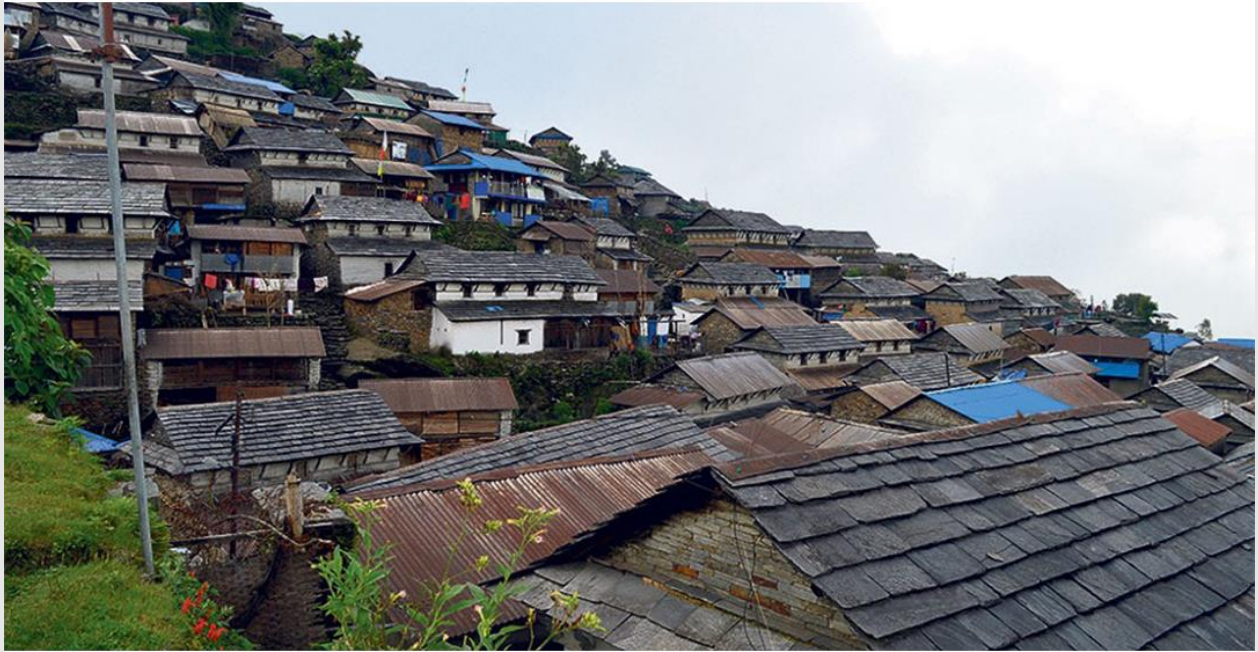


# **Situation of Traditional Method of Curing Illness in**



## **Rural Lamjung, Nepal**

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**A Research Report on**  
**Situation of Traditional Method of Curing Illness in**  
**Rural Lamjung, Nepal**



**Submitted to:**

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-Aaditya Kshetri

# Table of Contents

## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Background
- 1.2 Objectives of the Study
- 1.3 Significance of the Study
- 1.4 Limitations of the Study

## **CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS**

- 3.1 Study Area
- 3.2 Study Population
- 3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure
- 3.4 Nature and Sources of Data
- 3.5 Methods of Data Collection
- 3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

## **CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA**

- 4.1 Preliminary Findings
- 4.2 Finding from the research paper

## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

## **APPENDICES**

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the study

Nepal is a country located in South Asia and is home to a diverse range of ethnic groups and cultures. Traditional medicine has been an important aspect of Nepalese culture and has been practiced for centuries. Traditional healers or "dhamis" and "jhankris" are respected members of the community and are sought after for their ability to diagnose and treat various illnesses.

The practice of traditional medicine in Nepal is closely tied to the country's spiritual and cultural traditions. Many traditional healers use a combination of natural remedies, such as herbs and medicinal plants, as well as physical therapy and massage to treat illnesses. Traditional medicine is often viewed as a holistic approach to health care that considers not only the physical symptoms of an illness but also the psychological and spiritual well-being of the patient.

Despite the widespread use of traditional medicine in Nepal, the country's health care system is predominantly based on modern medicine. Access to modern medical facilities and trained health care professionals is limited, particularly in rural areas. As a result, traditional medicine continues to play an important role in the health care system of rural Nepal.

However, the use of traditional medicine in Nepal is not without its challenges. There is a lack of formal training and education for traditional healers, which can lead to misdiagnosis and ineffective treatments. Additionally, traditional medicine is often not recognized or supported by the government, and there is a lack of regulation and quality control for traditional remedies.

Traditional medicine is also an important component of Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), which refers to the knowledge, practices, and beliefs of indigenous communities regarding the natural world. Traditional medicine systems are often deeply intertwined with the local environment, and rely on a thorough understanding of the ecological relationships between plants, animals, and humans. By incorporating traditional medicine into TEK, indigenous communities are able to maintain their cultural traditions, promote sustainable use of natural

resources, and improve health outcomes. However, the integration of traditional medicine into formal health care systems can be challenging, as it requires recognition and validation of traditional knowledge and practices, and the development of appropriate policies and regulations.

Despite these challenges, there is growing recognition of the importance of traditional medicine in Nepal. Efforts have been made to integrate traditional healers into the country's health care system, and there is a growing interest in research on the safety and effectiveness of traditional remedies.

In conclusion, traditional medicine has been an integral part of Nepalese culture and continues to play an important role in the health care system of rural Nepal. However, there are challenges to the use of traditional medicine, and efforts are being made to address these challenges and integrate traditional healers into the country's health care system.

## 1.2 Objectives of the study:

- To assess overall health situation of Bhujung Village.
- To identify the most commonly used traditional remedies for various illnesses in Bhujung, Khwolasothar-4.
- To investigate the effectiveness of traditional remedies in treating common illnesses in Bhujung, Khwolasothar-4.
- To explore the cultural and spiritual significance of traditional medicine in Bhujung, Khwolasothar-4.
- To compare and contrast the use of traditional medicine and modern medicine in Bhujung, Khwolasothar-4.

## 1.3 Significance of the study:

The research on traditional methods of curing illness in rural Nepal is significant for several reasons. First, these traditional healing practices have been used in the region for centuries, and they continue to play an important role in the healthcare system. Understanding these practices is important for improving healthcare delivery and promoting culturally sensitive care in the region. Second, there is a growing interest in traditional medicine around the world, and the research on traditional healing practices in Nepal can provide insights into the effectiveness and safety of these practices. Finally, the research can contribute to the preservation of traditional knowledge and the recognition of the value of indigenous healing practices. By documenting and sharing information about these practices, we can help to ensure that they are not lost to future generations. Overall, the research on traditional methods of curing illness in rural Nepal has important implications for healthcare, cultural preservation, and global health.

#### 1.4 Limitations of the study:

One of the main limitations is the potential for bias in the data collection process. Because traditional healing practices are deeply rooted in culture and spirituality, there may be a tendency for people to overstate their effectiveness or for researchers to misinterpret the data. Another limitation is the potential for sampling bias. Because the study is focused on rural Nepal, the results may not be generalizable to other regions or populations. Additionally, the study may not capture the full range of traditional healing practices in the region, as some practices may be kept private or not readily accessible to researchers. Finally, there is the potential for ethical concerns, particularly around the use of traditional healing practices that may not have been rigorously tested for safety and efficacy. Despite these limitations, the research on traditional methods of curing illness in rural Nepal remains an important contribution to the field of global health and can provide valuable insights into the intersection of culture, spirituality, and healthcare.



## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Nepal, a landlocked country in South Asia, is known for its rich cultural diversity and traditional practices, particularly in rural areas where access to modern healthcare facilities is limited. Traditional methods of curing illness have been an integral part of the healthcare system in rural Nepal for centuries, rooted in the cultural and spiritual beliefs of local communities. These practices are often passed down through generations and are deeply intertwined with the natural environment and traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) of the region.

Traditional medicine has been an integral part of Nepal's health care system for centuries, and it is still widely practiced in rural areas of the country. In rural Nepal, traditional healers or "dhamis" and "jhankris" are highly respected and trusted for their ability to diagnose and treat various illnesses. Traditional healing methods in rural Nepal encompass a wide range of practices, including herbal medicine, rituals and ceremonies, massage and manipulation, as well as dietary and lifestyle practices.

- **Herbal Medicine:** Medicinal plants are widely used in traditional healing practices in rural Nepal. Local communities have accumulated knowledge about various plants found in their environment and their uses in treating different ailments. This section can provide examples of commonly used medicinal plants, their traditional uses, and how they are prepared and administered.
- **Rituals and Ceremonies:** Rituals and ceremonies are an important aspect of traditional healing practices in rural Nepal. Dhamis or Jhankris, the traditional healers, perform various rituals and ceremonies to seek blessings from deities or spirits for the healing of the patient. This section can explore the different types of rituals and ceremonies, their significance, and how they are performed.
- **Massage and Manipulation:** Massage and manipulation techniques are commonly used in traditional healing practices in rural Nepal. This section can describe the various massage and manipulation techniques used by Dhamis or Jhankris, their purposes, and how they are applied in the treatment of different ailments, such as musculoskeletal issues.

- **Diet and Lifestyle:** Diet and lifestyle practices are also an important component of traditional healing in rural Nepal. This section can highlight the traditional beliefs related to diet and lifestyle, such as specific foods or practices believed to prevent or cure illnesses, and how these practices are incorporated into the overall healthcare system.

A study by Pandey et al. (2016) found that traditional medicine was the first choice of treatment for 40% of people in rural Nepal. The study also found that traditional healers were sought after for the treatment of illnesses such as fever, diarrhea, cough, and colds. These healers often use medicinal plants, herbs, and other natural remedies to treat illnesses. TEK, the accumulated knowledge, practices, and beliefs of local communities about their environment and natural resources, is deeply intertwined with traditional methods of curing illness in rural Nepal. This section can focus on the role of TEK in healthcare practices, including:

- **Indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants:** The use of medicinal plants in traditional healing practices in Nepal is often based on local indigenous knowledge about the properties, uses, and preparations of these plants. This section can explore how TEK is utilized in identifying and using medicinal plants, and the importance of preserving and promoting this knowledge for sustainable healthcare practices.
- **Sacred landscapes and natural resources:** In rural Nepal, certain landscapes, rivers, caves, and other natural resources are considered sacred and believed to have healing properties. This section can discuss the cultural and spiritual significance of these landscapes, how they are integrated into traditional healing practices, and the role of TEK in their preservation.
- **Traditional beliefs and rituals related to the environment:** Many traditional healing practices in rural Nepal involve rituals, ceremonies, and beliefs related to the natural environment, such as offerings to deities or spirits, purification rituals, and other ecological practices. This section can explore the traditional ecological beliefs and rituals associated with healthcare practices and how they contribute to the overall cultural and ecological sustainability of healthcare in rural Nepal.

- Interactions between traditional healers and the environment: Traditional healers in rural Nepal often have a close relationship with the natural environment, as they rely on it for medicinal plants, sacred spaces, and other resources

Another study by Pant et al. (2017) found that traditional healers in Nepal often use a combination of physical therapy, massage, and herbal remedies to treat illnesses such as joint pain, back pain, and arthritis. These traditional methods are often effective, and patients report significant improvement in their symptoms after receiving treatment.

However, it is important to note that traditional medicine in Nepal is not without its limitations. A study by Jha et al. (2018) found that traditional healers in Nepal lack formal training and education, which can lead to misdiagnosis and ineffective treatments. Additionally, traditional healers may not have access to modern medical equipment and may not be able to diagnose or treat more serious illnesses.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of traditional medicine in Nepal, and efforts have been made to integrate traditional healers into the country's health care system. For example, the Nepalese government has established a Traditional Medicine Promotion and Coordination Committee to regulate traditional medicine and promote its integration with modern medicine (Acharya et al., 2018).

In conclusion, traditional methods of curing illness are still widely practiced in rural Nepal, and traditional healers are highly respected for their ability to diagnose and treat various illnesses. However, there are limitations to traditional medicine, and efforts are being made to integrate traditional healers into the country's health care system.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHOD

### 3.1. Study Area

Bhujung is a beautiful and traditional village located in the Lamjung district of Nepal. It is situated in the foothills of the Himalayas at an elevation of approximately 1,600 meters (5,249 feet) above sea level. The village is surrounded by forests, rivers, and agricultural fields, and it is home to a mix of ethnic groups, including Gurung. Bhujung village is one of many settlements in Lamjung that are primarily inhabited by the Gurung community and fall within the Gurung cultural heritage belt. Tea gardens, water mills, micro hydropower generation from its water resources (Midim Khola), and a ropeway for transportation are all available in the village. The Lamjung peak can be seen up close, and the Namuna mountain pass is near the village. Bhujuhng is administratively Ward 4 of the Kwalosthar Rural Municipality. It is bounded on the north by Marsyangdi Rural Municipality, on the south by Pasgaun and Singdi, on the south by Bhoje, and on the north by Madi Rural Municipality of Kaski District. Both the Lamjung peak and the Namuna pass are close by. Bhujhung has a land area of 71.34 square kilometers and a population of 354. Similarly, Bhujhung has a total population of 1596 people, 668 of whom are male and 848 of whom are female (— |, 2022.). Toche Danda is an observation point from which to view Mt. Lamjung, Pokhara, Sikles, and Taanting village. Wild bee honey hunting is a fantastic attraction in the area surrounding Ghimje, Komdo, and Fhanyu waterfalls. This area is home to numerous bird species. Ajomo Santaneswor Mahadev is a well-known temple that is said to grant bare couple's wishes for children. It is believed that if one takes a stone from the temple and sleeps with it overnight, conception was occur. Local residents practice worshipping the Sildo Devi goddess, the guard gods, and the Yumhapo god. Phajau, the Gurungs' traditional language, is still spoken here. Bhujung's simplicity is its dense cluster of houses, one ward (lowest administrative unit) covering the entire village, stone paved lanes, production of its local rice breed, and production of electricity. A green corridor that connects Bhujung and Ghale is under construction.

It is situated on a hilltop and offers panoramic views of the surrounding mountains, valleys, and forests. The village is known for its unique culture, architecture, and hospitality. The village has a population of around 1,200 people, mostly belonging to the Gurung community. With more than 500 households in the village, the village is considered one of the biggest Gurung community in the country. Gurungs are the indigenous people of the Nepal so they are famous for representing Nepal culture and tradition. Despite being such large village, the area can be great example for representing rural population of Nepal.

### 3.2 Study Population

Total 60 people were invited to participate in the question among which 4 were excluded due to incomplete data. It is very much necessary to collect the rigid pieces of information and the researcher thinks about 56 peoples are fruitful and can provide the rigid information for the researcher.

### 3.3 Sampling Size and Sampling Procedure

Convenience sampling was used to conduct this research. Convenience sampling is the easiest, fastest and cheapest because the researcher collects data and information from the people where they are assessable.

### 3.4 Nature and Sources of Data

The nature of the data can be both qualitative and quantitative. The researcher will use primary sources of data for his report. Primary sources are the original evidence of certain events or works. The secondary sources are like interviews, observations, surveys, and so on.

### 3.5 Methods of Data collection

The methods of data collection for the research are Observation, Focus Group Discussion, KII, Personal Interviews, and so on. Apart from the questionnaire which was the base for data collection, a session with ward chairman, and people involved in traditional healings were also

carried out and open-ended questions were asked. This helped to further build on as well as make a mind over how the report was going to be.

### 3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The research will be analyzed through the use of different analytical tools like SPSS, Percentages, Bar Diagrams, Pie charts, and many more.

### 3.7 Ethical Consideration

- Ensuring participant confidentiality and obtaining informed consent.
- Adhering to ethical guidelines and maintaining the privacy and anonymity of participants.
- Conducting the research with sensitivity and respect for individuals dealing with addiction and mental health issues.

## CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

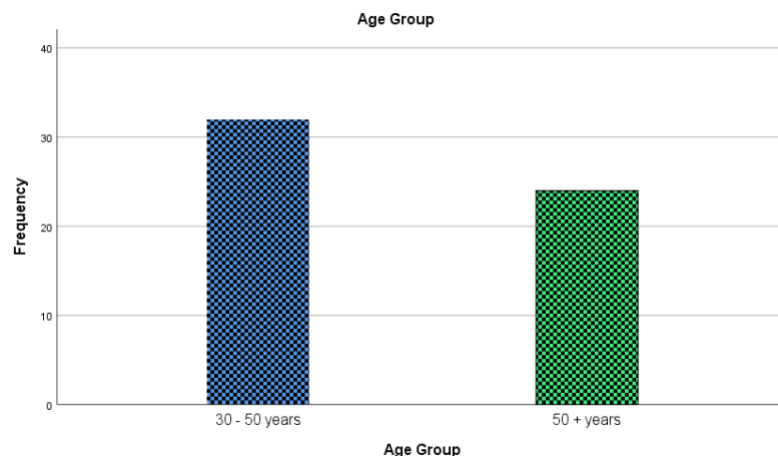
### 4.1 Preliminary Findings

From our first visit, the surrounding and study of environment was done. Different people and person involved in traditional healing. I came to know that there were more than few of them. Despite having two health posts in the village, an old one and a newly established one, the number of people I examined to believe in traditional healing were quite significant.

### 4.2 Finding from the research paper

The conducted research paper had two sections which covered demographic sections and their information and knowledge on traditional medical systems. Following data were obtained from the research.

#### 4.2.1 Age



Due to high number of adult population and very few youths below 30, only two categories of age were prepared. 57.1% of the sample is in the 30-50 years age group, and 42.9% of the sample is in the 50+ year age group. None of the respondents are below the age of 30. Maximum age of respondents was 62, minimum age was 33 and the average age was about 46.

**Table 4.2.1 Demographic Profile of the Respondents**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	27	48.2
	Female	29	51.8
Marital Status	Married	48	85.7
	Unmarried	1	1.8
	Widow/Widower	7	12.5
Family size	1-3	29	51.8
	4-6	27	48.3
Religion	Hindu	30	53.6
	Buddhist	22	39.3
	Others	4	7.1
Education	Uneducated	32	57.1
Attainment	Basic educated	18	32.1
	Well educated	6	10.7

- **Sex:**

51.8% of the respondents are female while 48.2% of the respondents were male.

- **Marital Status:**

Out of 56 people, 48 are married, which represents 85.7% of the sample. Additionally, 7 people are identified as widow/widower, representing 12.5% of the sample. Finally, only 1 person is unmarried, representing 1.8% of the sample.



- **Family Size:**

The table indicates that out of 56 people, 6 of them reported having only one family member, which represents 10.7% of the sample. Moreover, 10 people reported having two family members, representing 17.9% of the sample, and 13 people reported having three family members, which represents 23.2% of the sample. Additionally, 10 people reported having four family members, representing 17.9% of the sample. Furthermore, 14 people reported having five family members, which represents 25% of the sample. Finally, 3 people reported having six family members, representing 5.4% of the sample. The average family size was 3.45.

- **Religion:**

Majority of the respondent were confused between their religions because they followed both Hindu and Buddhism. But when they were asked to choose one, 53.6 % were Hindu, 39.3 % were Buddhist and rest 7.1% were following other religions.

- **Education Attainment:**

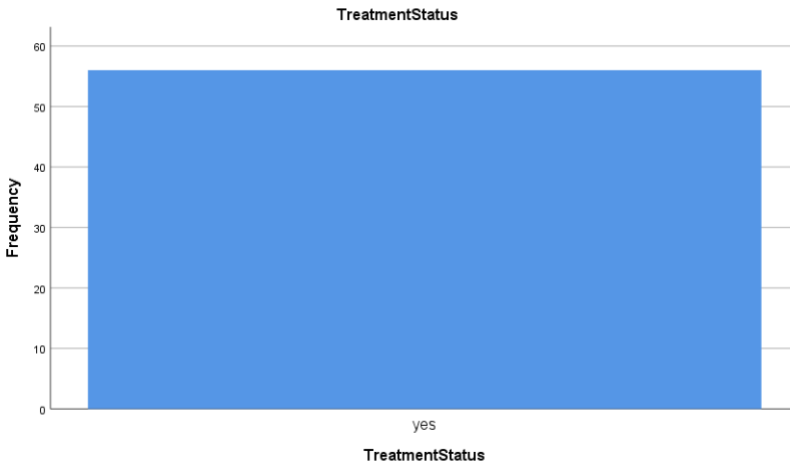
Just 42.9% of the respondent population had taken some sort of education while 57.1% population were uneducated. Even among the 42.9%, 10.7% or 6 people were well educated while the rest has only got some type of basic education.

**Table 4.2.2 Treatment Usage, Treatment Cases and Satisfaction**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Usage Frequency	Rarely	1	1.8
	Sometimes	18	32.1
	Often	21	37.5
	Always	16	28.6
Health Problems	Fever and Flu	26	16.4%
	Headache	18	11.3%
	Stomachache	20	12.6%
	Back pain	29	18.2%
	Fractures/sprain	34	21.4%
	Others	32	20.1%
Satisfaction	Very Satisfied	9	16.1
	Satisfied	29	51.8
	Neutral	17	30.4
	Very Unsatisfied	1	1.8

- **Treatment Usage**

It was found that all of the respondents have gone to seek traditional treatment method at some point in their life so far. Even with the availability of modern health service, all respondents have consulted traditional method at least once.



Source: Field Survey 2023

- **Usage Frequency**

Out of a total of 56 respondents, 1.8% reported using traditional methods "Rarely", 32.1% reported using them "Sometimes", 37.5% reported using them "Often", and 28.6% reported using them "Always".

- **Problems Classifications**

- When the respondents were asked with multiple choices on what problems they seek help for the most, most people chose fractures and sprains as the problem they seek help followed by back pain and Fever/Flus.

- **Satisfaction**

- The respondents were also asked how much were they satisfied by the traditional healing practices. Among 56 respondents:
  - 9 respondents (16.1%) were Very Satisfied
  - 29 respondents (51.8%) were Satisfied
  - 17 respondents (30.4%) were Neutral
  - 1 respondent (1.8%) was Very Unsatisfied

**Table 4.2.3 Treatment Usage, Treatment Cases and Satisfaction**

Variables		Frequency	Percentage
Effectiveness	Much more effective	9	16.1
	More effective	15	26.8
	About the same	25	44.6
	Less effective	6	10.7
	Much less effective	1	1.8
Comfort	Very Comfortable	7	12.5
	Somewhat Comfortable	15	26.8
	Neutral	11	19.6
	Somewhat Uncomfortable	16	28.6
	Very Uncomfortable	7	12.5
Satisfaction	Yes	24	42.9
	No	9	16.1
	Unsure	23	41.1

- **Effectiveness**

- The majority of respondents felt that modern medicines were either about the same or more effective than traditional methods of curing illnesses. Specifically, 44.6% of respondents felt that modern medicines were about the same, while 26.8% felt that they were more effective. Of those who felt that modern medicines were more effective, 16.1% felt that they were much more effective than traditional methods.

- However, it's worth noting that 10.7% of respondents felt that traditional methods were more effective than modern medicines, although not significantly so. Additionally, only 1.8% of respondents felt that traditional methods were very less effective than modern medicines. The small minority of respondents who felt that traditional methods were more effective should also be taken into account and investigated further to understand why they felt this way.

- **Comfort**

- When asked about how comfortable they felt while carrying out the traditional curing methods, slightly higher number of people found it to be somewhat uncomfortable. 19.6% found it to be neutral and 12.5% of them felt very uncomfortable.

- **Recommendations**

- About 42.9% of the respondents suggested that they would recommend traditional methods of curing illness to other people. 16.1 % suggested they would not recommend and 41.1% were unsure of it.

### **4.3 Checklists and KII findings**

While further asking questions about traditional method of curing illness, people responded that most common types of treatment methods were exorcism, local herbs and home remedies and Psychoanalysis. They were combination of these methods rather than solution as themselves alone. Other than that the preference of people towards traditional methods are slowly changing towards modern medicines like everywhere else in the world. As it is deeply rooted thought or belief, it is hard to get rid of people's mind but they are decreasing its use for common problems and only seeks help from it after modern medicine fails. The approach is accurate but it can be a threat to traditional ecological knowledges and Indigenous knowledge. While traditional healing practices have not been rigorously tested for safety and efficacy, many people in rural Nepal report positive experiences and believe in their effectiveness.

## CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

### 5.1 Summary

The above analysis has helped us obtain the following summary of findings:

- The majority of the respondents in the survey were in the age group of 30-50 years, and 42.9% were over 50 years old.
- More female respondents (51.8%) were surveyed than males (48.2%).
- Out of the total 56 respondents, 85.7% were married, and the average family size was 3.45.
- A majority of the respondents (53.6%) identified themselves as Hindu, followed by 39.3% who identified as Buddhist.
- Only 42.9% of the respondents had received some form of education, while 57.1% were uneducated.
- All the respondents had sought traditional treatment at some point in their lives, and 37.5% of them reported using traditional methods often.
- Fractures/sprains were the most common problems that respondents sought traditional treatment for.
- 23 out of 56 respondents felt uncomfortable while being diagnosed/ treated by traditional method.

### 5.2 Challenges and Opportunities

While traditional methods of curing illness in rural Nepal have their strengths, they also face challenges and opportunities that impact their sustainability and effectiveness.

- Modernization and changing cultural practices: With the increasing influence of modernization and changing cultural practices in rural Nepal, traditional healthcare practices may face challenges in maintaining their relevance and continuity. This section can discuss how modernization and changing cultural practices impact

traditional healing practices, and the need to balance cultural preservation with evolving healthcare needs.

- **Loss of TEK and biodiversity:** The loss of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and biodiversity due to various factors, such as deforestation, climate change, and globalization, can also affect traditional healing practices in rural Nepal. This section can highlight the importance of preserving TEK and biodiversity, and how their loss can impact the sustainability of traditional healthcare practices.
- **Access to modern healthcare facilities:** Limited access to modern healthcare facilities in rural Nepal can also impact the reliance on traditional healing practices. This section can discuss the challenges faced by rural communities in accessing modern healthcare facilities, and how traditional healthcare practices serve as an important healthcare option in such contexts.
- **Integration of traditional and modern healthcare:** There is a growing recognition of the need to integrate traditional and modern healthcare systems to provide comprehensive healthcare services in rural Nepal. This section can explore the opportunities and challenges of integrating traditional healing practices with modern healthcare systems, and how TEK can play a crucial role in this process.



## APPENDICES

### QUESTIONNAIRE

We are students of Pokhara University carrying research on Traditional Method of Curing illness at rural Kwholasothar ward no. 4, Bhujung of Lamjung District. We assure all personal information will be kept private and exclusively used for collective research. Please grant us some of your time and co-operation.

Questions	Answers
Part – 1 (Demographic Section)	
1. Name of the respondent	
2. Sex of the respondent	a) Male b) Female
3. Age of the respondent	
4. Religion of the respondent	a) Hindu b) Buddhist c) Muslim d) Christian e) Others
5. Marital status	a) Married b) Unmarried c) widow
6. No. of family members	
7. Education Level	a) uneducated b)basic education c) well educated
Part -2 Knowledge of Traditional Methods to cure illness	
8. Have you ever sought treatment from a traditional healer? (Shamans, Ayurveda, Vaidya, lama, jhankri etc.)	a. Yes b. No
9. How often do you use traditional methods of treatment for your health problems?	a. Never b. Rarely c. Sometimes d. Often e. Always

10. What types of health problems do you typically seek treatment for using traditional methods?(multiple)	a. Cold/Flu b. Headache c. Stomach Ache d. Back Pain e. Fractures f. Others.....
11. How satisfied are you with the traditional methods of treatment you have received?	a. Very Satisfied b. Satisfied c. Neutral d. Unsatisfied e. Very Unsatisfied
12. How do you rate the effectiveness of traditional methods of treatment compared to modern medicine?	a. Much more effective b. More effective, c. About the same d. Less effective e. Much less effective
13. How comfortable are you discussing your health problems with traditional healers?	a. Very comfortable b. Somewhat comfortable c. Neutral d. Somewhat uncomfortable e. Very uncomfortable
14. Would you recommend traditional methods of treatment to others?	a. Yes b. No c. Unsure
15. Name some of the methods you use / consume:	.....
16. What were your remedies for COVID -19 before and during infection?	.....

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