USE OF ENEMA AMONG THE QUAS IN CALABAR MUNICIPALITY OF CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA

Pius Abia Raphael, Asu Odok Edmond, Arikpo M.
Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

and

Eka Ide Theresa
Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, Faculty of Education, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to examine the use of enema among the Quas in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State, Nigeria. A review of related literature was carried out to ascertain the work of other researchers with regards to the phenomenon under study. The survey research design was considered most suitable for the study because the researchers were interested in examining the situation as it existed at the time of this investigation. The study used fifty (50) respondents selected from fifty (50) households through stratified random sampling technique. The interview method was used for gathering data used for the study. Simple percentage method was used for data analysis. The result obtained was presented in a table and bar chart respectively. The finding revealed that a higher percentage of the respondents were using enema, either by water or herbs. While a small percentage were not using any form of enema in the study area. Based on this finding, the use of enema is wide spread among the Quas, indicating that modernization and social change have not altered the culture of enema administration. While the use is wide spread, caution should be applied on its administration, especially those enemas on roots, herbs and barks of tree, while they are sometimes injurious to health. The paper recommended that enema though a strong cultural health therapy should be used with maximum regulation.

KEYWORDS: Enema, Social change, Modernization, Herbs, Health

INTRODUCTION
The use of Enema or Enemas among the Quas in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State cannot be over-emphasized. Since it is their practice to promote good health among themselves in the home traditionally, the treatment is for various kinds of illness, sickness and disease such as constipation. The Quas in Calabar Municipality involve in this traditional treatment to cure most of the diseases in their bodies. In the olden days, this practice was a household affair, because every household relied on enema for the improvement of their health and to prevent disease conditions (Eta, 2015).
Mbora (2012), defined enema as the procedure in which liquid or semi-liquid, be it warmed or cold water solution is injected into the rectum to expel its contents or to introduce drugs or permit x-ray imaging. It could also be a process of injecting fluid into the lower bowel through the rectum.

The Quas use enema as a technique applied to stimulate stool evacuation. The Quas in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State of Nigeria include: the Akim Qua Clan, Big Qua Clan, Ikot Omin etc. The people have a common language although they also speak Efik and English Language predominantly, but when they are in their Qua (Clan) meetings, they use their common dialect which is Ejagham dialect in communicating with one another (Edim, 2011).

LITERATURE ON THE USE OF ENEMA

Several studies have considered the incidence and use of enema among various groups of people. According to Unoh (2015), the use of enema is World Wide but it is a common practice among the Africans especially among the Qua people. Before the advent of modern (orthodox) medicine, Africans believed in their traditional medicine such as taking of herbs, roots, barks, stems, leaves to treat and cure most of their diseases by swallowing, drinking or injecting through the rectum.

Mbora (2012), opined that people engage in enema to relieve constipation. Enema can help to soften dry, hard or difficult stools by the use of warmed water only or water with herbs or little soap. According to National Institute of diabetes, digestics and kidney diseases, constipation is a common gastro-intestinal condition. It occurs when the colon is unable to release waste through the rectum. Patients with constipation have three or less bowel movement over a seven day period. Enema administration in the case of constipation will help to stimulate stool evacuation. It is a liquid treatment commonly used by the Quas people in Calabar Municipality to help relieve severe constipation. In the process of taking enema, it will help to push waste out of the rectum when you cannot do so on your own.

According to Warner (1993), enema can be applied during a dehydrated condition. Enema can be administered when a person with vomiting is dehydrated by giving an enema of rehydration. Take a drink made with water, sugar and salt only and very slowly. Dehydration results when the body loses much liquid than it takes in. This can happen with severe diarrhea, especially when the person vomits as well. Dehydration can happen in a case of very serious illness whereby, the person is very sick and cannot take much food or drink.

According to a Traditional Birth Attendant (name withheld), enema is used as popular home cure which is inherited from our parents. That enema when administered, it will help to wash and cleanse the bowel of old food residue and make your body light for any activity.

Unoh (2015), opined that enema is used for the treatment of internal heat among the people of Qua in Calabar Municipality. Most patients with internal heat which causes them some problems like the ladies who are unable to be pregnant, they subject themselves to these treatments by using enema to inject themselves with mixed concoction called cold enema (mbit-mbit ukebe, in Efik language). This helps most of them to conceive and deliver babies after judicious treatment.

Unoh (2015) further stated that treatment of malaria with some herbs, barks of trees, roots or stems by people of Qua in Calabar...
Municipality is more effective to them and safe cost for them from going to the hospital to spend money in drugs. That most of them would waste time at the hospital and at the end of the day, they would not even adhere strictly to the prescription and their medication accordingly, so they prefer enema.

Mbora (2012) also asserted that warm enema with water and soap prepares an expectant mother of delivery in the labour ward. Most hospitals are still practicing this method because it quickens the contraction and facilitates quick delivery. It is very useful in preparing expectant mothers for their delivery.

According to Johnson (2009), many people take enema to prevent body pains and fever, and they make it as a routine either weekly or monthly and they always feel better. He also reported that enema is used for the treatment and cure of fibroid diseases among women locally. He added that most people believe on using enema to treat pile instead of going to the hospital for medical attention.

There are different cans of pumping which are used for enemas. Materials used:
1. Calabash dish
2. Metal cans
3. Plastic cans

Most of these cans are calibrated to enable the users to know the quantity of enema to be used. Some of them are not calibrated especially the Calabash can which was used in the olden days. With the modern technology the cans use for enemas are now being fixed with nozzles at the end of the hose for easy operation.

METHODOLOGY

The design used by the researchers for this study was the survey research design, which was meant to describe and interpret the situation as it existed at the time of the research in Calabar Municipality of Cross River State, Nigeria.

A total number of fifty (50) households were selected for the study to ascertain the degree of usage of enema. The method of data collection was the interview method.

RESULTS

In this section, the result of data obtained from respondents is presented. The analysis was done using simple percentage statistical tool. The result is presented in a Table and bar chart.
TABLE 1

Simple percentage analysis of households utilization of enema in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State (N=50)

The result of analysis presented in Table 1 shows that out of the 50 respondents interviewed from 50 households in Calabar Municipality, 32 (64%) were using herbs enema as a form of medication, 14 (28%) were using water enema while 4 (8%) were not using any form of enema in the study area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>No. of respondents</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Herbs enema</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water enema</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non usage of enema</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The result obtained is further presented in figure 1 using bar chart.

**Bar chart presentation of utilization of enema among the Quas in Calabar Municipality, Cross River State**

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

Findings obtained from the study revealed that majority of the respondents were using herbs enema, some were using water enema while very few were not using enema at all in the study area. This finding is in agreement with the finding of Unoh (2015) which reported that enema is used for the treatment of internal heat among the people of Qua in Calabar Municipality. Most patients with internal heat which causes them some problems like the ladies who are unable to be pregnant, they subject themselves to these treatments by using enema to inject themselves with mixed concoction called cold enema (mbit-mbit ukebe, in Efik language). This helps most of them to conceive and deliver babies after
judicious treatment. The finding of Mbora (2012) also supports the finding of this study by asserting that warm enema with water and soap prepares an expectant mother of delivery in the labour ward. Most hospitals are still practicing this method because it quickens the contraction and facilitates quick delivery. It is very useful in preparing expectant mothers for their delivery.

CONCLUSION
Every home across the globe, people use home remedies. In some places, the older or traditional ways of healing have been passed down from parents to children for several centuries, despite the influence of modernization and civilization. The use of enema among the Quas in Calabar Municipality, have been helpful to them due to their belief and faith, which they have over years in view of its perceived efficacy. Many home remedies have great value like the enema to certain condition while to some conditions it may be dangerous. It is advisable that the people should use enema cautiously, because of the dangers usually associated with excessive use of herbs as component of enema. It must be used with caution, therefore enema is a solution of water or herbs put up to the anus to cause a bowel movement.

RECOMMENDATIONS
Based on the findings obtained in this study, the following recommendations are made:
1. Enema should not be administered to a person who has severe stomach-ache or any other sign of appendicitis or acute abdomen, even if he/she passes days without a bowel movement.
2. Enema should not be administered to a person with a bullet wound or other injuries to the gut.
3. Enema should not be administered to a weak person. It will weaken him/her the more.
4. Enema should not be administered to a baby that is less than 2 years old.
5. People should be sensitized adequately on the need not to administer enema to a child with high fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or signs of dehydration.
6. People should be discouraged from administration of enema as a habit in life.

REFERENCES