Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence And Modes Of Complementary And Alternative Medicine Use Among Peasant Farmers With Musculoskeletal Pain In A Rural Community In South-Western Nigeria

Version: 4 Date: 5 April 2015

Reviewer: Wenbo Peng

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions:

Methods
1. The study sample size is not clear – ‘A minimum sample of 216 respondents were expected to be recruited based on the number of households to be sampled. 250 individuals were approached for survey in order to accommodate for refusal of participation. 230 individuals responded in this study. The response rate in this study was 92.0% (i.e. 230/250). However, 14 copies of the questionnaire were found not valid for analysis owing to incomplete information. Therefore, the valid response rate in this study was 93.9% (i.e. 216/230). Analysis was based on the valid 216 questionnaires.’

The description of sample size is acceptable.

2. The authors used #2 test to examine the associations between CAM use and socio-demographic variables (Table 5) - ‘Table 5 has been removed from the study.’

This is acceptable.

Results
1. Although the numbers of ethnicity are revised in Table 1, these numbers are not in line with the numbers of ethnicity in Table 5 - ‘Table 5 has been removed from the study.’

This is acceptable.

2. What is the number of “Dietary supplementary diets or fasting” of current CAM users in Table 2 – ‘The number is 2.’

This is acceptable.

3. Based on the statement of definition of CAM in this article (see paragraph 3, materials and methods), CAM refers to any treatment or health practice which is self-prescribed. The title of Table 3 is “Health care practices and the use of CAM for musculoskeletal pain among the respondents (N=216)” with the details of “healthcare practice”, “Use of Traditional Health products”, and “Seek CAM providers”. What is the definition of traditional health products and healthcare
practice? Further, what is the definition of “complementary and alternative medicine products” in the corresponding item 12 (for Table 3) in the questionnaire? – ‘The ambiguity in use of terms were addressed. Table 3 was re-tilted as Complementary and alternative treatment of musculoskeletal pain. The sub-titles were recaptured as Pattern of CAM use, Frequency of CAM use and CAM Provider use respectively. CAM was defined as any treatment or health practice that were NOT suggested by a health care provider such as herbal therapy, massage therapy, concoction and black soap bathing, body incisions or medicinal scarifications, dietary supplementary diets or fasting, prayer or incantations, mind-body interventions, heat therapy, bone-setting and spinal manipulation.’

I don't agree with the definition of CAM used in this study as it is confusing for readers to understand CAM ‘were not SUGGESTED by a HEALTH CARE PROVIDER’. Also, it is not clear to use ‘frequency of CAM use’ and ‘CAM provider use’ as sub-titles in Table 3. What does ‘frequency of CAM use’ stand for?

Questionnaire
1. The pattern of item 4 is not consistent with items 1-3 (pain, ache, discomfort, or injury) – ‘The pattern of item 4 in the Questionnaire was corrected as pointed out.’

This is acceptable.

2. Mind-body therapy is included in items 8 and 9 as a CAM treatment, paralleling with herbal medicine, massage therapy, prayer, etc. According to the definition of CAM from National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), mind-body therapy refers to a wide range of techniques administered by a practitioner including acupuncture, massage therapy, meditation, relaxation techniques, yoga, and Tai Chi. The questions seem confusing as the authors mentioned in the manuscript that acupuncture, aromatherapy, ayurveda, homeopathy and yoga in the original prototyped tools were excluded in this questionnaire due to cultural difference – ‘The term “mind-body therapy” was corrected as “mind-body intervention”. Mind–body interventions in this study was conceived as the use of the mind ability through meditation and prayer, and other inspired channels involving music and dance to alter physical symptoms 8 Item 11 is not clear. What is the definition of “complementary”.

Please change another word ‘mind-body therapy’ in Table 2 for consistency.

3. Item 11 is not clear. What is the definition of “complementary and alternative medicine practices”? What is the evidence of the only two options of CAM practices – use CAM only and use CAM with conventional treatments by the medical doctor? – ‘The term “orthodox medicine” was replace with “conventional medicine” in item 11.’

As the authors have addressed some information on the concurrent use of CAM
and conventional treatments in the section of Introduction, this is acceptable.

Minor Essential Revisions:

Introduction

Third paragraph: The attention of the first sentence is the combined use of CAM and conventional therapies, while the following sentences only indicate the use of CAM in different countries – ‘Paragraph three of the background was recast for clarity.’

This is acceptable.

Discussion

The focus of this article is the prevalence of CAM use among peasant farmers with musculoskeletal pain in a rural community in south-western Nigeria. However, there is no comparison with other prevalence rates of previous relevant studies – ‘The prevalence of CAM use for MSP was compared with previous relevant studies in the discussion section’.

Need language corrections regarding ‘CAM use’ and ‘CAM use for musculoskeletal disorders’.

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Not suitable for publication unless extensively edited

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.