

VDyo-mā: A Female Faith-Healer, and Traditional Medical Practices in Kathmandu

Jyoti Tandukar

Assistant Professor of Sociology

Padmakanya Multiple Campus

Email: tandukarjyoti@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-8790-4603>

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Abstract

This paper explores the role of Dyo-mā, female faith healers in the Kathmandu Valley, who occupy a significant position in the intersection of spiritual, cultural and traditional medical practices. I have discussed how Dyo-mā contributes to its clientele, who bear different roles sharing and caring as traditional shamans and medicinal practitioners in Kathmandu. I have also explored the spiritual aspects, knowledge, and practices of Dyo-mā or Dyomāyāju. The power of Dyo-mā practices persists despite the influence of modern medical practices in urban settings. The faiths and beliefs of the people are deeply ingrained in their minds and have contributed to their healing as they overcome the psychological and physical challenges they face. The study also situates Dyo-mā alongside other traditional healing systems in Nepal, such as Ayurveda, Amchi (Tibetan-Himalaya medicine), shamanistic practices like dhāmi, Jhānkri and Guruba, which similarly integrate spiritual and herbal healing methods. However, major focus on the role of traditional healing practitioners, specifically Dyo-mā, and her role in healing practice in society.

Keywords *Dyo-mā, faith healers, Ayurvedā, mantrā and traditional medicine*

Introduction

Nepal is rich in cultural diversity, with a diverse range of castes, ethnicities, languages, and religions that have been practiced across the country in various cultures, including

shamanistic and faith healing practices. In this paper, I aim to present the social suffering, illness, and treatment system, which is not merely associated with pathological issues but also with issues of social and cultural beliefs and practices. Being born in Kathmandu in a Newar family, I have some privileges and memories regarding illness, diagnosis, and Medical practices existing among the indigenous Newar community in both Hinduism and Buddhism. They are the most prosperous groups in terms of education, economy, and health status. They believe that there are two causes of illness, i.e., natural and supernatural phenomena; such beliefs prevail in all castes, ethnic, and religious groups across the country. Before the introduction of the modern healthcare system in the country, traditional medical practitioners and faith healers were the primary sources of healthcare, responsible for treatment and healing. *Dyo-mā* is an agentive force that provides treatment services and sources of knowledge, enabling diagnosis of diseases, the use of medical herbs, and the expulsion of evil spirits from one's life, who has the power to exorcise evil spirits.

Faith healing is a traditional medical practice prevalent among all castes and ethnic groups in Nepal and the Himalayas. This can be viewed as an age-old medicinal practice, serving as an alternative to modern medical practices. The shaman received the power from the god and plays a mediating role in communicating between the god and the people. In the spirit possession, one group of people is specialists who have ecstatic communicative power with the superhuman, and another non-specialist group is laity, and they are excluded from ecstatic communication (Hofer, 1974). In remote areas of Nepal, people are still deprived of access to modern health facilities; therefore, they untimely die in the absence of modern medicines, trained health workers, and amenities. Thus, they consult with shamans, traditional healers, and practitioners of witchcraft who are accessible at the local level. Nepal is a syncretic blend of Hinduism and Buddhism. People of Nepal who practice this religious syncretism believes in dhāmi, Jhānkri, Picās, and other oracular figures. In this paper, I aim to explore female faith healers, such as *Dyo-mā* or Dyomayeju, in Newar society, which is associated with the concept of the *Devi Matā*, or Mother Goddess. *Dyo-mā* is one of the most respectable professions; therefore,

people greet them in different ways, for instance, touch their hands with a bow of their head and kneel in front of *Dyo-mā* are a few illustrations of respect to her. They are honorable people to all, due to their divine power and extraordinary knowledge, which enables them to heal, share, care, and cure their patients. The shamanic practice is an indigenous healing practice rooted worldwide that seeks to treat multi-faceted problems such as physical, psychological, and emotional. Shamanism is still in practice, despite the establishment of modern hospitals, pharmaceutical industries, and Nursing homes. Modern medicine did not replace faith-healing practices; instead, it incorporated them along with modern Medical care. I observed that two types of patients consult with *Dyo-mā*: one who believes in *tāntrism* and faith healing, and another who is unable to find relief through modern medical practices. *Dyo-mā*, a practicing spirit medium, employs trembling, worship, offerings, rituals, and medication. The dominant beliefs about the *karma* of their previous life impact their subsequent lives, which is usually referred to as *purba Janmakofal*—“consequences of past life”. *Dyo-mā* controls the spirits and evil forces through her magical spell, in case their clientele suffers from the *lāgu*—“malignant forces”, *Saitān* – “demon”, *bhūt*—“ghosts”, *Boksi*—“witchcraft, or sorcery”. They believe that they are the main force of illness.

Since 1950, there has been extensive research in Nepal and the Himalayan region concerning faith-healing practices that have had a significant impact on anthropological and sociological knowledge on shamanism. There have been tremendous debates and discourses on illness, diagnosis, cure and healing i.e., including witchcraft, *tāntrism* and self-healing (Dietrich, 1998), illness perception and causation, interpretation and treatment organization through use of herbs, *mantrās*, amulets and supernatural forces (Devkota, 1984; Stone, 1976; Subedi, 2011), traditional healing, depression and mental well-being (Luitel et.al 2025; Pham et.al 2021), medical pluralism and symbolic development (Pigg, 1995), spirit possession, shamanism, and spirit medium (Sidky, 2011) and trance, shamanism and psychotherapy. In this paper, I have broadly discussed the multiple causes of illness, as well as the various treatment processes that need to be integrated into modern health practices. One has to believe that illness is a natural or physical cause that might

occur due to a nutritional deficiency, bodily injuries and congenital disabilities. Another believes that Illness is associated with supernatural forces. The illness is believed to be caused by divine punishment, including the wrath of God, deities, spirits, and ghosts; therefore, we must please them through worship, offerings, and sacrifices across time and context. In this paper, I have discussed multiple roles *Dyo-mā* for causation, diagnosis, and cure through shamanic, *tāntric* and herbal uses. This research answers these research questions: How do gendered spiritual practitioners like the *Dyo-mā* contribute to local healthcare systems, and what cultural logics sustain their legitimacy? This inquiry is situated at the intersection of medical anthropology, gender studies, and symbolic healing. The paper also responds to broader debates in anthropological literature on shamanism, faith healing, and the coexistence of medical systems.

Research Methods

My interest in faith healing and the practices of the *Dyo-mā* began in early childhood. Growing up in a Newar family in Kathmandu, I often heard stories from my mother and elders about divine and supernatural powers manifested through rituals, festivals, and healing ceremonies. These early narratives laid the foundation for my curiosity about traditional healing systems.

Later, as a student of Sociology and Anthropology at Tribhuvan University, I encountered academic discussions on shamanism and indigenous medicinal practices, which sparked my interest in conducting extensive research. I conducted field research in the Swayambhunath of Kathmandu Valley at Tribhuvan University in the year 2000. Since then, I have visited *Dyo-mā* to explore its shamanic and traditional medicinal practices. I had consulted with 12 *Dyo-mās* and their clientele, who received their five female *Dyo-mā* healing services from the *Dyo-mā*. During the fieldwork, I conducted in-depth interviews with regarding their healing and traditional medical services to their clientele who had mental and physical challenges. The recorded interviews were transcribed and translated for further analysis and interpretation. I recorded information on *Dyo-mā's* performance, services, divine power, and communication with spirits and gods for the patient's

recovery. Additionally, I had also interviewed with the clienteles, their services, and the expectations from *Dyo-mā*. I was privileged to grow up in a Newar family in Kathmandu; therefore, I recorded all information in the Newari language. I had several opportunities to visit *Dyo-mā* for treatment and healing since my childhood with my family members and friends to heal from different psychological and physiological problems. I had also collected perceptions and opinions from clients and local people with whom they had established connections and relationships.

Historical trends of Faith-healing and traditional medicinal practices

In Nepal traditional healing systems have always been of great significance in cultural and religious practices. Before modern medicine stepped in, Ayurveda and spiritual or faith healing were a part of healthcare processes.

Ayurveda

Nepal is a land of *devbhumi* (land of god), *Tapoobhumi* (land of meditation), and the dwelling space of gods, goddesses, and sages. The mythical stories included in the Ramayan, the Mahabharat, the Vedas, and the Puran discuss traditional medical practices existing in the Indian sub-continent.

Ayurveda is a traditional healing practice in South Asia that has had a profound impact on the cure and treatment of various ailments. Ayurveda has an age-old history dating back to the 2nd Century BC. Ayurveda has its foundations laid by the ancient schools of Hindu Philosophical teachings named *Vaisheshika* and the school of logic named as *Nyaya* (Jaiswal & Williams, 2050, p. 50). These two schools followed distinct methods for the treatment services of their patients. The *Vaisheshika* School preached about inferences and perceptions that should be obtained about a patient's pathological condition for treatment. Whereas, *Nyaya* School propagated its teachings on the basis that one should have an extensive knowledge of the patient's condition, and the disease condition before proceeding for treatment (Ibid). The āyurbēdic practices started in the 3rd century in Licchavi era in Nepal.

Ayurveda, an ancient medical practice based on the *tridosha* theory which identifies three biological energies (Vata, Pitta and Kapha) as central to understand of disease and health. From the medieval period onwards āyurbēda received royal patronage and was institutionalized as a formal system of health care in Nepal (Shankar et al., 2006). The āyurbēdic medical system is one of the oldest forms of medical systems in the Indian sub-continent and originated in the Vedic period, ca. 1500–900 BC (Gewali&Awale, 2008). *Ayurbēda* is not merely medical practice but a holistic system combining spiritual, physical and herbal treatment methods. It reflects a form of medical pluralism, integrating body-mind balance, dietary regulation and plant-based remedies. This medical system flourished well up to the Mughal Empire in the 11th century. At the end of the 19th century, some books were written in Sanskrit, English, and Vernacular languages in the Indian sub-continent (Panikkar, 2002). Lihhavi King Amshu Varma (605-620 AD), established *Arogyashālā* (āyurbēdic hospital) for the treatment. In the medieval period, several hospitals and medicine manufacturing companies were established for public services. Deopatan inscription of the 7th century shows that King Narendra Dev established a healing hospital for the welfare of patients (Vajrācharya, p. 473, 20230 vs). This inscription also mentions that in the 7th century, two *Ayurveda* texts, the *Chakra Samhita* and the *Sushruta Samhita*, were written, which were used for diagnosis, treatment, identifying medicinal plants, and even surgical procedures. During the Licchavi period, a connection existed between social services, healthcare, and traditional health practices, including shamanism. In the Licchivi period, land was granted for religious and charitable purposes, primarily for medical services. During this period, temples were not only places for worship and preaching about God and goddesses, but also centers of treatment and healing. Pashupatinath is not only a center of religion but also a popular healing center. During the medieval period, *Vaidya and Raj* vaidyas were involved in treating patients, along with *Vaidhya Gubāju*—the priest of the Buddhist religion, who provided traditional medical services and utilized wild medicinal plants and herbs for the treatment of their clientele. In the Rana regime (1846-1951), *vaidyas* (āyurbēdic doctors) were recruited for the treatment of power sharers such as Rana, Kings, and military personnel. The ayurvedic medicinal practices have been popular in the Indian subcontinent for over, 3000 years, where local Vaidya

teaches yoga and a balanced diet as well as uses herbal medicine for the treatment to cure the patients.

Faith Healing

Among the numerous traditional treatment practices in Nepal, divine or spiritual healing is particularly prevalent. Treatment here is mainly belief-dependent and includes ritual prayers and spiritual exercises. A faith healer is believed to possess supernatural power through which he/she heals illnesses caused by invisible powers like ghosts, deities, planetary movement, or witchcraft. Although this approach may seem unconventional compared to modern medical practices. However, no official reports have been noted regarding their origin, these healing practices are strongly rooted in faith, destiny and belief in supernatural forces. Mention of *tantrā-mantrā* (*mystical arts*) in the ancient period of the Rigveda, particularly in safeguarding an individual against enemies, suggests that the awareness of spiritual healing power and *tantrā-mantrā* has existed since the Vedic or early intellectual period.

In traditional or preliterate societies, faith-healing and *Ayurvedā* are the healing systems that heal people from illness in Nepal. These two types of practices have been practiced in the absence of allopathic medicine. Traditional faith healers derive their power from divine sources. In contrast, traditional medical doctors acquire their knowledge through the transmission of medicinal knowledge across generations, self-practice, and prolonged interaction with nature. Both of them have provided the service at the local level in the Tibetan, Himalayan, and Indian sub-continent for several centuries. In the case of Nepal, these two treatment practices differ across the caste, ethnicity, religion, and region.

Dyo-mā: Role, Techniques and Symbolic Authority

In this section, I have briefly discussed how female faith healers, known as *Dyo-mā*, have applied their knowledge to treat patients in local settings. *Dyo-mā* is a faith healer, unlike *picāsni* of western Nepal, who mediates the role of communication between the deceased female souls and their female sufferer. The *picāsni* role is marginal in comparison to

dhāmi. They remain silent before *dhāmi*. Sometimes, *dhāmi* keeps them quiet while both of them are in possession. *picāsni* appeals to *dhāmi* on various occasions, such as during worship of the deities in the temples and ritual performance. The social hierarchy among *dhāmis* and *picāsni* would be reflected accurately in their possessions, conveying messages about God and their deceased ancestors. They are popular within the village and local community, serving as a messenger of the female's demise soul to her family. She conveys the message of why a female demise soul would be furious, what she demands from her kin, and how she would be happy. The people believe that we must remember the demise soul on special occasions and offer some items like clothes and food in her name, otherwise she would cause pain to her kin members. The position of *Dyo-mā* is distinct from *picāsni*. *Dyo-mā* is a faith healer who solves various problems: physical, mental and social etc, through supernatural powers. The main method of treatment through deity possession, in which it is believed that the goddess or divine spirit enters the body of a woman. A faith healer becomes the medium who conveys the words of the deity to the patient expressing divine language through human space. Since they are in a semi-conscious state they often, do not recall the words spoken during possessions. They are believed to be possessed by the mother goddess, and healing takes place accordingly. The position of *Dyo-mā* would be honorable, not to observe an inferior and marginal position in society. She would have conveyed the message of god to the patients in case they had been suffering from spirits and supernatural forces. They are playing the role of traditional medical practitioners, who acquire knowledge from seniors and self-practice.

People often consult female faith healers with various health problems, hoping for solutions ie headaches, fever, body aches, and fatigue, which are diagnosed by examining the wrist, tongue, or eyes to identify spiritual causes, such as ghosts, spirits, planetary influences, or deities, and treated by removing these influences. They employ specific methods for treating and curing their patients, such as chanting *mantrā*; they typically chant the mantra during the exorcism. The Sanskrit term “*mantrā*” was used for various types of verbal or phonic ritual utterances (Padoux & Flood, 2011, p.2). The concept of *mantrā* covers much more than “prayer” or “invocation”, than “praise” or “formula”

(Gonda, 1963, p. 245). They are chanting *mantrā* in a low voice near the ears of patients to ward off evil spirits. *Dyo-mā* acquires *mantrā* from different sources of deities. Their *mantrā* differ from one another. They chanted *mantrā* based on their acquired knowledge and understanding of their respective deities. These *mantrā* are based on sources of knowledge; for instance, they chant *mantrās* that they have acquired through mimicry and self-practice. *Dyo-mā* regularly chants the *mantrās*; however, some of them chant *mantrās* only during recitation. They chanted *mantrās* for different purposes, for instance, release from witchcraft, sorcery and to attract love and solve relationship problems. The practices of mantra could be seen in different religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism and Muslim. The issue of mantra primarily reduces the mental pressure and associated issues. *Mantrās* are associated with religious practices in Hindu and Buddhist traditions, where specific individuals chant *mantrās*. They possess the decisive power of the spoken word. Their *mantrās* include rhythms, exercise of power, sound and creative knowledge that they apply to relief and prosperity in their life. *Dyo-mā* *mantrās* are sacred and secret, which are chanted and blown in a specific time and context to release from the embedded problems, benefit, and blissful life. The *jhārphunk*—“exorcisms” is also a method of healing, where *Jhānkri*, *Vaidya*, and *Gubāju* chant *mantrās* to control mischievous elements within the human body. Such techniques of healing and treatment are popular among all the castes and ethnic groups across the country. The word *Jhārpkhunk* comes from the Nepali word *Jhār*—“sweep and cleanse” and *Phuk* “blowing”. These two words have different meanings; however, both techniques are employed for the treatment of patients. In *Jhārne*, *Dyo-mā* participates in sweeping away mischievous elements; for instance, they use this strategy to alleviate headaches, dizziness, stomachaches, and flailing limbs. They use the feathers of a peacock and a broom made of *amriso*—“*Thysanolaena maxima*” for cleaning the diseases and scars of patients. They sweep away mischievous elements from head to toe to cleanse the patient of diseases and scars through chanting *mantrās*. During the time of cleaning *Dyo-mā* was chatting and joking with patients. In western Nepal, local *Vidhaya* sweep the mischievous elements of humans through the use of *nigaloo*—“*Drepanostachyum falcatum*”. They usually sweep or hit a specific part of their body to treat the patient. *Dyo-mā* engages in *phuknu*—“blowing” with *mantrās*; they may

or may not be in possession. The body mass and energy of *Dyo-mā* are utilized to alleviate diseases. I have found that traditional faith healers diagnose diseases by measuring pulse rates through applying indigenous methods. They identify the problems, whether they are suffering from supernatural forces or natural causes. What types of mystical and divine forces (i.e., ghosts, spirits, demons, and witchcraft) have they been suffering from?. If they are able to identify the causes of pain and suffering in patients, they would advise and refer them for further treatment and healing to modern medical practitioners and traditional faith healers. These measurement techniques are based on gender; for example, if the clientele is male, the pulse rate is measured in the right hand, while if the client is female, the pulse rate is measured in the left hand. It is not compulsory to chant *mantrās* while measuring the patient's pulse rate during disease diagnosis. They used this technique before treating the patients. People across the country, particularly those from the Hindu society, worship deities for peace, prosperity, safety, productivity, and financial security. They worship different deities in the temples, shrines and gumbos for their well-being and the propitiation of malevolent stars. The regular worship of the deities, the god and the goddess, helps to ward off ghosts and spirits. People need to worship god according to their problems, commitment and a pledge. For instance, when people suffer from *Akāsh Bhairab* and *Akāsh Yogini*, they should sacrifice hens and ducks. The successful worship protects them in many ways in their everyday life. They worship Hanuman and Ganesh for relief from *Sādesatko Dasā*. They also worship ghosts, sorcery and witchcraft on different occasions to make them happy and blissful. *Dyo-mā* advises to worship *pancha tatwa*. According to Hindu philosophy, *pancha tatwa* refers to the five fundamental elements of the universe, comprising earth, water, air, fire, and space. In addition, the local people commonly use holy water from the rivers and springs. They believe that it contains medicines and minerals, which are beneficial for the treatment and massage of the body. Some clients, even from India, traveled a long distance to collect holy water from *Dyo-mā*. They are offering *akṣatā*—"offering rice in ritual and worship" in the name of gods and other supernatural forces during rituals and the healing process. *Dyo-mā* also sprinkles rice in the body of patients after blowing the *mantrās*, which keeps the patient's mind and soul at peace. They are using *akṣatā* for *jokhanā*

herna—“divination”. This practice assumes which supernatural forces afflict them and how they have been suffering. This is a psychological healing for the patient’s well-being. In Hindu culture, *kharāni* - “ashes” have been used for various purposes, such as relieving pain and applying the *kharāni* to the body. *Dyo-mā* distributed *kharāni* to her clientele to protect them from the evil spirits in their everyday life. Hindus immerse the ashes of the dead soul in the Ganga. In addition, *Dyo-mā* also uses *dhūp* - “incense” manufactured from Nepali paper to chase the spirits. Sometimes, *Dyo-mā* clientele collect bundles of *dhūp* for future usage. Along with health problems, they also address social and personal issues such as family disputes, infertility, addiction, business or job difficulties, and even missing items. In such situations, people who visit the *Dyo-mā* often find relief from intense pain and mental stress, and the *Dyo-mā* also offers necessary guidance or support. *Dyo-mā* is not simply a traditional healer and practitioner; however, her position and roles are embedded with symbolic dimensions, such as purity and pollution, sacred and profane. Traditional medical practices are not only associated with income and social services, but also tied to the power structure of society. The knowledge and devotion of *Dyo-mā* rest on an honorable position within the larger social arena.

Medical Pluralism and Challenges of Traditional Medical Practices

Nepal has various types of traditional medical systems based on the locally available herbs and plants, along with shamanic and spiritual practices over the generations. For instance, *Amchi* is the oldest traditional medical system in the Tibetan and Himalayan belt, also known as *Sowa-Rigpa* (knowledge of healing). In the eighth century, the then Emperor of Tibet, Tri Song Detsen, organized a medical conference, inviting leading medical personnel from countries such as India, China, Nepal, Iran, Iraq, and Greece (Gewali&Awale, 2008). This practice is widespread in the Himalayan districts, ie, Humla, Dolpa, Manang, Mustang, Rasuwa, and Solukhumbu. *Amchi* is a traditional doctor who has been practicing through cultural custodian and spiritual knowledge, along with the application of medicinal plants and herbs of the Himalayan region. In this medicinal practice, there is a combination of spiritual and folk knowledge of the *Amchi*, where people are still deprived of medical facilities. In Tharu Communities in western Nepal,

Guruwa plays a significant role in curing the patients through healing and the application of medicinal plants and herbs. His shamanistic and spiritual role seems to be culturally specific and they were consulted for the treatment, spiritual and development activities. Similarly, Shamanistic practice is widely popular in western Nepal, in which people believe that every illness and suffering is caused by the curse of God and an evil spirit. This is also the oldest tradition of treatment and psychotherapeutic practice in Nepal and the Himalayan region. It has been named variously across the caste, ethnicity, and region as Dhāmi-Jhankri in Hindu, Bompo in Tamange, *Dyo-mā* in Newar, *Picās* in the far-western region of Nepal, and Phedangba, Nakchhong, and Mangpa among Rai-Limbu.

Despite modern health facilities and treatment systems in Kathmandu, *Dyo-mā* remains popular among those disillusioned with biomedical solutions. The *Dyo-mā*'s practice addresses not just illness but emotional, social, and spiritual suffering in Kathmandu, particularly in Newar communities. They cure the patients through their Shamanistic skills and indigenous knowledge on plants and herbs and its application for treatment. The modern public health system focuses solely on biomedicine, overlooking locally available psychotherapists such as *Dhāmi-Jhankri* and *Picās*, as well as traditional doctors like *Amchi*, *Guruwa*, and *Vaidhya*. The *Dyo-mā*'s treatment methods coexist with modern allopathic and biomedical practices; therefore, they recommend visiting hospitals, nursing homes, local clinics, and consulting with medical professionals in the special case of illness. The traditional treatment system, practices, and methods differ from place to place, person to person, and culture to culture; therefore, the state needs to recognise such knowledge and integrate it into modern health development. The state should be culturally sensitive while crafting policies and planning for the recognition and integration of socio-cultural knowledge. The state should be responsible for documenting the knowledge on faith-healing and medicinal practices. The role of *Amchi*, *Guruwa*, *Vaidhya*, and *Dyo-mā*' seems to be similar in terms of treatment methods, experiences, and application of modern herbs and medicinal plants, and shamanic practices at the local level.

Conclusion

This tradition is still practiced in Kathmandu for its healing properties, combining shamanic and traditional medicine. This provides psychological and physiological services to local individuals who have a strong inclination towards religious faiths and ideologies. The patients who are unable to find relief through modern medical practices also consult with *Dyo-mā*. Therefore, medical practitioners such as doctors, nurses, clinicians, and public health workers should integrate *Dyo-mā* for healing and mental well-being. Local patients consult with *Dyo-mā* due to their firm trust in shamanic practices and traditional medical experts, such as Gubāju and Vaidhya. The possession and the traditional healers contribute to healing from fear, anxiety, and mental disorders. In modern healthcare facilities, state agencies must endorse policies of medical pluralism for patient treatment. The faith-healer's role is profound at the local level due to their shamanistic knowledge and the power of communication between divine sources and patients. Their skills in diagnosis and treatment services keep them in a highly regarded position in society. Interestingly, *Dyo-mā* played a dual role as a traditional practitioner, therapist, and messenger of God, often utilizing local resources and materials, and enjoying broad recognition, name, and fame. Traditional faith healers and medical practitioners play a profound role; therefore, their practices should be integrated into modern medical practices and recognized by the state agencies. The materials and methods used in healing are connected with rituals and worship practices. I believe that any illness and disease is not only a pathological and psychological issue, but also a socio-cultural issue; therefore, the state must incorporate the principle of medical pluralism into modern medical practices. In faith healing, there are patient-client relations and their emotions, sentiments, and memories.

This practice is symbolically constructed with specific signs and symbols. Their knowledge is transmitted from one generation to the next. The faith-healing practice is symbolically associated with economy, power, and socio-cultural practices, which extend to therapies, counseling, and treatment. The local faith healer serves as a medium between supernatural forces. They are communicating in a unique language in the subconscious mind to ward off evil spirits and diseases. Therefore, the state has to integrate the cultural values, ideologies and practices into the modern health system.

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