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Ethnomedicinal application of native remedies used against diabetes and related complications in Mauritius

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ABSTRACT

Ethnopharmacological relevance: Notoriously, the tropical island of Mauritius has one of the highest prevalence of diabetes worldwide and the economic burden associated with it is alarming. The use of native remedies (NRs) is well anchored in the local culture and it continues to be the cornerstone of therapy for diabetic patients. However, there is currently a dearth of updated primary data on NRs used by Mauritians against diabetes and diabetes related complications (DRCs). This study was therefore designed to gather primary folk knowledge on the different NRs used by Mauritians against diabetes and DRCs which can open new avenues to initiate novel antidiabetic drugs discovery.

Aim of the study: To record, analyze and document orally transmitted ethnopharmacological knowledge from diabetic patients and traditional medicine practitioners (TMPs) in Mauritius concerning NRs commonly used against diabetes and DRCs.

Materials and methods: Data was collected following interviews from diabetic patients (n=328) and TMPs (n=20). Eleven quantitative indexes, namely informant consensus factor (FIC), fidelity level (FL), use value (UV), relative frequency of citation (RFC), relative importance (RI), cultural importance index (CII), index of agreement on remedies (IAR), cultural agreement index (CAI), quality use value (QUV), quality use agreement value (QUAV) and ethnobotanicity index (EI) were calculated. Statistical analysis such as Pearson correlation and Chi-squared test were performed to determine any association.

Results: A total of 111 plant species distributed over 56 families, 30 polyherbal formulations and 16 animal species were documented to be traditionally used against diabetes and DRCs. For the first time 8 endemic plants have been recorded to be used against diabetes and DRCs from Mauritius. The most encountered medicinal plant family was Asteraceae. According to the EI,

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