



Cultural Identity and Core Values of an Ethnic Group in the Philippines

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Abstract- Learners of Indigenous People (IP) communities in the Philippines have shown declining interest in and appreciation for cultural heritage and traditional literature due to technological advancement and external cultural influences. This study explores the literary characteristics and cultural values of a tribe in the Philippines, aimed at preserving cultural heritage. Employing a descriptive research design and stratified random sampling, with 212 participants, the results indicate a moderate level of knowledge regarding the tribe's short stories, fables, songs, and dances, however high level of familiarity with legends. Gender was not a significant factor in the IP literary knowledge; however, age showed a notable difference. The literary pieces reflect values centered on the individual, family, community, and environment, mirroring the group's interests, aspirations, life conditions, and identity. Problems are encountered with cultural practice and preservation of tradition and culture. In response to these findings, the researchers recommend initiatives aimed at promoting and sustaining the literary heritage of the IPs in the Philippines.

Keywords- cultural values; cultural traditions; ethnic group; indigenous people; literary pieces;

I. Introduction

Cultural identity plays a significant role in shaping the beliefs, values, traditions, and social practices of ethnic groups around the world. In the Philippines, a country characterized by remarkable cultural diversity, ethnic groups maintain distinct identities that reflect their historical experiences, ancestral heritage, languages, religious beliefs, and traditional customs. The cultural landscape of the Philippines has



been influenced by indigenous traditions, regional interactions, and historical encounters with foreign societies, resulting in a rich and diverse cultural heritage.

The core values of an ethnic group serve as guiding principles that influence individual behaviour, family relationships, community participation, and social responsibilities. In Filipino society, values such as bayanihan (community cooperation), pakikisama (social harmony), utang na loob (reciprocity and gratitude), and respect for elders are widely recognized, although their expressions vary across ethnic groups and communities. These values contribute to social cohesion, strengthen interpersonal relationships, and help preserve cultural traditions across generations.

Background of the Study

In an increasingly interconnected world shaped by rapid technological advancement, the global landscape resembles a small, digital village. While this connectivity fosters innovation and exchange, it also accelerates the marginalization and disappearance of tribal populations and their rich cultural heritage. The erosion of these lifeways, marked by the loss of cultural institutions and, in some cases, physical extinction raises urgent scientific and humanistic concerns. From an evolutionary standpoint, documenting vanishing lifeways is essential for understanding the processes behind cultural extinction (Smith, 2018). Equally significant is the humanistic imperative to preserve tribal knowledge, which offers moral and practical contributions to humanity's survival. As industrialization intensifies, the loss of literature, music, and oral traditions deprives younger generations of cultural inheritance. Smith and Akagawa (2018) emphasize the role of intangible cultural heritage in shaping identity and the diverse approaches to its management. Similarly, Jacob et al. (2028) highlight the transformative potential of indigenous knowledge in public education, noting its capacity to improve learning outcomes and strengthen community relationships.

Literature serves as a powerful medium for transmitting values and cultural memory. Although imaginative and interpretative, literary works reveal truths and challenge readers to engage with ideas, emotions, and experiences. Through storytelling, communities preserve principles of beauty, justice, and truth. Smith (2018) argues that literature enables younger generations to understand their behaviors and societal dynamics, uncovering deeper meanings in everyday events. Zhu et al. (2021) found that cultivating life purpose among young adults involves psychological, sociological, and



educational factors, with effective interventions rooted in emotional support, family engagement, and social participation. However, Prakash and Tiwari (2022) note a research gap in emerging markets, where studies on millennials and post-millennials remain limited.

Historically, tribal communities have suffered under the expansion of civilization into their territories, resulting in habitat destruction, disease, malnutrition, and cultural decline (Goodland, 1982). The literary expressions of these communities reflecting their aspirations and values are often overlooked. Human behavior, shaped by group interactions and storytelling, evolves through literary genres that enhance awareness of human dignity and cultural identity.

While a nation's constitution and laws may reveal its history, its literature conveys its spirit. This is particularly true for tribal survival. Tribal literary works offer insights into environmental responses, dreams, joys, and values, empowering younger generations to become custodians of cultural heritage. These narratives, often passed down by mothers through tales, songs, and hymns, nurture communal values and aspirations. Pernia (2015), citing Pope John Paul II, underscores the importance of storytelling in perpetuating cultural values.

In the Philippines, initiatives such as the Indigenous Peoples Education Program (DepEd Order No. 11, s. 2016) support cultural preservation through storytelling, music, dance, and traditional practices. Masendo (2015) notes that younger *Manobos* (one of the largest and most diverse indigenous group in the Philippines) take pride in their heritage through elder-led storytelling. Similarly, the School of Living Arts and Traditions in an elementary school, in the northern part of the Philippines funded by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) promotes *Gaddang* (an indigenous ethnic group in the Northern Philippines) literature, such as dance, attire, and cuisine (Dawaten, 2015). Hipolito (2024), in a systematic review, highlights the role of Schools of Living Traditions (SLTs) in transmitting indigenous knowledge through culture-based education and experiential learning. Bautista (2018) further discusses collaborative efforts between the Peace and Reconciliation Community in Kalinga (indigenous people of the Northern part of the Philippines) and the NCCA to institutionalize cultural dance troupes within formal education, enhancing cultural sustainability. However, external influences and societal changes have led to a decline in traditional practices. Kumar and Singh (2023), in a systematic review, found that



globalization through new ideas, lifestyles, and technologies contributes significantly to the erosion of traditional cultures, particularly in urban and suburban areas where identity loss is more pronounced. One of the researchers, a member of the indigenous tribe, recalls childhood experiences with ethnic stories, musical instruments such as the *gangsa* (gong used in the Cordillera region of the Philippines), and traditional dances. These cultural elements distinguish their tribe and underscore the responsibility to preserve and transmit their heritage. Teachers play a vital role in this effort by incorporating folklore into reading materials, involving elders in dance instruction, and crafting ethnic instruments. However, modern media and the lack of local folklore resources in schools have diminished learners' appreciation for indigenous traditions.

This study is motivated by the need to explore strategies for reviving the cultural heritage of the Kal-owan (an indigenous tribe of the Northern Philippines). By examining the role of literature and education in cultural preservation, the research aims to contribute to broader efforts in sustaining indigenous lifeways in the face of globalization and modernization.

II. Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in the understanding that value systems are shaped through early socialization experiences across multiple environments: home, community, and school. These environments serve as foundational contexts where one internalizes societal norms and develops moral reasoning. Schools play a pivotal role in this process, functioning not only as educational institutions but also as agents of social and cultural transmission.

Theoretical perspectives from developmental psychology and education provide the foundation for this framework. Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory emphasizes the influence of nested environmental contexts such as family, community, and educational institutions on human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). His model highlights how these systems interact to shape behaviors and values. Similarly, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory underscores the importance of social interaction and cultural context in cognitive and moral development (Vygotsky, 1978). Through engagement with adults and peers, one learns and internalizes values that guide one's behavior within society. Schools are not merely physical spaces for academic



instruction; they are moral environments that contribute to the strengthening of communal values. As social institutions, schools influence the direction of social change and are often viewed by the public as catalysts for societal improvement. Teachers, in this context, are held accountable not only for academic outcomes but also for the moral development of their students. The inculcation of values is closely linked to literacy skills, particularly reading and listening comprehension, which enable learners to interpret, evaluate, and apply ethical principles in their daily lives.

Literature serves as a powerful medium for value formation. Through engagement with diverse genres such as short stories, fables, legends, songs, and dances, learners cultivate imagination and moral reasoning. Characters and narratives provide opportunities for reflection on ethical dilemmas and cultural norms. A well-structured curriculum that integrates local literature supports teachers in contextualizing lessons and fostering meaningful value formation (Karakuş, 2021). The teacher-learner relationship, built on trust and mutual respect, is both logical and moral in nature. As Koka (2016) emphasizes, positive interactions between teachers and students foster supportive learning environments that enhance educational effectiveness. The cultural and constitutional context of the Philippines further enriches this framework. The 1987 Philippine Constitution affirms the multidimensional nature of the human person, recognizing the individual as a social being who contributes to personal and national development (Nolledo, 1987). In alignment with this constitutional mandate, the Department of Education's Order No. 62, s. 2011, known as the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework, adopts a rights-based approach to education. This policy promotes culturally responsive instruction that reflects the social and cultural contexts of Indigenous Peoples (IPs) in the Philippines. It emphasizes the importance of integrating indigenous knowledge systems and practices into the formal education system.

Values cannot be prescribed or imposed. They must be described, understood, and internalized through meaningful engagement. They represent ideals that guide human behavior and must be integrated organically into the teaching-learning process. Teachers are encouraged to utilize local literary genres to preserve cultural heritage and support the Indigenous Peoples Education Program. Literature serves as a conduit for transmitting traditions, rituals, and behavioral norms to younger generations, fostering cultural continuity and ethical awareness. These conceptual foundations inform the design and direction of the present study. The input includes participant profiles such



as age and ethnic background, and the values embedded in indigenous literary forms including short stories, fables, legends, songs, and dances. The process involves assessing IP learners' knowledge of these literary forms and evaluating the characteristics and values they reflect. This framework guides the analysis of how literature and education contribute to value formation among Indigenous youth in the Philippines.

III. Paradigm of the Study

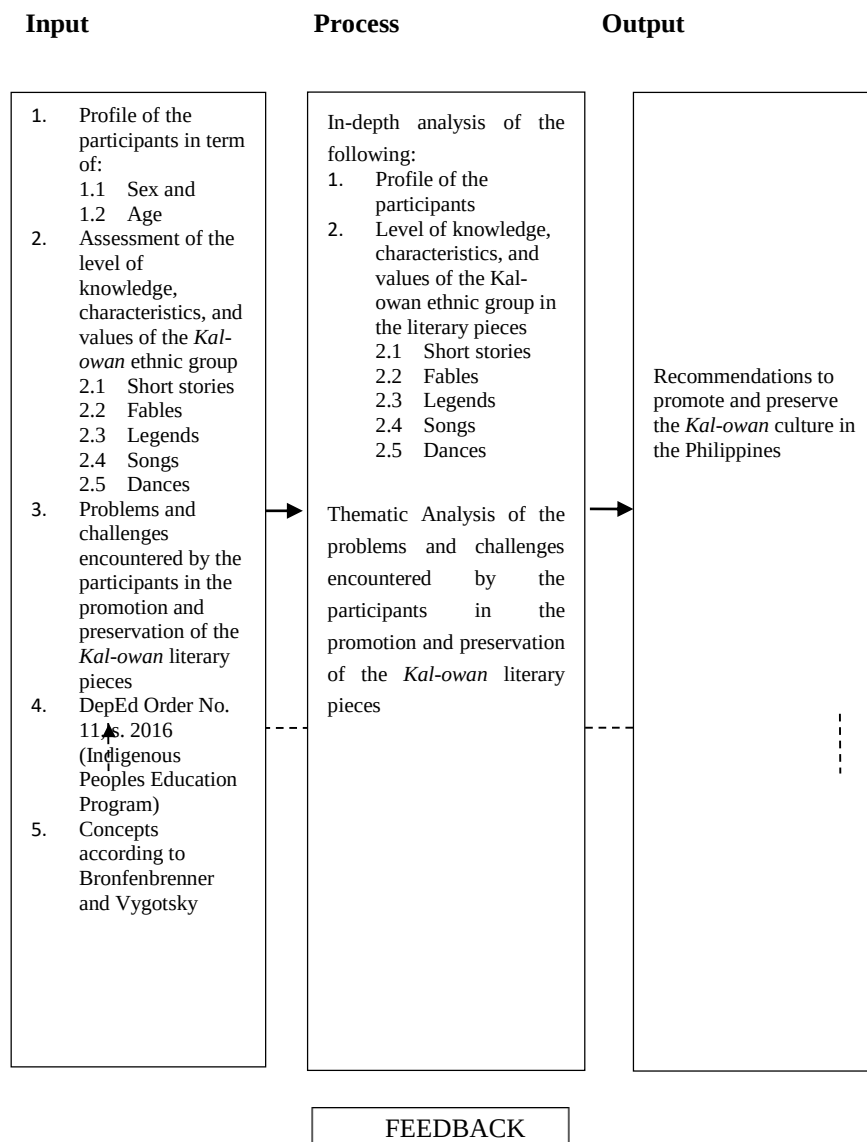




Fig. 1 Paradigm of the Study

Figure 1 above shows the paradigm of the study, which follows the input-process-output (IPO) model. The inputs consisted of the profile of the participants in terms of gender and age, as well as the assessment of the characteristics and values of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group as revealed in their literary pieces such as short stories, fables, legends, songs, dances, including DepEd Order No. 11, s. 2016 (Indigenous Peoples Education Program). The process involved an in-depth analysis of the participants' profile and the assessment of the level of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group in terms of short stories, fables, legends, songs, and dances, including the characteristics and values of the said ethnic group and a thematic analysis of problems and challenges encountered by the participants in the promotion and preservation of the *Kal-owan* literary pieces. Finally, the output of this study is a recommendation to promote and preserve the *Kal-owan* culture in the elementary school, the Northern part of the Philippines ethnic group.

IV. Problem Statement

The research investigated the characteristics and values of the *Kal-owan* Ethnic Group with the hope of promoting and preserving the culture and tradition. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the participants in terms of:

- Gender and
- Age?

2. What is the participants' extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group's literary pieces along with the following?

- Short Stories
- Fables
- Legends
- Songs
- Dances
- Is there a significant difference in the participants' extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group's literary pieces when they are grouped by profile variables?



- What characteristics and values are depicted in the different literary pieces as observed in the community?
- What are the challenges and issues encountered in the practice of the culture of the ethnic group?

The study tested at 0.05 level of significance the following hypothesis:

H1: There is no significant difference in the participants' extent of knowledge of the Kal-owan ethnic group's literary pieces when they are grouped by profile variables.

V. Methods

1. Research Approach

The researchers employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches using a descriptive design. Descriptive design as defined by Sevilla et al. (2006) aims to determine the status of a group at a time and is valuable in providing facts on which scientific judgement may be based, providing practices, behaviors, procedures, and formulating programs and/or policies.

2. Data Collection Methods and Tools

To collect the data needed for the investigation, the researchers utilized the following tools and undertook the following procedures below. The questionnaire was crafted by the researchers and was subjected to validation by three content research experts. It was also pilot tested to different groups who were not the participants of the study.

Survey Questionnaire. The researchers used a closed and open-ended questionnaire. The closed-ended questionnaire was floated to obtain information such as gender and age; and gather data on the level of knowledge of the different literary pieces such as short stories, fables, legends, songs, and dances from the student participants. The open-ended questionnaire was utilized to elicit the issues encountered by the student-participants in the practice of the culture of the Kal-owan tribe.

Structured Interview. One of the researchers consulted with the “*pangats*” (elder leaders) especially those who were born in Kalinga, Philippines (located in the northern part of the Philippines) and never have left the place. The interview made them understand the purpose of the study to avoid misinterpretation. The questions elicited



responses capturing the characteristics and values of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group as depicted in the different literary pieces and the issues encountered by “*pangats*” (elderly group among the said tribe) in the practice of the culture of the said IPs.

Participant Observation. This is the process that enabled the researchers to learn better about the activities of the people under study in their natural setting through observing and participating more in their activities. This provided the context for the development of sampling guidelines and interview guides.

Community Observation. One of the researchers is a *Kal-owan* native who lives among the *Kal-owan* tribe; thus, he encountered no difficulties in the translation and observation of the characteristics and values of the *Kal-owan* ethnic group.

Photography. One of the *Kal-owan* researchers documented through photos of the customary practices of the *Kal-owan* which are depicted or implied in different literary pieces.

Table 1. Participants of the Study

Participants	Frequency	Percentage
Students	139	65.56
Teachers	11	5.18
Out-of-School Youth	31	14.63
Elderly (<i>Pangats</i>)	31	14.63
Total	212	100.0

The study was conducted in Northern part of the Philippines where the *Kal-owan* tribe settles. It involved students, teachers from three elementary schools, out-of-school youth, and “*pangats*” as participants. Stratified random sampling was used to select the teachers, students, the out-of-school youth, and the elderly. Moreover, the group of students and of the out-of-school youth included those whose parents are members of the *Kal-owan* tribe, including those not considered as product of intermarriage. Among the participants aged below 18 years, their parents’ consent was sought.



3. Data Management, Analysis and Presentation

In analyzing the data, the researcher used the following statistical tools:

Frequency and Percentage. These were used to describe the profile of the participants. *Mean.* The researchers used this to determine the participants' extent of knowledge of different literary pieces. The means were interpreted using the following four-point Likert scale.

Table 2. Scale for Determining the Participants' Extent of Knowledge of the Kal-
owan Ethnic Group's Literary Pieces

Mean Range	Descriptive Interpretation
3.25 - 4.00	Very Great Extent (VGE)
2.50 - 3.24	Great Extent (GE)
1.76 - 2.49	Moderate Extent (ME)
1.00 - 1.75	Low Extent (LE)

One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). It was used to determine the significant difference in the participants' extent of knowledge of the different literary pieces when they are grouped by profile variables.

Content Analysis. The researchers used this to explore the characteristics and values depicted in the different literary pieces as observed in the community, as well as the challenges and issues encountered in the practice of the culture of the ethnic group.

VI. Results and Discussion

Table 3. Frequency Count and Percentage Distribution of the Participants in Terms of
Gender and Age

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	106	50.00
Female	106	50.00
Total	212	100.00
Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
10-15	139	65.57



16-20	31	14.62
21-25	5	2.36
26-30	5	2.36
31 & above	32	15.09
Total	212	100.00

Table 3 presents the frequency count and percentage distribution of the participants according to gender and age.

It can be gleaned from the result that there is an equal distribution of male and female participants. In terms of age, the majority of the participants belong to the 10-15 age group at 139 or 65.57%. Members of this age group are those studying in elementary and secondary schools. The following are those aged 31 years and above at 32 or 15.09%. On the other hand, the age groups 21-25 and 26-30 mark the lowest number of participants at 5 or 2.36% each.

Table 4. Extent of Knowledge of the Participants of the Kal-owan Tribe's Short Stories

Short Stories	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. <i>Sivfit</i> (a type of bird)	2.29	Moderate Extent
2. <i>Pil-piltak</i> (I am a bird)	2.23	Moderate Extent
3. What Small Boys Should Not Eat	1.69	Low Extent
4. <i>Kagetkit</i> (a small bird or sparrow-like)	3.13	Great Extent
5. <i>Maymay</i> (a traditional chant that expresses affection, admiration, or praise)	2.46	Moderate Extent



6. <i>Mendadawak</i> (a chant that conveys healing, blessing, or invocation)	2.66	Great Extent
7. <i>Diay Dalluyon</i> (flowing current of water)	1.71	Low Extent
8. <i>Sagipolan</i> (a chant that conveys playfulness, teasing)	1.70	Low Extent
9. Tamarind Tree and the Bamboo	1.74	Low Extent
10. <i>Apong Julia and Berta</i> (chants that blend storytelling with humor and social commentary)	1.73	Low Extent
11. The Proud Fachenggo	2.14	Moderate Extent
12. <i>Baggay and Buyog</i> (chants that draw imagery from nature, specifically plants and insects)	2.30	Moderate Extent
Category Mean	2.15	Moderate Extent

Table 4 presents the participants' extent of knowledge of the Kal-owan tribe's short stories. The results indicate that the participants have a great extent of knowledge of only two short stories, "*Kagetkit*" (a small bird or sparrow-like bird) and "*Mendadawak*" (a chant that conveys healing, blessing, or invocation) with means of 3.13 and 2.66, respectively. This suggests that these two short stories are considered the most popular in the community since they obtained the highest mean score from the participants. This also implies that the other short stories of which the participants have a low extent of knowledge need more documentation.



On the other hand, “*Siyfit*,” (a type of bird) “*Pil-piltak*,” (I am a bird), “Maymay” (a traditional chant that expresses affection, admiration, or praise), “*The Proud Fachenggo*,” and “*Baggay and Buyog*” (chants that draw imagery from nature, specifically plants and insects), were assessed as moderate extent, at 2.29, 2.23, 2.46, 2.14, and 2.30, respectively. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the participants have a low extent of knowledge of the following short stories: “What Small Boys Should Not Eat,” “*Diay Dalluyon*” (flowing current of water), “*Sagipolan*” (a chant that conveys playfulness, teasing), “*Tamarind Tree and the Bamboo*,” and “*Apong Julia and Berta*” (chants that blend storytelling with humor and social commentary), with means of 1.69, 1.71, 1.70, 1.74, and 1.73 respectively. The findings suggest that many of the members of the tribe are not that knowledgeable about their short stories. Overall, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* short stories, as indicated by the category mean of 2.15. This means that the participants have moderate exposure to the *Kal-owan* short stories. This may indicate a disconnection from their cultural heritage and traditions, which may lead to a weaker sense of identity and belonging and they might later miss out on the cognitive and emotional benefits that come from engaging with diverse narratives and moral lessons embedded in these stories.

Table 5. Extent of Knowledge of the Participants of the Kal-owan Tribe’s Fables

Fables	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. Why the Head of the Grasshopper is Chopped	1.59	Low Extent
2. The Snail and the Frog	2.46	Moderate Extent
3. The Termite and the Crab	2.01	Moderate Extent
4. The Mouse and the Carabao	2.55	Great Extent
5. The Small Bird and the Snake	1.73	Low Extent



6. The Dog and the Rabbit	1.74	Low Extent
7. Hen and the Crow	2.67	Great Extent
8. Crocodile and the Snail	2.42	Moderate Extent
9. Horse and the Monkey	2.06	Moderate Extent
Category Mean	2.14	Moderate Extent

Table 5 presents the participants' extent of knowledge of the Kal-owan tribe's fables. The data show that the participants have a great extent of knowledge of "The Mouse and the Carabao" and "Hen and the Crow" with mean scores of 2.55 and 2.67, respectively. This may be attributed to the fact that participants are knowledgeable about these fables since their main characters are the most common animals seen in the community.

On the other hand, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of "*The Snail and the Frog*," "*The Termite and the Crab*," "*Crocodile and the Snail*," and "*The Horse and the Monkey*," which obtained the mean scores of 2.46, 2.01, 2.42, and 2.06, respectively. Moreover, the participants have a low extent of knowledge of "Why the Head of the Grasshopper is Chopped," "The Small Bird and the Snake," and "The Dog and the Rabbit," at 1.59, 1.73, and 1.74, respectively.

Generally, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* fables as shown by the category mean of 2.14. The moderate extent of knowledge reflects a limited knowledge about the *Kal-owan* fables. This result supports the conclusion of Pulimeno et al. (2020) of the need for children's literature and storytelling which is helpful in promoting students' global development and wellbeing especially if it is included in school curricular activities.



Table 6. Extent of Knowledge of the Participants of the Kal-owan Tribe's Legends

Legends	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. Caved-in Hole in Pinukpuk	3.11	Great Extent
2. Origin of the Catfish	1.75	Low Extent
3. Why There is an Earthquake	2.75	Great Extent
4. How Bodong Started	2.46	Moderate Extent
5. <i>Nagapuan ti Mangga</i> (Origin of the Mango)	1.73	Low Extent
6. Origin of the Dragonfly	1.77	Low Extent
7. How Mushrooms Came to Be	1.63	Low Extent
8. Legend of Ammacian	3.35	Very Great Extent
9. How Wagud Got Its Name	3.17	Great Extent
10. Legend of Aciga	3.24	Great Extent
11. Legend of Malagnat	3.19	Great Extent
Category Mean	2.56	Great Extent

Table 6 presents participants' extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* tribe's legends. As revealed in the table, the participants have a very great extent of knowledge of the "Legend of Ammacian" with a mean of 3.35. In addition, participants have a great extent of knowledge of "Caved-in Hole in Pinukpuk," "Why is There an Earthquake," "How Wagud Got Its Name," "Legend of Aciga," and "Legend of Malagnat," at 3.11, 2.75, 3.17, 3.24, and 3.19, respectively.



Moreover, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of “How Bodong Started” with a mean score of 2.46. It is interesting to note that the participants have a low extent of knowledge of “Origin of the Catfish,” “Nagapuan ti Mangga,” “Origin of the Dragonfly,” and “How Mushrooms Came to Be,” with mean scores of 1.75, 1.73, 1.77, and 1.63, respectively.

Overall, the participants have a great extent of knowledge of *Kal-owan* legends as indicated by the category mean of 2.56. Accordingly, legends play a very important role in every community. Musiyiwa (2011) gives importance to traditional stories in educating and shaping the minds of young learners in Zimbabwe.

Table 7. Extent of Knowledge of the Participants of the Kal-owan Tribe’s Songs

Songs	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. <i>Uyya-yi</i> (lullaby)	3.20	Great Extent
2. <i>Dung-dung-ay</i> (man saying goodbye to their beloved)	3.61	Very Great Extent
3. <i>Salidummay</i> (no direct translation in English but symbolic of saying “this is life”)	3.62	Very Great Extent
4. <i>Ar-arrem</i> (courtship)	1.71	Low Extent
5. Song for the Dead	1.70	Low Extent
6. Song for Good Harvest	1.76	Moderate Extent
7. Birth of a Child	2.00	Moderate Extent
8. Song to God for a Child	1.73	Low Extent
Category Mean	2.41	Moderate Extent

Table 7 presents the participants’ extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* tribe’s songs. The data indicate that the participants have a very great extent of knowledge of “*Dung-*



dung-ay” (man saying goodbye to their beloved), and “*Salidummay*” (no direct translation in English but symbolic of saying “this is life”) with mean scores of 3.61 and 3.62, respectively. These two songs are considered as the most popular indigenous songs in the Cordillera Region since all local communities have their own versions of the songs which are sung in different community celebrations.

Of “*Uyya-yi*” (lullaby), the participants have a great extent of knowledge at 3.20. The participants have moderate extent of knowledge of “Song for a Good Harvest” and “Birth of a Child,” with mean scores of 1.76 and 2.00, respectively. Moreover, it is noteworthy that the participants have a low extent of knowledge of “Ar-arrem” (courtship), “Song for the Dead,” and “Song to God for a Child” at 1.71, 1.70, and 1.73, respectively.

Studies have shown a clear trend of diminishing knowledge of folk songs among younger generations, primarily due to changes in educational practices and cultural influences. According to a study by the University of Florida, it was found that children in the United States are not familiar with traditional folk songs, which threatens the preservation of cultural heritage. The study further revealed that many school music programs are replacing folk songs with contemporary pop music, leading to a significant gap in children’s knowledge of traditional songs (Ward, 2003). It was also found in research published by the University of Florida which noted that majority of young people could not sing patriotic, folk, and children’s songs because these songs are not sufficiently taught in schools (Keen, 2003). Way back in the 60’s, it was recommended the importance of including authentic folk music in educational curricula. Nketia (1967) emphasized that neglecting folk music in favor of Western music can lead to a disconnect between students and their cultural heritage

Table 8. Extent of Knowledge of the Participants of the Kal-owan Tribe’s Dances

Dances	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
1. War Dance	1.86	Moderate Extent
2. Wedding Dance	2.72	Great Extent
3. Dance of Thanksgiving for a Good Harvest	2.16	Moderate Extent
4. Courtship Dance	2.63	Great Extent



5. Dance to Ask God for Rain	1.78	Moderate Extent
6. Healing Dance by a Quack Doctor	1.60	Low Extent
Category Mean	2.13	Moderate Extent

Table 8 presents the participants' extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* tribe's dances. As shown, the participants have a great extent of knowledge of Wedding Dance and Courtship Dance with mean scores of 2.72 and 2.63, respectively. In the province of Kalinga, weddings and courtships are considered as two of the most important life events among the people; thus, almost all the subtribes of the province have these dances. According to Gavino (2016), weddings and courtships are two of the popular cultural identities of the *Kalingas*, and dances make them unique as a people.

On the other hand, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of War Dance, Dance of Thanksgiving for a Good Harvest, and Dance to Ask God for Rain, at 1.86, 2.16, and 1.78, respectively. Conversely, the participants have a low extent of knowledge of Healing Dance by a Quack Doctor at a mean score of 1.60.

Generally, the participants have a moderate extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* dances as reflected by the category mean of 2.13. It is indicated that there is a general trend of low awareness of tribal dances among Filipino students. A study conducted by Villa (2003) at Tukuran Technical-Vocational High School explored the awareness levels of senior high school students regarding Filipino culture, including traditional dances. The findings revealed that students had low awareness levels of traditional dances, which was attributed to the vanishing cultural heritage and the lack of integration of Filipino culture in teaching.

Table 9. Comparison of the Participants' Extent of Knowledge of the *Kal-owan* Tribe's Literary Pieces when Grouped According to Gender

Literary Pieces	SD	t Value	p Value	Decision at $\alpha=0.05$
1. Short Stories	0.68	0.39	0.53	Not Significant
2. Fables	0.67	0.81	0.86	Not Significant



3. Legends	0.58	0.23	0.33	Not Significant
4. Songs	0.67	0.35	0.85	Not Significant
5. Dances	0.53	0.29	0.59	Not Significant

Table 9 presents the result of the comparative analysis of the participants' extent of knowledge of the literary pieces of the *Kal-owan* Tribe when grouped according to gender. The data indicates that all the probability values obtained along the five literary pieces are higher than 0.05 level of significance; therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. This means that the participants' knowledge of the different literary pieces does not vary regardless of their gender. In other words, both male and female participants have similar extent of knowledge of their indigenous literary pieces. A recent study from the University of Mindanao, Philippines, find similarity to the present finding where it shows the difficulties students face in interpreting literary texts. It highlights that challenges such as lack of prior knowledge, poor vocabulary, and lack of awareness of literary devices are common across genders (Gomez, 2022).

Table 10. Comparison of the Participants' Extent of Knowledge of the *Kal-owan* Tribe's Literary Pieces when Grouped According to Age

Literary Pieces	Age	N	Mean	SD	F Ratio	<i>p</i> Value	Decision at $\alpha=0.05$
Short Stories	10-15	139	2.35	0.59	3.06	0.02	Reject Ho
	16-20	31	2.28	0.57			
	21-25	5	2.60	0.92			
	26-30	5	3.05	0.19			
	31-above	32	2.65	0.93			
	Total	212	2.40	0.67			
Fables	10-15	139	2.48	0.67	3.72	0.01	Reject Ho
	16-20	31	2.33	0.73			
	21-25	5	2.82	0.91			
	26-30	5	3.18	0.56			
	31-above	32	2.80	0.53			
	Total	212	2.53	0.68			



Legends	10-15	139	2.89	0.57	5.99	0.00	Reject Ho
	16-20	31	2.72	0.69			
	21-25	5	2.94	0.85			
	26-30	5	3.50	0.37			
	31-above	32	3.36	0.66			
	Total	212	2.95	0.64			
Songs	10-15	139	2.94	0.53	2.18	0.05	Reject Ho
	16-20	31	2.79	0.61			
	21-25	5	3.13	0.40			
	26-30	5	3.35	0.30			
	31-above	32	3.09	0.42			
	Total	212	2.95	0.53			
Dances	10-15	139	2.74	0.70	4.08	0.00	Reject Ho
	16-20	31	2.80	0.63			
	21-25	5	2.60	0.93			
	26-30	5	3.40	0.15			
	31-above	32	3.17	0.34			
	Total	212	2.82	0.67			

Table 10 presents the significant difference in the participants' extent of knowledge of the *Kal-owan* tribe's literary pieces when grouped according to age. As shown, all the probability values obtained along the five literary pieces are lower than 0.05 level of significance; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the participants' extent of knowledge of the different literary pieces varies when they are grouped by age.

Accordingly, those who are older are more knowledgeable about the literacy pieces than the younger members of the tribe due to their longer exposure to the community and their culture. Furthermore, the table shows that the significant difference in the participants' extent of knowledge of the literary pieces of the *Kal-owan* tribe is observed among those aged 26-30 as shown in their higher means.

This is supported by the results of previous studies reporting a higher level of knowledge and awareness of elders of their folk literature than that of younger people.



Nakata and Langton (2005) found that older generations of indigenous Australians possess a significantly greater understanding and awareness of their traditional knowledge, including folk literature, compared to younger generations. This disparity is attributed to the traditional methods of oral transmission, which have been less prevalent in recent times due to various socio-cultural changes.

Characteristics and Values Depicted in the Literary of the *Kal-owan* Community

The following are the characteristics and values depicted in the literary pieces as observed by the *Kal-owan* researcher, which were confirmed in the interviews and responses among the *Kal-owan* community.

As observed among the *Kal-owan* folks, their short stories are unique to the community which generally speak of their values which are focused on either self, family, community, and environment. Their stories give emphasis on individual's personal growth, self-discovery, and individual resilience which narrate identity, ambition, and how they overcome personal challenges. Also, the stories also focus on the relationship between the community and their natural environment. These narratives lead the *Kal-owan* to environmental stewardship and sustainability. The tales draw out the importance of traditions, support systems, family dynamics. Likewise, it evokes the important role of family in shaping one's values and life choices. Moreover, the narratives inspire the significance of communal ties, cooperation, and collective well-being. These stories often portray the community's shared history, cultural practices, and the ways in which individuals contribute to and benefit from their community.

The fables and legends of the tribe evoke values such as obedience to parents, the elderly and the law, which feature characters who embody respect for everyone regardless of social status and disability and adherence to the wisdom of the elders and community law. Likewise, they revolve around family and their responsibility to the community.

The values of the *Kal-owan* songs are based on the life-cycle practices of the tribe from birth to death. The traditional songs each serve a unique purpose in the cultural life of the *Kal-owan*, ranging from lullabies and courtship melodies to songs of farewell, celebration, and prayer. They reflect the community's values, emotions, and life events, providing a musical expression for every significant occasion.



Finally, the values of the dances are dependent on the events and celebrations being portrayed, and most of the events are relevant to the community such as winning a war, harvesting, planting, including important occasions such as wedding, courtship, and wake/burial.

By weaving their core values into literary works, communities preserve their cultural heritage and impart important lessons to future generations. This integration ensures that traditions, beliefs, and customs are remembered and respected, which serves as an educational tool for younger generations. Likewise, it provides moral and ethical guidance, fostering a sense of community and shared standards. It creates an emotional connection, strengthening community ties and fostering a sense of belonging. As new generations contribute their own stories, the literary tradition evolves, allowing the culture to adapt to modern contexts while honoring the past.

Issues Encountered in the Practice of the Culture of the Kal-owan Ethnic Group

The Challenges and Issues Encountered in the Practice of the Culture as provided by the of the Kal-owan Ethnic Group

When the Kal-owan tribe were asked what challenges and issues are encountered in the practice of the culture, their responses were as follows. The majority of them said that with the effects of social media, the traditional songs and dances are now becoming extinct because they are now substituted with modern songs and dances.

Students wearing G-strings often become targets of jokes and discrimination, especially among the minors. Similarly, the *Kal-owan* face prejudice when they wear their ethnic costumes on regular days or when visiting other places. Also, ethnic costumes can be quite expensive which cannot be used by the *Kal-owan*.

Participants also shared that there is limited documentation of literary pieces available for their use. They believe that the limited promotion of indigenous culture in schools, which is only highlighted during the nationwide Indigenous People's Education (IPED) day, and the strenuous process of making ethnic tools such as bowls called *duyog*, constitute significant challenges and issues in practicing the *Kal-owan* culture. Further, the limited number of experts teaching the proper beating of gongs and other ethnic musical instruments was considered by the majority of the participants as a challenge or issue, including the absence of ethnic costumes.



Plan of Action to Promote and Preserve the Kal-owan Culture:

Literature as a mirror of life develops the culture of a group of people. In understanding people's culture and values, folk literature can be a good source of information. In the community of northern Kalinga Philippines, it is very important to study, collect, record, and document the people's folk literature before the next generation would forget it due to cultural diffusion and intermarriages among members of different tribes. Promotion and preservation of folk literature must be encouraged for the continuous existence and enrichment of cultural heritage, towards building a better cultural identity. To gain deeper insights into the cultural practices of cultural minority groups, which offer deeper understanding of people's roots and strengthen the need to preserve cultural heritage, preservation of literary pieces must be encouraged.

VII. Conclusion and Recommendations

The *Kal-owan* community's literary pieces, including short stories, fables, legends, songs, and dances, vividly reflect their core values centered on self, family, community, and the environment. These narratives emphasize personal growth, resilience, environmental stewardship, and the importance of traditions and family dynamics. They also highlight communal ties, cooperation, and collective well-being, portraying the community's shared history and cultural practices. However, the *Kal-owan* face challenges in preserving their culture due to the influence of social media, which leads to the decline of traditional songs and dances. Moreover, they encounter prejudice and discrimination when wearing ethnic costumes, and the high cost of these costumes limits their use. The lack of documentation and promotion of their literary pieces further hampers cultural preservation. Despite these challenges, the integration of their values into literary works remains crucial for preserving their heritage and imparting important lessons to future generations.

Thus, it is recommended that to preserve *Kal-owan* culture there is a need to implement educational programs and digital archiving to teach and document traditional practices. Organization of cultural festivals and providing financial support for traditional attire to foster pride and reduce discrimination. Promote their heritage through social media and partnerships with cultural organizations to ensure traditions are passed down to future generations.



Disclosure Statement

The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the overall views of the *Kal-owan* tribe in Pinukpuk, Kalinga.

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