
Cultural Trade: Promoting Entrepreneurial Women Cultural Herbs Traders in Nigeria

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Abstract: Cultural Trade/Industry is a new concept for the activities of traditional industries including herbal medicinal dealers and largely remains a small family business dominated by women. However, despite their pivotal roles in Nigeria Health Care Delivery System, they continue to suffer neglect from government. This paper attempts to investigate the activities of this cultural trade with a view to foreground its contribution to the society. Multistage sampling procedures were used in the study. 72 Traders were randomly selected in 6 Local Government Development Areas of Ondo state, Nigeria. In addition, 504 clients were interviewed but 21 respondents, not well captured were rejected, remaining 483 clients. The questionnaires were analyzed using chi square analysis. Descriptive statistical techniques (frequency and percentages) were used to summarize the data collected. Secondary data were extracted from books, journals and other relevant publications. The study revealed that Cultural Herb Trade is predominantly dominated by women. The Traders have low entrepreneurship orientation, displaying their wares under sheds in the public markets; earning less than US\$1000 as profit yearly. They claimed inability to access loan from support institutions due to their poor financial literacy and abandonment. The findings showed that socio-economic attributes of Cultural Herbs Traders had significant effect on their performance ($\chi^2 = 6.162877$, $df = 2$, $pr = 0.029$). The findings also showed significant relationship between the treatment modalities of Cultural Herb Traders and their performance (Person $\chi^2 = 50.18154$ $Pr = 0.000$). Moreover, there existed significant relationship between the networking strategies of Cultural Herb Traders and performance ($\chi^2=44.63424$, $df = 2$, $pr=0.0009$). It was found that Cultural Herb Traders provided both preventive and curative health care services with significant association between performance and patronage by clients ($\chi^2=254.8922$, $df = 6$, $pr=0.000$), especially in the areas of malaria, infertility and small pox diseases to mention a few. 94% of the Clients indicated their continuous support to patronize the Traders because their medicines were efficacious. 89% of the clients/customers/buyers signified their intention to increase their patronage because of the good performance of their treatment. The study concluded that in spite of the prominence of these cultural herb traders, there is inadequate financial and research assistance from academia and corrupt government. Thus, Local Government may want to increase their research budgets to embrace modernization of cultural herbs trade sector.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship-Orientation, Corruption, Traditional, Health-Care, Government, Family-Business, Medicinal

1. Introduction

“Cultural” Industry/Trade is a new concept that attempts to promote the activities of traditional industries which in literature is believed to help in mutual integration of economy, culture, science, and technology, and has high integration, strong permeability and radiation force; providing good conditions for the development of emerging

industries and related modern industries. The concepts of “Cultural” or/and ‘Creative’ Industries are sometimes almost interchangeable. They can drive the development of related industries, promote regional economic development, and have a positive effect in enhancing the cultural quality of the people [1]. Many of them in developing nations might suffer negligence if not put into limelight and assisted. Some of the cultural industries have been modernised in developed

countries like China while many of them, including herbal medicinal dealers still suffer negligence in developing countries [2-4]. The world's cultural industries have the potentials to continue to create a value reaching hundreds of billions of dollars every day at a rate of over 5% [1].

In terms of the nature of the economic process, cultural industry is defined as a series of activities of the production, reproduction, storage and distribution of cultural products and services in accordance with industrial standards [5]. According to this definition, cultural industries include tangible or intangible artistic and innovative products including herbal medicines. Such industries have the potential to create wealth and by empowerment, increase revenue through the use of cultural assets and the development of traditional, modern or knowledge-based products and services.

It is believed that the promotion of herb trade through empowerment can modernise the cultural sector. The concept of empowerment in Nigeria has been variously used in government policy documents to explain government intervention strategy to improve businesses. Different definitions have been used to conceptualize empowerment. Empowerment is defined as “a multidimensional and interlinked process of change in power relations” [6]. Women empowerment is defined as “the process of increasing the capacity of women to make choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes” [7]. Women empowerment has also been classified into five components for better understanding: their “right to make choices”; “right to have access to resources”; “right to control their own lives”; “sense of self-worth” and “the ability to create a social and economic order” [5]. Women empowerment is further defined as women ability to make strategic life choices including the processes by which women take control and ownership of their choices. Core elements of empowerment have been defined as the ability to define one's goals and act upon them, awareness of gender power structures, self-esteem and self-confidence. Empowerment can take place at a hierarchy of different levels – individual, household, community and societal – and is facilitated by providing encouraging factors (e.g. exposure to new activities, which can build capacities) and removing inhibiting factors (e.g. lack of resources and skills). In this connection, women entrepreneurship can only play an effective role in promoting women empowerment through financial assistance of any means [8]. Empowerment is therefore a process of enhancing an individual's capacity to make choices and then transforming those choices into the sought after outcome [9]. Empowerment is defined as increasing the poor people's freedom of choice and action to shape their own lives [10]. Women's empowerment has been verified to “cause Trade/Business development” [11-12].

The concepts of “Trade” “Business” and “Industry” are often used interchangeably in literature. In Chinese, the terms industry, business, trade and industries mean almost the same, but the corresponding word in English is usually just industry. These entities are usually run by both non-

entrepreneurial managers and entrepreneurial managers through a process termed entrepreneurship.

The concepts of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial businesses means same thing and can be used interchangeably. Both are defined as the resources and processes which individuals utilize through opportunities in the market by the creation of new products or firms [13-16]. Women are however at a disadvantage in managing businesses. The creation of systematic knowledge about women's entrepreneurship is therefore needed [17]. Women entrepreneurs are therefore “the way forward” in curbing high unemployment rate in developing nations [18].

The products and services of women cultural herbs traders (WCHT) otherwise referred to in literature as either “Traditional Women Herb Sellers” (TWHSSs) or “Traditional Medicinal Ingredient Dealers” (TMIDs) are innovative [19-22]. However, despite their pivotal roles in Nigeria health care delivery system, women cultural herbs traders continue to suffer neglect from public assistance institutions. This paper attempts to investigate the activities of women cultural herbs traders (WCHT) with a view to foreground their usefulness to the community.

1.1. Objectives

The study focuses on the need for the empowerment of the entrepreneurial women in cultural herb business in Ondo state of the Southwestern Nigeria as a means of accelerating economic growth by examining the socio-economic characteristics, treatment modalities, and mode of dispensing products, networking and marketing strategies of medicinal plants, storage, hygiene and other health care delivery services among the women herb sellers. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

- i. examine the socio-economic attributes of Traders in cultural herb business in Ondo State, Southwestern Nigeria;
- ii. investigate the modalities, mode of dispensing their products and other health care delivery services in herbs trade in Ondo state of Southwestern Nigeria;
- iii. investigate the networking strategies for the marketing and storage in Ondo state and.
- iv. assess the performance of the business both in preventive and curative health care services in Ondo state of Southwestern Nigeria.

1.2. Hypothesis

Four hypotheses were formulated and tested for the purpose of providing answers for the stated objectives above.

- i. There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic attributes of cultural herbs traders and their healing performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.
- ii. There is no significant relationship between treatment modalities of cultural herbs traders and their healing performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.
- iii. There is no significant relationship between the

Networking strategies of herbal materials of cultural herbs traders and their performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

- iv. There is no significant relationship between the Preventive and Curative Health Care Services of cultural herbs traders in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

2. Methodology

The study area was Ondo state in Southwestern Nigeria. Southwestern Nigeria is one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria and it consists of six states that belong mainly to Yoruba speaking people. One of the six states is Ondo state.

2.1. Population, Sample Selection and Procedure

This study used mostly qualitative techniques. Multi-stage sampling procedure was engaged. Three towns comprising of one rural and two urban towns were randomly selected in each of the randomly selected six local government development areas of Ondo state totaling 18 towns while one public “*oja oba*” (King’s market) was targeted in each town. Four (4) traders were randomly interviewed in each king’s market totaling 72 cultural herb traders; and 7 buyers/clients were randomly interviewed among customers patronizing each of the traders during our visits using questionnaire administration. A total of 504 clients were interviewed and 21 of them that did not respond well were rejected, remaining 483 respondents. The questionnaires were analyzed using chi square. Descriptive statistical techniques (frequency and percentages) were used to summarize the data collected. Secondary data were extracted from books, journals, newspapers, publications, articles, internet documents and official publications.

2.2. Analysis of the Data

Recorded data from the in-depth interviews were transcribed and major themes noted. Transcription of the data was initially done in Yoruba language and later translated into English by the authors. It was later vetted by an expert to ensure proper and accurate translation.

The thematic analysis entailed encoding the translated data, grouping the codes into themes and then grouping the related themes into sub-themes [23]. The literature was also used as a benchmark in validating the theoretical ideas that emerged from the data. The emerged themes and direct quotes from the in-depth interviews are presented wherever possible, as suggested by Bryman Alan [24]. This is corroborated with the quantitative data analysis.

2.3. Theoretical Framework

There are two procedures that lead to empowerment of women as identified in literature. The first is providing self-confidence and basic capabilities for poor women to counter the existing challenges in men dominated society and the second is providing economic security to poor women. In

most developing countries especially in South Asia, one basic approach to develop self-confidence in women is by providing micro credit and loans. The result showed that vulnerability of the poor has reduced to some extent and assets/properties creation and income of women increased. This approach is hung on functionalism theory that supports external influence [25] Functionalism theory is strongly associated with the work of the anthropologist, Radcliffe-Brown [26]. Functionalism theory that allows external influence forms theoretical framework for this study. It must be recognized that financial and development experts have stressed the need for external influence/factors to aid women (giving women access to financial inclusion) in their drive to break the circle of poverty [27-29].

3. Result/Findings

The findings are presented below as emerged themes with direct quotes from the in-depth interview wherever conceivable as suggested from literature [22]. This is upheld with the quantitative data analysis.

3.1. Socio-Economic Attributes of Cultural Herb Traders in the Study Area

The socio-demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. The findings from seventy-two in-depth interviews held in the study area with the Traders were combined and presented, using hypothesis and set of four intertwined themes to explain the results.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic attributes of cultural herbs traders and their performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

The study showed the socio-demographic characteristics of the Traders in table 1. The study revealed that Women in cultural Herb trade were mainly old people (68%). and predominantly female (87.5%) but mostly married (55.6%). Majority of them were semi-literate including primary and tertiary levels (91%) with 23.6% being Muslims and 62.5% being Christians. They all have many years of experience with 58% of them having more than 20 years of experience in the business. They all displayed their wares in the market places that required very little capital base. The result indicated that all the herbal medicine traders’ annual income/profit range is below US\$1,000. Also, the entrepreneurial orientation of all the Traders (100%) is low as there has been little or no advancement on their discoveries for so many years. Also, there are practically no modern marketing strategies being displayed by all the traders, rather the Traders used the old and crude “selling” strategy to lure potential clients into buying their products and services. 92% of the traders attested to their low entrepreneurial orientation in innovation/invention. 78% of the traders agreed to their inability to take risk in commercializing their discoveries effectively. 80% of the Respondents agreed to their inability to think proactively.

Table 1. Socio-economic characteristics, entrepreneurial orientation and funding issues of cultural herbs' traders in Ondo State, Nigeria (n=72).

Age Group (Traders)	Frequency Distribution				Percentage
0-40	23				31.944
41 and above	49				68.055
Total	72				100
Marital Status – Traders					
Single	22				30.555
Married	40				55.556
Separated	10				13.889
Total	72				100
Religion- Traders					
Christianity	45				62.500
Islam	17				23.611
Traditional	10				13.889
Total	72				100
Gender (Sex)- Traders					
Male	09				12.500
Female	63				87.500
Total	72				100
Education- Traders					
No Formal Education	05				6.944
Primary	35				48.611
Secondary	31				43.055
Tertiary	01				1.389
Total	72				100
Herbal Medicine Traders' Experience					
0-9 Years	14				19.444
10-19 Years	16				22.222
20 Years and above	42				58.333
Total	72				100
Income/Profit range of Traders Yearly (USA Dollar)					
Low Income (Below 1,000)	72				100.00
Middle Income (Between 1,000 – 2,000)	00				00
High Income (2,000 and above)	00				00
Total	72				100.0
Entrepreneurial Orientation of Traders					
High	-				-
Moderate	-				-
Low	72				100
Total	72				100
Funding issues (Traders)					
Adequate funding	-				-
Poor funding (inability to access loan and neglect by the government)	72				100
Total	72				100
Elements of Entrepreneurship (n=72)	LEVEL:	Low	Medium	High	%
Proactiveness		80%	18%	2%	100
Risk Taking		78 %	22%	0%	100
Innovation/Invention		92%	08%	0%	100

Source: Field survey, 2018.

Table 2 is about the responses from Traders to the question whether cultural herbs traders received supports from the government

Table 2. Traders' distribution according to the financial support from the Government (n = 72).

Types of support (Financial)	Frequency Distribution	Percentages (%)
1 Receive financial support	4	6
2 Receive no support	68	94
Total	72	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018.

The results of Tables 2 and 3 are very revealing too. The result in Table 2 showed the response of the Traders to the question “whether the traders received financial support from the government” with 94% of them saying that the traders received no financial support from government. An in depth interview with the other 4% that claimed the traders received support showed that they were referring to the general repairs carried out by the government on the king's market and not specific support for the individual traders.

Table 3. Effect of Socio-economic attributes of Cultural Herbs Traders (CHTs) on Performance as perceived by Clients/Customers (n=483) CHTs Attributes.

Rating of CHTs Service	Old people >40	Middle aged people	Total
High (satisfactory)	181 90.95%	18 09.045%	199 100.00
Moderate (Good)	233 84.12%	44 15.88%	277 100.00
Low (Fair)	05 62.50%	02 37.50%	07 100.00
Total	419 86.749%	64 13.251%	483 100.00

Pearson χ^2 (df = 2), = 6.162877 pr = 0.029

3.2. Modalities, Mode of Dispensing Products and Health Care Delivery Services in Cultural Herbs Trade in Ondo State of Southwestern Nigeria

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between treatment modalities of cultural herbs traders and their performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria

From the table 4, it is noticed that the number of clients that rated treatment modalities of CHTs highly and moderately were more than three quarter of the study population. The study shows that the test hypotheses has been confirmed and accepted. It means that there is a significant relationship between the treatment modalities and the performance of CHTs in Ondo State, Nigeria. This has been clarified with the findings from the in-depth interviews generated by CHTs, that they rendered some services to the clients and even to other Traditional Healers (THs) through selection of materials for the clients and production of different kinds of concoctions to heal various ailments and diseases as stated above. It was emphasized that all their treatments were said to be done at lowest cost, which is not cumbersome, more accessible, and always available and made herbal materials easy to get for their clients.

Table 4. Effect of the treatment modalities of Cultural Herbs Traders (CHTs) on healing performance as perceived by clients (n=483).

Rating of CHTs Service	Yes	No	Total
Highly Satisfied	172 91%	17 9%	189 100.00%
Moderately Satisfied	225 85.56%	38 14.45%	263 100.00%
Lowly Contented/Fair	13 41.94%	18 58.06%	31 100.00%
Total	410 84.89%	73 15.11%	483 100.00%

Pearson χ^2 (df = 2) = 50.18154, Pr = 0.000

Source: Field work: 2018

3.3. Networking Strategies of Medicinal Plants and Storage in the Study Area

To further corroborate the information gathered from the qualitative instrument used, clients of CHTs were also interviewed along the same issues as indicated and discussed in the tables 5 and 6.

Table 5. Clients Distribution on sources of herbal materials, storage techniques and networking strategies during raw-materials scarcity (n=483).

Why CHTs continue to survive	Frequency Distribution	Percentages (%)
CHTs sources of the herbal materials		
Through middlemen.	334	69.15
Personal source (herbal garden).	149	30.85
Total	483	100.0
CHTs techniques for storing herbal materials		
By smoking	229	47.41
Turning materials into powder	46	9.52
By spreading in the air.	208	43.06
Total	483	100.0
CHTs networking strategies when faced with scarcity of supply of raw materials		
Creation of herbal garden.	186	38.51
Through middlemen	297	61.49
Total	483	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2018.

From Table 5, on the question of how CHTs source for herbal materials and the techniques for storing them; 69% of the clients said that herbal materials were sourced through middlemen while 31% emphasized that Traders got their materials through personal sources (herbal garden and so forth). On the technique of storing herbal materials, 47.41% said it was by smoking, 43.06 percent said it was by spreading their wares in the air. And 9.52 percent said that they turn herbal materials into powdered form to prevent it from being damaged.

Lastly, the clients who had patronised Traders were asked about their opinion on the networking strategies of Traders when faced with scarcity of supply of raw materials. 61.49 percent confirmed that they network through middlemen while 38.51% of the respondents said that they solved problem of scarcity of herbal materials by the establishment of herbal garden.

In table 6, data were collected on the networking strategies of sources of raw materials and performance of CHTs. These were subjected to chi-square analysis. The analysis showed that there is a significant relationship between the networking strategies and the performance of the CHTs in Ondo State, Nigeria. This implies that networking of CHTs have significant effect on their performance. The level of error that was showed in the analysis is five percent.

3.4. The Performance of the Business Both in Preventive and Curative Health Care Services in Ondo State of Southwestern Nigeria

Theme #4: Views and perspectives of respondents on preventive and curative health care services of CHTs. Various preventive and curative methods used by CHTs were discussed with explanation offered on the effectiveness of the treatment modalities of CHTs.

Table 6. The effect of the Networking strategies on performance of CHTs.

Rating of CHTs Service	Networking strategies for sourcing raw materials		
	Herbal garden	Middle men	Total
Highly (effective, useful & efficient)	139 74.33%	48 25.67%	187 100.00%
Moderately	252 93.68%	17 6.32%	269 100.00%
Lowly	16 59.26%	11 40.74%	27 100.00%
Total	407 84.27%	76 15.73%	483 100.00%

Pearson χ^2 (df = 2) = 44.63424, Pr = 0.0009
Source: Field work, 2018

On the performance of CHTs both in preventive and curative health care services, one of the women traders has this to say (Almost same response recorded in earlier studies [22]):

“On prevention capabilities of CHTs, There were many ways our forefathers used these herbal materials to prevent people from contacting ailments like syphilis or gonorrhoea called *Atosi* of any kinds in Yoruba land. We have herbal materials called *Papin, Baka, Kahun bilala*, that, when combined properly and used by someone, the person having sexual intercourse would not be infected. If at all it has been contacted before, it cannot get worse/degenerate or spread. There is another herbal material called *Obuotoyo*, which is already in its mixed form. If a person puts a small amount of it in clean water and drinks it immediately after sex, no disease will stay in the person’s body. We have several prevention methods like preparation of metal finger rings for ladies to wear during sexual intercourse to avoid unexpected pregnancy. Another preventive health care service we prepare regularly is the preparation of concoction soup for pregnant women who are around 7 months of pregnancy period. Once it has been eaten by the pregnant woman, the child and the mother would be protected from any illnesses. And it would also allow her to deliver the child easily”.

Table 7. The kind of diseases that Traders used to treat according to clients.

S/N	DISEASES/AILMENTS	PREVENTIVE	CURATIVE
	Diseases and illnesses	%	%
	Cultural Herbs Traders specialized on	n = 483	n = 483
1	General treatment	144 (30%)	19 (4%)
2	General children care	168 (35%)	68 (14%)
3	Cough/stomach-upset	97 (20%)	159 (33%)
4	Gonorrhoea/Syphilis	21 (4%)	31 (6%)
5	Asthma/Hypertension	10 (2%)	22 (5%)

S/N	DISEASES/AILMENTS	PREVENTIVE	CURATIVE
	Diseases and illnesses	%	%
	Cultural Herbs Traders specialized on	n = 483	n = 483
6	Infertility problems	9 (2%)	38 (8%)
7	Skin diseases	7 (1%)	78 (16%)
8	Fever or general body pain	16 (3%)	45 (9%)
9	Others (specify): Making diabolical ring to avoid unexpected pregnancy; black soap for easy delivery; attaché for pregnant women to avoid evil children entering their bodies; objects to put in the house to prevent measles or small pox; curing hopeless diseases i.e. asthma, diabetes etc.	11 (2%)	23 (5%)

Pearson χ^2 (df = 2) = 254.8922, Pr = 0.000
Source: Field work, 2018

“On curative health care, I am sure of curing different kinds of ailments such as asthma and hypertension that.”

The woman trader in question was asked how she knew that her treatments were effective. She said thus:

“The determination of my treatment effectiveness is based on my own experience. I always record high rate of patronage. Also the good comments of my clients testified to my effective treatment”.

This is corroborated with the views of the clients as discussed in table 7. The concluding part of this analysis presents the results of the hypotheses, which was tested.

Data were also collected on the kind of diseases that CHTs used to treat according to clients in table 7. These were subjected to chi-square analysis. It was found that CHTs provided health care services on both preventive and curative health care, with significant association between the performance and patronage by their clients ($\chi^2=254.8922$, df = 6, pr = 0.000), especially in the areas of malaria, infertility and small pox to mention a few. The result therefore showed that there is a significant relationship between the Preventive and Curative Health Care Services of women cultural herbs traders in Ondo state of Southwestern Nigeria.

4. Discussion

4.1. Socio-Economic Attributes of Cultural Herb Traders (CHTs) in the Study Area

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic attributes of cultural herbs traders and their performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

The result in Table 1 shows general characteristics of the Respondents. Although some of the traders inherited the herbal medicine practice from their parents, they have been able to minimally improve on the mixture formula of most of the herbal medicine so as to satisfy their clients by improving the efficacy of the herbs; although not up to international standard. Thus 92% of the traders attested to their low entrepreneurial orientation in innovation/invention (ability to

substantially innovate or discover new herbal medicines according to the changing demands of the market). 78% of the traders agreed to their inability to take risk in commercializing their discoveries effectively. For instance, the in-depth interview revealed that most of the herbal medicines have no standard measures when administering the drugs. Also they have no adequate knowledge of the adverse effects of the drugs in case of over dosing. Hence banks are not willing to assist. The art of commercialisation is an important aspect of entrepreneurship process. 80% of the Respondents agreed to their inability to think proactively (inability to identify opportunities, show initiatives and take necessary action with perseverance until a meaningful result is achieved).

This result showed that with the low level of education of the traders cum their entrepreneurial orientation, they could not be proactive, take risk and as well as innovate new ideas. Those Traders that did innovate only showed little signs of improvement on herbal medicines that were discovered by their parents. They engaged in informal training method in training their Apprentices. All the participants complained of poor funding and claimed inability to access loan due to their low level of literacy and neglect by the government. This assertion was corroborated by the response in Theme #1 and quantitative analysis in table 2.

Theme #1: Respondents views on the explanation of financial support available and offered by Government.

On the question asked about whether the traders received financial assistance from government and also on the kind of assistance and facilities that they required from government to enhance their performance, most of the traders attested to the fact that they had little or no financial support from the government. In fact, one of them had this to say:

“Cultural herbs traders have no space in Nigeria democratic government program because they are all corrupt and seem not to know what to do”.

The above comments coincidentally tally with the responses in Table 2 from Traders to the question whether cultural herbs traders received supports from the government.

The results in Table 3 showed the effect of socio economic attributes of the traders on performance. To test hypothesis 1; data were collected on the socio-economic attributes of Traders and assessment of their performance on health care services in general by the clients was subjected to chi-square analysis using cross-tabulation. The result in the table 3 showed that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic attributes of CHTs and their performance. It was tested using Pearson chi-square which resulted to chi-square value – 6.162877, degree of freedom 2 and probability value 0.029 which gave us enough evidence to conclude that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic attributes of CHTs and their performance. The data accept test hypotheses. One thing that is worth mentioning here is that the CHTs are largely old people with mixture of middle age women. So, the issue was not the age of CHTs per se; rather it was efficacy and effectiveness of their herbs. The CHTs too have confirmed the effectiveness of their herbs in

the qualitative analysis above.

4.2. Modalities, Mode of Dispensing Products and Health Care Delivery Services in Cultural Herbs Trade in Ondo State of Southwestern Nigeria

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between treatment modalities of cultural herbs traders and their performance in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

Theme #2: Respondents views on the explanation of different types of treatment modalities available and offered by cultural herb traders.

The views of Cultural Herb Traders were sought on their treatment modalities, one of the women Traders emphasized thus;

“We are restricted in our treatment to finding a suitable selection of herbal materials for ailments (fever, rashes and so forth) that befall our clients. The selection pattern of herbs for the patients is guided by experience as we have been taught by our fore mothers and fathers. Our treatment modalities vary from concoction (*Agbo*), through powdered materials (*Agunmu*) and preparation of lotion for measles to mention a few. Our collections of herbs may include roots, leaves, animal parts and so on. Occasionally, some old mothers come to us to buy herbs that treat their ailments because they already possess the motherhood knowledge from their experience. Other younger mothers that are yet to acquire experience will bring their crying babies here for us to diagnose and we prescribe appropriate mixture or by selecting herbal materials for them to boil and use to bathe the baby and drink. With this, he or she will surely be healed by God’s power. Surely, our services are very effective and cheap in price”.

This is corroborated with the evidence derived from the clients as shown in the quantitative analysis in the table 4 that tested hypothesis 2.

To test the hypotheses 2, data were collected from the clients on the treatment modalities and performance of CHTs as shown in Table 4. A Chi-square analysis of the effect of the treatment modalities of WTHSs on their performance in Ondo state of Nigeria using cross-tabulation in table 4 yielded Pearson χ^2 (df = 2) = 50.18154, Pr = 0.000. These data accept the test hypotheses. It means that there is a significant relationship between the treatment modalities and the performance of CHTs in Ondo State, Nigeria. It means that there is a significant relationship between the treatment modalities and the performance of CHTs in Ondo State, Nigeria.

4.3. Networking Strategies of Medicinal Plants and Storage in the Study Area

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between the Networking strategies of herbal materials of cultural herbs traders and their healing performance on clients in Ondo state, Southwestern Nigeria.

Theme #3: Women Cultural/Traditional Herb Traders/Sellers’ Views and Perceptions on the Sources and techniques for herbal materials, Networking strategies when

faced with scarcity of supply of raw materials (market scenario of medicinal plants), Storage, and Marketing in Cultural Herb Trading Business.

The question was asked during the in-depth interviews on how CHTs store herbal medicines and how they network when there is scarcity of raw materials and marketing. The answer to these questions corresponded with the result gotten from questionnaires (quantitative analysis) on their storage capability and networking. One of the Women traders commented on their networking strategies as follows;

“We get raw materials for our trade by patronizing the middle women called *Iya oko* in Yoruba language. They serve as the intermediaries between the farm suppliers and the buyers that deal with herbal medicine in the public markets in the towns. The suppliers randomly collect the medicinal plants from the wild bushes. It is the usual practice for the *Iya oko* to bring herbal materials two days to the market day. We preserve some at home and also take some to the market. At home, we separate some for grinding. We attach some leaves of the raw materials to the house-wall for drying or mix them with other materials for grinding. If the leaves are for concoction; we do not air-dry them to avoid loss of the ingredients or vitamin in them. Sometimes these plants’ parts are preserved by cutting them into smaller pieces and then sun-dried or kept in the ceiling of the shop or house, hung in the kitchen or fire places where they are exposed to constant heat that dries them up in order to reduce moisture content. Some are grinded into powder and preserved for future use”.

“*Iya oko* ensures cleanliness and maintains hygienic environment. Transportation of the herbs is done almost immediately to prevent nutrients’ degradation. The *Iya oko* whose husbands are hunters usually bring both dead and live animals and bush meat like bush rats (*okete*) and snake called ‘*Monomono*’ to the market for sale”.

“For our networking strategies when we are faced with scarcity of raw materials; we move from one market to another in search of herbal material (s). Markets that we usually visit include Akure, Okitipupa, Irele, Ondo, Owo and so on. We also have chance to get them among ourselves. We can also call ourselves together to discuss on current market situations like increasing prices during the scarcity of herbal materials. In addition, to sustain the medicinal plants, we tell those in the farm, through the middle men and women to plant trees because they must not go into extinction, i.e. mango trees and others. We also plant trees and create herbal garden near our homes”.

4.4. The Performance of the Business Both in Preventive and Curative Health Care Services in Ondo State of Southwestern Nigeria

Theme #4: Views and perspectives of respondents on preventive and curative health care services of CHTs.

Various preventive and curative methods used by CHTs were discussed with explanation offered on the effectiveness of the treatment modalities of CHTs. On the performance of CHTs both in preventive and curative health care services, one of the women traders has this to say (Almost same

response recorded in earlier studies [22]:

“On prevention capabilities of CHTs, There are many ways our forefathers use these herbal materials to prevent people from contacting ailments like syphilis or gonorrhea called *Atosi* of any kinds in Yoruba land. We have herbal materials called *Papin*, *Baka*, *Kahun bilala*, that, when combined properly and used by someone, the person having sexual intercourse would not be infected. If at all it has been contacted before, it cannot get worse/degenerate or spread. There is another herbal material called *Obuotoyo*, which is already in its mixed form. If a person puts a small amount of it in clean water and drinks it immediately after sex, no disease will stay in the person’s body. We have several prevention methods like preparation of metal finger rings for ladies to wear during sexual intercourse to avoid unexpected pregnancy. Another preventive health care service we prepare regularly is the preparation of concoction soup for pregnant women who are around 7 months of pregnancy period. Once it has been eaten by the pregnant woman, the child and the mother would be protected from any illnesses. And it would also allow her to deliver the child easily”.

“On curative health care, I am sure of curing different kinds of ailments such as asthma and hypertension that.”

The woman trader in question was asked how she knew that her treatments were effective. She said thus:

“The determination of my treatment effectiveness is based on my own experience. I always record high rate of patronage. Also the good comments of my clients testified to my effective treatment”.

This is corroborated with the views of the clients as discussed in table 7. Data were also collected on the kind of diseases that CHTs used to treat according to clients in table 7. These were subjected to chi-square analysis. It was found that CHTs provided health care services on both preventive and curative health care, with significant association between the performance and patronage by their clients ($\chi^2=254.8922$, $df=6$, $pr=0.000$), especially in the areas of malaria, infertility and small pox to mention a few. The result therefore showed that there is a significant relationship between the Preventive and Curative Health Care Services of women cultural herbs traders in Ondo state of Southwestern Nigeria.

5. Conclusion

The study revealed that Traders in cultural Herb trade were mainly old people (68%). and predominantly female (87.5%) but mostly married (55.6%). Majority of them were semi-literate including primary and tertiary levels (91%) with Muslims (23.6%), Christians 62.5%. Also, the entrepreneurial orientation of all the Traders is low. They claimed that their inability to access financial aids was mainly due to their low level of literacy and nonchalant attitude of state government. This confirms the earlier findings [22]. Findings also showed that socio-economic attributes of CHTs had significant effect on their performance, ($\chi^2=6.162877$, $df=2$, $pr=0.029$). The results also showed significant relationship between the treatment

modalities of CHTs and their performance (Pearson χ^2 (df = 2) = 50.18154 Pr = 0.000). There existed significant relationship between the networking strategies of CHTs and performance ($\chi^2=44.63424$, df = 2, pr=0.0009). And finally, it was also discovered that CHTs provided health care services on both preventive and curative health care, thus, there was significant association between the performance and patronage by their clients in Ondo state of Nigeria ($\chi^2=254.8922$, df = 6, pr=0.000), especially in the treatment of malaria, infertility and small pox to mention a few. Also majority of the buyers indicated their continuous support to patronize the Traders.

The study concluded that in spite of the importance of CHTs in the society, there is inadequate capital for them to acquire necessary herbal material resources. CHTs need to be highly and financially supported by the government or by the Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) so that they can be able to establish local botanical gardens to enhance their performance. In short, development workers should be able to identify the capacity gaps and build the capacity of cultural/traditional medicine practitioners. This would make CHTs to make available their knowledge and techniques to enhance the existing state of herbal medicine. Health education on the use of African indigenous herbal remedies is important for the practitioners to be guided for better participation and transformation of cultural industry in Nigeria.

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