Research Project of Trainees from India
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1. General Information

Topic: Indigenous Health Practices among the Poumai and Zo communities of Northeast India.
Research Location: Chandel, Senapati and Churachandpur Districts of Manipur state of Northeast India.
Research Objectives:
To document the indigenous health practices of the people of these communities
   a. to recover traditional healing practices
   b. to revive the traditional healing practices
   c. to preserve the medicinal herbs/plants for sustainable uses
   d. to avail the practices to the communities.
Research Problems:
   1. Listing of the medicinal herbs and plants used by the traditional health practitioners – its uses and location
   2. Comparison of the traditional uses of the medicinal herbs/plants with scientific usages.
   3. Identification of the traditional health practitioners
   4. Identification of the medicinal herbs, still in existence or non-existence
   5.
Research Beneficial:
   1. The local communities with less access to the modern medicines
   2. Preservation of the medicinal plants
   3. Development of ethno-science

2. Introduction
Manipur is a state located in the Northeastern part of India. It is one of the 7 sisters’ states in the Northeast India. The state is sub-divided into 9 districts and the research will cover 3 of the 9 districts. The total population of the state in around 22,93,896 (2001 census)1, the same census showed that the total population of the Indigenous People in the state 741,141 and the population of the communities involve in the research will be around 4,00,000.

The indigenous people sustain their lives from own land and resources. Land and forests are the support system around which the indigenous economy and knowledge systems evolved. The knowledge systems were meant to nurture and manage the resources at its most sustainable level without disturbing the ecological balance. Also the nexus between the natural resources and their livelihood system is based on their values, beliefs, practices and cultural norms.

The practices of traditional healing have been in existence in these communities since time immemorial. The knowledge of the practices was not in written form but passed down to the generation in oral description. The practices of the healing and the medicinal herbs and plants had been jealously guarded for sustainable uses. For thousands of years, (medicinal) plants and their caretakers (practitioners) have provided the primary means for the healing and curing of humans afflicted by disease or injury.2. However, the practices have greatly been neglected with the introduction of modern medicine and hospital at some settlements in the districts.

The introduction of modern medicinal practices, medicines and hospital has marginalized the traditional healing practices in these communities. With the introduction of scientific medicines, the curses it brought could not be diminished. As majorities of the communities lives in remote areas, proper and easy access to modern medicine, medicine practitioners and hospital is yet a
huge burden. The cost of the modern medical treatment and medicine is not affordable by the poor population of the community.

3. Comparison of traditional and modern healings (Literature Review)

4. Healing practices in the community (documentation, identification and revival of the practices)

1. Lists of medicinal plants, uses and locations
2. Ethno-science of the healing process (beyond rituals)
3. Physical conditions of the location of the plants (for preservation)

5. Conclusion/Recommendation