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Research Article

Assessing the use of Traditional Medecine in Oral Health Care

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ABSTRACT

This research is carried out on the use of traditional medicine in oral healthcare in the MBOH NSO village of BUI D IVISION in the North West region and the BALEVENG village of Cameroon as from the 23 December to the 28 of December 2010. This study aims at assessing the use of traditional medicine in oral healthcare with the aim of knowing those plants used by traditional healers in treating oral health problems ;knowing the various ailments treated ,their methods or forms preparation, methods of administration ,parts used and cost of treatment with their scientific and common names of the plants mentioned.

The research team used the cross sectional design and data collected through structured interview by the use of questionnaire. The sample size was to get 20 medicinal plants from the two study areas ,the team hypothesizes that traditional healers offer relatively cheap treatment; that they treat from signs and symptoms without treating the source with the treatment duration dosage depending on patients complain, But surprisingly ,the team discovered that some of these treatments were very cheap as payments could be done with salt ,or palm oil while on the other hand, some treatments were very expensive as a sum of 1000frs CFA plus a fowl and palm wine were required. Furthermore, the team realised 25 plants and also that the healers had no specific dosage and duration of treatment for each ailment treated and the source was never their concerned.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter data was presented using simple data presentation tools such as tables and charts. The data collected were qualitatively analysed.

The researchers from the unset has aspired to collect twenty medicinal plants used by traditional healers in oral health care management but surprisingly the researchers after interviewing 8 traditional healers through questionnaires realised 25 plants since the healers readily participated .

The data collected were guided with questions on demography, ailments treated ,plants and their parts used, types of formulations , and methods of administraions.The photographs of each plants were taken together with their scientific names after consulting the traditional healers and botanist.the photographs are placed in the appendix with each plant identified by a scientific names.

Table 1 showing list of s used by traditional healers.

common names	***scientific names***	**parts used**	**forms of preparation**	**diseases treated**	**methods of administration**
pear tree	*pearsia americana*	Seed/bark	Mouth rinse solution	Bolous lesion, toothache	gargling/ paste for brushing
colanut tree	*cola nitida*	Bark/fruit	Mouth rinse solution	Tooth ache / mouth thrush	Gargling/ paste applied by rubbing on sore areas
mango tree	*Mandifera indica*	Bark/roots	Mouth rinse solution	Tooth ache / inflammation	Gargling
garden egg plant	*Solanum americanum*	leaves/ fruits	Mouth rinse solution	Dry mouth	Gargling/rubbing
egg plant	*Solanum torvum*	leaves/ roots	Mouth rinse solution	Dry mouth/inflammation	Gargling/drinking
tobacco plant	*Nicotina tobacum*	leaves	paste	toothache	direct placement into cavity
Eucalyptus tree	*Eucalyptus saligna*	leaves	paste	toothache/halitosis	Gargling
Bird eye view	*Aspilia africana*	whole	paste	Dry mouth/toothache	Brushing
	Argiratum conizoides	whole	powder	toothache	Brushing
garlic	*Allium sativum*	roots	paste	gingivitis/toothache	Brushing
	Coleus blumel	leaves	paste	sore mouth/toothache	Brushing
	Sida rhombofrica	whole	chewing stick/mouth rinse	toothache	Gargling/ brushing
hibiscus	*Hibiscus noldea*	leaves	paste/mouth rinse	toothache	Gargling /rubbing
	Camelina bengalensis	whole	drinkable solution	dry mouth	drinking
maize	*Zea mais*	whole	powder	bolous lesion	Brushing
	Chenopodium ambrosiodes	whole	paste	toothache	placing on painful tooth
	Piper umbellatum	leaves	paste	dry mouth/toothache	holding the paste in the mouth
banana	*Musa carvendishii*	juice	solution	mouth thrush/ sore throat	drinking/ rubbing
aloe vera	*Aloe aloe*	gel	gel	gingivitis	rubbing
"alakata pepper plant"	*Aframomo danieli*	Seeds	paste	sore mouth	rubbing
king herb	*Dichroceplala*	whole	paste	migraine	massaging

	intergrifolia				
castor bean	*Risinus cammunis*	leaves	solution	toothache	gargling
"country iodine"	*Arnica montana*	leaves	solution	toothache/fresh wound from extraction	rubbing
"masung"		seeds	paste	toothache	directing the smoke from melted paste into the mouth
pawpaw	*Carica papaya*	leaves	Mouth rinse solution	toothache	gargling

Table 2: Sex of traditional healers

Sex	frequency	percentage	cummulative percentage
females	4	50.0	50.0
Males	4	50.0	100
Total	8	100	100

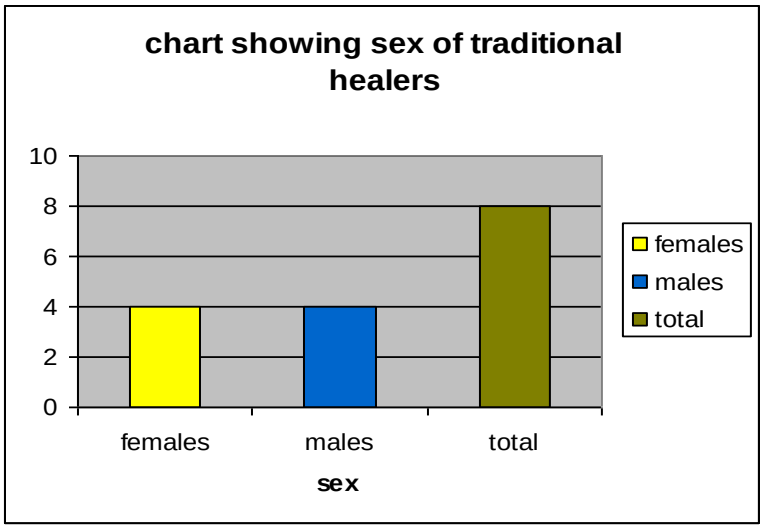

Fig 1

Table 3: Diseases treated

Diseases	Frequency	Percentage
toothache	7	87.5
dry mouth	2	25
gingivitis	1	12.5
migraine	1	12.5
extraction wound	1	12.5
bolous lesion	2	25
sore tongue	3	37.5
sore throat	1	12.5
mouth thrush	2	25

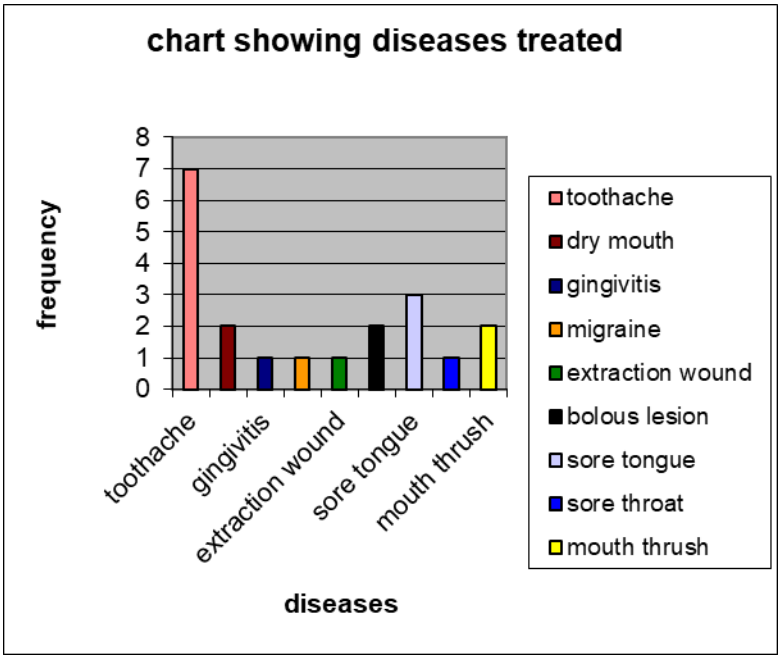

Fig 2

Table 4: Formulation and methods of administration

formulation and method of administration	Frequency	percentage
mouthwash/gargling	4	50
paste/direct application	8	100
powder/direct application	3	37.5
stem chewing	1	12.5

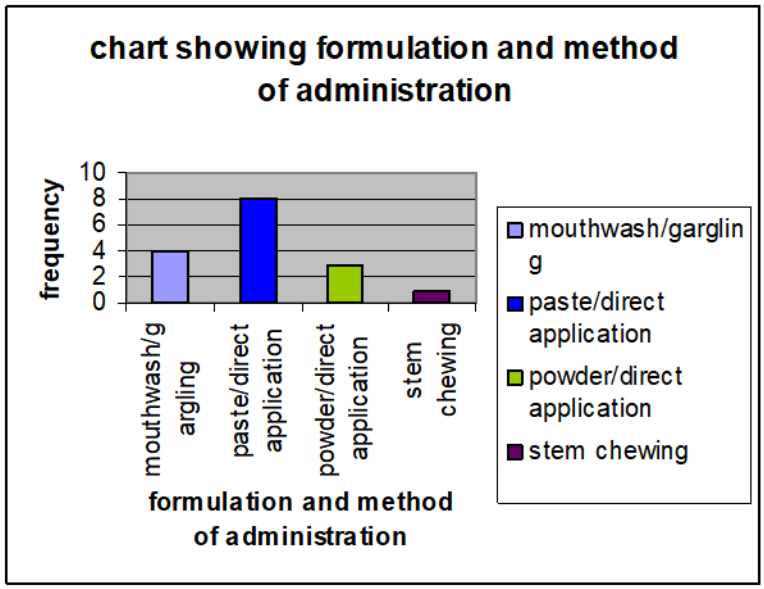

Fig 3

Table 5: Cost of treatment

Cost	**frequency**	**percentage**
two fowls	1	12.5
palm oil and salt	1	12.5
cash and fowl	3	37.5
cash, salt and oil	1	12.5
cash or fowl	2	25

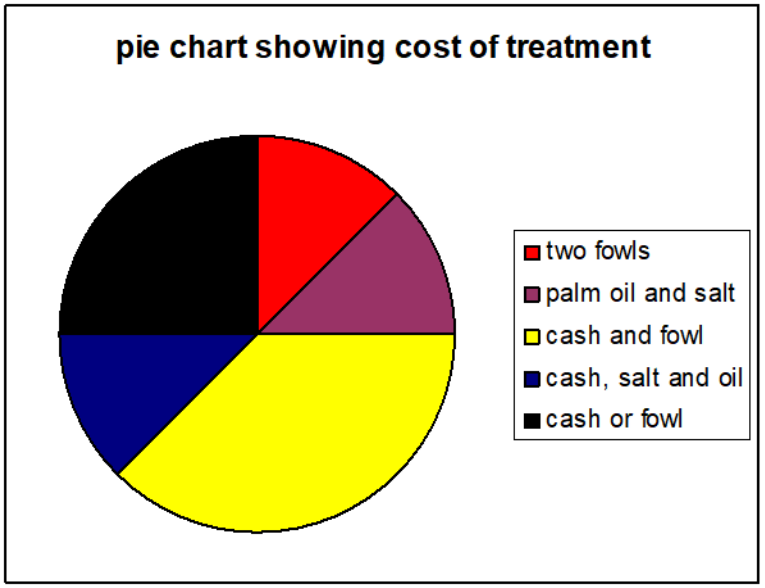

Fig 4

Table 6 : Side effects

Side Effects	Frequency	Percentage	Cummulative Percentage
None	8	100	100
Total	8	100	100

Table 7: Duration of treatment

Duration Of Treatment	Frequency	Percentage	Cummulative Percentage
indefinite	8	100	100
Total	8	100	100

Discussion

From the main objective ,the researchers set out ,to assess the use of traditional medicine in oral healthcare in the MBOH-NSO village of Bui-Division in the North West region and the BALEVENG village of Dschang in the Western region of Cameroon.

The current findings from the studies proved that the traditional healers of the Baleveng and Mboh-nso villages treat a good number of disease (dental caries, dry mouth, bullous lesions ,sore mouth, gingivitis, migrane).

Specifically ,the researchers set out to identify 20 medicinal plants ,but surprisingly,25plants were identified, proving that inhabitants of the two villages depend more on traditional medicine not only for oral health care, but also for other health related problems as seen from the literature review as stated by Abebe D (2001).Which says that 80%of Asian and African countries ,and the developed countries depend on traditional medicine.

Moreover, the researchers set out to assess the methods of preparation and to an extend the research team was interested in knowing their methods of preservation after preparation .The most interesting finding was that the plants were mostly prepared in the paste form, some of which were used in the treatment of dental caries by removing worms responsible for the pain by direct application. Other forms were ;powder ,gel ,and as toothbrush .It was also discovered that due to availability of the plants, once plants were prepared and used, especially the paste brush and gel, they were discarded immediately while the powders and solutions could be used for a longer period for as long as one week.

Furthermore, the team set out to determine the ailments treated ,the team realised that toothache was the most treated ailment without any extractions done

Another objective was to find out their cost of treatment , the most interesting result was that ,some ailments were treated very cheaply ,like in the treatment of sore mouth where the patient could pay with salt, and palm oil while others were very expensive unlike dental caries where it is belief that worms responsible for the pain are removed, the reason for high cost of two fowls ,cash, and palm wine.

Before going out to the field, the researchers hypothesized that traditional healers render relatively cheap treatment the reason why rural dwellers depend more on them .But surprisingly ,it was discovered that a majority of their treatments were expensive. Also the team ,discovered that ,the healer hardly attack the sources of infections. Nevertheless, this was proven to be true because no oral hygiene instructions were given after treatment .Since the healers had no knowledge of the standard anatomy of the oral cavity, they are bound to treat out of guest work.

As concerning the part used , the healers made good use of leaves and seeds (table.1).The Team realised that all the plants had no side effects reason being that most of these plants were also used to treat other health related problems. The treatments were realised to have no specific duration. An equal number of sexes of healers were sought with giving a total of eight healers.

The scientific and common names of the medicinal plants used by traditional healers were brought out unfortunately ,the list for the common names was not exhausted .The photograph of each plant was to be snapped ,each of the photographs have been placed in the appendix .Though ,the qualities of the pictures were not the best .

Conclusion

The study has shown that a majority of the inhabitants of the mboh-nso village and the Baleveng village depend so much on the use of traditional medicine in oral health care and other health related problems .Hence it could be concluded that ,the absence of attacking the source ,the absence of oral hygiene instruction and lack of knowledge in the anatomy and physiology of the oral cavity could lead to infections advancing to complications which will be attributed to witches and wizard attacks.

Recommendation

1. The researchers encourage the inhabitants of these two villages to improve on their oral hygiene in order to limit the rate of oral health problems.
2. The research team recommends that further research be done on same topic by others in other parts and regions of the country so that result be can generalised.
3. Also the team recommends that this research should be sponsored further to determine the active ingredients of various plants realised.

References

1. Dawit Abebe 2001. The role of medicine plants in Healthcare coverage of sustainable use of medicinal plants in Ethiopia. Proceedings of National Workshop on Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of medicinal plants in Ethiopia. pp. 6-21.

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