

Medicinal Value of Our Traditional Life Style of People in Sri Lanka: A Case Study with Special Reference to the Construction Materials Used in Marailuppai Village

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Researchers have identified the effects of buildings on human health over the century of time. The buildings especially the house designs of Sri Lankans have greatly changed from using nature friendly substances such as clay, Palmyra leaves, coconut leaves, straws and cow dung to artificial substances especially to cement, metal corrugated sheets and tiles according to the reports. The primary objective of this research is to analyze the medicinal value of the traditional life style of people in Sri Lanka. The secondary objective includes the ways to what extent the present Sri Lankans have deviated from a life style with medicinal value. Hundred families and their houses from Marailuppai village in Vavuniya District were taken using random sampling method for the study and the study was conducted for five years using qualitative and quantitative research methods. Questionnaire and family records were used to proof the quantitative validity of the study while interview, observations and focus group discussion were used to generate qualitative data for the study. The findings of the study revealed that all the houses of the people in the village are built with cement as a major construction material. The floors and the walls of the houses are too plastered either with cement paste or paint. For the roofs, the people have used metal corrugated sheets and tiles. However, the usage of tiles for roofs has been observed with more than 96%. Further, the observation of the researcher revealed that there are no houses built with clay, Palmyra leaves, coconut leaves or cow dung. According to the data collected, more than 95% of the houses were built with nature friendly materials such as clay, Palmyra leaves, coconut leaves, straws and cow dung for many years traditionally which date before the end of civil war. Thereafter, the life style of the people have changed significantly with the houses built using cement and tiles after the resettlement process which took place after 2009.

Key Words: Cow dung, cement, clay health, humans, life style, houses