

THE EXISTENCE AND NATURE OF *PILE*

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ABSTRACT

Getting first hand information about the existence of the *pile* would help clear the confusion between the medical practice and culture due to the several unexplainable phenomena surrounding its nature and how it works. The study was conducted to found out the nature of *pile* and how it works, how it gets transferred from one generation to another and its positive and negative. The study is qualitative. Whatever information uncovered in the study was reported using the descriptive method.

The study focused on the natural setting with the *pile* owners, victims and affiliates as the direct sources of data. Primary communication through face to face interviews was done with persons having *pile*, those who were victims of the *pile*, and those who have knowledge about *pile*, due to their affiliation to *pile* owners. The respondents freely told / narrated their stories or versions. A personal immersion was also done by the researcher in the actual households of the respondents to document their ways of life and any unusual routines in their lives because of their *pile*. Actual narrations by the respondents were quoted as actual data gathered.

Understanding the true essence of the *pile* as a culture leads to the conclusion that it is not altogether bad. The study showed that *pile* is an abstract but potent power bestowed only to a chosen member/s of a clan. It gets transferred through a dream where those bestowed experience being bitten by a dog or cat. The *pile* can attack anybody- the unlawful or even the innocent ones. The positive aspects of the *pile* include the fact that *pile* healer is not allowed to receive any monetary reward from the victim for it is their gift to do service to others. Victims of *pile* get cured by simply seeking and approaching the person endowed with the power to heal.

KEYWORDS: Culture, Ifugao Culture, Indigenous Culture, *Mun-agba*, *Pile*