



Peoples' Social Welfarism and Traditional Medicine Practice in Urban Local Government of Osun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the peoples' social welfare in respect to the traditional medicine as a means of health care services in Ilesha East Local Government area of Osun State, Nigeria. The study sampled 150 respondents which consists nursing mothers and elderly between the age of 18 and above who at a time had contacts with traditional medical practitioners and have been living in the community for more than six months within the study area. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the 11 political wards in Ilesha East local government area which was divided into zone A, B and C. The streets in each zone were listed and randomly chosen for the study. Textbooks, academic journals, seminars/workshops/conference papers, online materials, media clippings, and government gazette were used to gather secondary data. The information gathered was evaluated using descriptive statistical methods. The results revealed that traditional medicine is far better in tackling physical, mental and spiritual infirmities than modern medicine (88.0%), herbal products have high efficacy/potency as proven by NAFDAC herbal products registration, (67.3%) of the respondents derived satisfaction with the effects and outcome of using herbal medicines. The study concluded that as against the old practice traditional medicine practitioner now embrace modern science which has positively improved the traditional medicine practice on the social welfare of people in Ilesha East local government.

Keywords: Traditional medicine, Social welfare, Herbal, Healers, Diseases, Health.

Introduction

Individuals and/or groups in the developing countries, notably in the African continent most often employ traditional medicines as primary or complementary sources of healing there ailment. According to the situation report of the World Medicines (World Health Organization, 2011), traditional medicine is consumed by 70 percent to 95 percent of the population in underdeveloped countries, and it is used in varied degrees by every country on the planet. The rapid expansion in the number of herbal outlets, clinics, and hospitals (van der Boom et al,



2008), which constituted a large world market worth \$83 billion in 2008, reflects high rates of utilization (WHO, 2011). Despite tremendous economic and social growth, which has enhanced countries' financial and political ability to provide modern public health systems, such figures persist.

There are many theories as to why Traditional Medicines/Healers (TM/H) are used so frequently. According to academics, TM/H is more broadly accessible, preventable, and accessible than current drugs, which are still unavailable to two-thirds of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa (Leonard, 2003; WHO, 2002). For instance, a study in Uganda indicated that there were two to four hundred healers compared to one modern practitioner for every 20,000 people (WHO, 2002, p12). Due to the local cultivation of herbal substances, which reduces both direct and indirect costs, traditional medicine is also more affordable. Also, patients can administer it themselves (van den Boom, Nsowah-Nuamah, & Overbosch, 2008). Instead of a set amount given in advance, as is typically the case when visiting a doctor or using modern services, healers are known to charge based on ability to pay and accept various forms of payment. (Asenso-Okyere, 1995; Hausmann & Ribera, 2007).

Aside from economic considerations, anthropological factors contribute to the use of traditional medicine. Historical context, cultural acceptability, and sociological incentives centering on views of illness and disease, according to anthropologists, are all important factors in driving healthcare-seeking behavior (Evans- Pritchard, 1937; Foster, 1984; Hielscher & Sommerfeld, 1985; Kleinman, 1980). Traditional medicine was, historically, the default mode of treatment. For example, until the British colonial masters introduced modern medicine into Ghana, the Ghanaian people were completely relied on traditional medicine (Twumasi, 1979).

In many parts of the world, orthodox medicine has tended to trump traditional medicine until recently, when interest in traditional medicine looks to be on the rise. According to Essential Drugs (2003), there has been increasing focus and interest in the use of traditional medicines around the world in the last decade. Traditional medicine, for example, is claimed to account for nearly 40% of all health-care delivery in China. Chile has a rate of 71 percent, India has a rate of 65 percent, Australia has a rate of 48 percent, Canada has a rate of 70 percent, France has a rate of 49 percent, and the United States has a rate of 42 percent. Nigeria is included in this embrace. 70 percent of the population is claimed to believe in traditional medicine. Nigeria has established a Traditional Medicine Council and is claimed to be figuring out how to include African traditional medicine into its health-care delivery system (Abubarka, 2003; Maiwada, 2004; Adelaja, 2006). However, in many regions of the world, the question of incorporating traditional medicine into public health policy is contentious. London (2006:2), for example, stated that;

the notion of the service of alternative medicine falsely implies that a meaningful category of health care called alternative medicine exists and is scientifically based. But in common usage, the term is a euphemism used by enthusiasts and profiteers to give the appearance of legitimacy for methods promoted with scientifically implausible, invalidated or non-validated claims.

Notwithstanding the controversy, over 70 nations have rules in place for herbal products, and 25 countries were stated to have a national plan for traditional medicine in 2000. In nations like Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, and North Africa, traditional medicine is reportedly becoming more popular in the treatment and management of life-threatening illnesses including malaria and

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acquired immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), yet there is scant systemic evidence of its usefulness and safety (Essential Drugs, 2003). The arguments over conventional medicine are discussed in the scientific and philosophical spheres. The World Health Organization has played a significant role in the development of traditional medicine research policies, which cover, among other things, reflexology, osteopathy, chiropractic, aromatherapy, self-exercise treatments, mind-body therapies, radiation therapy, and vibration therapy. Among the others are dance therapy, radiant treatment, preventive medicine, psychotherapy, therapeutic fasting and dieting, etc (Adesina, 2008).

Due to the aforementioned factors, traditional medicine in Nigeria is as old as the population. The importance of traditional medicine is growing as more Nigerians choose herbal remedies. To control the practice of traditional medicine and promote research in five important areas (herbal medicine, bone setting, mental health, traditional birth attendance, and the sale of traditional medicine ingredients), the federal government established the Traditional Medicine Policy and the Traditional Medicine Council (Chesa, 2006). Modern technology, innovation and education, on the other hand, appear to have influenced herbalists' practice of traditional medicine in Nigeria. The general public expects herbalists to do toxicity testing on their remedies, to have well-branded and labeled products, and, most significantly, to ensure standard, uniform, and accurate dosing in partnership with scientists and recognized institutions. These factors highlight the importance of determining the extent to which traditional healers collaborate with modernity.

Statement of the Problem

There has been a worldwide renaissance of interest and attention in the use and research of traditional medicine in the last ten years (Essential Drugs, 2003), and support for traditional medicine has risen considerably (Hillenbrand, 2006). The World Health Organization recognized the role of traditional medicine in providing primary health care in 1978 during the Alma Ata Primary Health Care Delivery Declaration and advised countries to develop official policies on it. Apart from wealthy countries, African countries, particularly Nigeria, are still grappling with how to implement long-term policies that will elevate traditional medicine to an enviable position.

The growing popularity of herbal medicine hinges on the peoples' belief that herbal products are natural and safer than synthetic drugs. The study by Ansari and Inamdar (2010) disapproves the claim that all-natural products are safe for consumption and confirmed that some natural herbs are poisonous which may cause injury to liver or kidney. Similarly, Kew et.al. (1993) and De Smet (1995) opine that some herbal products in the market need to be subjected to the drug approval process to ensure their safety and effectiveness as some of the products are deemed to contain lead, mercury and corticoids which are poisonous organic substances that can damage the organs of the body. Also, the lack of standardization and safety regulations of the herbal product has been identified as problem areas. However, WHO (2000) insists that herbal products must be in batches, with botanical names, chemical and biological standardization of products, the safety and efficacy of the product and the shelf-life be established. As the therapeutic potential of many herbs is yet to be fully discovered and bearing in mind that orthodox medicine cannot address all form of diseases, there is need to explore and improve on traditional medicine with aim of proffering health care solution where western medicine is unable to cope. Hence, this study intends to assess the extent to which traditional medicine practices have impacted on the social welfare of people in Osun State using Ilesha East Local Government as a study area.

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Objective of the study

Assessed the peoples' social welfare through the utilisation of traditional medicine as a means for healthcare delivery in Ilesha East Local Government area.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Ilesha East Local Government of Osun State which is strategically situated on approximately 70N 50E whose inhabitants are mainly farmers, artisans, traders, civil servants and students. Ilesha East Local Government was purposively selected amidst the six local governments established in Ijesha-land which forms part of 30 local governments in Osun State of Nigeria. The study covers all the 11 wards: Okesa, Omi-Asoro, Oke-Eso, Ilemo, Ijamo, Ijoka, Anaye, Ifofin, Irojo, Bolorunduro and Oke-Opo. Ilesha East Local Government is an urban community in which there is a Primary Health Center in each of the political wards, apart from the Wesley Hospital which is an annexe of Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospital located in the area. Also, there are registered Traditional Medical Practitioners within the local government and most of them use part of their residential houses as clinics meant for consultation and processing of the herbal products.

The study sampled 150 respondents which consists nursing mothers and elderly between the age of 18 and above who at a time had contacts with traditional medical practitioners and have been living in the community for more than six months within the study area. A purposive sampling technique was used to select the 11 political wards in Ilesha East local government area which was divided into zone A, B and C. The streets in each zone were listed and randomly chosen for the study, while the respondents were visited by the researcher at the appointed time. Textbooks, academic journals, seminars/workshops/conference papers, online materials, media clippings, and government gazette were used to gather secondary data. Data collected were analysed using descriptive statistical tools.

Literature Review

Traditional Medicine in Nigeria

African traditional medicine entails gathering and applying medicinal plants for the treatment, prevention, and promotion of people's bodily and spiritual well-being. The practitioners of this health-care strategy are known as "traditional healers/herbalists." A qualified herbalist can distinguish one herb from the rest. As a result, African traditional health care can be defined as the entire set of practices, methods, ingredients, and procedures that enable Africans to prevent disease, alleviate pain, and cure the sick. Traditional medicine is one of the most important sources of health-care delivery services at the grassroots level, where a large proportion of Nigerians live (Omoleke, 2003).

As is well known, traditional medicine encompasses all forms of folk medicine, unconventional medicine, and in fact any treatment technique passed down via a community's or ethnic group's heritage. It is a cultural gem of many civilizations around the world. In order to diagnose, prevent, and treat physical, mental, or social imbalances, traditional medicine relies primarily on practical experience and observations that are verbally or in writing passed down from generation to generation, according to the World Health Organization (1976). A few examples of traditional medicine include herbal remedies, massage, homoeopathy, mud baths, music and wax baths, reflexology, dance therapy, hydrotherapy, self-exercise therapies, radiation and vibration, osteopathy, chiropractic, aromatherapy, preventive medicine, radiant heat therapy, therapeutic fasting and dieting, spinal manipulation, and psychotherapy. It does show that a big

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country like Nigeria, with a variety of cultures and traditions, should have a plethora of traditional medicine and renowned and well-respected traditional healers to take care of the teeming people.

A traditional healer is defined by the WHO (1976) as a person who is accepted by the community in which he lives as qualified to provide healthcare using plant, animal, and mineral substances, as well as specific other methods, based on the community's social, cultural, and religious background, as well as the community's knowledge, qualities, and beliefs about physical, mental, and social wellbeing, as well as the causes of disease and disability.

Categories of Traditional Healers

Herbalists:

Herbalists are one of the specialists in traditional medicine who make use of herbs wholly or in parts of the seeds, fruits, flowers, root bark, stem bark, leaves or the stem. Also, use is the animal parts which include but not limited to chameleons, tortoises, snakes, snails, lizards etc; and inorganic materials of alum, salt, camphor as well as insects such as black ants, bees, termites etc are not left out. Herbal preparations are typically available in liquid and solid forms in the form of powder that may be mixed with (cold or hot) pap or any other beverage or applied topically to cuts created on any region of the body with a sharp knife. Other preparations include those soaked in local gin or water, either boiled or not, decanted as required before drinking (Ezekwesili-Ofili, 2019). Herbal preparations are made by pounding with native soap now known as 'medicated soap' used for bathing against skin diseases. Paste preparation in pomade and ointment are made in Shea butter or palm oil medium. Others include soup to be consumed by the patient and that which may be administered as an enema. Most importantly, the herbs are collected fresh and preserved by drying. The herbalists cure mainly with plants which have become part and parcel of every culture in Nigeria.

Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs)

A traditional birth attendant, according to the World Health Organization, is a person who attends to an expectant mother during labor and has previously obtained her baby-delivery expertise on her own or via working as a birth attendant with others. TBAs consist generally of males and females whereas, in the northern part of Nigeria, TBA is of female sex only. TBA is in a central position in Nigeria as claimed that between 60-85 per cent of childbirths delivery in particular in the rural communities is through the TBAs (Salihu et al., 2014). Not only do they diagnose pregnancy, TBA determines the position and confirms the growing of the foetus. As such, they are actively involved like a modern-day midwife in both the pre-natal and post-natal care preparations.

Highly skilled TBAs have been saddled and helpful in obstetrics and paediatrics care and simple maternal and babyhood illnesses management. As a result of experience and exposure acquired over the years in particular on the concept of human reproduction in the areas of pregnancy and childbirth as being a normal biological function, TBAs have been further trained to be helpful in orthodox medicine practices at the primary health care level. This practice has enabled a wider coverage of primary healthcare leading to improvement in maternal or child health as well as lowering of maternal and child mortality and morbidity possible.

As old and experienced women, child delivery by caesarean section is uncommon since it is unnecessary to seek surgical intervention during childbirth. In a situation of difficult labour, the TBA worked on the foetus by massaging and pressing on the abdomen. On the other hand, the womb or the vulva or both are washed with plants preparations having muscle relaxant

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properties a few days before delivery. The use of helpful words (incantations) is not left out in accordance with different social, cultural and religious beliefs. When a TBA delivers a bridged baby, for example, he says, "A kiit'orisu, a kiif'idi bi, ibiti Oluwa ni ko o gbawa niko ogba." Which literally translates as "we don't ordinarily defecate through the head," "we don't normally vomit through the anus," and "the God-ordained method of delivery should be observed" (Adesina, 2008). (Salihu et al, 2014). The TBAs' efforts have, for the most part, resulted in safe and caesarean-free deliveries.

Traditional Surgeon

The various forms of surgery recognized in traditional medical care include:

- a. The Incision of tribal marks: tribal marks impressions are made into cheeks, arms, bellies or any other parts of the body by the traditional surgeons for identification and beautifications. The open wounds are covered with charred herbal products to effect healing.
- b. Male and female circumcision (Clitoridectomy): circumcisions are performed by a traditional surgeon using special knives and scissors. Snail body fluid or plant-based pastes are typically used to treat the resultant bloodletting and wounds.
- c. Removal of whitlow: previously infected fingers and toes are cut open and treated as necessary. Ear lobe piercing is also done in youth to allow for the wearing of earrings. Tooth extraction: decaying or holey teeth are usually extracted and treated with herbal medications made with local gin to relieve pain.
- d. Amputations are performed with the aid of anaesthetic, in which a strong narcotic concoction is used to ensure that the patient is sent to sleep without feeling the amputation, which is done with a sharp knife. The first stroke was required for the excision, and the ensuing stump was packed with appropriate herbal preparations to promote healing within four to five weeks.
- e. Uvulectomy (cutting of the uvula): Uvulectomy (cutting of the uvula) is thought to protect the patient from numerous pharyngeal infections and respiratory problems. Northern Nigerian traditional surgeons are skilled at cutting off the upper end of the throat flap known as the epiglottis for the treatment of the ailments related with it. This procedure is carried out by a trained conventional surgeon who has minimal knowledge of anatomy and does not use x-rays.
- f. Orthopaedic Surgery is the art and science of matching fractures and ensuring that the related injuries heal properly. Traditional bonesetters have gained experience in the practice of setting broken bones traditionally and using their talent to guarantee that the bones are properly connected and healed.

Fractures may be classified as simple, compound or complicated broken bones. Fractures arising from motor accidents or a fall from a height may be classified according to the resulting intensity; the wounds are cleaned and the bones are properly united to prevent any deformity. Wound bleeding is stopped on the application of herbal extracts such as cassava or basil leaf extracts or the snail's fluid in which banana leaves are used as lint. Immobilization of the fracture is ensured by the use of wooden splints made from bamboo plants while fresh or dry banana stem fibre will serve as a bandage. Traction to fracture legs takes different methods which may involve subjecting the patient to radiant heat treatment or hot pepper application to reduce inflammation and swelling. The occurrence of post-treatment limb's deformities is very rare. The choice of a chicken whose leg will be shattered and re-set is one of the unique bone-

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procedures. setter's At the same time, the chicken fractures are treated in the same way as the patient's fractures. This is done to determine how long the patient's fracture will mend and when the wrapped splints and clay caste should be removed. Bone setters can stop gangrenous limbs from deteriorating further and leading to amputation. Patients have to be transferred from the government hospital to the bone setter's clinics for treatment.

Traditional Medicinal Ingredient Dealers:

Females are more likely to be involved in the purchase and sale of herbs, animals, insects, and minerals utilized in herbal remedies. Traditional healers are women who prepare herbal combinations or decoctions for the treatment or cure of fever or other disease conditions in children and women.

Traditional Psychiatrists:

Traditional psychiatrists are primarily concerned with the care and treatment of those who suffer from mental illnesses or are insane. It is common practice to tie or shackle lunatics to keep them from acting violently. Individuals who are believed to be under the influence of a demon are caned until they submit and given a potent herbal sedative to calm them down. The herbal concoction may contain extracts of African herbs. For those with mental problems, rehabilitation and treatment take longer.

Practitioners of Therapeutic Occultism:

Among these practitioners are diviners or fortune tellers, who may be seers, Alfas, or priests and who employ paranormal or enigmatic energies, incantations, and prescribed rituals related to the community's religious devotion, as well as adopt all kind of puzzling things to heal various illnesses. Practitioners are regularly called upon to diagnose, elucidate the cause of, and treat diseases. They are frequently held in great regard in the community because of their capacity to cope with the invisible, the supernatural. They are said to have extrasensory perception and be able to see things that conventional people cannot. The practitioners' receive telepathic signals, contact oracles, spirit guides, and other supernatural beings, and they succeed when other traditional healers and doctors fail. Creating prayers, reciting and singing incantations, making invocations, and crafting fetish material to appease unknown gods are among their activities. These practitioners are expected to be able to identify and treat ailments caused by supernatural forces with ease.

This results from the idea that some medicinal ingredients, like unusually large trees thought to house spirits, astronomic herbs, graveyard plants like the physic nut, protective plants like the wild colocynth or Sodom apple, or even reproductive herbs like the sausage tree or the tree of life itself, have occultic powers and can be used by these practitioners effectively for the benefit of all. Magic stones, which are frequently tossed to the ground, are among the instructions used by these practitioners. Sounds created in this manner are read and understood. Some people respond to messages by throwing them into a pool or a glass of water. Others rely on cowries, coins, kola nut seeds, divining rods, keys, or sticks, among other things. Divination has matured, and its varied roles are now tied to religion, creation stories, cosmology, and other subjects. Its usage as a means of communication and for stochastic processes sets it apart from most conventional healers.

Growth in Traditional Medicine in Nigeria

Traditional medicine has arisen in Nigeria's many communities in response to the people's health requirements. As a result, many communities have evolved a variety of traditional ways to address their health issues utilizing locally accessible resources. Traditional medicine in Nigeria is as old as the hills, according to Tella (1986). Traditional medicine in Nigeria has

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given rise to many types of healers, as well as various therapeutic methods, strategies, and medications or treatments. Orthodox medicine was introduced by the British colonial masters, and today two systems of medicine coexist in the country; both have the primary goal of curing, managing, or preventing diseases and maintaining good health.

It is crucial to stress the significance of traditional medicine to the majority of Nigerians. Most Nigerians, especially those who live in rural regions, lack access to orthodox medicine, and it's estimated that about 75% of people still choose to seek treatment from traditional healers for their medical problems. The escalating expense of imported medications and other medical supplies has turned into a significant problem where such access is possible. The inexplicable aspects of traditional medicine, in particular, are highly valued by many rural populations, who believe that it is the wisdom of their ancestors that acknowledges their socio-cultural and religious origins, which orthodox medicine seems to overlook. More people are using traditional medicine globally, according to recent surveys. In the area of traditional medicine, China had a medical doctor to population ratio of 1:20,000, compared to a traditional practitioner to population ratio of 1:2000, whereas Swaziland had a medical doctor to population ratio of 1:10,000 and a traditional practitioner to population ratio of 1:100.

There is ample evidence that the use of herbs as medicine by many traditional healers for illness issues gives significant benefits for treating a variety of chronic disorders, including the following:

- Cardiovascular disease (hypertension, stroke, etc.) for which Negro coffee and Africa Rauwolfia vomitoria are used to treat hypertension and other nervous diseases, according to information from Nigerian folkloric medicine.
- Convulsions, sleeplessness, and other nervous system issues, which the parrot's beak and African Rauwolfia can help with.
- gastrointestinal system (diarrhoea, dysentery, etc.): basil, Ocimum gratissimum, and Carica papaya seeds are used to treat diarrheal illnesses and intestinal parasites, respectively.
- The leaves of the common rose periwinkle or mormodica are useful in the endocrine system (diabetes, for example).
- The lemongrass is beneficial to the respiratory system (asthma, cough, etc.).
- genitor urinary system - gonorrhoea, haematuria, etc., for which bush banana and Citrus paradise seeds have been used to treat refractory urinary tract infections
- Skin conditions such as wounds, dermatomycosis, and dermatomycosis, for which the craw-craw plant, Aloe vera, and pure honey have shown to be particularly useful in the treatment of skin illnesses and chronic wounds.
- Ear, nose, and throat pain, sinusitis, and other conditions for which the resurrection plant is commonly prescribed; and

Parasitic Infectious: caused by microorganisms, bacteria, fungus, viruses, insects, and other organisms, for which garlic, clove, and African mahogany have been proven to be effective (Oreagba, 2011).

Herbs alone or in conjunction with animal parts and minerals have been used to cure a wide range of maladies and complaints, including hernia, snake bite, arthritis, gout, and many others. In the modern era, plant medicines include vincristine and vinblastine, which are isolated from the Rose periwinkle and are used to treat childhood leukemia and Hodgkin's disease, reserpine, which is extracted from the African or Indian Rauwolfia and is used in tranquilizers, diosgenin, which is extracted from the yam and is used in the treatment of rheumatism and the production

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of oral contraceptives, and Shea butter. To aid with birthing, the TBAs have used plant extracts and medications with muscle relaxant properties. These data demonstrate the continued use of therapeutic herbs in Nigerian traditional medicine (Adesina, 1995; Gbile, 1987).

According to Leslie (1969), cited in Bonsi (1982), symbolic traditionalism is the process of reinterpreting the past in light of the present. By adding fresh elements to long-standing traditions, this approach modifies great traditions. Traditional medical practice anticipates that treatment will vary depending on the particulars of each illness. Nowadays, the majority of traditional healers adopt the systematic and controlled methodology of chemical and biological sciences, which underpins modern medicine. These new types of healers who employ contemporary methods are posing a threat to the practice of conventional medicine. They finish up exploring the practices by locating and reclaiming historical wisdom. As a result, tradition and modernity are no longer at opposition and are instead united.

Traditional medicine in Nigeria has advanced significantly. Most individuals trust and rely on professionals to relieve their physical and mental discomfort as well as to provide them with emotional and spiritual support. Their success is influenced by their capacity to comprehend the political, social, cultural, and personal circumstances of people, families, and communities (Roan, 1999). Because traditional medicine is more widely available, more affordable, and more holistic than the western alternative, it is essential to many people. Due to the high degree of patronage, traditional medicine practitioners have been able to overcome several other issues by modernizing in the following areas:

Diagnosis/Aetiology:

In a typical traditional context, the traditional healer combines the functions of a modern doctor, pharmacists, and nurses. The following heads are frequently followed in the treatment of an ailment or disease: (Tella, 1986).

Based on the disease's symptomatology, common disorders or difficulties are easily detected and successfully treated. If the ailment persists, the diviner/occultist is consulted. The diviner may consult a number of spirits, including his oracle, prescribe suitable rites, and make sacrifices in order to ascertain the true cause of the ailment. Because she thinks that magic, ghosts, taboo breaches, spirit incursion, and acts of God can all result in disease, she also thinks that these things can also result in disease. Public opinion and rumors have also been discovered to aid the diviner in determining the etiology of a sickness. Diagnosis can also be accomplished through visual examination of the eyes, skin, urine, feces, etc., taste, such as testing the diabetic's urine for sugar, using ants to detect sugar in the diabetic's urine, palpation, such as using palms and fingers to detect sugar in the diabetic's urine, or analyzing the patient's dreams. As with bone fractures and other traumatic injuries, proper diagnosis is required in the treatment of psychosomatic and psychiatric illnesses. In general, most traditional treatments rely on accurate diagnosis.

Symptom:

As much as possible, the patient relates his or her symptoms. These are also kept in mind by the healer. Behavioral changes; a fever or unusually high body temperature; a jaundiced state with yellow eyes, urine, palms, and fingers that may indicate liver issues; seizures, such as convulsions, diarrhoea from poisoning, frequent stools and vomiting, bleeding from the nose, mouth, gums, teeth, or private parts, anus, blood in the urine, coughing, and vomiting are some of the other symptoms that might occur. A skilled herbalist can easily distinguish between regular and intermittent pains, as well as severe and dull symptoms, and link them to specific

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ailments. Stethoscopes and other basic instruments are promoted for usage by modern healers to determine indications, which are normally noticed by skilled healers.

Traditional Medicine Treatment

As was previously said, a herbalist uses medicines derived from plants, animals, and minerals to treat patients. He can also employ any of the therapeutic modalities that were previously discussed, including therapeutic massage, therapeutic occultism, and therapeutic fasting and dieting.

Government Policy on Traditional Medicine

The National Health Policy in Nigeria recognizes the existence of traditional medicine practitioners and states the need for them to be trained to improve their skills. In order to train herbalists on proper administration and practices of herbal medicine, the Federal Government established and funded the Federal College of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Lagos, as well as the Traditional Medicine Department within the Federal Ministry of Health. Herbalists are urged to register and submit their proven and efficacious standardized herbal products for authentication and approval to the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control.

However, some State Governments (Osun, Oyo, Edo, Ogun, Delta, Lagos and Ondo), through legislation established Traditional Medicine Boards in their state that will regulate, develop and control the practice of traditional medicine. They've also set up botanical gardens in which therapeutic plants can be grown (Erinosho, 1998). The Lagos State Government established a College of Traditional Medicine Practitioners meant to train traditional medicine practitioners who will command both local and international respect in this field. The Oyo State Government recently established a traditional clinic at the Adeoyo General Hospital in Ibadan, and plans to establish a traditional hospital for the use of traditional healers in the management of major diseases (hypertension, diabetes, sickle-cell disease, cancer, and so on) that defy orthodox treatments, in order to explore all avenues to ensure the good health of her citizens (Saturday Tribune Jan14, 2009, p7). The State Governments have also supported trado-medicine fairs and exhibitions which provide enlightenment to the public on the possible curatives obtainable from traditional medicine which orthodox medicine has not been able to cure.

Presentation of Result

Respondents' view about Traditional Medicine

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents on their view about traditional medicine. It reveals 84.6% either agreed or strongly agreed that traditional medicine is cheaper, affordable, potent and accessible than orthodox medicine; while 14.0% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this stand. On availability and accessibility, the majority (80%) claimed that traditional medicine is generally available and more accessible than orthodox medicine. Indeed, 69% of the respondents adjudged that traditional medicine is safer than modern drugs while 30.6% opposed the claim. Likewise, the majority (88%) attested that traditional medicine is more potent and efficacious than modern drugs. Also, the table shows clearly that religion does not affect the usage of traditional medicine. Only the minority (32.7%) of Christians and (20.0%) of Muslims either disagreed or strongly disagreed about the using of traditional medicine. 88.6% of the respondents agree that traditional medicine is the only health service that tackles mental and spiritual infirmities effectively. However, the respondents (76%) do not believe in the assertion that herbal medicine can cause both the liver and kidney damage after usage. Similarly, 70.7% of respondents objected to the claim that herbal medicine might cause problems or complications in pregnancy. Rather, 86.6% either agreed or strongly agreed that

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herbal medicine does promote the health of the expectant mother. As such 86% recommended that herbal medicine should be used by all women during pregnancy. Also, 63.3% of respondents opined that dosage might still constitute a major challenge but the majority (84%) subscribed that herbal medicine is more effective and act faster in curing ailments than modern drugs. Also, 46.7% either agreed or strongly agreed that herbal products are better branded and packaged as against 46.6% with a differing opinion. However, 46.7% claimed that traditional medical practitioners now request for medical test results before medication which was opposed by 50% respondents. Except for few, 82% of the respondents strongly agreed that traditional medicine incorporates mystical or diabolic power to cure some ailments. The majority (84.6%) respondents also agreed strongly that traditional medicine should be encouraged by the government at all levels. Lastly, the majority subscribed to the establishment of more agencies to strengthen the practitioners and enlighten the people on the importance of traditional medicine.

Table 1. Respondents' View about Traditional Medicine

1	Traditional medicine is cheaper and affordable than orthodox medicine	Frequency	Percentage
	Strongly agreed	102	68.0
	Agreed	25	16.6
	Indifference	2	1.3
	Disagreed	16	10.6
	Strongly disagreed	5	3.3
	Total	150	100.0
2	Traditional medicine is readily available and accessible than modern drugs		
	Strongly agreed	85	56.7
	Agreed	35	23.3
	Indifference	5	3.3
	Disagreed	10	6.7
	Strongly disagreed	15	10.0
	Total	150	100.0
3	Tm. is safer than modern drugs		
	Strongly agreed	69	46.0
	Agreed	35	23.3
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	28	18.6
	Strongly disagreed	18	12.0
	Total	150	100.0
4	Tm. has more efficacy/potency than modern drugs		
	Strongly agreed	78	52.0
	Agreed	54	36.0
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	5	3.3
	Strongly disagreed	13	8.7
	Total	150	100.0
5	Tm. Helps in tackling physical, mental and spiritual infirmities better than modern drugs		
	Strongly agreed	125	83.3
	Agreed	8	5.3
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	7	4.7
	Strongly disagreed	10	6.7

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	Total	150	100.0
6	Tm is one of the causes of liver and kidney damage	Frequency	Percentage
	Strongly agreed	13	8.7
	Agreed	15	10.0
	Indifference	8	5.3
	Disagreed	18	12.0
	Strongly disagreed	96	64.0
	Total	150	100.0
7	Herbal medicine may cause problems or complications in pregnancy		
	Strongly agreed	22	14.6
	Agreed	10	6.7
	Indifference	12	8.0
	Disagreed	30	20.0
	Strongly disagreed	76	50.7
	Total	150	100.0
8	Herbal medicine can help promote health during pregnancy		
	Strongly agreed	96	64.0
	Agreed	34	22.6
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	20	13.3
	Strongly disagreed	-	-
	Total	150	100.0
9	Tm should be used by all women during pregnancy		
	Strongly agreed	94	62.7
	Agreed	35	23.3
	Indifference		
	Disagreed	8	5.3
	Strongly disagreed	13	8.7
	Total	150	100.0
10	Dosage is a major problem in the use of tm		
	Strongly agreed	70	46.6
	Agreed	25	16.7
	Indifference	1	0.7
	Disagreed	46	30.7
	Strongly agreed	8	5.3
	Total	150	100.0
11	The herbal products are in better branding and packaging in the form of tabletting, encapsulating, solution and powdery	Frequency	Percentage
	Strongly agreed	55	36.7
	Agreed	15	10.0
	Indifferent	10	6.6
	Disagreed	18	12.0
	Strongly disagreed	52	34.7
	Total	150	100.0
12	Traditional medical practitioners now request for medical test (blood test, x-ray, etc.) result before medication		
	Strongly agreed	60	40.0
	Agreed	10	6.7
	Indifference	5	3.3
	Disagreed	20	13.3

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	Strongly disagreed	55	36.7
	Total	150	100.0
13	Tm. Is faster in the cure of ailment than modern drugs	Frequency	Percentage
	Strongly agreed	115	76.7
	Agreed	11	7.3
	Indifference	6	4.0
	Disagreed	3	2.0
	Strongly disagreed	15	10.0
	Total	150	100.0
14	Tm. Incorporates mystical or diabolical power in its practice		
	Strongly agreed	116	77.3
	Agreed	7	4.7
	Indifference		
	Disagreed	8	5.3
	Strongly disagreed	19	12.7
	Total	150	100.0
15	Christianity supports the use of tm.		
	Strongly agreed	63	42.0
	Agreed	38	25.3
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	19	12.7
	Strongly disagreed	30	20.0
	Total	150	100.0
16	Islam supports the use of tm		
	Strongly agreed	78	52.0
	Agreed	42	28.0
	Indifference	-	-
	Disagreed	18	12.0
	Strongly disagreed	12	8.0
	Total	150	100.0
17	Derived satisfied with the effects and outcome of using herbal medicines at all times.		
	Strongly agreed	74	49.3
	Agreed	27	18.0
	Indifference	2	1.3
	Disagreed	28	18.7
	Strongly disagreed	19	12.7
	Total	150	100.0
18	The government should encourage the usage of tm by all Nigerians		
	Strongly agreed	93	62.0
	Agreed	34	22.6
	Indifference	1	0.7
	Disagreed	16	10.7
	Strongly disagreed	6	4.0
	Total	150	100.0
19	More agencies should be established to strengthen the practitioners and enlighten the people on the importance of tm.		
	Strongly agreed	96	64.0
	Agreed	30	20.0
	Indifference	-	-

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Disagreed	21	14.0
Strongly disagreed	3	2.0
Total	150	100.0

Field Survey, 2021

Discussion of Findings

Ilesa East Local Government is an urban community in which there is a Primary Health Center in each of the wards apart from Wesley Hospital which is an annexe of Obafemi Awolowo Teaching Hospital that is located in the area. This implies that the two health care systems orthodox medicine and traditional medicine are readily available in the locality. The relative cheaper cost of herbal products was responsible for the patronage by 84.6% of the inhabitants, as earlier put forward by Sofowora (1993) and Palmer (2005). The preference for the herbal product is hinged on the safety (69.3%) in which side effects are very rare and efficacy/potency (88.0%) than the modern drugs in which almost all drugs have one side effect or the other which has been further proven by NAFDAC registration of some of the herbal products. But large numbers of the respondents (88.0%) attested to the fact that traditional medicine is far better in tackling physical, mental and spiritual infirmities than modern medicine.

However, 76% and 70.7% of the respondents objected to the claims that traditional medicine is responsible for the cases of the damages to the body organs and pregnancy complications respectively. This is in contrast to Kansu-Foguem (2014) position that the majority of the herbal plants contain toxic constituents that harm the major organs. According to the split opinion, 46.7% attested those herbal products are now better branded and packaged in form of tablet, capsule, powdery and solution forms which ameliorate the problem of accurate dosage as put forward by 63.3% inhabitants, in contrast to Ekeanyanwu (2011) and Wilcox's (2004) claim that herbal medicine preparation procedure, dosage, standardization and safety may be problematic. Interestingly, traditional medical practitioners now request for medical test results before medication as strongly agreed by 46.7% respondents in which 84.0% believed that traditional medicine cures ailments faster than modern drugs. Also, the respondents (82.0%) affirmed that traditional medicine incorporates mystical or diabolical power in its practice. This authenticates Westerlund (2006) claim of warding-off evil spirit and provides the cure. The two religions, Islam (80.0%) and Christianity (67.3%) are in support of the use of herbal products. The respondents (67.3%) derived satisfaction with the effects and outcome of using herbal medicines every time and urged the government (84.6%) to encourage the use of traditional medicine by all Nigerians as well as strengthening the practitioners (84.0%) by the establishment of more agencies.

Conclusions

The preference for the herbal product is based on the safety in which side effects are very rare and efficacy/potency proven by NAFDAC registration of some of the herbal products. The on the shelf herbal products are now better branded and packaged in form of tablet, capsule, powdery and solution forms which ameliorate the problem of herbal medicine preparation procedure, accurate dosage, standardization and safety. Interestingly, traditional medical practitioners now request for medical test results before medication. The study concluded that as against the old practice traditional medicine practitioner now embraces modern science which has positively improved the traditional medicine practice on the social welfare status of Ilesa East local government inhabitants.

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