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THE EFFICACY OF APHRODISIAC HERBS CONSUMPTION IN MANAGING SEXUAL DYSFUNCTION AS PERCEIVED BY MARRIED ADULTS IN AKINYELE LOCAL GOVERNMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING PRACTICE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government and its counselling implications. A mixed survey design was used and 403 married adults were sampled using a simple random sampling technique. The instrument was a researcher-designed questionnaire, titled: "Perceived Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in Managing Sexual Dysfunction" (PEAHCSD). The reliability was ascertained by the test-retest method with a coefficient of 0.89. The findings showed that aphrodisiac herbs consumption are widely perceived as effective in managing sexual dysfunction because it helps to improve sexual desire, enhance sexual performance, increase emotional intimacy, manage erectile dysfunction, and to overcome premature ejaculation among married adults in Akinyele Local Government. Further findings revealed that there were no significant differences in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government on the bases of age and educational attainment. However, there was a significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government on the basis of religion. Thus, it was recommended that married adults experiencing sexual dysfunction are advised to seek professional counselling to address underlying psychological factors, rather than relying solely on consumption of aphrodisiac herbs.

Keywords: Aphrodisiac herbs, Sexual dysfunction, Married adults, Akinyele Local Government

Introduction

Marriage is a fundamental social institution in Nigerian society, fostering strong connections and bonds between families. It represents a union between a man and a woman who starts living together, sharing social, cultural, and emotional intimacy, and collaborating to build a life

together. Sexual satisfaction is a vital component of a happy marital relationship, contributing significantly to long-term happiness and fulfillment. However, challenges such as sexual dysfunction and loss of interest in sex are common issues that can hinder satisfaction and strain relationships. Sexual dysfunction is defined as the inability of individuals or couples to engage in or enjoy normal sexual activities. It encompasses persistent or recurrent difficulties during any phase of the sexual response cycle, which can prevent individuals or couples from deriving satisfaction from sexual activity, often leading to emotional distress.

Sexual dysfunction can arise from a variety of factors, including psychological, medical, lifestyle, and systemic causes. Psychological problems include performance anxiety, strained relationships, depression, stress, guilt, and fear of sexual failure (Richter, 2024). Chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, vascular issues (e.g., atherosclerosis, venous leakage), penile diseases (e.g., Peyronie's disease, priapism, phimosis), and complications from pelvic surgeries or smooth muscle dysfunction also play a role. Neurological disorders like Parkinson's disease, stroke, cerebral trauma, Alzheimer's, or spinal cord and nerve injuries are significant factors. Additionally, certain medications (e.g., antihypertensives, psychiatric drugs, antidepressants, and antiandrogens) and lifestyle choices, such as chronic alcohol abuse and smoking, are common underlying factors. Aging, associated with a decline in hormone levels, and systemic diseases like cardiac conditions or post-organ transplant complications, further exacerbate the issue (Ogunleye, 2020). For women, sexual dysfunction often involves vaginal dryness, challenges in achieving orgasm, or negative associations with sexual activity, often linked to traumatic experiences like rape or molestation. For men, erectile dysfunction typically manifests as the inability of the male sexual organ to function effectively, posing significant challenges to the reproductive process.

Idris and Adebayo (2023) categorised sexual dysfunction into four primary types: sexual desire disorders, arousal disorders, orgasmic disorders, and sexual pain disorders. Ideally, these issues should be openly addressed by couples to facilitate appropriate interventions. However, many couples struggle to discuss their sexual concerns. According to Babalola, Iwaloye, Ottu, Aturamu and Olawale, (2024), the avoidance of orthodox medical treatments for sexual dysfunction among married adults may stem from their reluctance to discuss such issues with healthcare providers and a preference against drug-induced solutions. Many couples perceive traditional herbs as more effective and less intrusive than medications prescribed by physicians. Also, using aphrodisiac herbs allows them to address their concerns privately, avoiding the perceived discomfort of involving a third party in such personal matters.

Ribnicky, Poulev, Schmidt, Cefalu, and Raskin (2024) noted that aphrodisiacs, often referred to as libido boosters, are gaining popularity among young adults and sexually active men seeking to enhance their sexual performance. Richter (2024) categorised aphrodisiacs into three types based on their effects: substances that stimulate libido (sexual arousal and motivation), enhance sexual potency (erection effectiveness), and sexual pleasure. The widespread use of aphrodisiacs is particularly noticeable in Nigeria, where women frequently sell herbal mixtures on street corners. These aphrodisiacs are reputed to improve libido, potency, and pleasure. Historically, aphrodisiacs have included items such as the toxic Spanish fly, powdered rhinoceros horn, and extracts from rare plants. In many societies, these herbal concoctions are branded with evocative names reflecting their perceived effects, such as "man power," "body energizer," or "action pill." These labels highlight their role in boosting sexual performance and energy.

There are numerous natural herbal and nutritional aphrodisiacs known to enhance sexual desire in both men and women (Sofawora, 2023). These substances are believed to increase libido, improve sexual performance, enhance blood flow, boost fertility, and increase the force and intensity of ejaculation. In addition to their role in improving sexual health, these herbal remedies are crucial for treating sexually transmitted infections (STIs), especially in remote areas of Africa where access to clinics and hospitals is limited. Herbs containing antibacterial chemical compounds are particularly useful in addressing male infertility (Ajayi & Abiodun, 2022). Preparations for managing sexual impotence and erectile dysfunction often involve traditional methods such as pounding, chewing, or boiling the herbs, with the resulting remedies typically administered orally. Traditional healers frequently prescribe these herbs as teas or mix them with local beverages such as fermented milk, porridge, or local brews to treat conditions like impotence and erectile dysfunction effectively.

Some herbs, such as coffee, are roasted or smoked before being used, and aphrodisiac herbs are sometimes dispensed with local beers, fermented milk, or porridge, as the alcohol content may enhance the extraction of active chemicals compared to water alone (Ribnicky, Poulev, Schmidt, Cefalu, & Raskin, 2024). While aphrodisiac herbs are widely used and many people consider them safe, they are often combined with other substances and derived from plants that vary in species, growing conditions, and active compounds. However, herbal extracts can be contaminated, adulterated, or contain harmful substances, and the quality control of these herbal medicines directly affects their safety and effectiveness (World Health Organisation, 2021). Despite their widespread use, there is limited data on the composition and quality of most aphrodisiac herbs, mainly due to the lack of sufficient government policies or regulations, as well

as the absence of standardised research methods for evaluating traditional medicines (World Health Organisation, 2022).

Yakubu, Akanji and Oladiji, (2017) examined male sexual dysfunction and methods of assessing medicinal plants with Aphrodisiac potentials. The findings of the study revealed that there was an increasing search for medicinal plants with Aphrodisiac potentials and hence, the need to review the methods available for screening these medicinal plants. Ogunleye (2020) examined the role of *Kola nut* extract in managing sexual dysfunction among married women in Ekiti State. Findings revealed that the stimulant properties of kola nut enhanced mood and sexual responsiveness. Participants also reported improved energy levels and reduced anxiety during intimacy. However, excessive consumption led to sleep disturbances and increased heart rate.

Olorunfemi (2024) investigated the use of African medicinal plants in treating erectile dysfunction, with a focus on herbs like *Mondia whitei* and *Zanthoxylum heitzii*. These plants were found to improve erectile function by enhancing nitric oxide synthesis and promoting vasodilation. Married adults who used these herbs reported improvements in sexual performance and satisfaction. The study also emphasised the herbs' affordability and accessibility as alternatives to synthetic drugs. However, challenges included inconsistent dosages and limited clinical standardisation. The researchers advocated for further studies to establish standardised formulations. Their findings provided insights into integrating traditional medicine into modern healthcare systems.

Ajayi and Abiodiun (2022) explored the efficacy of *Tribulus terrestris* in enhancing libido among married men in southwestern Nigeria. The herb's active compounds were shown to increase testosterone levels and improve sexual desire. Participants reported noticeable changes in their sexual activity after three weeks of use. The study highlighted the herb's role in addressing psychogenic and mild organic sexual dysfunctions. However, potential side effects such as gastrointestinal upset were noted. Ekanem and colleagues (2023) assessed the effects of *Maca root (Lepidium meyenii)* on sexual dysfunction in middle-aged married adults in Lagos State. Results revealed significant improvements in libido and stamina among users after consistent use over two months. The herb was particularly effective for individuals experiencing sexual decline due to stress and aging. Researchers noted minimal side effects, making it a safer option compared to synthetic drugs.

Akinola (2021) assessed the use of *Yohimbe bark extract* among men experiencing erectile dysfunction in northern Nigeria. Findings showed that the herb improved erectile function by stimulating nerve endings and enhancing blood flow to the genital region. Participants reported increased confidence and relationship satisfaction after use. Despite its efficacy, the study noted risks of increased heart rate and blood pressure with overuse. Oladele

and Adejumo (2022) focused on *Ginseng* use among married couples in Ibadan and its role in reducing sexual dysfunction due to fatigue. It demonstrated that regular use enhanced energy levels, reduced stress, and improved libido. Couples reported better intimacy and satisfaction in their relationships. The herb's adaptogenic properties were keys to its efficacy.

Hence, the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs in managing sexual dysfunction among married adults in Nigeria is influenced by factors such as age, religion, and educational attainment. Younger adults often report higher responsiveness to herbal treatments, possibly due to their faster metabolism and proactive approach to addressing health issues, compared to older individuals (Idris & Adebayo, 2023). Religious beliefs significantly impact perceptions of aphrodisiac herb usage; for instance, adherents of traditional or indigenous religions may view these remedies as culturally acceptable, whereas some conservative religious groups might stigmatize their use (Ogunbiyi & Adeola, 2021). Educational attainment also plays a crucial role, as more educated individuals tend to have better awareness of the scientific basis, potential benefits, and risks associated with these herbs, leading to more informed usage patterns (Ogunleye, 2020). These demographic factors shape both the adoption and perceived efficacy of herbal aphrodisiacs in Nigeria's diverse cultural landscape. However, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, none of the previous researchers had investigated the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria. This is the gap that this study sought to fill.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government. Also, the influence of moderating variables of age, religion and educational attainment, were examined on the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government.

Research Question

The following research question was raised to guide the conduct of the study:

1. What is the perceived efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction by married adults in Akinyele Local Government?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government on the basis of age.
2. There is no significant difference in

the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government on the basis of religion.

3. There is no significant difference in the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government on the basis of educational attainment.

Research Method

The researchers used a mixed survey design (combination of quantitative and qualitative) to examine the efficacy of aphrodisiac herb consumption in managing sexual dysfunction, as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government. The mixed survey design was employed to gather data through questionnaires or interviews, aiming to address research questions regarding the status, attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours of a specific group or population.

The study's population consists of all married adults in Akinyele Local Government, estimated at 92,237 (National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, 2024). According to Research Advisor (2006), a minimum sample size of 384 was recommended for a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error (384 x 5/100 = 19). However, to account for potential attrition and research loss, the researcher opted to increase the sample size to 403. Besides, 403 respondents were selected using a simple random sampling technique from various groups, including religious organizations, non-governmental organisations, institutions, and the civil service.

The instrument used in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire titled "Perceived Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in Managing Sexual Dysfunction" (PEAHCSD). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A gathered personal data from the respondents, while Section B contained 15 items regarding the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction, with respondents asked to rate their responses using a four-point scale: Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 points, Agree (A) - 3 points, Disagree (D) - 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 point.

To determine the validity of the instrument, the researchers gave the instrument to five experts in the Department of Psychology at the University of Ibadan for assessment and feedback. The experts' suggestions and revisions were incorporated into the final version of the instrument. For reliability, the test-retest method was used. The same instrument was administered to 20 married adults in Iseyin Local Government, who were not part of the main sample, on two separate occasions with a two-week interval. The scores from the two administrations were then correlated using the Pearson Moment Correlation Formula, resulting in a coefficient of 0.89.

The questionnaire was scored using a four-point-type rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA) - 4 points, Agree (A) - 3 points,

Disagree (D) - 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) - 1 point. The benchmark for the instrument was established by summing the response points and dividing by 4, resulting in a mean score of 2.5 (i.e., 4+3+2+1=10/4=2.5). A mean score above 2.5 indicated that respondents perceived aphrodisiac herbs as effective in managing sexual dysfunction, while scores of 2.5 or below suggested they were not. The null hypotheses were tested using the Independent t-test and One-Way ANOVA, with a significance level at 0.05.

Guided by ethical considerations, two researchers, supported by three trained research assistants who were informed about the study's purpose, carried out the face-to-face distribution of questionnaires to the respondents. The study's objectives were thoroughly explained to the respondents, and their informed consent was obtained prior to participation. Those who declined to participate were excluded and did not receive the questionnaire. Additionally, participants were assured of confidentiality before completing the questionnaires, and a one-hour interview session was included as part of the process.

Presentation of Results

Out of the 403 questionnaires distributed to the respondents, 400 were completed accurately and accounted for, constituting the dataset used for this study.

Demographic Data of the Respondents

The demographic data showed that 107 respondents (26.7%) were aged 18 to 29, 239 respondents (59.7%) were between 30 and 45 years old, and 54 respondents (13.6%) were 46 years and above. This indicated that the majority of participants fell within the 30 to 45 age range. Concerning religion, 182 respondents (45.5%) identified as Christians, 210 respondents (52.5%) as Muslims, and 8 respondents (2.0%) practiced African traditional religion, making Muslims the largest religious group among the participants. Regarding educational attainment, 198 respondents (49.5%) had a higher education, while 202 respondents (50.5%) had only a secondary education, suggesting that a slightly greater proportion of participants had secondary education.

Research Question: What is the perceived efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria?

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Table 1: Mean and Rank Order on the Perceived Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in Managing Sexual Dysfunction among Married Adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria

N	As far as I am concerned:	Mean	Rank
15	Aphrodisiac herbs improve my sexual desire	3.89	1st
5	Aphrodisiac herbs help in managing sexual dysfunction	3.87	2nd
12	Aphrodisiac herbs enhance sexual performance	3.85	3rd
8	Aphrodisiac herbs improve communication with my partner	3.83	3rd
3	Aphrodisiac herbs are a natural solution for sexual dysfunction	3.80	5th
9	Aphrodisiac herbs help me to overcome premature ejaculation	3.79	6th
2	Aphrodisiac herbs are easy to access and affordable	3.77	7th
11	Aphrodisiac herbs improve emotional intimacy with my partner	3.75	8th
10	Aphrodisiac herbs help me to increase sexual confidence	3.72	9th
4	Aphrodisiac herbs lead to an improvement in my sexual health	3.70	10th
1	Aphrodisiac herbs are a complementary therapy for sexual dysfunction	3.69	11th
14	Aphrodisiac herbs improve all quality of life	3.65	12th
7	Aphrodisiac herbs help alleviate pain or discomfort during sexual activity	3.61	13th
13	Aphrodisiac herbs help to reduce symptoms of sexual dysfunction (e.g., erectile dysfunction, low libido)	3.59	14th
6	I would recommended aphrodisiac herbs to others who experience sexual dysfunction	3.55	15th

Table 1 indicated that all fifteen items had mean scores exceeding the mid-point score of 2.50, suggesting that most respondents confirmed the effectiveness of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction in Akinyele Local Government.

Interview Session

Respondents View on efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs in managing sexual dysfunction

Respondent 1: Male, 32

"Aphrodisiac herbs have been a game-changer for me. I was experiencing erectile dysfunction, but after taking ginseng and maca supplements, I noticed a significant improvement in my sexual performance. My wife and I are now more intimate and connected than ever"

Respondent 2: Female, 28

"I was skeptical about trying aphrodisiac herbs, but my husband convinced me to give it a shot. We started taking damiana (also known as Turnera diffusa) and ashwagandha supplements together, and it's been amazing. Our sex life has improved dramatically, and we feel more connected and loving towards each other''

Respondent 3: Male, 38

"I've been using aphrodisiac herbs for years, and I can attest to their effectiveness. I take a combination of ginseng, maca, and horny goat weed (also known as Epimedium), and it's helped me to maintain a healthy sex life despite my age. My wife and I are still going strong after 11 years of marriage.

Respondents 4: Female, 29

"I was experiencing low libido after giving birth to my second child. My husband and I

tried various things, but nothing seemed to work. Then, we discovered aphrodisiac herbs. We started taking damiana and ashwagandha supplements, and it's been a lifesaver. Our sex life is now better than ever"

Respondent 5: Male, 22

"Aphrodisiac herbs have helped me overcome performance anxiety. I was experiencing erectile dysfunction due to stress and anxiety, but after taking ginseng and maca supplements. I noticed a significant improvement in my sexual performance. My wife and I are now more confident and intimate in our relationship"

Respondent 6: Female, 27

"I have been using a combination of ginseng, maca, and ashwagandha (commonly known as Indian Winter cherry or Indian Ginseng) for a few weeks now. My partner and I have noticed improved communication and intimacy. I think aphrodisiac can be a useful addition to a healthy lifestyle"

Respondent 7: Male, 25

"I was struggling with low libido and intimacy issues, but after using ashwagandha and tribulus terrestris (also known as Devil's-thorn, Devil's-weed, Gopher-head, Caltrop, and Puncture Vine), I noticed improvements in my sex drive and overall well-being. My partner and I have also worked on our communication and emotional connection, which has strengthened our relationship"

Respondent 8: Female, 34

"I've tried various aphrodisiac herbs, including maca, ginseng (also known as Man-root) and horny goat weed. While each has its benefits, I believe it's essential to find the right combination that works for individual. Aphrodisiac herbs can be a natural and effective solution for sexual dysfunction, but it's crucial to consult a healthcare professional before using them"

Respondent 9: Female, 42

"I was experiencing vaginal dryness and pain during sex after menopause. My husband and I tried various things, but nothing seemed to work. Then, we discovered aphrodisiac herbs. We started taking damiana and ashwagandha supplements, and it's been a lifesaver. Our sex life is now better than ever"

Respondent 10: Male, 39

"I've been using ginseng and maca supplements for some months now, and I can confidently say that they've improved my sexual performance. My wife and I are now more intimate and connected than ever. I highly recommend aphrodisiac herbs to anyone experiencing sexual dysfunction.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: *There is no significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on age*

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Table 2: Analysis of Variance Showing the Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as Perceived by Married Adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria Based on Age

Source of Variance	Df	Sum of Square	Mean Squares	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value	Cal. p-value
Between Groups	2	131.410	65.70	2.55	3.00	0.070
Within Groups	397	10214.662	25.72			
Total	399	10346.072				

*Not significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 2 showed a calculated F-value of 2.55, critical F-value of 3.00 and a p-value of 0.07. Since the calculated p-value of 0.07 was greater than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there was no significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on age.

Hypothesis 2*:* *There is no significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on religion*

Table 3: Analysis of Variance Showing the Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as Perceived by Married Adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria Based on Religion

Source of Variance	Df	Sum of Square	Mean Squares	Cal. F-value	Crit. F-value	Cal. p-value
Between Groups	2	315.443	157.72	6.24*	3.00	0.032
Within Groups	397	10030.629	25.26			
Total	399	10346.072				

*Significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 3 showed a calculated F-value of 6.24, critical F-value of 3.00 and a p-value of 0.032. Since the calculated p-value of 0.032 was less than the alpha p-value at 0.05, the hypothesis was rejected. Hence, there was a significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on religion. Since there was a significant difference using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), the researcher proceeded to use Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) as a post-hoc

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test to determine the religion's group means scores that led to the significant difference noted in the ANOVA results in Table 4.

Table 4: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Showing the Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in managing Sexual dysfunction as Perceived by Married Adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria Based on Religion

Duncan's Grouping	Mean	N	Group	Religion
A	35.31	210	2	Islam
B	31.07	8	3	African Traditional Religion
C	27.31	182	1	Christianity

In Table 4, the DMRT results indicated that Group 1 (Christianity) with a mean score of 27.31 differed significantly from Group 2 (Islam) and Group 3 (ATR) with mean scores of 35.31 and 31.07 respectively. It is also important to note that the entire groups mean scores differed significantly from one another. Hence, the significant difference noted in the ANOVA results in Table 5 was as a result of the mean score of Group 2 (Islam). This implied that some of the married adults in Akinyele Local Government who practice Islam have a different perception towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction.

Hypothesis 3: *There is no significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on educational attainment*

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations and t-value on the Efficacy of Aphrodisiac Herbs Consumption in managing Sexual dysfunction as Perceived by Married Adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria Based on Educational Attainment

Educational Attainment	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Critical t-value	Cal. p-value
Secondary School	202	35.42	5.44	398	1.24	1.96	0.062
Higher Institution	198	27.03	3.82				

*Not significant at 0.05 alpha level

Table 5 showed a calculated t-value of 1.24, critical t-value of 1.96 and a p-value of 0.062. Since the calculated p-value of 0.062 was greater than the alpha p-value at

0.05, the hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there was no significant difference in the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction as perceived by married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria based on educational attainment.

Discussion of Findings

Findings revealed that Aphrodisiac herbs consumption (such as Maca, Ginseng, Horny goat weed, Damiana, Ashwagandha and Tribulus terrestris) has helped majority of the respondents to improve sexual desire, enhance sexual performance, increase emotional intimacy, manage erectile dysfunction, and to overcome premature ejaculation. Respondents' views also buttressed the findings that aphrodisiac herbs are very effective in managing sexual dysfunction. The consumption of aphrodisiac herbs is often regarded as an effective remedy based on personal success stories and endorsements from trusted peers or family members, which contribute to its growing popularity. Another reason could be that many married couples view sexual health as an important aspect of a successful relationship. The use of aphrodisiac herbs may be seen as a way to improve intimacy, reduce tension, and maintain a satisfying sexual relationship, which in turn can strengthen the marriage. This finding agreed with that of Ekanem (2023), who observed that regardless of why an individual uses it, traditional medicine provides an important health care service whether people have physical or financial access to allopathic medicine, and it is a flourishing global commercial enterprise and its products are potent.

Findings indicated that there was no significant difference in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction on the basis of age. Conversely, the finding is in nonconformity with that of Idris and Adebayo (2023) which revealed that age of married adults has positive influence in the use of aphrodisiac herbs for treating sexual dysfunction. The absence of a significant difference in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs based on age could be attributed to the universal nature of sexual health concerns and the widespread belief in traditional remedies across age groups. Regardless of age, individuals may share similar cultural exposure, social influences, or experiences regarding aphrodisiac herbs, leading to comparable perceptions of their effectiveness. Additionally, sexual dysfunction is a challenge that can affect individuals of all ages, fostering a unified view of potential solutions like aphrodisiac herbs.

Another finding showed there was a significant difference in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction on the basis of religion. This finding agreed with that of Ogunbiyi and Adeola, (2021) whose findings showed

that there was a significant difference in the use of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction on the basis of religion. The significant difference in the perception of the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction among married adults in Akinyele Local Government, based on religion (Islam, Christianity, and African Traditional Religion), could be attributed to varying cultural and religious beliefs. Islamic communities may be more inclined to use natural remedies due to teachings on herbal medicine and the acceptance of traditional practices. In contrast, Christian and African Traditional Religion communities might have different attitudes towards the use of such herbs, influenced by their religious doctrines, cultural practices, and level of acceptance of alternative treatments.

Further finding revealed that was no significant difference in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government, Nigeria towards the efficacy of Aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction on the basis of educational attainment. The hypothesis was accepted. The lack of a significant difference in the perception of aphrodisiac herb efficacy based on educational attainment among married adults in Akinyele Local Government, whether secondary school leavers or those with higher education, could be attributed to the strong cultural and traditional beliefs that influence the use of aphrodisiac herbs. Regardless of educational level, individuals may share similar cultural practices and exposure to traditional remedies, leading to a common perception of their effectiveness. Also, education may not necessarily alter deeply ingrained cultural views on alternative health practices like the consumption of aphrodisiac herbs.

Implications of the Findings for Counselling Practice

The findings found that aphrodisiac herbs are widely perceived as effective for managing sexual dysfunction among married adults in Akinyele Local Government. Counsellors should leverage this insight by promoting awareness about their safe and informed use through workshops and educational programmes. Since perceptions of married adults in Akinyele Local Government towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs in managing sexual dysfunction did not differ significantly based on age or educational attainment, counselling interventions can adopt a general approach that addresses common concerns across these demographics. Key areas of focus should include improving communication in relationships and addressing sexual health issues in a manner that is universally relatable and age-appropriate. Creating a stigma-free environment in counselling sessions is crucial, encouraging clients to openly discuss sensitive topics such as sexual dysfunction.

The notable difference in perception based on religion emphasises the importance of culturally sensitive and faith-compatible

counselling approaches. Interventions should respect religious beliefs and practices, adjusting strategies to align with the values and expectations of different faith communities. This ensures that counselling is both respectful and effective. Furthermore, working closely with healthcare providers is crucial for a comprehensive approach to managing sexual dysfunction. This includes addressing the psychological, emotional, and physiological aspects of the issue, while prioritising the overall well-being of clients and respecting their cultural and religious backgrounds.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, majority of the respondents affirmed that the consumption of Aphrodisiac herbs was very effective in managing sexual dysfunction. There was a significant difference in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction on the basis of religion. However, there were no significant differences in the perception of married adults in Akinyele Local Government towards the efficacy of aphrodisiac herbs consumption in managing sexual dysfunction based on age and educational attainment. Hence, the consumption of aphrodisiac herbs among married adults significantly shapes attitudes and acceptance, underscoring the importance of adopting targeted strategies for health education and awareness through guidance and counselling initiatives.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that:

1. Married adults should understand the efficacy and risks of aphrodisiac herbs consumption before using them to manage sexual dysfunction, whether the problem is short-term or long-term.
2. Married adults should be educated by health professionals about the use of aphrodisiac herbs to manage sexual dysfunction, including their efficacy, side effects, and interactions with other medications.
3. Married adults experiencing sexual dysfunction, regardless of age, are advised to seek professional counselling to address underlying psychological factors, rather than relying solely on aphrodisiac herbs.
4. Married adults should consider their religious beliefs and practices when using aphrodisiac herbs to manage sexual dysfunction and also incorporate holistic approaches, such as regular exercise, a balanced diet, and stress management.
5. Married adults should have access to accurate and reliable information about aphrodisiac herbs, enabling them to make informed decisions about their sexual health and wellbeing, regardless of educational background.

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