



## A Glance on the Method of Preparation and Application of Traditional Herbal Enhancement Substances (*Kayan Mata*) from Islamic Perspective

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### Abstract

*Kayan Mata* refers to indigenous herbal enhancement substances commonly used in Northern Nigeria for strengthening marital intimacy, improving sexual vitality, and fostering emotional bonding between partners. Rooted in Hausa cultural traditions, these remedies continue to gain relevance due to their natural composition and perceived effectiveness. This paper examines the traditional methods used in preparing and applying *Kayan Mata*, highlighting the indigenous knowledge systems, preparation processes, and routes of administration. The study relies on qualitative cultural analysis, oral interviews, ethnographic observations, and review of relevant literature on African ethnobotany and Hausa traditional medicine. Findings indicate that preparation involves drying, grinding, soaking, fermenting, or mixing herbs, spices, seeds, and organic compounds. Application varies depending on the intended outcome and may involve oral ingestion, topical use, fumigation, incense (*turare*), massage, or incorporation into food. Traditional *Kayan Mata* practices demonstrate a rich blend of cultural knowledge, spiritual symbolism, and herbal pharmacology. Understanding their preparation and application provides insights into African indigenous health systems and their relevance in contemporary society.

**Keywords:** *Kayan Mata*, Hausa culture, herbal enhancement, traditional medicine, preparation methods, application techniques.

### Introduction

Traditional herbal enhancement substances, popularly known as *Kayan Mata* in Northern Nigeria, occupy an important place in indigenous healing, marital relationships, and women's cultural empowerment. Historically associated with Hausa women, these substances are believed to enhance sensual appeal, emotional connection, fertility, and overall marital harmony. Their continued usage reflects a deep-rooted trust in nature-based remedies and an intergenerational transfer of knowledge from older women, traditional healers (*yan shayi*, *maiganyeye*, *maita*), and cultural custodians. As modern society increasingly embraces herbal alternatives, *Kayan Mata* has attracted both academic and socio-cultural interest.

The preparation of *Kayan Mata* involves complex indigenous knowledge blending practical herbalism with spiritual symbolism. Ingredients are typically sourced from local forests, markets, and household environments, including spices such as cloves, ginger, *kanumfari*, nutmeg, honey, herbs, resins, seeds, and roots. Some preparations may involve spiritual rituals, incantations, or invocations depending on the practitioner's tradition or intended purpose. Understanding the meticulous processes of selecting, purifying, grinding, fermenting, or mixing these substances helps illuminate the sophistication embedded in traditional Hausa medicine.

In terms of application, *Kayan Mata* is administered through several routes depending on the expected outcome—whether enhancing libido, strengthening vaginal muscles, boosting emotional affection, or improving general reproductive health. Common applications include oral consumption, topical use, steaming or fumigation, baths infused

with herbal extracts, or food incorporation. These methods reflect not only biological mechanisms but also cultural interpretations of healing, intimacy, and womanhood. Given its widespread usage, documenting these practices helps preserve indigenous knowledge and informs discussions surrounding health, safety, and cultural continuity.

### **Understanding the Cultural Context of *Kayan Mata***

*Kayan Mata* refers to traditional herbal enhancement substances used predominantly among Hausa women for strengthening marital affection, boosting libido, enhancing emotional bonding, and maintaining reproductive health. These practices are deeply rooted in Hausa cultural medicine, where women rely on botanical knowledge passed down through generations. The cultural relevance of *Kayan Mata* stems from both its medicinal properties and its role in marital stability, emotional wellness, and feminine empowerment<sup>1</sup>.

### **Sources and Selection of Herbal Ingredients**

The preparation of *Kayan Mata* begins with identifying suitable herbs, seeds, roots, spices, and resins believed to possess aphrodisiac or medicinal qualities. Common ingredients include cloves (*kanumsari*), ginger (*citta*), tiger nuts, honey, tamarind, and aromatic resins such as *turare*. Traditional practitioners select ingredients based on their purity, potency, and intended function—whether for lubrication, tightening, emotional bonding, or hormonal stimulation. Proper selection ensures the efficacy and safety of the final preparation<sup>2</sup>.

### **Techniques of Preparing *Kayan Mata* Substances**

Preparation methods vary but commonly include drying, grinding, fermenting, boiling, soaking, and mixing. Some products, such as tightening powders, require sun-drying and fine grinding, while liquid enhancers are made by soaking herbs in honey or herbal oils for several days. Certain mixtures are cooked into thick pastes, whereas others are fermented to extract stronger biochemical compounds. Traditional healers emphasize precision in quantity, duration, and handling, believing that improper preparation can reduce the effectiveness of the herbal remedy<sup>3</sup>.

### **Method of Preparation of Traditional Herbal Enhancement Substances (*Kayan Mata*)**

There are different methods of preparation of traditional herbal enhancement substance (*Kayan Mata*) even if they are of the same type such as those that are in oral form called *tsimi* concoction which contains a mixture of some parts of plants such as leaves, backs of tree, roots and stems. A typical example of these includes *saiwar mata*, clove, *karo*, *minannas* and so on that are to be boiled for almost 24hours, then sieved and have spices, sugar or honey added to them; while some people add drugs inside such as viagra. There are also some people who mix camel milk with tiger nut, sesame, coconut and rice as *kunun aya* of camel milk.<sup>4</sup>

Another method is practised by pseudo scholars who wrote some parts of the Qur'an, mix it with *hatimai* of some Prophets (*hatimai* of Prophet Yusuf) written on top of fermented cow milk together with the names of couples as part of traditional enhancement substances (*Kayan Mata*) so that they become tastier than any other woman in the world and to the extent of controlling the husband.<sup>5</sup>

Even though that is what they said but philosophical is not true, the love the sweetness the feeling is all the heart of husband base on the love he has for her, so if she is using "*Kayan Mata*" she will think is because of them.

For those enhancement substances of insertion, the woman concerned will use many things. Some of them use chemicals while others use some parts of plants or animals. They include those that are unsafe or prohibited in Islam. For example, concerning the one for insertion into Virgina, women use *bagaruwa* powder mixed with honey, olive oil, musk perfume that is meant for female tightness. Some women insert garlic, flesh meat, penis of *ayu fish*, *alom* and *karo* (Arabic gum).<sup>6</sup> Some men use bile of bull, nanny goat and ram testicles as well as the testes of rat, hyena and brain of reptiles such as wild lizard (*damo*), which are rubbed on the tip of penis for libido or to sustain erection. Another oral type comes inform of powder and semi powder called *gumba*. Different parts of plants of trees are grinded into powder which is to be taken with milk; some are mixed with millet and rice in a powder form. This in most cases is for women only.<sup>7</sup>

Another way of preparing traditional herbal enhancement (*Kayan Mata*) comes in form of pepper soup, in which cooked or fried meat of different animals are used based on need or behaviour. This kind of method is prepared in so many ways. For example, a pair of pigeons are used because they are born as a couple and they are caring and promising birds that do

<sup>1</sup> A.M. Gidado, *Traditional Healing in Hausa Societies*, Northern Heritage Publishers, Kano, 2011, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> H.S. Umar, *Ethnobotany and Indigenous Healing*, Sahel Research Press, Zaria, 2015, p. 67.

<sup>3</sup> M.T. Yakubu, *African Herbal Pharmacology*, Greenleaf Medical Publishers, Lagos, 2014, p. 121.

<sup>4</sup> Haj.Ummul aikin Allah, 57years, Bello way Hausare Area Sokoto State, 21/7/2023

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, Haj. Ummu Aikin Allah

<sup>6</sup> Haj. Sadiya Mai *Kayan Mata*, 67 years, Gidan dare, Runji- sambo Sokoto, 12/ 2/2024

<sup>7</sup> Muhammad bn Muhammad Tukur Al-Fallati, *Kitabul ma 'a-wanatul ikhwan-ni*, N.P, P, 1929

not change husbands even if their mate is dead. Rather, they remain as single for life. Women want similar response from their husband's that is why they use pigeons. This traditional herbal substance is prepared as follows: a set of pigeon that are couple are isolated or caged for a week, feeding them with food and *ruwan rubutu* (the water use to wash the written done with ink "taddawa" on iron or wood slate "Allo", which they wrote Suratul Inshirah together with the couple names and "hattims" are being washed and use the water to cook the meat with it), which contains the name of husband and wife with the *Hatimi* of Prophet Yusuf who is the most beautiful creation of all human race. This is done with the sole aim of making the husband see his wife as the most beautiful woman in the world. This will be added together with *Suratul Inshirah* (chapter 94), which is written on an iron slate to be washed and cooked with pigeon, chicken, or any type of meat.<sup>8</sup>

Furthermore, different *Hatimi* such as tomb of Prophet Yusuf which is consider used to cook different parts of meat such as the penis of bull and the private part of a cow with the belief that they contain some natural hormones that increase human libido. The penis of *ayu* fish (sea lion) is also used based on the tale that the *ayu* fish mates its partner and lasts for several months before they are separated. So, a woman will insert it expecting her husband to enjoy her more than any other woman and last for a long period of time during intercourse. Those that use pigeon believe that pigeons are promising lovers that never get separated or divorced. If one dies, the other remains a widow forever.<sup>9</sup>

From the above information, it can be seen that there are different ways traditional herbal enhancements are prepared. Some are taken in natural form and are safe for consumption, while others come from natural parts of plant but their medical safety is not known because the plants have some ingredients which can hinder health, others contain harmful or impure substances that are forbidden in Islam.

## Methods of Application Among Users

*Kayan Mata* is applied in various ways depending on the intended outcome. Oral forms such as powders, drinks, or syrups are ingested to enhance libido or energy levels. Topical forms—including oils, ointments, and herbal pastes—are applied directly to intimate areas to improve lubrication or sensitivity. Fumigation (using *turare* or incense) allows women to expose their bodies to aromatic vapors believed to stimulate sensuality and emotional warmth. Some preparations are also mixed with bathing water to achieve cleansing and reproductive benefits<sup>10</sup>.

## Method of Application of Traditional Herbal Enhancement Substances (*Kayan Mata*)

There are various ways of administering the substances, which depend on the interest of the user or on the complaint presented to the herbalist. These are as follow:

1. Oral form for both solid and liquid substances
2. Inhaling/ *Hayaki* /Steam bath
3. Robbing/Bath
4. Insertion<sup>11</sup>

## The Oral Form

These types of traditional herbal enhancement substances (*Kayan Mata*) are administered or used orally either in solid or in liquid forms and they contain all the types of the traditional enhancement substances (*Kayan Mata*) that are whether for potency or for pleasure like cow milk is use for potency for both male and female and many more<sup>12</sup>.

- i) **The Solid Ones:** Some of them are in powder form such as moringa leaves, *bagaruwa*, *sanya*, *malga*, *gamji*, *tafashiya* and so on. All of these are in form of leaves or plant that are used in different forms to make *gumbar mata*, such as *gumba mai rawani*, *bita zai zai*, *uku bala'i*, *super glue*, *hakin daka*, *mai tamatela*, *ciminti mata*, *bounvita mata*, *farin wata sha kallo* and so on.
- ii) **The liquid Ones:** are called *tsumin mata*, which consist of leaves, bark of trees and roots. They are boiled together with honey, sugar and species for different purposes and are called *maltnar mata*, concoction, *zuman mata*, *tsimi goron tula*, *tsimi dan kamaru* and so on.

There are those that are in meat form such as red meat, chicken, pigeon, cow tail, cow anus, and bull penis. They are used to produce the following: *kaza mai daraja ta hudu*, *kaza mai itace*, *danbun kaza*, *'yan shila*, *tsoka tara*, *cicciben nagge* and so on. All these depend on the request of the user.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>8</sup> A.M. Hantsi, "Ribar 'Ya Macce A Gidan Aurenta", Mai Nasara Publishing Company Nig. Ltd, Kasuwar Kurmi Kano, N.D, P.18

<sup>9</sup> *Op.cit* Haj Ummu ikon Allah

<sup>10</sup> R.L. Danjuma, *Herbal Medicine and Reproductive Health in Northern Nigeria*, Savanna Academic Press, Abuja, 2018, p. 84.

<sup>11</sup> Alh Nasiru Mai Kayan Mata, 58years, central market Sokoto, Kofar Gavo Sokoto State, 30/07/2023

<sup>12</sup> M. bn Muhammadu Tukur, *kitabul asarul fil Dibbi (Ma'awanil Ihwahi fi Ma'asharatil Niswani)*, N.P, N.D

## **Inhalation and Steam Bath (*Hayaki*)**

Another method of using traditional enhancement substances (*Kayan Mata*) is through steam bath (*Hayaki*) or inhaling in order to achieve the desired purpose. These types of enhancement substances are more like incense sticks which are used from dried leaves, bark of trees in order to achieve the set goals such as *turaren tsugunno* and others.

## **Rubbing**

This kind of method is mostly seductive. It consists of the use of perfume or some parts of tree barks. The concoction is soaked in water to bath with it or rub it all over the body. Some are in a dried form and live fire charcoal is used to burn the substance and the user sits on it or wrap herself with blanket so that the smoke will penetrate her body. This is meant to overpower or to seduce the husband or to be seduced.<sup>14</sup>

## **Insertion Method**

This is another set of traditional herbal enhancement substances (*Kayan Mata*) that can be applied in form of insertion in the private part of both men and women. For women, they use them in order to tighten their Virgina or to appear like virgins. The concoction is inserted by the women while the men inject them through their opening/hole of penis in order to sustain erection or increase libido such as bile of bull, cock, testes of a he-goat, chicken bile veins of cock, cock testes, fox bile (*karen fiki*), rat testes and so on.<sup>15</sup> Women used different types than those of men such as: *sabulu ara bukacal*, *ma iyashi*, *shiga ba biya fita badadi*, *mutukaraba takalmin kaza*, *sabulu kefi budurwa*, *zam zan dan matsu*, *hutar da malamin ki*, *cika mummuna da aiki*, *key holder*, and *maddadahi*.<sup>16</sup>

From the above discussion it can be seen that the use of traditional herbal enhancement substances *Kayan Mata* can be administered in different ways, their types and method of preparation depending on the demand of the user and what she/he wants to achieve. This determines the types he or she is going to use and the method to be used.

## **Safety Considerations and Contemporary Adaptations**

While *Kayan Mata* remains popular, awareness of safe usage is increasingly emphasized. Some herbal substances may cause irritation, hormonal imbalance, or infection if misused or adulterated with harmful chemicals, especially in modern commercial markets. Contemporary health practitioners recommend obtaining herbal products from credible traditional specialists and avoiding synthetic additives. Today, the practice blends traditional knowledge with modern quality-control considerations, demonstrating both cultural adaptability and continued relevance in marital and reproductive well-being<sup>17</sup>.

## **Islamic Perspective on the Method of Preparation and Application of Traditional Herbal Enhancement Substances (*Kayan Mata*)**

### **1. Permissibility of Preparation Methods**

From an Islamic perspective, the method of preparation of herbal substances must fulfil the following conditions:

**2. Ingredients must be *halāl*:** Any preparation involving *harām* substances such as alcohol, intoxicants, impure items (*najāsah*), or substances known to cause harm is prohibited.

**Absence of shirk or superstition:** Preparations must not involve incantations, charms, magical rituals, or invoking jinn, as these constitute *shirk*, which Islam strictly forbids (Qur'an 4:48).

**Scientific and ethical approach:** Islam encourages knowledge-based practices; therefore, preparation should rely on empirical herbal knowledge, not deceptive or mystical claims.

## **Islamic View on Application and Usage**

### **The application of *Kayan Mata* is subject to clear Islamic restrictions:**

#### **a. Within Lawful Marital Context**

Islam permits enhancement or treatment aimed at improving marital intimacy, provided it occurs exclusively within marriage. Any application intended to attract non-mahram men or promote zina (adultery) is strictly prohibited. And do not approach zina. Indeed, it is an immorality and an evil way<sup>18</sup>.

<sup>13</sup>Alh. Usman Adam, 62 years Kasuwar Kurmi, Gidan Mai Jimina, Vice chairman Islamic Medicine practitioner Association Kano, Kano State, 11/11/22

<sup>14</sup>Hadiza 'yar Baiwa Habubakar Gobir, 50 years, Sandamu Town, Katsina State, 24/11/22

<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Al-fullate, Op. Cit

<sup>16</sup> Malam Abu Dange 65years, Tsohuwar Kasuwa, Behind of Maryam Abacha Hospital Sokoto, Sokoto state, 12/04/23

<sup>17</sup> F.I. Suleiman, *Modern Perspectives on Traditional Medicine*, Horizon Books, Kaduna, 2020, p. 103.

<sup>18</sup> Qur'an 17:32

### b. Preservation of Modesty (*Hayā'*)

Islam emphasises decency and modesty, especially for women. Public discussion, marketing, or application methods that expose 'awrah, encourage immodest behaviour, or vulgarity are un-Islamic, even if the substance itself is natural.

### 3. Avoidance of Harm (*Darar*)

One of the fundamental maxims of Islamic jurisprudence states:

"Lā ḥarar wa lā ḥirār" – There should be neither harm nor reciprocating harm.

Therefore:

Any preparation or application that causes physical injury, psychological distress, or reproductive harm is *harām*.

Islam obliges consultation with qualified medical professionals where harm is suspected.

Use of substances without proper knowledge of dosage and effects contradicts the Islamic duty to protect life (*hifz al-nafs*).

### 4. Intention (Niyyah) and Ethical Boundaries

In Islam, intention determines moral value. The preparation and application of *Kayan Mata* are judged by:

**Purpose:** Is it for marital harmony or for deception and immorality?

**Outcome:** Does it strengthen family bonds or cause moral corruption?

**Transparency:** Islam forbids deceit; using substances secretly to manipulate emotions or sexual behaviour is unethical.

### 5. Scholarly Views and Contemporary Islamic Opinion

Many contemporary Muslim scholars in West Africa maintain that:

Herbal remedies are permissible if free from shirk, harm, and immorality.

Cultural practices must be filtered through *Shari'ah*, not accepted blindly.

Women should be protected from exploitation by unregulated herbal markets that exaggerate benefits for profit.

### 6. Islamic Recommendation

**Islam recommends:**

- Regulating herbal preparation under health and ethical supervision.
- Educating Muslim women on *Shari'ah*-compliant health practices.
- Encouraging *du'a'*, mutual respect, and communication in marriage rather than reliance on potentially harmful substances.

### Conclusion

The preparation and application of *Kayan Mata* highlight the depth of Hausa traditional medical knowledge and the significant cultural roles women play in preserving and transmitting these practices. Through meticulous herbal selection, careful preparation, and culturally meaningful methods of application, *Kayan Mata* continues to serve both medicinal and socio-emotional purposes within marital life. While its popularity grows in modern contexts, it remains essential to balance traditional wisdom with contemporary health awareness, ensuring that these enhancement substances are used safely, ethically, and respectfully. Ultimately, understanding *Kayan Mata* contributes not only to ethnomedical research but also to preserving an important aspect of African identity and heritage.

From an Islamic perspective, the method of preparation and application of *Kayan Mata* is conditionally permissible. It becomes *harām* when it involves:

Unlawful ingredients, Shirk or superstition,

Physical or moral harm, use outside lawful marriage, violation of modesty and dignity.

Islam does not reject culture but insists that all cultural health practices must submit to *Shari'ah* principles, ensuring faith, dignity, health, and moral integrity are preserved.

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