

Health Practices of the Tagbanua on Response to Changes in their Environment

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Why the Tagbanua?

- How do they survived for thousands of years while everything surrounding them was changing?
- Pala'wan population is dwindling; and
- Batak is in the brink of extinction (Eder)

- Direct lineage from the Tabon Man
- present in Palawan Island before the Spanish colonization
- presence in the island is said to date back to as early as 1000 AD.

Source: Cola, 2012

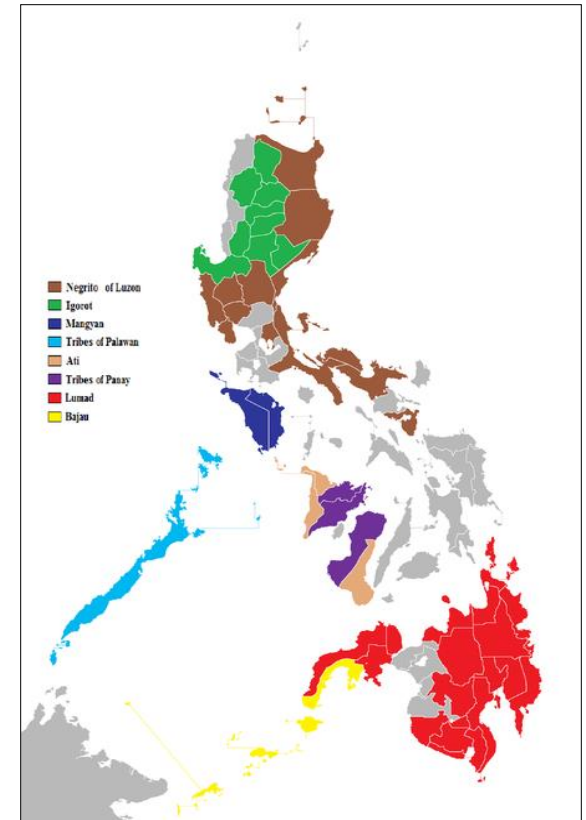


Figure 1. Tribes of the Philippines

(wikimedia.org, 2009)

- They have probably health practices that made them survived
- They probably adapt to their changing environment to survive
- This means they know something that is probably not written
- And these three “probably ” are the inspiration of this study

Belief and Health Practices

Um'o mig - atən me agsarot?

What is illness/sickness?

Magayən ə' pamek' ər mo?

Do you feel well?

What do you do to have good health?

Mat mo kung magsarot?

Do you mean when we got sick?

Eight key informants

2 “maglalambay or lambay”,

- 1) magbabandil ;and
- 2) paltera

2 Menan

- 3) Two Aunties, are ordinary Tagbanua housewives, a 65 year-old from Iraan and 4) a 60-year-old from Gogognan.

4 descendants of Apo Palwas.

- 5) daughter
- 6) Nelly and 7) Gelly granddaughters and
- 8) Bagarar.
- The family of Apo Palwas was the only pure blood Tagbanua that was living in Mabini, Aborlan.
- Tagbanua and non-Tagbanua (De’wan) seek the help of these informants to alleviate their infirmaries.

Health Practices in the Context of the Maslow's Basic Needs

- Air they Breathe and Use of Sunlight
- Rest and Sleep

The Diday-diday

- Diet and Nutrition
- the Use of Pure Water
- The Temperance and Trust in God

FOOD HABIT

- *“Dati sa umaga nilagang saging o kamoteng kahoy ang kinakain namin, tanghaliaan na kami magkakanin, pero ang sabi mas maganda na sa umaga kumain ng kanin at sa ibang oras kumain ng kamote.”* (We were eating boiled banana or cassava in the morning however it was told that it is better that we eat rice in the morning and eat cassava in other hours of the day.)
- They reported that they felt stronger and better when they follow the above rule. However, they prefer to have three rice and viand meals everyday if they have enough rice to consume for a week.

DIDAY-DIDAY

- *Diday-diday* is a habit of many Tagbanua, it is a term where they got a break from working and have rest for a day or for days. Three descriptions were given to explain this observed phenomenon.
- “*Ito ba yong nagpapahinga ka pahiga-higalang walang ginagawa.*” (We are lying doing nothing.)

DIDAY-DIDAY

- *“May ugali ba kami minsan na parang ayaw mong magtrabaho. Higa-higa lang kahit na tanghali na.”* (We have this habit, sometimes we do not want to work. We just lying down even though it is late in the morning or almost noon.)
- *“Ito yung tumitigil kami magtrabaho pahinga lang sa bahay, pahiga-higa, paupo-upo o mag tatrabaho pero sa paligid lang ng bahay.”* (It is when we stop doing work in the fields, we rest at home, lie down or just sitting or do small household chores.)
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DIDAY-DIDAY

- In a closer look *Diday-diday* is a break the Tagbanua used to protect their body and mind from much stress or breakdown, or in today's common term "burnout". They respond to their body's need to rest.
- They put off hard work in the field for a day or several days. *Diday-diday* is a way to rest their body to replenish their depleting vigor. It is like a vacation or long break in today's term but they do not go anywhere but home.

ILLNESS PREVENTION

- view food as a basic need to live. They should eat proper food at proper time so that they would not get sick.
- do not have any view on lack of accurate amount of type of nutrition may cause disease and proper diet may cure disease. But they believe that some foods must be prohibited to avoid ailments.
- prohibit soda drinks during acute illness, when women are in postpartum stage, or when having difficulty urinating.

ILLNESS PREVENTION

- very hungry should not immediately drink coco juice, it will cause *pasma* or tremulousness.
- not eat coconut flesh when very hungry.
- not eat foods that they have an allergy. “*Wag kakain ng pagkaing kontra.*”

COFFEE

- *kapeng barako or kapeng bilog* taste better and more healthful than an instant coffee, but they consume more instant coffee because of its accessibility and availability.

ILLNESS PREVENTION

- a person with malaria should not eat:
sour foods;
coconut meat; and
carao (one of the varieties of banana).

If they eat these the sick person will become sicker.

- usual diet is rice and vegetable sometimes fish, they seldom to have meat.
- steam, boil, or broil their foods. Most of them seldom fry their food.
- do not eat to just anybody's home. They are afraid of "*lason*" or "*ratson*" in the food of others. ("*Lason*" is anything toxic in the body)
- drink *tabad* (rice wine) on special occasions only.
- men take alcoholic beverage on festivities and weekend breaks

WATER

- Refrain from going outdoor after downpour when it was warm and sunny before it rained. “*Maaring sumakit ang tiyan dahil sa singaw ng lupa.*”
- Avoid wait for at least 7 days after birthing to take a bath. “*Pwede silang mabinat.*” (They may get sick.)
- Avoid drinking young coconut juice (buko juice)
- Water must be in a covered container.

The Temperance and Trust in God

- Tagbanua are generally peace loving people. They have an expression, “*kung ganyan ba, wala bang magawa*” (If it is like that we cannot do anything). They tolerate and accept their fate. They let their fate and God decide for their future.
- They believe in natural works of nature. They live in a tranquil place. Everything in their place is serene. Disputes if there are any are usually resolved by their local council (IP’s political organization headed by their Masiricampo).

HOUSE WAS OPEN BUT
NOBODY HOME

CONCEPTS THAT EMERGED

Causes of disease

1) Disease that can be cured by the modern medicine

Communicable disease and accidents

2) Diseases from the Environment

- Can be cured by the botanicals

3) Spiritual health (soul) disease given by God the creator usually refers to their psychological wellness (Maguindusa)

4) Sumpa or bati

a. Diwata they are deities everywhere

b. Panyaen , fairies

c. the spirit world (dead) that we cannot see

d. person

Ailments that Tagabanua are afraid of:

- *Colebra*
- *Ugyap*



Herbal Remedy

- 68 plants were identified
for 37 ailments

Belief and Responses to the Changes

Drought

Cause by panyaen

Dig deeper well

Conduct ritual

Extreme heat

Work earlier

Cover head

Stronger Typhoon

Stay at home

KAINGIN

- On the Climate
- WE are not very much affected because we can not do kaingin
- WE are better off with staple food if we can plant rice
- Some plant like De'wan
- WE now use insecticide for stem borers
Before we use herbs to kill the pests

USE OF FOREST

- Many Tagbanua ends in charcoal making
- Helper of the “lumber harvester”
- Honey is cheaper and becoming farther
- Some of the herbs are now planted

Before; available everywhere

- They resolved in herbal medicine if the modern medicine cannot cure them after visiting a doctor
- They now use healing modalities heard from Radio

Taking MX3 and Power capsule

Doc Alternatibo

Tagbanua adapts

Kung ano ang nasa paligid yun ang ginagamit namin

- The use of gasoline as cure for insect bite of
- Centipede
- Scorpion

They follow with the flow.

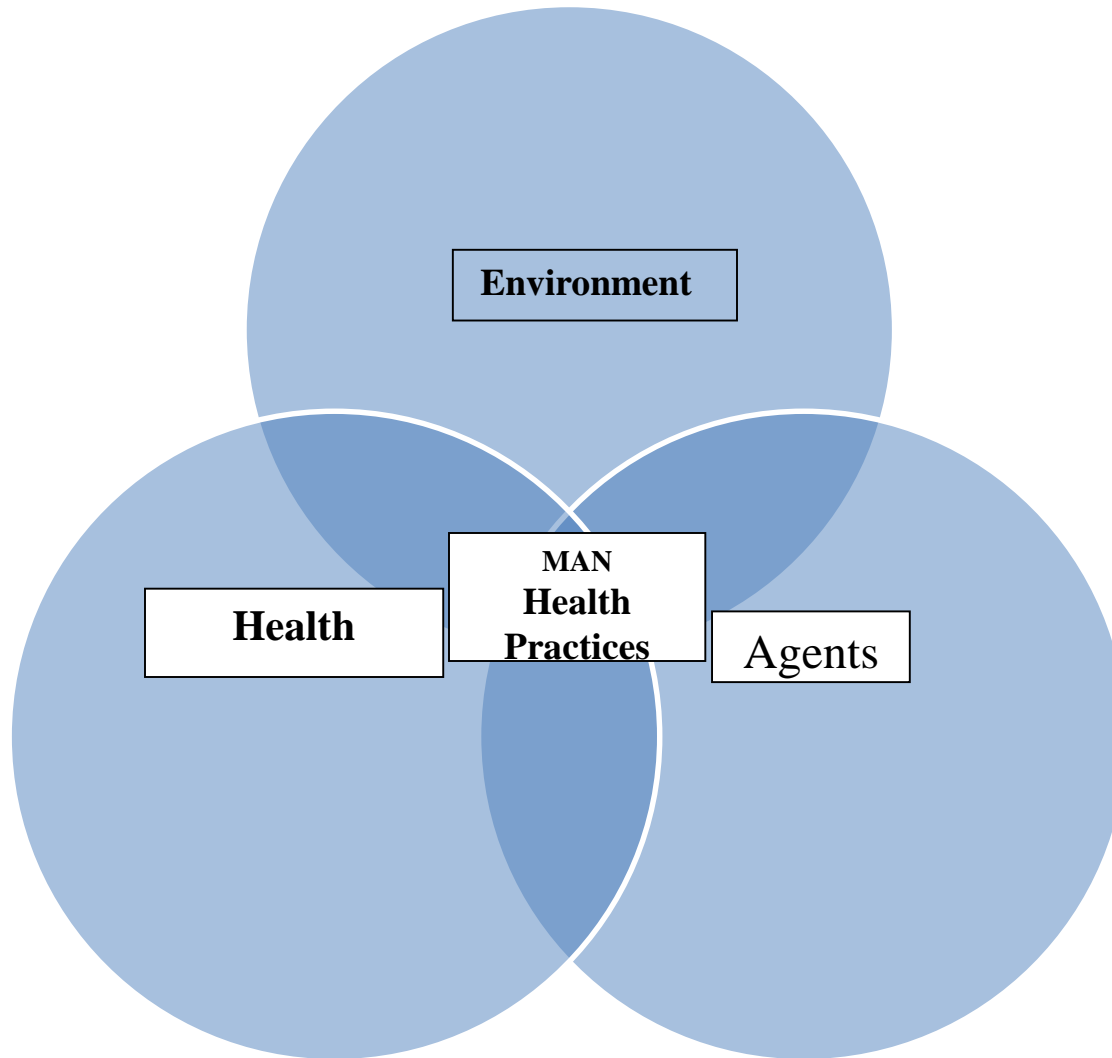


Figure 2 above illustrates the relationship of man to his environment and health that result to Indigenous People's Knowledge.

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