

Review of: "Ethnobotanical Documentation of Yerba Mate in Syria"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The article "Ethnobotanical Documentation of Yerba Mate in Syria" presents several issues that limit the understanding and validity of the data on the use of yerba mate in Syria. While it highlights that 60% of users consume the herb for health benefits, it does not specify what those benefits are, which weakens the argument. Furthermore, although the research methods include data collection on "reasons for use," these aspects are not discussed in the results, suggesting a disconnection between the information collected and its analysis. The inclusion of clear examples of traditional uses and cultural practices related to yerba mate would enrich the research, highlighting its importance in family and community contexts, and emphasizing its role as a symbol of hospitality and cultural identity.

The introduction of yerba mate into Syrian society also lacks a historical depth that contextualizes its adaptation to local traditions. The social analysis of consumption should consider how the beverage symbolizes unity and friendship, as well as integrate information about health benefits that could reinforce its cultural relevance. The methodology presents gaps, such as the lack of justification for the use of convenience sampling, which may introduce bias, and it does not discuss the need for ethical approval, given that it involves human participants. The statistical analysis, although mentioned, is not detailed, and the manner in which the Relative Frequency of Citation (RFC) index is calculated lacks more robust explanations.

The results presented may not be representative of the general population, especially due to the predominance of participants from rural areas, which limits the generalization of the findings. The categorization of consumption motives is broad and does not capture nuances, which may result in a limited understanding of individual motivations. Moreover, the lack of quantitative data supporting claims about the benefits of yerba mate undermines the credibility of the results. The discussion on the culture and rituals associated with consumption in Syria is superficial and does not explore social interactions in depth.

Finally, the conclusion could be enriched by highlighting the results and perceived therapeutic benefits, integrating these perceptions into the cultural context. There is a need for more rigor in validating claims of health benefits, along with references that support these assertions. The research should also consider global trends in interest in functional beverages, suggesting the importance of yerba mate not only in Syria but as part of a broader cultural phenomenon. Continued research and exploration of specific areas deserve encouragement to better understand the complexity and cultural richness of yerba mate consumption.

