

Indigenous Healing Practices among Mothers in the Rural Areas of Pilar: an Alternative Health Care During Covid 19

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ABSTRACT

Since the advent of modern medicine, indigenous healing methods have been used in rural areas. Mothers have a significant role on family's health decision-making, they often manage diseases by keeping an eye on symptoms, researching potential causes, and weighing the family's financial burden before seeking medical assistance. This study aimed to find out the indigenous healing practices among women's in the rural areas of Pilar, Capiz which aims to find out the socio-demographic profile of the respondents; determine the common illnesses respondents family experienced; and determine the indigenous healing practices they used in treating such illnesses. The researchers used descriptive type of research conducted in 6 barangays in the Municipality of Pilar. 1087 women serves as respondents of the study selected through stratified sampling technique. Percentage and frequency were the statistical tools used in analysing the data. Result revealed that seventeen (17) common illnesses were experienced by the respondents. Cough, headache, body pain, parasitic infection and diarrhea were the top 5 common illnesses they have experienced. The respondents practice seven (7) indigenous healing techniques.

INTRODUCTION

Since the advent of modern medicine to the Philippines, indigenous healing methods have been used in rural areas; these methods vary depending on the location. Every community has its own distinct customs, and the information has been passed down from parents to their young offspring. Filipinos place a high value on health, and they often turn to their relatives for support during illness or to more powerful family members like moms or grandmothers. Mothers have a significant role in family health decision-making. They often manage diseases by keeping an eye on symptoms, researching potential causes, and weighing the family's financial situation before seeking medical assistance. Mothers may also use alternative therapies or at-home cures in addition to consulting with family members and spiritual counselors.

Even with the advent of modern medicine, young children are still trained to respect and show affection to older family members in positions of authority. As a result, they prefer to seek adult guidance for treatment and accept adult judgments. The COVID-19 epidemic has given traditional medicine significantly more importance. With the invention of vaccinations, the epidemic seems to be coming to a conclusion, but getting, storing, and distributing vaccines both internationally and domestically will still need a significant investment of time and money.

Therefore, there is still a need for major and urgent study on the effectiveness of medicinal herbs as a complementary treatment for COVID-19 symptoms. Research on the application of lagundi (*Vitex negundo*) and tawatawa (*Euphorbia hirta*) as treatments for COVID-19 individuals with mild to moderate symptoms or those without co-morbidities is being carried out in the Philippines. Current research is being done to determine whether virgin coconut oil (VCO) works as a viable antiviral agent against COVID-19. Regretfully, there is still a lot of false information floating around regarding whether or not specific traditional or alternative medicine items have been legitimately authorized as a safe and effective COVID-19 therapy.

For traditional and alternative medicine to be widely accepted as a useful approach to treating illnesses, it is imperative that the safety, effectiveness, and quality of traditional medications and procedures be guaranteed. In contrast to pharmaceutical medications and other contemporary therapies, however, strict and rigorous regulations are still absent from the use, distribution, and practice of traditional medicine. It is also troubling that there isn't a single, publicly accessible database of traditional medical methods and items. In addition to giving the public accurate and current information on safe and effective goods, such a database is crucial for recording indigenous healing methods for future reference and research projects.

The intention is that everyone will soon possess enough knowledge to make an informed decision when selecting between safe alternative treatments and more traditional ones. In addition to being personally empowering, this gives the constitutional policy protecting and advancing the right to health new vitality. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to learn about the traditional

healing methods used by women in Pilar, Capiz's rural communities as a kind of alternative healthcare during the COVID-19 pandemic. This specifically attempts to: 1. Discover the prevalent ailments that the respondents' family or the residents endured over the course of two years. Identify the native therapeutic methods you employed to cure these ailments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Indigenous Institutional Theory

Indigenous institutional theory is a way to look at how an institution demonstrates its commitment to the Indigenous community, as well as its social and cultural norms, the role of human agency, and the experiences of Indigenous Peoples inside "Western" institutions. The framework is noteworthy for broadening its scope to include the acts of Indigenous leaders concerning the execution of institutional transformation. Lastly, the goal of Indigenous Institutional Theory is to examine the political agenda and institutional underpinnings, as well as the ways in which they interact with institutional rhetoric and differ from one another within the same institutional field.

Indigenous Institutional Theory offers a critical vantage point from which to examine Indigenous experiences and knowledges in respect to other people and in opposition to institutional discourse in a variety of intuitive contexts. It facilitates a deeper comprehension of the function and ensuing significance of Indigenous Peoples within institutional frameworks. According to the authors, it will also make it easier for Indigenous Peoples' voices to be centralised inside institutions. As such, its goal is to support policy makers in creating best practice models for organizations that want to successfully incorporate Indigenous Peoples so that they may exercise their leadership potential.

As stated by Balayan, M. The Agta of Sierra Madre in Lupigue, Ilagan, Isabela have been practicing indigenous or traditional healing to restore people's health for ages. Interestingly, the healing practices have been found to be effective and sustainable. et al. conducted an ethnographic study with the goal of identifying and describing the indigenous knowledge, beliefs, and practices on healing of the Agta. The ultimate source of herbal remedies used by the Agta to prevent or treat a wide range of maladies is nature. Examples of plants with therapeutic qualities include trees, shrubs, wild weeds, and grass. The recognized plant parts—roots, stem, bark, leaves, and flowers—as well as their sap are all consumed or used topically as decoctions. Interviews also disclosed that other wild creatures, such as monkeys, have their fresh blood utilized as medication for specific ailments, in addition to fish bile. There are also healing rituals when the healer communicates with spirits. A soothsayer or herbolario performs these rites. Because of the time-tested efficacy and sustainability of these healing methods, the Agta have clearly shown a great feeling of ownership and pride for them. It is strongly advised that the aforementioned methods be communicated and transmitted in order to facilitate the resurgence of indigenous healing customs.

According to Molina (2018), traditional healers in Zamboanga City are consulted by both wealthy and impoverished people. The many conventional

therapeutic modalities used in the city were recorded by the research. Open-ended interviews were used in a qualitative study design by the researchers. The traditional healers who served as key informants were chosen through the use of purposeful sampling. For documentation, pictures and a voucher specimen were obtained. Three techniques were recognized: herbalism, subada (hilot), and sahuma (mangtatawas). In subada, the healer uses coconut oil or store-bought ointment to massage the afflicted body part. There are sixteen documented medicinal plants in herbalism. The most often utilized plant part is the leaf, while decoction is the most often employed technique. The healer employs tawas, kemenyan, blessed palm, and candle in sahuma. The healer will interpret the image that emerges.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the descriptive research design. This study determined the indigenous healing practices among mothers in Pilar, Capiz.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at the six (6) barangays of the Municipality of Pilar namely: Brgy. San Silvestre, Tabun-acan, Yating, Sinamongan, Dayhagan and Balogo. Pilar is a coastal municipality in the province of Capiz. The municipality has a land area of 77.99 square kilometers or 30.11 square miles. Its population as determined by the 2020 Census was 47,100. Based on these figures, the population density is computed at 604 inhabitants per square kilometer or 1,564 inhabitants per square mile. Pilar has 24 barangays and a household population of 45,244 broken down into 10,757 households or an average of 4.21 members per household as of 2015.

Dayhagan is a barangay in the municipality of Pilar with a population as determined by the 2020 Census was 1,685. This represented 3.58% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of Dayhagan in the 2015 Census was 1,616 broken down into 380 households or an average of 4.25 members per household.

Balogo has a population of 1,442. This represented 3.06% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of Balogo in the 2015 Census was 1,478 broken down into 335 households or an average of 4.41 members per household.

Sinamongan has a population of 2,119. This represented 4.50% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of Sinamongan in the 2015 Census was 2,123 broken down into 496 households or an average of 4.28 members per household.

San Silvestre is a barangay in located in the mountainous area in the municipality of Pilar with a population of 794. This represented 1.69% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of San Silvestre in the 2015 Census was 808 broken down into 205 households or an average of 3.94 members per household.

Tabunacan has a population of 1,911. This represented 4.06% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of Tabun-acan in the 2015 Census

was 1,899 broken down into 452 households or an average of 4.20 members per household.

Yating has a population of 1,148. This represented 2.44% of the total population of Pilar. The household population of Yating in the 2015 Census was 1,229 broken down into 280 households or an average of 4.39 members per household.

Respondents of the Study

The respondents of the study were the 1,0897 mothers from the six (6) barangays in the Municipality of Pilar. Most mothers (259 or 23.83%) belongs to the age group of 41-50 years old, were Roman Catholic, graduated from secondary and were employed.

Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

To identify the number of respondents from each barangay the researchers used stratified sampling technique using Cochran formula. This breakdown as follows:

Name of Barangay	No. of mothers	No of Respondents
Brgy, Balogo	385	179
Brgy. Dayhagan	380	191
Brgy. Sinamongan	496	216
Brgy. San Silvestre	205	134
Brgy. Tabun-acan	452	208
Brgy. Yating	270	159
Total		1,087

To identify the individual respondents the researchers used accidental sampling technique.

Research Instruments

The research instrument used was a researcher-made questionnaire to gather data. One (1) Set of questionnaire was used as instrument to the total of 1, 087 mothers in six (6) barangays in the municipality of Pilar during the year 2021-22. It was composed of three parts: Part I intended to draw the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, religion, educational attainment, and employment status. Part II dealt with common illnesses experience by family members, Part III composed of a checklist to identify the indigenous health practices to cure illnesses, and Part IV dealt with indigenous healing practice used to cure common illnesses. The questionnaire was faced validated by experts in the field.

Reliability of Instrument

Before the final distribution of the questionnaire, it was pre-tested to 30 mothers in Barangay Olalo to determine the reliability and validity of the

questionnaire. The instruments obtained a reliability index of 0.964 using Cronbach's alpha formula showing a high-reliability results.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the actual gathering of data the researcher ask permission from the municipal mayor and barangay captains of the six barangays to allow the researchers to conduct the study. After the permission was granted the researcher approached the respondents and personally administered the instrument to the respondents following the minimum COVID protocol Ample time was given to each of the respondents to ensure completeness of information solicited. After the questionnaires were retrieved, the gathered data were tabulated, processed, analyzed and interpreted.

Data Analysis

The data collected were processed, analysed, interpreted using statistical tools such as:

Frequency count, percentages and rank were used to describe the common illnesses experience by the respondents and the indigenous healing practices by the respondents to cure common illnesses.

RESEARCH RESULT

Steps to test your results here

Common Illnesses Experienced by the Respondents Family

Table 1 showed that there were 17 common illnesses experienced by the respondents and family members. Out of 1087 mother respondents, 90.52% experienced cough (984), 90.43% experienced headache (983), 82.52% experienced body pain (897), 77.37% experienced parasitic infections (841), 59.15% experienced diarrhea (643), 55.84% experienced stomach ache (607), 54.92% experienced common cold (597), 47.29% experienced measles/*tipdas* (514), 35.60% experienced allergy (387), 28.70% experienced wounds/injury (312), 28.06% experienced skin diseases (305), 14.08% experienced dog bites (153), 10.30% experienced chicken pox (112), 9.84% experienced boils/*uyapos* (107), 9.02% experienced mumps/*bayuok* (98), 6.16% experienced problems on pregnancy (67) and 0.37% experienced COVID 19 (4).

The result implied that cough (984 or 90.52%) ranked number one among the common illnesses experienced by the family members of the respondents.

Table 1. Common Illnesses Experienced by the Respondents and Family Members

Rank	Common Illnesses	Frequency	Percentage
1	Cough	984	90.52
2	Headache	983	90.43
3	Body Pain	897	82.52
4	Parasitic Infections	841	77.37
5	Diarrhea	643	59.15
6	Stomach Ache	607	55.89
7	Common colds	597	54.92
8	Measles/ <i>Tigdas</i>	514	47.29

9	Allergy	387	35.60
10	Wounds/Injury	312	28.70
11	Skin Diseases (<i>Bun-i/hadhad/Alipunga</i>)	305	28.06
12	Dog Bites	153	14.08
13	Chicken Pox	112	10.30
14	Boils/ <i>Uyapos</i>	107	9.84
15	Mumps/Bayu-ok	98	9.02
16	Problems on Pregnancy	67	6.16
17	COVID 19	4	0.37

Indigenous Healing Practices by Mothers

Table 2 showed that out of 1087 mother respondents, 859 or 79.02% selected herbalism as the common indigenous healing they practice, 657 or 60.44% chose *hilot*, 409 or 37.63 chose *albularyo*, 407 or 37.44% selected *faith/spiritual healers*, 304 or 27.97% selected *medico*, 206 or 18.95% selected *tuob* and 57 or 5.24% chose *tandok*.

Results implied that most of the respondents still chose herbalism as the number one indigenous healing they practice.

Table 2. Indigenous Healing Practices by the respondents

Rank	Indigenous Healing Practice	Frequency	Percentage
1	Herbalism	859	79.02
2	Hilot	657	60.44
3	Albularyo	409	37.63
4	Faith/Spiritual Healers	407	37.44
5	Medico	304	27.97
6	Tuob	206	18.95
7	Tandok	57	5.24

Common Illnesses and Indigenous Healing Practices

Table 3 showed that Out of 984 respondents who have experienced cough, 307 or 31.20% concur on herbalism, 105 or 10.67% concur on *medico* and 27 or 2.74% used *tuob*. Of the 983 respondents who experienced headache, 479 or 48.73 had gone to *hilot*, 301 or 30.62% opted to herbalism. Out of 897 respondents who experienced body pain, 374 or 41.69 selected *hilot*, 210 or 22.41% selected herbalism, 27 or 3.01% seek the help of *medico*, and 17 or 1.90% seek the help of faith healers. Out of 841 respondents who have experienced parasitic infections, 378 or 44.95% opted to herbalism. For diarrhea who were experienced by 643 respondents, 258 or 40.12 opted also to herbalism. Of the 607 respondents who have experienced stomach ache, 289 or 47.61% seek the help of *medico*, 257 or 42.34% seeks the aid of *albularyo*, 197 or 32.45% opted to herbalism, 185 or 30.48 seek the help of *hilot* and 87 or 14.33% seek the help of faith/spiritual healers.

Out of 597 respondents who experienced common colds, 324 or 54.27% opted to *hilot*, 159 or 26.63% selected herbalism, 127 or 21.27% seek the aid of *medico*, 37 or 6.20% selected *tuob*, and 35 or 5.86% seek the help of faith/spiritual healers. 514 respondents who experienced measles/*tipdas* had opted to herbalism (287 or 55.84%), and 108 or 21.01 seek the help of faith/spiritual healers. Out of 307 respondents who experienced allergy, 368 or 95.06 opted to herbalism, 268 or 69.25% seek the aid of *medico*, Out of 307 respondents experienced wounds/injury, 297 or 95.19% opted to herbalism. Of the 305 respondents who experienced skin diseases 278 or 91.15% opted to herbalism, 69 or 22.62% seek the aid of *medico*, 57 or 18.29% seed the help of *albulario* and 25 or 8.20% seek the help of a faith/spiritual healers. Out of 153 who experienced dog bites, 57 or 37.25% seek the help of *tandok/manug tandok* and 27 or 17.65 opted to herbalism. Of the 112 who experienced chicken pox/*sulalob*, 57 or 50.89% opted to herbalism and 35 or 31.25% seeks the help of *medico*. Out of 107 who experienced boils/*uyapos*, 98 or 91.59% opted to herbalism, 27 or 25.23% seek the help of *medico* and 16 or 14.95% seek the help of *albulario*, Of the 98 respondents who experienced mumps/*bayu-ok*, 58 or 59.18% opted to herbalism, 15 or 15.31 seek the help of *albulario*, 11 or 11.22% seek the help of *medico*. Out of 67 respondents who experienced problems on pregnancy, 40 or 70.15% seek the help of *hilot*, 32 or 47.76% seek the help of *medico* and 25 or 37.31% seek help from spiritual/faith healers. Of the 4 respondents who experienced mild COVID 19, 3 or 75% opted to *tu-ob*.

Data implied that almost all of the respondents who have experienced common illnesses selected herbalism as one of their indigenous healing practice.

Table 3. Common illnesses and traditional healing practices

Common Illnesses	Traditional Practices														
	Hilot		Albulario		Medico		Iers/Spiritual		Herbalism		Tuob		Tandok		
	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	Freq	Per	
Body Pain	897	374	41.69	27	3.01	17	1.90	0	0.00	201	22.41	0	0.00	0	0.00
Stomach Ache	607	185	30.48	257	42.34	289	47.61	87	14.33	197	32.45	0	0.00	0	0.00
Cough	984	0	0.00	0	0.00	105	10.67	0	0.00	307	31.20	27	2.74	0	0.00
Diarrhea	643	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	258	40.12	0	0.00	0	0.00
Common Colds	597	324	54.27	0	0.00	127	21.27	35	5.86	159	26.63	37	6.20	0	0.00
Wounds/Injury	312	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	297	95.19	0	0.00	0	0.00
Allergy	387	0	0.00	167	43.15	268	69.25	109	28.17	368	95.09	0	0.00	0	0.00
Head Ache	983	479	48.73	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	301	30.62	0	0.00	0	0.00
Boils/Uyapos	107	0	0.00	16	14.95	27	25.23	0	0.00	98	91.59	0	0.00	0	0.00
Chicken Pox/ Sulalob	112	0	0.00	0	0.00	35	31.25	0	0.00	57	50.89	0	0.00	0	0.00
Mumps/Bayuok	98	0	0.00	15	15.31	11	11.22	0	0.00	58	59.18	0	0.00	0	0.00
Skin Diseases (Bun-i/hadhad)	305	0	0.00	57	18.69	69	22.62	25	8.20	278	91.15	0	0.00	0	0.00
Dog Bites	153	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	27	17.65	0	0.00	57	37.25
Measles/Tipdas	514	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	108	21.01	287	55.84	0	0.00	0	0.00
Problems on Pregnancy	67	47	70.15	0	0.00	32	47.76	25	37.31	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00
Parasitic Infections	841	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	378	44.95	0	0.00	0	0.00
COVID 19	4	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	75.00	0	0.00

DISCUSSION

People all throughout the world are suffering from a chronic global health crisis, but it is especially bad for those who reside in remote and isolated areas of rural towns and countries. In risky situations, accidents, and crises, patients are left to fend for themselves due to a lack of medical services. Despite being often disregarded, the health sectors react to the crisis and make links with as

many partners and resources as they can. Indigenous healing is now seen as an essential part of healthcare systems. They provide first-aid remediation to patients in order to soothe their emotions before escorting them to a clinic or hospital. The importance of their ability to offer emergency medical treatment cannot be overstated. Traditional medicine in the Philippines preserves the harmony of components in patient treatment. The nation is renowned for having a rich cultural past, which influenced the advancement of both traditional and alternative medicine today. Pilar as one of the last town in the first district of Capiz having barangays which is too far from the town. During COVID 19 pandemic and lockdown it is very difficult for them to go to town proper to purchase medicine and go to hospitals. Most of the mothers who primarily cares for the health of their family members have opted to traditional healers who at that time were most accessible. Cough, headache, body pain and diarrhea as the most common illness experienced by the residents were being brought to traditional or indigenous healers for remedies.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Seventeen (17) common illnesses were experienced by the respondents and respondent's family members for the last two years. Cough, headache, body pain, parasitic infection and diarrhea were the top 5 common illnesses they have experienced for the last two years. The respondents practice seven (7) indigenous healing as alternative to modern medicine. Herbalism, hilot and albularyo were the top three (3) indigenous healing practice by the respondents as alternative to modern medicine. Herbalism is the most common indigenous healing practice by the respondents from 6 barangays. Herbalism is the most indigenous healing practice used by women to cure common illnesses for their family members as alternative to modern medicine.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study is only limited to the traditional healing practices of mothers, This does not covers on the scientific basis on the effectivity and efficiently of the traditional or indigenous healers in the area. A study on the effectivity and efficiently of the different herbals and ointment used by the traditional/indigenous healers maybe conducted.

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