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Satisfying Sugar Cravings in Obese and Diabetic Patients with *Synsepalum dulcificum*

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Abstract

Managing the dietary intake of sugar has been found to be one of the most cost effective ways of coping with obesity and diabetes. However, this means of preventing and coping with diabetes and obesity has been found to be difficult for both adults and children since the need to satisfy their cravings for sugar is paramount. *Synsepalum dulcificum*, an underutilised and neglected indigenous Ghanaian fruit has been used for centuries in Ghana to satisfy sugar cravings. The fruit is unsweet with a mild taste. However, after eating this fruit, any sour food subsequently consumed, turns extremely sweet. The sweetening effect can last for about one hour. This research was conducted to find out if *Synsepalum dulcificum* can serve as an alternative means of managing sugar craving in people especially those with obesity and diabetes. The research used literature review to determine the essential analysis of this fruit and the possibility of serving as a sugar substitute. The results indicated that the sugar content in the fruit has been found to be insignificant. The sweetening effect of the fruit is attributed to the presence of Miraculin, which is used as a sugar substitute. The fruit has been tried in obese and diabetic patients without side effects. Cancer patients with unpleasant metallic taste in their mouth had it masked after eating the fruit. It can be concluded that the fruit can serve as a means of satisfying sugar cravings in many people whilst managing their dietary sugar intake due to the insignificant sugar content. It is recommended to cultivate the fruit on large scale. Also the consumption of the fruit must be promoted among people who are obese and diabetic.

Keywords: Diabetes, Ghana, obese, sugar, *Synsepalum dulcificum*