



Drowning Screens: Social Media Experience and the Emotional Well-Being of Filipino Adolescents

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Abstract: This study explored the social media experience in Facebook and Twitter and its relation to the emotional well-being conditions of twenty (20) senior high school students in Metro Manila. Online in-depth interviews were conducted that centered on the quality of their Facebook and Twitter experience, the prevalence of distress, negative emotions, and life satisfaction. Facebook and Twitter have been utilized for entertainment and maintenance of social networks online. However, Facebook has been maintained as a “les lieux de communication” or a space to communicate with friends, family members, and classmates. Yet, due to its “public” nature, the participants were inhibited from sharing their thoughts and feelings in their Facebook account. On the other hand, multiple Twitter accounts have been maintained: for public consumption and an “exclusive” account. This exclusive Twitter account has been maintained as a “les lieux de emotion” or a social space wherein they could be inhibited on what ideas, opinions, or sentiments they will share. Experiencing distress, negative emotions, and satisfaction with everyday life has been associated with utilization of Facebook and Twitter due to issues on accessibility and unwarranted information, lack of control on popping up pornographic materials, and the threat of hacking and breached in their “les lieux de communication” and “les lieux de emotion.” Moderation and vigilance should be maintained in utilizing social media accounts to mitigate the risks of negative experience and impact on one’s emotional well-being.

Key Words: social media experience; emotional well-being; Facebook; Twitter; Filipino adolescent

1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an integral part of an individual's life for this allows people to connect, create, and collaborate, wherein it has also been used to convey one's feelings, thoughts, and ideas. Despite this, there has been developing literature that provides evidence on the changing motives, attitudes, and behaviors due to one's involvement in social media. A study by Rasmussen, Carter, LaFreniere, Norman, and Kimball (2020) elaborated on how one's emotions are affected due to the excessive use of social media, resulting in complications on emotion regulation. Some individuals have positive experiences such as encouraging posts, entertainment, and accessibility, while others have negative experiences like having fake news, malicious posts, and inappropriate content from other social media users. Young, Kolubinski, and Frings (2020) stated that the role of social media on one's emotional well-being could help boost self-worth, increase self-esteem, provide joy, and prevent loneliness. On the

other hand, negative engagement in social media, such as promoting toxicity, bashing people online, and more, creates effects that may damage an individual's well-being in the long run.

As Filipino adolescents engage in social media, they encounter experiences that are positive or negative. Datu, Yang, Valdez, and Chu (2018) stated how self-expression correlates with online engagement, elaborating that positive experiences are when individuals share their sentiments and like towards each other, while negative experiences are when individual are exposed and have become involved in inappropriate behavior resulting to the user's emotional, psychological, and emotional well-being affected. With this, the issue of one's engagement in social media centers on its unique characteristic, to provide an avenue for an individual to communicate their feelings, ideas, and sentiments.



Review of Related Literature

1.1. Social Media Experience

Adolescents are usually immersed in social media since they frequently use it in their daily lives. The effects of online life given a highlight on social connectedness explain that social networking experiences may build up its setting, which could be versatile to an individual. A better understanding of the contributing factors is necessary, given the severity of these conditions, their negative and potentially long-term consequences for adolescents. Based on the research by Kelly, Zilanawala, Booker, & Sacker (2018), utilizing social support and knowledge acquisition can be beneficial when using social media since it could help improve and understand the underlying processes. Also, it could help identify opportunities for interventions that could benefit adolescents in social media.

1.2 Emotional Well-being

Numerous literature defines emotional well-being as having the absence of any mental health problem. Brown's article tackles emotional well-being and its relation to health, citing WHO's definition of emotional well-being, "a state of complete physical, mental and social well being" (p. 1). It was emphasized that the importance of emotional well-being to a person's health shows that being emotionally healthy means that one knows how to deal with the highs and lows of life while having confidence and a positive outlook in life. However, when one doesn't pay attention to their emotional well-being, they could develop emotional distress and encounter various illnesses, such as being prone to different viral illnesses, developing stress, and the like.

1.3. Social Media Experience and Emotional Well-being

The role of social media in adolescent's lives has become central and globally ubiquitous. At the same time, many advantages of using social media are existent, like having more prominent connectedness with others. According to Brunborg & Andreas (2019), social media, being a significant part of adolescents' lives, may relate to negativity as an effect. Connections between the time spent engaging in social media and emotional well-being issues, such as depression and anxiety, were found since their social media engagement could be the potential intervening pathways relating to their emotional well-being.

1.4. Statement of the Problem

This study explores the social media experiences and their relation to the emotional well-

being among Senior High School students in De La Salle University-Manila. The following specific questions were sought:

1. What is the social media attitude and behavior of the participants?
2. What is the type and quality of social media experiences of the participants?
3. What is the type and quality of emotional well-being of the participants?
4. How do online attitudes and behaviors and type and quality of social media experiences relate to the type and quality of emotional well-being?
5. What is the overall emotional well-being of the participants?
6. How do social media, the extent of social network, social media experience, and attitude and behavior towards social media relate to the emotional well-being of the participants?

2. METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research utilized a purposive sampling method in selecting the participants. Fifty (50) senior high school students were initially invited and screened based on the following criteria: 1) have Twitter and Facebook accounts; 2) spends at least 4 hours of active engagement in Twitter and Facebook; 3) often or regularly likes or reacts to posts; 4) often or regularly comments on others' posts, and 5) often or regularly posts on their social media accounts. A final list of twenty (20) participants was engaged in an in-depth online interview which centered on their utilization of Facebook and Twitter, the quality of the social media experience in Facebook and Twitter, issues and concern with Facebook and Twitter, and their experiences of distress and negative emotions as well as their self-assessment of life satisfaction. The six-stage thematic analysis by Braun and Clarke (2016) guided the coding and identification of the major themes. Ethical guidelines set by the DLSU Integrated School have been observed, including, but not limited to, securing informed consent and voluntary participation.



3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Facebook and Twitter as an Integral Part of Everyday Life

Facebook and Twitter are two of the most used social media applications, especially for adolescents. Both platforms may bring beneficial and disadvantageous uses for their users. As the world increasingly depends on technology, the utilization of these platforms has also been developing. Both platforms provide entertainment, access to information, and maintenance of social ties online. However, the participants of the study highlight the distinction on the primary utility of Facebook and Twitter as social media. The distinction is associated with the type of activities, posts, or information they access when logged in.

Facebook and Twitter are avenues for individuals to share their insights and experiences in life. With Facebook being a social media platform for meeting and interacting with people, it provides an opportunity for individuals to become more open and expressive online. Exclusivity in the application ultimately covers whether the users would accept friend requests, including determining whether the type of content they possess online is fit for their liking. On the other hand, Twitter is a social media platform wherein individuals freely express their opinions and share their experiences online; similar to Facebook, it is extensive in a way that it is universally used as an “online diary” for individuals. Twitter can also be exclusive in a way that users have the ability to private their account, wherein they can choose the people who can view their account since follow requests are enabled.

3.2. Facebook as a ‘Les Lieux de Communication

Facebook is maintained as a place of communication, especially since most participants use Facebook for educational purposes wherein they check their Facebook groups and group chats to be updated about their academics. Additionally, they use this to connect with their friends, family, and relatives to keep in touch and maintain their relationship with one another. This also includes chatting with their classmates when necessary.

Facebook is known to be a universally used social media platform; it serves as the main way of communication for most people on the internet. Consequently, the majority of the users stated that there were issues regarding their privacy online. In addition, the participants of the study value privacy and exclusivity; in return, the decision in accepting friend requests was based on the relationship with the

person online. Simultaneously, blocking Facebook friends was also evident because it would stem from how they think the participants are online. Thus, most Facebook users find this need since the prevalence of suspicious activity online bothers them. The participants usually block people who oppose their political stands, when they find the other person weird and annoying, and whenever a stranger starts to show suspicious activity.

3.3. Twitter as a “Les Lieux de Emotion”

Twitter users maximize the platform to post and express their emotions and feelings through tweets. Provided that Twitter is a more private platform than Facebook, it is maintained as a place of emotion as participants are inclined to express themselves through tweets since users can post their emotions more freely without the fear of privacy invasion, particularly by their relatives. Especially in this day and age, wherein adolescents use social media as a platform to rant about their daily lives, most of the participants have said to do this activity more on Twitter.

When the participants were asked about how they use their Twitter account/s, the majority of the Twitter users make use of more than two accounts: one is two fully share their opinions and sentiments to which is only open to their closest friends, another may be a stan account in order to support the people they idolize, and another is a more formal and professional Twitter account wherein their tweets, retweets and likes are open to the public. Thus, people use Twitter as a personal application to share their sentiments and opinions.

Most of the participants considered the need to block people due to suspicious acts and inappropriate tweets. The participants would often block people who spread negativity, such as fake accounts and threats. Moreover, fewer Twitter users use the block option in the application since they have not encountered any experience to deem this feature applicable. Thus, Twitter users use the block feature to avoid negativity and suspiciousness to prevail on their timelines.

3.4. The Emotional Well-being of Facebook and Twitter Users

Considering how social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter could significantly impact its users’ quality of experience, participants classify these experiences as either positive or negative. Positive experiences are associated with positive thoughts and feelings like being happy in being able to communicate with friends and classmates, relieved to be updated with what is happening in school, with the situation



of people they love, and being able to get the information that they need whenever they want them. The participants associated the distress and negative emotions that they feel with their utilization of Facebook and Twitter. There are instances where unwarranted information is made public online or accidentally views pornographic and disturbing materials. Additionally, most participants are inhibited from expressing themselves freely in their public accounts because of fear of being targeted by “cancel culture.” Moreover, the feeling of distress and anxiety are associated concerns on their account’s privacy. These include fear of hacking, receiving random messages, and group invitations. Consequently, the uncanny social media algorithm disconcerts them, making the users feel unsafe. One of the biggest worries is the idea that their “private” thoughts and emotions are shared with other people outside their “exclusive” online circle. Unwarranted information overload is also causing the participants distress and makes them anxious like trigger warnings, especially COVID-19 concerns. Also, viewing the achievements of their networks posted online makes them feel insecure about themselves, which significantly affects their life satisfaction because they think they have a lot of things missing in their lives.

4. CONCLUSIONS

Facebook and Twitter are social media platforms that have become an integral part of the life of Filipino youth, evident in the narratives of the participants of this study. They are both utilized as a tool for communication, entertainment, access to information, and maintenance of their social ties online. However, Facebook has been maintained as a “les lieux de communication” or a space to communicate with friends, family, and classmates. Although, due to its “public” nature, the participants were inhibited from sharing their thoughts and feelings in their Facebook account. On the other hand, multiple Twitter accounts have been maintained: for public consumption and an “exclusive” account. This exclusive Twitter account has been maintained as a “les lieux de emotion” or a social space wherein they could be inhibited on what ideas, opinions, or sentiments they will share. One of the interesting findings of this study is the association of Facebook and Twitter as an online space of toxicity and negativity. Thus, experiencing distress, negative emotions, and satisfaction has been associated with utilization of Facebook and Twitter due to issues on accessibility, unwarranted information, lack of control on sudden posts of pornographic materials, and the threat of hacking and breaching in their “les lieux de communication” and “les lieux de emotion.” Moderation and vigilance should then be maintained

in the utilization of social media accounts to mitigate the risks of negative experiences and impact on one’s emotional well-being.

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Ethnocultural Analysis on Different Practices of the Bihog Tribe (Agta) on Childbearing

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Abstract: Bihog Tribe (Agta) has different beliefs and cultural practices in childbearing. They have their traditional medicines, ceremonies, coping mechanisms, and food eaten during the pregnancy period, labor, and postpartum. The study used an ethnographic type of research in qualitative approach. Interview protocol was utilized to gather information about their culture and beliefs. The subjects consisted of three mothers and a midwife, with a total of four that were purposively selected. The study was conducted in Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon. The answers from the interviews and discussions proved that their culture and traditions were effective enough to allow childbearing to happen without medical interventions. Moreover, they used medicinal herbs such as 'lagundi', ginger, and 'paminat' (a phytomedicine in the form of rind used to avoid relapsing). 'Pasuob' or smoke ritual was also done to drive 'Danyar' (evil spirits) away. It is also taboo to walk around the tribe for it might attract Danyar and to let pregnant women eat bread because the fetus might grow larger inside the womb that could cause difficulty in labor. On the other hand, the Local Government Unit (LGU) provided help and support to the tribe, including prenatal care, medical supplies, and free check-ups without disturbing the tribe's traditions.

Key Words: Aeta; Bihog tribe; childbearing; prenatal; labor; postpartum

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Childbearing is one of the most challenging phenomena in a woman's body, and it is in need of utmost care. The birth of a child can be such a happy time, especially when the little one is in good health. Women give birth to their children with the help of doctors, nurses, and midwives in hospitals and birthing centers nowadays. Local Government Units (LGUs) are now mandated by the government to upgrade birthing facilities.

Before, most women gave birth at their homes because of being distant from hospitals and birthing centers or lack of fortune in finance. This caused the high maternal mortality rate in our country, which is why in 2008, the country passed the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and Nutrition Strategy policy, dubbed as the "No Home Birthing Policy." Statistics show that 208 mothers of 100,000 live births die due to childbirth and complications. The goal was to reduce the country's high rate of maternal mortality to 52, according to the article of Bacani (2020). On the contrary, ethnic groups from different corners of the Philippines still perform their childbirths at home, not only because of their

remoteness and lack of finance but also because they want to preserve their culture and traditions. One of these tribes is the Agta or Bihog, who resides in Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon.

The Bihog Tribe has small nose, dark brown eyes, and brown skin. They are the Aetas in Province of Quezon. Being an ethnic group, the Bihog Tribe has unusual ways of living, culture, and tradition. Their daily living and practices are culturally diverse from standard society.

Furthermore, Withers and Lim (2018) claimed in their study that cultural beliefs can influence women's use of formal maternal health care services. The traditional beliefs and practices in pregnancy are prevalent in Asia, mostly in tribes that reside in remote areas. Their fear of institutional birth is women's fear of unnecessary medical interventions.

Moreover, Matsubara et al. (2013) stated in their study that women's satisfaction is an important indicator of the quality of care during childbirth. A good environment in the surroundings of a pregnant woman, such as a warm home and good health facility, can increase positive effects in her pregnancy and childbearing. In contrast, an unsatisfying childbearing experience can cause postpartum mental disorder to the mother, which, in a way, agrees with ethnic mothers not wanting the medicine industry to



interfere in their pregnancy and childbirth. Their culture may be more satisfying for them than the modern medical interventions.

Therefore, the researchers would like to determine the beliefs and cultural practices of the Bihog Tribe on childbearing in Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to investigate the different childbearing practices performed by the Bihog Tribe. The study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the traditional practices done by the Bihog Tribe in Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon during:

1.1. Prenatal

- 1.1.1. Medicine,
- 1.1.2. Ceremony, and
- 1.1.3. Food eaten?

1.2. Labor

- 1.2.1. Medicine,
- 1.2.2. Ceremony, and
- 1.2.3. Food eaten?

1.3. Postpartum

- 1.3.1. Medicine,
- 1.3.2. Ceremony, and
- 1.3.2. Food eaten?

2. What are the struggles and challenges encountered of an Agta woman during pregnancy and childbirth?
3. What are their coping mechanisms?
4. How does the Agta midwife perform midwifery guardianship?
- 5.

1.3. Significance of the Study

The study is beneficial to the Bihog Tribe (Agta) because it would help them let society and the government know about their experiences regarding childbearing and would motivate the government to provide support and help without disregarding their culture and traditions. Medical practitioners would also be informed about how the tribe performs their procedures on childbearing and will help them distinguish the differences between the modern medical practices and the traditional practices of the tribe. Also, the study might be helpful to the researchers pursuing similar studies that can be beneficial to the Agta.

1.4. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The researchers conducted this study by means of following this method represented inside the conceptual framework, which are the input, the process, and the output.

The input of the study focuses on the

objectives or research where the researchers identified the childbearing practices, challenges encountered, and coping mechanisms of Agta women in childbearing.

The process shows how the researchers collect the data regarding the different childbearing practices of the tribe through interviews, reading articles, and data gathering. Also, the researchers participated in the IPs environment.

Lastly, the output of the study is the identified childbearing practices of the Bihog Tribe (Agta). Furthermore, an action plan or community-based research that focuses on the access to the health care system of IPs is recommended.

2. METHODOLOGY

The researchers used an ethnographic type of research by utilizing interviews and discussions to gather data and information about their culture. It was a qualitative approach that focused on investigating and describing the culture and traditions regarding childbearing present in the tribe. The ethnographic design was utilized because the research paper's objective is to determine their culture and traditions through observations and participation in the tribe's environment. The study was conducted in Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto. Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon. The location was in an isolated area where the researchers walked for almost three hours. The participants of the study were composed of three Agta mothers and one Agta midwife, a total of four, who could answer the questions from the interview protocol and could provide data regarding the different practices of the Bihog Tribe (Agta) on childbearing. The interview questions were prepared and developed by gathering related literature and were answered by the subjects as the researchers asked the questions. Permission was also sought to do audio recording and video recording, likewise given assurance regarding the confidentiality of the data. The responses were then transcribed and coded for interpretation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Agta Mothers as the Subjects

Table 1. Herbal Medicines and Decoctions

Subject	Answers	Codes
Mother A	"Halaman sa ubo, Lagundi, oregano."	'Lagundi' and oregano leaves
Mother B	"Nainom ng luya para mawala yung lamig sa katawan."	Turmeric tea for body cold.
Mother C	"Yung katas ng paminat, iniinom para hindi mabinat hangga't di nauubos kahit araw-araw."	'Paminat' extract is used to avoid relapsing.

Table 1 shows the herbal medicines and decoctions that the pregnant women in their tribe drink. 'Lagundi', turmeric tea, and oregano leaves



were used as remedies for coughs and colds. Tea from 'Paminat', a rind that can be found in the forests and rivers near their tribe, was taken to avoid relapsing from the tiresome pregnancy stage.

Affirmatively, the study of Lamxay et al. (2011) stated that ethnic groups usually use medicinal plants in recovery during pregnancy, postpartum, and infant health care.

Table 2. Beliefs and Traditions Regarding Pregnancy and Childbearing

Subject	Answers	Codes
Mother A	"Bawal maglakad kung saan-saan kapag buntis. Bawal kami sa kalaan baka maamoy ng mga taong di nakikita."	Walking around was forbidden
Mother B	"Bawal kami ng tinapay kasi lalaki yung bata sa tiyan, mahihirapan ilabas."	Bread was restricted
Mother C	"Kapag ang buntis ay nagdadala ng mabibigat, hindi mahihirapan sa panganganak kaya nagkakabod ako noon."	Carrying heavy objects can help in easy and comfortable delivery.

Table 2 shows beliefs and traditions regarding pregnancy and childbearing acknowledged in their tribe. They believe that pregnant women should not walk around the tribe and forests because 'Danyar' (evil spirits) might smell them and bother them. Bread might also result in the growth of the baby before it even comes out of the womb, so it is considered a forbidden food. Lastly, they believe that carrying heavy objects helps in making their labor and delivery a lot easier.

Table 3. Cultural Practices during Childbearing

Subject	Answers	Codes
Mother A	"Pag nahihirapan ilabas [bata], pinapasukan kami. Hinihilot kapag nairi na para mapadali yung paglabas [bata]."	Smoke ritual and caressing of stomach are done for easier delivery.
Mother B	"Sinusuob saka hinihilot para mabilis lumabas yung bata."	Smoke ritual or 'Pasuob' and caressing of stomach are performed.
Mother C	"Pag kami ay nanganganak na, sinusuob kami, tapos yung tiyan pinupunasan."	'Pasuob' and caressing of stomach are performed.

Table 3 shows their cultural practices during childbearing. A smoke ritual or 'Pasuob' was performed. Caressing of the stomach was also practiced for the baby to come out easily.

They believed that 'Pasuob' is necessary to be performed during pregnancy and labor to prevent 'Danyar' or evil spirits from bothering the mother and child. Almost parallel to the study of Grey (2016), Aetas of Mt. Pinatubo also has a cultural act where they burn rubbers outside the woman's house to drive evil spirits away.

3.2 Agta Midwife as the Subject

Table 4. Ceremonies during Labor and Delivery

Informant	Responses	Corresponding Code
Agta Midwife	"Naggapasuob. 'Pag naman pwede na maligo na 'yung bagong panganak, kinukuhanan ko lang ng pampaligo. Lukban, saka 'yang anonang, at sambong."	Smoke ritual or 'Pasuob' and caressing of stomach for the fetus to come out of the womb easily Postpartum mother can take a bath when she is allowed to with grapefruit, 'anonang', and 'sambong'.

Table 4 shows the ceremonies during labor and delivery or childbearing that they perform. They have a smoke ritual or 'Pasuob' where they surround the woman's body with smoke. She also caresses the woman's stomach so that the infant can exit through the woman's vagina easily.

The answers of the subject were derived from her knowledge and experiences regarding midwifery guardianship. The subject answered 'Pasuob' and caressing of stomach since these activities were done during their labor and delivery. She also said that grapefruit, 'anonang', and 'sambong' are essentials for postpartum mothers when taking a bath.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The Bihog Tribe has a lot of unusual cultures and traditions regarding childbearing, which is affirmed in the study of Grey (2016). However, the study revealed different cultural practices on driving away evil spirits which might disturb the woman and child. Grey stated that Aeta from Mt. Pinatubo burned rubber outside the house of the pregnant woman while the Agta from Sitio Mapatong, Brgy. Sto Tomas, Tagkawayan, Quezon performed 'Pasuob' using 'tawas', incense, and 'kamanyang', or sometimes 'balete'. Pregnant women are also not allowed to walk around the tribe to avoid 'Danyar' (evil spirits) as part of prenatal care. Thus, the Bihog Tribe used turmeric and Paminat as herbal medicines and implemented food orders, which include restrictions from eating bread and cassava during prenatal, childbearing, and postpartum. The postpartum mother can also wash her body, only when she is allowed to, with grapefruit, 'anonang', and 'sambong'.

The Agta women feared hospitals which made them stick to their usual traditions that might lead to some challenges and struggles such as no proper monitoring, health problems, or worse, death, because of lacking health care assistance. This conclusion affirmed what Withers and Lim (2018) have stated. They stated that one of the barriers to institutional birth is the women's fear of unnecessary medical interventions.

The Agta women coped with the struggles they have encountered by continuing to follow and to



believe the traditions and cultures they have in their tribe. They were also given assistance which affirmed to Matsubara et al. (2013), wherein he stated that satisfaction and a good environment can increase positive effects in the childbearing experience of the mother.

The Agta midwife was taught by her mother, a former tribe midwife, about midwifery guardianship. Her knowledge and professionalism were beneficial to the women of the tribe. She performed midwifery guardianship based on her knowledge about their culture.

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An Ethnocultural Study on the Medical Practices of ‘Magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon

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Abstract: ‘Magtatambal’ is a faith healer who specializes in curing animal bites. They have preserved medical cultures and practices in Tagkawayan, Quezon. This study used an ethnocultural type of qualitative research by utilizing interviews and observation. The subjects of the study were composed of three ‘magtatambal’: (1) ‘magtatambal’ in Barangay Aliji, (2) ‘magtatambal’ in Barangay Bamban, and (3) ‘magtatambal’ in Barangay Sta. Cecilia, Tagkawayan, Quezon. They were purposively selected because of their differences in the method of treating animal bites and are specifically identified as experienced ‘magtatambal’. In the light of the findings, the researchers found out that ‘magtatambal’ 1 performs her medical practices by saying a Latin prayer, blowing air, and patting the body part bitten of the patient. ‘Magtatambal’ 2 performs her medical practices by washing the wound caused by the animal fangs using the ‘tambal’ (alcohol) and letting the victim drink one shot of the ‘tambal’. Lastly, ‘magtatambal’ 3 conducts theirs by putting a boiled ‘bolo’ (bamboo stalk) to the wound that will extract the venom from the victim’s body. The subjects encountered difficulty in handling patients who are already experiencing the effect of the venom. Passing the knowledge and the procedure is the subjects’ way to preserve their practices.

Key Words: ‘bolo’; ‘Magtatambal’; ‘tambal’; medical practices; ethnocultural

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Humans have traditionally relied on nature to meet their essential needs, such as food, clothes, medicines, and natural healing remedies. Before, there were no high establishments, modern medical equipment, and further knowledge about medicine. It is impressive how diseased people are still able to survive without the things mentioned. Only traditional healing methods such as herbal ingestion, local incision, and prayers are given to its patients. The said procedures are done using traditional healing methods or sometimes termed as faith healing.

Faith healing is a method of medication in which a believer seeks divine intervention through praying to reconcile a particular ailment or condition. Since time immemorial, faith healing has been used by believers who adhere to different religions to heal diseases. Faith healers are the ones who conduct faith healing. Other than that, they have the ability to cure patients despite lacking the proper study from medicine. Usually, their knowledge came from their ancestors or was learned from their experiences.

A ‘magtatambal’ is a faith healer that can be

found in Tagkawayan, Quezon. They specialized in treating snakebites, rabies, and other poisonous animal bites. They only differ from the methods on how they treat their patients. The availability of this medical practice helped save the lives of many people. However, due to the modernization of medicine, faith healing is slowly fading, and much more to vanish if it will not be preserved. If people forget about this culture, it will be lost over time.

Snakebite is a serious medical, social, and economic problem in many parts of the world, especially in tropical and subtropical countries, home to most of the world's dangerous snakes and have limited access to treatment. In Vietnam, the majority of traditional healers inherited their family businesses and learned healing skills and expertise from their forefathers and foremothers. Also, the affordable treatment cost compared to modern medicine is one of the factors for local people to use their service continuously.

According to Peprah et al. (2018), in their research entitled “Religion and Health: exploration of attitudes and health perceptions of faith healing users in urban Ghana,” faith healers served as the first port of call for disease curing and prevention for most users. Consumers of faith healing perceived their health status to be good due to the perceived



effectiveness of faith healing to cure health problems.

Traditional healers, however, are often neglected and left out from rabies prevention and control plans. Mental Floss UK (2018) stated the “cut and suck” method was discredited a few decades ago because research proved it to be counterproductive. They said that venom spreads to the victim’s system quickly, so there is no hope of sucking out a sufficient volume to make any difference as it can only increase the risk of infections.

The researchers pursue this study to explore their medical practices, to learn from their perspectives, and to understand their way of healing. This study will help determine the reliability of the said medical practices. Also, the study would help preserve the knowledge and culture of ‘pagtatambal’.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The study would like to investigate the medical practices of ‘Magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the medical practices of the ‘Magtatambal’ in:
 - 1.1. Barangay Aliji, Tagkawayan, Quezon
 - 1.2. Barangay Bamban, Tagkawayan, Quezon, and
 - 1.3. Barangay Sta. Cecilia, Tagkawayan, Quezon?
2. What are the challenges encountered by the ‘Magtatambal’?
3. How do the ‘Magtatambal’ preserve their medical practices?

1.3. Significance of the Study

The study is beneficial to the faith healers to help them be recognized and preserve their culture and knowledge about treating patients. It would inform the community about alternative and natural processes used by the ‘magtatambal’. In addition, this study will give them enough information to understand better the traditions and cultures which their ancestors use. Also, the study might be helpful to the researchers pursuing similar studies as they can use this as a reference or guide.

1.4. Scope and Delimitation

The study focused on the medical practices of ‘magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon. The study was conducted in Barangay Aliji, Bamban, and Sta. Cecilia. Each barangay inherent one ‘magtatambal’ who differs from one another by their medical practices. In connection, this study would determine the culture in doing the medical practice of the ‘magtatambal’ and help preserve it by giving value to

the practice and introducing it to the people.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

The researchers would like to study the ethnocultural about the medical practices of ‘magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon.

In input, the researchers would gather the data from the selected ‘magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon.

In process, the researchers would analyze, observe, and conduct an interview.

The output of the study is the medical practices in curing animal bites of ‘magtatambal’ in Tagkawayan, Quezon.

1.6. Definition of Terms

The following terms were conceptually and operationally defined:

Bolo is a bamboo stalk in Tagalog. This is one of the materials used in ‘pagtatambal’.

Medical practice is the practice of medicine by a group of physicians who share their premises and other resources. In this study, it is the term used for the medical process of the ‘magtatambal’ which is passed down from generation to generation.

Pagtatambal is the practice and culture of treating animal bites without the use of modern medical apparatus. Tambal is the term that defines the main tool or equipment used by the ‘magtatambal’ to perform their medical practices.

2. METHODOLOGY

The study used an ethnographic type of qualitative research by utilizing interviews and observation. The findings of the study were based on the researchers’ observation and gathering of the information about the medical practices of the selected ‘magtatambal’ in the different barangays of Tagkawayan, Quezon. The researchers conducted the study in Barangay Aliji, Bamban, and Sta. Cecilia. An interview protocol was prepared to gather sufficient data for the study. Also, the researchers observed the actual medical practices of the ‘magtatambal’. The subjects of the study were composed of three ‘magtatambal’ in the selected barangays: one in Barangay Aliji, one in Barangay Bamban, and one in Barangay Sta. Cecilia. They were chosen purposively because of their differences in their medical practices, as well as their ability to articulate and describe their Ethnoculture.



3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Medical Practices Performed by the 'Magtatambal'

Subject	Answer	Code
Magtatambal A	"Ano...nilalapatan ng Latin [prayer]. Ano lang...hihipan yung mismong kinagatan. Hihip 'saka yung tapik lang siya." =	Praying Latin, blowing, and patting.
Magtatambal B	"Ayun...hinuhugason ko ng tambal 'yung kinagatan bago patinumin ko [tambal]. Wala akong dasal". =	Pouring the wound. Drink 'tambal'.
Magtatambal C	"Magpapakulo ako ng tubig... 'pag tulong kulo na saka ko laang 'yung kawayan yung bolo...bago ipakapit dun sa ano... 'pag wala namang sugat at medyo tuyo na inamihan [hinihiwaan] ko na para may masipsipan. Yung blade." =	'Bolo'

Table 1 shows how the 'magtatambal' perform their medical practices. The subjects uttered that they perform their healing by: (1) praying Latin, blowing, and patting the area of the victim's wound; (2) pouring the liquor ('tambal') on the victim's wound for it to be cleaned, then, letting the patient drink a shot of 'tambal'; and lastly, (3) slitting a small piece of skin near the wound caused by the animal's bite and putting the boiled 'bolo' on the wound to sip the venom or rabies.

Mental Floss UK (2018) stated that venom spreads to the victim's system quickly, so there is no hope of sucking out a sufficient volume to make any difference. It can only increase the risk of infections.

Table 2. Tools and Equipment used in the Medical Practices

Subject	Answer	Code
Magtatamba 1A	"Latin [prayer] lang more on Latin...libro 'yun na isinalin sa 'kin. Ahh...galing pa 'yun sa ninuno ng...(pause)...kung bago ilang salin na ako kay ama...sa...tatay ni ama...tapos...siguro mga pang ano na ako eh pang...(pause)...pang-anim or pito. Bigay lang talaga 'yun...kasi 'yun... 'yun talaga naman ay dapat ay pansarili...kaso zyempre 'yung mga nakakaalam...kung bago sinasabi nang sinasabi kaya kung bago dumami 'yung mga nagpapagamot na rin. 'Pag ano lang, pagka Meshal na Araw, ainal, na."	Latin prayers
Magtatamba 1B	"Tambal, oo 'yun laang. Ay bigay din laang yun sa amin...nilalagyan ko ulit ng alak...alak lang ang panlagay ko. Wala." =	Tambal
Magtatamba 1C	"Oo, bolo tapos pakulo ng tubig... bulak tapos, oo... 'baka blade." =	Bolo, boiled water, cotton, and blade

Table 2 presents the tools and equipment used by the 'magtatambal' in their medical practice. The first 'magtatambal' said that she only uses prayer, which is composed of Latin words. The last two subjects stated that they used alcoholic beverages and a 'bolo' boiled in water, cotton, and blade.

The Latin language is mostly used in faith healing from then until now as it possesses powerful entities used as a medium for communicating with spirits to seek guidance for faith healing. Using 'bolo' boiled in water removes unwanted bacteria that can affect the wound of the patient, and using alcohol is believed to be a good first aid for snakebite to dissolve the venom.

The use of alcohol to dissolve venom is questioned as it can affect the circulation of blood and the lymphatic system and can make the venom climb to the brain faster, leading to death. However, Hall (2018) supported that the use of alcohol can dissolve venom.

Table 3. Summary of the Subjects' Answers in the Interview

Questions	Summary of Answers
1. Where did you obtain your knowledge? Did you study the process of treating animal bites? How long? Did someone give you the process?	It was inherited from their great grandfather, husband, and taught by her mother-in-law.
2. Do you also prescribe medicine, either herbal or chemical, after you treat your patient? If yes, what are those?	They do not prescribe any medicine except for Amoxicillin (antibiotics).
3. Do you perform rituals?	One of the 'magtatambal' performs a ritual and offers prayers during Holy Week while others do not.
4. Have you experienced treating other animal bites? If yes, what are those?	They all treat animal bites, including dogs, cats, and rats.
5. How would you know if the venom or rabies are extracted? What are the signs?	The venom has been extracted from the body if the victim's body is no longer numb, something watery and sticky came out, and the 'bolo' or 'tambal' was placed on the victim's body twice.
6. What are the problems you encounter?	They experience difficulty in handling patients who are already experiencing the effect of the venom.

Table 3 shows the summary of the subject's answers in the interview. Their medical practices are mostly inherited and taught by their relatives and they only prescribe Amoxicillin (antibiotics). Only one of them performs a ritual, but they all treat other animal bites, including dogs, cats, and rats. The indicator that the venom is fully extracted is when the patient's body is no longer numb, a liquid substance came out, and the 'tambal' was placed twice on the affected area. The 'magtatambal' finds the treatment challenging if the patient is already suffering from the effects of the venom.

4. CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the findings, the researchers found out that 'Magtatambal' 1 performs her medical practice by saying a Latin prayer, blowing air, and patting the body part bitten of the patient. 'Magtatambal' 2 performs her medical practice by washing the wound caused by the animal fangs using the 'tambal' (alcohol) and letting the victim drink one shot of the 'tambal'. Lastly, 'Magtatambal' 3 conducts theirs by putting a boiled 'bolo' (bamboo stalk) to the wound that will extract the venom from the victim's body. They usually encounter difficulty in handling patients who are already suffering from the effects of the venom. Passing the knowledge and the procedure is the subjects' way to preserve their healing. Knowing and understanding these medical practices helps in appreciating the knowledge and culture of Filipinos. This is an important part of history that defines who Filipinos are, and this traces back to the strong belief in the faith of the Filipinos.

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