



## Lived Experiences of Imangali Tribe: An Ethnographic Method to the Preservation of Ibil and Apugid Rituals

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### ABSTRACT:

Many indigenous peoples in the Cordillera mountains have continued to thrive in their remote yet self-sufficient communities such as *Imangali* tribe of Tanudan, Kalinga. This tribe has its own distinct rituals, practices and even languages that makes it unique from the others. These beliefs and practices that were handed down from generation to generation are better remembered if written and recorded. The study aims to determine the relevant lived experiences of *Imangali* tribe in preserving their practices along the *Ibil* and *Apugid* practices. The study employed an ethnographic approach, specifically, the researchers utilized a semi-structured interview to gather the data. Thematic analysis was used in interpreting the transcribed data from the interviews of the participants. Findings revealed significant themes that describes the practices of the tribe in preserving the two rituals. This includes that even in sickness or nearing death, or even death in itself, it would seem that it is a celebration of the togetherness of the *Imangali* tribe. There are social relationships established. Even with the expensive preparations that is set in recognition of a sick person, nearing death of a person or a dead person, it also brings people of the culture together. Therefore, the lived experiences of the *Imangali* tribe is an expression of the preservation of *Ibil* and *Apugid* rituals.

**Keywords:** *Imangali* tribe, preservation, *Ibil*, *Apugid*, rituals in death, social relationships, food preparations

### Introduction:

*Understanding others makes possible a better knowledge of oneself: any form of identity is complex, for individuals are defined in relation to other people – both individually and collectively – and the various groups to which they owe allegiance, in a constantly shifting pattern. (UNESCO, 1996)*

The rituals, practices and languages of man are manifested through man's experiences, ideals, sentiments, aspirations, thought, and emotions. These reflect the depth of man's rituals, practices and languages that molds the truly creative person of a tribe and tells profound truths about life in various ways. These beliefs and practices that were handed down from generation to generation are better remembered if written and recorded (Sappa, 2016).

As we move towards a world where the people and its cultures are becoming homogenous, we lose the value of having so many diverse voices and experiences available to learn from. In short, we lose cultural preservation. Cultural preservation gives the people an irrefutable connection to the past. It allows man to identify themselves with others and deepen their sense of belongingness and national pride. Cultural preservation includes documenting and studying languages and encouraging the preservation and use of indigenous or tribal languages and rituals.

According to Donqui-is (1998), Kalinga was non-existent during the 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. The name "Kalinga" apparently is not indigenous to the present Kalinga constituency since the word is traced to "Gaddang" dialect. The name referred to the mountaineers on the eastern side of Cordillera. During those years of Spanish occupation of the Cagayan Valley, pestered lowlanders with their head-hunting raids. Kalinga as name stuck with those mountain dwellers occupying now the territory of Kalinga province. There are 31 subtribes of the Kalinga Ethnolinguistic Group distributed over the eight municipalities of the province. This include Alingang (Salegseg), Ableg, BAnao, Bangad, Biga, Ballayangon, Balatoc, Balinciagao, Basao, Botbot, Buwaya, Calaccad (Gaddang), Dacalam, Dananao, Dao-angan, Gammonnang, Guinaang, Gobang, Gilayon, Kagalwan, Limos, Lubuagan, Lubo, Mabaca, Mabongtot, Mangali, Nanong, Tanglag, Talococ, Tinglayan and Sumadel. Each subtribe can be identified thru their dialect which has dissimilarities in diction and pronunciation.

SIL International estimates that approximately 7,000 people live in the eight Mangali villages of Tanudan municipality in the southern part of Kalinga province. The Mangali inhabit five of the municipality's sixteen barangays. The people of Kalinga province share many similarities, but the area is by no means culturally homogeneous. The Mangali culture group has its own unique society among the dozens of other distinct culture groups that make up the larger Kalinga ethnolinguistic group. (Stallsmith, 2007)

Mostly, the *Imangali* Tribe uses their language in conducting their rituals and practices from birth, marriage, death, healing and in other special occasions. However, many of these rituals and practices were remain uncollected and undocumented even though it was passed from generation to next generation by their thoughts and actions. Some of the undocumented practices are *Ibil* and *Apugid*.

As a traditional practice observed among the Kalinga, when a person dies, all relatives and neighbors help in the whole duration of the funeral wake which is called the *Bagungun*. Also, it is a practice that even one of their tribe's mate died in any part of the country, it is customary that the cadaver will have to be brought at home. The Project of Dacalan Ancestral Domain cited two death rituals: the *Dandanag* a ritual song for old age men and women with grandchildren. Singing is allowed for everybody to express their gratefulness and the *Ibil*, crying for the deceased.

In the other hand, "*Apugid*" means re-strengthening rite. It is a ritual done by the *Imangali* tribe in order to ask "*kabunian*" (Heavenly Creator) to renew the strength of the sick person. A cow or a carabao is butchered. The liver is roasted and a part of it is given to the sick person. They will invite all their relatives far and near to visit the sick old man, or old woman. The sick is made to sit down and brought outside to be entertained by the family and visitors. They believed that the sick will be miraculously healed if she/he saw his/her relatives. (Sappa&Wangiwang,2016)

The researchers aim to feature the practices *ibil* and *apugid* of the *Imangali* tribe. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions that includes defining *ibil* and *apugid*; explaining the process and how the *Imangali* tribe conduct the *ibil* and *apugid* rituals; identifying the lived experiences of the *Imangali* tribe based on their practices of *ibil* and *apugid* rituals; and identifying authentic ways on how to preserve the practices of *ibil* and *apugid* rituals.

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## Review of Related Literature:

The impact on cultural Integrity of the Kalinga indigenous knowledge like the core values, womb to tomb story, rituals and traditions is local knowledge adapted to the culture and ecology of the community. This said knowledge should be sacred from current threats against its oral tradition base, from its appropriation by others and from introduction of new technologies and knowledge systems. (Dacalan Ancestral Domain of Kalinga) In rituals, Kalinga's in general have commonalities in certain ceremonial rites but as denominated in culture into northern and southern Kalinga some rituals are practices as common among these two ethnolinguistic groups. (Donqui-is, 1998.)

According to the study of Sappa & Wangiwang (2016), the researchers found out that there are a lot of language expressions in the selected rituals and practices of the *Imangali* along birth alone. There are various rituals and practices of the *Imangali* tribe being done or celebrated from the time of birth and onward as he/she grows; the rituals and practices are expressed meaningfully through the use of their own native language; and there are implications of the different rituals and practices of the *Imangali* along birth. These had several implications on the said culture that include: children are considered to be the most precious gem to the *Imangali* tribe, that is why when a baby is born a celebration follows right away as a way of thanking the Giver of life or *Kabunian*. Also, as they always say "the more children you have, the richer you are." The *Imangali* tribe are very protective of their children specially the newly born baby from any harm in the surroundings.

In addition, they envision their children to a successful future that is why they do all the rituals for the children not to encounter any untoward incidents. The value of close relationship from both families of the couple is evident. The respect between the families of both sides of the couple is also there. It is expensive on the part of the couple and their families too are considering that it is stressful because of the many preparations involved in the giving birth of a child in the *Imangali* culture (Sappa & Wangiwang 2016). Furthermore, Donqui-is (1998) stated that the beauty in the multilingual, ethnolinguistic groups of Kalinga is that while they speak in different tongues, they understand each other.

The study looks into the ancestral practices of *ibil* and *apugid* found in these rituals and practices of the *Imangali* sub-tribe of Kalinga aiming to identify and document such in terms of the sickness of a person, the nearing of a person, and the death of a person in this culture. *Ibil* and *Apugid* are some of the practices of the *Imangali* tribe that builds their identity. Also, there are many implications of these practices to education and socio-economic development of the *Imangali* Sub-Tribe. Some of these include the strong bonding among the people in the community, social involvement is a social obligation, empathy to the bereaved family, too expensive on the part of the bereaved family and some practices like the *sangadil* (elevated bamboo chair where they let the dead person sit on it) even though it is not advisable in terms of health aspect. (Sappa & Adora, 2016)

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## Methodology:

The researchers will be using qualitative approach and interview method. Interview will mostly use to define the practices *ibil* and *apugid*, to know the lived experiences of the *Imangali* in their practices *ibil* and *apugid*, and ways to preserve these practices. Thematic analysis will also use in order combine all the ideas of the respondents. Ethnographic method will be utilized for the reason that one of the researchers belong to the *Imangali* tribe. Also, ethnography usually generates richer and more in-depth information that can provide a broader understanding of the social processes involved in the *Ibil* and *Apugid* practices of the *Imangali* tribe. In like manner, it will only be used to study the small group of the *Imangali* tribe that can be applied only to this group studied and would not seem easy to be generalized on the basis of a single study (Giddens, A. et al., 2012).

The informants of the study are the *Imangali* natives whose age ranges from 40 and above. Their experiences, ideas and knowledge will be used to explain the practices *ibil* and *apugid* and on how to preserve these practices.

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## Findings and Discussion:

Based from the informants, *Ibil* is a mournful cry for the deceased people and called the persons who are crying as "*umibil*". The *umibil* are mostly oldies from the relatives of the dead person. The *umibil* are crying to show their "*dago*" or their pity to the dead person. While crying the *umibil* also speaks or

gives advice to the dead person. Some of the *umibil* narrates his/her experiences together with the dead person when he/she is still alive. Sometimes the *umibil* are crying because the dead person reminds him/her of the people who passed away from his/her family. *Ibil* are not just for the dead person but also for the sick one's especially if that person is in the critical condition. *Imangali* conduct *ibil* usually during burial or if there is "bagungon" or wake.

While *Apugid*, is ritual done by the *Imangali* tribe as healing process for the sick old people in the community. They believe that the cause of the sickness is the "lagayan" or ghost because of the sins of that person. Also, the respondents compared the process of *apugid* in the past and present base to what they have witnessed and experienced.

This in reference that according to the informants *Apugid* was practiced in the past by the *Imangali* ancestors. At the present time, *Apugid* is still practiced though the *Imangali* tribe and had it modified due to that many of the members of the *Imangali* tribe are already professionals.

Table 1: Comparison of *Apugid* from the Past and Present

Past	Present
1. Only the old people who are in serious condition or the ones who are nearly to death	1. Old people who are sick, old people who are not sick and still strong.
2. The family will invite all their relatives from the different barrios.	2. The family will invite all their relatives from the different barrios.
3. They can butcher carabao, cow or even pig depends to the status of the family when the sun comes up.	3. 3. They will butcher carabao or cows. They will butcher when it is still dark or early in the morning.
4. Roast the liver of the carabao or cow and let the sick person taste it.	4. 4. Roast the liver or cook the soft part of the butchered animals and let the old person taste it.
5. The inner parts like intestines were cooked and be eaten by the visitors.	5. 5. Seldom to distribute some of the meat to the visitors because mostly they are going to eat it all.
6. The other parts of the butchered carabao or cow will be distributed on how many barrios attended or in terms of the people present in the occasion.	6. 6. They may conduct a program to show their happiness because it is like a reunion. Also, they can play gongs.

The table shows that the practice *apugid* is now modified due that many of the *Imangali* became professionals. As a result, carabaos or cows are mostly butchered. The *apugid* is not a force practice of the *Imangali*, it is in the family if they are going to conduct it but this may be a forever "kantiyaw" or tease to the family by their relatives.

Based on the findings of the study, from the basis in the past that only old people who are in a serious condition or nearly dying or even those who are not, and in the present emphasizes the strong bonding among the members of the community. This includes that in the past up to the present that the family will invite all relatives from different barrios which means that there is social involvement and thus, a social obligation. In turn, it implies that there is empathy that has to be extended to the bereaved family.

The study also found out that the butchering of carabaos, cows or even pigs, specifically the liver that gets to be roasted early in the morning gets to be tasted by the old or sick person. These butchered animals is also from the basis of the status of the family. In addition, inner parts of the butchered animals were cooked and to be eaten by visitors who come to visit the sick or dead person. In the past, other parts of the meat of these butchered animals were distributed on how many barrios attended during the ceremony for the sick or dead person. On the other hand, in the present, seldomly do the meat of these butchered animals were distributed because the visitors would consume all of these anyway. At present also, there is a program to show togetherness of the different family members and relatives because it serves like a reunion. Based on these later findings, it supports the idea that this ceremony gets to be too expensive on the part of the bereaved family because of the many preparations that goes with it.

This is seen in the response of the informants where they stated that "Atte idi *apugidan* da di masait anda dandani matoy ta adu di manikararag an siya ta maaan sait na. Nu man *Apugid* da ayangan da de aabalayan da anda susunnod da atte naduma duma ay ili. Nu apus de tagu boyok isida da nu kadangyan di tagu nowang ya baka isida da pun ansida da nu pumadda. Iuna da iuto pun ituno de apdoy ya puso ya ipaan da de masait. Iuto da , da bagis ya anu-a ta siya anun da bisita ya mangili pun bilangan da ya nan-iisuwon da atte tagu ay naulmong." As this is translated in verbatim: "In the past they conduct *Apugid* to the sick and old people same thing with old ones who are in serious condition. In conducting *Apugid* they will call all their relatives from the other barrios and butcher a cow, carabao if they are rich and pig if they are poor. They will roast or cook the liver or soft parts of the meat and let the old person eat it. They will also cook the intestines and let the people eat it then the other meats will be distributed to the people who attended the *Apugid*."

Furthermore, informants also verbalized that "Sin sadi ye panawon, *Apugidan* da de an-usdol ulay adi masait ta anpiya anganan na si isida da an siya ta nu *Apugidan* da nu dan-dani matoy, adi napun anun. Ayangan da os di aabalayan da anda susunnod da tan duwa di *apugid* ya ila sunga plogramaan

da ya gangsaan da ta anliw-liw-an de tatagu we nawnong ya ansida. Sin sadi ay panawon, baka ya nowang isida da te adu adu ban bannag sin sadi, adu san makuna ay professional pun parbangon ansida-an da enggana si masdom. Sin sadi adi napun anuk-un te dade pobre ippon anun da te aminon de babangkang alan da isida sunga aminon da iuto ta maaan de dogo ta ay apus isunga impun agon bilangon da.” This is translated as

At present, they will conduct *Apugid* to the old person even though they are still strong in order for him or her to taste the meat because if they will conduct it when the person is in critical condition he or she will not have the chance to taste the meat. Same thing in the past they will still call their relatives from the different barrios. Cook or roast the liver and give it to the old person. But, at present they modified it, they conduct a program and play gongs to entertain the guest like that they will celebrate 2 events the *Apugid* and reunion at the same time. Also, they will butcher cow or carabao as much as possible and butcher it early in the morning till afternoon. Lastly, they cook all the meat and eat it so there is no longer distribution happen for the guest of the said occasion.

On the other hand, *Ibil* is: “*Ha Ibil nu natoy di tagu nu para an saon umibil ak si tagu ay natoy te nalagip o da amak, sunod o da abeng o ay natoy. Inilak di natoy malagip ko dida pun iarig ko dida sina natoy, anna di ibil anna di luwa umibil ak ta maan si panununut ya dagson di rikna ya aasi ta si natoy.*” As translated, *Ibil* is when you cry in the dead person remembering your loved ones who passed away. You are crying in order to show your pity to the dead person as well as to release the pain and sorrow you feel for your loved ones. “*Umangaag ta dago ta si natoy ay tagu sunga umibil ta, da de maibagbagam san ibil ay sadi anu-a kaman ibagam dade problema pun san amballo an na si umayunan nad langit.*” When translated, this refers to when the *Imangali* tribe show that when “We are crying to show our pity to the dead person. While crying you are also speaking like saying some problems and for her or him will go to heaven.”

In addition, cultures reflect lived experiences as well as attitudes. Doing *ibil* for the *Imangali* implies that they are sympathized people and helpful. As for the *apugid*, the *Imangali* portrays their “*pasindayaw*” or tribute to their parents or grandparents. It is a way to show how grateful they are in having them so they want to make them happy and experience a very memorable thing for the rest of their lives. “*Maasiyan ta ay nangitutulong ud dago na us ay si sait na nu siya say idoga ta ay ibil. Ulay udom ay ili nu am ammun ya igammun nu maasiyan ka sin tagu ud ibilam pun ulay nu adi natoy nu masasait nu maasiyan a ud mabalin ay ibilam*” As translated where the informants stated that “Also we can speak about how we see him or her before and how he fight to his sick. Even though he is not a part of your family or relatives as long as you show pity for that person from the different barrios you may do the *ibil*. *Ibil* is not only for the dead person but also for those who are sick.

*Ibil* and *apugid* are some of the undocumented cultures of the *Imangali* tribe, it is a must to take action in order to preserve it. Some of the ways are: showing or letting the young ones witness these practices that can help the younger generation to expose themselves with the practices. Next, in conducting programs, this is a good assistance in order for the people to be aware of the practices they are conducting and to understand the reason behind the practices. Then, record or take a video as much as possible, that may serve as a memory of the event but a live evidence of the practices. Lastly, the *Imangali* tribe have these “*Lallakay*” or the old people of the community who are ready to help and guide the young generation in conducting the practices. This is especially true if the people do not know how to conduct it. Thus, the findings of the study would support the reasons why *Ibil* and *Apugid* culture are part of the lived experiences of the *Imangali* tribe.

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## Conclusions and Recommendations:

Kalinga province consists of many tribes, one of this is the *Imangali* tribe the biggest tribe for they inhabit sixteen barangays. *Imangali* tribe is rich in terms of their practices and rituals that are still existing until today. Hence, many of these rituals and practices are not documented like the *ibil* and *apugid* rituals and practices. As time passes by, where generations keep on changing the *Imangali* tribe have not noticed that little by little they are forgetting their own cultures. Also, they might consider adapting to the new environment that involves their cultural practices.

There is a connection of the lived experiences of the *Imangali* tribe to their cultures like the *apugid* and *ibil*. The practices of *ibil* and *apugid* portrays some of the endless attitudes and values of the *Imangali* tribe. Also, the study shows that social relationships play an important role in modifying rituals and practices.

Therefore, even in sickness or nearing death, or even death in itself, it would seem that it is a celebration of the togetherness of the *Imangali* tribe. The social relationships established in the *Imangali* culture emphasizes strong bonding, social involvement, and social obligation that brings the members’ togetherness. Even with the expensive preparations that is set in recognition of a sick person, nearing death of a person or a dead person, it also brings people of the culture together. It means that even in the many aspects of *Imangali* life and their way of life, in birth, marriage and even in death, it has to be a gathering of a community, for the community by the community.

Also, people must keep on finding effective ways in order to preserve the practices *ibil* and *apugid*. These two practices are playing a very significant role in the life and in showing the identity of the *Imangali* tribe that makes them unique. The study is urging to document and preview all the rituals and practices not only the *Imangali* but all the tribes in the province of Kalinga and the Cordilleras.

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