IDENTIFICATION OF PSYCHOACTIVE COMPOUND IN UNRIPE PAWPAW (*Carica papaya*) SEED AND PEELS OBTAINED FROM AWKA, ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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**Abstract**

Given the strict monitoring of heroin, cocaine, loud, and weed use and distribution by drug law enforcement agencies in Nigeria, it is particularly alarming that drug-addicted individuals have devised innovative methods to produce more potent drugs to satisfy their cravings. The pawpaw seed and peels were collected from Awka, a region in Anambra state. The chemical constituents present in the seed and peel of pawpaw were examined through the utilization of n-hexane solvent extraction and Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometer (GCMS) analysis. The chemical constituents’analysis of dried pawpaw peel samples revealed the presence of Methaqualone (14.01%), a hypnotic drug that shares pharmacological similarities with barbiturates. However, Methaqualone was not detected in the pawpaw seed. The findings corroborate the prevailing notion that individuals addicted to drugs utilize pawpaw plants as a means to achieve a state of intoxication, and as a substandard substitute for cannabis.

**Biography of Presenter**

Dr. Gloria Nwanisobi, a Nigerian, graduated in 2006 with a B.Sc. in Pure and Industrial Chemistry from Ebonyi State University in Abakaliki. The University of Nigeria, Nsukka awarded her an M.Sc. and a Ph.D. in analytical chemistry in 2011 and 2016, respectively. In 2013, she began her academic career at Madonna University in Nigeria as a lecturer II. At Nnamdi Azikiwe University in Awka, Anambra state, Nigeria, she is currently a senior lecturer. She has had over twenty publications published in respectable journals, and she has peer-reviewed numerous articles related to her area of expertise.

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