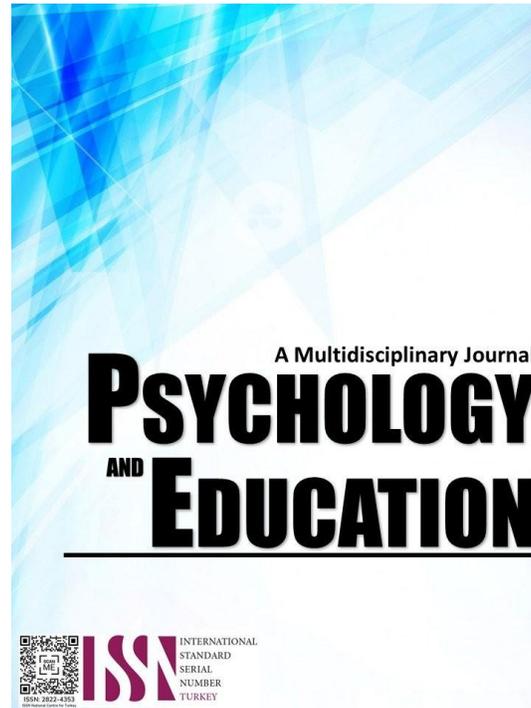


PHILIPPINE LITERATURE TEXTBOOKS AS MEANS OF REPRESENTING CULTURAL ARTIFACTS IN MINDANAO: A QUALITATIVE CONTENT ANALYSIS



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Philippine Literature Textbooks as Means of Representing Cultural Artifacts in Mindanao: A Qualitative Content Analysis

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Abstract

This study examined how Mindanaoan cultural artifacts are represented in Philippine literature textbooks used in higher education institutions in Mindanao. It aimed to identify the dominant artifacts included, evaluate the inclusiveness of these representations, and determine how they contribute to students' cultural awareness. The research analyzed thirteen textbooks authored by Mindanaoan writers, supported by interviews with student participants. A qualitative content analysis was employed to study the presence and treatment of local culture. Narrative Theory (Bruner, 1991), Multicultural Education Theory (Banks, 2004), and Cultural Representation Theory (Hall, 1997) provided the analytical framework. The findings revealed that only one textbook contained extensive cultural materials, including folktales, myths, epics, proverbs, and indigenous practices. The remaining textbooks offered little or no local cultural content. These gaps created patterns of exclusion and stereotyping, which limited the cultural inclusivity of the materials. Students interviewed for the study said that textbooks featuring Mindanaoan culture helped them connect more closely with the lessons. They reported stronger engagement, improved self-confidence, and a clearer sense of cultural identity. In contrast, the use of texts dominated by Western and Luzon-based content weakened their interest and made learning less relevant. The absence of local voices led to a disconnect between classroom instruction and students' lived experiences. The study demonstrated the need for literature textbooks that reflect regional cultures and affirm local identities. Inclusive representation promotes meaningful learning, motivates students, and strengthens cultural pride. The analysis also showed that culturally sustaining pedagogy requires textbooks that integrate local narratives into mainstream instruction. The results support calls for curriculum reform and textbook development that recognize the Philippines' cultural diversity. They emphasize the importance of involving local writers, educators, and cultural experts in creating materials that authentically represent Mindanaoan traditions with respect. By addressing cultural gaps in current textbooks, schools can provide students with resources that support both academic learning and cultural awareness.

Keywords: *Philippine literature, cultural representation, Mindanaoan artifacts, qualitative content analysis, inclusive pedagogy*

Introduction

The issue of textbooks within text-forming cultures has long concerned educators and researchers globally. Gomes et al. (2020) conducted a qualitative study examining how indigenous people are visually portrayed in contemporary Brazilian educational handbooks. Their analysis revealed that, despite some public policy efforts to make indigenous populations more visible, textbook imagery frequently continues to rely on stereotypes—depicting indigenous people as either invisible or outdated—thus reinforcing cultural distance in the classroom where students fail to see their lived traditions reflected in their studies.

Globally, educators emphasize the urgent need for culturally sustaining pedagogy and decolonized curricula to ensure textbooks affirm rather than erase diverse cultural identities (Cabanilla & Villanueva, 2024). In the Philippine context, textbook literature often leans toward Tagalog and Luzon-centric narratives, sidelining cultural pluralism. Supporting this concern, Java (2024) highlights how K-12 educational materials often overlook regional and Indigenous representation, instead privileging dominant cultural voices—a trend that diminishes the visibility of diverse local identities in education. Magdadero and Sacramento (2022) further demonstrate how inclusive Indigenous education practices—particularly in Lumad alternative schools—can address misrepresentation and systemic cultural exclusion through community engagement. Together, these findings underscore the importance of integrating substantive, contextually grounded regional voices—especially from Mindanao—into the curriculum to foster equity, cultural belonging, and decolonized learning environments.

Mindanao exemplifies this imbalance. As Godinez-Ortega (2024) underscores, literature textbooks often exclude Mindanaoan voices—such as the Darangen epic, T'boli T'nalak weaving, and Maguindanaon proverbs—offering only superficial descriptions devoid of cultural grounding. This omission deprives students in Mindanao of authentic recognition of their heritage and leaves learners elsewhere unaware of the region's rich traditions. At the same time, Sampang et al. (2025) note that educators and module writers face significant challenges in identifying biases related to ethnicity and inclusivity in learning materials—a clear indicator that these gaps are systemic and not easily remedied. Moreover, Ortega and Rosales (2023) examine how literature classrooms often fail to integrate the country's inherent multicultural diversity into teaching practices. They argue that despite the Philippines being home to dozens of ethnic groups and hundreds of dialects, textbooks and instruction tend to overlook this plurality, perpetuating a singular, centralized cultural narrative.

The challenge extends beyond inclusion to encompass both educational equity and cultural justice. Raton, Bagares, and Soberano

(2024) found that socially just teaching within ESL classrooms enhances student engagement, empathy, and critical awareness of social and cultural inequities. Similarly, Caoli & Tenorio (2023) demonstrated that integrating Indigenous knowledge—such as Mangyan heritage—into curriculum design empowers students and strengthens their cultural identity. Together, these studies underscore that textbooks and teaching methods must serve not only as instructional tools but also as platforms that validate learners' identities and promote intercultural understanding—especially in Mindanaoan contexts, where diversity must be affirmed, not silenced. This perspective aligns with global advocacy for integrating cultural heritage into educational systems. UNESCO (2021) recognizes education as a pivotal avenue for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage—asserting that incorporating living traditions within formal and non-formal learning not only enhances educational relevance but also fosters cultural diversity and intercultural understanding

The findings will be shared with schools and teachers in Mindanao and disseminated at regional research congresses where curriculum developers and policymakers from DepEd and CHED are present. To broaden the impact, results will also be presented in national and international conferences on inclusive education and cultural representation, and published in peer-reviewed journals in education, literature, and cultural studies. This multi-level dissemination strategy ensures that the work contributes to both domestic policy debates and the broader international conversation on culturally sustaining pedagogy and textbook inclusivity.

Research Questions

This study answered the following questions.

1. What are the dominant artifacts contain in Philippine literature textbooks used in Mindanao?
2. How do these textbooks provide inclusive representation of Mindanaoan culture through these artifacts?
3. How do these representations develop the cultural awareness of the learners?

Methodology

Research Design

The research design adopted in this study was qualitative, specifically aimed at examining the representation of cultural artifacts in Philippine Literature textbooks used in Mindanao. Qualitative research was most appropriate, as it prioritized sense-making and contextual interpretation, enabling a deeper exploration of how textbooks integrated cultural narratives and how these narratives influenced learners' perceptions of cultural identity and belonging. This design enabled examination of the sociocultural dimensions of textbooks in their natural classroom context, providing insights into how dominant and local cultures were conveyed through the literature materials. For instance, Mendoza (2024) employed a phenomenological qualitative analysis to investigate how English teachers in Davao de Oro managed the challenges of integrating cultural influences into literature instruction, revealing coping strategies and constraints that reflected students' lived realities. In this study, qualitative content analysis served as the primary methodological approach. This method involved systematic coding, categorization, and interpretation of textual data, focusing not only on the frequency of cultural elements but also on the terminology, symbolic patterns, and embedded messages they contained. Such an approach was beneficial when analyzing textbooks, where cultural representations might be explicit or subtle, expressed through metaphors, imagery, or coded references. The goal was to uncover how values, traditions, and identities were represented—or excluded—in Philippine Literature textbooks in Mindanao. Astiandani and Purwati (2021), for example, demonstrated the value of qualitative content analysis in identifying how cultural representation and intercultural competence can be constructed in the curriculum, thereby showing its relevance for critiquing and improving culturally responsive materials.

Mindanao's ethnolinguistic diversity provided the essential context for this research. The island was home to Indigenous groups, Muslim communities, and settler populations, each with distinct cultural practices and worldviews. However, mainstream educational materials had often misrepresented or neglected these traditions. This study examined whether the dominant cultural images and themes within textbooks aligned with or diverged from the lived experiences of Mindanaoan learners. By situating the analysis within the region's social realities, the research went beyond description to a critical evaluation of cultural inclusivity in educational content. For operational clarity, this study defined cultural artifacts as textual and symbolic elements in literature textbooks that embodied local norms, values, and traditions. These included folktales, proverbs, songs, rituals, or other culturally rooted narratives that functioned both as vehicles of learning and as instruments of cultural transmission. The analysis focused on how these artifacts were incorporated, whether they fostered cultural pride and awareness, and how they shaped learners' sense of identity. For instance, the study evaluated whether the textbooks included diverse Mindanaoan narratives, whether these were presented respectfully and accurately, and whether they challenged or perpetuated stereotypes about local communities.

This study highlighted the vital role of Philippine Literature textbooks as dynamic carriers of cultural knowledge and identity, emphasizing that they should not only feature canonical works but also integrate culturally responsive content that validated learners' identities and highlighted local traditions, since junior high literature texts often embedded cultural details—such as local beliefs, rituals, and social norms—thus serving as effective vehicles for cultural transmission and reinforcing traditional practices and cultural pride (Camposano & Gilbas, 2023; Hipolito, 2024). Moreover, weaving Philippine cultural heritage into teacher education curricula strengthened future educators' capacity to promote historical awareness, cultural identity, and inclusivity in classrooms, allowing textbooks to transcend mere language teaching and function as instruments of heritage preservation and identity affirmation across

diverse Filipino communities (Gadaza et al., 2025).

Respondents

The thirteen Philippine literature textbooks produced by Mindanaoan writers were used in this study and were generally used in Mindanao-based higher educational institutions. The selection of these materials was based on their relevance to college-level English instruction and their alignment with the study's primary objective of exploring sociocultural integration in language education. Although the selected textbooks were not always overtly local in their narratives, they were expected to integrate sociocultural topics, local linguistic aspects, and community-based settings that reflected Mindanaoan realities. These features made the textbooks an excellent resource for advancing culturally responsive and inclusive teaching methodologies. It was stressed that the authors of these textbooks were not participants in the study; their texts were used only as objects of analysis within a qualitative content analysis.

Besides the book analysis, the research also employed a qualitative data-collection method through semi-structured interviews with identified student participants from five purposively selected colleges in Mindanao. In particular, ten participants from these colleges were invited to take part in the focus interviews. The students had studied and used the textbooks as part of their educational process in courses taught using Philippine literature textbooks. The decision to focus exclusively on students was intended to provide direct, authentic insights into how they perceived Philippine Literature textbooks, their cultural representations, and their roles in learning experiences. Student voices were central to understanding how textbook content influenced their cultural awareness and supported—or limited—the development of their language and identity. Their reflections served as crucial data in answering Research Question 3, which examined the role of textbook representations in shaping cultural understanding and fostering engagement with literature. By foregrounding learner perspectives, the study aimed to reveal not only the cultural inclusions and exclusions in textbooks but also the broader sociocultural dynamics that affected classroom interaction and identity formation.

Ethical considerations formed an essential part of the study's design. Although college students were not a vulnerable population, certain risks were acknowledged, such as hesitation to express critical views about curricular materials or institutional practices due to discomfort. To address this, all participants were fully informed about the study's purpose, procedures, and safeguards before their involvement. Participation was entirely voluntary, with the option to withdraw at any time without consequence. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained throughout data collection, analysis, and reporting, thereby protecting the identity and integrity of all student participants.

By combining a critical reading of Philippine Literature textbooks with qualitative data drawn from student testimonies, this research provided nuanced insights into how instructional materials contributed to language development and cultural identity formation within the Mindanaoan educational context. The focus was on how learners perceived textbooks as influencing their acquisition of core skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—while simultaneously shaping their cultural awareness. Students' reflections highlighted how literature textbooks either supported or limited their engagement with local cultural narratives and their relevance to everyday experiences. Moreover, the study underscored the importance of embedding culturally grounded content in instructional materials. Since these textbooks addressed issues tied to place, context, and identity, their analysis revealed how culturally relevant materials could serve as mechanisms for inclusive, responsive, and transformative language education. In doing so, the research demonstrated that textbooks were not merely tools for language learning but also powerful resources for fostering cultural pride, sustaining heritage, and cultivating critical awareness among Mindanaoan learners.

Procedure

To gather meaningful and high-quality data, this study employed a rigorous and ethical qualitative methodology because qualitative researchers were encouraged to adopt explicit and systematic strategies, including iterative data collection, targeted research questions grounded in theory, and researcher reflexivity to ensure methodological rigor and trustworthiness (Johnson, Adkins, & Chauvin, 2020). Moreover, systematic data collection was foundational in qualitative research, ensuring that insights were context-sensitive and reliable and contributing to a deeper understanding of human experiences (Makateng & Mokala, 2025). Guided by these principles, this study used a Discourse Analysis framework and structured procedures to collect and analyze relevant information.

The first step was submitting an ethics application to the university's Research Ethics Committee (REC), along with supporting documentation, including participant information sheets, consent forms (both written and signed), and sample interview questions. Official grants were obtained, i.e., approval from the Graduate School and the Coordinator of Applied Linguistics at the University of the Immaculate Conception, as well as permission to use some Philippine literature textbooks from their authors or publishers.

Writers from Mindanao wrote the Philippine literature textbooks examined. They were singled out as the most appropriate, given their value to higher education and their potential to foster sociocultural awareness. These were the textbooks the participants used as their primary learning texts, in which they reflected on the cultural representations in the Philippine literature activities.

Roles were clearly articulated according to the level of student participation. During the interview, students were first asked to explain what cultural awareness meant to them and, second, how the cultural artifacts presented in Philippine Literature textbooks—such as stories, traditions, and depictions of indigenous and regional practices—helped develop that awareness. They revisited specific passages from the materials they had studied and reflected on how these representations influenced their understanding of culture and their own

sense of identity. The guiding focus was therefore on the following: what was cultural awareness, and in what ways did cultural artifacts contribute to its development?

College students who had been extensively exposed to the identified Philippine Literature textbooks were chosen as participants. The selection process also took into account diversity in academic backgrounds and sociolinguistic contexts. This purposive sampling approach aimed to yield in-depth, meaningful insights into the significance of cultural representation in Philippine literature.

The objectives and procedures of the study were fully explained to all participants, and ethical considerations were addressed before their formal inclusion. Students were informed of their rights, including the option to withdraw, their voluntary status, and the confidentiality of their responses. Each participant received and signed an Informed Consent Form (ICF) that clearly outlined the tasks expected of them, namely, to review the chosen textbooks and reflect on the cultural content presented in them.

The primary method of data collection was focus interviews. The questions were framed to directly explore students' personal definitions of cultural awareness and their views on how cultural artifacts in the textbooks served as tools for developing it. At least 50 percent of the interviews were conducted face-to-face, while the remaining interviews were held virtually via platforms such as Google Meet or Zoom, in line with UIC-REC standards. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accurate transcription and interpretation.

The study strictly complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. All collected information was anonymized, encrypted, and accessible only to the principal researcher. Personal identifiers were removed during transcription, and all research records were disposed of responsibly at the conclusion of the study.

This study highlighted students' perspectives through a careful analysis of their reflections on cultural materials in Philippine Literature textbooks, generating valuable insights into what cultural awareness meant to them and how cultural artifacts contributed to its development, while also shaping identity and strengthening their ability to engage across different cultural contexts.

Data Analysis

This study investigated the predominance of cultural artifacts within the Philippine Literature textbooks utilized in Mindanao, guided by three research questions: (1) What were the dominant cultural artifacts contained in Philippine Literature textbooks used in Mindanao? (2) How did Philippine Literature textbooks provide an inclusive representation of Mindanaoan culture through the stories they contained? (3) How did these representations contribute to the development of learners' cultural awareness? To address these questions, the study employed qualitative content analysis guided by the Braun and Clarke (2021) framework, complemented by thematic analysis to generate systematic answers.

In response to RQ1, the paper identified the significant cultural artifacts by conducting an in-depth review of 13 purposively selected texts, labeled GE-BK01 to GE-BK13, within Philippine Literature textbooks. Mindanaoan folktales, myths, proverbs, epics, and legends, along with indigenous practices that highlight the region's unique cultural heritage, were the primary artifacts of focus. The data reduction process involved coding these artifacts into themes guided by Narrative Theory (Bruner, 1991). This theoretical lens helped explain how stories and oral traditions contributed to historical consciousness and identity formation. Artifacts were systematically organized through coding and memoing to capture cultural meanings.

For RQ2, the research examined how inclusive representation was achieved through the cultural artifacts identified in the textbooks, drawing on Multicultural Education Theory (Banks, 2004). The analysis determined whether the textbooks explicitly highlighted Mindanaoan culture or embedded it implicitly within narratives, examples, or activities. The study then explained why the stories found in the textbooks could be considered inclusive representations—whether because they portrayed indigenous traditions, reflected regional identities, or affirmed the cultural values of Mindanaoan communities.

To answer RQ3, a thematic analysis was used to explore how textbook representations contributed to learners' development of cultural awareness. Customs, belief systems, and social practices were evaluated using Cultural Representation Theory (Hall, 1997). Representations were examined for their ability to foster cultural awareness, strengthen identity, and encourage respect for cultural diversity. Themes such as authenticity, depth of portrayal, and relevance to learners' cultural contexts emerged. These findings emphasized the crucial role of textbooks in shaping learners' appreciation of cultural heritage and their sense of belonging.

The findings were presented through narrative discussions and matrices that displayed how cultural artifacts were incorporated into literary instruction. Textbook sections were organized by theme and interpreted in detail. To ensure validity and reliability, peer reviews and intersubjective consensus were conducted. Additionally, coded data were evaluated by experts in literature and cultural studies to verify their credibility. This verification step confirmed that the research adequately addressed its objectives.

Finally, the paper identified both the strengths and limitations of how Mindanaoan culture was represented in Philippine Literature textbooks. While some representations were found to affirm regional identity and foster learners' cultural awareness, others highlighted the need for more accurate and comprehensive portrayals of Mindanao's rich heritage.

Ethical Considerations

Resnik (2024) stated that ethical principles played a critical role in guiding all stages of research involving human participants, ensuring the safety of individuals and promoting scientific integrity and trust among the population. In this study, ethical considerations informed the design and conduct of the research, particularly regarding institutional approval, privacy, dignity, and the voluntary participation of all informants. The study followed ethical guidelines, including briefing participants on informed consent, maintaining privacy, and respecting the cultural settings. These principles also guided decisions about the researcher's qualifications, adequacy of facilities, and community engagement. Upholding ethical standards ensured participants' protection and enhanced the credibility, validity, and social value of the research findings.

Social Value. Tracy (2020) emphasized that qualitative research should demonstrate social value, linking the issues under investigation to equity, inclusion, and productive social change. The representation of Mindanaoan culture in Philippine literature textbooks was identified as an area requiring greater societal understanding, justifying the need for this study. By examining reflections of local cultural artifacts—including traditions, values, and oral narratives—in educational materials, the study aimed to support inclusive education and enhance cultural awareness. In line with the moral ethic of respecting persons, the study promoted recognition of diverse cultural stories as a means of fostering social cohesion and responsive pedagogy.

The research empowered educators, curriculum designers, and policymakers to understand how Philippine literature textbooks represented Mindanaoan cultural artifacts. This knowledge facilitated the integration of local culture into pedagogical practices, promoting learners' cultural awareness and appreciation. Additionally, the findings could encourage textbook publishers to adopt culturally sensitive practices, contributing to the broader documentation of culturally responsive education. To maximize societal impact, the study disseminated its results through academic journal publications, conferences, workshops, and community seminars advocating for cultural representation in education—**Informed Consent.** Voluntary participation was prioritized in accordance with ethical principles (Resnik, 2020). Participants were provided with detailed information about the study's objectives, procedures, and potential risks and benefits. They were given sufficient time to decide whether to participate, informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty, and signed informed consent forms documenting their voluntary participation.

Vulnerability of Participants. The most vulnerable participants were students and educators using the textbooks. The study safeguarded participants' autonomy and privacy, applying rapport-building skills to create a respectful environment for sharing information. Participants were allowed to withdraw at any point. Strict confidentiality protocols, such as anonymizing participants' identities, were implemented to protect privacy.

Risks, Benefits, and Safety. The risks of this study were minimal, primarily related to sharing opinions and experiences about textbook content. Psychological risks were mitigated by ensuring confidentiality and providing a supportive research environment. The benefits outweighed the risks, as the findings were expected to enrich educational practices by promoting the inclusion of Mindanaoan cultural artifacts in Philippine literature textbooks.

Privacy and Confidentiality. The Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173) guided the collection, storage, and processing of personal data. Participants' identities were anonymized using a coding system, and all data were stored on a password-protected device accessible only to the researcher. Participants were assured that their personal information would not be disclosed without their consent.

Justice. Fairness in participant selection and treatment was ensured through equitable sampling. Educators were selected based on criteria such as at least 3 years of teaching experience in Mindanao and current employment at a higher education institution. Student participants were currently enrolled in higher education institutions in Mindanao, had completed at least one course using Philippine literature textbooks, and were willing to share their learning experiences. The textbook authors were Mindanaoan and had published Philippine literature textbooks used in higher education. Participants were acknowledged for their contributions through tokens of appreciation, demonstrating respect for their time and effort.

Transparency was a central guiding principle in this study. The researcher ensured he was transparent about his intentions and research practices. This approach allowed him to provide detailed information about the study's objectives, procedures, and expected results to all participants. Transparency ensured that participants were well informed and could make voluntary, informed decisions about their participation.

To further enhance the credibility and accuracy of the research, member checking was employed. This involved presenting the interpretations of the gathered data back to the participants so that they could confirm that their views were accurately understood. This validation strengthened the integrity of the findings and helped establish a constructive working relationship between the researcher and participants (McKim, 2023; Lincoln et al., 2022).

The researcher also ensured that all information was presented clearly, understandably, and meaningfully, while avoiding excessive simplification. The research process was carefully documented and shared with the appropriate authorities and readers. By maintaining meticulous records and transparent communication, the study upheld high ethical standards and ensured the integrity of the results.

Qualification as a Researcher. As a doctoral candidate pursuing a Doctor of Philosophy in Education with a major in Applied Linguistics and a Master of Arts in Teaching, I have developed a deep commitment to language education and cultural representation. My academic



journey, combined with extensive research experience, provided the methodological expertise and ethical awareness necessary to conduct this study rigorously. To ensure the validity and reliability of the findings, I consulted expert debriefers and my dissertation adviser, a distinguished scholar affiliated with the University of the Immaculate Conception.

Adequacy of Facilities. The University of the Immaculate Conception and the University of Mindanao provided access to essential learning resources, including ProQuest, online databases, and library facilities. The ethics committee at the University of the Immaculate Conception ensured the scientific validity and ethical compliance of the study.

Community Involvement. A key outcome of this study was active community engagement. The dissemination strategy was designed to inform and involve educators, curriculum developers, and other stakeholders in Mindanao. Research findings were shared at local, national, and international conferences to foster critical discussions on integrating local cultures into Philippine literature textbooks. Participants received comprehensive feedback that acknowledged their valuable contributions. Additionally, tailored communication was provided to educators and curriculum developers to encourage the practical application of the research insights. By promoting community involvement and knowledge exchange, the study aimed to enhance cultural inclusivity in Philippine literature education, ultimately enriching the educational landscape in Mindanao.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the results of the study. The presentation began with the profile of the materials analyzed, followed by the results based on the three research questions: first, the dominant artifacts contained in Philippine literature textbooks used in Mindanao; second, how these textbooks provided an inclusive representation of Mindanaoan culture through these artifacts; and third, how these representations developed the cultural awareness of the learners.

Profile of the Research Materials

Presented in Table 1.1 was the profile of the instructional materials used across various tertiary institutions in Mindanao. Thirteen textbooks were purposively selected to represent widely used materials in general education courses, including *The Literatures of the Philippines*, *Essentials of Writing in the Discipline*, *Basics of English on Structure and Communication*, *GED-2 Purposive Communication*, *Purposive Communication*, *Speak Right and Shine!*, *Communication for Society: Purposive Communication*, *Skillful Reading*, *Purposive Communication*, *Writing Project Feasibility Study*, *Language and Communication*, *Speak and Write for a Purpose*, and *Now I Know: A Practical Guide in Reading*. For ease of reference in the analysis, each textbook was assigned a unique code from GE-BK01 to GE-BK13, where “GE” stood for General Education and “BK” for Book, followed by a two-digit number. Short descriptions were also provided to clarify each textbook’s content, scope, and instructional focus.

Table 1.1. *Profile of the Research Materials*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Title of the Book</i>	<i>Description</i>
GE-BK01	The Literatures of the Philippines	This textbook introduces and explores literary works from the country’s regions to highlight Filipino cultural identity.
GE-BK02	Essentials of Writing in the Discipline	This textbook guides students in developing research writing skills within Philippine and global contexts.
GE-BK03	Basics of English on Structure and Communication	This textbook reviews core grammar and communication skills to strengthen English proficiency.
GE-BK04	GED-2 Purposive Communication	This textbook provides compiled resources to support purposive communication learning in the classroom.
GE-BK05	Purposive Communication	This textbook develops communicative competence and intercultural awareness through tasks and assessments.
GE-BK06	Speak Right and Shine!	This textbook teaches effective communication skills through interactive exercises and performance tasks.
GE-BK07	Communication for Society: Purposive Communication	This textbook enhances students’ ability to communicate effectively across contexts and media.
GE-BK08	Skillful Reading	This textbook builds reading comprehension through structured activities addressing common reading challenges.
GE-BK09	Purposive Communication	This textbook integrates writing, speaking, listening, and presenting for academic and real- world communication.
GE-BK10	Writing Project Feasibility Study	This textbook serves as a practical guide for preparing and evaluating feasibility studies for new ventures.
GE-BK11	Language and Communication	This textbook develops advanced communication skills for academic and professional purposes.
GE-BK12	Speak and Write For A Purpose	This textbook provides strategies for effective speaking and writing in diverse contexts.
GE-BK13	Now I Know: A Practical Guide In Reading	This textbook enhances reading comprehension and critical thinking through research-based approaches.



Profile of the Participants

Table 1.2 presents the profile of the participants in the focus interview. The table included the following information: assigned code, province of origin, gender, and academic background. Participants came from different regions in Mindanao, and each was given a unique code to ensure confidentiality.

Table 1.2. *Profile of the Participants*

Code	Province	Gender	Course
P-S01	South Cotabato	Male	Teacher Education
P-S02	Davao Del Sur	Female	AB English
P-S03	Surigao Del Norte	Male	Criminology
P-S04	Davao Del Norte	Male	Nursing
P-S05	Bukidnon	Male	Legal Education
P-S06	South Cotabato	Female	AB English
P-S07	Davao Del Sur	Female	Architecture
P-S08	Surigao Del Norte	Male	BSED English
P-S09	Davao Del Norte	Female	English
P-S10	Bukidnon	Male	AB Mass communication

Dominant artifacts are contained in English language textbooks used in Mindanao

The analysis presented in Table 2 provides a comprehensive overview of the dominant cultural artifacts found in Philippine literature textbooks used in educational institutions across Mindanao. The table includes essential information, including the type of cultural artifact, the textbook in which it appears, its title, a brief description of its cultural significance, and a unique identifying code. These artifacts include folktales, myths, epics, legends, proverbs, and indigenous practices such as Pilandok’s Tale, Tulalang, and T’nalak Weaving. Each entry reflects the traditions, values, and heritage of various Mindanaoan communities. Collectively, these elements demonstrate how textbooks incorporate local cultural content to enhance learners’ cultural awareness and support the preservation of regional identity.

Table 2. *Dominant Artifacts Contained in Philippine Literature Textbooks used in Mindanao*

Types of Cultural Artifacts	Source	Title of Artifacts	Descriptions	Code
Folktale	The Literatures of the Philippines	Mandaya Oman-oman (Buwaya na Butig)	This story tells how Bakwos, who ignored his elders and acted with pride, was cursed (buwaya) and transformed into a crocodile.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Tulalang	This Manobo folktale tells of Tulalang, a noble and courageous warrior who defended his people from their enemies.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	The Maguindanao Tale of the Faithful Wife	This folktale tells of a man who married three women—a widow (balo), a divorced woman (biniyaan), and a young lady (raga).	GE-BK01
Indigenous Practice	The Literatures of the Philippines	Pilandok’s Tale	This Maranao folktale tells of Pilandok, who uses his cleverness and wit to outsmart greedy and corrupt rulers.	GE-BK01
	Essentials of Writing in the Discipline	Dura	“Dura” is a Bagobo war song that describes traditional practices and rituals performed before and after battle.	GE-BK01
	Essentials of Writing in the Discipline	T’nalak Weaving	T’nalak Weaving is a traditional craft closely linked to the colorful and distinctive culture of the T’boli people.	GE-BK02
Proverb	Essentials of Writing in the Discipline	Binukid	Binukid is the native language used by the Bukidnon Tribe for daily communication and for passing down stories, knowledge, and traditions.	GE-BK02
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Sekkaw warad tavod du-buwaya (You would not be without your belt - parents)	This Bagobo saying is a riddle-like proverb that highlights the importance of parents in one’s life.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Panonggelangan	Panonggelangan is a Manobo proverb that teaches the importance of remembering one’s roots and approaching life with patience.	GE-BK01
Myth	The Literatures of the Philippines	Masaalla	Masaalla is a collection of Tausug proverbs that offer guidance about life, relationships, and resilience.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Limokon	Limokon is a mythical bird regarded as a spiritual guide in Bagobo belief.	GE-BK01



Epic	The Literatures of the Philippines	Radia Indarapatra	Radia Indarapatra is a mythical hero celebrated in the epics of the Lanao Muslims.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan	Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan is a Subanon epic that recounts the heroic adventures of Taake, who defeated the Datus of the Kingdom of Keboklagan and restored the Kingdom of Sirangan.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Darangen	Darangen is a Maranao epic that tells the story of Prince Bantugan, who left his kingdom after his brother, King Madali, ordered everyone to shun him.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Bantugan	Bantugan is a continuation of the Maranao epic Darangen, focusing on the life and adventures of Prince Bantugan after he left his kingdom.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Ulahingan	Ulahingan is an epic that tells the story of Agyu and his relatives as they journeyed to the paradise called Nalandangan.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Indarapatra at Sulayman	Indarapatra at Sulayman is a Maranao epic that tells of Prince Sulayman's courage in battling three monsters and the deep brotherly love of King Indarapatra, who came to rescue him from death.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Tuwaang Attends a Wedding	Tuwaang Attends a Wedding is a Manobo epic that tells how Tuwaang, guided by the gungutan bird, travels to the wedding of the Maiden of Monawon and faces supernatural trials before bringing the bride home to Kuaman.	GE-BK01
Legend	The Literatures of the Philippines	The Wrath of Malinugngan	The Wrath of Malinugngan is an epic that tells how Malinugngan and his sister Badbaranapon were punished by the gods, known as the Anitu, because of their forbidden love.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Budasari	Budasari is a romantic epic that tells the story of Budasari, a woman abandoned at birth by her real parents, who later meets Sultan Mongindra and eventually learns she is a princess.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name	How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name is a legend that explains how the city's name may have come from the Maranao or Maguindanao word Kaag-ayan, or the Bukidnon word Kaagya-an, meaning "place of shame."	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Signs of the Planting Season	Signs of the Planting Season is a Bukidnon legend about how Magbabaya and his wife were transformed into a star and a fish.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	The Origin of Davao	The Origin of Davao is a legend that tells how Datu Bagu ruled the land and named it Davao, where he was later reunited with his long-lost brother, Datu Manguda.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	Legend of Mount Cotabato	Legend of Mount Cotabato tells how the mountain called Timako, standing at the mouth of the Rio Grande River, got its name.	GE-BK01
	The Literatures of the Philippines	The Legend of Ango	The Legend of Ango tells how Ango and his family were turned into stone by the wrath of the deity Anitan.	GE-BK01
The Literatures of the Philippines	How the Angels Built Lake Lanao	How the Angels Built Lake Lanao is a Maranao legend that explains how Archangel Diabarail created Lake Lanao by moving the sultanate of Mantapoli to the center of the earth, leaving behind a vast basin that filled with water.	GE-BK01	
The Literatures of the Philippines	The Story of the First Durian (The Hermit's Three Wishes)	This Maranao legend tells how Barom-Mai, a young man desperate to win back his wife's love, sought the help of the hermit Jupit Purok. The hermit granted him three wishes, resulting in the creation of a unique tree bearing a fruit that was sweet inside but thorny outside—the first durian.	GE-BK01	

Folktales

Folktales are oral literary works that narrate the indigenous knowledge, morals, and cultural world orientation of a given ethnolinguistic community. Folktales, like other cultural artifacts, serve both entertainment and the preservation of the public traditions, cultural norms, and cosmology of the people whose cultures they belong to. The stories identified in this research study are Oman-oman (Buyag na

Butingin), Tulalang, The Faithful Wife, and Pilandok.

Oman-oman (Buyag na Butingin) is one of the Mandaya tales that tells the story of Bakiwos, a proud and arrogant man who was punished as a crocodile by the power of a buyag, or verbal curse. This metamorphosis occurred during a fishing expedition, when Bakiwos, after being told several times by the elders not to, taunted the sacred butingin, a giant fish the locals revered. He dared exclaim, "What can the butting do? I will snatch it myself and show that neither spirit of the river can lay a finger on me!" The elders became alarmed at his insolence, and one among them declared a buyag, and said, "Your pride will curse thee--May the spirits turn thy body into what thy heart belongs to." The butingin, not long after, burst forth from the bottom of the river, upset the boat of Bakiwos, and drew him underwater. When he once again made himself visible, he became a crocodile, inhabiting the world without people, none of whom wanted or appreciated him.

This story can be classified as a folktale because it reflects the oral culture of the Mandaya and provides Kagwan with spiritual assurance that spoken words are the most influential. It also teaches humility, the need to avoid pride, and how to be ethical in society through folktales. There are all the significant components of a folktale: supernatural change, the teaching that something is wrong, and the use of culturally meaningful symbols, such as the crocodile. In Mandaya tradition, the crocodile is usually considered both feared and worshiped, and is often regarded as a symbol of spiritual recompense for misdeeds. Bakiwos is a similar character, refusing to listen to the community's wisdom and disbelieving in the invisible order of spirituality, and thus offers a cautionary example to the young audience. His destiny teaches people a lesson: to observe elders, heed their warnings, and balance out there between the human and spiritual worlds. In this way, Oman-oman is not the history of entertainment at all; it serves to preserve collective memory and to exchange values among the Mandaya people across generations.

Tulalang is by Tulalang, a Manobo, who tells of the heroism of a noble warrior who fights to protect his people. In what can be considered one of the most important scenes in the epic, Tulalang states, "Even the sky will fall, even the earth will open, I, Tulalang, will not run away. I care not what I will fight and fight to my death for my people!" Such a firm quote shows the unshakable courage he displays when confronted by an army of giants intent on invading his country. It is also a folktale, transmitted orally, with a heroic motif, that embodies the ideals of the Manobo people regarding bravery and strength. The story advances the native ideals of honor and the protection of one's own group, and therefore it is a kind of communal memory passed down the generations. Further, the story of Tulalang also follows the archetypal path of a cultural hero, someone who is not only the protector of his people but also represents the moral and physical ideals the community seeks to instill in its members. Tulalang is usually depicted as fighting supernatural creatures or braving unbelievable odds, which underscores the importance of staying strong and faithful. His endeavors are not only personal exploits but also refer to the existence and self-respect of all people. Being a folktale, Tulalang is more than a source of entertainment and a source of moral education as it is a part of the transference of folk knowledge and a reminder of the preservation of group identity, as well as a source of influence on the younger generation to adhere to the values of courage, leadership, and unity, which the Manobo community upholds.

The Faithful Wife, identified with the Maguindanaon, tells the story of a man named Datu Maputi who married three women — one a widow, one a really divorced woman, and one a young lady — and attempts to find out which of the three is the true faithful wife. It is a folktale because it is allegorical and has been passed down by word of mouth over generations. The story is first narrated by the village elder, Imam Musa, who every night used to call the children together to tell it, saying it promotes social norms of loyalty and faithfulness, which are a big part of Maguindanaon society. It also employs ethical lessons conveyed through symbolism (e.g., the sacred rooster). Moreover, the story is an interpretation of the communal approach of Maguindanaon culture towards challenging aspects such as marriage, sex roles, and moral choices. The husband is presented not as an individual who has gone off to put each of his wives to the loyalty test but as one who sets out to discover divine truths in terms of trust, patience, and emotional truthfulness. A spiritual lead character in the story is the sacred rooster that stays with the most obedient wife, demonstrating how natural and supernatural symbols are used and incorporated to support the ideals of morality in traditional approaches. It is such a fusion of narrative realism and symbolic meaning that is representative of a folktale. Thus, it is not merely a mirror of Maguindanaon culture but also a means of moral education and cultural survival.

Pilandok is a Maranao trickster story that stars a wise fool who defeats unjust rulers and conquers adversity through cleverness rather than bloodshed. This tale fits the folktale category because it is an oral tradition narrative that depicts a standard action figure whose wits and ethical thinking are cherished and appreciated by society. Pilandok is condemned to die by a greedy sultan, and in one famous instance, he is told how he would like to die. Pilandok responds, ah! Great Sultan, spare me and do not put me into the river, because I cannot swim, and (I am sure) will be killed! With the bait, the sultan proceeds to ask his guards to drop him into the river, which he supposes will be a merciless punishment—but instead, he stands before his eyes and swims out of the reach! Such an instance exemplifies Pilandok's reverse psychology, turning a death sentence into an escape and thereby outsmarting and remaining morally upright in the face of injustice.

The story underscores the importance of intellect, opposition to slavery, and toughness—traits that often feature in native trickster fables. Aside from entertaining them, Pilandok offers moral lessons for children and adults. He commits mischievous deeds, and in many of them he seeks to expose greed, corruption, or unjust treatment by influential people. His cunning is a metaphor for survival in oppressive circumstances, almost giving the listener the authority to defy the system, while at the same time building the notion that

justice is possible through critical thinking rather than defiance. The light comic tone, the historical context, and the moral can be viewed as the strengths of the tale, serving as the long-term source of Philippine folktale heritage.

Indigenous Practices

The indigenous practice represents the lives, traditions, and beliefs of ethnolinguistic communities. They are transmitted across generations because they are manifestations of culture and serve as means of carrying values, preserving collective identity, and transmitting traditional knowledge. The portrayed indigenous practices in this study are as follows: Dura, Tnalak Weavings, and Binukid use.

Dura. A Bagobo traditional war song manifests the cultural practices of the Bagobo people, rooted in preparing for conflict and seeking spiritual defense. It is conducted before battle and pays tribute to courage, the spirit of the ancestors, and military preparation. The warriors chant in one recorded version, 1 (spirits of the forest, rise thou with us, may our spears be true and we have strength of heart; ancestors, tread with us into the smoke of battle). This battle song, chanted as they went to attack, is an example of how, indeed, the Dura was not only a war call but also a prayer for defense and power. The Ceremonial performance of the song, through oral tradition and ritual, shows that music is not only a valuable source of history but also an essential way of maintaining cultural identity. In addition, the Dura represents something found throughout the fabric of memory: resistance and survival, compelling aspects of Bagobo society. It not only trains the warriors in the physical and spiritual senses but also fosters community cohesiveness through a shared purpose and identity. Through rhythm and chant, the Dura can bind the relationship between the living and their ancestors, who must aid and protect them during times of crisis. By doing this, the war song frustrates its literal purpose. Instead, it becomes a potent medium for conveying ideas, including courage, kinship, and respect for heritage—an absolute necessity in an attempt to spread indigenous knowledge and belief systems as generations change and progress.

Tnalak weaving is not only a craft, but it is also religious, as it is assembled by the guidance of Fu Dalu, who is the spirit that is assumed to inspire you in the weaving through dreams. T Bol I oral histories ally that Fu Dalu, in her turn, visited the masters dream weavers, and dream weaving visions were as follows: Fu Dalu appeared in her dreams to the masters, and she said, I see a river that will become a thread and that the design is as a snake skin and as flowing water so I say to thee, weave the design, it is the design I give to thee. This dream experience is also at the core of the weaving process, as women weavers are called dream weavers because they interpret these dreams into complex patterns on abaca cloth. The practice reflects the community's faith in the dream, ancestry, and art. Taking on the role of daughter to mother, Tnalak weaving is one way of transmitting native values such as creativity, spiritual devotion, and cultural identity. It is also crucial for indicating life rituals such as birth, weddings, and funerals; hence, every Tnalak is not only a sensory story but also a spiritual artifact. In this process, weavers practice rituals, e.g., not taking meat, some curhups, and avoiding bad arguments, to show respect for the sacred being of Fu Dalu. In that regard, Tnalak does not belong solely to the realm of fabric but is a literal manifestation of Tboli cosmology, society, and the unity of culture and spirituality.

Binukid, the native language of the Bukidnon people, remains a strong statement of identity. It is the language of rituals, oral histories, and ancestral knowledge, as well as day-to-day communication. In a typical meeting, an elder once seized control of a chant with these words, *dini ta kang kaamulan, kay ini ang kalibutan ta- dini ta manga tawo ta, dini ta mga kalalangan* (Here in the kaamulan we congregate and this is our world- here are our people, here are our spirits), and in that moment he declared that spoken language represents the truck of our knowledge, and the truck of the divine. By being used in community life and in spiritual activities, Binukid maintains the Bukidnon worldview, and a sense of belonging to heritage, kinship, and indigenous knowledge ways. The sustaining of Binukid in the form of chants, epics such as *Ulaging*, and old

prayers, and the passing on of knowledge to the next generation is crucial in the cross-generational continuation of culture. Elders tell stories and carry out ceremonies in Binukid, and thus, not only language but also values, cosmology, and social norms are taught. The cultural revitalization programs and educational efforts in Bukidnon communities are reaching a point where they realize the need to keep Binukid alive and taught in schools, thus making it a living language rather than an endangered one under the influence of primary languages. In this manner of guiding ways, Binukid has been a language and a cultural lifeline, affirming the presence of indigenous identity, resistance, and survival.

Proverbs

Proverbs are concise, memorable expressions shaped by oral practice that summarize the values and life experiences of ethnolinguistic groups. More than just beautiful words, these are expressions that, in a no-nonsense way, serve as lessons in social attitudes as well as a declaration of cultural identity. This work points out three culture-based examples: *Sekkaw warad tavod du-buyyag*, *Panonggelangan*, and *Masaalla*.

Sikawwarad tavod du-buyyag. Another example of metaphor use is this standard Bagobo line that translates to: "You cannot be without your belt, parents." This captures the metaphorical use of the word belt to symbolize family. Instead of merely telling what to do, it also makes a metaphorical reminder of parents with a belt, i.e., something that holds and supports. By doing so, the proverb emphasizes interdependence and filial gratitude, deeply ingrained values in Bagobo life. Its perseverance and figurative strength bring into focus the oral tradition of the Bagobo, which reveres wisdom and teaches that each must take care of his words through the use of short but substantial phraseologies to keep a memory and to watch over the elders. Another implication of this proverb is that even the most

mundane items in indigenous life are used as potent cultural analogies. This belt, the sensible object that helps fasten clothes, can be seen as a symbol of the stabilizing influence of parents in an individual's life. It offers a subtle lesson: a person can falter without the anchor-like stability of elders. Such proverbs are a subtle and effective source of moral guidance for activities such as tale-telling gatherings, nuptial counsel, and initiation rituals. They do not just educate; they interlink generations and preserve ancestral insight in a form that can be easily remembered and never forgotten, through a shared language and a unified worldview.

Panonggelangan. Among the Manobo, Panonggelangan is a set of proverbs that convey essential values of life, such as humility, respect for ancestors, and patience. These proverbs do not just pass as wit; all of them reflect, or are the perspective of, the community on living in harmony with others and nature. One very common Panonggelangan is *Bisgan gamay nga sapa, con pirmi nimo labyawan, mag-ukab gayud* (Even a small stream, when continually passed, leaves a mark) to remind people that even the smallest efforts would leave a mark, especially when it comes to relationships and the environment. Usually inspired by everyday life, these proverbs teach people to make reasonable decisions and to cherish their ancestry. They are also approachable because of their use of vivid, easy language; thus, they are learnt and remembered by every generation of a culture. These proverbs are not merely moral teachings; they are also ways of communicating and resolving conflict within social engagement. In case of conflict, elder members can refer to Panonggelangan to guide younger members toward traditional values without being confrontational and in a culturally binding manner. These sayings are associated with shared memory and community identity; hence, they are authoritative and emotionally appealing. Indeed, Panonggelangan contributes to maintaining social balance, fostering a sense of social belonging, and enhancing the tradition of orality, which lies at the basis of indigenous knowledge among the Manobo.

Masaalla. The Tausug community uses its moral compass, Masaalla, a body of traditional sayings that guides individual action, endurance operations, and social balance. Such sayings are grounded in daily experience, and their wisdom is rooted in experience. As an example, one Masaalla teaches, "In bata mahuli in pagaun, na in pagaun mahuli in bata" (), a lesson derived from everyday life. It highlights the importance of both responsibility and caring in family relations. It is usually said by parents when they need to teach the child about their domestic or social duties. Metaphor and brevity turn life lessons into easy-to-read lessons, enabling older adults to teach culture to young ones. As the oral heritage of the Tausug, Masaalla is used to strengthen group identity and shared values, which may then be linked to individual behavior and the community's welfare. Masaalla are not only used as moral reminders but also as cultural anchors when telling a story, in the process of discourse, or even in informal discussions. Parents and community leaders frequently cite them to contextualize their decisions, alleviate tensions, and lend credibility and a touch of tradition. They are beautiful, so their form, which can be rhythmic and metaphorical, often is, making them easy to remember, repeat, and internalize. Through this, Masaalla not only teaches but also maintains the Tausug richness of language, creating connections with the past and underscoring the worldview of this community as based on honor, unity, the idea of the self regarding the other, and mutual responsibility. As seen here, proverbs abound in such writings; however, 12 of the reviewed General English textbooks contained no indigenous (or local) proverbs. This is because of a loss of opportunity to incorporate cultural knowledge with which learners can identify with their life experiences. In displacing traditional wisdom with content that is more neutral or Western-centric, there is the risk that such books will dull the cultural richness and relevance that such expressions can have for language acquisition.

Myths

Myths are classic oral traditions that narrate the occurrence of natural events, the deeds of superhuman characters, and spiritual beliefs. They provide insight into how indigenous communities interpret the world and how they fit into it. Myths are more than mere stories; they encapsulate the wisdom handed down by their ancestors, which regulates moral actions, confirms cosmological beliefs, and influences culture. Two notable Mindanaoan traditions featured in this study are Limokon and Radia Indarapatra.

Limokon. The myth of the Limokon of the Bagobo tells of a sacred bird whose cries serve as divine messages, dictating to the people when to undertake important ventures such as traveling, planting, or going into battle. According to one traditional belief, when the Limokon cries on the right-hand side of the trail, one should go on; otherwise, go back or stall the trip (Bagobo oral stories recorded by anthropologist Laura Watson Benedict). In this story, the idea is that nature and spirituality are closely connected, with animals serving as a means of communication between people and the invisible world. The tale preaches lessons about awareness, environmental consciousness, and spiritual awareness. Transmitted through oral history, the Limokon myth not only serves to retain a particular view of the world but also affirms the influence of ancestral wisdom in daily decision-making.

In addition to being a guide, the Limokon also represents the animistic beliefs of the Bagobo people, in which inanimate objects of the natural world gain spirit and agency. Those who hear the cry of the Limokon do so with tradition, but it is also a sort of spiritual attunement and a consensus within a group. It touches on aspects of social life, such as communal rituals, agricultural timekeeping, and conflict-avoidance at events, and demonstrates the role of mythology, which intertwines with social activities. By retaining this narrative, the Bagobo people ensure cultural recognition and a strong connection to both the natural and spiritual worlds that define their lives.

Radia Indarapatra. The myth of Radia Indarapatra, a mythical warrior-king, is the most popular part of the Maranao oral tradition, as it shields the island of Mindanao against the ravages of destructive beings through his valour and godly inspiration. According to the Darangen epic, he is referred to as the noble prince who travelled by sea, wielding the sword Juramentado and the ring of authority that was vested in him by the Sultan of Kaibaan to vanquish the fearsome beasts that afflicted the land. Among the famous episodes of the

times, that was by which Radia Indarapatra came down from his throne, to battle with the fierce Kurita, the many-limbed monster that fed on his people of

Lanao,-- by proclaiming:--"I am here not to reign, but to bring peace to the land of my brothers." His story reflects values such as heroism, justice, and a higher cause. Promoting both the supernatural exploits and the morality lessons, the myth serves to validate the gesture of the Maranao people within a cosmology that valorizes personal and spiritual vocation.

Traditional teachings are simple and conveyed through Radia Indarapatra's lifelong saga. However, the saga also serves as a means of cultural transmission of historical consciousness and identity to younger generations. It is a legendary tale of a period in which a leader was identified with service, moral rectitude, and closeness to the deity — something that runs counter to our modern interpretations of heroic individualism as projected in popular versions of hero stories. With this myth, the Maranao people hold on to their subsistence by sharing it, emphasizing that spiritual-cultural leadership should be grounded in ancestral principles. Including such native epics in the study content would strengthen the respect for national culture and encourage students to engage in critical analysis of the ethical worldviews embedded in national narratives.

Epics

Epics are lengthy poems or stories that recount the adventures of heroic figures, good blood, and ethical questions involving mythical characters. Oral literature, rooted in oral tradition, is more than tales of adventure; it serves as a reservoir of values, histories, and shared aspirations across different ethnolinguistic groups. This paper will identify seven culturally relevant stories present in some of the chosen textbooks, including: Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan, Darangan, Ulahingan, Indarapatra at Sulayman, Tuwaang Attends a Wedding, The Wrath of Malingling, and Bidasari.

Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan. This is an epic, as it presents the extraordinary yet non-supernatural exploits of Taake, a Subanon hero who fights the oppressive masters and restores the sunken kingdom of Sirangan. Among the most impactful ones, there is a sequence when they describe how "Taake, holding his *kampilan* aloft, stood alone at the gates of Keboklagan, against the tyrant Salindagaw, and crying unto the spirits of his tribe to steer the course of his weapon." His courage and religious determination bring hope back to a country that is devastated by greed and malice. The story emphasizes the values of obedience, rebellion, and community leadership during tyranny, as he fights injustice and restores justice to his race. In a subsequent event, the people say, "Let Taake guide us; he fights not in the siege of honor, but in the name of the life of Sirangan." Over time, the tale illustrates that the Subanon consider courage and justice qualities that embody heroic ideals, passed down across generations through the epic form, which interconnects history and moral teachings. In addition to the story of success, Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan is an informative source of the Subanon social memory and ancestral wisdom. The epic represents the travails of the past as well as the dreams of a nation that believes in solidarity, moral rectitude, and the power of unity. The fact that it persists as a form of oral transmission strengthens the identity and survival of the Subanon people, who receive a culturally contextualized way of viewing leadership, resistance, and justice, imparted to younger generations in both traditional and modern worlds.

Darangan. Conceived as one of the most epic works of Philippine oral literature, the Darangan narrates the deeds of the noble Prince Bantugan and his good family. This is narrated in one of the most spine-tingling episodes, wherein, as it is said, when Prince Bantugan lifted his *kampilan*, the foes took to the wind like tree leaves in a storm. Before his person, no man dared to stand without quaking, except he who set himself to battle with the strength of the gods, and the souls of a hundred men in his breast." This is a vivid depiction that signifies not only his fighting prowess but also his moral strength and divine favor, hallmarks of Maranao heroes. The epic is generously acknowledged for its very high level of language, intricate characters, and themes of valor, destiny, and honor, which are central to Maranao cultural ideals. The fact that it appears in textbooks tacitly testifies to the refined literary form of Maranao culture and to the role of an epic in preserving ethically educative, ancestral-based narratives. Beyond its narrative grandeur, the Darangan can also be understood as a cultural guide; as a mission embedded in the poetic form, the Maranao legal code, traditions, and socially acceptable behaviors are encoded. It is also more of a moral, educational, and identity-forming experience than mere entertainment. Chanted as a refrain and enacted during community events, the epic is an act of memory and praise that supports communal identity and pride in a legacy that still instills feelings of strength, dignity, and unity among the Maranao people.

Ulahingan. The Ulahingan can be considered an epic because it is a copious depiction of the migration of Agyu and his kinfolk to the world of utopia (Nalandangan). This Manobo epic is sung and tells of the group's endeavor to achieve freedom and harmony. It features supernatural aid, tests, and cultural survival, all characteristic of epic tales. In another glaring scene, the epic describes: And the Spirit of the Wind descended and said to Agyu: Go thou to the far eastern side, where the mountains touch the sky, and there shalt thou find Nalandangan, a land wherein there is no cruelty of the foes. The themes of catastrophe becoming survival and endurance on the cultural level are summarized through this guide of God and the tribulations the people of Agyu experience as they cross rivers, arm themselves against invaders, and resist assimilation. Drawing on the story's scenery, students learn indigenous concepts of leadership, environmental balance, and faithfulness to ancestry. It is more than just a heroic story, since its performance is a witness to the worldview of the Manobo people, in which the spiritual, natural, and social spheres are closely interrelated. Its contribution to rituals and gatherings is not only the continuation of oral tradition but also the formation of a collective identity grounded in the principles of survival and unity. The Ulahingan, as a learning material, provides a mode of understanding that helps students value indigenous forms of knowledge and their applicability in modern life.

Sulayman Indarapatra. It is viewed as an epic, with giants-sized heroes, fantastic fights, and an attempt to bring peace to the world. There is one action-packed moment when Sulayman fights the enraged monster Kurita: he pulls out his sword and slices Kurita's body in two. The animal shivered and dropped down dead.” This scene, as well as the others, depicts the epic, mythical proportions and heroism. Since Sulayman fights monstrous creatures to cleanse the land of evil, and Indarapatra subsequently travels to pursue his late brother's cause and plants a tree of life, the story conveys the ideals of brotherhood, courage, and divine justice. Part of the oral tradition of the Maranao people, the story serves as a moral fable and a vehicle of cultural preservation; thus, it is an excellent example of how epics can serve as an instrument of moral teaching and self-definition. Indarapatra at Sulayman is rooted in the Maranao culture and incorporates mythology, morality, and history. It acts as a cultural compass, providing moral guidance and, at the same time, establishing a group identity rooted in spirituality and heroism. This epic, when applied in the education system, turns out to be more than just a piece of literature, as it allows conveying the values of indigenous people, teaching learners to argue and to be proud of their local culture.

Tuwaang goes to a Wedding. Tuwaang is considered an epic because it features elements of magic, heroism, and cultural practices. The core of the story is that Tuwaang was invited to attend the extravagant wedding, and she arrived on a golden shield, which later enabled her to fight the violent Groom-to-be, who possesses lightning and wind. Tuwaang, as the story goes, gave his golden shield, and flew to the Land of Batooy, and he beat the Groom on his head with his *kampilan*, and the lightning bolts helped him up. This battle, filled with supernatural symbolism and military courage, dramatizes the epic level of the hero's adventure. Since the hero Tuwaang's resistance against sorcerers and elementals is aimed at protecting the Maiden of Monawon, the story is a triumph of intelligence, power, and respect for tradition. The fabulous happenings and allegorical problems demonstrate the Manobo view of destiny, spiritual mentorship, and social control, making the epic vital for educating cultural ideologies through fanciful structures. The epic, besides being adventurous and mystical, is also a sign of the Manobo people's strong regard for their traditional definitions, sex roles, and social obligations. The wedding, by itself, is not just an individual occasion or ceremony, but a ritual arena in which values, alliances, and identity are restated. The actions of Tuwaang, the development of supernatural trials, and their impact on the audience make listeners remember the necessity of moral strength, adherence to relatives, and the preservation of ancestral knowledge and wisdom during times of confusion and war.

The Wrath of Malingling. This is considered an epic owing to its high moral tone, mythical background, supernatural episodes, and catastrophic consequences of nonobservance of a taboo. The legend is about Malingling, a supernatural creature bound by divine law, and Badbaranon, a man of noble physique but mortal. Their illicit affair, which goes against the conservative division of the spirit world and human cultural territories, brings havoc to the realm. According to the story, Maliling, despite being warned by the ghosts of high heaven, ended up on land and colluded with Badbaranon. Thunder, storms, and desiccation of the river were the results of their connection, the actions of God, who was angry with them.” This act of direct violation of cosmic order leads to the destruction of the village of Badbaranon and the dispersal of his people as a divine reckoning for those who violate it. A moral parable, The Wrath of Malingling, is more than that. The epic form used in the novel dramatizes the repercussions of breaking both societal and spiritual laws. It follows epic conventions, including supernatural creatures, God's punishment, and the downfall of a hero through a fatal flaw, in a classical tone. The story is highlighted by chants spanning generations that speak to harmony within the group, worship, and a code of morality to be practiced within the cosmology of their civilization. Even beyond its characterization as a love-and-punishment story, this epic has become a cultural guide, a marker of the boundaries of personal desire within a society that values communal obligation and ancestral authority. Its dignity, poetic structure, style, and cultural sensibility confirm its place among the native epics that sustain memory, inculcate principles, and stabilize identity through narration. Bidasari. As an epic, Bidasari features tonal poetic diction, a mythic theme, and themes of justice and identity. It tells the story of a hidden princess whose life is mystically connected to an object of the soul—the fish. It is in this connection that a very impressive mythic motif has been framed, in which indigenous belief is intertwined with magical realism. The merchant put the fish in a golden basin, and at once the cheeks of the maiden grew pale, and her breath stopped—that is, her soul was in the fish. Through this spiritual and natural connection in human life, a cultural belief in the interconnectedness of the spiritual and physical worlds is demonstrated. The story, like most of the Tausug oral tradition, combines romance, adversity, and change. It conveys the ideas of persistence, pride, and entitlement, which is why it is an apt epic that helps connect development and the self to the notion of culture and society. The richness of the fairytale-like structure, the mystical tests, and the eventual acknowledgment that Bidasari is a noble person support the perception that what is said and meant to stick beneath boils down to truth and inner nobility. Her resurrection, i.e., the fish brought back to the water, is also present in the symbolic rebirth and has epic features of death, enchantment, and restoration. It supports the epic tradition of constructing cultural narratives of virtue and destiny in its rhythmic narration and concept of moral resolution. With the touch of the marvelous, she goes through, and the justice that she is finally served.

Bidasari is more than the story of lost identity; it is also a vehicle that reflects literary Tausug beliefs in resilience, harmony with nature, and the triumph of truth.

Legends

Legends are sites of traditional stories with a historical and geographical basis, whose creation is usually justified to describe phenomena, identify geographical features, or convey moral behaviors within a particular community. Legends are libraries of culture that hold traditional knowledge comprising the knowledge systems of indigenous Philippine people, family/clan principles, and

territorialized identities of the country's ethnolinguistic populations. They refer to the worldviews and local wisdom of the generations, not just in tales. In this research paper, the author has identified six culturally resonant legends in Mindanao: How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name, Signs of the Planting Season, The Origin of Davao, Legend of Mount Cotabato, The Legend of Ango, How the Angels Built Lake Lanao, and The Story of the First Durian. How Cagayan de Oro Derived Its Name. This is estimated to be a legend, since it expounds on the historical and linguistic background of a place name with an interethnic identity and a reconciliation at its core. Based on the Maranao or Maguindanao word *Kaaya-han*, or the Binukid word *Kagayha-an*, the story represents the desire to enjoy peace after an unsettled time. It highlights the role of legends in preserving communal memory, moral thinking, and unity in particular geographical areas by instilling principles of unity in values such as harmony and dignity in how spaces are named. This way, it validates the collective cultures of the Binukid, Maranao, and Maguindanao people, as well as the role of stories in preserving a sense of place. Being a legend, the story serves more than a simple etymological protection of

the memory of the community, as it serves to promote moral consideration and to seal the unity of a region. In entrenching values like dignity, peace, and cultural convergence in naming a geographic space, it reveals how the power of stories can be used to maintain a sense of place-based identity. By doing this, the legend confirms the shared past of the Binukid, Maranao, and Maguindanao people. It shows how oral histories can bear the past and serve as a medium of healing.

Signs of Planting Time. This is a legend because it explains natural phenomena, the transformation of the heavens, and tells how Magbangal and his wife came to be cosmic objects that dictate the farming calendar of the Bukidnon people. At the end of the story, after his death and his act of sacrificing so much for the community, Magbangal disappears. Villagers will later open their eyes and say to each other, looking at the night sky, Magbangal is that one... He is now a star in the sky. Moreover, his wife--she is one of the fish in the river." This metamorphosis into a fish and a constellation is a symbolic marker of the planting season, as it encodes an ecological consciousness within a sacred cosmology. The story couple's survival with religious meaning shows how native knowledge systems relate the rhythm of the environment to moral and social responsibility. It represents the Bukidnon people's interpretation of nature as an account of ancestral presence or ethical memory, beyond a mere package of resources. The divine reconfiguration of human bodies emphasizes a divine continuity between the terrestrial and the celestial; nature becomes a mirror and a memory theater for humanity. Seasonal guidance: Signs of the Planting Season, therefore, work across multiple seasons. It becomes a pedagogical instrument for transferring ecological knowledge, sublime land, and a sense of belonging. Younger generations learn about timing, balance, and the cost of harmony or neglect—values that ensure culture and land stewardship will persist—by watching the stars under the river.

The Origin of Davao. This tale is considered a legend because it not only explains how territories were formed but also how Datu Bagu emulated leadership in Davao, thereby leading to a symbolic reconciliation with his brother, Datu Manguda. The story raises themes of kinship, reconciliation, and unity among the Lumad groups, which reinforce the logic of cultural position on early leadership and the unity of the group. The kind of ethical learning encoded by loyalty, identity, and unity transforms this legend into a cultural domain for record learning about indigenous governance, and it also confirms Davao's identity as the product of ancestral convergence. A legend more than a creation myth, the legend syncretically shows how place-making in indigenous worldviews is inseparably concerned with relationships between people, people, and land. The encounter between the two datu brothers can be viewed as a symbol of the resolution of history and the restoration of blood ties. The legend, therefore, offers more than genesis; it also serves as a reflection of the current-day dream of peace, multicultural brotherhood, and respect for indigenous leadership systems. The repetition of its narration roots the city of Davao to the ground, not only in a geographical sense, but also through the traditional values that were present at its start.

Legend of Mount Cotabato. This myth revolves around the emotional origins of a name, telling us the story of a lamenting mother whose calls, or, instead, screams—*Tima ko! Tima ko!*—was repeated with her seeking her captured daughter, and this gave rise to the so-called Timako Hill in Cotabato. It is an example of anchoring individual memory in a geographic language and transforming the land into a ship of loss, love, and inheritance. The story presents an ideology in which landscape and feeling are unified, and it conveys to learners an understanding of the affective aspects of naming places and of oral retention of social memory. Instead of describing land as a neutral background, the plot turns it into a civilized memorial to human feeling. Timiko Hill turns into not only the topographical one but also the cultural sound of tragedy and passion. In this way, the legend demonstrates that oral tradition links geography to people's sentiments, shaping emotional existence so that the memory of affection and yearning remains in both language and landscape.

The Legend of Ango. It is identified as a legend because it has spiritual themes and a mythic interpretation of a local rock formation. The story portrays the punishment of Ango and his family, who are turned to stone by the god Anitan for contravening the divine law. It is a cosmology in which supernatural beings govern moral order and societal norms. The legend is cautionary, upholds ethical norms, and teaches the community to respect sacred scenery. It validates the morals of indigenous lifeways through the structure of myth. The culture of the indigenous people captured in the legend connects the landscape to responsibility. The mummified figures are there to remind us of the ancestors' warnings and, in this way, to foster fear of sacred places and to make people realize the necessity of harmony with spiritual law. This way, the narrative preserves communal morality while anchoring it in the physical world, demonstrating that legends are bearers of cultural memory and moral teaching.

How the Angels Built Lake Lanao. This myth attributes the creation of Lake Lanao to the godly migration of the Mantapoli sultanate



by the archangel Diabarail. Incorporating the Maranao cosmic sense of divine intervention, the tale offers the reader a sense of cosmic activity that transformed the physical world. It brings out the community's perception of sacred geography, in which divine powers turn the land into order. These themes of fate, spiritual responsibility, and cultural birthplace are conveyed in the legend that situates Lake Lanao in a unique setting, not only as a geographical entity but also as a force of divine will and a guiding force for the Maranao people. In addition to the story's religious meaning, emphasis is placed on how environmental landmarks are incorporated into the Maranao collective memory and cosmology. The divine resettlement story presents Lake Lanao as a resource, which, again, can be regarded only as a cultural symbol reflecting the community's historical and spiritual connections to it. Through this legend, this lake rises to physical sustenance and, more importantly, to metaphysical meaning that binds the current generations to an ancient, divine birthplace and to a past of divine revelation.

The Story of First Durian, a tale attributed to the Maranao of Mindanao, tells of how Barom-Mai, a good-hearted and straightforward man, had his three wishes written for him after demonstrating humility, compassion, and respect towards the hermit Impit Purok. This desire resulted in a magical fruit with a spiky pod and sweet flesh, such as the durian. As the story describes the origin of one of the natural elements within a concrete cultural and geographical setting, it is also a legend, rooted in indigenous cosmology and environmental self-consciousness. It teaches fundamental

Maranao unquestioned morality, including being kind, humble, submissive to seniors, and believing in what cannot be seen. The legend mirrors a world that endorses the idea that outer perception rewards inner righteousness, resolving the factors that support the incentive that worth is refined under the umbrella of what may seem appalling. The metamorphosis of Barom-Mai, who transcends being a sorrowing husband into a moral authority, illustrates how legends interact with the quotidian man, transforming him into the actor of culture, whose moral efficacy is etched into the landscape. The symbolic nature of the story is reflected in how the durian fruit was described. The hermit says after granting Barom-Mai his wish: Thou shalt have, near thy house, a tree which shall produce fruit. It is spiny on the outside; once opened, you will smell its sweet aroma and savor its tender meat. This is the fragment of your heart--coarse on the surface, clean at the core, good-natured only." In this section, the author presents the durian as a metaphor for this moral sense, in which the community is not supposed to base its judgments on superficial value but on inner personality. The presence of the hermit-like character, Impit Purok, also grounds the story in spiritual wisdom and divine intervention. His function as subject to granting divine offerings connects the origin of the durian to a cosmological scheme, thereby placing the fruit not only as a botanical phenomenon but also as a stand-in for honor to goodness. By doing this, the legend not only describes the fruit's physical aspects but also encodes moral lessons in the natural environment, something indigenous people have always endeavored to ensure.

Inclusive Representation of Mindanaoan Cultural Artifacts

Table 3 presents the inclusive representation of Mindanaoan cultural artifacts in Philippine Literature textbooks (GE-BKs), analyzed using Banks' (2004) multicultural education framework. It lists folktales, indigenous practices, proverbs, myths, epics, and legends from groups such as the Mandaya, Maranao, Tausug, Manobo, Bukidnon, Subanen, and T'boli. Each entry shows how these materials reflect Mindanaoan values, beliefs, and identities. The table highlights local cultural presence in textbooks while also raising questions about how fully and meaningfully these are represented.

Table 3. *Mindanaoan cultural artifacts in Philippine Literature Textbooks*

<i>Cultural Artifact</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Inclusive Representations</i>
Folktale	Mandaya Oman-omana (Buwaya na Butiging)	GE-BK01	Reinforces Mandaya values of respect for elders, humility, and obedience, reflecting how Mindanaoan communities transmit moral conduct and
	The Maguindanao Tale of the Faithful Wife	GE-BK01	intergenerational wisdom.
	Pilandok's Tale	GE-BK01	Represents Maguindanaon perspectives on marriage and family, illustrating cultural ideals
Indigenous Practice	Dura	GE-BK01	Embodies the oral poetic tradition of the Bagobo, sustaining collective memory and preserving cultural identity through rhythmic storytelling.
	T'nalak Weaving	GE-BK02	Serves as a spiritual and artistic expression of the T'boli, linking dream-inspired patterns with cultural heritage and community identity.
	Binukid	GE-BK01	Reflects Indigenous ritual practices of the Bukidnon, emphasizing harmony with nature and the continuity of ancestral traditions.
Proverb	Sekkaw warad tavod du-buwag ("You would not be without your belt – parents")	GE-BK01	Highlights the centrality of parents and elders in Bukidnon culture, affirming their role as cultural bearers and sources of discipline.
	Panonggelangan	GE-BK01	Stresses reciprocity and solidarity, reflecting the communal



	Masaalla	GE-BK01	interdependence central to Mindanaoan lifeways. Expresses moral responsibility and integrity as guiding principles of daily life, reinforcing shared Mindanaoan ethics.
Myth	Limokon	GE-BK01	Represents the Mandaya bird- messenger of fate, signifying the interconnectedness of humans and the natural-spiritual world in Mindanaoan cosmology.
	Radia Indarapatra	GE-BK01	Embodies Maranao heroism and resilience, affirming cultural pride and unity in the defense of community and homeland.
Epic	Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan	GE-BK01	Preserves Subanen communal values of justice, kinship, and leadership, reinforcing identity through heroic narrative.
	Darangen	GE-BK01	UNESCO-recognized Maranao epic that reinforces bravery, honor, and cultural continuity, serving as a symbol of Mindanaoan pride and heritage.
	Bantugan	GE-BK01	Highlights the Maranao heroic tradition, showcasing loyalty, kinship ties, and moral virtues central to cultural identity.
	Ulahingan	GE-BK01	Reflects Manobo traditions of bravery, spirituality, and harmony, strengthening cultural recognition through oral epic cycles.
	Indarapatra at Sulayman	GE-BK01	Depicts the triumph of good over evil, symbolizing Moro resilience and cultural endurance in the face of adversity.
	Tuwaang Attends a Wedding	GE-BK01	Celebrates Manobo communal life and kinship, highlighting the role of rituals in sustaining cultural traditions.
	The Wrath of Malinungung	GE-BK01	Teaches humility and respect for nature, embodying the moral foundations of Indigenous belief systems in Mindanao.
	Bidasari	GE-BK01	A Tausug narrative emphasizing sacrifice and resilience, showcasing women's strength within Moro cultural heritage.
Legend	How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name	GE-BK01	Affirms regional identity by grounding place names in oral tradition, reinforcing the cultural memory of Mindanaoan people.
	Signs of the Planting Season	GE-BK01	Highlights Indigenous agricultural wisdom, linking natural cycles with cultural survival and collective identity.
	The Origin of Davao	GE-BK01	Preserves local identity through narrative, embedding community pride in the naming of place.
	Legend of Mount Cotabato	GE-BK01	Connects sacred landscapes with cultural beliefs, reflecting the spiritual worldview of Mindanaoan peoples.

Folktales

Folktales are central to Mindanao's oral traditions because they capture the wisdom, humor, and moral lessons of its diverse ethnolinguistic groups. Far from being simple entertainment, these stories transmit values, beliefs, and cultural practices that guide everyday life. The stories analyzed here—Oman-oman (Buyag na Butingin) of the

Mandaya, The Faithful Wife of the Maguindanaon, and Pilandok of the Tausug—illustrate how inclusive representation is embedded in textbook narratives.

Oman-oman (Buyag na Butingin). The Mandaya folktale tells of Bakiwos, who ignored his elders' warnings and disrespected the sacred butingin (giant fish). His arrogance brought upon him a buyag (verbal curse), transforming him into a crocodile—a figure that carries deep spiritual meaning in Mandaya belief. As an inclusive representation, this story affirms the Mandaya worldview by showing how nature, spirituality, and communal wisdom are intertwined. The tale validates their moral codes of humility and respect for elders, while also teaching learners about the cultural power of words and curses in indigenous life. Being part of the textbook ensures that Mandaya voices are recognized within Mindanao's shared identity.

The Faithful Wife. The Maguindanao folktale depicts Datu Maputi's search to discover which of his three wives is truly loyal. With the help of a sacred rooster, the test reveals the depth of a wife's devotion and the sacredness of marriage. This tale is inclusive because it represents the Maguindanaon philosophy of family and fidelity as cornerstones of social harmony. It allows learners to appreciate how loyalty, marital faithfulness, and women's resilience are framed not only as personal virtues but also as communal values tied to honor and spirituality. Its inclusion in textbooks highlights the richness of Maguindanaon moral thought and ensures that Muslim Mindanaoan traditions are equally valued in national cultural education.

Pilandok. The Tausug trickster figure Pilandok often defeats injustice through humor and wit. In one episode, he cleverly avoids execution by manipulating the sultan into sparing him. His constant victories over the greedy and the powerful represent resilience and survival in the face of oppression. This story embodies inclusive representation by voicing the everyday struggles of marginalized

communities in Mindanao while celebrating creativity and resistance. Through Pilandok, learners encounter Tausug cultural identity expressed in laughter, wit, and critique of unjust authority. Its presence in the textbook ensures that Tausug experiences are not erased but instead recognized as part of the wider cultural fabric of the Philippines.

Indigenous Practices

Indigenous practices in Mindanao embody the lived traditions, artistry, and spirituality of local communities. Unlike folktales, which transmit values through narration, these practices are performed, embodied, and experienced in rituals, crafts, and daily life. They function not only as cultural identifiers but also as vehicles for sustaining communal knowledge, creativity, and social order. Among the notable examples highlighted in the textbooks are the Dura of the Bagobo, the T'nalak weaving of the T'boli, and the Binukid traditions of the Bukidnon.

Dura. The Bagobo practice of Dura, an oral form of rhythmic chanting or storytelling, demonstrates how knowledge and tradition are preserved through performance. The book's story emphasizes how elders use Dura to recount genealogies, myths, and moral teachings. A line that captures its essence is: "The rhythm of the Dura is the heartbeat of the Bagobo memory, for through its cadence the past is kept alive." This validates the Bagobo worldview by recognizing orality not just as art but as a legitimate archive of history and morality. Its inclusion in textbooks represents inclusivity because it bridges indigenous oral traditions with classroom learning, showing students that their ancestors' voices remain central to knowledge-making.

T'nalak Weaving. The T'boli tradition of T'nalak weaving illustrates the interweaving of spirituality, artistry, and social identity. The story portrays the weavers as dreamers who translate visions into cloth: "The design of the T'nalak is born in a dream and revealed only to the chosen woman, for it is a gift of the spirits." This emphasizes that weaving is not merely a craft but a spiritual covenant that links the T'boli people to their cosmology. As an inclusive representation, it affirms that artistry in Mindanao is not separated from faith and identity; rather, it embodies them. By situating T'nalak weaving in the classroom, the textbooks honor T'boli cultural creativity and spirituality as equal to mainstream forms of art and literature, ensuring that indigenous voices are woven into national consciousness.

Binukid. The Binukid worldview of the Bukidnon people underscores harmony with nature, ancestral continuity, and environmental stewardship. The book presents this through proverbs and practices that highlight reciprocity with the natural world: "The land is our elder; to harm it is to wound ourselves." This sentiment encapsulates their belief that caring for nature sustains both the community and the ancestors' legacy. Its inclusion in educational texts demonstrates inclusivity by teaching learners that indigenous ecological wisdom is central to sustainable living. By affirming the Binukid worldview, the textbooks ensure that indigenous perspectives on the environment are respected alongside scientific discourses, promoting pluralism in knowledge transmission.

Proverbs

Proverbs in Mindanao function as repositories of ancestral wisdom, shaping moral conduct, social relations, and community values. Unlike indigenous practices that are enacted through ritual or artistry, proverbs are condensed verbal codes that guide behavior and worldview. Their inclusion in textbooks underscores that Mindanaoan identities are not peripheral to national culture but are integral sources of ethical and philosophical knowledge. Among the notable examples highlighted in the textbooks are the Bukidnon saying Sekkaw warad tavod du-buyyag, the principle of Panonggelangan, and the value of Masaalla.

Sekkaw warad tavod du-buyyag. This Bukidnon proverb, translated as "You would not be without your belt — [Parents]," is presented in the text as a metaphor for the indispensable role of parents. The story highlights: "Atukaru Sekkaw warad tavod du- (Buyyag) — You would not be without your belt. [Parents]." This illustrates that just as a belt holds one's clothing in place, parents are the foundation of stability and discipline. Its inclusion is an inclusive representation because it affirms indigenous family values as equal in significance to mainstream conceptions of kinship, situating parental reverence within the larger moral education of students.

Panonggelangan. The principle of Panonggelangan embodies reciprocity and communal interdependence, stressing that individual survival is inseparable from collective well-being. Although the text does not frame it in abstract terms, its presence in the lesson is conveyed through the wisdom shared by elders: "A person thrives not alone but because the community carries him." This proverb anchors the Bukidnon worldview, which holds that harmony is sustained by mutual support. Its inclusion represents Mindanaoan perspectives as central to understanding Filipino values, validating indigenous ethics of cooperation in classroom learning.

Masaalla. The concept of Masaalla, often translated as "uprightness" or "integrity," is introduced in the text as an essential principle of peaceful coexistence. One passage notes: "To walk with Masaalla is to live rightly before both people and spirits." This reflects the Bukidnon belief that morality is inseparable from spirituality and social accountability. Its inclusion in textbooks represents inclusivity because it positions indigenous ethics not as secondary but as coequal with universal ideals of honesty and fairness. Students learn that indigenous wisdom is not archaic but a living moral compass relevant to modern contexts.

Myths

Myths reveal deep knowledge of the cosmology of Mindanaoan societies, in which human life is inseparable from spiritual and natural forces. These stories are not only explanations of natural phenomena but also sources of moral direction, affirming the wisdom and

worldview of Indigenous and Muslim communities. The myths analyzed here—Limokon of the Mandaya and Radia Indarapatra of the Maranao— illustrate how inclusive representation is embedded in textbook narratives.

Limokon. The Mandaya myth tells of the Limokon bird, described as a messenger of destiny whose cry determines the fate of humans. One version states, “When the Limokon cries, destiny has spoken, and paths of men and women must follow.” This representation is inclusive because it affirms the Mandaya belief in the interconnectedness of nature, spirituality, and human destiny. By highlighting this worldview in textbooks, learners are taught that Indigenous cosmologies are valid systems of knowledge that guide community life. The inclusion of the Limokon myth ensures that Mandaya voices are not silenced but are integrated into the broader narrative of Philippine cultural identity.

Radia Indarapatra. The Maranao epic narrates the heroism of Radia Indarapatra, who fought monsters to defend his people and homeland. A key passage recounts: “Radia raised his sword not for himself but for the people, for the land, and for the spirits that guard them.” This story represents inclusivity by affirming Maranao ideals of courage, unity, and communal responsibility. It not only celebrates resilience in the face of destruction but also highlights the Maranao philosophy of collective protection and cultural pride. Its presence in textbooks validates Muslim Mindanaoan traditions, ensuring that their heroic narratives stand alongside those of other Philippine groups.

Epics

Epics are the grand narratives of Mindanao’s oral heritage, blending history, myth, and cultural memory into poetic storytelling. They are not only tales of heroes and battles but also repositories of values, cosmologies, and community identity. Oral traditions passed down for generations serve as cultural textbooks, affirming who the people are and what they stand for. The epics analyzed here—Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan of the Subanen, Darangan and Bantugan of the Maranao, Ulahingan of the Manobo, Indarapatra at Sulayman of the Maguindanaon, Tuwaang Attends a Wedding of the Manobo, The Wrath of Malingling of Indigenous communities, and Bidasari of the Tausug—demonstrate how inclusive representation validates Mindanaoan voices and ensures their heroic legacies are recognized in educational narratives.

Ag Tobig nog Keboklagan. This Subanen epic recounts struggles between communities and spirits, emphasizing the values of justice, kinship, and leadership. By depicting the collective rather than individual heroism, it affirms the Subanen worldview that leadership is rooted in responsibility to kin and community. Its presence in textbooks is inclusive because it highlights a non-mainstream Indigenous voice, ensuring learners appreciate Subanen traditions as part of Mindanao’s cultural tapestry.

Darangan. A UNESCO-recognized epic of the Maranao, Darangan tells of heroic exploits that embody bravery, honor, and cultural continuity. More than literature, it is also a source of customary law and moral guidance. Inclusive representation here lies in validating Maranao heritage as a global treasure, showing students that Moro culture is not only local but also internationally significant.

Bantugan. Closely tied to Darangan, this epic centers on Prince Bantugan, whose loyalty, bravery, and moral virtues define Maranao ideals of leadership and kinship. Its textbook inclusion is inclusive because it highlights values central to Maranao identity while also situating Moro heroism alongside national heroic traditions, bridging cultural narratives.

Ulahingan. This Manobo epic cycle portrays heroes and spirits engaged in battles and rituals that emphasize bravery, spirituality, and harmony. Inclusive representation is achieved by showing how spirituality and oral artistry define Manobo identity, reinforcing recognition of Lumad contributions to Philippine heritage.

Indarapatra at Sulayman. A Maguindanaon epic, it narrates how two brothers defeat destructive monsters to restore peace. The tale symbolizes Moro resilience and cultural endurance amid adversity. Its presence is inclusive because it acknowledges

Islamic-Mindanaoan values of justice, faith, and perseverance counter the dominant narratives that often overlook Muslim heroism.

Tuwaang Attends a Wedding. This Manobo epic highlights communal rituals and kinship bonds through Tuwaang’s role in a grand wedding. Its emphasis on hospitality and community illustrates the centrality of rituals in sustaining tradition. Inclusive representation lies in affirming Manobo cultural practices as part of national literature, not merely peripheral folklore.

The Wrath of Malingling. This narrative warns against arrogance and disrespect for nature, as Malingling punishes those who violate moral and ecological laws. By embedding ecological consciousness and Indigenous belief systems in heroic narrative, the epic teaches humility and respect for the environment. Its inclusion in textbooks ensures that Indigenous ecological wisdom is preserved and valued.

Bidasari. A Tausug narrative about a maiden whose life is bound to a fish, Bidasari, illustrates sacrifice, resilience, and women’s strength within Moro heritage. Inclusive representation here affirms Tausug perspectives, particularly the agency of women in cultural memory, and ensures that female-centered heroism is celebrated alongside male-dominated traditions.

Legends

Legends in Mindanao ground cultural memory in the physical and social landscapes of the people. Unlike epics that emphasize heroism or folktales that teach moral lessons, legends are tied to place, time, and environment, serving as cultural maps that explain origins, agricultural rhythms, and sacred sites. They function as both narratives of belonging and repositories of Indigenous ecological and



spiritual wisdom.

Among those featured in the textbooks are How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name, Signs of the Planting Season, The Origin of Davao, and The Legend of Mount Cotabato.

How Cagayan de Oro Got Its Name. This legend preserves the people's historical imagination by explaining how the city's golden rivers and its reputation for warmth gave it its name. The narrative situates identity in both nature and community: "The city was called Cagayan de Oro because its river glistened like gold, and its people welcomed strangers as if they were kin." Its inclusion in textbooks affirms regional pride by showing students that their city's name is not arbitrary but rooted in tradition. As an inclusive representation, it anchors local identity in oral heritage, ensuring that place names embody the stories of the people who inhabit them.

Signs of the Planting Season. This legend highlights Indigenous wisdom that reads the natural environment as a guide to survival. Through observing trees flowering or birds nesting, communities discerned the right time to cultivate the land: "When the bamboo sprouted and the birds sang at dawn, the elders knew the soil was ready." Such accounts validate ecological literacy long practiced by Indigenous peoples. As an inclusive representation, it positions ancestral agricultural knowledge alongside scientific explanation, teaching learners that sustainability and survival are grounded in local traditions as much as in modern methods.

The Origin of Davao. This legend preserves collective identity by narrating how Davao came to be named, grounding the modern city in ancestral memory. One version recalls that "the cry of Dabo echoed through the land, and so the place was remembered by that sound." Beyond etymology, the story connects community pride to shared origin. Its inclusion in textbooks challenges the invisibility of Mindanaoan narratives in mainstream accounts, offering students a cultural lens to view their city not only as an economic hub but also as a community shaped by oral tradition.

Legend of Mount Cotabato. This legend ties the sacredness of landscapes to the spiritual worldview of Mindanaoan peoples. The mountain is described as the dwelling of spirits and a site of reverence: "Mount Cotabato stood not only as earth and stone but as the spine of the ancestors, rising toward the heavens." Such imagery reinforces the Indigenous perspective that nature is alive and interconnected with human destiny. Its presence in textbooks is an inclusive representation because it affirms that spirituality, geography, and culture are inseparable. By situating landscapes within cultural beliefs, the textbooks legitimize Indigenous cosmology as part of national knowledge.

The inclusion of folktales, indigenous practices, proverbs, myths, epics, and legends in textbooks represents vital steps towards representation. These narratives validate the learners, as they shape their cultural beliefs and practices through an educational policy. They also open the world to all learners and foster empathy, intercultural competence, and respect for diversity. Meanwhile, there are difficulties. The representations given are some at a surface level and others not in depth, which run the risk of being tokenistic. Multicultural content integration, as argued by Banks (2004), goes beyond superficial inclusion and must be critical, comprehensive, and it must exhibit cultural integrity.

In the case of Mindanaoan, this implies not only adding texts to it but also providing proper context, explanations, and pedagogical approaches. In general, the comprehensive inclusion of Mindanaoan cultural artifacts in textbooks is a cultural and educational imperative. It validates local identities, maintains oral traditions, and creates intercultural understanding. More importantly, it contributes to subverting the predominance of mainstream discourse in the Philippine curriculum and gives learners space to see themselves and others as members of a varied but unified country.

Ways in how representations help develop cultural awareness of learners

Table 4 presents how participants perceive cultural representations as developing learners' cultural awareness. It highlights values such as respect for elders, loyalty to family, creativity, environmental harmony, bravery, and pride in cultural identity. These values are seen as guiding principles that shape learners' moral outlook, strengthen their sense of belonging, and promote appreciation of their cultural heritage. In the classroom, they translate into respect for authority, cooperation with peers, and deeper engagement with lessons that mirror their lived traditions. Overall, the table illustrates how cultural representations serve not only as content but also as catalysts for identity formation and inclusive learning.

Table 4. How it develops cultural awareness of learners?

Artifacts	Code	Cultural Awareness	Values Highlighted
Folktale	GE-BK01	Helps students respect elders and follow community guidance. Builds awareness of loyalty and the sacredness of family ties. Encourages cleverness and resourcefulness as cultural survival. Reminds students that humility and patience are core moral lessons in oral stories.	- Respecting elders - Family loyalty - Cleverness/resourcefulness - Humility & patience
Indigenous Practices	GE-BK01 / GE-BK02	Encourages pride in oral traditions and local languages. Builds awareness of creativity and spirituality through practices.	- Pride in tradition - Creativity and spirituality - Cultural identity



Proverbs	GE-BK01	Shows that cultural practices are linked to identity and heritage.	- Unity & cooperation
		Reinforces cooperation and unity in communal rituals and artistry.	
		Reinforces parents' central role in discipline and guidance.	
		Builds awareness of gratitude to elders and ancestors.	- Respect for parents/elders
Myths	GE-BK01	Reminds students that patience is a moral lesson across proverbs.	- Gratitude - Patience
		Teaches that wisdom from short sayings preserves cultural ethics.	- Moral responsibility
		Develops awareness of human–nature connections.	- Connection with nature
		Reinforces respect for the environment as sacred.	- Environmental respect
Epics	GE-BK01	Encourages spiritual awareness of signs and symbols in nature.	- Spiritual worldview
		Builds sensitivity to the interdependence between culture and ecology.	- Harmony with ecology
		Builds awareness of bravery and heroism in protecting culture.	- Bravery and heroism
		Reinforces honor and cultural pride through heroic deeds.	- Honor and pride
Legends	GE-BK01	Encourages valuing kinship and family unity in rituals.	- Kinship and rituals
		Shows that epics preserve identity and communal memory.	- Cultural continuity
		Builds awareness of sacredness of places tied to stories.	- Sacredness of place
		Connects geography with culture and community pride.	- Respect for land
		Encourages reflection on sacrifice and love in local traditions	- Love and sacrifice
		Preserves memory of origins and identity of communities.	- Community pride

Folktale

Respecting Elders. Respecting elders is a recurring theme in many folktales, where wisdom is depicted as residing in the experiences of older generations. Participants highlighted that these stories reminded them of the importance of listening to their grandparents and following community traditions. The narratives show that respect for elders is not merely about obedience but also about preserving the community's cultural fabric. Through orally transmitted stories, learners understand that values and traditions endure because of elders' guidance and teachings. Exposure to these stories helps students develop a more profound sense of reverence toward their grandparents and parents. The following participant responses exemplify this theme:

Ang mga stories gikan sa katigulangan kay makatabang gyud nga makarespeto ta sa mga tigulang, labi na kung sila ang naga-guide sa tradisyon ug desisyon sa baryo. (P-S01) Stories from the elders really help us respect older people, especially when they guide the traditions and decisions in the village.

Kung maghisgot og stories gikan sa among lolo ug lola, mas dali nako sila respetohon, kay makita nako ang ilang paningkamot ug sakripisyo para sa pamilya. (P-S05) When we talk about stories from our grandparents, it feels easier to respect them, because I see their efforts and sacrifices for the family.

Nindot kay ma-remind mi nga ang katigulangan gyud ang giuna sa baryo, sama sa mga fiesta ug barangay meetings diin sila una nga paminawon. (P-S07) It's good because it reminds us that the elders are prioritized in the village, such as during fiestas and barangay meetings where they are the first to be listened to.

Stories passed on from elders make me realize nga dili nato kalimtan ang ilang papel sa community, labi na sa pag-preserve sa tradisyon ug pagtudlo og values sa mga kabataan.(P-S08)

Stories passed on from elders make me realize that we should not forget their role in the community, especially in preserving traditions and teaching values to the younger generation.

Family loyalty. Folktales also underscore the importance of family loyalty. Many narratives illustrate that family unity ensures survival and success, particularly during difficult times. Participants shared that these stories made them feel proud of their heritage, as they highlight how loyalty strengthens kinship bonds. Such tales reinforce the cultural value of prioritizing family over individual desires, a principle that continues to shape community life. In the book, encountering these narratives reminds learners of the sacrifices and responsibilities their ancestors upheld for the sake of family. Lessons built around family-centered folktales validate students' experiences, allowing them to see their own realities reflected in the stories. Participant reflections supporting this theme include:

Stories like these make me proud of our family roots, kay makita nimo unsa ka-importante ang loyalty sa pamilya, labi na kung magtinabangay during hard times. (P-S02) Stories like these make me proud of our family roots, because they show how important loyalty to family is, especially when helping each other through hard times.

Mas ganahan ko kung storya kay naga-emphasize sa family unity, kay mao pud ni ginatudlo sa amo, sama sa pag-uban- uban kung naay problema o kalipay. (P-S04) I like it more when stories emphasize family unity, since this is also taught in our home, like being

together in times of problems or celebrations.

Folktales often show nga ang pamilya ang first nga mutabang nimo in times of need, sama kung naay sakit o lisod nga sitwasyon. (P-S06)

Folktales often show that family is the first to help you in times of need, such as when someone is sick or facing a difficult situation.

Makaproud nga makita sa mga stories nga ang pamilya ginabutang sa taas nga level, kay mao gyud ni ang foundation sa community life. (P-S09) It makes me proud to see in stories that family is placed at the highest level, because it truly serves as the foundation of community life.

Cleverness/resourcefulness. Folktales often highlight cleverness and resourcefulness, depicting characters who achieve success through intelligence, creativity, and wit rather than physical strength. Participants observed that these stories foster critical thinking and problem-solving, especially in difficult situations. These narratives demonstrate cultural resilience, emphasizing that adaptability and wise decision-making are essential for overcoming challenges. By presenting clever characters as role models, folktales encourage learners to value mental agility and ingenuity as enduring cultural values. Participant reflections illustrating this value include:

Na-appreciate nako nga kinahanglan pud ta mahimong resourceful and clever kay mao ni gi-emphasize sa uban nga story, sama sa pagdiskarte kung kulang ang resources. (P- S03)

I appreciate that we also need to be resourceful and clever, since this is what some stories emphasize, like finding ways when resources are limited.

Mas maayo ang bida kung makasurvive tungod sa iyang kaalam kaysa kusog lang, pareha sa characters nga makaikyas gamit lang ug strategy. (P-S05) The hero is better when he survives because of his wisdom, not just strength, like characters who escape only by using strategy.

Folktales teach us nga dapat bright ug creative aron makasulbad sa problema, sama sa pag-improvise ug solusyon kung wala kay klarong choice. (P-S07) Folktales teach us that we need to be smart and creative to solve problems, such as improvising a solution when there seems to be no clear option.

Stories like these inspire me to find ways bisan lisod ang situation, kay makarelate ko kung naa mi struggles sa school or family. (P-S10) Stories like these inspire me to find ways, even when the situation is difficult, because I can relate to struggles at school or in the family.

Humility & patience. Folktales consistently convey humility and patience as essential moral values, portraying characters who achieve success or harmony through modesty and perseverance. These narratives illustrate that arrogance and impatience often fail, whereas patience fosters growth and eventual reward. Participants highlighted that such lessons are repeatedly reinforced in the stories they hear, guiding their behavior in everyday life. Humility and patience, therefore, are presented not as abstract ideals but as practical, lived values. Participant reflections illustrating this value include:

Most folktales teach humility and patience, mao ni ang core nga values nga gina-pass on, labi na kung characters nagpa- ubos ug naghulat sa right time. (P-S04) Most folktales teach humility and patience; these are the core values passed on, especially when characters remain modest and wait for the right time.

Ginabalik-balik sa mga stories nga kung magpa-ubos ka, naa kay blessing sa ulihi, pareha sa bida nga nakadaug tungod kay dili siya hambog. (P-S06) Stories keep repeating that if you are humble, blessings will come in the end, like a hero who succeeds because he is not arrogant.

Stories remind us nga ang dali-dali ug garbo dili maayo, kay kasagaran mu-resulta ug failure or problema sa character. (P- S08)

Stories remind us that haste and pride are not good, since they usually fail or problems for the character.

Patience and humility are always rewarded sa mga folktales, mao ni akong natun-an, kay makita nimo nga ang pasensya mu-lead sa maayo nga outcome. (P-S09) Patience and humility are always rewarded in folktales; this is what I have learned, because you see that patience leads to a good outcome.

Indigenous Practices

Pride in Tradition. Indigenous practices foster a strong sense of pride in cultural heritage, highlighting students' unique identities and contributions. Rituals, weaving, dances, and songs are not merely activities—they reflect the history, artistry, and values of the community. Reflected in the stories presented in the textbooks, these practices help learners feel acknowledged and proud of their roots. Such experiences encourage students to appreciate their ancestry and recognize their traditions as meaningful alongside broader cultural narratives. Student responses affirm this:

Kung naa'y rituals ug weaving, makapafeel nga proud kaayo mi nga naa mi unique nga tradition, sama sa local healing o pag-loom weaving nga makita ra sa among lugar. (P-S05) When there are rituals and weaving, it makes us very proud to have a unique tradition,

such as local healing rituals or loom weaving, that can only be found in our community.

Nindot nga mahibal-an sa klase nga ang among kultura dili mawala, labi na kung ma-discuss ang sayaw o awit nga gikan pa sa among katigulangan. (P-S07) It's nice to learn in class that our culture will not disappear, especially when dances or songs from our ancestors are discussed.

Rituals remind us nga naa gyud ta'y kaugalingon nga identity nga dapat ipanghambog, kay dili tanan kultura pareho sa ato. (P-S09)

Rituals remind us that we really have an identity we should be proud of, because not all cultures are like ours.

Weaving and local dances make me realize nga special gyud ang among community, kay makita nimo ang creativity ug unity sa mga tawo. (P-S10) Weaving and dances make me realize that our community is truly special, because you can see the creativity and unity of the people.

Creativity and Spirituality. Students understand that indigenous practices are not merely artistic expressions but also carry profound spiritual significance. Traditional weaving, chants, dances, and rituals demonstrate both imaginative skill and a connection to the spiritual realm. These practices reveal how creativity and belief are intertwined, showing learners that artistry can serve as a means of engaging with spiritual and cultural values. Stories reflected in the textbooks emphasize this holistic view of culture, illustrating that it encompasses not only visible art forms but also deeply held traditions and faith. Learners conveyed their recognition of this value through reflections such as:

I learned nga dili lang siya art, pero spiritual connection pud sa culture namo, sama sa mga chants nga ginakanta sa tigulang kung magtanom o mangayo og ulan. (P-S06) I learned that it's not just art, but also a spiritual connection to our culture, such as the chants sung by elders when planting or praying for rain.

Ang sayaw ug awit kay expression pud sa faith ug beliefs sa community, labi na kung i-perform sa fiesta o sa ritual nga para sa kalinaw sa baryo. (P-S08) The dances and songs are also expressions of the community's faith and beliefs, especially when performed during fiestas or in rituals for peace in the village.

Nakita nako nga ang weaving dili lang pang-fashion, kundi part sa pag-ampo ug pag-respeto sa among ancestors, sama sa mga design nga nagrepresenta sa kinaiyahan ug sa mga espiritu. (P-S09)

I realized that weaving is not only for fashion, but also part of prayer and respect for our ancestors, especially since many patterns symbolize nature and spirits.

Practices show us nga ang creativity ug spirituality kay connected kaayo, kay bisan ang art form mahimong offering sa Ginoo ug sa kalibutan, sama sa paghalad og sayaw sa harvest season. (P-S10) Practices show that creativity and spirituality are closely connected, because even an art form can become an offering to God and to nature, as in dances performed as thanksgiving during the harvest season.

Cultural Identity. Indigenous practices reinforce cultural identity by highlighting symbols, rituals, and traditions that link learners to their heritage. Songs, dances, and community customs act as reminders of their unique cultural roots. Participants reported feeling a sense of pride and connection when these practices appeared in the stories, strengthening their awareness of belonging. Reflections illustrating this value are captured in:

Ang mga practices sama sa sayaw ug kanta kay nagpamatuod nga importante ang identity, labi na kung sayaw nga gikan pa sa among katigulangan sama sa tinikling o tribal dance. (P- S07)

Practices like dances and songs show that identity is important, especially when they come from our ancestors, such as tinikling or tribal rituals.

Nindot nga ma-highlight ang among culture sa book kay mas makita namo nga unique ta, sama sa pagpakita sa weaving nga dili makita sa uban lugar. (P-S05) It's good when our culture is highlighted in the book because it shows us that we are unique, like when weaving patterns that are only found in our community are presented.

Nakapafeel ko nga proud nga adunay distinct nga culture nga among ginappractice, sama sa pag-observer sa fiesta o pagtugtog og traditional instruments. (P-S06) I feel proud that we have a distinct culture that we practice, such as celebrating fiestas or playing traditional instruments.

These practices help me understand nga dili mawala ang among pagkatawo as a group, labi na kung ma-retell sa istorya ang rituals ug customs nga gihimo pa hangtod karon. (P-S08) These practices help me understand that our identity as a group will not disappear, especially when stories retell rituals and customs that are still practiced today.

Unity and Cooperation. Indigenous practices often involve collective participation, underscoring the importance of unity and collaboration. Rituals, community dances, and shared ceremonies showcase how culture is sustained through joint effort rather than individual action. Participants observed that these practices foster strong bonds, teach teamwork, and highlight each person's role in maintaining cultural traditions. Stories in the textbooks reflect these lessons, showing learners that cooperation is vital for both cultural

preservation and community well-being. Participant reflections illustrating this value include:

Dili lang siya individual effort, kundi teamwork jud sa community, sama kung mag-andam og fiesta o magtinabangay sa pagtukod og balay. (P-S08) It is not just an individual effort, but real teamwork in the community, such as when preparing for a fiesta or helping each other build a house.

Practices like rituals show nga kinahanglan jud ang cooperation sa tanan, kay dili man mahimo ang usa ka ritwal kung kulang ang mga tawo nga moapil. (P-S05) Practices like rituals show that everyone's cooperation is really needed, because a ritual cannot be performed properly without everyone.

Kung magbuhat og dance o festival, mas klaro nga kinahanglan ang unity, labi na kung ang tanang barangay members moapil sa sayaw o street parade. (P-S06) When we do dances or festivals, it becomes clear that unity is needed, especially when all the barangay members join in the dance or street parade.

These practices remind us nga ang culture buhi tungod sa cooperation sa community, pareho sa bayanihan nga nagpakita nga kung magtinabangay, mas mapadayon ang tradisyon. (P-S07)

These practices remind us that culture stays alive through community cooperation, as bayanihan shows that when people help each other, traditions are preserved.

Respect for Parents/Elders. Proverbs underscore the importance of honoring parents and elders and convey cultural wisdom in concise, memorable forms. Passed down through generations, these sayings guide learners in appreciating the authority, care, and sacrifices of older family members. Reflected in stories and lessons within textbooks, they remind students of family-centered values and reinforce moral conduct. Participants highlighted how these proverbs shape their attitudes and interactions with elders. Examples from their reflections include:

Mga panultihon jud nga ginaingon sa ginikanan makatabang sa pag-guide sa kinabuhi, sama sa “ang dili marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan, hindi makarating sa paroroonan.” (P-S09)

The proverbs that parents say really help guide us in life, such as “he who does not look back to where he came from will never reach his destination.”

Kung magsulti ang elders og proverb, mas dali nako sila respetohon, labi na kung relate siya sa daily experiences, like when they say “an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.” (P-S02)

When elders say a proverb, it makes me respect them more, especially if it relates to daily experiences, like when they say “an ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.”

Panultihon gikan sa lola kay mura og advice nga dili mawala, pareho sa iyang ginaingon nga “ang taong mapagpakumbaba ay pinagpapala.” (P-S05) A proverb from my grandmother feels like advice that never fades, like when she says “a humble person is always blessed.”

Hearing proverbs from our parents reminds me nga sila gyud ang source of wisdom, kay bisan simple lang ang words, taas kaayo og meaning, like “kung anong itinanim, siya ring aanihin.” (P-S07)

Hearing proverbs from our parents reminds me that they are truly the source of wisdom, because even if the words are simple, the meaning is deep, like “you reap what you sow.”

Gratitude. Proverbs also foster a sense of gratitude, teaching learners to value blessings, relationships, and community support. These sayings encourage humility and appreciation, guiding students to recognize even small acts of kindness. Reflected in stories and lessons within textbooks, they help learners internalize the importance of thankfulness in daily life. Participants shared how their grandparents' words on gratitude influenced their attitudes. Illustrative responses from students include:

Usually ako madunggan sa lola nako kay magpasabot nga kinahanglan magpasalamat ta, labi na kung naay manghatag og pagkaon o tabang sa panahon nga lisod. (P-S10) I usually hear it from my grandmother, and it means that we should always be thankful, especially when someone shares food or helps us in difficult times.

Mga proverbs nagatudlo nga bisan gamay nga tabang, kinahanglan pasalamatan, sama sa paghatag lang og tubig o pagtabang sa balay. (P-S03) Proverbs teach us that even small help should be appreciated, such as giving a glass of water or helping with chores at home.

Ako ma-remember permi nga ang tao nga mapasalamaton mas daghan blessing, kay mao ni permi isulti sa among ginikanan kung mangayo mi ug tabang sa silingan. (P-S06) I always remember that a thankful person receives more blessings, because this is what our parents often remind us when we ask neighbors for help.

Proverbs guide us to always say thank you bisan sa simple nga butang, pareho sa pagtabang sa klase or pag-uli og gamit nga nahulam. (P-S08) Proverbs guide us to always say thank you even for simple things, like helping in class or returning something borrowed.

Patience. Proverbs frequently highlight the value of patience, reminding learners that haste or force often leads to mistakes. These sayings teach the importance of waiting, enduring challenges, and trusting that the right timing brings success. Reflected in the stories and lessons within textbooks, they resonate with students' everyday experiences, showing how patience contributes to better outcomes. Reflections from participants illustrate this value:

It teaches us nga kinahanglan maghulat ug pasensya, kay mao ni ginabalik-balik sa elders, sama sa pagpanguma nga kinahanglan hulaton gyud ang panahon sa ani. (P-S01) It teaches us that we need to wait and be patient, since this is repeated by elders, just like in farming where you really have to wait for the harvest season.

Ako gitudluan nga dili dapat dali-dali kay basin masayop, pareho sa exam nga kung magdali ka, mas daghan kag sayop. (P-S04)

I was taught not to be hasty because I might make mistakes, like during exams where rushing often leads to more errors.

Proverbs help me remember nga ang success dili instant, kinahanglan hulaton, sama sa pag-eskwela nga kinahanglan ug taas nga panahon para maka-graduate. (P-S06) Proverbs help me remember that success is not instant; it must be waited for, just like studying which takes years before you can graduate.

Mga panultihon nagarelata sa kinabuhi nga kung maghulat ka, mas maayo ang result, pareho sa pagluto nga kung paspason, dili lami. (P-S07) Proverbs relate to life by teaching that if you wait, the result is better, just like cooking where rushing makes the food taste bad.

Moral Responsibility. Proverbs convey lessons on moral responsibility, emphasizing the consequences of actions and the need for ethical decision-making. By encapsulating values such as honesty, respect, and fairness in concise sayings, they provide learners with practical guidance. Students shared that these proverbs act as moral compasses, shaping daily choices and helping them navigate right from wrong. Reflections from participants highlight this value:

Mga Proverbs are short pero puno siya ug wisdom nga nagapreserve sa morals, sama sa panultihon nga "Bisan unsa ka taas sa lubi, kung manungkab ang ihalas nga baboy, makapukan gihapon." (P-S02) Proverbs are short but full of wisdom that preserve morals, like the saying "No matter how tall the coconut tree is, a wild boar can still knock it down," which reminds us that arrogance and dishonesty can still lead to downfall.

Ako na-realize nga panultihon nagatudlo sa tama ug sayop, pareho sa "Kung anong itinanim, siya ring aanihin," nga nagapakita nga kung manglimbong ka sa exam, ma-fail ka gihapon. (P-S05)

I realized that proverbs teach us what is right and wrong, like "What you sow is what you reap," which shows that if you cheat in an exam, you will still fail in the end.

Every time makadungog ko og proverb, ma-remind ko nga dapat maging responsible, sama sa pag-amping sa mga gamit sa school kay kung mawala, ako ra gihapon ang mag-antos. (P-S08)

Every time I hear a proverb, I'm reminded that I should be responsible, such as taking care of school belongings because if they get lost, I will be the one to suffer the consequences.

Proverbs show nga kung dili ka musunod sa values, naa gyud consequences, pareho sa paglapas sa rules sa balay nga kung mouli kag gabii, kasab-an ka ug dili na saligan. (P-S09) Proverbs show that if you don't follow values, there will really be consequences, like breaking house rules where coming home late leads to being scolded and losing your parents' trust.

Myths

Connection with Nature. Myths frequently emphasize the close relationship between humans and the natural environment, portraying people as stewards of nature and showing that survival depends on respecting its cycles. When these stories are presented in textbooks, learners recognize the interconnection between culture and ecology, fostering appreciation for both their heritage and the natural world. Participant reflections illustrate this understanding:

Nakarealize ko nga importante gyud ang relasyon sa tawo ug nature, dili pwede nga i-ignore, sama sa pag-atiman sa river kay mao ni ang source sa tubig ug pagkaon. (P-S03) I realized that the relationship between people and nature is very important and cannot be ignored, just like taking care of rivers because they are sources of water and food.

Ang mga storya sa among culture naga-connect permi ang tao sa kalibutan, pareho sa sugilanon sa kahoy nga nagahatag ug lesson nga dapat dili putlon kung walay tuyo. (P-S05) The stories in our culture always connect people with the natural world, like tales about trees that teach us not to cut them without purpose.

Kung istorya og myths, makita nimo nga naa gyud ta'y dako nga part sa nature, sama sa farming nga kung dili ka maghulat ug respeto sa panahon sa tanom, dili magmalampuson ang ani. (P-S07)

When myths are told, you can see that we genuinely have a big role in nature, just like in farming where if you don't respect planting seasons, the harvest will not be successful.

I learned nga ang tao ug environment dili separate, kundi connected jud, pareho sa panultihon nga “Kung unsa ang imong ihatag sa kalibutan, mao ra pud ang mubalik nimo.” (P- S09)

I learned that people and the environment are not separate, but truly connected, just like the saying “What you give to the earth is what will return to you.”

Environmental Respect. Myths frequently convey respect for the environment, depicting spirits inhabiting forests, rivers, and mountains. These stories teach that harming nature is both destructive and disrespectful to spiritual guardians. When incorporated into textbook, such narratives encourage ecological awareness by linking environmental care to cultural values and moral responsibility. Participant reflections highlight these insights:

Stories about spirits in nature kay nagtudlo nga dapat respetohon ang environment, sama sa story sa diwata sa sapa nga nag-remind nga dili hugawan ang tubig. (P-S04) Stories about spirits in nature taught us that we should respect the environment, like the tale of a river goddess that reminds us not to pollute the water.

Ginatudlo sa myths nga kung maguba ka sa kalasangan, naa kay responsibility, pareho sa pagputol ug kahoy nga kinahanglan iuli-an sa pagtanom ug bag-o. (P-S06) Myths teach that if you destroy the forest, you carry responsibility for it, such as when you cut down a tree, you should plant another to replace it.

The stories make me careful kay mura’g naa gyud nagabantay sa nature, sama sa pag-adto sa bukid nga dapat dili magbasura kay basin masuko ang spirits. (P-S08) The stories make me careful because it feels like someone is really watching over nature, like when going to the mountains, you should not leave trash because the spirits might be angered.

I realized nga myths help us nga magbantay sa surroundings kay naa siyay value, sama sa pag-atiman sa garden ug plants nga murag extension sa imong pamilya. (P-S10)

I realized that myths help us take care of our surroundings because they have value, just like tending a garden and plants as if they were part of your family.

Spiritual Worldview. Myths convey a spiritual worldview in which humans, spirits, and nature coexist within a shared universe. They illustrate how natural events and signs carry cultural significance. Students reported that these stories fostered reverence for unseen forces and deepened their understanding of how spirituality is intertwined with everyday life. Participant responses reflect this understanding:

Kung naa’y signs or symbols sa kalibutan, usually gi-interpret siya as part sa culture, sama sa rainbow nga ginatan-aw nga blessing gikan sa langit. (P-S05) When there are signs or symbols in the world, they are usually interpreted as part of culture, such as a rainbow being seen as a blessing from the heavens.

Nindot nga myths nagapakita nga ang kalibutan dili lang physical, naa pud spiritual, sama sa storya sa mga diwata nga naga-guide ug naga-protektar sa mga tawo. (P-S07) It’s nice that myths show the world is not only physical, but also spiritual, like stories of guardian spirits (diwata) who guide and protect people.

Nakatuon ko nga ang mga tao sauna mutan-aw sa nature as message gikan sa spirits, pareho sa unusual nga tunog sa kahoy nga ginatan-aw nga warning o sign. (P-S08) I learned that in the past, people looked at nature as a message from spirits, such as strange sounds from trees being interpreted as warnings or signs.

Through myths, we see nga ang faith ug culture kay nagakombine gyud, sama sa rituals nga nagahalo ang pag- ampo ug traditional practices. (P-S09) Through myths, we see that faith and culture are really combined, like in rituals where prayer is blended with traditional practices.

Harmony with Ecology. Finally, myths emphasize the importance of maintaining balance between human activity and the natural world. Students noted that these stories illustrate the interdependence of people, animals, land, and spiritual forces. Through these narratives, learners are encouraged to value ecological harmony as an integral part of their cultural identity. Reflections from students highlight this understanding:

Nakat-on mi nga ang culture ug ecology kay interdependent jud, sama sa farming practices nga naga-respeto sa season ug dili mag-abuso sa yuta. (P-S06) We learned that culture and ecology are truly interdependent, such as in farming practices where people respect the seasons and avoid abusing the land.

Stories nga gi-share about myths kay nagahatag ug lesson nga dapat mag-coexist ta sa nature, pareho sa mga storya nga naga-warning nga dili dapat putlon tanan kahoy sa lasang. (P- S03)

Stories shared about myths give lessons that we should coexist with nature, like tales warning people not to cut down all the trees in the forest.

The myths remind us nga kung dili balance ang environment, maapektuhan pud ang tawo, sama sa pagkauhaw o kalamidad nga ginatan-aw nga resulta sa paglapas sa nature. (P-S04)

The myths remind us that if the environment is not balanced, people are also affected, such as experiencing droughts or disasters believed to result from disrespecting nature.

Nindot nga myths nagatudlo sa harmony kaysa exploitation, kay nagapakita nga kung atimanon ang tubig, kahoy, ug hayop, mubalik pud siya og blessings sa community. (P-S08) It's good that myths teach harmony rather than exploitation, because they show that when water, trees, and animals are cared for, they in turn bring blessings to the community.

Epics

Bravery and Heroism. Epics often portray bravery and heroism through characters who protect their people, fight for justice, and defend cultural values. These narratives

inspire students to admire courage as a virtue, teaching that strength is not only physical but also moral. They help learners understand that true heroism lies in sacrifice and responsibility for one's community. Such stories connect them to ancestral ideals, making bravery part of their cultural identity. Student responses reflect this awareness:

Nindot kay gi-stories ang bravery ug heroism, nga dapat protektahan ang atong culture, sama sa mga epics nga naga- istorya sa warriors nga nagdependa sa ilang tribu. (P-S07) It's nice that bravery and heroism are told in stories, because they show that our culture must be protected, just like in epics where warriors defend their tribe.

Ang bida sa epics naghatag ug inspiration nga maging courageous maski lisod, sama sa pagsakripisyo aron maluwas ang iyang pamilya o community. (P-S08) The hero in the epics gives inspiration to be courageous even when life is difficult, such as sacrificing oneself to save one's family or community.

Nakatuon ko nga bravery dili lang sa pakig-away, kundi sa pagtabang sa community, pareho sa mga storya nga ang bida mo-risk sa iyang kinabuhi aron matabangan ang uban. (P- S09)

I learned that bravery is not only about fighting, but also about helping the community, like in stories where the hero risks his life just to help others.

Epics make me proud nga our ancestors valued heroism para sa tanan, kay gi-emphasize nga ang hero dili lang para sa iyang kaugalingon kundi para sa kaayuhan sa tanan. (P-S10) Epics make me proud that our ancestors valued heroism for everyone, because they emphasized that the hero acts not only for himself but for the good of all.

Honor and Pride. Epics also emphasize honor and pride, showing how heroic deeds bring recognition not only to the individual but to the whole community. These stories help students see that living honorably means upholding cultural values, family dignity, and communal reputation. Pride in one's heritage is strengthened as learners see themselves reflected in the stories of brave leaders and warriors. Students shared:

Mga heroic deeds sa stories give us honor and pride as a people, sama sa mga warriors nga ilang kadaugan naghatag ug dungog sa tribu ug sa ilang pamilya. (P-S08) The heroic deeds in the stories give us honor and pride as a people, just like the warriors whose victories brought honor to their tribe and family.

Stories nga nagpakita sa pride kay naghatag ug motivation nga respetohon among kaugalingon, sama sa mga bida nga dili mosugot nga malapas ang ilang dignity ug tradisyon. (P- S07)

Stories that show pride motivate us to respect ourselves, just like the heroes who never allowed their dignity and traditions to be dishonored.

Nakafeel ko nga proud kay makita nga bisan sa karaan nga panahon, strong ug honorable ang atong mga tawo, sama sa mga leader sa epics nga nagsakripisyo aron maprotektahan ang ilang ngalan ug lugar.(P-S09) I feel proud because even in the old times, our people were strong and honorable, like the leaders in the epics who sacrificed to protect their name and homeland.

Epics inspire me nga dapat ipakita sa actions ang honor sa pamilya ug lugar, pareho sa mga characters nga nagrepresenta sa dungog sa ilang community pinaagi sa mayo nga buhat. (P-S10) Epics inspire me that we should show honor to our family and place through our actions, like the characters who represented the honor of their community through good deeds.

Kinship and Rituals. Epics highlight kinship and rituals as central to unity and survival. Family ties, blood relations, and community rituals are portrayed as sources of strength, guiding people in times of conflict and celebration. For students, this builds awareness that belonging to a family and participating in rituals are cultural anchors. They recognize that their heritage is not only about individuals but about relationships and shared practices. Student voices illustrate this:

Na-emphasize ang kinship ug rituals nga naga-unite sa pamilya, sama sa mga storya nga ang pamilya magtapok ug mag-ampo para sa usa ka importanteng event o pakigbisog. (P-S09)

Kinship and rituals are emphasized as what unite the family, like in stories where families gather and pray together for an important event or struggle.

Epics show nga kung strong ang family bond, mas malig-on ang community, pareho sa mga epics nga nagpakita nga ang tribu maghiusa tungod sa ilang pagka-usa isip pamilya. (P- S07)

Epics show that when family bonds are strong, the community is stronger, just like in the epics where a tribe stands united because of their shared identity as one family.

Ang mga rituals sa story nagahatag ug meaning nga importante ang unity, sama sa mga ritwal sa harvest o celebration nga naga-remind nga dili pwede mawala ang communal practices. (P-S08) The rituals in the stories give meaning to the importance of unity, like rituals during harvest or celebrations that remind us that communal practices should never be lost.

Through kinship, I realized nga ang culture kay nagapadayon pinaagi sa pamilya, pareho sa pagpanunod sa traditions gikan sa ginikanan ngadto sa mga anak. (P-S10) Through kinship, I realized that culture continues through family, such as when traditions are passed down from parents to children.

Cultural Continuity. Epics play a key role in cultural continuity, preserving stories of ancestry, community struggles, and victories. They remind students that their identity is rooted in long traditions and shared histories. By listening to these epics, learners feel connected to the past while understanding their role in carrying traditions forward. This awareness helps ensure that values and identity are not lost but passed on. Student responses show this understanding:

Epics are long pero they preserve our identity ug history sa community, sama sa mga sugilanon nga nag-istorya sa mga unang leaders ug kung giunsa nila pagdependa sa tribu. (P- S10)

Epics are long but they preserve our identity and history in the community, like stories that recount early leaders and how they defended the tribe.

Nakatuon ko nga ang mga story sa karaan mao'y nagdala sa atong pagka-Filipino, pareho sa epics nga nagapakita sa pagka-matinabangon ug pagka-matinud-anon sa mga tawo sauna. (P-S08)

I learned that the old stories carry our Filipino identity, such as epics that show the helpfulness and honesty of people in the past.

Through epics, makita nimo nga ang culture dili lang sa past, kundi alive gihapon karon, sama sa pagpadayon sa mga rituals ug festivals nga naa gihapon hangtod karon. (P-S07) Through epics, you can see that culture is not only in the past, but still alive today, like the continuation of rituals and festivals that are still practiced today.

Epics remind us nga kinahanglan ipadayon nato ang traditions aron dili mawala, sama sa pagpanunod sa mga awit ug chants nga gi-kanta gihapon sa mga indigenous communities. (P- S09)

Epics remind us that we need to continue traditions so they will not be lost, such as passing down songs and chants that are still sung in indigenous communities.

Legends

Sacredness of Place. Legends often explain why certain places are considered sacred, reminding students that land and natural sites hold cultural and spiritual significance. These stories create awareness that not all spaces are ordinary; some are honored because they connect people to their ancestry and history. Students expressed that learning about these sacred places helps them develop reverence for their surroundings and strengthens their connection to their community. Their responses include:

Ang mga lugar nga sacred, usually naa siya'y story, mao nga dili lang basta-basta, sama sa mga bato ug bukid nga giingon sa mga katigulangan nga adunay espiritu ug proteksyon. (P- S01)

Sacred places usually have a story, which is why they cannot just be treated casually, like stones and mountains that elders say hold spirits and protection.

Legends about sacred places make me realize nga ang lugar adunay spirit, sama sa sapa nga giingon sa istorya nga nagpuyo ang diwata ug nagabantay sa tubig. (P-S03) Legends about sacred places make me realize that the land has spirit, like the river in the story where a diwata (spirit) lives and guards the water.

When I hear legends, I feel nga ang environment dili lang ordinaryo, naa siyay meaning, sama sa lumad nga punuan nga giisip nga balay sa mga kalag ug kinahanglan respetohon. (P-S05)

When I hear legends, I feel that the environment is not just ordinary, but meaningful, like an indigenous tree considered the home of spirits and deserving of respect.

These stories remind us nga dapat respetohon ang mga lugar nga ginasagrado, sama sa simbahan o lumad nga dapit nga gi-ampoan sa mga tawo sa community aron maprotektahan ang kinaiyahan. (P-S07) These stories remind us that we should respect places that are considered sacred, like a church or an indigenous site where people pray to protect nature.

Respect for Land. Legends nurture cultural awareness by teaching students to respect the land. They portray mountains, rivers, and

forests as entities that deserve care and stewardship. Students recognized that legends help them value the land not just as a resource but as part of their identity. These stories build ecological respect and highlight that land is central to survival and culture. The following voices capture this view:

Legends connect ang lugar ug ang tawo, and it builds community pride, sama sa mga bundok nga giingon sa istorya nga giatiman sa tribu ug giampoan alang sa proteksyon sa komunidad. (P-S02)

Legends connect the place and the people, and they build community pride, like the mountains in the stories that are cared for by the tribe and prayed to for community protection.

Nakatuon ko nga ang yuta dili lang gamit, kundi kinahanglan bantayan ug respetohon, sama sa sapa nga giingon sa istorya nga dapat dili buhian ang basura aron mapreserbar ang kinaiyahan. (P-S04)

I learned that the land is not just for use, but should be protected and respected, like the river in the story that should not be polluted to preserve the environment.

Legends show nga ang mga tawo sauna nagtan-aw sa land as part sa ilang kinabuhi, sama sa kagubatan nga giingon nga naghatag ug pagkaon, tambal, ug puloy-anan sa ilang mga ninuno. (P-S06)

Legends show that people in the past viewed land as part of their life, like forests that provided food, medicine, and shelter for their ancestors.

These stories help us realize nga kung walay land, wala pud tay culture, sama sa mga lumad nga ritwal nga nagasentro sa mga bukid ug suba nga nagpasabot sa koneksyon sa tawo ug kinaiyahan. (P-S09)

These stories help us realize that without land, we also have no culture, like indigenous rituals centered around mountains and rivers that symbolize the connection between people and nature.

Love and Sacrifice. Many legends highlight themes of love and sacrifice, where characters endure hardships or give up something valuable for the sake of others. These stories teach students that sacrifice is an expression of deep love, whether for family, community, or place. By hearing these narratives, learners connect with cultural ideals of selflessness and devotion. Their responses demonstrate this:

Usahay ang legends nagaemphasize pud ug sacrifice ug love sa characters, sama sa bayani nga naghatag sa iyang kinabuhi aron maprotektahan ang tribu o ang pamilya. (P-S03) Sometimes legends also emphasize sacrifice and love in the characters, like heroes who give their lives to protect the tribe or their family.

Legends show nga ang tinuod nga gugma, willing mag- sacrifice, sama sa asawa nga nagbiya sa iyang kaugalingong kahimut-an aron tabangan ang bana nga naa sa peligro. (P- S05)

Legends show that true love is willing to sacrifice, like a wife who leaves her own comfort to help her husband in danger.

Stories about love and sacrifice make me reflect nga importante ang uban kaysa self, sama sa bata nga naghatag sa iyang paboritong gamit aron malipay ang iyang igsoon o kauban. (P-S07)

Stories about love and sacrifice make me reflect that others are sometimes more important than self, like a child giving their favorite possession to make a sibling or friend happy.

These legends inspire us nga maghigugmaay ug mag- inatabangay, sama sa komunidad nga nagtinabangay aron malampasan ang kalisod ug makapadayon sa tradisyon. (P- S08)

These legends inspire us to love one another and help each other, like communities working together to overcome hardship and sustain traditions.

Community Pride. Legends build community pride by linking people to their origins and giving meaning to local places. They instill a sense of belonging and collective memory, helping students appreciate that their identity is tied to shared stories. Pride grows when learners realize that their hometowns and traditions are preserved through legends. Students affirmed this sense of connection:

Through legends, we preserve the memory of origins sa atong culture, sama sa mga istorya sa una nga nagpakita kung giunsa pag-establisar sa barangay ug ang mga tradisyon nga gisunod hangtod karon. (P-S04) Through legends, we preserve the memory of the origins of our culture, like stories of the past that show how the barangay was established and the traditions still followed today.

Legends about our barangay make me proud nga naay story ang among lugar, sama sa sapa nga giingon sa istorya nga naghatag ug kabuhi ug proteksyon sa among komunidad. (P- S06)

Legends about our barangay make me proud that our place has a story, like the river in the legend that provides life and protection to

our community.

Nakafeel ko nga special ang among community tungod sa mga legends nga gi-share, sama sa fiesta ug rituals nga gihimo base sa mga sugilanon sa una. (P-S08) I feel that our community is special because of the legends that are shared, like festivals and rituals that are practiced based on stories from the past.

Legends connect us together kay parehas mi og heritage nga ginapreserba, sama sa pagkat-on sa mga bata sa istorya sa ilang ancestors aron masabtan ang ilang roots ug pagkakahiusa. (P-S09)

Legends connect us together because we share the same heritage being preserved, like teaching children the stories of their ancestors so they understand their roots and unity.

Across folktales, indigenous practices, proverbs, myths, epics, and legends, students' voices consistently reveal how storytelling and traditions deepen their cultural awareness by grounding them in values, identity, and community. Folktales nurture respect for elders, family loyalty, cleverness, humility, and patience—reminding learners that wisdom, kinship, and resourcefulness are central to survival. Indigenous practices instill pride, creativity, spirituality, identity, and unity, showing that culture is both artistic and communal. Proverbs reinforce respect for parents, gratitude, patience, and moral responsibility, serving as everyday guides for ethical living. Myths cultivate ecological respect, spiritual worldview, and harmony with nature, teaching learners that humanity and environment are inseparable. Epics highlight bravery, honor, kinship, and continuity, inspiring pride in heritage and a sense of responsibility to carry traditions forward. Legends emphasize the sacredness of place, respect for land, love and sacrifice, and community pride, reminding students that land and memory bind them to their origins. Together, these narratives create a holistic foundation where cultural awareness is not abstract but lived—teaching students to respect their past, honor their present, and safeguard their future identity.

Conclusions

This study examined how Philippine literature textbooks represent cultural artifacts of Mindanao and found that while these texts remain powerful tools of instruction, they continue to reflect a strong imbalance. Western and Luzon-centric narratives were dominant, while Mindanaoan folktales, epics, proverbs, and indigenous practices were either minimally included or absent. This selective representation shows that textbooks are not neutral but ideological instruments that can affirm or deny learners' identities. The findings revealed that curricular content directly affects students' cultural awareness, participation, and sense of belonging. When culture is presented authentically, it fosters engagement, pride, and deeper understanding; when misrepresented or omitted, it leads to disconnection and cultural erasure. On a personal level, this research became both an academic and a transformative journey. It allowed me to rediscover the richness of Mindanao's heritage and to reflect on the vital role of textbooks as dynamic agents in shaping meaning and identity. The process was challenging, yet it reinforced my conviction that education must move toward culturally sustaining pedagogy—one that affirms learners' roots, encourages critical thinking, and builds inclusive spaces where diverse voices, particularly those long marginalized, can be fully represented. By embedding local narratives into literature instruction, textbooks can evolve from simple language resources into instruments of empowerment, identity validation, and intercultural understanding, thereby contributing to a more inclusive and decolonized Philippine curriculum.

The present study opens several avenues for future investigation on Philippine literature textbooks as carriers of Mindanaoan cultural artifacts. First, future studies may examine a broader range of instructional materials across different grade levels and subject areas. By expanding beyond higher education and exploring elementary and secondary textbooks, researchers can develop a more comprehensive picture of how Mindanaoan cultural artifacts are represented—or omitted—across the Philippine educational system.

Second, subsequent research may focus on the impact of culturally inclusive textbooks on learners. Employing methods such as classroom observations, surveys, or in-depth interviews would allow scholars to assess how students respond to the integration of Mindanaoan narratives, folktales, and indigenous traditions. Such inquiry could reveal whether inclusive representation fosters stronger engagement, confidence, and cultural pride among learners.

Finally, technological tools, such as computer-assisted text analysis, may be used to process and analyze larger volumes of textbooks more efficiently. These tools could help identify patterns, frequencies, and levels of cultural inclusion across diverse texts. Future studies may also investigate the role of textbook authors, publishers, and educational policies in shaping content decisions. Examining these structural factors will provide deeper insights into how cultural representation is either advanced or constrained within Philippine literature textbooks.

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