

Traditional Osteopathic Knowledge In The Village “Manki”: Principles And Representations Of The Body

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the indigenous osteopathic knowledge developed among the Manki in particular and the Bamum in general, focusing on their therapeutic principles and the underlying cultural representations of the human body. Adopting an anthropological and ethnographic approach, the study explores traditional body manipulation practices used to treat musculoskeletal pain, trauma, and certain functional imbalances. The results show that these practices are based on a holistic conception of the body, perceived as a system of equilibrium between physical structures, vital forces, and social and spiritual dimensions. Traditional practitioners employ specific manual techniques: pressure, mobilization, and stretching combined with empirical knowledge passed down through generations. This knowledge is also linked to symbolic representations of the body, where joints, bones, and nerves are interpreted through cultural referents specific to Bamum society. The study highlights the richness and internal coherence of this local knowledge, while emphasizing its role in community health systems. It advocates for scientific and cultural recognition of these practices, as well as for reflection on their potential integration into modern medicine within a framework of therapeutic pluralism.

Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, Traditional osteopathy, Traditional African medicine, Bamum people, Representations of the body.

I. INTRODUCTION

In many African societies, traditional therapeutic systems remain a cornerstone of healthcare. These systems are based on empirical knowledge accumulated over generations and transmitted primarily through oral tradition or initiation. Among this knowledge, traditional osteopathic practices play a significant role in the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, including fractures, sprains, dislocations, and certain types of body pain. Among the Bamum people in general, and those of the village of Manki in particular, located mainly in the Western Region of Cameroon, this therapeutic knowledge is part of a broader set of cultural representations of the body, illness, and healing. Traditional practitioners, often called bone setters or bone specialists, develop specific manipulation, massage, and support techniques that, in some respects, resemble the principles of modern osteopathy. However, these practices are not limited to a biomechanical approach to the body; They are part of a symbolic and cosmological system in which social, spiritual, and energetic dimensions also play a role. In a context marked by the coexistence of modern and traditional medicine, the study of indigenous osteopathic knowledge among the Bamum people allows for a better understanding of local therapeutic approaches and cultural representations of the human body. It also contributes to the appreciation of African medical heritage, which is often marginalized in mainstream scientific discourse.

Thus, this study aims to analyze the therapeutic principles and representations of the body that underpin traditional Bamum osteopathic practices. More specifically, it focuses on the modes of transmission of this knowledge, the techniques used by practitioners, and the cultural conceptions of the body and illness that structure these practices.

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: ENDOGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINES

This section links endogenous knowledge, traditional medicine, and representations of the body and shows that the traditional osteopathic knowledge of the village "Manki" is the expression of a broader system of endogenous knowledge, embedded in traditional medicine and structured by cultural representations of the body and disease.

II.1. Definition of key concepts

II.1.1. Endogenous knowledge

Indigenous knowledge refers to knowledge produced locally by a community through experience, oral transmission, and observation of the environment. In the context of the village of Manki, this knowledge encompasses the therapeutic practices held by traditional healers and practitioners. This knowledge is based on cultural heritage, intergenerational transmission, empirical experience, and the integration of the social and spiritual dimensions of health.

Indigenous knowledge can be defined as a body of knowledge, practices, and representations developed by a community in its interaction with the natural and social environment. In the field of health, this knowledge manifests itself through various therapeutic systems based on observation, experience, and intergenerational transmission.

II.1.2. Traditional Medicine

According to the World Health Organization, traditional medicine encompasses all practices, knowledge, and beliefs related to health, using plants, body manipulation, or rituals to prevent or treat illness. In the case studied, traditional medicine includes: traditional osteopathic manipulations, the use of medicinal plants, and ritual or symbolic practices related to healing.

African traditional medicines constitute complex systems in which biological, social, and spiritual dimensions are closely intertwined. Unlike biomedical medicine, which is based primarily on an anatomical and physiological approach to the body, traditional therapeutic systems adopt a holistic view of health. The body is considered a dynamic set of forces whose balance determines the individual's well-being.

Within this framework, traditional osteopathic practices can be understood as techniques for rebalancing the body, aiming to restore harmony between the various physical and symbolic components of the organism.

II.1.3 Traditional Osteopathic Knowledge

Traditional osteopathic knowledge refers to local body manipulation techniques aimed at treating fractures, dislocations, and muscular or joint pain. This knowledge is based on empirical anatomy, specific manual techniques, and cultural rules of practice.

II.1.4 Representations of the Body

Representations of the body refer to how a society conceives of the structure of the human body, the causes of illness, and the relationships between the body, mind, and the social world. In the context of the "Manki" village, the body can be perceived as a physical system (bones, muscles, joints), a space of energetic or spiritual balance, and an element integrated into the social and cosmic order.

II.2. Conceptual Articulation

The conceptual framework is based on the idea that: endogenous knowledge structures traditional medicine practices, including traditional osteopathic knowledge, which is influenced by cultural representations of the body.

Thus:

Endogenous knowledge (constitutes the cognitive and cultural basis);



Traditional medicine



represents the local healthcare system;



Traditional osteopathic knowledge (is a therapeutic specialization within this system);

Representations of the body (guide the understanding of pathologies and treatment methods).

III. SOCIOCULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE BAMUM

The Bamum people in general, and the Manki people in particular, are primarily located in the Noun department of western Cameroon, with the city of Foumban as their historical center. Heirs to an ancient and structured kingdom, the Bamum possess a rich cultural heritage that includes particularly well-developed political, artistic, and religious traditions. In Bamum society, health and illness are not interpreted solely in biological terms. They are also linked to social relationships, invisible forces, and the balance between the individual and their environment. Traditional healers therefore occupy a central place in community health management. Bone and joint specialists constitute a specific category of healers. Their expertise is recognized in the treatment of bodily injuries, particularly in rural areas where access to hospitals may be limited.

The socio-cultural context of the Bamum is characterized by a strong traditional organization, an attachment to customary institutions, and a rich cultural heritage from the history of the Bamum kingdom. Despite the influence of modernity and imported religions, traditions continue to structure the social, political, and cultural life of the communities

III.1. The Bamum: Origin and Social Organization

The Bamum are a people of the Western Region of Cameroon, primarily settled in the Noun Department, with Foumban as their historical capital. The Bamum Kingdom is one of the most structured traditional kingdoms in Central Africa. It was strongly influenced by the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Njoya (late 19th – early 20th century), known for: the creation of the Bamum script (Shü-mom), the modernization of the kingdom's administration, and the development of royal art and architecture. This society is traditionally hierarchical, centered around: the Sultan (Mfon), notables and secret societies, neighborhood and lineage chiefs, and extended families.

III.2. Bamum Culture and Traditions

Bamum culture is rich and manifests itself in several areas:

➤ **Religion and Beliefs**

Traditionally, the Bamum practiced ancestral religions based on ancestor worship and the spiritual forces of nature. Today, Islam (very widespread in Foumban) and Christianity are the most prevalent religions, with traditional practices still present in rituals.

➤ **Arts and Crafts**

The Bamum are famous for wood carving, bronze casting, royal masks and thrones, beadwork, and traditional embroidery. These objects often have political and spiritual significance.

➤ **Family Organization**

The family is generally extended and patriarchal. Important decisions (marriage, inheritance, conflicts) are often settled by elders and traditional chiefs.

III.3. The Village of Manki: Local Sociocultural Context

The village of Manki is located in the West Region of Cameroon and shares several cultural traits with the Grassfields peoples. In this village, social organization is based on:

➤ **Traditional Chieftaincy**

The village is led by a traditional chief surrounded by notables. This chieftaincy plays an important role in land management, conflict resolution, and the preservation of traditions;

➤ **Community Structures**

Social life is organized around youth associations, women's groups, traditional societies, and community work (collective farming, mutual aid). These structures strengthen community solidarity;

➤ **Economic Activities**

The population lives primarily from agriculture (maize, beans, taro, yams), livestock farming, and small-scale trade. Local markets play a central role in trade.

III.4. Shared Sociocultural Values

In Bamum communities and neighboring villages like Manki, several values are essential: respect for elders, community solidarity, the importance of traditions, attachment to the chieftaincy, and the oral transmission of history and customs. Ceremonies (weddings, funerals, traditional festivals) are key moments in social life.

IV. PRINCIPLES OF TRADITIONAL OSTEOPATHIC KNOWLEDGE

IV.1. Empirical Knowledge of the Body

In the traditional therapeutic practices observed in the village of Manki, the understanding of the human body relies largely on empirical knowledge, that is, knowledge built from observation, practical experience, and intergenerational transmission. Unlike biomedical knowledge based on scientific anatomy and experimental protocols, this knowledge develops primarily through learning by imitation, progressive experimentation, and the interpretation of bodily signs.

Traditional practitioners thus acquire the ability to identify bodily imbalances through palpation, joint mobility assessment, and observation of posture. The body is perceived as a set of interdependent structures in which bones, muscles, and joints must maintain a certain harmony to ensure health. Pain, blockages, or deformities are interpreted as manifestations of misalignment or a disruption of this balance.

This empirical knowledge is also evident in body manipulation techniques. Through experience, therapists develop a tactile sensitivity that allows them to locate areas of tension or bone displacement. Therapeutic techniques—pressure, stretching, and joint mobilizations—are then applied according to practical principles derived from observing the results obtained with patients.

Furthermore, this knowledge is not solely technical; it is embedded in a system of body representations specific to the local cultural context. The body can be considered a space where physical, social, and sometimes spiritual dimensions interact. Healing, therefore, results not only from the mechanical correction of bodily structures, but also from the restoration of an overall balance between the individual, their environment, and the forces that surround them.

Finally, the transmission of this knowledge generally occurs informally, within family lines or through apprenticeship with a master practitioner. Direct observation, repetition of movements, and accumulated experience constitute the main modes of acquiring knowledge, thus reinforcing the empirical nature of these therapeutic practices.

IV.2. Manipulation and Repositioning Techniques

In the village of Manki, traditional osteopathic knowledge is based on a set of manual techniques aimed at correcting imbalances in the body. These techniques are part of a therapeutic approach that considers the body as a holistic system whose various parts are interdependent. Traditional practitioners primarily use palpation, mobilization, and manipulation to identify and correct musculoskeletal dysfunctions.

IV.2.1. Diagnostic Palpation

The first step in treatment generally consists of careful palpation of the patient's body. The practitioner explores the joints, muscles, and painful areas to identify tension, displacements, or blockages. This phase allows for an empirical diagnosis based on the therapist's experience and tactile perception.

IV.2.2. Joint Manipulation Techniques

Joint manipulations consist of performing precise and controlled movements on a joint to restore its normal mobility. These movements may involve rapid or gradual actions designed to reposition a joint deemed displaced or blocked. The goal is to reduce pain, improve circulation, and restore the body's functional balance. The manipulations are sometimes accompanied by a joint cracking sound, related to the release of gas in the joint during the corrective movement.

IV.2.3. Traction and Stretching Techniques

In some cases, the practitioner applies traction to the limbs or spine. These movements aim to release muscle tension, stretch tissues, and promote the realignment of bone structures. Stretching is often combined with massage to relax the surrounding muscles.

IV.2.4. Repositioning of Body Structures

Repositioning is a central step in traditional osteopathic practices. When the therapist determines that a bone or joint is displaced, they perform a manual adjustment to reposition the structure in what is considered its

normal position. This intervention is based on the idea that the proper organization of body structures is essential for the proper functioning of organs and tissues.

IV.2.5. The Symbolic and Cultural Dimension of Therapeutic Practice

Beyond the biomechanical dimension, manipulations are also embedded in a cultural and symbolic framework. In the local conception of the body, pain or illness can be interpreted as an imbalance between different forces or bodily elements. The therapeutic practice then aims not only to correct a physical dysfunction, but also to reharmonize the entire body and restore vital balance.

IV.3. The Use of Medicinal Plants

In the village of Manki, traditional osteopathic practices are not based solely on bodily manipulations aimed at restoring the alignment or mobility of anatomical structures. They are also part of a broader therapeutic system in which medicinal plants play a central role. The use of these plants is integrated into a holistic conception of the human body, in which the physical, energetic, and sometimes spiritual dimensions are closely linked.

IV.3.1. Plants as a Complement to Bodywork

In local therapeutic practice, healers specializing in the treatment of joint pain, dislocations, or musculoskeletal disorders frequently combine osteopathic manipulations with the administration of herbal preparations. These preparations can be applied in various forms: poultices, decoctions, macerations, or therapeutic baths. Their main function is to facilitate recovery after manipulation, reduce inflammation, and relieve pain. In some cases, plants are used before manipulation to soften tissues or to "prepare" the patient's body for the therapeutic intervention. This association reflects an empirical understanding of the anti-inflammatory, analgesic, or relaxing properties of certain plant species.

IV.3.2. Methods of Administration and Therapeutic Practices

Traditional therapists in "Manki" use plants in several ways:

- Topical applications: crushed leaves or bark are applied directly to painful areas to reduce swelling and promote tissue healing;
- Medicinal baths: certain decoctions are used for body baths to relax muscles and restore the internal flow of vital energy;
- Ingestion of decoctions: in some cases, the patient drinks a herbal preparation to act on the body from within and support the healing process;
- Fumigations or massages with vegetable oils: these techniques aim to improve the penetration of active ingredients and prolong the effects of the manipulations.

These practices demonstrate that plants are not considered mere pharmacological remedies, but rather as elements integrated into a complex therapeutic protocol.

IV.3.3. Representations of the Body and the Symbolic Efficacy of Plants

The use of medicinal plants is also linked to local representations of the body. In the therapeutic approach observed in Manki, certain musculoskeletal pains can be interpreted not only as a mechanical imbalance of the body, but also as the manifestation of a disturbance in vital forces or social and spiritual relationships. In this context, plants possess a dual efficacy: a physiological efficacy, linked to their empirically recognized therapeutic properties, and a symbolic and cultural efficacy, associated with the meanings attributed to plant species in local tradition.

Some plants are thus chosen not only for their medicinal virtues, but also for their supposed ability to purify the body, dispel harmful influences, or restore balance between the patient and their environment.

IV.3.4. Transmission and Preservation of Ethnobotanical Knowledge

Knowledge of medicinal plants used in osteopathic treatments is generally transmitted orally and through initiation. Experienced healers pass on their knowledge to apprentices, often within the family or lineage. This transmission includes plant identification, preparation techniques, dosages, and therapeutic indications.

However, this knowledge now faces several challenges, including changing lifestyles, the gradual disappearance of certain plant species, and competition from modern biomedical systems. In this context, the scientific documentation of these practices contributes to the enhancement and preservation of traditional medical heritage.

IV.3.5. Prospects for Dialogue Between Traditional Knowledge and Biomedicine

The study of the use of medicinal plants in the traditional osteopathic practices of "Manki" opens up interesting perspectives for dialogue between traditional medicine and biomedicine. The pharmacological properties of certain plants could be the subject of in-depth scientific investigations to assess their efficacy and safety. Such an approach would not only allow for a better understanding of the therapeutic basis of these practices, but also recognize the value of local knowledge in community health strategies.

V. REPRESENTATIONS OF THE BODY IN BAMUM CULTURE

V.1. The Body as a Biological, Social, and Spiritual Reality

In Bamum culture, the human body is not perceived solely as a biological structure. It also constitutes a symbolic, social, and spiritual support that connects the individual to the community, ancestors, and the invisible world. In the anthropological approach, the body is considered an "anchor of thought and social order," as societies project their collective values, norms, and beliefs onto the body.

Among the Bamum, this concept is manifested in healing practices, rituals, and symbolic objects that link the physical and spiritual dimensions of the body. Thus, illness is not only interpreted as a physiological dysfunction, but can be understood as a disruption of balance between the individual, spiritual forces, and the social order.

V.2. The Body in Traditional Therapeutic Knowledge

Traditional Bamum therapeutic practices, particularly those related to massage and body manipulation akin to empirical osteopathy, are based on knowledge passed down orally from generation to generation. These practitioners treat muscle pain, sprains, joint blockages, and even fractures through manual techniques and the use of medicinal plants.

From this perspective, the body is conceived as a dynamic system of equilibrium, where bones, muscles, and joints must maintain functional harmony. Disruption of this balance leads to pain or illness. The traditional therapist then acts as a mediator tasked with restoring bodily order.

This approach demonstrates that traditional osteopathic knowledge is not based solely on empirical observation, but also on a local cosmology of the body, integrating symbolic and spiritual dimensions.

V.3. Artistic Representations of the Body

Bamum culture also expresses its conception of the body through the arts, particularly sculptures, masks, and ritual objects. In these works, the human body is stylized and imbued with social and political meanings. Statues and masks often represent kings, queens, ancestors, or mythical figures and embody power, fertility, or the continuity of lineage.

These artistic representations reflect a view of the body as a repository of memory and collective identity. For example, some royal sculptures evoke the spiritual presence of an important figure whose spirit is considered still active within the community.

V.4. The Body in the Symbols and Rituals of the Bamum Kingdom

The traditional symbols of the Bamum Kingdom also refer to a metaphorical representation of the body and its capabilities. Among these symbols are the spider, the double bell, and the two-headed serpent, which respectively represent wisdom, communication, and strategic power. These symbols appear in royal insignia, clothing, sculptures, and ritual objects, contributing to the construction of a symbolic anthropology of the body, where certain body parts or capacities (strength, intelligence, speech) become metaphors for social power.

Furthermore, traditional ceremonies like the Nguon provide privileged moments of collective bodily expression through dances, costumes, and public rituals, reaffirming the identity and political organization of the Bamum kingdom.

V.5. The Body as a Space of Mediation Between the Individual and the Community

In Bamum society, the body is not limited to an individual dimension. It also represents a space of mediation between the individual and the community. Bodily practices (care, rituals, dances, adornments) contribute to the construction of social identity and the integration of the individual into their group.

Thus, representations of the body in Bamum culture reveal a holistic conception where the biological, social, and spiritual dimensions are closely linked. This vision profoundly influences traditional therapeutic knowledge, particularly that which is close to osteopathy, and explains the central place of the body in care practices and cultural rituals.

VI. TRANSMISSION AND LEGITIMATION OF OSTEOPATHIC KNOWLEDGE

In the village of Manki, traditional osteopathic knowledge is transmitted primarily through oral and experiential means. This therapeutic knowledge, relating to the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders, fractures, sprains, dislocations, and certain bodily pains, is generally held by locally recognized practitioners. Their learning is based mainly on initiation and prolonged observation under a master practitioner, often a family member or village elder.

The transmission of this knowledge thus takes place within a social framework structured by kinship, lineage, and relationships of trust within the community. The future practitioner gradually acquires techniques for manipulating the body, identifying bodily imbalances, and using certain plants or substances to complement treatment. This informal training relies on careful observation of therapeutic gestures, practical repetition, and the gradual incorporation of empirical know-how. In this process, the body becomes both an object of learning and an instrument of knowledge.

Furthermore, the legitimation of this knowledge does not rest on academic or biomedical institutions, but on social and symbolic mechanisms specific to the community. A practitioner's recognition is built primarily through the perceived effectiveness of their interventions, the reputation acquired through successful healings, and collective validation by village members. The trust placed in them by patients is thus a determining factor in consolidating their therapeutic status. This legitimacy is also embedded in a system of body representations specific to the local sociocultural context. In the traditional conception observed in Manki, the body is perceived as a dynamic whole where bones, muscles, and joints must maintain a functional balance. Osteopathic manipulations aim to "realign" disrupted bodily elements, thereby restoring harmony and the flow of vital forces within the body.

Furthermore, the practitioner's moral and social standing plays a significant role in establishing their therapeutic authority. Experience, age, wisdom, and respect for community norms all contribute to building this legitimacy. The practitioner is not merely a technician of the body; they are also perceived as a custodian of ancestral knowledge passed down through generations.

Thus, traditional osteopathic knowledge in this village lies at the intersection of bodily experience, social relations, and local symbolic systems. Its transmission and legitimation rely on a set of community practices, beliefs, and mechanisms that ensure the continuity and recognition of this therapeutic knowledge over time.

VII. CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

The traditional osteopathic knowledge observed in the village of Manki is now situated within a context marked by profound social, health, and cultural transformations. These transformations raise several challenges related to the transmission of knowledge, the institutional recognition of local therapeutic practices, and their integration with contemporary biomedical systems.

VII.1. The Transmission and Sustainability of Therapeutic Knowledge

One of the major challenges concerns the intergenerational transmission of traditional osteopathic knowledge. In many rural African societies, this knowledge is primarily based on oral and initiatory transmission, often limited to certain family members or carefully selected apprentices. However, contemporary dynamics such as increased schooling, urbanization, and the migration of younger generations contribute to weakening these traditional mechanisms of transmission.

Thus, in Manki, several practitioners express concern about the gradual disappearance of certain knowledge, particularly that related to joint manipulation, tactile identification of bodily imbalances, and symbolic interpretations of the body. The difficulty in finding motivated or available successors constitutes a vulnerability factor for the continuity of these therapeutic practices.

VII.2. The Relationship Between Traditional Medicine and Biomedicine

Another key issue lies in the relationship between traditional osteopathic knowledge and the modern biomedical system. In many African contexts, patients navigate between several therapeutic systems depending on the nature of their ailment, the severity of their symptoms, or the resources available. This therapeutic plurality reflects a pragmatic conception of health in which different forms of knowledge coexist.

However, this coexistence is often marked by institutional asymmetry. Traditional practices, although effective for certain musculoskeletal conditions (fractures, sprains, dislocations, lower back pain), remain largely marginalized in public health policies. The lack of clear regulatory frameworks and mechanisms for collaboration between traditional practitioners and biomedical professionals limits the possibilities for integrating this knowledge into formal healthcare systems.

VII.3. Transformations in Representations of the Body

The representations of the body that underpin traditional osteopathic practices are generally based on a holistic vision in which the physical, social, and spiritual dimensions of the body are closely linked. In the contemporary context, these conceptions are increasingly confronted with other explanatory models of illness, particularly those disseminated by Western medicine and healthcare institutions.

This confrontation does not necessarily lead to the disappearance of traditional conceptions, but rather to processes of hybridization and reconfiguration of knowledge. Some practitioners thus adapt their discourse by integrating biomedical terms or reformulating their practices to make them more understandable to educated or urban patients.

VII.4. Recognition and Valorization of Local Knowledge

The question of recognizing local therapeutic knowledge is also a major issue. In a global context where traditional medicines are generating increasing interest, particularly in the fields of community health and integrative medicine, traditional osteopathic practices could benefit from greater scientific and institutional recognition.

However, this recognition must be accompanied by ethical reflection on the protection of local knowledge and the rights of the communities that hold it. The documentation and dissemination of this knowledge must avoid the risks of appropriation or cultural decontextualization.

VII.5. Research Perspectives

Several research avenues can be explored to deepen our understanding of traditional osteopathic knowledge in the village of Manki and in other similar contexts:

First, comparative studies could identify the convergences and specificities of body manipulation techniques in different regions or cultural groups. Second, interdisciplinary research combining anthropology, medicine, and biomechanics could contribute to a more nuanced analysis of the therapeutic efficacy of certain practices. Finally, particular attention could be paid to the training trajectories of traditional practitioners in order to better understand the processes of learning and legitimizing this knowledge.

Thus, the traditional osteopathic knowledge of the village of Manki represents a rich therapeutic and cultural heritage. Faced with contemporary changes, its continued existence will depend largely on the ability of local communities, researchers, and healthcare institutions to recognize its value, support its transmission, and foster a constructive dialogue with biomedical approaches.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The analysis of traditional osteopathic knowledge in the village of Manki highlights the existence of a structured therapeutic system based on empirical knowledge of the human body, transmitted intergenerationally within the community. Far from being simply isolated empirical practices, this knowledge is part of a holistic conception of the body, in which physical, social, and symbolic dimensions are closely linked. The body is not perceived solely as an anatomical assembly, but as a space of equilibrium between different forces, the disruption of which can lead to illness. The study reveals that traditional practitioners employ a set of manual techniques involving manipulation, pressure, stretching, and repositioning, all aimed at restoring bodily harmony. These techniques, grounded in observation, experience, and oral transmission, reflect a nuanced understanding of joints, muscles, and bone structures. They also reflect a representation of the body in which bones, nerves, and joints play a central role in explaining pain and bodily dysfunctions.

Furthermore, these therapeutic practices cannot be separated from their sociocultural context. Local representations of the body, health, and illness structure how inhabitants interpret physical ailments and choose their treatment methods. Thus, traditional osteopathic knowledge appears not only as a set of healing techniques but also as an essential component of the community's cultural and medical heritage.

However, this research also highlights the challenges this knowledge faces in a context of modernization and increasing medicalization. The coexistence of biomedical and traditional medicine raises issues of recognition, transmission, and preservation of this local knowledge. Therefore, better integration of this knowledge into health policies and interdisciplinary research could foster constructive dialogue between different therapeutic systems. Ultimately, the study of traditional osteopathic knowledge in "Manki" invites us to reconsider the richness of local medical knowledge and its potential contribution to a pluralistic understanding of the body and healthcare. It also opens up avenues for future research on the interactions between traditional medicine and biomedicine, as well as on ways to safeguard and promote this therapeutic heritage.

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