



Documentation of Traditional Knowledge Associated with Medicinal Animals in West Gojjam Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia

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Abstract: Ethnozoology and Zootherapeutic research is very limited and little attention has been given in Ethiopia. The study was designed to investigate and document traditional knowledge associated with medicinal animals in West Gojjam Zone of Javitenan, North Achefer, and Bahir Dar Zuria districts. Ethnozoological data were collected using structured questionnaires and use value (UV), informant consensus factor (ICF), fidelity level (FL), preferential ranking, and paired comparison were analyzed. A total of 26 animal species were identified and recorded as a source of medicine to treat 33 types of ailments. Animal-derived medicines of *Bos indicus*, *Trigona spp.*, and *Apis mellifera* were frequently reported species to treat various ailments. *Bos indicus*, *Trigona spp.*, *Apis mellifera*, *Hyaenidae carnivora*, and *Labeobarbus spp.* were the most frequent use-value reports (84%, 52%, 43%, 37% 36%) respectively. Informants reported 25 animal parts to treat ailments. Honey and meat took the highest frequency use report followed by purified butter, Milk, Liver, fatty meat, and Cheese stored more than 7 years were described with an average ICF value of 69%. A maximum degree of consensus was developed for the remedy of the evil eye (88%) followed by dry cough, swelling, and hepatitis 82% each. Use of animal-derived medicine from *Liotrigona spp.* used to relieve dry-cough tend to have the highest FL (80%); followed by *Labeobarbus spp.* for swelling (33%) and *Trigona spp.* for dry-cough (30%). Paired comparisons revealed that purified butter ≥ 2 years, Cheese ≥ 7 years, honey of *Liotrigona spp.* (YetinignTazma), and honey of *Trigona spp.* (Tazma) was the most popular and efficacious animal-derived medicines to cure malaria and ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, respectively. Results of this study recorded the most popular animal-derived medicine to cure various ailments. Thus, the government must strengthen traditional healers with training, club formation, material and financial support, and improve means of protecting their intellectual property rights. Moreover, chemists and pharmacists should undergo a detailed study to identify which chemical constituent of animal and animal products is responsible for the respective treatment of ailments in the study area.

Keywords: Informant Consensus, Medicinal Animals, Traditional Knowledge, Use Values

1. Introduction

Traditional Medicine has been practiced for several thousand years in different parts of the world particularly where large ethnic communities live in. Currently, more than 80% of the world population uses traditional medicine either on its own or as a complementary medicine [1]. More than 80% of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa relies on traditional medicines and Traditional Health Practitioners

(THPs) as the primary source of health care [2]. Like in many other developing countries, more than 70% of the human and 90% of the livestock population primarily depend on traditional medicine in Ethiopia [3].

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined traditional medicine (TM) as the total of all knowledge and practices, whether explicable or not, used in diagnosis, prevention, and elimination of physical, mental, or social imbalance and relying exclusively on practical experiences and observations

handed from generation to generation, whether verbally or in writing [4]. The term TM covers traditional healers and their use of plant materials, animal origins, and inorganic mineral substances for health care in the context of social, cultural, and religious backgrounds [5]. The dynamic relationship between human culture or societies and animal resources in their environment can be studied in the field of ethnozoology [6]. Zotherapy is an important component of ethnozoology, involves the healing of human ailments by using therapeutic based on medicine obtained or ultimately derived from different animals [7].

The use of animal parts for the treatment of ailments affecting both humans and livestock has a long and rich history [8]. Wild and domestic animals and their by-products such as hooves, skins, bones, feathers, and tusks were important ingredients in the preparation of curative, protective, and preventive measures in various cultures [9, 10, 8]. There is varied and richer utilization of animals for illnesses in Latin America and Africa with a long period of traditional practices of animal remedies for all kinds of ailments [11]. Whole, parts or products of animal species such as scales of the tree pangolin species are used for the treatment of a wide range of human ailments in Ghana [1].

In Ethiopia, like in the rest of the world, research on ethnozoology is very limited, and only a little attention has been given to zotherapeutic research. As Alves noted that though medicinal animals are widely used in different countries for health care, it is little researched when compared to medicinal plants [12]. Only some researchers like Gelahun Abate tried to list around 23 animals used for the treatments of human diseases in Ethiopia [13]. As Gidey Yirga *et al.* reported the use of different parts and products of 16 species of medicinal animals such as bile, milk, blood, pancreas, urine, hair, and fecal matter to treat 18 different human ailments from Kunama in the Kafta-Humera district [14]. As Mezgebu Belay reported the use of various vertebrate and invertebrate, wild and domestic, taboo and edible animals in various forms such as meat, urine, feces, bone, skin, blood, fat, honey, milk, butter, bile, egg, etc. to treat various kinds of human ailments such as TB, rabies, impotence (sexual), asthma, snake biting, pellagra, evil eye, etc. and external pathologies like wounds and skin diseases from Gendewuha and Kumeraaftit people of Metema district [15]. Moreover, a total of 21 animal species were recorded to treat 46 different types of ailments in the Amaro district of Southern Nations and Nationalities People Regional State of Ethiopia [16].

The traditional knowledge of traditional healing practices using animals is now disappearing very rapidly due to modernization [17]. This loss of traditional knowledge has an impact on the development of modern medicine. It is important to document the traditional knowledge of human communities since the majority of such communities are losing their socio-economic and cultural characteristics [18]. Traditional healers in Ethiopia hold their indigenous knowledge in secret and little information has been recorded by few authors [19]. Therefore, the current paper reports the

result of a study of the traditional knowledge associated with medicinal animals in West Gojjam Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia. The investigation and documentation of TK in medicinal animals of the area is very valuable in the development of pharmaceutical compounds for bioprospecting, and also very helpful in making strategies for sustainable utilization of natural resources and conservation of biodiversity. The objective of this study was to investigate and document traditional knowledge associated with medicinal animals and medicinal animals used by traditional healers in West Gojjam Zone.

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Description of the Study Area

i. Location

The study was conducted in the West Gojjam zone, North West of Ethiopia particularly in Javitenan, North Achefer, and Bahir Dar Zuria districts in which practice, distribution, and use of medicinal plants and animals are high. West Gojjam zone is one of the 10 zones in the Amhara Region and lies between 36° 30' to 37° 5' Longitudes East and 10°16' to 11°54' Latitudes North [20]. The total population is estimated as 2,106,596 and more than 91% of the people lived in rural areas [21]. Agriculture is the main source of livelihood for the community. Administratively, the West Gojjam zone is divided into 13 rural districts and 5 town administrations [22]. The total land area of the West Gojjam zone is 13,280 km². Its elevation varies from 1500 to 3500 m.a.s.l. Most of the districts (75%) in the zone have an ambient temperature ranging from 15–20°C and the remaining has 20–27°C [23].

ii. Population

The study areas, namely North Achefer, Bahir Dar Zuria, and Jabitenan districts, are among three of the 14 districts found in the West Gojjam zone. North Achefer is bordered in the North by Lake Tana; in the South by South Achefer; in the West by the North Gondar zone; in the East by Bahir Dar Zuria; and in the Southeast by Mecha. According to the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, this district has a total population of 189,716 [21]. The majority of the inhabitants (99.05%) practiced Ethiopian Orthodox Christianity religion. Bahir Dar Zuria borders in the South by Yilmana Densa; in the Southwest by Mecha; in the Northwest by the Lesser Abay River which separates it from North Achefer; in the North by Lake Tana (On the shores of Lake Tana situates the city and special zone of Bahir Dar); and in the East by the Abay River which separates it from the South Gondar Zone. Based on the Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, this district has a total estimated population of 182,730 [21]. Jabitenan borders in the Southeast by Dembecha; in the West by Bure; in the Northwest by Sekela; in the North by Quarit; and in the East by Dega Damot districts. According to Central Statistical Agency of Ethiopia, the district has a total estimated population of 179,342 [21]. The three districts

have long been inhabited by people who have an age-old tradition of using medicinal animals and plants to treat

human and livestock ailments.

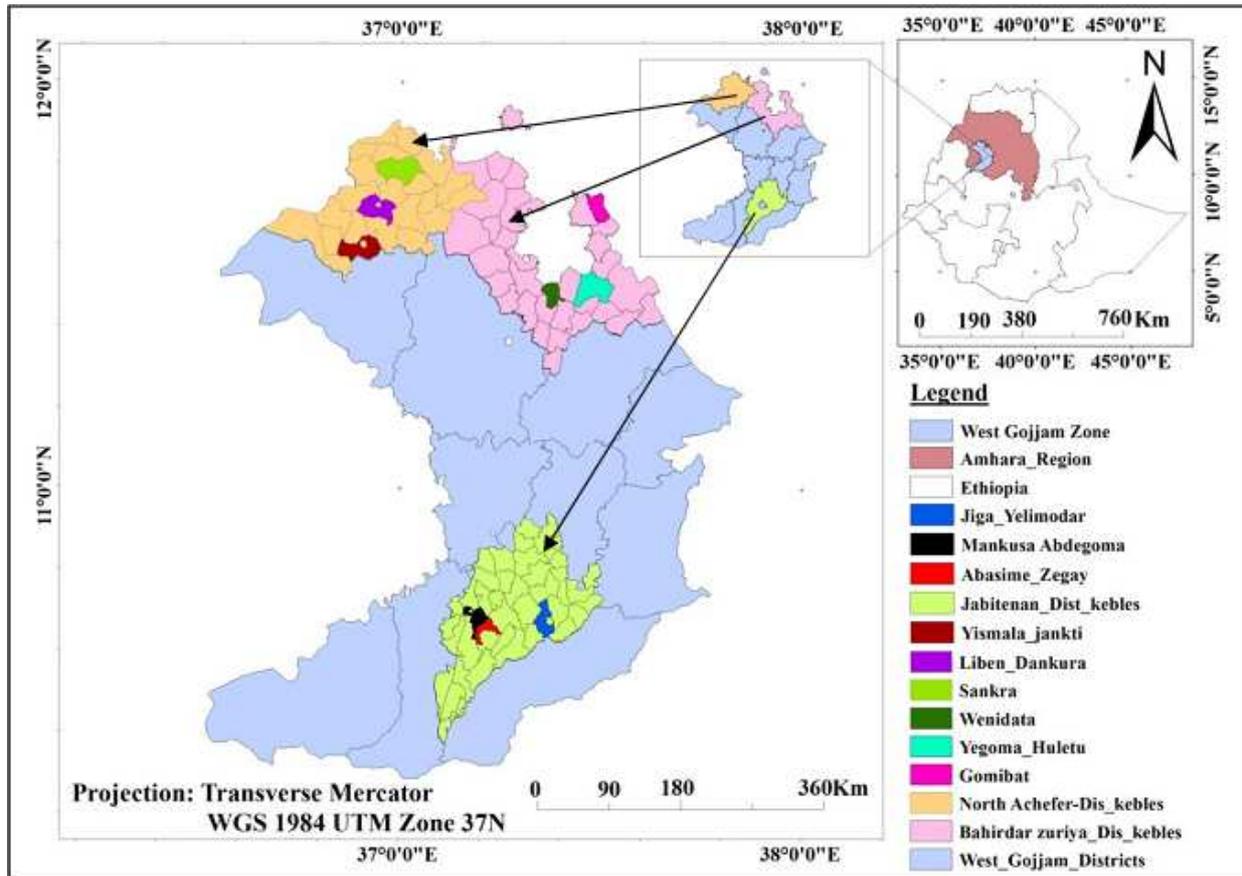


Figure 1. Map of the study area.

2.2. Data Collection Method

The study zone, districts, and Kebeles were selected purposively based on the availability of traditional medicine practitioners following the information obtained from literature and information from zonal and district health bureaus of the Amhara Region. Three districts from a zone and three representative Kebeles from each district, namely: Jiga-Yelimodar, Mankusa-Abdegoma, and Abasime-Zegay from Javitenan; Yismala-Jankit, Liben-Dankura and Sankra from North Achefer; and Wenidata, Yegoma-Huletu, and Gomibat from Bahir Dar Zuria; were selected. Then, on average, 9 respondents (traditional medicine practitioners) and 2 key informants (traditional healers) were selected from each Kebele. The informants were selected based on their experience, recognition as a traditional healer, knowledge of healing practice, and age. Ethno-zoological data were collected using semi-structured questionnaires. The questions were prepared in English, translated into a local language, and administered through interviews. For each ethno-zoological medicine, the target groups were asked to explain its therapies, preparation methods, diseases claimed to be treated, parts of animals used, routes of administration, and the local name of the species. The information regarding the use of a particular animal for a specific disease was treated as

one user report.

2.3. Data Analysis

The ethno-zoological data were analyzed using SPSS version 21 and a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was used to analyze use-value, informant consensus factor, fidelity level, preferential ranking, and paired comparison.

A. *Use value (UV)*: was calculated for an individual animal to give a quantitative measure of its relative importance to the informant objective.

$UV_s = \sum_i UV_{is} / n$; where: UV = the use value of a species

UV_i = number of use reports cited by the informants for that particular species

N = total number of respondents interviewed

B. *Informant consensus factor (ICF)*: was calculated to determine the homogeneity of the informant for a particular animal to treat a particular ailment.

$ICF = (N_{ur} - N_t) / (N_{ur} - 1)$; where:

N_{ur} = total number of use reports for a particular illness category

N_t = total number of species used for this illness category

C. *Fidelity level (FL)*: was calculated to express the preference of a species to other species in the

management of a particular ailment

$FL = (I_p/I_u) * 100$; where:

I_p = the number of informants stating the use of a species for a particular ailment category

I_u = number of informants stating the use of that species for any sort of ailment category

D. *Preferential ranking*: was made to rank the popular medicinal animals according to their healing capacity of certain ailments. The popular medicinal animal was ranked by the selected informants. Informants were oriented and asked to mark the highest value for most preferred and 1 for the least preferred medicinal animal to treat malaria, rabies, hepatitis, dry cough, epilepsy, arthritis, and asthma. Then summed up values, ranked and illustrated in tables.

E. *Paired comparison*: was used to evaluate the degree of preference of the selected medicinal animals reported from the study area to treat a certain disease. A list of pairs of selected items with all possible combinations was made, and the sequence of the pairs and the order within each pair was randomized and presented to selected informants and their responses were recorded; and total scores were summed up using the $n(n-1)/2$; where n = the number of medicinal animals being compared. The data were summarized using descriptive statistics and presented by percentages, frequency distribution, tables, charts, and graphs.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Demography

A total of 83 informants 85.9% males and 14.1% females and

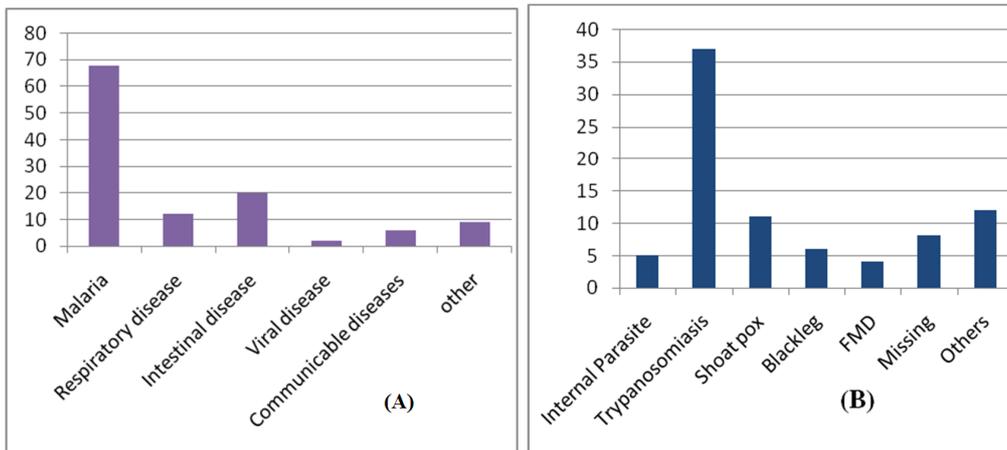


Figure 2. The most common diseases of human (A) and animal (B) in the study area based on informants report.

3.3. Medicinal Animals and Use-value Reports of Informants

In this study, a total of 26 animal species were identified and recorded as a source of medicine to treat 33 ailments. Animal-derived medicines of *Bos indicus*, *Trigona spp.* and *Apis mellifera* were frequently reported species to treat various ailments. Moreover, *Procvavia capensis*, *Labeobarbus*

18 key informants were interviewed with an average age of 50 ± 11 . Regarding their educational status, 49.4% of the informants were unschooled while the remaining 50.6% had attended either primary or secondary school educations Table 1.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of the informants in the study area.

Variables	Name of the Variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
District	Jabitenan	28	33.7
	Semen Achefer	30	36.1
	Bahir Dar Zuria	25	30.1
	Mankusa-Abdegoma	9	10.8
	Jiga-Yelimodar	9	10.8
	Abasem-Zegay	10	12.0
	Sankra	10	12.0
Kebele	Liben-Dankura	10	12.0
	Yismala-Jankti	10	12.0
	Yigoma-Huletu	9	10.8
	Wenidata	8	9.6
	Gomibat	8	9.6
	Illiterate	21	25.3
	Educational Status	Informal education	20
1-4		15	18.1
5-8		24	28.9
10-12		3	3.6

3.2. Common Diseases Claimed by Informants

Informants' claimed, Malaria and Trypanosomiasis was the most troublesome human and animal health problems of the study districts respectively figure 2. However, viral diseases of the humans and foot and mouth diseases of the animal are the least reported health problems in the study districts. According to World Bank report, 61% of the zone area was exposed to malaria and 30% to Trypanosomiasis [24].

spp. and *Hyaenidae carnivora*, and other animal-derived medicines were also used to treat different ailments (Table 2.). Based on [15] study of 24 animals had been recorded and used as sources of remedies in the Metema district of Gendewuha and Kumeraaftit kebeles as traditional medicine.

Use value report of the 83 informants showed that *Bos indicus*, *Trigona spp.*, *Apis mellifera*, *Hyaenidae carnivora*, and *Labeobarbus spp.* were the most frequent use-value

reports (84%, 52%, 43%, 37%, and 36%), respectively. However, Tortoise, Spider, and Guinea fowl were the least use-value report of animal species (4%, 4%, and 2%) respectively as shown in Table 2. The higher use-value of animal traditional

medicine indicates that particular animal species are used by a large number of people while a lower use value shows that the respondents disagree on the use of that particular animal species for the treatment of ailment [25].

Table 2. Medicinal animal species used by traditional medicine practitioner and its use-value reports of individual animal species based on their relative importance.

№	Species Name/Animal taxon	English Name	Local Name	∑iUVis	UV	%UV
1	<i>Clarias gariepinus</i>	Catfish	Ambaza assa	4	0.05	5
2	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>	Bush pig	Asama	10	0.12	12
3	<i>Bos indicus</i>	Cattle	Ykenede Kbite	70	0.84	84
4	<i>Equus asinus</i>	Donkey	Aheya	4	0.05	5
5	<i>Gallus domesticus</i>	Chicken	Doro	14	0.17	17
6	<i>Capra hircus</i>	Goat	Fiyel	15	0.18	18
7	<i>Hystrix cristata</i>	Porcupine	Jart	10	0.12	12
8	<i>Hyaenidae carnivora</i>	Hyena	Jib	31	0.37	37
9	<i>Phacochoerus africanus</i>	Warthog	Kerkerro	17	0.2	20
10	<i>Phyllophaga spp.</i>	White grub	Qimburs	5	0.06	6
11	<i>Perdix perdix</i>	Partridge	Qoqe	10	0.12	12
12	<i>Silvicopra grimmer</i>	Antelope	Midako	4	0.05	5
13	<i>Panthera pardus</i>	Leopard	Nebir	4	0.05	5
14	<i>Labeobarbus spp.</i>	White fish	Nechasa	30	0.36	36
15	<i>Apis mellifera</i>	Honeybee	Nib	36	0.43	43
16	<i>Lopus starkii</i>	Rabbit	Tinchel	4	0.05	5
17	<i>Procavia capensis</i>	Wood chuck	Shikoko	17	0.2	20
18	<i>Trigona spp.</i>	Stingless bee	Tazma Nib	43	0.52	52
19	<i>Liotrigona spp.</i>	Stingless bee	Tinign	15	0.18	18
20	<i>Chiroptera spp.</i>	Bat	Yeletitwof	10	0.12	12
21	<i>Python sebae</i>	Python	Zendo	9	0.11	11
22	<i>Papio anubis</i>	Baboon	Zinjero	6	0.07	7
23	<i>Numida meleagris</i>	Guinea fowl	Jigra	2	0.02	2
24	<i>Testudinidae</i>	Tortoise	Eli	3	0.04	4
25		Snake	Ebab	5	0.06	6
26		Spider	Shererit	3	0.04	4

3.4. Animal Parts to Be Used for Medicinal Purpose by Informants

A total of 25 animal parts and products were reported by informants to treat 33 types of ailments. Among the total frequency of use report (381) honey and meat took the highest frequency followed by butter (purified butter), milk,

liver, fatty meat, and cheese (stored more than 7 years) were described in Figure 3 and some of them were mixed during preparation. Based on [15] animal body parts used as a remedy of human diseases include fat, honey, milk, butter, urine, feces, meat, skin, bones, bile, liver, eggs, horn, etc. and some of these animal medicines need a mix during preparation [16].

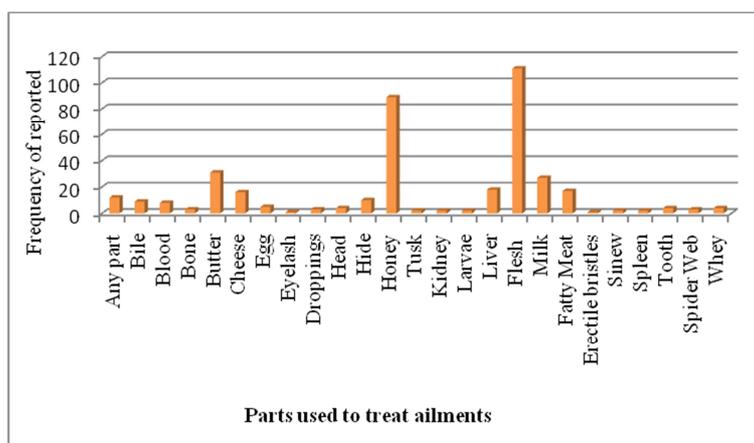


Figure 3. Animal parts and/or products used for the treatment of different ailments.

3.5. Storage Conditions of Prepared Animal Traditional Medicines

Most of the informants (77.1%) stored animal-derived

traditional medicines in a clean area, 7.2% stored in a dry area using glass, and 3.6% stored in a cold area with or without glass. However, 8.4% of the informants did not store

animal-derived traditional medicine. This indicates that the Informants had traditional knowledge of storing animal-derived medicine in a clean area. This understood that traditional medicines derived from animals were more perishable than those medicines derived from plants. Therefore, animal-derived traditional medicines need proper sanitation and protection to enhance their shelf life.

3.6. Informants' Consensus Factor of Ailments Treatment with Animal-Derived Medicines

Based on the informants' report of remedial action, 12 of the most reported ailments were calculated as an informant consensus factor (ICF). Results showed an average ICF value of 69%. The maximum degree of consensus was developed for the remedy of the evil eye (88%) followed by dry cough, swelling, and hepatitis 82% each Table 3. However, Hemorrhoids were the minimum ICF value remedy which is 40%. Informant consensus values below the average ICF value indicate that treatment of a particular ailment was in different animal parts and/or products, which implies heterogeneity of use reports (Table 3).

Table 3. ICF value of 12 selected ailments of treatments with animal-derived medicines.

Disease Category	Nur	Nt	ICF
Abdomenal pain	24	8	0.70
Asthma	12	5	0.64
Dry cough	40	8	0.82
Epilepsy	13	7	0.50
Hepatitis	12	3	0.82
Arthritis	27	8	0.73
Malaria	25	8	0.71
Rabies	9	3	0.75
Swelling	34	7	0.82
Wound	22	11	0.52
Hemorrhoids	6	4	0.40
Evil-eye	27	4	0.88
Σ			8.29
ICF value (Σ/12)			0.69

3.7. Fidelity Level and Preferential Ranking of Animal-Derived Medicines to Treat Ailments

The ethno-zoological uses of animals that are commonly known by the informants have a higher fidelity level (FL) as shown in figure 4. Use of animal-derived medicine from

Liotrigona spp. used to relive dry-cough tend to have the highest FL (80%); followed by *Labeobarbus spp.* for swelling (33%) and a product obtained from stingless bees *Trigona spp.* for dry-cough (30%).

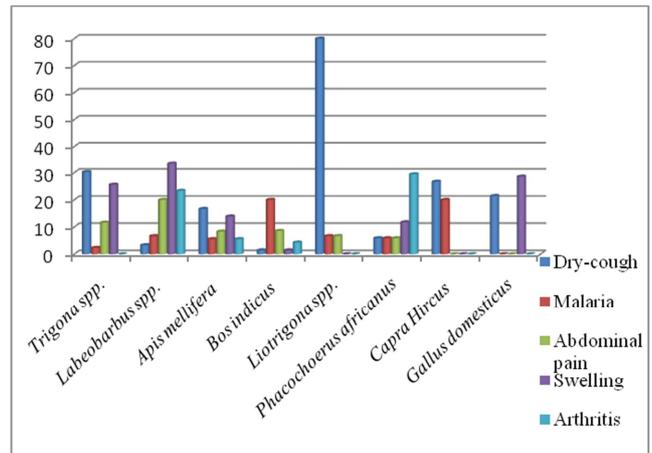


Figure 4. Fidelity level of animal-derived medicines used for treating the selected ailments.

The preferential ranking was conducted to show the preference of one medicinal animal and its parts to the other. This can be conducted when different species are used for the same illness. Based on 18 key informants' reports of 9 animal-derived medicines used to cure malaria, Processed products of *Bos indicus* (Cheese ≥ 7 year and Purified Butter ≥ 2 year) were ranked 1st and 2nd respectively. Therefore, both are used as effective traditional medicine to cure Malaria. Moreover, 'Tazma' honey of *Trigona spp.*, honey of *Apis mellifera*, 'Tazma' honey of *Liotrigona spp.*, Bile of *Capra hircus*, the meat of *Labeobarbus spp.*, and meat of *Phacochoerus africanus* were ranked 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th respectively. However, the meat of helmeted guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris*) was the least preferred animal-derived medicine to cure malaria (Table 4). Moreover, dry Cough was treated with seven animal-derived medicines. Out of these, a chicken egg is the most preferred animal-derived medicine and ranked 1st. Larva and honey of honeybees and 'Tazma' honey of *Trigona spp.* ranked 2nd (Table 5). However, whey of cow milk was the least preferred animal-derived medicine to treat dry Cough.

Table 4. Preferential ranking of 9 animal-derived medicines to treat Malaria based on 18 key informants.

Spp. Name	Parts used	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17	R18	Total	Rank
Bos indicus	Cheese ≥ 7 year	6	4	3	8	9	9	8	9	8	9	5	5	6	7	9	9	9	9	132	1 st
Apis mellifera	Honey	8	6	7	7	8	4	2	2	5	6	3	3	4	9	5	8	8	6	101	4 th
Labeobarbus spp.	Meat	5	7	4	2	5	2	5	7	6	5	8	8	3	3	3	3	4	2	82	7 th
Phacochoerus africanus	Meat	1	2	2	1	3	3	3	5	4	2	7	1	9	1	2	2	1	3	52	8 th
Capra hircus	Bile	4	3	6	3	6	6	6	4	9	7	2	9	2	5	4	4	6	4	90	6 th
Liotrigona spp.	Tinign honey	3	1	8	5	1	8	7	8	3	1	4	7	5	6	8	5	5	8	93	5 th
Bos indicus	Purified Butter ≥ 2 year	9	9	9	9	7	5	9	3	7	8	6	6	8	2	6	6	3	5	117	2 nd
Trigona spp.	Tazma honey	7	5	5	6	4	7	4	6	2	3	9	2	7	8	7	7	7	7	103	3 rd
Numida meleagris	Meat	2	8	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	4	1	4	1	4	1	1	2	1	40	9 th

Table 5. Preferential ranking of 7 animal derived medicines to treat 'Dry Cough' based on 18 key informants.

Spp. Name	Used part	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	R8	R9	R10	R11	R12	R13	R14	R15	R16	R17	R18	Total	Rank
Gallus domesticus	Egg	1	2	7	7	6	1	5	7	6	5	4	3	5	7	7	5	7	5	90	1 st
Apis mellifera	Larva & Honey	7	6	3	5	1	5	7	5	4	6	3	6	6	6	4	7	2	4	87	2 nd
Trigona spp.	Tazma honey	6	5	5	4	4	6	6	3	2	2	7	5	4	4	5	6	6	7	87	2 nd
Liotrigona spp.	Tinign honey	5	1	6	2	3	7	2	4	7	7	6	4	7	2	6	4	3	6	82	4 th
Capra hircus	Milk	3	3	2	1	7	4	1	2	3	4	2	2	3	5	2	3	5	1	53	6 th
Bos indicus	Whey	2	7	1	6	2	2	4	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	3	45	7 th
Labeobarbus spp.	Meat	4	4	4	3	5	3	3	1	5	3	5	7	2	3	3	2	1	2	60	5 th

According to key informants' report of eight species of animals derived medicines to treat Arthritis: meat of *Phacochoerus africanus*, the meat of *Labeobarbus spp.* and meat of *Potamochoerus larvatus* ranked 1st, 2nd, and 3rd respectively. However, the meat of *Procavia capensis* was the least preferred animal-derived medicine to treat Arthritis as shown in Table 6.

Table 6. Preferential ranking of 8 animal-derived medicines to treat Arthritis based on 18 key informants.

Respondents	<i>Apis Mellifera</i>	<i>Phacochoerusa africanus</i>	<i>Labeobarbus spp.</i>	<i>Potamochoerus larvatus</i>	<i>Hystrix cristata</i>	<i>Bos indicus</i>	<i>Clarias gariepinus</i>	<i>Procavia capensis</i>
R1	4	5	8	6	2	3	7	1
R2	6	3	7	4	2	5	8	1
R3	8	1	7	4	2	5	6	3
R4	5	8	4	6	2	1	7	3
R5	2	8	6	3	4	1	7	5
R6	5	8	7	6	2	1	3	4
R7	1	8	7	6	4	2	5	3
R8	1	8	7	6	5	2	3	4
R8	6	8	7	5	1	4	3	2
R9	3	8	2	5	1	4	7	6
R10	4	8	5	7	2	3	6	1
R12	5	7	8	6	3	1	2	4
R13	5	6	8	7	4	1	2	3
R14	6	5	4	8	7	3	1	2
R15	8	5	1	6	7	3	2	4
R16	8	6	5	4	3	7	2	1
R17	4	8	2	6	7	3	1	5
R18	6	8	5	2	3	7	4	1
Total	87	118	100	97	61	56	76	53
Rank	4th	1st	2 nd	3rd	6th	7th	5th	8th

3.8. Paired Comparison of Animal-derived Medicines for the Treatment of Ailments

Paired comparison of 6 medicinal animal species was used to indicate the efficacy and popularity of animal-derived medicines to treat malaria as shown in Table 7. The result of paired comparisons revealed that purified butter ≥ 2 years, Cheese ≥ 7 years, 'Yetinign Tazma' honey of *Lio trigona spp.*, and 'Tazma honey' of *Trigona spp.* were the most popular and efficacious animal-derived medicines to cure malaria and ranked 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th respectively. However, the bile of goat (*Capra hircus*) and meat of white fish (*Labeobarbus spp.*) was the least popular and efficacious animals to cure malaria.

Table 7. A paired comparison of 6 animal-derived medicines for the treatment of Malaria based on 18 key informants.

Respondents	<i>Bos indicus</i> (Cheese ≥ 7 year)	<i>Capra hircus</i> (Bile)	<i>Liotrigona spp.</i> (Yeteneqn Tazma)	<i>Bos indicus</i> (Purified Butter ≥ 2 year)	<i>Trigona spp.</i> (Tazma honey)	<i>Labeobarbus spp.</i> (Meat)
R1	1	2	4	5	3	0
R2	2	3	1	4	5	0
R3	2	1	4	5	0	3
R4	3	3	0	5	2	2
R5	3	4	0	5	2	1
R6	2	2	4	5	2	0
R7	4	0	2	5	2	2
R8	1	4	2	2	4	2
R8	4	5	2	3	0	1
R9	3	1	0	5	2	4
R10	3	0	3	5	3	1
R12	1	5	2	3	0	4
R13	3	1	4	5	0	2
R14	3	1	4	0	5	2
R15	4	0	3	2	5	1

Respondents	<i>Bos indicus</i> (Cheese \geq 7year)	<i>Capra hircus</i> (Bile)	<i>Liotrigona spp.</i> (Yeteneqn Tazma)	<i>Bos indicus</i> (Purified Butter \geq 2year)	<i>Trigona spp.</i> (Tazma honey)	<i>Labeobarbus spp.</i> (Meat)
R16	5	0	4	1	3	2
R17	5	4	2	1	3	0
R18	7	2	3	1	2	0
Total	56	38	44	62	43	27
Rank	2nd	5th	3 rd	1 st	4th	6th

3.9. Informants Attitude on the Conservation Aspects of Animal Traditional Medicine

More than half of the informants (61.4%) reported the current status of medicinal animals' as rare to obtain them and 38.6% of them perceived their status in a declining state. The informants also reported the demand for seeking medicinal animals to treat ailments as rare (74.7%), increasing (20.5%), and decreasing (4.8%). Informants listed some of the threats that caused the decline of medicinal animals such as deforestation, hunting, climate change, agricultural expansion and shortage of forage, overexploitation of animal genetic resources, lack of modern medication, lack of shelter, and lack of awareness. Based on the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment report extinction, overhunting, habitat loss/degradation/ fragmentation, invasion of non-native species, pollution, and climate change as main threats of global biodiversity [26]. There is a massive loss of wildlife across the globe due to over-hunting [27]. Therefore, informants practiced different techniques to conserve medicinal animals. For instance, 80.7% conserve animal traditional medicine by protecting the forests which are shelters of medicinal animals. Moreover, prevention of hunting, application of breeding, and raising awareness of the local people about medicinal animals be also practiced to conserve medicinal animals.

Informants reported modernization harmed the application and use of animal-derived traditional medicine. Because experts abuse traditional healers as well as users to ban preparation and use of animal-derived traditional medicine and they consider it as folk medicine. Thus, modernization made local peoples forget the knowledge of animal-derived medicine. As [17] noted knowledge of traditional healing practices using animals is fast disappearing due to modernization. This showed that the loss of traditional knowledge has much impact on the development of modern medicine [14].

3.10. Inheritance of Healing Wisdom

Informants who practice Animal-derived traditional medicine to treat ailments inherited the traditional knowledge from their parents, particularly fathers (47%), mothers (14.5%), and grandfathers, grandmothers, and brothers (10.8%). Moreover, 12% of the informants inherited the animal traditional knowledge from friends, community neighbors, monks, and nephews. However, 15.7% of the informants did not want to reveal the sources of their knowledge of animal-derived traditional medicine. Informants (94%) showed a willingness to inherit the

knowledge of animal traditional medicine to their daughters (56.6%), sons (12%), families (8.4%), friends (2.4%), and researchers (1.2%). Besides, 13.3% of the informants showed a willingness to inherit the knowledge of animal-derived traditional medicine to any interested person. However, 6% of the informants did not want to inherit the traditional knowledge of medicinal animals to any person. Traditional healers in Ethiopia held their indigenous knowledge in secret [19] and showed interest to pass on the animal-derived traditional medicinal knowledge orally only to their eldest son, at their old age [28].

The attitude of urban inhabitants towards the use of traditional medicine

A total of 57 individuals (73.3% males and 26.3% females) of urban dwellers were interviewed to assess the use of traditional medicine derived from animals, of which, 43.9% were district Livestock and Fishery expertise including animal health experts, 29.8% are extension agents and 26.3% were district health expertise and officers.

Out of the total traditional medicine users of urban inhabitants, 56.1% used traditional medicine for treating ailments. However, 43.9% did not use traditional medicine for treating ailments. The reason for not using traditional medicines for treating ailments was the unknown dose of medicine used for treatment, doubts about the safety of the treatment, and efficacy of traditional medicine. Moreover, the non-apparent use, availability and accessibility of the traditional medicine to one's dwelling place limit the preference of using them as traditional medicine.

Users of urban inhabitants (42.1%) used traditional medicine derived from both plants and animals, (12.3%) from plants only, and (1.8%) from animals only. The reason for using much more traditional medicines derived from plants than animals was since most of the world's modern medicines are mostly derived from plants, and science affirmed their efficacy in laboratories. Besides, plant-derived traditional medicines were easily accessible and had a lower price than modern medicines, and easily available. Users of animal-derived traditional medicine reasoned that animal remedies were natural, harmless, fast to treat, used as an ingredient in combination with other plant medicines and some of them are available on markets such as honey, butter, fish, milk, egg, liver, and Tazma honey. 26.3% of urban user inhabitants reported traditional animal medicines were sold for treating ailments such as evil eye, hepatitis, asthma, wound, and sexual disorders.

The knowledge of Zoonotic diseases was assessed in urban inhabitant users of animal-derived traditional medicine. Users 84% knew and listed Zoonotic diseases such as Rabies, Brucellosis, Tuberculosis, Anthrax, and Blackleg. This

indicates urban inhabitants were more educated than rural ones. However, 16% of them did not know about Zoonotic diseases. Urban inhabitant users described major challenges on the use of animal-derived traditional medicine as follows: 22.8% described the challenge as a shortage of supply, 17.5% declared as lack of knowledge, 10.5% reported sanitation problems, and others listed the challenge as the dose of animal-derived medicine used for treatment is an unknown and religious restriction on some of the animal-derived traditional medicine. Moreover, the lack of scientific research and the decline of traditional healers were stated as the main challenges by some of the users. Among the challenges, a shortage of supply is due to over hunting of animals, deforestation, and climate change.

4. Conclusion and Recommendation

Ethiopia is rich in biological resources and home to different ethnic groups, many of which have adopted various techniques to protect their health care systems and uses traditional medicine derived from plants and animals. Animal-derived medicines are an alternative to treat ailments in rural areas. Thus, the results of this study revealed 25 parts and/or products of 26 animal species were used as traditional medicine to treat 33 ailments in the study area. Moreover, this study recorded the most popular animal-derived medicine to cure various ailments. However, the status of medicinal animals and the demand of seeking medicinal animals were rare due to different factors. Besides urban dwellers of government employees were recorded as users of animal-derived traditional medicine.

The following recommendations are drawn from the study

- a) The government must strengthen traditional healers with training, club formation, material and financial support, and improve means of protecting their intellectual property rights. Moreover, continual awareness-raising and training should be given to the community of the study area to avoid egocentric and abusive behavior and to enhance the participatory role of the local people regard to issues of traditional medicinal knowledge.
- b) Researchers such as chemists and pharmacists should undergo a detailed study to identify which chemical constituent of animal and animal products is responsible for the respective treatment of ailments in the study area.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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