

Collaboration between modern and traditional medicines in Ivory Coast: Attitude and practice of traditional healers in Yopougon, Ivory Coast

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Objective: The objective of this work was to describe the opinions, attitudes and practices of the traditional healers on the collaboration between modern and traditional medicines in Yopougon.

Materials and Method: We carried out a descriptive transverse exploratory study over one 3 months period in the commune of Yopougon. The study consisted of an interview of 150 traditional healers.

Result: Traditional healers were aged of 47 years on an average (extremes 21 and 95 years), with a ratio M/W=0.53. 94% of them were non spiritualistic. 92% were favorable to collaboration between the two medicines but only 40% really collaborated with the modern health workers. Collaboration was focused on the treatment (52%), the paraclinic examinations (20%), the diagnostic (19%) and the follow-up of patients (9%). 62% of the traditional healers needed a modern medicine for paraclinic examinations to confirm their diagnosis or the follow-up of their patients. 76% of them referred their patients to modern health agents in case of a serious health problem (41.1%) or in the event of therapeutic failure (12.5%). The main obstacle with collaboration evoked was the crisis of confidence (21.8%). 52.4% of traditional healers think that the use of the improved traditional phytomedicines (ITP) would support a good collaboration with the agents of modern health.

Conclusion: In Yopougon, traditional healers have a favorable opinion on collaboration with the modern health workers. However the introduction of a climate of trust and comprehension through suitable sensitizings and legal texts is essential for raising certain obstacles.

Biography

Diaby Badara is completing a certificate of specialized studies in Public Health at the Felix Houphouet-Boigny University of Cocody, Côte d'Ivoire. He received his M.D. in 2007 from the Gamal Abdel Nasser University of Conakry, Guinea. He is highly interested in traditional medicine and is staff at the National Programme for Traditional Medicine Promotion in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. He has authored 4 articles and serves as a review member of the French medical journal, "Revue Santé Publique".

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