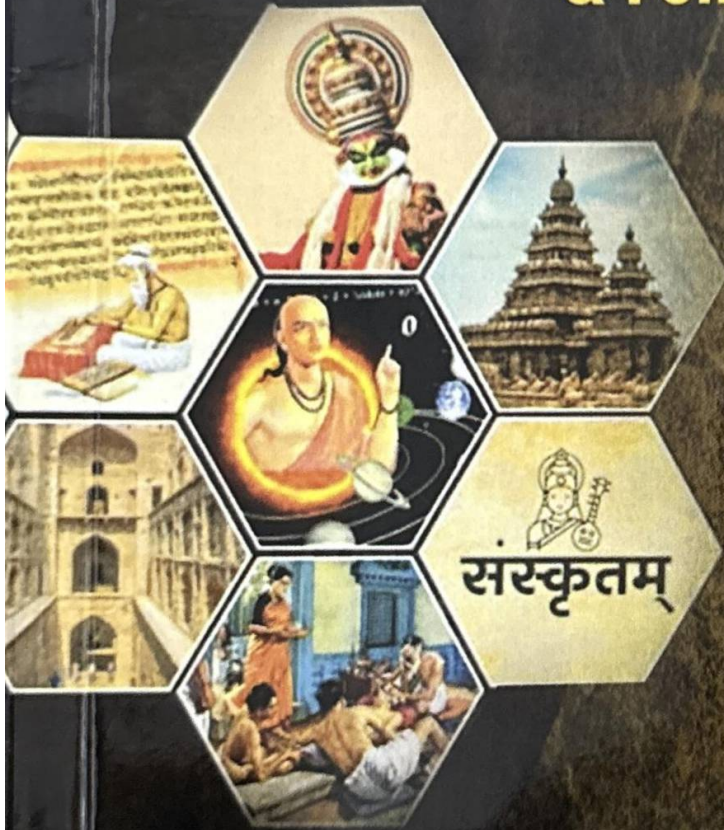




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Development: Tradition, Innovation
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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Indigenous Knowledge and Reproductive Health Management: an in-depth investigation among the Kaibartas of Assam

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The Kaibarta, a large Scheduled Caste community in Assam, maintains a rich tradition of plant-based ethno-medicine. This study analyzes the health-seeking behaviors of Kaibarta women, specifically aiming to document the community's indigenous reproductive health knowledge. Research was conducted across six Kaibarta villages in Assam's Lakhimpur and Dhemaji districts. Pre-tested schedules targeting reproductive health issues guided data collection, focusing on treatment-seeking patterns and medicines used by participating women. Semi-structured interviews and group discussions with elderly and knowledgeable villagers captured indigenous knowledge. The study involved 643 Kaibarta women participants; 307 (47.75%) reported symptoms linked to Reproductive Tract Infections (RTIs). Among them, 38.73% relied on traditional home remedies, while 12.91% sought no treatment. Traditional medicine use was highest among women with a high school education (18.51%), closely followed by non-literate women (15.55%). The research documented 42 medicinal plant species used by the Kaibarta. The Kaibarta community under study demonstrated a strong reliance on indigenous medicine. This practice is influenced by various factors, including women's educational attainment, the community's economic background, and limited access to modern medical facilities. Further intensive research into their traditional healthcare practices could yield valuable knowledge for broader applications.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge, Reproductive Health, Kaibartas, Reproductive Tract Infections.