

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA



University of Venda

THE DISTRIBUTION PATTERNS, UTILISATION AND CONSERVATION
OF *SCLEROCARYA BIRREA* (A. RICH.)HOCHST, SUBSP. CAFFRA IN TWO
VILAGES OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA

BY

MOCHEKI TEBOGO ALLISON (11575112)
A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILMENT OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN BOTANY

SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

PRIVATE BAG X 5050

THOHOYANDOU

0950

SOUTH AFRICA

UNIVEN LIBRARY

Library Item : 20161828



SUPERVISOR: MR. MH LIGAVHA- MBELENGWA

CO SUPERVISOR: PROF. MP TSHISIKHAWE

2016

Abstract

South Africa is a country with vast cultural diversity and biodiversity whereby many people still rely on a wide variety of plants in their daily lives for food, shelter, fuel, medicine and other necessities of life. *Sclerocarya birrea* is one of the most commonly used and wide spread fruit-bearing tree species found throughout sub-Saharan Africa, and in most countries, people from rural communities use it. It is one of the most highly valued indigenous trees of southern Africa due to its wide variety of uses which are recognized as commercially, medicinally and culturally important. To determine the distribution patterns and utilization of *Sclerocarya birrea* in the two cultural groups in some parts of the Limpopo Province. The study was conducted at GA-Makhushane and Tshivhongweni villages where participants were interviewed using questionnaire. To determine the distribution patterns of *Sclerocarya birrea*, nearest-neighbour method was used and the dispersion index (R) was estimated using method employed by Clark and Evans (1954). The results were analyzed using Analysis of Variance single factor. The results of this study revealed that *Sclerocarya birrea* is regularly distributed in both study areas and has a variety of uses from treating stomach and period pains to selling and making profit from its products and also feeding the livestock. The Bapedi cultural group has a higher number of uses for the fruits and the stem than the Vhavenda cultural group, whereas the Vhavenda cultural group has higher number of uses for the bark than the Bapedi cultural group. The fruits were mostly used by both cultures since they have the highest number of uses in both cultures followed by the bark. The study also found that the knowledge about the uses of *Sclerocarya birrea* is transferred to the younger generation and the plant is well conserved. It was concluded that *Sclerocarya birrea* is an important plant species to both communities since it serves as a source of food, income and medicine