

Indigenous Belief Systems and Spiritual Roles of Tambalan in Dolores Eastern Samar

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ABSTRACT

Everything tries to adapt to a changing environment, and so society, health, and wellness are shaped by it. This paper explores the notion of belief systems and the spiritual roles of Tambalan in Dolores, Eastern Samar. The traditional healing methods are part of Filipino culture, which traditionally healed itself using prayers, herbs, and local knowledge to cure its illnesses before the crossover of other civilizations in the Philippines. But the rapid pace of modernization of healthcare and society has led to a gradual disappearance of most of these native practices in the mainstream consciousness. The aim is to document and study the stories connected with myths, beliefs, and the spiritual activities of Tambalan to translate the cultural knowledge into contemporary media. With the help of a qualitative research methodology, supported by the modified version of ADDIE, Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation, the researchers gathered data using interviews, observations, and narrative beliefs to learn community views on Tambalan and its functions in the healing process, as well as spiritual mediation and cultural preservation. The information was then converted into a multimedia product and rated using the modified DepEd Region III Nueva Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for Storybooks and Big Books. Factor 1 was rated 4.6 and Factor 2 4.7, which were interpreted as highly acceptable; both met all required standards. With this, there is a strong basis for the idea that using multimedia to share indigenous cultural knowledge and stories increases cultural awareness and makes it more accessible to younger audiences.

Keywords: Indigenous, healing, Tambalan, multimedia, qualitative.

INTRODUCTION

Background and Rationale

Traditional healing practices have existed since humanity's earliest cultural expressions. These diverse cultural healing methods have evolved in the context of adapting to the evolution of nature (Pesek et. al. 2006). In ancient history, shamans were the first known healers, dating back tens of thousands of years, who used spiritual and herbal medicine to cure the ill. These said practices varied across cultures from Native Americans to Ancient India, like the Ayurveda, which demonstrates the use of a systematic approach and spiritual connection, rituals, and herbs. Ancient healing was prevalent across the world long before Hippocratic medicine. Various cultures have developed and reinterpreted this intricate system of healing that is measured by observation, from spiritual beliefs to modern healthcare (Elundo 2024). In 1993, the World Bank proposed the idea of explicating health development, entitled Investing in Health.

The transition to modernize cities and municipalities across the Philippines is rising. Eastern Samar is one of the growing provinces, and its increasingly urbanized cities require new infrastructure and modernized healthcare services to meet the demands of the growing population (PIDS, 2024). Along the riverside was a coastal town named Dolores in Eastern Samar. In 1650, the families who were displaced after the suppression of the Sumoroy Rebellion sought refuge on the Bacod River, which led to the establishment of the town. The name Dolores

refers to the pain, sorrow, and hardships that the first inhabitants experienced during the Spanish occupation in the Philippines (msgrope.blogspot.com, 2017). It began as a small settlement from a visita(barrio) to eventually develop into a poblacion. Throughout the years, the town evolved from a political entity to also a place that embodies cultural identity and shared history. Thus, it became what is now known as the Municipality of Dolores.

Before the establishment of proper medical infrastructure for healthcare, the people relied on traditional healing methods like the *Tambalan*. Research on *Tambalans* in Dolores, Eastern Samar, has made its way as a critical inquiry due to its integral part in indigenous healing and spiritual beliefs, preserving cultural knowledge within Filipino culture (Rosales and Gepty 2022; Rebuya et al. 2020). Often, the traditional ways are fading, lost, and forgotten. *Tambalans*, which have been deeply rooted in cultures and communities since before Spanish colonization, are slowly disappearing due to modernization (Cheung 2015). The impending technological change in society is both a threat and a tool to intensify cultural knowledge. According to Posaran (2025), multimedia is seen as a surfacing tool in the mainstream as an effective instrument in reaching younger people and using aligned forms of teaching indigenous cultural knowledge as a means of conserving cultural identity. Furthermore, multimedia has played a vital role in shaping society; incorporating findings from this paper would lessen prejudice and misinformation about *Tambalans* that have bewildered people for years.

Traditional healing has been an integral part of Filipino culture, passed down from one generation to another, preserving indigenous knowledge that has not been fully transcribed by medical professionals. Various folk healers have their own local names, like *surhano*, *babaylan*, *sirkano*, *haplasan*, *tambalan*, and *mananambal*. In the province of Eastern Samar, *Tambalans* are often associated with local medical practitioners who use indigenous practices to treat patients with illnesses or supernatural interventions (Gamba et al. 2025). In this study, the researchers used the ADDIE framework to address the problem, integrating the research study about *Tambalan* and the creative freedom of conceptualizing a multimedia product. The purpose of the study is to highlight the role of qualitative research that can shape the storytelling, character design, and crafting of visual stories through digital output. Specifically, this study aims to (1) document and analyze narratives that pertain to myths and beliefs, and spiritual roles of *Tambalan* through qualitative research, (2) convert documented data that is based on the research findings, and (3) evaluate the converted data by using the modified evaluation tool of DepEd Region III Nueva Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for Storybooks and Big Books.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilizes the qualitative research design guided by the modified ADDIE framework to understand the belief system and spiritual roles of *Tambalan* in Dolores, Eastern Samar. The modified ADDIE instructional framework model focuses on Analysis, Design, Development, and Evaluation phases. Qualitative research by design is used to understand human behaviour through observations (Pathak et al. 2013). Thus, the ability to comprehend the beliefs and spiritual experiences of the people and transform collected data into multimedia output. Moreover, the modified ADDE model provided a systematic technique that transforms transcribed data into multimedia production output without the need for field implementation.

Research Locale

Research in *Tambalans* in Dolores, Eastern Samar, has not been made into literature. The researchers have made their area of interest in the folk healing aspect of the community and how it is still held in modern-day society. So the researchers conducted a qualitative research study that focuses on the indigenous belief system and the spiritual roles of *Tambalans* in Dolores.

Dolores is a coastal town in the province of Eastern Samar, located alongside a small river that connects to the Philippine Sea in the eastern part of Visayas (Region VIII). It has a land area of about 308.58 km², and according to the 2020 census, Dolores has a population of 44,626, with 46 barangays, and a density of approximately 145 people per square kilometer. Dolores's geographical area comprises about 6.68% of the total land area of Eastern Samar and about 9.35% of the province's population (Retrieved from: philatlas.com, 2026).

Research Respondents

The study was conducted through a survey with a selected group of people within Dolores, Eastern Samar, Philippines, gathered through purposive sampling. It has been a desirable area of interest for the researchers due to its culture and traditions, and its ability to provide information on the myth-based narrative. This section provides the necessary information for determining the people who are selected to be part of the study and their role in completing the multimedia material.

Table 1. Respondents' Profile

Respondent Type	Number	Role in the Study	Phase Involved
Healer	2	Provided myth narratives and cultural context	Analysis, Design, Development
Local Elder	2	Clarified story elements and symbolism	Analysis
Community Member	7	Provided community narrative context and modern views	Analysis

Table 2. Evaluator's Profile

Highest Educational Attainment	Profession	Number
Baccalaureate degree with Master's degree Units	Senior High School Teacher	10

Analysis Phase

The researchers interviewed the respondents found through purposive sampling with experience or awareness of the topic of *Tambalans*. This study employed a qualitative research design, utilizing a multimethod approach. Information was gathered using an online open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured personal interviews. This method aligns with the methodological triangulation principles, which empower richness and credibility by using multiple sources of qualitative data. Using these various methods allowed the researchers to enhance the meaning of the survey data and strengthen the development of themes (Williams et al. 2023).

While informed by prior studies, the questionnaire is researcher-developed and contextualized for a community-based inquiry entitled "Research Questionnaire for Indigenous Belief Systems and Spiritual Roles of *Tambalans*." This developed questionnaire was modified and adapted from various related studies in the context of folk healing, medical pluralism, religious syncretism, and indigenous methodologies. This process enabled the researchers to effectively compile and collate information about the people called *Tambalan* in the locality of Dolores and to methodically compare it with related studies to improve insight into the background and history of this indigenous form of healing.

The means used to extract key points from the data gathered in the interviews is a thematic analysis approach, in which the transcribed interviews are coded and then classified into themes such as meaning and identity of *Tambalan*, Historical Roots and Knowledge Transmission, Illness Beliefs and Healing Practices, Medical Pluralism, Religion, and Change, and Continuity, Relevance, and Knowledge Preservation

Design Phase

In this phase, the researchers created concepts and illustrations based on the knowledge that was gained in the analysis phase using the software Clip Studio Paint and Photoshop by Adobe. Clip Studio Paint for the ability to effectively create multiple types of digital media outputs, as mentioned by a professor at the Osaka University of Arts, Machiko Satonaka (Celsys, n.d.), and Adobe Photoshop, as an industry-standard software for its effectiveness when making adjustments and adding in visual effects that help enhance the overall look and feel (Walden University, n.d.).

The concept art has multiple iterations, which portray different takes on the same ideas gained from the analysis. Concept art would include full-body character art and the tools used by the practitioners. During the interview with the folk healers, the researchers asked about the specific ritual garments to ensure that the design is accurate, culturally aware, and would not depict the practitioners in a stereotypical light. Additional revisions were then done after obtaining the feedback gained on the design to polish them further. This process ensures that there is no mismatch between the goals of the researcher's creative vision and authentically depicting the *Tambalans*.

To guarantee that the created output's narrative is aligned with the data acquired in the analysis phase, the subjects discussed are based on the themes the researchers gathered in the thematic analysis of the interviews. These themes serve as the guidelines for the multimedia output's narrative and shape the direction of what ideas the output's focus will be.

Development Phase

During the development phase, with the use of the previously mentioned software, Clip Studio Paint and Photoshop, the revised concept arts obtained in the design phase will be used in the production of the final product. The first step in developing the multimedia output is creating an outline of events and then a rough draft. The outline serves as a guide to how the story goes and is based on the themes the analysis phase observed, and the rough draft acts as the work in progress, meaning it is reviewed repeatedly to fix any mistakes, polishing it to eventually become a fully finished multimedia product.

Evaluation Phase

This phase is where the final multimedia product was evaluated by a group of experts through the use of the Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Books and Big Books of the Department of Education, Nueva Ecija. This evaluation rating sheet provides a uniform parameter to rate the final output by its acceptability, quality, and effectiveness. In examining the results, descriptive statistics were used, notably the mean and grand mean. As for revising and authenticating the final output, qualitative feedback acted as the means of reinforcement.

Data Analysis

In the Data Analysis phase, the researchers used the modified Rating Scale based on the DepEd-Nueva Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for Storybooks and Big Books to analyze and validate the collected data. The tool was used in terms of narrative accuracy, cultural appropriateness, and illustration quality. The outcome of the evaluation will determine the effectiveness, acceptability, and areas for further improvement of the said developed material.

Table 3. Rating Scale Based on the DepEd–Nueva Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Books and Big Books

Scale	Mean Range	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
5	4.21 – 5.00	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
4	3.41 – 4.20	Very Satisfactory	Acceptable with minimal revisions
3	2.61 – 3.40	Satisfactory	Acceptable with moderate revisions
2	1.81 – 2.60	Fair	Needs major revisions
1	1.00 – 1.80	Poor	Not acceptable

Ethical Considerations

This multimedia research project adhered to established ethical standards throughout the processes of data gathering, content validation, and expert evaluation. Informed consent was obtained from all validators prior to participation, ensuring that they were fully informed of the study's objectives, procedures, and their right to withdraw at any stage without consequences.

Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly observed. Any references to institutional records or contextual information used to guide content development were examined only in summarized form, with no personally identifiable information included. Evaluators' comments and ratings were treated with confidentiality and were reported solely in aggregated form to prevent individual attribution.

All digital and printed materials generated during the validation process including scripts, storyboards, and multimedia outputs were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all materials were archived or disposed of responsibly in accordance with institutional guidelines.

The study upheld the principle of beneficence by ensuring that all research activities minimized risk and supported positive educational and cultural outcomes. The primary purpose of the project was to produce multimedia materials that promote cultural awareness, ethical representation, and educational value. Prior coordination and written permission from appropriate academic authorities were secured to ensure compliance with institutional and ethical research standards before the conduct of validation activities.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this phase, the data gathered during analysis were gathered from the multimethod design using an online open-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview using the researcher-developed Research Questionnaire for Indigenous Belief Systems and Spiritual Roles of *Tambalan*, an instrument adapted from existing qualitative literature on folk healing, medical pluralism, religious syncretism, and indigenous methodologies. The questionnaire was developed to document and analyze the origin, cultural context, and narrative relevance to local myth literature about *Tambalan* before multimedia adaptation.

Findings show that *Tambalans* have existed long before colonization in the Philippines. It has been deeply rooted in Filipino culture and adapted from Roman Catholicism's ideology. This said practice has been passed down from one generation to another and is not limited to familial ties. People who are interested in learning such indigenous knowledge are welcome to do so. Old healers give instructions to the newly assigned healers in booklets or didactic speeches. For a healer to effectively heal someone, they must perform *orasyon* (prayers), either imbuing an item or food to dissuade spiritual interventions such as evil entities. Prayer is a crucial tradition for healers as it gives them the strength and power to treat someone with illness. According to one of the Healers, *orasyon* in the Latin language is more effective than the common English prayers. They added, Healers from the old times are much more powerful than the modern-day indigenous healers.

The community sees *Tambalans* as much more affordable than hospitals. They are needed and have a role in the community. *Tambalans* don't usually ask anything in return, as they believe that it is a gift from God and they must share this blessing with others, they added. If a healer asks for money, they are considered a performative healer or fake. People who have limited resources resort to seeking folk healers in the community to treat their underlying sickness. The community respondents believe that evil entities are sometimes the cause of someone's illness or misfortune, so they seek *Tambalans* instead of modern methodologies.

In the cultural context, *Tambalans* serve as a viewpoint that, despite the changes in Filipino culture, it stands still and continues to exist because of how it is connected to the community. Though younger generations have less interest in this indigenous practice, especially in emerging smart cities or municipalities. Often, they are misinterpreted or prejudiced due to a colonial mentality that they see *Tambalans* as delegitimized or vilified. So, they are left to be forgotten or unacknowledged by the mainstream media, so there is a need for retelling to preserve cultural knowledge and continuity. Furthermore, the results confirm that the said myth is culturally relevant, which will directly guide the overall structure of the story and character designs in this given project.

The data that was used were gathered using the Research Questionnaire for Indigenous Belief Systems and Spiritual Roles of *Tambalan*, developed by the researchers and adapted from various qualitative research papers. The instrument is designed to document the authentic origin, ancestral knowledge, belief adaptation, and ritual practices before story adaptation.

Table 4. The (5) thematic sections structure of the questionnaire:

Section	Focus
A	Meaning and Identity of <i>Tambalan</i>
B	Historical Roots and Knowledge Transmission
C	Illness Beliefs and Healing Practices
D	Medical Pluralism, Religion, and Change
E	Continuity, Relevance, and Knowledge Preservation

These questions are adapted from Jocano’s Albulario folk healing, De Vera and Esteban’s Medical Pluralism and Traditional Healing Practices, Dela Cruz and Santiago’s Folk Healing Practices and Christian Faith among Filipino Communities, and Smith’s Decolonizing Methodologies.

Table 5. Thematic Summary of Interview Results (Based on the Questionnaire for Indigenous Belief Systems and Spiritual Roles of *Tambalan*)

Thematic Category	Dominant Findings	Design Implications
Meaning and Identity of <i>Tambalan</i>	Modern-day Folk Healers that uses traditional medicine with Spiritual empowerment	Casual garments, items for making medicines, and an altar.
Historical Roots and Knowledge Transmission	Existed long before the pre-Spanish era, mostly found in small communities, knowledge was taught by previous old healers	Can be any historic year in the Philippines, and the setting is located in a barangay, where an elderly person who possesses knowledge
Illness Beliefs and Healing Practices	Evil Spirits, <i>Orasyon</i> , Plant-based medicines	Divine protector and Native Healer
Medical Pluralism, Religion, and Change	<i>Tambalans</i> are affordable and doable for everyone, and adapted Christianity to their rituals	Community-driven, divine guidance and protection are taken from the Christian faith
Continuity, Relevance, and Knowledge Preservation	Traditional medicine and methods, the Younger Generation doesn’t know the myth, and some vilify it	Contemporary retelling, unsettling to youths, rituals, and practices

The research instrument exhibits a multi-dimensional structure that indicates various factors of the myth, the origin, practices, belief system, and its relevance to modern-day society.

In Table 5, it is shown that the *Tambalans* date back to the pre-Spanish era and have existed by means of treating wellness and health in the community. It is also said that they are holders of divine powers that can treat illnesses and can mediate to the spiritual realm. They are protectors of the people, they can manifest their spiritual strengths using *orasyons* imbued in sacred items or foods. This knowledge is passed down to someone who is willing to learn or take the responsibility as a folk healer. These healing powers were given as a gift to treat those people who are in need, either from sickness or spiritual interventions like evil entities. Moreover, section E serves as a confirmation that myths about *Tambalans* need retelling in modern media to be culturally relevant and a means to preserve indigenous authenticity. Overall, the idea of constructing this academic instrument strengthens the myth-based narratives and authentic nature of the *Tambalans* when it is adapted to create a multimedia product, and ensures that all the ideation processes are evidence-based, participatory decision-making, and culturally appropriate. In designing the character, the data reflected from the initial physical semi-structured interview with the folk healers. The finding states that contemporary folk healers like *Tambalans* usually wear casual clothes and do not have any special garments, unlike their predecessors, the *Babaylan*, who wear various garments like amulets, beads, headdresses, and ritual attire. This shows that despite modernization, practices like *Tambalans* continue to exist for the community. This is confirmed during the section A interview. By translating the given narratives from the respondents into a graphic form, the design phase demonstrates the initial process of converting the myth-based literature into an authentic, locally grounded character representation of the findings while preserving conscientiousness to the myth.

Figure 1. Final Character Design of a Healer



Figure 1 illustrates the final design of a character concept of a folk healer. The specific gender of the healer is determined from previous research about *Babaylans*, who were the predecessors of *Tambalans*; it is women who perform the rituals and practices. An experienced and wiser folk healer is old; in the ideation of the final design, the character was made more hunchbacked, with saggy facial features, with slim hands and legs, and a protruding belly. A bead was added to the right hand to add the asymmetrical weight of the design and to add interest in the concept.

Figure 2. Character Concept exploration

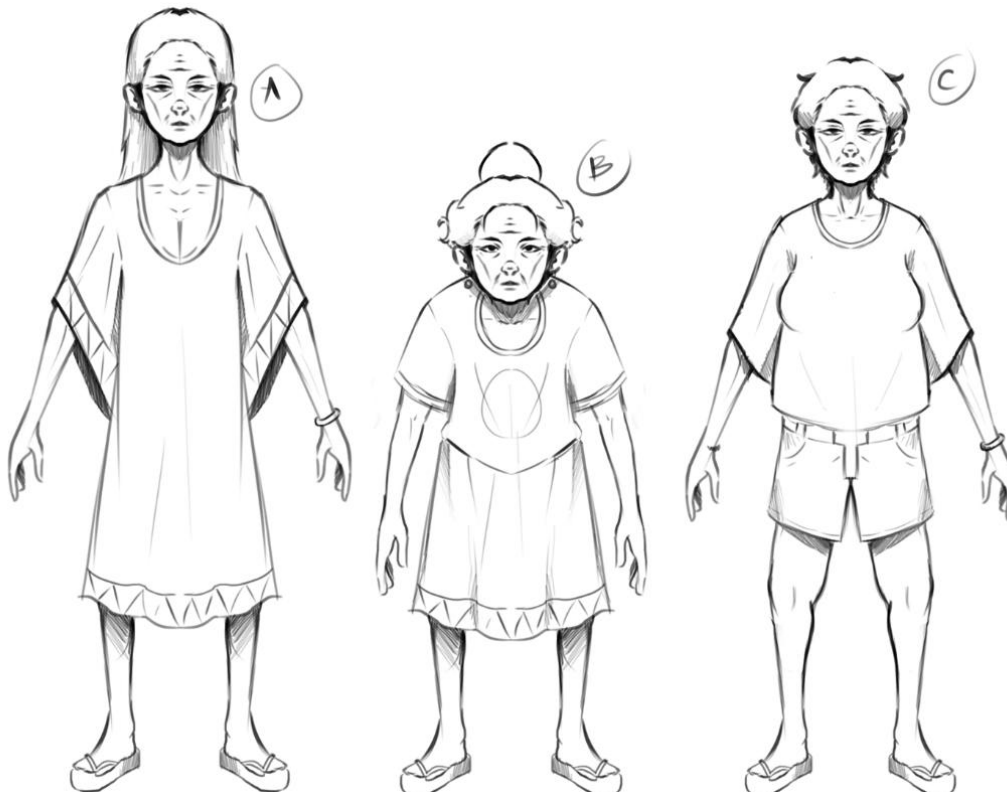


Figure 2 illustrates the exploration concept for the final character. During the physical interview, the researcher observed clothing, body type, and facial structure to conceptualize sketches of a modern-day folk healer. The researcher asked further questions about whether they had ritual attire they wore during their practice to confirm the idea of the final character. To finalize the character and to maintain the initial data that were gathered during the interview, it is in the best interest to take the concept of each design of A, B, and C to create an authentic and still accurate representation of the character.

Figure 3. Folk Healer's Item



Data from the transcribed physical interview shows that folk healers have common items used in their practice. One specific common healing practice that the healers do is praying using beads, *orasyon* (Latin prayers), and *pagluluun* (smoke ritual), shown in Figure 3. One of the healers was the main inspiration for sketching the other items. Healers can also give protection to other people by making a *sabung*, a red stitched cloth with a written sacred prayer inside. One of the healers also mentioned having a *bato ha pantog*, kidney stones that were put in a jar with pure, clean water, and then, before the healer drank it, they performed an *orasyon*. They believe this is a way to cleanse the inside of their bodies. This additional concept not only adds depth to the character design but is also based on the authentic narrative of the myth.

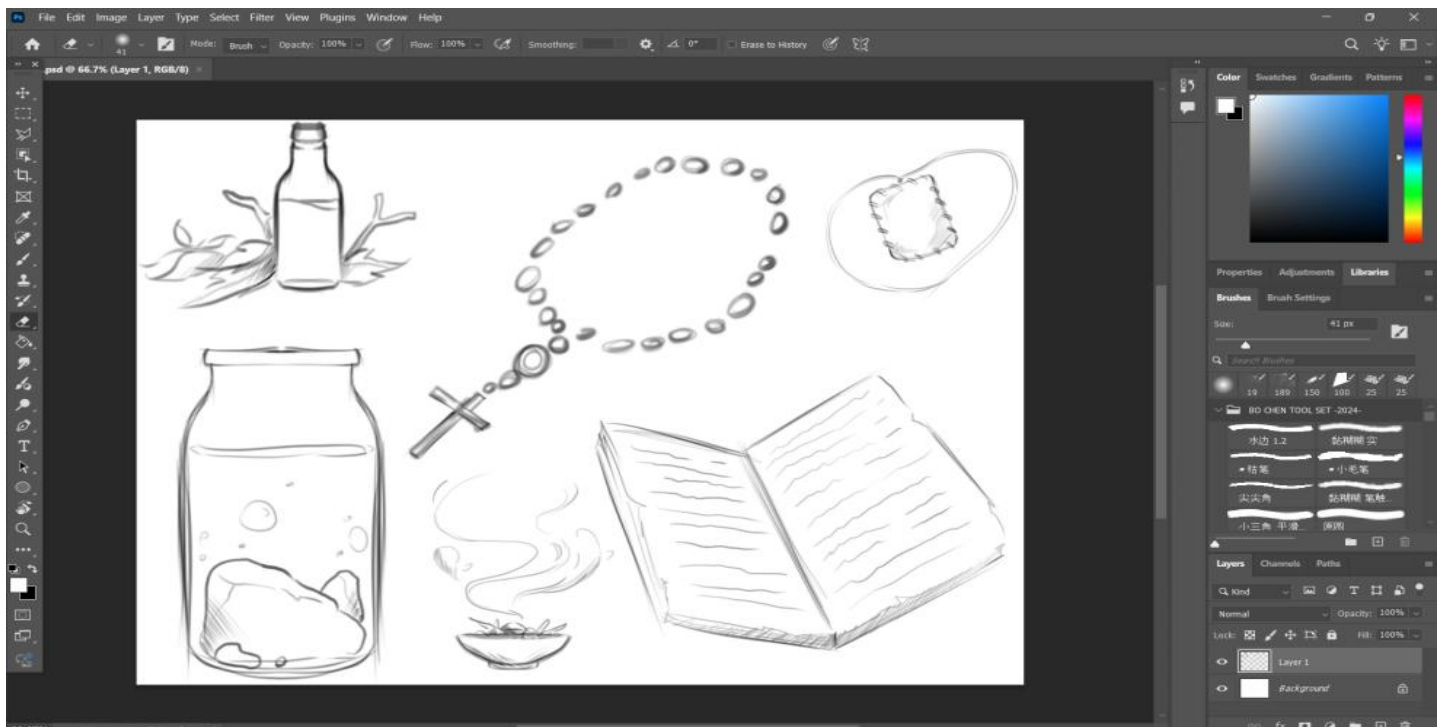
During the development phase, the researchers developed some concept art and designs for the Tambalan that are narratively based on the collected data from the interview. We can see some different variations and elements from the design phase. This ideation phase was needed in order to proceed to developing the material. There were multiple versions created based on the data that was gathered during the interview with the folk healers. Using the software ClipStudio Paint, there were three versions of the said character; this is to see if other body shapes, clothing, and features apply to the characteristics of a healer. Using Photoshop, the developers sketched out the materials of elements commonly found or heard in Tambalan, which were created in Photoshop to enhance the design's cultural depth. The common elements were beads, *sabung*, *lana* (healing oil), *bato ha pantog*, a book for prayers, and *ginluluunan* (smoke healing).

These additional concepts contribute to the actual multimedia output. Multiple software programs are being used because they vary in terms of comfort and usability for the researchers or developers of the material. Both software programs provide the necessary features to complete the development phase.

Figure 4. Sketches of multiple variations of Folk healers using ClipStudio EX



Figure 5. Sketches of various elements that were commonly found or heard from a Tambalan



In finalizing the character design and elements, the developers then brainstormed the idea of which among the multiple variations was the most accurate portrayal of a folk healer. They then proceeded to merge some features from all the variations to create an entirely new character variant, but with all the notable features. After the final character design, a full-blown illustration was made using Photoshop. This illustration will serve as the main cover page of the story material being produced. Moving on with the story development, the plot and story were made using Microsoft Publisher, where all the illustrations and story narration were put. There were multiple stages of development before the material was finalized and ready for evaluation. The researchers first made a

draft of the story, adapting all the data and information gathered from the interviews. Consultations from the research adviser were also made to ensure data accuracy and relevance of the material. While making the story, the researchers have to keep in mind the ethical considerations of making the material. Lastly, proofreading, the materials were then sent to a proofreader to evaluate and correct the errors. Moreover, the researchers or developers then revised the material, and it was ready for evaluation.



Figure 6. Final character design of the Folk healer using Photoshop.



Figure 7. Illustration of the cover page using Photoshop.

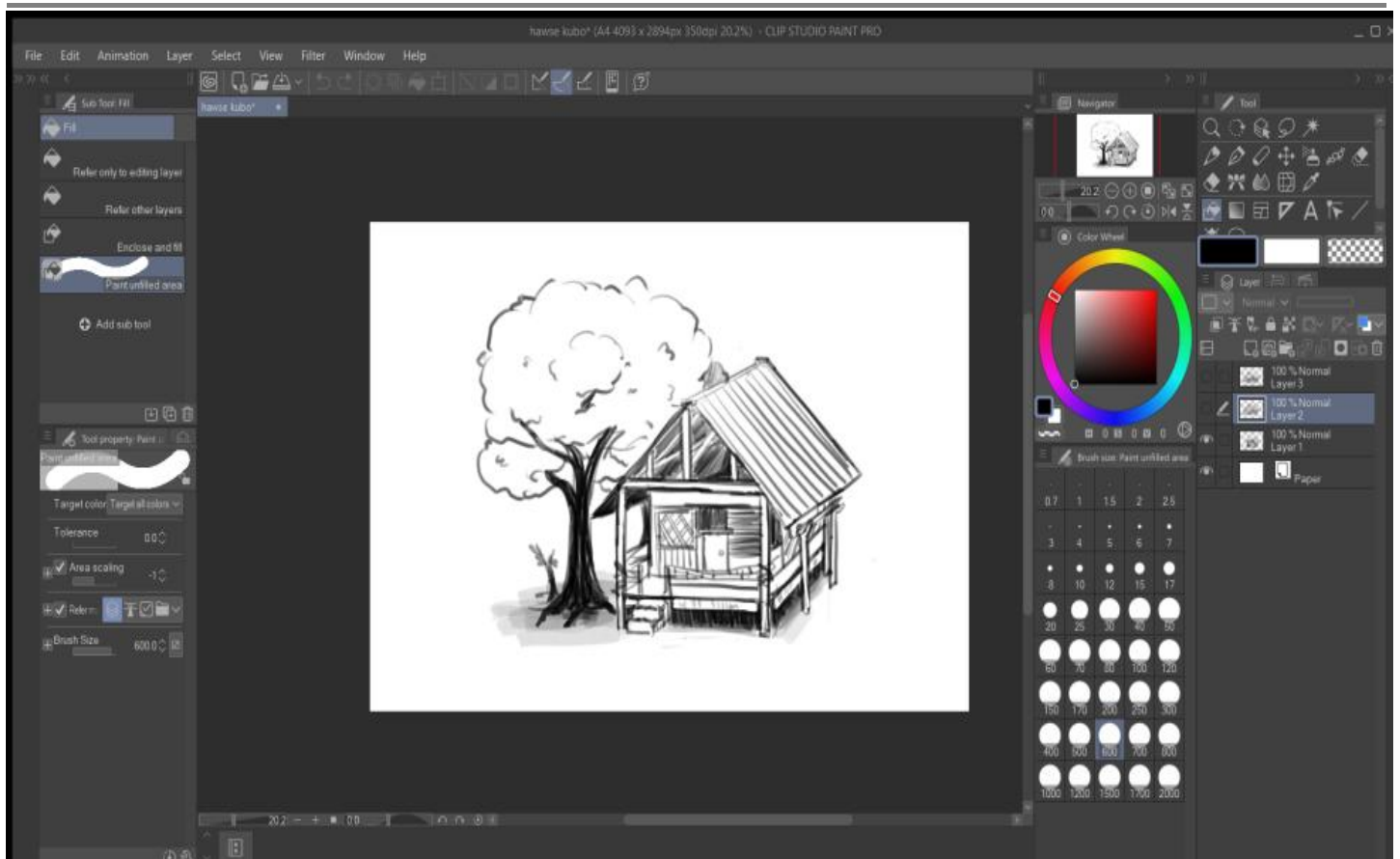


Figure 8. Creating an illustration for the Tambalans ' home using Clip Studio Paint

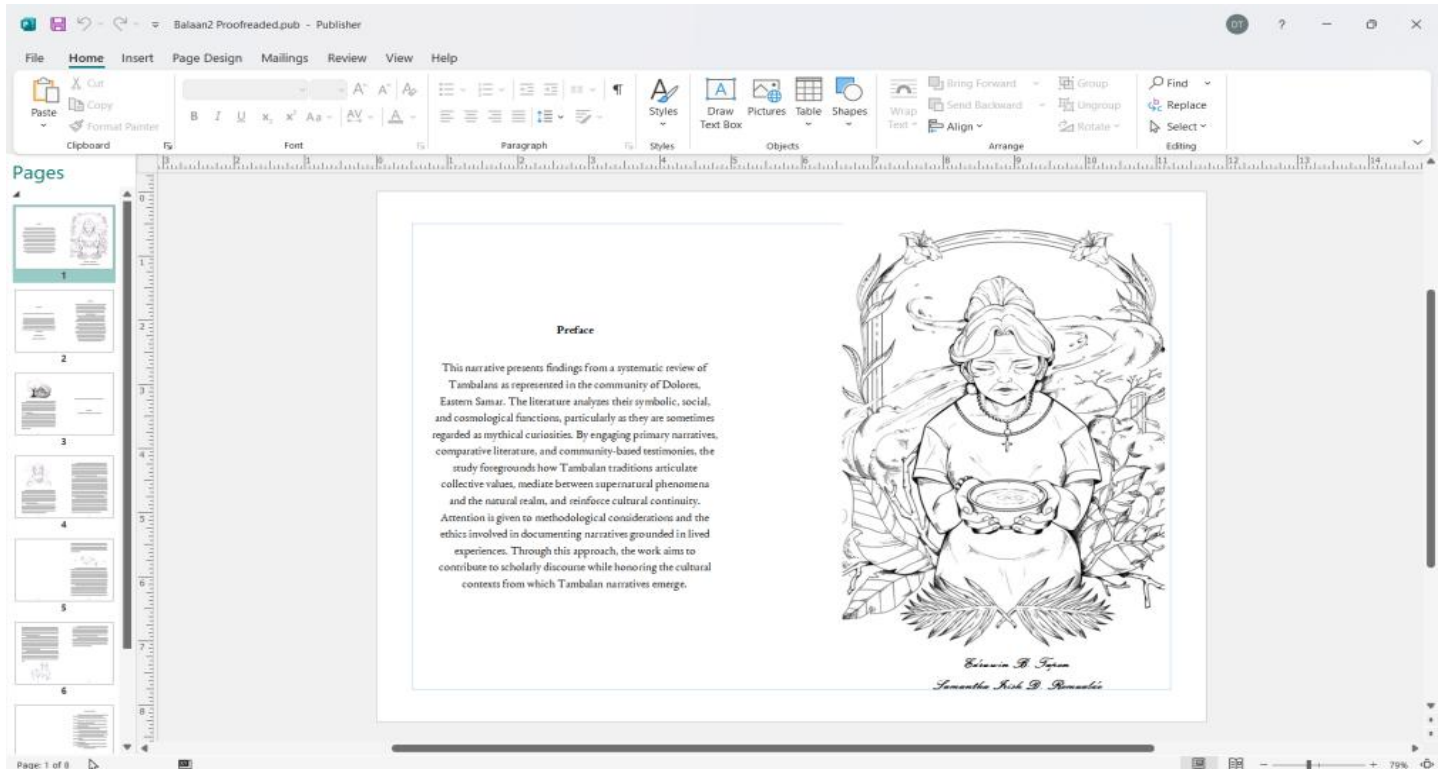


Figure 9. Material making using Microsoft Publisher.

In the evaluation phase, the researchers used a modified DepEd Region III Nueva-Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for Storybooks and Big Books. After the development of the material, the researchers or developers proceed to finalize the collected data from the evaluation tool presented. The material is professionally evaluated, which will determine whether the multimedia output needs revisions or there should be a further analysis of the topic.

Table 6. Summary of Evaluation of Factor 1.

Parameter	Grand Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Story	4.7	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Sociocultural Sensitivity	4.9	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Development Aspect	4.8	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Plot/Storyline	4.3	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Characters	4.5	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Visuals	4.8	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Language	4.7	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Grammar	4.5	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards

Table 6 presents Factor 1, the story, which was interpreted as 4.7, including the story's main topic, the length of the story documentation, and the coverage of the narrative. Socio-cultural sensitivity was rated the highest among the questions in the rating sheet, standing at 4.9. It includes the discussion of the materials' sensitivity to ideologies, culture, religion, race, gender biases, and prejudice. This also includes whether the material promotes cultural awareness, positive customs, and cultures. In the development aspect, it is interpreted as 4.8. It discusses cultural relations, identity, the pursuit of knowledge, preservation of knowledge, and the historical development of cultures. The Plot or storyline, which was interpreted as 4.3, the lowest in the grand mean. Here, the context of the story, concepts, critical thinking, community beliefs, connection to the readers, and a meaningful synthesis were discussed and evaluated carefully by the professionals. The characters were then interpreted as 4.5, the key cultural roles, concept of the elements, and supporting ideas of the topic. Visual has 4.8; it talks about the illustrations, recognizability, appropriateness of the drawings, and clear visualization. Language was interpreted at 4.7, including vocabulary, cultural language, terminology, understandability, and sentence construction. Grammar is at 4.5 in total grand mean, which checks if there are no typographical and grammatical errors.

Table 7. Summary of Evaluation of Factor 2.

Parameter	Grand Mean	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
Prints	4.6	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Book Design and Layout	4.7	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
Paper and Binding	4.8	Excellent	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards

Table 7 indicates that factor 2 includes the print, book design and layout, and paper and binding. The print subcategory was interpreted at 4.6 in total grand mean, which discusses the size of letters, font style, and spacing. The book design and layout were interpreted at 4.7; it includes the discussion of layout, cover of the material, text, visuals, and consistency of all elements. Paper and Binding were the last to be interpreted, which stands at 4.8 in interpretation. This indicates the quality of paper, binding durability, size, and weight of the material.

Table 8. The total Grand Mean per Factors 1 and 2.

Factors	Grand Mean	Interpretation
1	4.6	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards
2	4.7	Highly acceptable; meets all required standards

In the evaluation phase, the researchers and developers provided a physical copy of the multimedia material and the modified evaluation tool for rating the output for each evaluator. There has been some minor commentary from the evaluators, which was noted; this will provide valuable insights to further strengthen and make the material or resource more credible and reliable. Among the parameters, the smallest grand mean collected was the Plot/Storyline, which was 4.3 in grand mean (Table 6). It was suggested that the material can still be expanded and has room for improvement in the story narration of the topic. The topic can be discussed from a deeper sense of perspective to address this problem, but nonetheless, it was accepted. Additionally, Socio-cultural Sensitivity was the highest grand mean, standing at 4.9. The evaluators validated the material as it follows the ethical guidelines and respects the integrity of the topic. Moreover, it enlightens readers about the history of the Philippines and how deeply rooted folk healing is in Filipino culture. This opens up a new perspective for the readers' awareness of cultural identity. Moreover, this was then rated as highly acceptable for the readers.

After the calculation of the means per subcategory, the total grand mean was calculated per factor, which was factors 1 and 2. Factor 1 has the total grand mean of 4.6, which is interpreted as highly acceptable and meets all required standards. Along with this, Factor 2 was interpreted at 4.7, which is also interpreted as highly acceptable; this can be seen in Table 8.

CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the significance of qualitative research in making an informative contribution to the development of storytelling, visual narratives, and character designs based on the indigenous belief systems of the *Tambalan* community of Dolores, Eastern Samar. To begin with, the study was able to record and dissect the myths, beliefs, and spiritual functions of the *Tambalan* based on a multi-method qualitative data-gathering methodology. It was revealed that *Tambalans* are indigenous traditional healers and spiritual brokers, and they practice herbal medicine, ritual prayer, and guidance based on a higher power. These stories bring out the cultural importance of *Tambalan* traditions and how they are still relevant to the community.

The written accounts were successfully translated into digital form, shaped into a culturally aware presentation, visualization, and characterization. This was made possible by incorporating the qualitative research data gathered in the analysis and design stages into a multimedia product. The paper has shown that the narratives of the indigenous myths based on the myth of the indigenous people can be maintained and shared using modern visual media.

The modified DepEd Region III, Nueva Ecija Evaluation Rating Sheet for storybooks and big books was used to evaluate the converted output. The multimedia material qualified as educational media cultural content, as noted in the Results and Discussion. As such, it is culturally suitable to be used as an educational resource and reporting on the indigenous narratives in a lucrative, easily understandable means that, as indicated in the Results and Discussion, is applicable in the current context this context was supported by the results given in the

evaluation with interpretation of 4.3 in Plot or Storyline and 4.9 in socio-cultural sensitivity, interpreted as highly acceptable base from Table 3 rating scale.

Another thing that the first factor's parameters confirm is that the story, *Balaan Nga Lambong*, is deemed to be engaging, appropriate, informative, and effective as a tool for the general reader's needs in learning more about the practitioners called *Tambalans* in the locality of Dolores. While there are still a few aspects that need improvement, such as the plot or storyline with an interpretation of 4.3, grammar, and characters, the results are still in the range of being excellent and highly acceptable for its purposes. The second factor in the evaluation of the story focuses more on the quality of the binding and paper, design and layout, and printing of the material itself. All three aspects range from 4.8, 4.7, and 4.6, respectively. It can be concluded that the created output's standard and quality in the technical sense as a printed work was highly acceptable to its requirements.

All in all, the output created was successful with excellent ratings on all of the aspects of the two factors, with only a handful needing more improvements. In general, the results confirm that the qualitative research can be a strong basis for culturally based multimedia productions. The paper shows that recording knowledge, stories, and indigenous beliefs of the people, and translating them to a multimedia resource can help preserve the traditional knowledge of the indigenous people, bring about cultural awareness in the youth, and help the local myths and belief systems to become more accessible to the new audience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusion and findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

Future researchers are encouraged to explore the deeper story on the history and culture of the folk healers called *Tambalans*, as the study in this material has a more general look into them, which ended up with only a 4.3 result in the evaluation. The lack of detail being conveyed to the reader may have caused it to lose the specifics that differentiate the folk healer in Dolores from other similar practitioners.

With the results of character in the evaluation amounting to 4.5, it's advised to look more extensively into the unique traits of *Tambalans* themselves, focusing more on their character and story to immerse more people in their struggles and goals as folk healers.

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