

Structural elucidation of two unique antimicrobial Cassane – type tricyclic diterpenes from the root of *CALLIANDRA PORTORICENSIS* (JACQ)-BENTH (*FABACEAE*).

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Abstract: The burden of infectious diseases by bacteria and fungi had constituted a great concern to the entire human population. *Calliandra portoricensis* (*Fabaceae*) had been widely used over the years in ethnomedicine for the; treatment of various ailments such as swollen gum, tooth and throat inflammation often associated with microbial infections. At present, no active antimicrobial compound has been reported from this specie. The aim of this research was to identify, isolate and characterize the antimicrobial compounds from the root of *C. portoricensis*. The pulverized root sample (0.8 Kg) was extracted by successive cold maceration respectively for 72 hr. The most bioactive ethyl acetate extract (4.61 gm) was subjected to chromatographic column fractionation (Silica Gel G, 200-400 mesh-stationary phase). Gradient mixtures of n-hexane: ethyl acetate: methanol (4:0:0; 3:1:0; 2:2:0; 1:3:0; 0:1:0; 0:3:1; 0:2:2; 0:1:3; 0:0:4; – v/v/v) were used for elution. Agar well diffusion method was adopted for the bioassays susceptibility tests and MIC determinations. Clinically viable human pathogens for the tests were; *Staphylococcus aureus*, *Escherichia coli*, *Bacillus subtilis*, *Klebsiella pneumonia*, *Streptococcus fecalis*, *Candida albicans* and *Aspergillus niger*. Two major fractions (F_A and F_B) active against the test organisms were pooled the most active fraction F_B on further purification by preparative TLC (Silica Gel G, 0.5 mm thickness), yielded bioactive pure compounds C₁ (9 mg) and C₂ (8 mg). Both compounds exhibited MIC values of 125.00±0.70 µg per milliliter against *Candida albicans* and *Aspergillus niger* These activities were found to be quite significant with respect to the reference controls (Ciprofloxacin and fluconazole) at P ≤ 0.05. Characterization of C₁ and C₂ by spectroscopic analysis (UV, MS, FT – IR and NMR), identified two novel compounds as Cassane - type tricyclic diterpenoids. C₁ (Molecular Mass: 340, C₂₀ H₃₆ O₄) is (5,10- 8,9- 12,13)-seco. 4,4,10 – trimethyl, 7 – hydroxy, 14 – hydroxymethyl, 16 – keto, 13(15) – ene – cassane furanoditerpene and compound C₂ (Molecular Mass: 418, C₂₄ H₃₄ O₆) is (12,13)- seco. 12, 14 – epoxy, 12(16) -Oxo – 16(17), 13(15) – diene, 4, 10, 17 – trimethyl, 4, 7 – di – aceto cassanoate The Cassane - type diterpenoids have been reported for promising antimicrobial properties.

Key words: *Calliandra portoricensis*, antibacterial, antifungal, cassane-type diterpenoid derivatives.

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Introduction:

Over the years, humans have depended on natural products for basic needs such as food and medicines. Evidence abounds on how the ancient civilizations of Chinese, Indians and North Africans used plants for the treatment of various diseases [1].

There has been a huge burden of infectious diseases on the populace due to the newly emerging and re-emergent diseases as well as multiple drug-resistant microbial strains that have necessitated search for newer and better antimicrobial agents [2]. About 80 % of world inhabitants patronize herbal medicine [3], and this is most pronounced in the resource-limited countries of the globe [4].

Currently, plants are still rated as the most economical and effective alternative source of medicines and 'lead' for novel drug discovery [5; 6]. Studies are therefore needed to validate scientifically, the safety, efficacy, quality and dosage of medicinal plants used [7].

The plant *Calliandra portoricensis* is a shrub distributed in tropical regions of America, India, West Indies and West African Nigeria [8]. The phytochemical constituents include; saponin, flavonoids, cardiac glycosides, steroids, triterpenoids, reducing compounds and alkaloids [9].



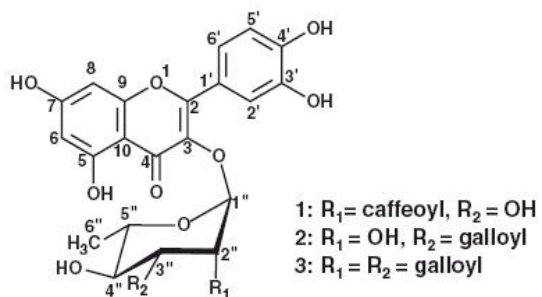
Figure 1: Photograph of *Calliandra portoricensis* showing, twigs, leaves and flowers.

Ethno botanically, the common names of *Calliandra portoricensis* include, “Sleeping plants” and “Corpse awakener,” Tude (Yoruba of South Western Nigeria); [10]; “Ekweanahi” and “Avuvuagu” or “Eriagbo” among the Igbos of South Eastern Nigeria. In these regions, the plant has been used extensively in traditional medicine for the treatment of various ailments such as; throat and tooth inflammations, swollen tonsils, mouth ulcers. These medical conditions are usually caused by bacteria and fungi. [11].

There were some previous scientific reports in the following domains; worm expeller, laxative, abortifacient, antidote to viperian venom [12; 13] Antidiarrhoea, anticonvulsant and antipyretic properties. [14; 15; 16]. Also crude extracts of *C. portoricensis* exhibited antimicrobial activity. [17]. Antioxidant, antiangiogenic, and antiproliferative activities in human prostate cancer cells [18]. Antisickling properties [19]. Antioxidant and antihepatotoxic [20]

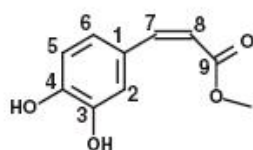
Table 1: Some chemical constituents previously isolated from the genus *Calliandra*:

Structural formulary	Name of Isolated compound	Morphological part	References
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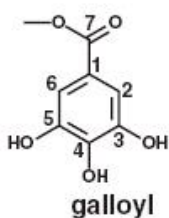
1.) Quercitrin 2 -O-caffeate
 Leaves and stem of *Calliandra haematocephala* [21];)

2.) Quercitrin 3 -O-gallate

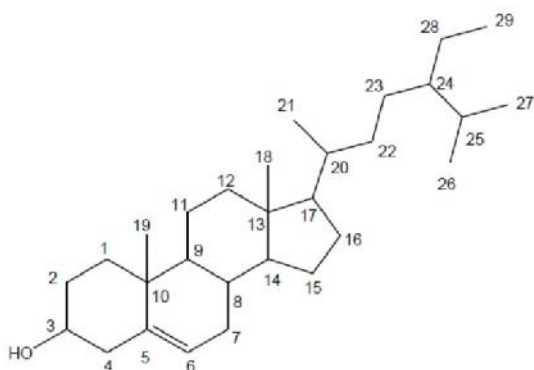


Z-caffeoyl

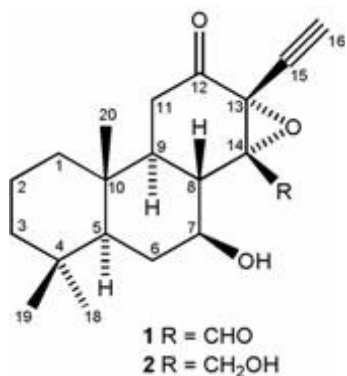
3.) Quercitrin 2 ,3 -di-O galate



galloyl



-sitosterol
 Leaves of *C.haematocephala* [22]
 a.



Cassane derivatives:
 Escobarine A (1) Root of *Calliandra californica* ([23])
 Escobarine B (2)

Aims and objective of the study:

To identify, isolate and characterize the antimicrobial compounds from the root of *C. portoricensis*.

Materials and Methods:

Plant Material:

The root sample of *Calliandra portoricensis* was collected in the month of June from Osisioma Local Government Area in Abia State of Nigeria. The plant was identified and authenticated in the Herbarium of the Department of Plant Science and Biotechnology, University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria by Dr. Chimezie Ekeke with the Voucher Number: UPH / V / 1240. The material was properly washed, air dried, pulverized and stored for subsequent use.

The methodology adopted the techniques as described earlier [24], for; extraction by successive cold maceration using n-hexane, ethyl acetate and 70 % aq. Methanol for 72 hr respectively, Antimicrobial *in vitro* susceptibility evaluation and Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) determinations by agar well diffusion method, preparation of test micro organisms which were; *Staphylococcus aureus* (Gram +ve cocci), *Streptococcus fecalis* (Gram +ve cocci), *Escherichia coli* (Gram -ve rod), *Bacillus subtilis* (Gram +ve rod), *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (Gram -ve rod), *Candida albican* (fungi), *Aspergillus niger* (fungi), **Also conducted was** column Fractionation of bioactive ethyl acetate extracts (Silica Gel G, 200-400 mesh-stationary phase) with gradient mixtures of n-hexane: ethyl acetate: methanol (4:0:0; 3:1:0; 2:2:0; 1:3:0; 0:1:0; 0:3:1; 0:2:2; 0:1:3; 0:0:4; – v/v/v) used for the elution , The bioactive fraction (B) was subjected to further purification by preparative TLC (Silica Gel G, 0.5 mm thickness), The resultant bioactive pure compounds C₁ and C₂ were subjected to spectroscopic analysis (UV, MS, FT – IR and NMR).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Table 2: Result of antimicrobial susceptibility tests of TLC bands (C₁ and C₂) on selected human pathogens at concentration of 1 mg / ml:

TLC Band [C₁]

TLC Band [C₂]

Microorganism	C-1	CTR	C-2	CTR
<i>Staphylococcus aureus</i>	*25.00±0.40	23.00±0.70	*31.00±0.12	24.00±0.70
<i>Escherichia. Coli</i>	*35.00±0.60	38.00±0.90	*20.00±0.60	25.00±0.70
<i>Bacillus subtilis</i>	*45.00±0.50	40.00±0.80	*22.00±0.50	35.00±0.40
<i>Klebsiella pneumoniae</i>	*35.00±0.70	30.00±0.60	*18.00±0.40	30.00±0.80
<i>Streptococcus. fecalis</i>	*30.00±0.20	35.00±0.10	*20.00±0.80	25.00±0.40
<i>Candida albicans</i>	*33.00±0.90	35.00±0.00	*20.00±0.90	25.00±0.70
<i>Aspergillus n.</i>	*25.00±0.50	14.00±0.80	*30.00±0.50	45.00±0.60

Values are Diameter Zone of Inhibition (mm) and expressed as mean ±SEM; n = 3; CTR. = Control - Ciproflaxacin (20 µg per milliliter for bacteria) and Fluconazole (1000 µg per milliliter for fungi); (-) = no inhibition; 10 % aqueous DMSO (negative control, no inhibition).

* Represent significant values with respect to the control of P _ 0.05

Table 3: Minimum Inhibitory Concentrations (MIC) values of TLC bands (C₁ and C₂) in µg per ml against the selected human pathogens:

S/N	Micro organisms	TLC Bands.	
		C ₁	C ₂
1.	<i>Staphylococcus. Aureus</i>	125.00±0.80	125.00±0.10
2.	<i>Escherichia. Coli</i>	25000±0.30	125.00±0.70
3.	<i>Bacillus. Subtilis</i>	125.00±0.20	250.00±0.30
4.	<i>Klebsiella pneumoniae</i>	250.00±0.60	125.00±0.80
5.	<i>Streptococcus fecalis</i>	12500.±0.50	125.00±0.10

6.	<i>Candida albicans</i>	125.00±0.70	125.00±0.40
7.	<i>Aspergillus niger</i>	125.00±0.20.5	125.00±0.60

Values are expressed as mean ± SEM; n = 3.

Table 4: Interpretation of ^1H and ^{13}C NMR Spectral data (Deuterated Chloroform $_{\text{CDCl}_3}$ as solvent) for compounds C_1 and C_2 .

Assigned position/ identity of atoms	^{13}C (ppm)		^1H (ppm)		^1H - ^1H COSY		HMBC 2,3,4 JAC		DEPT-135	
	C_1	C_2	C_1	C_2	C_1	C_2	C_1	C_2	C_1	C_2
C-1	22.0	29.85	-0.88	1.2-1.3					CH_2	CH_2
C-2	18.2	29.51	0.9,1.2	1.2-1.3					CH_2	CH_2
C-3	22.8	33.97	1.32	1.2-1.3					CH_2	CH_2
C-4	45.8	54.66		-						-
C-5	29.8	22.85	1.33	0.9					CH_2	CH_2
C-6	21.1	33.39	1.3	1.2-1.3					CH_2	CH_2
C-7	21.7	44.49	0.9	3.7			H_8		CH_2	CH
C-8	25.0	41.85	1.68	3.3			H_7		CH	CH
C-9	23.0	22.24	1.45	0.8					CH	CH_2
C-10	38.0	52.96	2.4	-					CH	-
C-11	30.2	32.08	1.4,1.75	1.2	H_{12}				CH_2	CH_2
C-12	65.7	95.21	4.3	5.98	H_{11}				CH_2OR	CH
C-13	127.9	111	7.6	5.40	H_{15}				$=\text{CH}$	CH
C-14	28.7	82	2.04	3.60				C_{21}	CH_2	CH
C-15	129.9	109	7.4	6.05	H_{13}				$=\text{CH}$	CH
C-16	170 ca	140	-	-					RO-C=O	-
C-17	13.1	95.09	0.99	6.04					CH_3	CH
C-18	11	14.23	0.95	0.95					CH_3	CH_3
C-19	14	14.53	0.9	0.75				$\text{C}_2,$	CH_3	CH_3

C4

C-20	67.2	170	4.23	-		CH ₂ OH	R-O- C=O
C-21		164		-			R-O- C=O
C-22		18.81		1.0			CH ₂
C-23		56.71		3.80		C ₂₀	O- CH ₃
C-24		55.89		3.70		C ₂₁	O- CH ₃

Both compounds exhibited DZI of 33.00 ± 0.90 and 25.00 ± 0.50 respectively against *Candida albicans* and *Aspergillus niger* as well as MIC values of 125.00 ± 0.70 μg per ml for each. These activities were found to be quite significant with respect to the reference controls (Ciprofloxacin and fluconazole) at $P \leq 0.05$.

The susceptibility tests result shown in (Table 1) was found to be consistent with the report which suggested that Diameter Zone of Inhibition of 10 mm and above despite the current ease of acquired microbial resistance should be considered to possess some antimicrobial activity; while those equal to or above 20 mm could be considered potent [25]. Further, the result shown on (Table 2), on MIC values was in line with the report of an investigation which expressed that extracts having activity where MIC values were below 8 mg /ml were considered to possess some antimicrobial activity, whereas natural products with MIC values below 1 mg /ml should be considered as noteworthy [26].

Compound C₁ had a R_f value of 0.91 (Silica Gel, 0.25 mm, n-hexane: ethyl acetate: methanol – 12: 4: 1) and fluoresced light green under UV lamp at 365. The C₁ was a semi-solid oily and dark brown compound. Ultraviolet (UV) spectrum exhibited absorption maximum at 280 nm. This was consistent with values reported on cassane - type tricyclic diterpenoids [27], and supported by the presence of conjugated chromospheric group on ring C of compound C₁. The structure of this compound was elucidated by using FT - IR, NMR (1- D and 2 - D experiments) and MS spectroscopy. The IR bands were in the region; 3402.54 cm^{-1} and 2959.47 cm^{-1} , representing the -OH stretching and -CH vibrations respectively. Also evident was the carbonyl stretch at 1727.30

cm⁻¹, α and β unsaturation at 1415.52 cm⁻¹ and the structure of the pure compound was established by ¹H – NMR, ¹³C – NMR, ¹H – ¹H COSY, DEPT – 135, HSQC, and HMBC.(Table 4).

The proton (¹H) – NMR contained five peaks of deshielded protons at δ (ppm); 7.6, 7.4, 4.26, 4.25 and 2.04

The cosy spectrum revealed the correlation of the proton peaks and exhibited cross – peak correlations as in; proton H -12 with H – 11 and H – 13 with H – 15.

Three methyl protons singlets were evident at δ (ppm); H – 17 – Me (0.99); H – 18 – Me (0.95) and H – 19 – Me (0.90). Evident too were ten methylene (CH₂) protons corresponding to H – 1, H – 2, H – 3, H – 5, H – 6, H – 8, H – 9, H – 11, H – 12 and H – 20 respectively. Also present were five methine (CH) protons at; H – 7, H – 10, H – 13, H – 14 and H – 15 respective. The olefinic (Sp²) = CH protons were evident at H – 13 and H – 15. The methoxy (–OCH₂ – protons at H – 12 were evident too. The clear designations and identity of atoms were achieved by the use of 2 – Dimensional proton to carbon correlation (HMBC and HSQC). The other proton chemical shift peaks were equally rationalized on the same Table 4.

A total of twenty spectral peaks were identified in ¹³C – NMR experiments of compound C₁ These were rationalized by the aid of DEPT -135. Three methyl groups at δ (ppm); 13.10, 11.00 and 14.00 corresponding to C17 – Me, C18 – Me and C19 – Me respectively. Olefinic group (C = C) at δ (ppm): 127.90 (C – 13 and 129.90 (C – 15) respectively. Ten methylene (-CH₂) groups at δ (ppm); 22.00 (C-1), 18.20 (C – 2) 22.80 (C – 3), 29.80 (C -5), 21.10 (C -6), 25.00 (C -8), 23.00 (C-9) 30.20 (C-11) 65.70 (C-12) and 67.20 (C-20). Two oxymethylene groups (-CH₂O) at; 65.70 (C-12) and 170.00 (C – 16). Present also were five methine groups (-CH-) at; 21.70 (C – 7), 38.00 (C – 10), 127.90 (C – 13), 28.70 (C – 14) and 129.90 (C – 15.). Evident also were two quaternary groups at; 45.80 (C – 4) and 170.00 (C – 16) respectively.

Other correlations were evident in HMBC as rationalized in Table 4.

The number assignment of hydrogen, carbon and oxygen was further supported by the MS The mass and NMR (1D AND 2D) spectral data suggested the presence of cassane – type tricyclic diterpenoid. This skeleton is usually linked to certain sub group in *Fabaceae* family [28]. Again, a peak was shown at m/z 341 and corresponded to [M + 1] equivalent to molecular mass of 340 (C₂₀H₃₆O₄).

Compound C₁ is therefore a Cassane – type tricyclic diterpenoid derivative with (IUPAC) name as; (5, 10- 8, 9- 12, 13)-seco. 4,4,10 – trimethyl, 7 – hydroxy, 14 – hydroxymethyl, 16 – keto, 13(15) – ene – cassane furanoditerpene. (Figure 2).

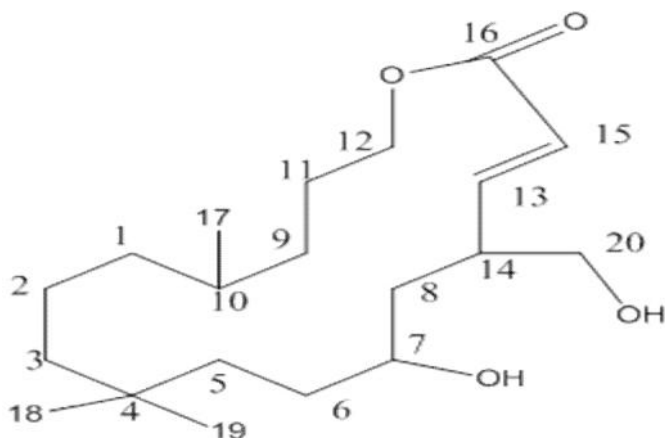


Figure 2: The structure of compound C₁. (5, 10- 8, 9- 12, 13)-seco. 4,4,10 – trimethyl, 7 – hydroxy, 14 – hydroxymethyl, 16 – keto, 13(15) – ene – cassane furanoditerpene.

Compound C₂ had a R_f value of 0.46 on analytical TLC plate (Silica Gel, 0.25 mm, n-hexane: ethyl acetate: methanol – 12: 4: 1) and fluoresced deep purple under a UV lamp at 365 nm it was also a semi-solid and oily compound with molecular formula of C₂₄H₃₄O₆ as could be deduced from the MS data by a peak showing at m/z 419 corresponding to [M+1] equivalent to its molecular mass of 418.

FT–IR of C₂ showed a broad stretching at 3375.40 cm⁻¹ of -OH groups and C=O stretching in the band region of 1710.33 cm⁻¹. Presence of –CH, CH₂, CH₃ vibrational frequencies were also evident.

The ¹H-NMR for compound C₂ exhibited signals of deshielded protons with chemical shifts at δ_{H} (ppm) 6.05, 6.04, 5.98, 5.40, 3.80, 3.70, 3.60 and 3.30, corresponding to; H-15, H-17, H-12, H-13, H-23, H-7/24, H-14 and H-8 respectively. Five quaternary carbons with no protons at; C-4, C-10, C-16, C-20, and C-21, were evident. Also evident were the three methyl protons singlets at chemical shifts δ_{H} (ppm); 0.95, 0.75 and 1.0, corresponding to; C-10-Me, C-4-Me, and C-17-Me respectively. Olefinic (Sp²) protons at δ_{H} (ppm); H-15 (6.05) and H-17 (6.04) (ppm); Present too were the oxymethine protons at δ_{H} (ppm); H-12 (5.98) and H-14 (3.60) respectively.

The structural configuration of this compound C_2 was further supported by a total of twenty-four carbon signals in ^{13}C - NMR spectroscopy these resonances were rationalized on the basis of DEPT- 135. (Table 4). Five quaternary carbons at δ (ppm); C-4 (54.66), C-10 (52.96), and C - 16 (140.0), C-20 (170.0) and C - 21 (164.0). Three methyl group carbons were evident at δ (ppm): Me - C-18 (14.23), Me - C-19 (14.53), and Me - C-22 (18.81). Five methylene groups (-CH₂-) at δ (ppm) C-1 (29.85), C-2 (29.51), C-3 (33.97), C-6 (33.39) and C-11 (32.08). Present too were the two oxymethine groups (>CHO) at δ (ppm): C-12 (95.21) and C-14 (82.00). Two olefinic methine groups were evident at δ (ppm) C-15 (109.00) and C-17 (95.09).

The 1H -H COSY indicated that proton H - 8 ($\delta_H = 3.30$ ppm) exhibited cross - peak correlation with H -7($\delta_H = 3.70$ ppm). At the same time, the following correlations were observed with HMBC spectrum proton H -14 ($\delta_H = 3.60$ ppm) with C - 21($\delta_C = 164.00$ ppm), H - 23 ($\delta_H = 3.80$ ppm) with C - 20 ($\delta_C = 170.00$ ppm) and H - 24 ($\delta_H = 3.70$ ppm) with C - 21 ($\delta_C = 164.00$ ppm).

The absorption maximum of UV- VIS experiment was at 270 nm this is consistent with earlier reports on Cassane skeleton.

This novel compound C_2 isolated from the root of *Calliandra portoricensis* was identified as (12,13) - seco - 12, 14 - epoxy, 12(16) -Oxo - 16(17), 13(15) - diene, 4, 10, 17 - trimethyl, 4, 7 - di - aceto cassanoate. (Figure 3).

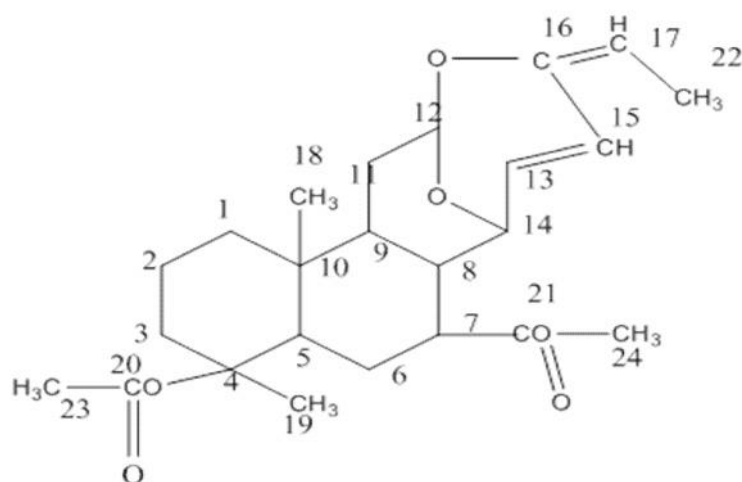


Figure 3: The structure of compound C_2 : (12,13)- seco. 12, 14 - epoxy, 12(16) -Oxo - 16(17), 13(15) - diene, 4, 10, 17 - trimethyl, 4, 7 - di - aceto cassanoate.

Both compounds C₁ and C₂ being Cassane – type diterpenoids derivatives could be linked to earlier reported activities exhibited by similar moieties against test bacteria, viruses and *candida albican* – fungus [23; 29; 30]

Conclusion:

This study had successfully isolated, identified and characterized two novels Cassane - type tricyclic diterpenoid derivatives. Compound C₁ as; (5, 10- 8, 9- 12, 13)-seco. 4,4,10 – trimethyl, 7 – hydroxy, 14 – hydroxymethyl, 16 – keto, 13(15) – ene – cassane furanoditerpene. (Molecular mass: 340 and molecular formularies: C₂₀ H₃₆ O₄). and Compound C₂ as; (12, 13)- seco. 12, 14 – epoxy, 12(16) -Oxo – 16(17), 13(15) – diene, 4, 10, 17 – trimethyl, 4, 7 – di – aceto cassanoate (Molecular mass: 418 and molecular formula: C₂₄ H₃₄ O₆). These Cassane - type diterpenoids have shown promising activities against bacteria and fungi (*Candida albican*).

Recommendations:

The two compounds C₁ and C₂ should be further investigated for toxicity and Structure Activity Relationships (SAR) for drug development, possibly formulated into lozenges for treatment of the throat, oral thrush and tooth infections. Their tinctures could be prepared for nail-fungal and other mixed dermatological infections, douches and pessaries for vaginal candidiasis.

Acknowledgement

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Conflict Of Interest:

There was no conflict of interest involved in this research work.

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