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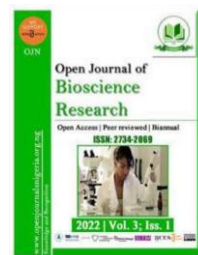
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

MISUSE OF TOPICAL CORTICOSTEROIDS IN THE TREATMENT OF ACNE AND HYPERPIGMENTATION: AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY IN TWO PHARMACIES IN LAGOS, NIGERIA.

***Olukole, E. O. & Fuludu, F. A.**

[Microbiology Department, Basic & Applied Sciences, Babcock University, Ilishan-remo, Ogun state, Nigeria.](#)

[*Corresponding Author Email: olukole.esther@gmail.com](mailto:olukole.esther@gmail.com); [Phone no.: +2349051693786](tel:+2349051693786)

ABSTRACT

[Nigeria witnesses a prevalent inclination towards the use of easily accessible over-prescribed drugs and topical corticosteroids are no different. This study explores the misuse of topical corticosteroids, particularly focusing on the widespread use of triple action creams \(TACs\) \(which combine antibiotics, antifungals, and topical corticosteroids\) in addressing hyperpigmentation and acne. This study was conducted to examine the misuse of TACs and adverse effects experienced by the study population and highlight the association between motivations of use, demographics and respondents profile. A cross-sectional descriptive study was carried out in 2 pharmacies from March 2023 to January 2024 amongst 326 individuals using triple-action creams for skin conditions. Data collection included administering questionnaires and conducting physical skin analyses. Chi-squared and Fisher tests were used for data interpretation. Among 326 subjects, the female population \(81.9%\) was found to abuse TACs the most, and \(84.4%\) of the study population was aged between 21-30 years. Betamethasone dipropionate \(56.8%\) was the most commonly employed steroid used for treating acne \(41.7%\) and hyperpigmentation \(17.5%\). Side effects from prolonged use included sensitivity \(63.2%\), macular hyperpigmentation \(37.1%\), erythema \(29.8%\), and steroidinduced acne \(21.5%\). In conclusion, This study provides recent insights into the population segments most affected by the misuse of tripleaction creams along with current treatment practices and preferences for the treatment of acne and hyperpigmentation within the study population. These findings concerning the adverse effects experienced by the study population underscore the need for regulatory measures regarding the marketing and prescription of topical corticosteroids.](#)

[Keywords: Acne, Corticosteroid abuse, Hyperpigmentation, Lagos, Nigeria, Triple action creams.](#)

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