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The Value of dereplications in understanding the worth of traditional Pharmacopeias

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As acculturation and globalization continues, there is an urgent need to carefully record and delineate traditional pharmacopeias so that their true worth is understood and protected and any possible benefits related to their commercial development are equitably distributed. In the past most of these endeavors resulted in a list of plants with their associated uses without providing further explanations as to the extent of this knowledge within the traditional group, or if this knowledge was known elsewhere. This practice tended to generate the notion of finite exclusivity without providing proof that this was actually the case. Moreover, since the talents and methods of those conducting these initial studies varied widely, little effort was made to provide adequate information on how selective processes and preferences as well as modes of collection, preparation and use were achieved. Without these data, the potential of their clinical worth, bioreactive capacities or chemical compositions were often compromised. This frequently led to expending much time, effort and treasure on a pharmacopeia's evaluation without guidance on how these efforts could be optimized to achieve its best possible medicinal potential. This paper will review and provide examples of how types of dereplications and other techniques are helpful in amplifying this process.

Biography

Memory Elvin-Lewis has received university degrees from the University of British Columbia, BA (1952); DSc Honoris Causa (2012), University of Pennsylvania, MSc in Medical Microbiology (1957), Baylor University (MSc in Virology and Epidemiology (1960), the University of Leeds PhD in Medical Microbiology (1966) and Andrews University (DSc Honoris Causa (2003). She has been the recipient of many national and international awards and honors including the Silver Medal, "Primio Martín De La Cruz", Mexican Academy of Traditional Medicine (2001), Distinguished Economic Botanist, Society of Economic Botany (2006) and Dr. E K Janaki Ammal Medal, Society of Ethnobotanists, India (2008). She has been President of the Microbiology Sections of both the American Association of Dental Schools and the International Society of Dental Research and continues to serve on editorial boards or as a reviewer on numerous national and international publications. Her publications encompass subjects in ethnobotany and ethnopharmacology, medical-dental botany, microbiology, virology, epidemiology, anthropology, legal aspects of benefit sharing, and adverse effects of herbal products. Invited lectures (60 +); Proceeding abstracts (45) Journal articles (53) Book reviews (7) and Book chapters (25), Books (2) with W.H. Lewis. Medical Botany: Plant affecting Human Health. John Wiley, NY.

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