



Bee Farming in Mbeya

18. Mbeya

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Introduction:

Our Objectives are:

- To assess the availability of bee products in Mbeya City.
- To assess the awareness of communities in Mbeya City regarding the uses of bee products.
- To examine the link between the bee products and human health
- Bee keeping is traditionally being practiced but little knowledge about the significance of bee and bee products is acquired by the communities in Mbeya urban and pre-urban areas in order to assess the extent of the availability of bee products awareness of communities about the roles of bee products in human health. The study was conducted by young scientist Mbeya Sec School in March – July 2014
- The study was intended to create awareness and generate information on the value of bee products in human health.
- Data was collected from professionals of bee keeping and agriculture officers, herbalist, elders and bee products traders. Data were collected from 50 respondents through direct interviews, structured questionnaires and direct observation.

Method:

Data was collected from professionals of bee keeping and agriculture officers, herbalist, elders and bee products traders. Data were collected from 50 respondents through direct interviews, structured questionnaires and direct observation.

Bee keeping has been traditionally practiced in small scale in Mbeya Urban and peri-urban areas. Experience shows that most of people are not engaged in this activity probably because of little awareness about bee products and their importance in human health. This study is aimed to investigate the degree of awareness of people on bee products, availability and their roles in human health.

Questionnaires and interview tools were used in collecting data. Observation was conducted to assess the availability of apiary (bee farm), bee products, market of bee products and extent in which bee products are used. Library and internet was visited to obtain existing information of bee products and their importance in human health.

The study was conducted in March – July 2014 and it involved farmers, elders, herbalist, bee products traders, professionals involved in bee keeping, agriculture and natural resources officers.

Respondents were visited once in their working sites and offices. On the day of visit, questionnaires directed to respondents were used to obtain information, interviews and observations were also conducted to assess the availability of bee farm (Apiary), herbal works, bee products and markets.



Young scientist observing conditions necessary for bee farm (apiary)



Results:

Despite of bee keeping, most of the people in Mbeya city are not aware of some of the bee products and their importance to human health. A very small population of herbalists, some sellers of bee products and some elders aged sixty years and above are aware of some of the bee products and their importance to human health. This was proved by the data collected in Mbeya city where 50 people were asked if they knew the mentioned bee products and the results were as follows:

Category	respondents	Percentage
Honey	50	100%
Bee propolis	0	0%
Royal jelly	0	0%
Bee bluder (larvae and pupae)	17	34%
Bee pollen	0	0%
Bee venom	06	12%
Bee bread	0	0%

Common bee products found in Mbeya city

The above table revealed that, all respondents 100% (50) are aware of the availability of honey and they know it as one of the bee products, while 34% (17) of the respondents were aware of the bee bluder (larvae and pupae) as one of the bee products, 12% (6) respondents know bee venom as among the bee products and none of the respondents were aware of the availability of bee propolis, royal jelly, bee pollen, and bee bread as among bee products in Mbeya city.

Based on the findings from this study, respondents that were visited were willing to start bee keeping and using bee products if they are well educated and empowered. Generally it may be concluded that little is known about the importance of bee keeping and their products in human health although is practiced but it is not efficient.



A Photo showing herbalist explaining significance of bee products including honey.

References:

1. www.Triticum.NI/English/home_frl.html
2. Honey quality methods of analysis and international Regulatory standards: Review of the work of international Honey Commission. www.apis.admin.ch/host/doc/pdfhoney/IHCmethods_e.pdf

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