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## Exploring indigenous ethnomedicinal plants used by tribals of Manipur region

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**Abstract**

This article contains survey, investigate, gather data, and document the plant species associated with traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge for treatment of various diseases in Manipur, North East India, and to evaluate these traditional practices. Field visit Torbung Bangla, Loklaiphai in the geographical precincts of Churachandpur district; Singda Kuki village in Gamphazol subdivision of Senapati district; Kangpokpi hilly areas; Goukam veng; Bishnupur hilly areas; and Phayeng in the Imphal district of Manipur region and Semi-structured questionnaires were used to gather informations from tribal people of selected region. Traditional treatment ways were studied along with their corresponding ethnomedicinal terminologies. Plant species identified from fields, healers' private collections and home gardens. 55 plants with their ailment category, parts used and route of administration graphical representation showcased and presented in table format. Method of preparation includes most commonly Paste (24%), hot infusion (19%) and Cold infusion (13%). Informants Consensus factor (ICF) used to determine the relation between no. of disease category treated to the no. of plants species used for specific category. Dermatological problem and bites has ICF 0.94 highest value indicates use of specific plants for specific illness by large no. of population. While Psychological issues, cancer and tumour category has lowest ICF 0.01 indicates use of specific plants for specific illness by low or limited no. of population. Many plants species mentioned in the paper are still used by tribal community. Plant species mentioned in this paper suggests further future study should be conduct in aspects of phytochemical evaluation, characterization and pharmacological investigation. Most of the traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge are still preserved and actively used by traditional healers in daily life for treatment

**Keywords:** Manipur, ethnomedicinal plants, traditional ethnomedicinal knowledge, traditional healers

**1. Introduction**

The north-eastern states of India have been graced various valuable medicinal plant species with ethnomedicinal applications. It is also regarded as one of the world's most abundant collections of various plants, including fragrant and medicinal ones <sup>[1]</sup>. Since ancient times, traditional medicinal plants has been widely used for disease treatment. This is one of the most widely available and inexpensive techniques of treating several diseased conditions <sup>[2]</sup>. Indigenous medicinal plants have been traditionally used in various ailment for centuries and have gained popularity in recent years<sup>3</sup>. Bio-folklore is prominent in communities due to the ancient connection between people and their traditional knowledge of bioresources <sup>[4]</sup>. The indigenous tribal people lived in remote, mountainous regions distinctive heritage, thus they exploited plants in multiple ways for the treatment of various ailments <sup>[5]</sup>. An estimated 53.8 million tribal people, representing over 550 groups, live on the Indian subcontinent. It is believed that the majority of tribal territories make up approximately 15% of the nation's total land area.

The adverse effects of synthetic, allopathic, and contemporary medicine have led to a significant increase in the use of medicinal herbs in recent decade <sup>[6]</sup>. Additionally, the expensive expense of modern treatment has contributed to this trend. Developing countries can opt for affordable, effective, and safe traditional herbal medication <sup>[7, 8]</sup>.

A wide variety of medicinal plants are likely to be found in the territory of Manipur. Manipur inhabitants treat illnesses with a wide variety of medicinal plant species. In order to treat most of the common illnesses, plant's various parts *viz*; rhizome, tuber, fruit, root, flower, leave and bulb used in ethnomedicinal formulation by the tribal people of Manipur, both individually and as polyherbal mixtures <sup>[9]</sup>. Manipur is a hilly state in the northeastern corner of India. It extends between (23049' and 25044' N latitude and between 92059' and 95045' E longitudes. The state covers an area of 22,327 Sq.km. The state is bounded on the north by Nagaland,

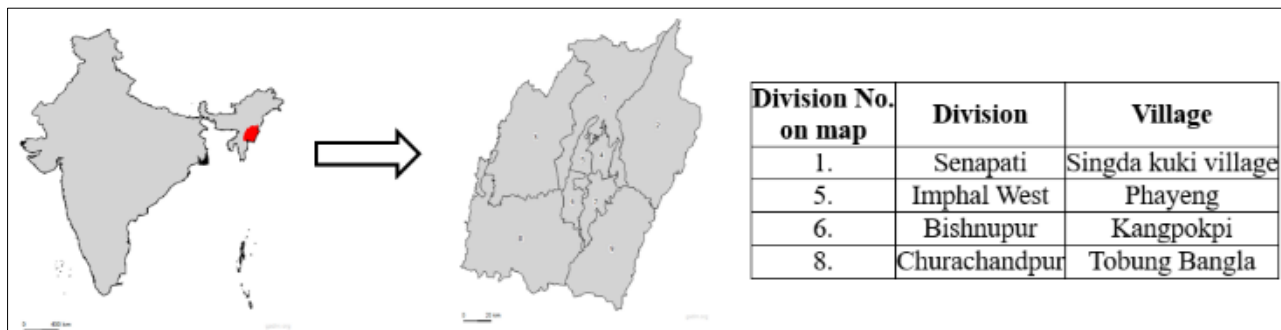
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on the east by Myanmar, on the south by Mizoram and Chin Hills of Myanmar and on the west by Cachar district of Assam. The major portion of the State consists of ranges of hills with a north and south facing aspects. The central portion of the state is occupied by the oval-shaped "Imphal Valley" with an area of about 1,545 Sq. km <sup>[10]</sup>.

The Meiteis community is part of one of Manipur's largest ethnic groups. Their three main religions are Christianity, Sanamahism, and Hinduism <sup>[11]</sup>. Among the tribal

communities still vying for official recognition of their ethnic names are aimol, anal, angami, chiru, chothe, gangte, hmar, kabui, koirao, koireng, kom, lamkang, lushai, maipuri muslims, mao, maram, maring, monsang, moyon, paite, purum, ralte, sema, simte, sukte, tangkhul, thadou, vaiphei, and zou <sup>[12, 13]</sup>. My review paper's objectives are to investigate, gather data, and exhibit Manipur's tribal people's traditional ethnomedical knowledge.



**Fig 1:** Survey Area conducted in Manipur with Division Manipur region

## 2. Aim of the study

To survey, investigate, gather data, and document the plant species associated with traditional ethnomedical knowledge for treatment of various diseases in Manipur, North East India, and to evaluate these traditional practices.

## 3. Material and method

### Interviews

During the survey, ethnobotanical information and indigenous knowledge of traditional healers and tribal peoples concerning the usage of local plants for medicinal purposes were gathered through oral questionnaires and in-person interviews <sup>[14]</sup>. Interviews were carried out on the customary application of several ethnomedicinal herbs by Manipur's folk populations. Through semi-structured questionnaires and open interviews, informants provided their customary knowledge <sup>[15]</sup>. The primary focus of the questionnaires was the traditional beliefs

and ethnobotanical uses of local native plants by local tribal groupings. Total 60 inhabitants of the localities were interviewed among them male is 35 and females are 25. Six subject specialist and expert in plant study were connected during survey and they are localities, belonging communities too. Information about 56 plants of 33 families used to treat 54 different disorders are gathered. Four of these were chosen for further phytochemical and ethnomedicinal research.

### 3.2 Study area

The field visit and survey covers the following areas: Torbung Bangla, Loklaiphai in the geographical precincts of Churachandpur district; Singda Kuki village in Gamphazol subdivision of Senapati district; Kangpokpi hilly areas; Goukam veng; Bishnupur hilly areas; and Phayeng in the Imphal district of Manipur.

**Table 1:** Socio-Demographic analysis of informants (Tribal villagers)

Sr. No.	Factor	Tribal Informants category	Total no. of informants Interviewed	Percentage
1	sex	Male	35	58.33%
		Female	25	41.66%
2	Age	Upto 30 years	9	15%
		31 to 45	13	21.7%
		46 to 60	23	38.33%
		61 and above	15	25%
		Traditional healers	18	30%
3.	Occupation	House wives	10	16.6%
		Subject experts	07	11.7%
		Adult tribals	13	21.7%
		Farmers	12	20%

## 3.3 Quantitative statistical analysis

### 3.3.1 Informants consensus factor

Informants Consensus factor used to determine the relation between no. of disease category treated to the no. of plants species used for specific category. Informant consensus factor (ICF) was determined using the formula <sup>[15]</sup>.

$$[ICF = N_{ur} - N_t / N_{ur} - 1]$$

Where,  $N_{ur}$  refers to each disease category total number of use (citation) reports and  $N_t$  refers to number of plant species used to each ailment category by informants. The ICF should range between (0-1). 1 is the highest value indicates use of specific plants for specific illness by large no. of population. And 0 is the lowest value indicates lower specificity of species to the specific disease category <sup>[16]</sup>.

### 3.3.2 Use report

$U_r$  is each mention of use for a plant by an informant as a single use record. Another use for specific plant mentioned by informant considered to be two citation records by informant [17]. Since the focus was on determination of relative homogeneity of use-reports, we compared the number of use-reports  $U_r$  to the number of species in each category of use  $N_i$  [18] (see Table 3)

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Ailments category

The classification of disorders into several groups was contingent upon the use of ethnomedicinal herbs by Meitei and other tribal people as traditional healers. Topical illnesses, external injuries, cuts, bites, and skin infections, respiratory tract disorders, urinary tract infections, gynaecological issues, circulatory system disorders, bone dislocation, dental issues, hepato-biliary system issues, digestive system issues, menstrual excessive blood loss, and issues related to the nervous and psychological systems are the most common

categories. Skin infections and infestations (32%) were more common than neuro-muscular problems (2%), in hilly areas. Immature deaths are caused by a lack of medical facilities and skilled contemporary practitioners, that's why ethnomedical practice is essential to preventing in unpredictable circumstance

### 4.2 Method of preparation

Inhabitants of the highland Manipuri region have become accustomed to using herbal remedies in their natural form. There are many different ways that plants are utilized to cure different illnesses. Direct application to wounds, cuts, and bites is most common. Direct application, decoction, hot and cold infusions, dried powder, and paste are examples of indigenous methods of usage. Some of the traditional methods used by tribal people and traditional healers to make preparations included boil in water (28%), ash (48%), rupturing layers to release scent (21%), heating the material slightly (3%), and dietary fruits and vegetables.

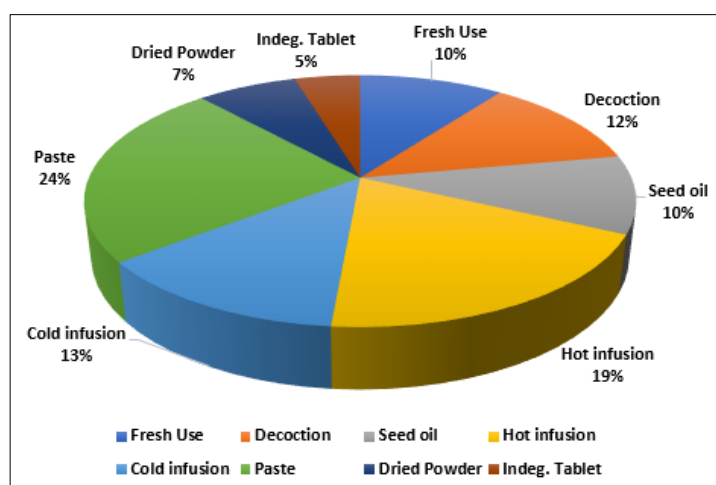


Fig 2: Percentage of types of Indigenous plants preparation used by traditional healers and tribal people

### 4.3 Parts of plants used in the ethnomedicinal formulation preparation

The habitat is comprised of vegetation such as grass, trees, shrubs, and plants. The plant has active pharmacological phytoconstituents in several parts that are highly effective against a variety of diseases. Indigenous medical systems encourage the use of all plant parts since they have been

shown to be beneficial in treatment. Traditional healers in the Manipur region uses a variety of plant materials, including whole plants, roots, stems, bark, fruits, flowers, seeds, latex, gum/resin, tubers, and rhizomes, in the preparation of traditional indigenous medicines. Certain therapeutic plants are often used as vegetables in diets. Following graphical depiction are as:

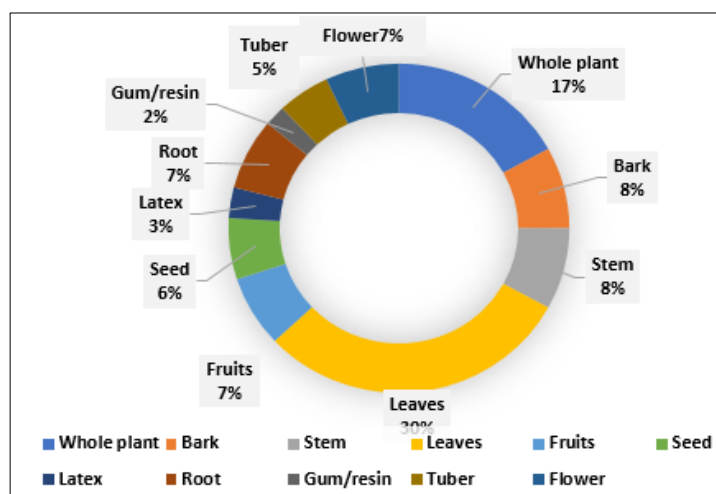


Fig 3: Graphical representation of ethnomedicinal formulation preparation

**Table 2:** Ethnomedicinal plants used by tribal people of Manipur

Sr. No	Botanical name	Family	Vernacular name	Part used	Preparation	Uses	Reference
01	<i>Acacia farnesiana</i> (L.) Willd	Leguminosae	Chingonglei hangampal	Bark, seed and leaves	Decoction	Decoction and paste is applied in ringworm, anti-inflammatory, Antioxidant, tuberculosis.	[19]
02	<i>Acacia nilotica</i> (L.) Delile	Legumin Osae	chigonglei	Bark, gum and leaves	Decoction	Throat infection and tooth pain. Extract of pod used in urinogenital diseases. Fresh leaves infusion used in diarrhoea and dysentery. Gum is best antisypytic and astringent property.	[20, 21]
03	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i>	Asteraceae	Khongjai napi	Leaves	Paste	Leaf paste is styptic and vermifuge	[22]
04	<i>Alangium Chinense</i> (Lour.) Harms	Alangiaceae	Kokan, Kokal	Leaves, roots	paste	acroeesthesia, hemostasis, fractures, snake bites, circulatory issues, toxicity, contraception, rheumatic arthritis and wound healing	[4, 23]
05	<i>Alisma plantago aquatica</i> L.	Alismataceae	Kouthum	seeds	Powder	Useful in treatment of beri-beri, Leprosy	[24]
06	<i>Allium hookeri</i> Thwaites	Amaryllidaceae	Maoi napakpi	Whole plant	Juice	Blood pressure, ulcer	[15]
07	<i>Allium sativum</i> Linnaeus	Amaryllidaceae	chanam	bulb	Juice	Used in the treatment of Rheumatic pain, watery diarrhoea, blood thinning agent, menopause	[25]
08	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Chengkruk	shoo	Juice, Paste	Emollient, Antioxidant, Anticancer, Antiinflammatory, wound healing, acne and skin treatment.	[26]
09	<i>Argemone Mexicana</i> L.	Papavaraceae	Yenkhumit	Whole plant	Juice	Applied locally in fresh injuries, wounds and boils. as an emollient, decoction is used in fresh wound and skin itching	[27]
10	<i>Artemisia Nilagirica</i> (C.B. Clarke) pamp.	Asteraceae	Laibakngou	Leaves	Infusion	Stomachic, haemostatics, antiseptic	[28]
11	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i>	Moraceae	Theibong	Fruit pulp	Pulp	Applied to cure boils	[29]
12	<i>Asparagus Filicinus</i> Buch.-Ham. ex D. Don	Asparagaceae	Nirshing	Tuber	Decoction	small pox, menstrual problems, tonic	[30]
13	<i>Bixa Orellana</i> L.,	Bixaceae	Ureirom (Urucum)	Leaves	Juice	In jaundice, laxative, bronchitis, wound healing.	[31]
14	<i>Blumeopsis flava</i>	Araceae	Hao-chak	Leaves	Paste	Leaf paste prevent wounds from worsening, decoction in bronchial congestion, cold, cough and effective in skin diseases. Leaf with mustard oil used for dropsy and back pain.	[32]
15	<i>Bombax ceiba</i> Linnaeus	Malvaceae	Terea	Bark and fruit	Juice	Female disease, Asthma, small pox, boils	[33]
16	<i>Cayaponia laciniata</i>	Curcubitaceae	Kwak-thabi	Tender twig and leaves	Extract	Tender twig extract is used in cuts, wounds, skin infection and burs. boiled leaves are eaten and used in inflammation	[34]
17	<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Monshaobi	Leaves	Decoction	Decoction of leaf is recommended for leukoderma	[35]
18	<i>Clerodendrum infortunatum</i> L.	Lamiaceae	Kuthap manbi	Leaves	Paste	Leaf paste is useful for skin diseases, to cure cough and dysentery	[36]
19	<i>Commelina benghalensis</i> L.	Commelinaceae	Wangden Khoibi	Whole plant	Decoction	Leaf decoction paste is applied in boils and burns	[37]
20	<i>Costus speciosus</i> (J. Koen ex Retz Smith)	Zinziberaceae	kebu, keyu, kostam, kudavam	rhizome	Powder	Used to treat inflammation, bronchitis, rheumatism, and fever.	[38]
21	<i>Crassocephalum crepidioides</i> (Benth.)	Asteraceae	Tera-paibi	Whole plant	Fresh	Used in wound healing	[39]
22	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i> Linnaeus	Cucurbitaceae	Mai	Seeds	Roasted seeds	Used as vermifuge, Anthelmintics	[40]
23	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Zingiberaceae	Yaingang	Rhizome	Paste	Paste applied over wounds	[41]
24	<i>Cuscuta Reflexa</i> roxb.	Convolvulaceae	uri sanamacha	whole plant	Decoction	Plant decoction used to bath against skin infection, laxative, purgative	[42]
25	<i>Cynodon Dactylon</i> (L.) Pers.	Poaceae	Tingthou	Whole plant	Juice	Used as blood coagulant, antidiabetic, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory.	[43, 44]
26	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Cyperaceae	Sembangkouthum	Rhizome, tubers	Decoction	Used in the treatment of diabetes, inflammation, liver diseases	[45]
27	<i>Eugenia praecox</i> Roxb.	Myrtaceae	Shileima	Seeds and fruits	Seed powder Bark paste	Seed in diabetes, Respiratory infections, Bark as haemostatic	[46]
28	<i>Euphorbia odoratum</i>	Asteraceae		Leaves	Paste	oil is styptic and wound healing	[47]
29	<i>Ficus Religiosa</i> L.	Moraceae	Peepal, Sana Khongnang	Leaves, latex, tender	Juice, Paste	Antiseptic, antibacterial, antiulcer Astringent on cuts and wound, skin diseases	[48]

				branches, fruits			
30	<i>Goniothalamus sesquipedalis</i> (Wall.) Hook. f. & Thomson	Annonaceae	Leikham	Whole plant	Decoction	Drunk as remedy of stomach pain	[49, 50]
31	<i>Goniothalamus sesquipedalis</i> (Wallich) Hooker f. & Thomson	Annonaceae	Leikham / Ahom	Leaf	Juice	Purification of blood, Antiviral	[51]
32	<i>Houttuynia cordata</i> Thunberg	Saururaceae	Aithanglou	Whole plant	Decoction	Excessive menstrual discharge, goitre, Chronic skin diseases, Diuretic and Anti-inflammatory	[51]
33	<i>Iris sibirica</i> L.	Iridaceae	Kombirei	Rhizome	Decoction	Brain coolant and hysteria	[52]
34	<i>Isodon Ternifolius</i> D. Don kudo	Lamiaceae	Khoiju	Leaves	Decoction	Antimicrobial, Antifungal, skin infection and skin diseases.	[53]
35	<i>Kaempferia rotunda</i> Linnaeus	Zingiberaceae	Yai thamna monbi	rhizome	Liquid paste	Inflammation, bolis, wounds, epilepsy and acidity	[54]
36	<i>Litsea khasiana</i> Meisn	Lauraceae	<i>Litsea hookeri</i>	roots	Powder	In the treatment of chronic bronchitis root powder given along with piper nigrum and suagr	[55]
37	<i>Magnolia hodgsonii</i> (Hook. F & Thoms.) H. Keng.	Magnoliaceae	U-thambal angagba	Bark	Powder	Rheumatism, diaphoretic	[52]
38	<i>Mikania micrantha</i> Kunth	Asteraceae	Oori Hingchabi	Whole Plant	Infusion	Used in skin infecton, Antimalarial, Diuretic	[56]
39	<i>Mukia maderaspatana</i> (Linnaeus) M. Roemer	Cucurbitaceae	Lamthabi	Whole plant	Juice	Jaundice and kidney infection	[57]
40	<i>Musa paradisica</i> Linnaeus	Musaceae	Changlong	stem	extract	Anti-diabetic activity, antiulcer activity, wound healing, hair growth promoter, diuretic, analgesic, and anti-allergic activity	[58]
41	<i>Mussaenda roxburghii</i> Hooker	Rubiaceae	Hanu-rei	Petaloid floral bracts	Paste	The leaf paste is applied on wounds for blood clotting, Applied to suppurate boils, used as source of vegetables.	[59]
42	<i>Oryza sativa</i> L.	Poaceae	Phou	seeds	Cooked rice and charcoal powder	Applied to external areas of fractured bone for rapid and quick healing	[60]
43	<i>Paederia foetida</i> Linn	Rubiaceae	Oinam	Leaves, roots, whole plant	Paste	Thick mixture of Root paste and salt is applied in ringworm,	[61]
44	<i>Passiflora edulis</i> Sims.	Passifloraceae	Sapthei	Root and leaves	Juice	To reduce clotting of blood and induce abortion	[62]
45	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Gooseberry Heikru	Fruits, barks, leaves	Fruit juice, leaves Paste	Bark paste applied in injuries, UV protectant, skin anti-aging, antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory	[63]
46	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L.	Phyllanthaceae	Heikru	fruits	Juice	Used as brain and nerve tonic in blood disease	[64]
47	<i>Phyllanthus fraternus</i> G. L. Webster	Euphorbiaceae	Chakpa heikru angouba	leaf	Juice	Fever and cough, Jaundice, blood coagulation, as antioxidants in skin aging	[65]
48	<i>Podophyllum hexadrum</i> Royle	Podophyllaceae	Sielkhupdon	stem	Eaten raw	Stem is eaten raw against piles	[66]
49	<i>Psidium guajava</i>	Myrtaceae	pungton	Fruits, young twigs	Pulp	Ripe fruits applied over wounds, Anti skin aging, diabetes,	[67]
50	<i>Psidium guajava</i> Linnaeus	Myrtaceae	Kolthei	young twigs	raw twig eaten	As antidiarrhoeic, antidyenteric, eaten to cure stomachache	[68]
51	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> Linnaeus	Poaceae	Kolchu	Stem	Extract	Extract used to purify blood, cures liver and kidney infections.	[69]
52	<i>Schima wallichii</i> (DC)	Theaceae	Usoi	Bark, Leaves, Fruits	Infusion	Infusion of bark is used in injury while fresh twigs extract are applied on spider bite and skin infection	[70]
53	<i>Solanum violaceum</i> Ortega	Solanaceae	Chinlengbi	flower	juice	Relieve toothache, ati-microbial, anti-bacterial and used in skin infection	[71]
54	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> Linnaeus	Caesalpiniaceae	Mangge	fruits	Infusion, paste,	In the treatment of liver diseases, for snake bite fruit seeds placed on cut area	[72]
55	<i>Terminalia Myriocarpa</i> Heurck and Muell	Combretaceae	Tolhao	Leaves	Paste	Skin diseases	[73]

**Table 3:** Informants Consensus factor

Ailment category	No. of medicinal plants used	U <sub>r</sub>	ICF
Dermatological problems and bites	33	153	0.94
Respiratory tract problems	4	19	0.83
Oro-dental problems	2	34	0.89
Kidney related problems	3	10	0.77
Blood clotting, purification of blood and B.P.	3	7	0.66
Gynaecological, menstruation related problems	3	17	0.80
Stomach ulcer and Stomach ache	3	08	0.71
Gastro-Intestinal (abdominal) problems	4	21	0.85
Hepato-liver diseases	3	13	0.72
Bone fracture and dislocation	3	18	0.81
Psychological issues	1	1	0.01
Nervous system related issues	3	5	0.34
Cancer and tumour	1	1	0.01

**GPS Photos of actual Survey on field work**

Image B. (from right to left) Ms. Dimple Shinde, Dr. Deshworjit Singh Ningombam, local Traditional healer, Mr. Sukhadev Shinde and Mrs. Babita Shinde. Acknowledging other images consisting of Local traditional healers of Manipur

## Conclusion

Plants plays an indispensable role in the lives of the tribal indigenous people of Manipur. Years of ethnomedicinal practices proves true potential of plants against wide range of ailments. Method of preparation includes most commonly Paste (24%), hot infusion (19%) and Cold infusion (13%). Dermatological problem and bites has ICF 0.94 highest value indicates use of specific plants for specific illness by large no. of population. While Psychological issues, cancer and tumour category has lowest ICF 0.01 indicates use of specific plants for specific illness by low or limited no. of population. Phytopharmaceutical evaluation and pharmacological investigation should be carry out on this plants. More importantly most of the traditional knowledge are still preserved and actively used in daily life for healing in natural ways in villages on ground level of knowledge and this can be better replacement to allopathic synthetic medication having large side effects to patients.

## Conflict of interest

There is No Conflict of Interest.

## Acknowledgement

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## List of abbreviations

ICF	Informants Consensus factor
$N_t$	refers to number of plant species used to each disease category by informants
$N_{ur}$	refers to each disease category total number of use (citation) reports
Sq.km	Square kilometer
$U_r$	Use report

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