

Streamlining Efforts to Fully Understand Alternative Medicine

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Opinion

Everywhere in the world, humans have been able to extract natural remedies from their environment for various diseases through the cumulative experiences over the years. In great civilizations that have marked humanity, it exist a good part of the history of plants uses as a remedy, like Chinese and Egyptian civilizations.

Today, we have an important heritage of ancestral knowledge about the use of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) that we must preserve and consolidate. This ancestral knowledge that we found among traditional healers, herbalists and sellers of MAPs, is a socio-cultural and socio-economic that many countries has a part; it constitute the alternative medicine.

Nowadays, in every region and in every city, we found hundreds of herbalists activating in the trade of MAPs. The place of herbal teas with thyme and verbena is not reproachable when it comes to an outbreak of flu or a cold.

By definition, MAPs are defined as raw materials used for therapeutic, aromatic and/or culinary purposes, or as components for the manufacture of cosmetics, medicines, natural foods and other products related to health. Currently, the industrial demand for MAPs is undeniable, thanks to the increased production of therapeutic and cosmetic formulations and herbal supplements.

In developed countries, finished products based on MAPs are increasingly prescribed and sold. In developing countries, this type of product represents a significant economic potential for some exporters to develop and exploit in full. Morocco (12th largest exporter), gives the most important example of the exploitation of these products.

The evolution and change in lifestyle that the world knows made natural products increasingly solicited by consumers. For example, food products that contain natural additives are more demanded than those added with synthetic ones.

Indeed, the scientific community has conducted several scientific works to study medicinal plants by researching active molecules with biological activities. Various scientific databases testify to this, hundreds of thousands of scientific articles on the study of MAPs are listed there.

The important technological advances in the field of chemical analysis, mainly the development of ultrasensitive techniques have advanced the phytochemistry from a simple maceration to purification and identification, or even the monitoring of the metabolism of a given molecule within the plant: metabolomics.

Several aspects are treated by researchers in their studies. Among these aspects, we cite: anticancer, antidiabetic, antioxidant, antimicrobial and other biological properties of those molecules extracted from MAPs.

Today, it is time to fully develop natural products and boost the scientific knowledge of these natural molecules. The journal intends to contribute to international progress in the advances of traditional medicine and to give scientific support to its practices.

I invite the scientific community to share, in this journal, their valuable scientific works and let's develop this field together for more benefices to the humanity.