

The Perspectives on Inayan in the Kankana-Ey Community of Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet

Angeli B. Degan

Graduate School, College of Social Sciences, Benguet State University, 2601 La Trinidad, Benguet, Cordillera Administrative Region, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Culture is said to be dynamic, as it is passed down from one generation to another, its meaning and construct is reshaped and redefined. In the Cordilleras, *inayan* is a central cultural value. In recent articles, its nature and practice has been well-documented but few discussions were made on how it is transmitted across generations. Hence, the central question that this study aims to address is on how the process of transmission is done and whether there is contestation and or reinterpretation of the value. The study was conducted in the Kankana-ey community of Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet". It utilized a phenomenological approach to gather pertinent data set. Three families consisting of three generations (grandparent, parent, child) were interviewed about their definition, practice, and practice in the didactic process of *inayan*. Results reveal that elders perceive *inayan* as 1) a moral compass, 2) associated to spiritual sanctions and fear, and 3) likened to Christian teachings. On the other hand, the middle generation (parents) have mentioned three factors that influence the manner in how they adapt and redefine *inayan*; these are--- a) negotiating tradition and modernity; b) parenting styles and discipline; and, c) social and practical conditions. The third generation (child) have mentioned three aspects that affects the manner in how they perceive, negotiate, and or resist *inayan* as a moral value. The aspects mentioned are: a) dilution and use of humor; b) competing influences of various societal aspects; and, c) selective adherence. Based on the data, it was deduced that the process of transmission is influenced by shifting pedagogies between the three generations; and in the process of transmission, the institutions like the family, school, church, and social media were identified as pertinent mediums. Nonetheless, the contestation (keep/ discard) and reinterpretation (superstitions vs. moral values, family and personal negotiations) is much evident in the discourse.

Keywords: Inayan, Transmission, Continuity, Reinterpretation, Dilution

INTRODUCTION

Benguet is one of the culturally diverse provinces in Cordillera. Each municipality and barangay serve as a communal space where various indigenous groups, including the *Ibaloi*, *Kankanay/Kankana-ey*, *Kalanguya*, *I'wak*, and *Karao* practice their distinct cultural traditions, languages, and customary practices, coexisting within a unified provincial framework (Lapniten, 2018).

Kankanay's or *Kankana-ey* are group of indigenous peoples which means "mountaineer". It is composed of 2 subgroups which are the Northern *Kankanay* and Southern *Kankanay*. According to Peralta as cited by Sitabayasi (2022), the term *Kankanai* is used to refer to the Northern *Kankanays*, while the term *Kankana-ey* is used to refer to the Southern *Kankanays*.

The Southern *Kankanays* or the *Kankana-ey*s are dominantly residing in Benguet. They are situated in the municipalities of Buguias, Mankayan, upper half of Kapangan, Bakun, and Kibungan (Yodisphere, 2022). As a group, they are generally referred to as indigenous peoples. Indigenous peoples are group of individuals having a strong link to territories and natural resources; historical continuity; distinct social, economic, or political

systems; resolves to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and system communities; and possesses a distinct language, culture, and beliefs (United Nations, 2006). For indigenous peoples, the aspect of culture is very much common (Baring, 2013). For many Indigenous groups, cultural values serve not only as moral foundations but also as frameworks for collective well-being and sustainable development (Shrestha, L'Espeir Decosta, & Whitford, 2024). The *Kankana-ey* of Benguet as an indigenous group is known for their rich cultural traditions, which embody a strong sense of morality, spirituality, and community life.

Culture in every aspect is a way of living. Its breadth encompasses a vast arena in human life. It has shaped and continues to shape human society. Another aspect of culture is being complex and dynamic construct. Rather than a fixed set of traditions, Spencer-Oatey (2012) defines culture as a "fuzzy set of basic assumptions, values, orientations to life, beliefs, policies, procedures, and behavioral conventions" that shape, but do not strictly determine people's actions and interpretations. It emphasizes that culture has multiple layers, from observable practices to deep-seated assumptions, while remaining adaptive, diverse, and continually negotiated among individuals and groups.

The concept of evolving culture is a universal construct. An instance is on the practice of filial piety in Confucian societies. Filial piety is often defined as a set of norms, values, and practices regarding how children should behave toward their parents (Bedford & Yeh, 2021). Filial piety has long shaped family care giving, intergenerational equity, old age income support, living arrangements, and other aspects of individual, family, social, political, and legal relationships in China, Japan, and South Korea for millennia (Elsevier, n.d.). However, with the current transformation in society and culture, recent studies conducted showed a change in the practice of filial piety. A study conducted by Ho & Kang (1984) in the practice of filial piety shows that the middle generation in many contexts practices filial piety differently than their elders, and that some traditional obligations are less strictly adhered to. For instance, a shift from authoritarian model (obedience, strict duty, following parental wishes) to a more reciprocal or emotional model (affection, mutual respect, meeting parents' emotional needs) has been noted. This was evidenced by the result of the study where the middle generation depart more from traditional child training and filial piety and began to be more involved in child care.

In the Philippines, cultural values of the past have been reinterpreted and perhaps restructured in the present generation. These include practices that range from courtship (*harana*), community spirit (*bayanihan*), agricultural practices, to *inayan* (Cordilleran concept of 'fear of the unknown').

Courtship in the past was done through *harana*. Yu (2023) in her study cited Lourdes Quisumbing's note that *harana* was then one of the ways a man could attract the attention of the woman he admires aside from reciting love verses to her. *Harana* is usually done at night; to do this, a man gathers his group of friends to sing with him in front of the window of the woman he admires (Holbrook, 2023). At present, it is rare to witness the same scenario as courtship has evolved with time and technology. The middle generation may have had their courtship through love letters. Whereas, modern courtships among the third generation are far different from traditional courtship as it can now take place without personal contact through virtual dating, chatting online, sending text messages, conversing over the telephone, and instant messaging (Regala, Sarabia, & Mapoy, 2023).

Bayanihan, a powerful concept of communal unity and cooperation has long defined the Filipino community (De La Cruz, 2025). The practice of *bayanihan* involves helping without expecting rewards (Eastspring Investments, n.d.). It was a concept traditionally illustrated as 'neighbors coming together to move a *nipa* house in a new area' (Menguin, 2024). Another form of *bayanihan* is seen on how the community helps a neighbor in his farm. As time evolves, this practice found various ways on how it is reflected. In the modern times, during the COVID-19 pandemic, *bayanihan* found a new image through the community pantries which showed an act of solidarity with the poor and suffering (del Castillo, 2021). These cultural practices are indeed a testament to a culture that continues to emerge and reinterpreted as it is passed down.

The dynamism of culture in the Cordillera's has been affirmed by recent scholarships. Cordilleran cultural practices continue to evolve in response to contemporary pressures. Sajise, Borromeo, Altoveros, & Bon (2012) cited in their study Takeda et al. (2012) which discussed how farmers in the Cordillera actively sustain over 400 varieties of rice through practices such as seed selection, varietal exchange, and gender-based management.

These agricultural decisions are informed not only by ecological adaptation and dietary needs but also by cultural and religious values. Such action demonstrates that tradition is neither passively preserved nor easily displaced by modern influences. Instead, Cordilleran communities negotiate continuity and change, balancing ancestral heritage with contemporary demands. For many Indigenous groups, cultural values serve not only as moral foundations but also as frameworks for collective well-being and sustainable development (Shrestha, L'Espeir Decosta, & Whitford, 2024).

Another Cordilleran culture is *Inayan* which has long guided the moral and spiritual lives of the *Kankana-eyes* since the pre-colonial period. It is a *Kankana-ey* culture that refers to the unwritten moral code that serves as both a cultural and spiritual restraint is inclined towards the belief in a supreme being *Adika-ila*, *Kabunyan*, and the spirits. To be on the good side of these deities, the *Kankana-eyes* give sacrificial gifts and offerings to appease the deities and spirits (Sitabayasi, 2022). According to Baring (2013), the *Kankana-eyes* call the supreme god in the sky world as *Adika-ila*; second to this highest spirit in the sky world are the deities *Kabunyan*; there are also spirits of dead ancestors called *ap-apo* and spirits of the people who have just died called the *kakading*; and the last group of spirits that belongs to the underworld are called the *anito*--- these spirits resides in ocean, rivers, lakes, springs, caves, rocks, valleys, bushy trees and shrubs and abandoned houses or buildings. Specifically, the spirits in the water are called *pinten* and the spirits in the mountain are called *tomongao*. Most of the rituals, beliefs, and practices of the *Kankana-eyes* revolve around appeasing these spirits to avoid bad omens.

Lagmay (2012), as cited by Leyaley (2016), defines "*Inayan*" as an Igorot concept that means to hold back or prevent an individual from doing something unpleasant to others. If understood in the context of the *Kankana-ey* language and culture, it is the fear of a supreme deity who forewarns or dissuades one from doing anything harmful to others. The cultural value of *Inayan* puts emphasis on doing good while considering the well-being of others, in addition to one's own. It fosters a sense of accountability and interdependence among individuals while influencing their relationships within communities (Waugh, 2021). In the *Kankana-ey* context, *Inayan* connects an individual's fate to their obligations toward others, reflecting the more profound meaning that underpins social bonding and responsibility (McKay, 2016). In that way, *Inayan* is viewed as a moral compass that is embodied in restraint, a principle that includes refraining from activities deemed socially or cosmologically improper. An instance is the case among the *Kankana-ey* where they avoid uttering cuss words because of the consequence they may reap if their word will sound offensive (Domingo, Caroy, Carambas, & Po-or, 2019). According to Delima (2017), violation of the *Inayan* not only results in communal disapproval but also has spiritual repercussions, which are frequently depicted as the experience of *bain* or humiliation. Hereafter, *Inayan* functions as an ethical and moral compass that discourages individuals from engaging in actions deemed harmful, unjust, or socially disruptive.

Additionally, Molintas (2019) highlights how *Inayan* is deeply rooted in indigenous cultural traditions, and also has contemporary applications in organizational ethics and leadership. Hence, politics is not excluded in the discussion of *Inayan*. In an article published by Lapniten (2018) through the Philippine Daily Inquirer, public officials like Gov. Crescencio Pacalso vouched for the peaceful conduct of elections in Benguet because of the peoples' adherence to *Inayan*. This was supported by Board Member Roberto Canuto as he shared his observation in Kapangan where people vote for their mayors to complete their terms.

However, the culture of indigenous peoples has been constantly challenged by globalization. It is a fact that contemporary globalization has posed many changes in our economy, politics, and culture (Ghosh, 2011). Nonetheless, as anthropologist posits, culture is dynamic. The fact that culture is fluid and not static is supported by how culture is communicated and learned--- since the process of communicating is done in various ways by humans (Moua, 2012).

Culture and values are never permanent given that their modes of transmission and interpretation evolve across generations and cultural contexts. Salvador-Amores (2020) illustrates how indigenous practices, such as weaving and tattooing, are being codified into formal teaching materials to reach younger generations. While this ensures preservation, it also reveals tensions in the teaching-learning process. Eventually, the nuances of lived practice and moral sanction can be oversimplified or reinterpreted. This is true when tacit knowledge, once embedded in ritual life, is transformed into structured pedagogy.

Similarly, Zapata (2017) illustrates how *Inayan* and related codes, such as *nga-ag*, have infiltrated digital and mobile spaces, where youth adapt, reframe, and sometimes dilute these values in technologically mediated communication. Her work shows that while indigeneity persists, it does so in hybridized forms shaped by the online environment. These research findings underscore the dynamism and perhaps ‘evolution’ of a cultural value like *Inayan* as it moves from elder discourse to mobile networks of the younger generation. Nonetheless, a significant gap is notable in this study especially with regards to how younger generations are taught the value of *Inayan* in the family-level and how they navigate the value in both offline and online settings.

In the lens of faith and tradition, it can be noted that the cultural bearers have found a way of enculturating *Inayan* to the Christian principle as similarities to Biblical constructs has been drawn. An instance is the finding of Kwarteng (2020) where he emphasized its theological significance by linking it to the concept of *lawa*, a customary form of sanction or prohibition that invokes fear of divine or communal retribution to maintain social harmony. Highlighted in his study is that *Inayan* and *Lawa* are reflections of the *Kankana-ey's* profound moral consciousness, which is based on justice, accountability, and respect for the community and the divine. His findings revealed that these cultural values are not contrary to Christian teaching; instead, they can serve as bridges for inculturation, expressing the Christian faith within local traditions. Instead of displacing indigenous moral systems, inculturation acknowledges their enduring relevance in guiding ethical behavior and sustaining community cohesion. This perspective highlights the dynamism of culture and the significance of understanding the transgenerational didactics of *Inayan*. Evidently, it was perceived not only as a cultural heritage but also as a living moral force that can dialogue with modern faith traditions and contemporary societal challenges.

These research findings accentuate the relevance of this study, which examines how *Inayan* is passed down and reinterpreted within families across generations. It also aims to build a perspective involving other generations since existing researches has largely emphasized the voices of elders but little is known about the familial and intergenerational processes by which values are taught, reinterpreted, and lived (from parent to child, and from middle to third generation).

Moreover, phenomenological accounts (The Phenomenology of *Inayan*, 2023) describe elders' perspectives but seldom compare them with those of the younger generations in schools, workplaces, churches, and digital platforms. Understanding how *Inayan* travels across three generations within a single-family unit (grandparent, parent, and child) offers unique insights into its continuity and transformation. This is a pertinent aspect that our study aims to address, since the youth are this generation's culture bearers and it is a fact that today's culture is challenged by contemporary globalization. By engaging voices across grandparent–parent–child triads, the study explores a multi-generational ethnography of *Inayan* that goes beyond static portrayals of culture. It highlights the tensions between continuity and change, captures the didactic processes of value transmission, and clarifies how *Inayan* functions as a moral compass in the context of societal transformation.

In a study conducted by Salvador-Amores (2020), the research findings acknowledge the pressures of Christianity, migration, and globalization on indigenous values. However, exploration of how families negotiate these pressures in concrete ways is limited. For instance, an elder may recall *Inayan* as a communal ethic tied to rituals and taboos. At the same time, his/her child may frame it through religious morality or barangay rules, and the grandchild may reframe it through peer culture or digital interactions. Such is the case of iTadian youths who happen to utilize their phones capturing the images of dead people during an accident and posting it on the social media; the elders deemed it as a taboo since it is not good to be displaying the faces of the dead in the social media as it may be utilized and interpreted wrongly by the consumers of the posted pictures (Indigenous Digital Collectif, 2015). Capturing these layered perspectives within the same kin network allows for tracing both transmission and probable demise in the moral authority and significance of *Inayan*.

Therefore, four interlinked gaps are targeted in this study: a) How the elders in Sagpat, Kibungan narrate and embody *Inayan* as a lived moral principle; b) How the middle generation adapts or redefines *Inayan*; c) How youth perceive, negotiate, or resist *Inayan* in both offline (family, school) and online (digital) spaces; and, d) How *Inayan* is taught, contested, and reinterpreted across three generations within the same family.

Inayan, as a cultural aspect, is a broad concept. Hence, to fully elucidate the goals of this research, the study is delimited to discussing the perceptions of *Inayan* of selected elders from Sagpat, Kibungan; exploring how the middle generation adapts or redefines *Inayan*; navigating how the youth perceive, negotiate, or resist *Inayan* in both offline (family, school, church, government) and online (Facebook, Messenger, and Instagram) spaces only; and, exploring the didactic process within the a single-unit of family.

Specifically, the study may be relevant in the community and academe as it attempts to determine effective ways of promoting cultural preservation by documenting and comprehending indigenous moral systems that are at risk of being lost or forgotten, especially at the family level, where culture is first learned and taught; provide insights for educators and policymakers to create culturally sensitive programs that incorporate indigenous values; and promotes collective dialogue between elders and youth, leading to mutual understanding and cultural continuity.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study is anchored on the premise that *Inayan*, as a cultural and moral value of the Kankana-ey in Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet, functions as an ethical restraint that shapes individual behavior and fosters communal harmony. However, in the context of globalization, religious influence, and digital transformation, its meaning and practice are continuously reinterpreted across generations. It dwells on the understanding of the “Perspectives on inayan” across three generations: the elders (first generation), the parents (middle generation), the child/ren (third generation) in Sagpat, Kibungan.

The perspectives are examined through three interrelated generational lenses and how the culture of *Inayan* is transmitted across these generations. The discussion below discusses the three generations varied and diverse view and understanding of the concept *inayan*.

- a. Elders (First Generation): In this generation, the understanding of *Inayan* is deeply rooted in tradition, spirituality, and communal moral codes. Hence, these elders understood *inayan* as the unwritten moral code that serves as both a cultural and spiritual restraint that is inclined towards their belief in a supreme being *Adika-ila*, *Kabunyan*, and the spirits. To be on the good side of these deities, sacrificial gifts and offerings are done, hence, the rituals. This generation plays a trivial role in the *Kankana-ey* community in transmitting *Inayan* through rituals, oral teachings, and lived practices that emphasize accountability to both community and deities.
- b. Parents (Middle Generation): This group redefines *Inayan* in light of religious principles, governance, and the demands of modern family life. This group understands or defines *inayan* as a cultural value that is not contrary to Christian teaching. Further, this group often associate *inayan* to the concept of *lawa* which are both based on justice, accountability, and respect for the community and the divine. Transmission at this level is mediated by household instruction, moral guidance, and negotiation between indigenous values and contemporary influences.
- c. Child/ren (Third Generation): The younger generation navigates *Inayan* within both offline and online settings. In this generation, the cultural value of *inayan* is understood not only in physical settings but also within the bounds of digital and mobile spaces where the generation have the possibility to adapt, reframe, and sometimes dilute these values in technologically mediated communication. This generation often adopts the values of *Inayan* through family teachings, reinforcement in school, and Church activities; others reinterpret it through the ways of digital and peer interactions, reflecting the cultural change in a modernizing world.

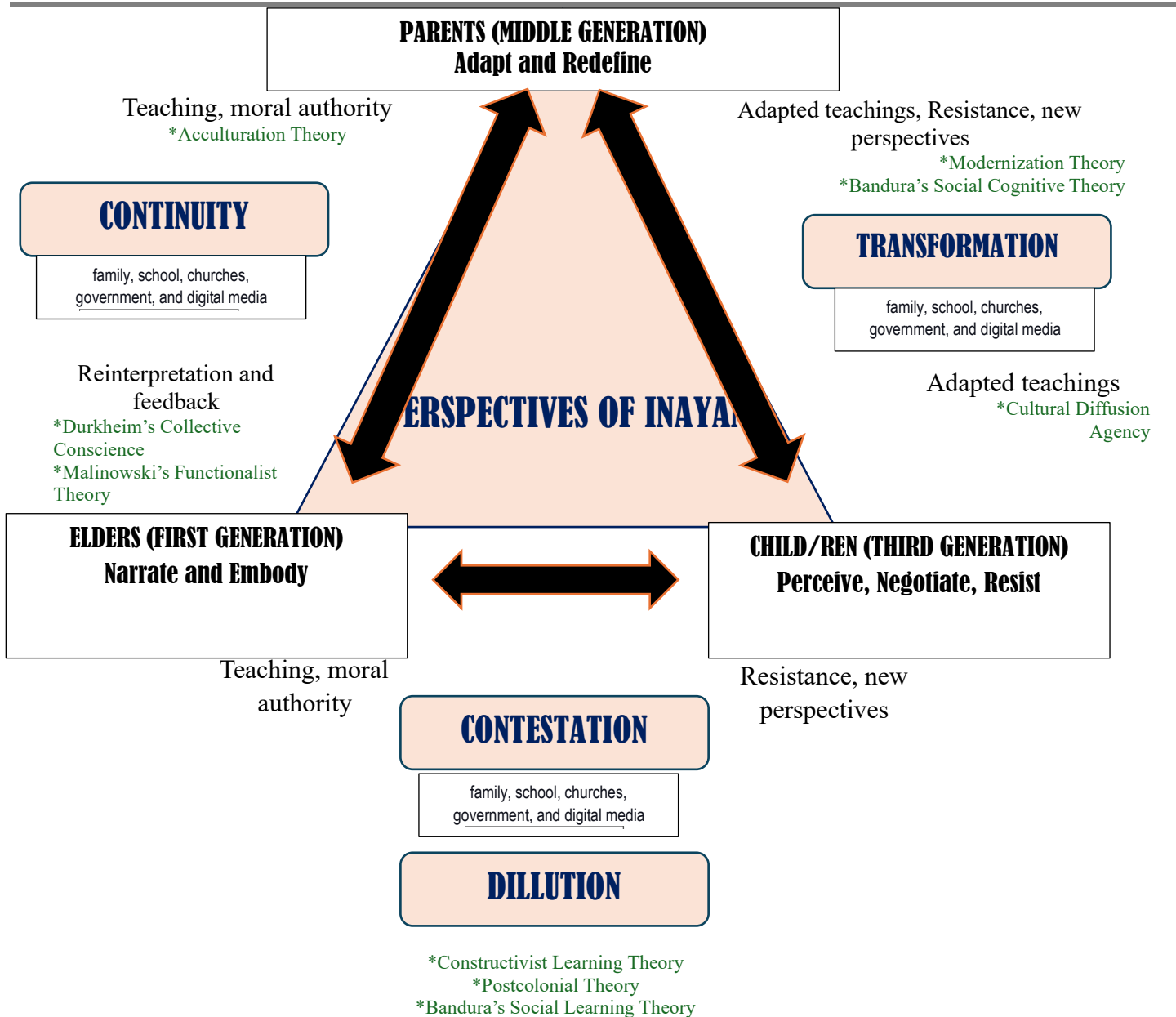


Figure 1. Conceptual Paradigm of the Study

This study adopts the intergenerational transmission theory which refers to the complex and dynamic process with which values, ideas and behaviors are transmitted across generations (Leiden University, n.d.). Hence, the theory assumes that cultural values are taught, adapted, and reinterpreted through exchanges between older and younger generations--- they call this the vertical learning of culture (Schönpflug, 2009). Dumbrajs (2012) defined it as the exchange of some good or service between one generation and another emphasizing on the significance of social learning as a basic activity in human societies.

Triangular framework was utilized to effectively situate the relationship between the three generations---the elders (first generation) as custodians who narrate and embody *Inayan* through oral tradition and lived moral authority; the parents (middle generation) function as cultural mediators who adapt or redefine *Inayan* as influenced by modernity and religion; and the child/ren (third generation) are positioned not only as learners but also as agents who perceive, negotiate, or resist *Inayan* both in offline contexts (family, school, community) and online spaces (digital platforms), where competing values and global influences intersect.

A critical relationship between the three generations was illustrated by the bidirectional arrows. It illustrates that transmission is reciprocal wherein while elders influence parents and child/ren through narratives and rituals, child/ren and parents also reshape elders' sense of *Inayan* by questioning its relevance or demanding reinterpretation in modern contexts. This reflects the two-way process of socialization. Everyday family

conversations, parental discipline, digital engagements, and even moments of resistance become sites where the moral principle of *Inayan* is given new life or subjected to contestation.

Surrounding the intergenerational triangle are the possible outcomes of these didactic processes: the continuity of *Inayan* in its traditional sense, its transformation as it adapts to modern realities, its contestation as competing interpretations emerge, or its dilution under the pressures of family, school, churches, government, and digital media. Thus, the framework underscores that the value of *Inayan* is not simply inherited but continually shaped by intergenerational didactics within changing cultural landscapes.

Central to the understanding of these various perspective is how the cultural value of *Inayan* is narrated and embodied by the first generation; adapted and redefined by the middle generation; perceived, negotiated, and resisted by the third generation; and, how it is continued, transformed, contested, and diluted in the process. However, this didactic process is not linear. Hence, *Inayan* as a value is perceived in this study as not merely a static tradition but a dynamic cultural principle negotiated across generations.

The biologists Cavalli-Sforza and Feldman as cited in Schönpflug (2009) discussed the concept of cultural transmission which refers to the process by which cultural information is carried across generations is regarded as a universal phenomenon. Nonetheless, in the process, selective transmission usually occurs--- this is the case when not everything in a culture gets passed on since transmitters of culture usually act as filters. In this sense, the cultural element that gets passed is influenced by the transmitters' choices, contexts, cognitive constraints, and relevance.

In the process of cultural transmission lies the fact that culture is learned through the process of observing others. Albert Bandura calls this the social learning theory. The theory posits that imitation, modelling, and reinforcement are significant in the learning process (McLeod, Albert Bandura's social learning theory, 2025). Hence, this paper also notes on the didactic process especially within a single-family line. The question as to how first generation model the value of *Inayan* to the second generation; and the second generation to the third generation will be grounded on this theory.

Further, framework illustrates how the continuity, transformation, contestation, and dilution of *Inayan* are mediated by contextual influences such as the family, school, churches, government, and digital media. These institutions provide avenues through which *Inayan* is transmitted, redefined, contested, or diluted. At the same time, they introduce external pressures that may either sustain or weaken its authority as a moral compass. This is reflective of the concept of the theory of socialization which refers to the process where an individual learns and internalizes their society's norms, values, beliefs, and customs in a two-way process; hence, individuals are influencing and being influenced by their social environment (Dev, n.d.). In this study, the primary agents of socialization are the family but factors from the social environment like religion, modernity, and digital media may shape or reshape the process of cultural transmission.

Symbolic interactionism which was theorized by George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer is also notable in understanding the continuity, transformation, contestation, and dilution of *Inayan*. The theory posits that people respond to elements of their environments according to the subjective meanings they attach to those elements (McLeod, n.d.). This study stands on the understanding that *Inayan* is a moral value that is both lived and discoursed upon. In the framework, the elders embody and narrates it based on oral narratives and involvement in traditional rituals; the parents adapt and redefines it under the contexts of modernity and religion; whereas, the child/ren interprets or resist it within the boundaries of offline spaces (family, school, religion, politics) and online spaces (digital platforms). Hence, *Inayan* as a value, functions simultaneously as a moral compass and contested symbol, constantly discoursed with new meanings.

The conceptual framework presents that *Inayan* is a dynamic cultural value as it is transmitted and interpreted across generations, determining its present and future relevance as a moral compass for the *Kankana-ey* community. This framework provides the basis for examining how cultural values are taught, contested, and lived within family units, thereby addressing gaps in existing literature on indigenous moral systems.

Statement of the Problem

This study aims to understand how *inayan* as a cultural value is perceived, taught, and redefined by families in intergenerational levels. Specifically, it is guided by the following research questions:

- a) How do the elders in Sagpat, Kibungan narrate and embody *Inayan* as a lived moral principle?
- b) How does the middle generation adapt or redefine *Inayan*?
- c) How do the youth perceive, negotiate, or resist *Inayan* in both offline (family, school) and online (digital) spaces? and,
- d) How is *Inayan* taught, contested, and reinterpreted across three generations within the same family line?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The research design employs a qualitative phenomenological approach in studying how *Inayan*, a Kankanaey traditional moral value as it is negotiated across generations within the community of Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet. This approach highlights a specific, subjective experience that is often taken for granted. It illuminates how individuals make sense of these experiences (McLeod, 2024), revealing a rich and deep meaning of human life. This approach is pertinent in understanding the cultural value of *inayan* as it is narrated, embodied, adapted, redefined, perceived, negotiated, resisted, taught, contested, and reinterpreted across the three generations.

The study aims to capture the depth and complexity of *Inayan* as a lived moral value among the *Kankanaey* group. Hence, the phenomenological method supports this study by examining *Inayan* not only as a cultural concept but as a traditional moral compass in the everyday life of the individuals in the community. It also explores how *Inayan* is being practiced and continued through intergenerational teaching in the family setting. The method implies that the researcher should actively participate in community immersion, serving as a listener and contributing to the meaning-making process of these experiences. The methodological design honors cultural knowledge while maintaining academic rigor.

Locale

This research takes place in Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet, a highland barangay within the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). Sagpat is primarily inhabited by the *Kankana-eyes*, an Indigenous ethnolinguistic group recognized for strong kinship ties, communal cooperation, and respect for land and tradition. It is composed of 7 barangays namely--- Poblacion, Lubo, Madaymen, Badeo, Tacadang, Palina, and Sagpat (PhilAtlas, 2025). When entering the municipality of Kibungan through the Governor Bado Dangwa road, Sagpat is the first barangay to be reached. Based on available data in the Barangay profile of Sagpat from the Registry of Barangay Inhabitants, the demographics of Barangay Sagpat as of August 2025 is composed of 1 *Ayangan*, 1 *Balanga*, 1 *Ifugao*, 1 *Ilonggo*, 1 *Kalanguya*, 1 *Kapampangan*, 1 *Kiangan*, 1 *Tinguian*, 8 *Tagalogs*, 28 *Ibalois*, 30 *Ilokanos*, 251 *Bisaya*, and 3855 *Kankana-ey* (Sacpa, 2025). The total August 2025 population of barangay Sagpat is at 4,180. Based on the data, it is heavily populated by *Kankana-eyes*. This makes the locality a significant area for the conduct of our study.

The community is selected as the study site due to the active practice of *Inayan* as a living moral code. Direct observation and engagement within the cultural environment facilitate an understanding of *Inayan* as it manifests in conversations, rituals, decision-making, and daily interactions.

Participants of the Study

The study involves 9 participants from three familial generations of *Kankanaey* participants comprising a grandparent, a parent, and a child. This family structure is selected because *Inayan* is traditionally transmitted within families. Including three generations enables examination of how *Inayan* is taught, interpreted, adapted, or challenged over time.

Purposive sampling is employed to select and identify individual participants who are capable of providing substantial insights relevant to the research topic (Reyes et al., 2021; Palinkas et al., 2015). Barangay officials and the council of elders of Sagpat, Kibungan, Benguet assist in the selection process. The criteria are as follows:

1. The participant must be a recognized member of the Kankanaey community of Sagpat.
2. The participant must belong to one of the three generational groups (elder, parent, or youth).
3. The participant must have personal experience and understanding of *Inayan* as a guiding moral value.

Data Gathering Procedure

The research study employs three main methods in understanding of *Inayan*: Semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and field notes. The interview guide comprises a flexible set of guide questions that enable participants to freely share personal narratives and reflections on how they experience and interpret *Inayan* in their daily living.

Bracketing (Andrada et al., 2020) is exercised during the process to prevent the researcher's perspective implication on participants' responses, thereby warranting an in-depth conversation with the participants. Interviews are conducted in *Kankanaey* or whichever language the participant is most comfortable to ensure authenticity and accuracy.

Interviews are audio-recorded with informed consent, then transcribed verbatim and translated into English. Field notes are kept throughout the observation period to document what is seen and heard. This method complements the interviews by demonstrating how *Inayan* is performed and embodied, rather than just discussed. It allows researchers to cross-check findings and capture different dimensions of the phenomenon.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify and interpret patterns of meaning within the data. This data processing remains significant and flexible, particularly befitting phenomenological research, which emphasizes participants' lived experiences and the cultural meanings they convey (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Nowell & Albrecht, 2023). It builds on the structure suggested by Creswell (2014) which follows four key steps:

1. Familiarization: Interview transcripts, field notes, and recordings are read repeatedly and listened to carefully to gain a holistic understanding of participants' narratives. Initial reflections and recorded impressions are analyzed to support deeper engagement with the data.
2. Initial Coding: Evocative accounts and phrases related to *Inayan* are highlighted and assigned descriptive codes. A codebook is used to define each code, providing sample quotations from the participants responses to ensure transparency and consistency throughout the process.
3. Theme Development: Related codes are grouped together to identify broader categories and themes that reflect shared experiences, cultural patterns, and values surrounding *Inayan*. Thematic maps should help visualize the connections between the themes.
4. Interpretation: Themes are now refined, defined, and named clearly. Each theme is supported by participants' quotations, which are analyzed in relation to the *Kankanaey* cultural context, including the Indigenous moral system.

Several techniques are employed to ensure accuracy and trustworthiness such as member sharing of their initial findings with participants for feedback and clarification; peer debriefing to refine themes; and the researcher's journals which document the researcher's decisions and reflections throughout the analysis, enhancing transparency. These strategies follow the recommendations of recent thematic analysis research (Castleberry & Nolen, 2022; Braun & Clarke, 2023) to ensure rigor and credibility in qualitative studies.

The thematic analysis categorizes meanings and traces intergenerational patterns of how *Inayan* is transmitted, adapted, and negotiated across the three generational groups: elders, parents, and children. The sample size suffices as it adheres to the in-depth data analysis principle of phenomenological studies.

By examining themes that emerge within between these groups, the analysis highlights how traditional moral values are embodied by elders, reinterpreted by parents within modern and religious contexts, and negotiated or contested by the younger generation within both offline and digital spaces. This analytic lens is guided by intergenerational transmission theory (Leiden University, n.d.; Schönpflug, 2009), Bandura’s social learning theory (McLeod, 2025), and symbolic interactionism (Mead & Blumer, in McLeod, n.d.), emphasizing that cultural values are not merely inherited but are continuously reshaped through lived interaction. Data saturation is attained when no new themes, insights, or information emerges from additional interviews.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The table presents the participants’ background in relation to the study. The participants consist of three families where each family has a representative from the three generations. Each family are residing in a common compound; thereby sharing a common neighborhood. Though in the case of Family A and B, the third generation (Rose and John) are residing now in a different household during weekdays because of their employment.

Name of Participant	Background
Family A	
Flor, 80 years old	She was born and raised in a family who had strongly adhered to tradition and culture; yet when Christianity was introduced in their place, her parents were the first ones to be converted into Christianity. Nonetheless, Flor has not fully understood and practiced her faith that time even until she got married. According to her narrative, her church participation and involvement only deepened when her husband died. Hence, she was strongly exposed to the traditional concept of <i>inayan</i> .
Bea, 58 years old	In her narrative, Bea strongly recalls a childhood bound in the church. Her parents had taught her about the moral compass of <i>inayan</i> as <i>lawa</i> . According to her, she got aware on the traditional concept of <i>inayan</i> when she got married. Her in-laws were strongly animistic; in fact, her father-in-law is a <i>mambunong</i> .
Rose, 25 years old	Rose was born and raised in a Catholic family. Nonetheless, her extended family in her father side has strong inclination towards the traditional practice (animism). She grew up witnessing some rituals performed by her paternal grandfather and heard her paternal family-side utter and adhere to the practice of <i>inayan</i> . Nonetheless, her education and Christian formation had stronger influence on her moral and personal views.
Family B	
Drew, 85 years old	Drew is a respected elder in the community. He was born and raised at a time when his family and the community he lived in strongly adhered to traditional beliefs. According to him, he only immersed in the church in his old age as most of his life revolved around providing for the needs of his family; especially of his children.
Judith, 53 years old	A teacher by profession, Judith recalls a childhood that revolves in school, farm, and their house. According to her, it is seldom that her parents bring them to the church when they were kids. Although her parents never fell short in reminding them about the good values and good acts towards their self, neighbor, nature, and God. (<i>inayan/ lawa</i>)
John, 24 years old	Like his mother, John pursued education and is now a Social Science teacher in a private school in Benguet. In relation to the concept of <i>inayan</i> , he recalls it

	being told to him by his parents through the concept of <i>lawa</i> ; yet he has a broad knowledge and understanding of the concept because of his educational background.
Family C	
Ignacio, 65 years old	Ignacio was born and raised in an animistic family; his family has strong adherence towards the traditional concept of <i>inayan</i> . He has a broad knowledge and understanding of the concept.
Jovy, 36 years old	Jovy’s narrative and understanding of the concept was shaped by traditional and Christian construct. She was raised in an animistic family and was later immersed in the church when she was in high school.
Cherry, 15 years old	Cherry, the youngest respondent is a Grade 7 student who is immersed in a family whose narrative on <i>inayan</i> is constructed by both a traditional and Christianized concept. She is also well exposed in the influence of digital media.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Elders Narration and Embodiment of *Inayan*

In this study, the concept of *inayan* as understood in the perspective of the elders as deeply rooted in tradition, spirituality, and communal moral codes. Thus, *inayan* is perceived by elders as the unwritten moral code that serves as both a cultural and spiritual restrained that is inclined towards their belief in a supreme being *Adi-Kaila*, *Kabunyan*, and the spirits. The elders were individuals who have practiced and witnessed traditional rituals and narratives in relation to *inayan*.

Based on the data gathered, the elders’ understanding of what *inayan* is in their context has resulted in three themes which includes a) *Inayan* as a Moral Compass; b) *Inayan* as attached to Spiritual Sanctions and Fear; and, c) *Inayan* as similar in Christian Teaching.

***Inayan* as a Moral Compass**

A moral compass refers to an internal guide that help a person distinguish between right and wrong to make ethical decisions. Hence, it may influence how one acts in situations involving fairness, honesty, respect, and responsibility.

The respondents have narrated *inayan* as ‘*lawa*’; thereby perceiving it as actions that should not be done simply because it is bad. Some situations cited by the respondents which supports their view on it as a bad action were when their parents told them ‘*lawa sa*’ when they took something that it is not theirs, or when they disobey them. Drew jokingly stated that an individual who consistently do something that is bad even with the knowledge that such action is bad is considered a crazy person saying “*kaman ka et din way bagbagtit na tan amum ay lawa yan enka am-amagen* (It’s as if you are an individual who is crazy since you keep on doing something bad even with the knowledge that it is bad). In this sense, *inayan* in the community acts like a moral compass which governs the rightness and wrongness of their actions.

As a moral compass, *inayan* directs people toward social harmony, respect, and accountability. One instance cited by the respondents is the avoidance of stating something that is false in a *sapata*. In tradition, a *sapata* (oath) is done when one is not guilty of an action he or she is accused of. It is like the highest form of oath and the elders believe that it is *inayan* to say it in the state of dishonesty as it may result to communal balance or may impact the person saying it in a negative manner. One case cited by the respondents was the case of a man named Dulay who was accused of stealing and killing the pig of their neighbor. Accordingly, Dulay butchered the pig of their neighbor out of annoyance coupled with his intent to devour meat. Hence, he skillfully butchered the pig and hid the evidence which may point to him. Nonetheless, the owner of the killed pig had a strong gutfeel that it was Dulay who killed his pig. Hence, he summoned the elders to make amends; yet Dulay confidently denied the accusation and did a *sapata*. As a consequence, the elders performed a *bunong* asking the moon and sun’s guidance (*iangad da, inkararag da sin agew ya buwan*) with the words ‘*Mo way inamag na, way mapasamak en sisya within 6 months*’ (If he did steal and kill the pig, something bad will happen to him within 6 months).

Coincidentally, within six months, something bad happened to Dulay. He unintentionally ate a poisonous mushroom which caused him severe vomiting and diarrhea. The elders suspected that *nangan sapata na* (the *sapata* did not turn out well). The death of Dulay eventually proved his acts of stealing because during his wake, people were able to recover their missing things in his home ranging from kitchen utensils, to blanket, and even garden tools. Henceforth, in the community, the story of Dulay served as a warning that *sapata* must be performed with honesty because it is *inayan* to lie.

Among the elder generation, *inayan* is primarily understood as a moral directive or action that should not be done because they are *lawa* (bad). Elders consistently frame *inayan* as a principle for maintaining harmony and avoiding wrongdoing because of the negative consequence one may reap. Flor explains, “*Et din lawa adi ay am-amagen tan mo amagem et manbungas lawa abe*” (These are bad actions that should not be done because they will result in negative consequences). Similarly, Drew emphasizes that *inayan* is about avoiding disobedience and improper acts, such as stealing crops, which he considers *lawa*. He stated, “*Inayan are the actions that should not be done (lawa ay amagen) ... For example, it is inayan to get one’s harvest that is not his/her own.*”

This corroborates the findings of Lagmay (2012), as cited by Leyaley (2016), where she defined *inayan* as an Igorot concept that means to hold back or prevent an individual from doing something unpleasant to others. As a cultural value, it puts emphasis on doing good while considering the well-being of others, in addition to one’s own. This understanding of *inayan* in recent scholarships has consistently resonated on the narratives of the respondents citing *inayan* as equal to the concept of *lawa*.

In the narratives of the respondents, *inayan* has served a moral function with moral principles associated to maintaining community order and ensuring that nothing negative will happen to oneself as a result of practicing what is branded as *inayan*.

In this sense, *lawa* is perceived as a customary form of sanction or prohibition that invokes fear of divine or communal retribution to maintain social harmony. Hence, in the community, *inayan* functions as a preventive mechanism, discouraging harmful acts and promoting communal well-being. Through the elders’ narratives, it can be deduced then that *inayan* is not merely a cultural term but a lived ethical system deeply embedded in everyday decision-making. This corroborates with Leyaley (2016) who states that *Igorots* use *inayan* functionally for discipline in an individual context to avoid committing unpleasant act; hence, enabling an individual to reduce the risk of participating in unacceptable situations.

From a theoretical lens, this aligns with Emile Durkheim’s concept of collective conscience. Collective conscience refers to a shared set of beliefs, ideas, attitudes, and knowledge that are common to a social group or society which informs our sense of belonging and identity, and our behavior (Cole, 2025). In this sense, *inayan* can be seen as part of the collective conscience of the Kankana-ey community especially among the elders or the first generation. It represents shared moral principles that guide behavior, maintain harmony, and prevent actions that could harm or disrupt social balance. Just as Durkheim emphasized the role of collective conscience in social solidarity, *inayan* serves as a cultural mechanism for cohesion and moral regulation through the avoidance of doing acts that are *lawa*.

Inayan as attached to Spiritual Sanctions and Fear

Elders also associate *inayan* with spiritual consequences, reflecting its cosmological dimension. Ignacio defines *inayan* as “*kae-egyat*” (fear of the unknown); as he states it, “*Inayan* for me is like *kae-egyat* (fear of the unknown). When somebody is wicked, they say *kae-egyat di, inayan di* (It is *inayan* to do wickedness).”

Further, one respondent mentioned that he has taught his children the value of paying respect to the spirits within the nature. An instance he shared was saying to his children “*Inayan, adi kan basta manputputo si ka-iw tan mo way temengaw*” (It is *inayan* to cut trees because there might be a spirit (*temengaw*) residing in it). This suggests that wrongdoing invites misfortune through supernatural forces.

International Journal of Advanced Research Management and Social Sciences also stated that *inayan* is practiced and adhered to by the *Kankana-ey* ethnolinguistic group where they have a common understanding of it as preventing an individual from doing something unpleasant towards other living and even to non-living things.

Their practice is grounded on their belief that Kabunian will bring blessings to them when they are in harmony with man and nature. In the community, *inayan* is a system which encompasses a range of taboos which should be strictly avoided. These taboos range from theft, adultery, murder, disobedience to elders, irresponsible use/consumption of nature, being selfish, to a list of actions that is branded as *lawa* (bad).

Flor also mentioned a traditional construct of *inayan* which she learned from the elders like “*inayan tan paniyew; inayan ay adi kan-kanen din dung-aw; inayan ay manpoto si ka-iw tan mo way temengaw*” (It is *inayan* because it is *paniyew*; it is *inayan* to spend the money intended for the dead for personal gains; it is *inayan* to cut trees because of the *temengaw*). One example cited by the respondent in the case of *paniyew* is ‘it is *paniyew* to go and have outing right after the burial of a relative’. Such action, including the avoidance of spending the money intended for the dead (*dung-aw*) also resonates the community’s practice of *inayan* in relation to the spirits of the dead. These spirits are referred to as the *kakading* and *ap-apo*.

This conception of *inayan* among the elders in Sagpat resonates with McKay’s finding where *inayan* is connected to an individual’s fate to their obligations toward others which reflect a more profound meaning that underpins social bonding and responsibility (McKay, 2016). Further, the case of *agmot* (cursing out of anger for a wrong deed/ act) and *sapata* cited by Ignacio is reflective of the findings of Domingo, Caroy, Carambas, & Po-or (2019) where they cited that the *Kankana-ey* community avoid uttering cuss words because of the consequence they may reap if their word will sound offensive.

This reflects Malinowski’s functionalist theory (Porth, Neutzling, & Edwards, n.d.), which views the society as comparable to human organs---each fulfilling an important role for the growth and development of a society and the maintenance of social order. Hence, taboos like avoidance in uttering negative or ill words and dishonesty serve as mechanisms for social control and risk management. Such practice reflects the traditional essence of *inayan* where actions must be cautiously practiced in consideration of both living, non-living things, and spirits residing within the nature or environment.

***Inayan* as similar in Christian Teaching**

A significant shift emerges in the elders’ discourse: *inayan* is increasingly reframed through Christian ethics. Flor notes, “*Many people nowadays have a better and Christianized understanding of inayan... Today, inayan is better understood as something that should not be done because it is bad; and it may result to bad consequences. It is no longer attached to the temengaw, pinten, anito.*” This reinterpretation aligns *inayan* with the Ten Commandments, emphasizing prayer over ritual and God as the ultimate moral authority; hence, emphasizing prayer over ritual and God as the ultimate moral authority.

This corroborates the study of Leyaley (2016) who explains that *Inayan* is considered a guiding principle akin to the Ten Commandments. It functions as a moral and spiritual deterrent against wrongdoing such as killings, theft, and land disputes. When violations occur, rituals like *daw-es* are performed to appease spirits and let *Kabunyan* (Supreme Being) administer punishment, showing its spiritual dimension.

This transformation illustrates cultural syncretism, a concept defined as the blending together of two aspects of culture thereby creating a new custom, idea, practice, or philosophy. In this case, the indigenous value of *inayan* was anchored to adapt to a dominant religious framework which is Christianity. It also reflects pragmatic considerations, as rituals that affects economic practices in a cash-crop economy like *ngilin* are abandoned in favor of less resource-intensive practices such as prayer. *Ngilin* is a ritual that requires an individual to rest and reflect after the death of a family member. The act of resting would require an individual to not perform labor in relation to the farm. Flor cited that during the time of her husband’s death, she chooses to not practice *ngilin* and turn to the act of praying instead in order for her to provide the needs of her children. Hence, she skipped the ritual even with the warnings of *inayan* from the elders and the community members not out of defiance or non-adherence but out of necessity.

This shift is further enhanced by the fact that some elders have made efforts to instill among their children the good values through immersing them in the church. As Flor emphasized, through immersing her children in the church, she is able to let her children realize the value of doing good actions and avoiding bad actions. This

supports acculturation theory, illustrating cultural adaptation under dominant religious frameworks. At present, Kibungan is largely dominated by Christian practices. In the case of Flor, she did integration of both cultures where she adapted to the cultural influence of Christianity without compromising the essential distinctiveness of the traditional practices.

Middle Generations' Adaptation and Redefinition of *Inayan*

The discussion with middle generation on how they learned *inayan*, practiced *inayan* as parents, and taught *inayan* to their children. The middle generation consists of individuals who were once children to their parents and are now parents to their children. They are individuals who are in the middle of two generations--- the first generation (elders) and the third generation (youth). They were asked question about how their parents taught them the traditional value of *inayan* and how they practiced it as parents and taught the value to their children. The discussion resulted into three themes which revealed that *inayan* was learned, taught, and practiced in various ways like a) Negotiation of Tradition and Modernity; b) Parenting Styles and Discipline as Factors; c) Social and Practical Conditions.

Negotiation of Tradition and Modernity

Middle-generation participants reveal ambivalence toward traditional *inayan*. While they uphold its ethical core by avoiding bad actions, they critique aspects attached to *inayan* that requires rituals which may affect their economic lives. This reflects a nuance in the concept of *inayan* as generally understood in the community and in the academe. Generally, *inayan* is a concept that represents virtues like humility, honesty, and commitment which discourages harmful or disrespectful actions that could anger spirits and cause illness or other issues; hence encouraging individuals to avoid conflicts because of the general knowledge that 'one reaps what he sows'; thereby enforcing discipline and harmony among Kankana-ey communities. Nonetheless, it was not the case with one respondent who critiqued *inayan* for its ritualistic aspect.

Bea remarks, "*Having bad dreams and elders will tell you to perform rituals... this kind of inayan just drains one's economic resources.*" This clamor of Bea was a result of her personal experience from her in-laws. She recounted a story when his son got sick; coincidentally, during that time she kept on dreaming about a woman who attacks her by strangling or biting her. She then shared this story to her in-laws and instead of advising her to bring her child to the hospital, they instructed her to heed the advice of a mansip-ok. They performed rituals as her in-laws warned her that it is *inayan* if they won't appease the spirits (who is approaching her through dreams) that they may have disturbed. It was only after all the rituals were conducted that she was able to bring her son to the nearby health center; unfortunately, his son died. This case left a regret and pain in her heart as the doctor remarked that had she brought her son to the hospital earlier, his son may have survived. As a result, Bea promised to turn fully to her faith. She recounts the time where she realized This selective adherence underscores a pragmatic orientation, privileging livelihood over ritual obligations.

Such negotiation mirrors broader patterns of cultural change, where indigenous practices are reinterpreted to align with contemporary socio-economic realities. The shift from fear-based compliance to value-based reasoning signals a transition toward rationalized morality. Further, it can be noted that the shift resulted from the influence of the religious institution.

This negotiation reflects modernization theory, where traditional practices are reinterpreted to align with contemporary socio-economic realities. In another perspective, it can be noted that the reinterpretation resulted from factors like the influence of personal experiences, religion, and economic considerations.

There is also an important aspect in the data that needs to be evaluated--- Bea's claim that the ritualistic aspect of *inayan* is economically draining. Bea expounded this by narrating not only her personal experience but also her observation. An instance she shared was regarding the socio-cultural pressure placed on the shoulders of the widows. In the community, when a family member dies, the giving of *deng-aw/ abuloy* (cash donations) is done. After the burial is done, *gutod* (counting of total donations and settling of expenses). In traditional practices, the family must perform *taytayaw/ pamisa* especially if much money is left from the cash donations even after the expenses were settled because according to the teachings of the elders, *it is inayan to spend the money intended*

for the dead in other things. In the local dialect, they say *'pilak met din ipugaw sa, ada nawada sa mo adi natey sa, isunga dapat lang ay usaren amin para sin natey'* (that is the money of the people, if not because of the occurrence of death, that money was not accumulated; hence, the money must be used for the dead). Bea considers this economically draining because it may lead to further debt accumulation on the part of the family because most of the time, the money (left from the cash donations) is not sufficient for the occasion. She further shared an instance on the part of his cousin who died leaving his four little children behind. "It pains my heart to see those little children left with no food and uncertain future while the money is used for such ritual when it is not necessary if it is offered through prayer instead" claimed Bea. She re-emphasized that had the elders not adhered to the ritualistic aspect of *inayan*, the money could have been used for a better cause--- the financial security of the family left behind.

Nonetheless, it has to be emphasized that Bea does not see *inayan* as something bad, she personally claimed that she has strong adherence to it due to its value-laden aspect; she just critiques the rituals attached to it. This corroborates with Fiar-od (2021) who noted that costly rituals often impose financial strain, prompting selective adherence.

Parenting Styles and Discipline as Factors

Jovy, a young parent, mentioned the significance of responsible parenthood in the passing of good values. She recounts that she was able to learn the meaning of *inayan* through constant reminders from her parents. An instance she shared was her parents' reminder on honesty, respect to living and non-living things, and obedience to elders. She also recalls that the time her parents reminds her about these values is when they saw her doing bad actions or other people. As a parent she also practiced the same by reminding her child to a) ask permission when going somewhere; b) avoid riding in a stranger's car; c) avoid stealing or getting other people's things without asking permission; d) avoid stating baseless words or claims about other people; and, e) avoid lying. These reminders are what she regards as *inayan* which she teaches her children alongside her husband. She further emphasized that the parenting style which is coupled with proper discipline methods of parents play a significant role in inculcating the good value of *inayan* to the younger generation. As she mentioned, *'parents should not argue in front of their children because it really affects or influences the behavior of the children, children who witness their parents quarrelling becomes disrespectful.'* This statement calls for reflection on the part of parents and elders: have we truly pushed for the continuation of good values from the past or have we served as mediums for its dilution?

Further, elders recall fear-based discipline in their childhood, contrasting it with today's dialogic approaches. Drew notes, *"During our time, our parents were very physical in terms of imposing discipline. When we do not obey them, they scold and whip us. It is very unlike today where children are too informed about their rights which limits our physical imposition of discipline. What is needed for children today is to communicate in a friendly manner."* This evolution mirrors global shifts from authoritarian to value-based parenting, influenced by legal norms and child rights advocacy. Hence, parents have shifted in a parenting style that is mostly on the aspect of 'authoritative parenting'. Authoritative parenting style is an approach to child-rearing that combines warmth, sensitivity, and the setting of limits; in this style, parents use positive reinforcement and reasoning to guide children; thereby avoidance in resorting to threats or punishments (Dewar, 2024). The parents emphasized that instead of a punishment-based discipline method, they provide advices and set clear limits. The passing of value is done through borrowing the narratives shared to them by their parents. For instance, they share stories of successful people whose success have been rooted in their good deeds; and stories of people who outrightly defied the warnings of *inayan* and faced negative consequences.

Social and Practical Conditions

Practical conditions have made the middle generation perceive *inayan* in a different light which also influenced the manner they practice and teach it to their children. An instance was Bea's loss of her child despite adhering to a ritual done as a result of her in-laws' warnings on *inayan*; this was coupled by her socialization in her church. According to her, she was disturbed then with the condition of her child because the medicine he is taking seems to take no effect, his fever was on and off. That time, her in-laws and even her husband suggested a consultation with a *mansip-ok* to be done because there might be something wrong. In their words, they said to her *'ay inayan*

tan mo way akin gapu et isa (perhaps something “unseen” is causing his illness). With the desire to cure her child, she agreed. The *mansip-ok*'s verdict was ‘the illness of Bea’s son is caused by his dead father who is asking for a blanket’. As a result, her father in-law performed a *bunong* to appease the spirit of Bea’s father because it is *inayan* to ignore a warning like that. Nighttime came and her son’s condition suddenly got better. He even played with his toy gun and stated words to them like ‘*Mama, ay laylayden yo sak-en?*’ (Mama, do you love me?). Unbeknownst to Bea, these are the last words of his son as their morning was faced with his cold dead body. This caused a great pain on the heart of Bea. Afterwards, she was faced with a series of bad dreams; yet her loss taught her a lesson on the value of faith over tradition.

As Bea narrated:

When I had that unfortunate experience with the loss of my son, I had realized many things regarding what my in-laws and husband perceive as inayan. There is a good culture and there is a bad culture. My understanding of inayan was illuminated by my religion--- dreams, bad dreams, is not really nakaka-inayan. What should be done when having bad dreams is to pray and strengthen one’s faith to God. I can say this because of the many bad dreams I ignored through prayer.

My religion gave me a better perception and understanding of what inayan really is. It directed my path to view inayan as ‘lawa di man-amag si lawa’ because it is the proper thing to do and I ignored the negative consequences of inayan that is attached to the spirits residing within the nature. In my mind, there is only one God and the anito/ kakkading/ temengaw/ pinten and other spirits are non-existent; also, I believe that the spirits of the dead are unable to harm the living.

This resonates with Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory where he presented the concept of agency---a term which refers to the capacity of individuals to intentionally influence their own functioning and life circumstances. In this case, Bea was cornered between the pressures of her in-laws to adhere to such practice yet eventually, she was able to navigate through her agency and negotiate through the practice.

Third Generations’ Perception, Negotiation, and Resistance of *Inayan*

The discussion with the third generation on how they perceive, negotiate, and or resist *inayan*. The third generation consists of youth whose age ranges from 15 years old to 25 years old. These are individuals who have been exposed to the modern institutions both offline and online. The data gathering resulted in three themes which includes a) Dilution through humor; b) Competing influence; and, c) Selective adherence.

Dilution through Humor

Youth often trivialize *inayan*, using it in memes or jokes (e.g., “*ay inayan ito*” popularized by Lampitok). An instance was the case shared by Cherry, a 15-year-old junior high school student, regarding the manner she heard and learned of the word *inayan*. Cherry said, “*We say ‘ay inayan ito’ in joking contexts when someone does a clumsy action.*” This conception of *inayan* is far from the traditional construct of the concept which is branded by the elders as something ‘sacred’ and is a ‘big word’. According to the first and second generation, the word *inayan* holds a sacred value in their time. Nonetheless, this group has developed a new meaning of the word which was diluted through humor and with a meaning far from the traditional. Further, it can be noted that the word has served just as an expression.

In a deeper discussion with Cherry, she mentioned that her joking manner of expressing the word ‘*inayan*’ has led to her better understanding of the word/ concept. According to her, she was corrected by her mother when she used *inayan* as an expression in a joking manner (*ay inayan ito!*). This was the moment she realized that the word holds a sacred meaning and its cultural significance is undervalued by her peer group because of their lack of knowledge and understanding of the concept.

The dilution of *inayan* through humor can be understood as a product of individual, mediated, and collective actions that reshape cultural meaning. Bandura’s conception of humans as proactive and self-reflective agents helps explain why many youths now use *inayan* in joking contexts such as saying “*Ay inayan ito!*” when

someone performs a clumsy act which reflects personal agency in reframing the term as a comedic expression rather than a moral injunction. Over time, these digital interactions evolve into collective agency, wherein peer groups normalize the humorous use of *inayan*, as illustrated by Cherry's account of friends using the phrase casually during playful situations. Through repeated social reinforcement, *inayan* loses some of its normative force, demonstrating how cultural erosion is not merely a passive process but a transformation actively driven by youth choices, media environments, and shared group practices.

This humorous act reflects cultural erosion accelerated by digital media. Botangen (2017) notes that social media fosters both preservation and distortion of indigenous values, depending on context. This supports cultural diffusion theory, where digital platforms accelerate reinterpretation of traditional norms.

Competing Influence

Participants cite church, school, and social media as competing forces shaping their understanding of *inayan*. This was reflected in Rose's statement "*Mas nangingibabaw na ang church teachings ngayon... parang nasa baba na siya compared sa Christian values.*" This claim of Rose was rooted in her personal view and understanding of the concept. When interviewed about her understanding of *inayan*, she showed hesitation, admitting that her awareness of the concept is likened to the concept of the Ten Commandments. As she elucidated, the concept of *inayan* is not much discussed within her circle of friends. In fact, during the interview where she was asked about how her parents taught her about the concept, she threw a question to her mother, Bea, who responded her right away that the concept was taught to her as the '*lawa*'. An instance cited by her mother is, '*lawa di mangakew, lawa di man-etek*' (It is bad to steal, it is bad to lie). This was agreed to by Rose, "*Aah, aw baw adi. Malagip ko din one time ay enkami nangakew si lukto sin ka-elementary mi yan manbunget si Papa, lawa adi di kanana*" (Yeah, I can recall that time where we stole a neighbors camote during my elementary days, my father was mad at us saying that what we did was wrong).

Rose's claim could be illuminated by her mother's response on the question 'How do you teach the value to your children?' Bea responded that she chose to immerse her children in the church since the values emphasized in the *inayan* concept is similar to church teachings like the 10 Commandments. Consequently, Rose's view has been influenced by her parents and her immersion in the church at a young age. When Rose was asked about the essence of the influence of school, social media, or church influenced how she thinks about *inayan*, she directly mentioned that the concept was not taught in the school nor has she learned about this in the social media. Her understanding of the concept was rooted in her family's teaching.

The statement shows that church, school, and social media act as competing socialization forces that shape how they understand and prioritize *inayan*, and this dynamic aligns strongly with Bandura's agency theory. According to Bandura, individuals do not acquire cultural values in isolation; rather, they learn through triadic reciprocal causation, where personal beliefs, social influences, and environmental structures constantly interact. This is evident in Rose's reflection, her statement indicates a personal recognition that Christian teachings now dominate her moral reasoning, while *inayan* occupies a subordinate position.

John, a youth who has an informed understanding of *inayan* through the academe, has emphasized on the competing influence of church, school, and social media towards his adherence on *inayan*. He emphasized on the ill-effects of social media to the value development of an individual. As John argued, if one does not have a proper grounding of values, he/ she may emulate what is being seen on the social media. John further mentioned that there are times where he questions his perception or values because of the things that he sees on the social media. An instance he cited is in terms of the country's political system where politicians display an outright act of corruption--living luxuriously through the hard-earned taxes of the Filipino people yet as days go by, these politicians become richer and richer instead of getting punished.

This reflects how individuals exercise personal agency in choosing which moral frameworks to prioritize based on what they find more authoritative, familiar, or socially reinforced.

At the same time, institutional agents such as the church and the school exert proxy agency, influencing youth by providing ready-made moral systems and authoritative narratives that may overshadow indigenous values.

Social media adds another layer by shaping what is visible, celebrated, or normalized, often through humor, trends, or peer interaction. Bandura's concept of collective agency also becomes relevant: as peers increasingly align with Christian teachings or digital influences, the collective orientation further marginalizes *inayan*, making its adherence less reinforced within youth communities. Thus, Rose's comment illustrates not only a personal shift in values but also a broader pattern of how multiple institutions compete for cultural authority. Through Bandura's lens, these institutions act as powerful agents that shape, redirect, or weaken indigenous moral systems, demonstrating that the erosion of *inayan* is mediated by both individual choices and larger sociocultural forces.

While formal education and religion reinforce ethical principles, online platforms introduce conflicting narratives. UNESCO (2025) warns that digital technologies, while enabling cultural expression, risk eroding traditional practices if not critically mediated.

This reflects Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, highlighting multiple layers of influence on cultural transmission.

Selective Adherence

Despite dilution, some youth uphold *inayan* as a cultural anchor. One respondent assert, "*Yes because it keeps us grounded in our values and culture.*" This selective adherence reflects identity negotiation amid globalization, echoing findings by Laltoog (2025) on urban Igorots who retain *inayan* as a moral compass in professional and social life.

In spite of the ongoing dilution of *inayan* through humor, digital influence, and competing institutional teachings, some youth continue to uphold *inayan* as a cultural anchor where one respondent affirmed this commitment, this assertion illustrates how individuals actively negotiate their identities amid globalization rather than simply absorbing external influences. This process aligns with Stuart Hall's (1996) notion of identity as a continuous production, where people selectively draw from cultural resources to maintain a sense of rootedness. In this case, *inayan* becomes a touchstone that young people return to as a way of preserving continuity with their indigenous heritage.

Bandura's agency theory further deepens this interpretation by emphasizing individuals' capacity for self-reflective and purposive action. These youth exercise personal agency by choosing to retain *inayan* even when contemporary structures—church teachings, schooling, and digital culture—pull them toward alternative value systems. Their adherence demonstrates an intentional effort to preserve cultural meaning, showing that dilution is not universally experienced; rather, it varies depending on how individuals interpret and enact their cultural responsibilities.

Despite living in environments saturated with globalized norms, they strategically uphold *inayan* as a marker of cultural identity and ethical grounding. Such selective affirmation reflects what Weinrich's identity structure theory describes as identity commitment, where individuals maintain allegiance to cultural values that support psychological stability and belonging.

Thus, the youth who consciously preserve *inayan* exemplify the dynamic interplay of cultural continuity and adaptation. Even in a rapidly globalizing context, they demonstrate agency by choosing which aspects of tradition to retain, thereby keeping *inayan* alive not as a relic of the past but as a living guide for navigating modern life.

This supports identity negotiation theory, where individuals selectively maintain cultural markers amid globalization.

Transmission, Contestation, and Reinterpretation of *Inayan*

The family is the basic social institution. It is where culture is first learned and passed down. Hence, it is critical to analyze how a central value in the Kankana-ey culture like *inayan* is transmitted, contested, and reinterpreted

within three generations in a single-family unit. The data gathering resulted in three themes citing three factors which includes a) shifting pedagogies; b) contestation and reinterpretation; and, c) role of institutions.

Shifting Pedagogies

Traditionally, *inayan* is taught through fear-based with elders sharing cautionary tales about spirits, experiences of individuals in the community and consequences of actions. However, the first generation now notes the significant shift towards teaching *inayan* through values and open discussions. As Drew recalls, “*Before, inayan was taught through fear... now through values and dialogue*”. This was supported by the second generation in their claim that the consequence attached to *inayan* has decreased in intensity. According to Bea, the word *inayan* was *nadagsen* (heavy or intense) during their time; when one says *inayan*, it means a lot and one must adhere to it. Nowadays, the word has decreased in intensity. In fact, when the word *inayan* is said to the third generation, they do not show fear or even value the word.

Jovy has also emphasized the role played by responsible parenthood in the act of passing the value to the third generation. However, she also noted the shift or change in the children’s behavior nowadays. She cited the case of children today where they show disrespect towards their teachers by being overtly vocal in their thoughts and the tone of their voice or manner of their speaking is often inappropriate; hence, Jovy asserted that children must be dealt in an authoritative manner through imposition of clear boundaries rather than imposing strict rules and policies.

This change in parenting style reflects a broader trend in education, moving away from punitive methods and towards nurturing approaches that reinforce positive behavior and values. It resonates with modern educational frameworks that prioritize cultural responsiveness, (“Indigenous ethics and values – Pulling together: A guide for researchers, Hilkala,” 2021). Moreover, this transition aligns well with constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes experiential learning and dialogue rather than coercion. It creates an environment where individuals can learn through experiences and positive interactions.

Contestation and Reinterpretation

Alongside the shift in teaching methods, there are ongoing debates among community members about which values of *inayan* are worth preserving. These values as claimed by Bea are the negative and positive ones---the negative values include the rituals that has to be done to appease the spirits (like *sangbo*), practices that are not economically beneficial (spending the *dung-aw*, or cash donations intended for the dead, for the *taytayaw*); whereas, the positive values attached to *inayan* are the *lawa* (bad) actions that should be avoided to avoid reaping bad consequences and hurting a living and or non-living thing.

For instance, Bea argues for letting go of certain superstitions but insists on holding onto the moral values that *inayan* embodies, as Bea emphasized, “*I recommend ngilin and other superstitious beliefs not be taught*”. Bea defined *ngilin* as the strict adherence to taboos and rituals regarding social and economic activities to protect oneself and the members of the family from illness of harm. These taboos are often attached to the nature spirits. An instance is skipping farm labor after the burial of a family member. Bea supported this claim through sharing the story of her brother-in-law who adhered to the practice of *ngilin* after the death of his father which she branded as impractical. This is so because it seemed to just have served as a lazy excuse of her brother-in-law to skip farm work while her wife had to take the reins of farm work. This viewpoint reflects a broader movement towards decolonization, striving to align traditional knowledge with contemporary ethical standards (Flores et al., 2025).

Further, it resonates postcolonial theory, which analyzes the complex relationship between maintaining indigenous knowledge and value system and adapting to modern ethics. It's a delicate balance that a community navigates as they seek to honor traditions while moving forward (Postcolonial theory,2021).

Role of Institutions

Institutions like schools and churches play a vital role in transferring and reshaping *inayan*. The respondents have cited the vital role of the church in inculcating good values through the teachings like the 10

Commandments which is similar to *inayan*. Likewise, the school was also mentioned in its vital role in the transmission of the value through the Social Science subjects and IPED related activities as these can be beneficial in deepening the cultural understanding of the children. As emphasized by the respondents, these institutions can work together in instilling the development of positive values among the youth through the teaching of *inayan* in the sense that it is understood as *lawa di man-amag si lawa* (it is bad to do a bad act). Further, the youth (third generation) are regarded as the future cultural bearers; thus, the necessity to inculcate in them the good values and positive culture. Nonetheless, the social media reflected a nuance in the positive role of institutions due to its ill-effects on the value of children.

It can be deduced then that many community members recognize the importance of integrating cultural knowledge into formal curricula and working together to support this transition. One young person suggested, “*The education sector should give more attention to cultural understanding... navigate through social media.*” This situates the interconnected role of institutions in ensuring the passing down of cultural values.

Programs like the Department of Education’s Indigenous Peoples Education (IPEd) programs and initiatives highlight efforts to weave cultural values into educational frameworks, promoting inclusiveness in the sharing and reinterpretation (Miole, 2024) of *inayan*. This aligns with Albert Bandura’s social learning theory, emphasizing the impact of role models and reinforcement in passing down cultural knowledge (McLeod, 2025).

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION

From the results analysis, the following findings were derived:

- a. The elders have varied perceptions on what *inayan* is. While they generally perceive it as a moral compass governing the rightness and wrongness of actions in a society ensuring a sense of communality and responsibility towards the other being; some individuals shape it in the grounds of spiritual sanctions and fear, thereby teaching the avoidance of doing it because of the negative impact it may yield; yet, some elders question its traditional conception and embodying it instead within the teachings and moral construct of Christianity.
- b. The middle generation being the main individuals who connect the elders and the youth have delivered responses that are evident of the redefinition of *inayan*. Based on the data, it can be concluded that the middle generation have redefined the concept of *inayan* by negotiating tradition and modernity, the influence of shifting parenting styles and disciplining process of children, and socio-economic considerations. This reflects that the middle generation have played a role in the reinterpretation and or dilution of the *inayan* value.
- c. The findings show that youth renegotiate *inayan* within competing cultural influences, offering a new contribution to understanding its contemporary form. *Inayan* is increasingly diluted through humor, with memes and catchphrases like “ay inayan ito” turning a serious moral norm into digital play. Meanwhile, church, school, and especially social media compete to shape youth perspectives, often overshadowing traditional teachings. Yet a countertrend emerges: some young people still uphold *inayan* as a cultural anchor that grounds their values and identity. Together, these dynamics reveal that *inayan* is neither simply disappearing nor fully preserved but is being reshaped into a hybrid moral framework by the younger generation.
- d. This study contributes new insight into how *inayan* is being reshaped through shifts in teaching practices, reinterpretation, and institutional involvement. Transmission has moved from fear-based methods rooted in spirit-related warnings to value-based approaches centered on dialogue and role modeling. Participants also actively contest which elements of *inayan* should be preserved, with some advocating the removal of “superstitious” practices while retaining its ethical core—reflecting ongoing efforts to decolonize and modernize indigenous knowledge. Moreover, the research highlights the growing role of schools and churches as key transmitters of *inayan*, with calls for deeper curriculum integration and alignment with programs like the Department of Education’s IPEd initiative. Together, these findings show that *inayan* is evolving through intentional pedagogical shifts, critical reinterpretation, and institutional support, marking a significant transformation in its contemporary transmission.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are forwarded:

- a. The discussion on *inayan* breeds diverse beliefs and perceptions stemming from the varied experiences and cultural climate; hence, one must practice sensitivity when discussing the issue.
- b. The academe and the church need a thorough re-assessment on how a community or an individual perceives *inayan* before imposing teachings and or ideas as it may spark an uninformed discussion.
- c. The academe, the church, and the family institutions are significant mediums in developing the positive values associated with *inayan*. Hence, a thoroughly collaborated project/ program that may help enhance good values among the youth is recommended.
- d. Further research involving the perception of the church and the academe may be conducted to ensure the development of a noteworthy program and or project.

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