
Uncovering the Aqua Folktales of Banate

Juvelyn R. Lindong, PhD.

lindongjuvelyn19@gmail.com

*Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology- Main Campus
Poblacion Site, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines*

Rhazzel Jade A. Bebos

Chlyredth B. Casaldan

Mariecho E. Gonzales

Steve Justine L. Grecia

Arn F. Firmeza

*Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology- Main Campus
Poblacion Site, Barotac Nuevo, Iloilo, Philippines*

Abstract — "Uncovering the Aqua Folktales of Banate" delves into the rich cultural heritage of Banate, Iloilo, through the exploration and analysis of aqua folktales. Rooted in Dundes' Folklore and Oral Tradition Theory, this qualitative study aims to document and analyze the aqua folktales prevalent in the Municipality of Banate, with the overarching goal of creating a comprehensive collectanea. The participants of this study were elders in the community, totaling 40 individuals, comprising 22 females and 18 males, who contributed 31 Aqua Folktales as the data for analysis. The collected data were transcribed and organized for thematic analysis, focusing on cultural and social dimensions. A triangulation process was applied to test the validity of the data through the convergence of information from different participants. The data then underwent an in-depth analysis using Socio-Cultural Analysis. The themes derived from the analysis of the aqua folktales were Mystery, Horror, Fallacy, Revenge, Tradition, Consequence, Curse, and Gratitude. Aqua folktales are traditional narratives revolving around water-related themes transmitted orally through generations before the development of writing systems. Characterized by their didactic nature and universal appeal, they serve as repositories of cultural identity and values, reflecting the intricate relationship between communities and water. It is recommended to compile and preserve the aqua folktales in an accessible archive, thereby preserving and appreciating Banate's cultural legacy while highlighting the importance of aqua folktales in understanding the dynamic interplay between people and water within unique cultural contexts. The output of the study is a collectanea of Aqua Folktales.

Keywords - Collectanea, Aqua Folktales, Folklore and Oral Tradition theory, Thematic Analysis, Socio Cultural Analysis

I. INTRODUCTION

Aqua folktales, rich in cultural heritage, are a genre of traditional narratives that have traversed extensive historical periods, spanning centuries and even millennia within the domain of folklore. The term "folk," rooted in the German word "volk," emphasizes their universal appeal, intended for a broad audience. Originating from cultures intricately linked to water, these tales encapsulate mythical beings, legends of underwater realms, and narratives highlighting the profound importance of oceans, rivers, or lakes within the cultural legacy of specific communities. Noteworthy for their didactic nature, aqua folktales convey moral lessons and explain natural phenomena, fostering an understanding of the intricate relationship between people and water within unique cultural settings. These stories are characterized by simplicity, conveyed in straightforward language, and transcend various cultural backgrounds. Cherished as valuable

cultural expressions, aqua folktales continue to offer profound insights into the diverse ways communities have historically perceived and interacted with water, contributing to the preservation of cultural identity and heritage (Kirby, 2022).

Banate, a coastal town in northern Iloilo, Philippines, is primarily known for its fishing activities and features 18 barangays, seven along the shorelines (Guia, 2015). With a diverse landscape catering to coastal and upland communities, Banate's rivers contribute to its economic vitality. The town boasts captivating water bodies, including Managupaya's Caniapasan Falls and Hiburkan Rock, recognized as key tourist attractions (Bombette, 2014). Beyond their aesthetic appeal, these water features are integral to Banate's identity. They are enriched by local folklore that turns them into repositories of history and heritage. Exploring Banate's waters offers a journey through picturesque landscapes, creating a distinctive blend of natural beauty and cultural significance.

The study attributed the decline of aqua folktales to global influences such as globalization and commercial entertainment, which caused transformative changes that adversely affected traditional narrative preservation. As communities shifted towards modern entertainment, the once-vibrant art of storytelling dwindled, posing a serious threat to the survival of culturally rich aqua folktales.

The researchers wanted to conduct the study to bring back traditional aqua folktales in the municipality of Banate. This aimed to keep our cultural heritage alive. Engaging with these aqua folktales made people feel prouder of their culture, and it helped them come together as a community. It also helped in passing down our cultural knowledge to the next generations. The study also believed that interacting with these aqua folktales could improve communication skills and critical thinking and make people appreciate their cultural roots even more. Thus, the researchers conducted the "Uncovering the Aqua Folktales of Banate."

Epistemological and Theoretical Framework

The study used the narrative analysis of John W. Creswell (2007), which posits that knowledge is co-constructed through subjective and contextual stories from various fields such as literature, history, anthropology, sociology, sociolinguistics, and education. This framework emphasizes qualitative methods to explore individual experiences deeply, the interactive relationship between researcher and participant, contextual and ethical reflexivity, and strategies to ensure trustworthiness and authenticity in providing comprehensive insights into human life (Clandinin et al., 2013). It studies the life experiences of individuals over time by obtaining and reflecting on people's lived experiences.

This study was primarily grounded in Dundes' (1965) Folklore and Oral Tradition Theory, which centered on the profound influence of folk narratives in shaping and perpetuating a society's cultural identity. The theory posited that folklore functioned as a dynamic repository, encapsulating collective values, beliefs, and shared experiences, thereby serving as a vehicle for transmitting cultural heritage across successive generations. Dundes emphasized the interplay between memory and orality, asserting that the oral transmission of folklore was crucial in maintaining cultural continuity within a community (Eslit, 2023).

Dundes' theory emphasized storytelling's role in fostering social cohesion, shaping collective identity, and challenging the perception of cultural heritage as static. It acknowledged the adaptability of oral traditions, with rituals

and symbolism conveying cultural meanings. The theory underscored folklore's educational function in transmitting norms, values, and societal expectations to younger generations. In the context of globalization, Dundes prompted exploration into how oral traditions adapted or resisted, influencing cultural resilience. Overall, the theory highlighted the intricate dynamics of cultural transmission, emphasizing folklore's significance in preserving and perpetuating cultural heritage (Eslit, 2023).

Statement of the Problem

The study aimed to document and analyze aqua folktales in the Municipality of Banate. Based on the folklore and oral tradition theory, a collection of aqua folktales was designed.

Specifically, the study sought to address the following concerns:

1. Explore the aqua folktales of the Municipality of Banate, Iloilo.
2. Develop potential outputs based on the study.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design using narrative analysis, which focused on examining the stories and narratives individuals or communities shared about their experiences. It helped uncover how cultural and social influences shaped personal and collective narratives. In-depth investigation, understanding, and interpretation of social phenomena in their natural environments were the goals of qualitative research. Utilizing a qualitative research methodology enabled researchers to thoroughly investigate and comprehend the intricacies of social and cultural phenomena.

Semi-structured interviews were characterized by a flexible guide containing open-ended questions and prompts. These interviews provided researchers with the freedom to explore topics in-depth while also maintaining a degree of structure. The researcher typically began with predetermined questions but had the flexibility to adapt the conversation based on the interviewee's responses. This approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the interviewee's perspective and could uncover unexpected insights (Rubin, 2011).

Locale and Resource Persons of the Study

The study was conducted in the Municipality of Banate, Iloilo, Philippines, with a specific focus on the communities of Alacaygan, Belen, Bularan, Carmelo, Magdalo, Managupaya, San Salvador, Talokgangan, and Zona Sur. These areas served as the primary sources of data contributors, particularly the elders, who shared their valuable insights and stories about aqua folktales. These locales' cultural richness and historical significance provided a unique backdrop for exploring the traditions and beliefs surrounding water elements in the region.

The study focused on engaging elders from the Municipality of Banate, Philippines, who possessed valuable knowledge about aqua folktales. These individuals were meticulously identified and approached through strategic connections with local community leaders, cultural organizations, and individuals well-acquainted with the nuances of

the community. The selected elders, meeting specific inclusion criteria, actively contributed their insights and stories to enrich the research.

The inclusion criteria for the participants were as follows: participants had to be elders, either male or female; they had to be current residents of Banate, ensuring a solid connection to the local context; and they should have possessed a comprehensive knowledge of aqua folktales prevalent in the area.

The exclusion criteria for the participants were as follows: young individuals were not eligible for participation, as the focus was on the wealth of knowledge and experience that comes with age; those residing outside the boundaries of Banate were excluded to maintain a local context; and individuals lacking knowledge about the aqua folktales specific to the area were excluded to ensure the study's thematic relevance and depth.

This careful selection process guaranteed that the participants contributed meaningfully to the study, providing a rich collection of aqua folktales deeply rooted in the cultural fabric of Banate. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were essential to refine the participant pool, ensuring a focused and contextually relevant exploration of sociocultural aspects related to aqua folktales in the Municipality of Banate.

Data Gathering Procedure

The research commenced with a courtesy call to local community leaders and secured their support for the study. Subsequently, eligible elders in the Municipality of Banate, specifically in Alacaygan, Belen, Bularan, Carmelo, Magdalo, Managupaya, San Salvador, Talokgangan, and Zona Sur, were identified based on specific inclusion criteria. Informed consent was obtained from the selected elders, followed by preliminary interviews to establish rapport and set expectations. The main data collection phase involved systematic semi-structured interviews using open-ended questions to gather aqua folktales. A triangulation process was applied to test the validity of the data through the convergence of information from different participants.

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were transcribed and organized for thematic analysis, focusing on cultural and social dimensions. Themes were derived from the analysis, and each theme included representative aqua folktales that highlighted unique cultural insights and social dynamics. The narratives underwent an in-depth socio-cultural analysis, highlighting the folktales' embedded social functions and cultural significance. This provided a deeper understanding of the community's collective identity and historical continuity.

The final documentation and reporting stage involved; compiling the analyzed aqua folktales, incorporating selected representative stories into a comprehensive report, and having a linguistics professional evaluate the folktales to validate the stories. The study's documentation, including aqua folktales, transcripts, and related materials, was archived for future reference and cultural preservation. The ultimate output of the research was the creation of a collectanea of aqua folktales, contributing to the preservation of cultural heritage.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The collected data were transcribed and organized for thematic analysis, focusing on cultural and social dimensions, and underwent in-depth analysis using Socio-Cultural Analysis. The themes derived from the analysis of the aqua folktales are Mystery, Horror, Fallacy, Revenge, Tradition, Consequence, Curse, and Gratitude. For Mystery, the aqua folktales are "Ang Bulawan nga Barko," "Ang Lunok sa Busay," "Bugahod," "Misteryo sa Punong," "Ang Bugtong nga Bagis," "Ang Bulawan sa Bato," "Ang Lunok sa Punong," and "Ang Indi Mapatay nga Isda." For Horror, the stories are "Ang Mag-asawa nga Aswang sa Punong," "Diyas Dias," "Ang Pagli-li sang Kama-kama," "Ang Babayi sa Hunasan, Ang Hubot sa Bay-bay" and "Ang Tawo sa Baruto." Fallacy stories are "Ang Bobon," "Kataw sa Unos," "Ang Tambilawan nga Isda," "Ang Baboy sa Bungalon," "Ang Sigbini," "Puting Dalaga," and "Ang Lawod." The Revenge stories are "Mureng Kumpol" and "Ang Balyena sa Bay-bay." Tradition stories are "Ang Gamay nga Isda" and "Ang Hibutkan sang Bularan." Consequence stories are "Ang Nadula nga Bay-ad" and "Ang Pitaw sa Lawod." Curse stories are "Ang Pakinhason sa Bobon" and "Ang Sinda sang Balangaw." Gratitude stories are "Ang Inid sa Hibutkan" and "Ang Lapsag nga Kataw."

Furthermore, this research endeavor recognizes the transformative impact that aqua folktales could have on the local community. By delving into these narratives, the study seeks to preserve Banate's cultural heritage and foster a sense of pride and belonging among its residents. It undertakes to uncover the intricate tapestry of Banate's cultural legacy woven within its aqua folktales. Through deep analysis and understanding of these tales, the study envisions a revitalized sense of community cohesion and cultural appreciation. Engaging with their rich heritage, residents are poised to forge stronger bonds, deepen their understanding of their collective past, and ultimately cultivate a stronger sense of identity and belonging within the Municipality of Banate.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the study's exploration of Aqua Folktales within the Municipality of Banate, Iloilo, underscores the enduring significance of oral traditions in cultural preservation. It delved into Banate's cultural heritage, uncovering narratives rich in storytelling and embedded with historical, social, and moral significance. The research illuminated the unique characteristics of aqua folktales and their role in shaping the identity and values of the Banate community, highlighting the importance of oral traditions in fostering community cohesion and identity formation. Aqua folktales bridge past and present, connecting community members to their roots and instilling a sense of pride and belonging.

The study developed a comprehensive collectanea of Aqua Folktales, ensuring their preservation for future generations and providing valuable insights into the community's traditions, values, and identity. This contribution strengthens the ongoing cultural conservation efforts in the Municipality of Banate.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

Culture Arts History and Tourism Office. By leveraging these results, we can significantly enhance cultural tourism experiences while simultaneously contributing to the preservation and reinforcement of cultural cohesion within our community.

Community. These findings may catalyze the revitalization of folktales, offering a precious chance to reconnect with cultural roots. This fosters a sense of pride, identity, and belonging among community members, potentially leading to increased empowerment and self-confidence.

Students. To benefit immensely from this study's results, as it could deepen their understanding of their cultural heritage and promote respect for diversity. Moreover, it may inspire them to preserve cultural traditions for future generations actively.

Mother-Tongue-Based Multilingual Education Teachers. The study could provide valuable materials for contextualization, localization, and indigenization, helping teachers create more relevant and engaging learning experiences that reflect local culture and language.

Linguists. The study's result can be a valuable resource for linguists interested in documenting and analyzing the linguistic aspects of aqua folktales. This contributes to the broader field of cultural and linguistic preservation.

Faculty of Iloilo State University of Fisheries Science and Technology. These findings could enrich their knowledge and understanding, empowering them to contribute to community development through the revival and preservation of folktales. This, in turn, could lead to more excellent cultural preservation and community cohesion.

Parents. The outcomes of this study are valuable. By becoming more aware of their role in strengthening family bonds and preserving cultural heritage, parents can instill moral values and cultural pride in their children, fostering a deeper connection to their roots.

Future Researchers. These findings present a valuable resource that can guide their endeavors and inspire further exploration into socio-cultural approaches, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. Building upon this foundation, future research can continue to drive positive societal change and understanding.

REFERENCES

- [1] Kirby, P. (2022). What is a Folktale? Retrieved from <https://study.com/learn/lesson/folktale-characteristics-types.html>
- [2] Guia, J. (2015). The versatile coastal town of Banate, Iloilo. Retrieved from <https://www.vigattintourism.com/tourism/articles/The-Versatile-Coastal-Town-of-Banate-Iloilo>
- [3] Bombette. (2014). Beautiful, bountiful banate. Retrieved from <https://mybeautifuliloilo.blogspot.com/2011/07/beautiful-bountiful-banate.html>
- [4] Clandinin, D. J., Connelly, F. M., & Huberman, A. M. (2013). Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research (3rd ed.). Sage Publications. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X019005002>
- [5] Eslit, E. R. (April 2023). Resilience of Philippine folklore: An enduring heritage and legacy for the 21st century. Retrieved

from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/369976909_Resilience_of_Philippine_Folklore_An_Enduring_Heritage_and_Legacy_for_the_21st_Century

[6] Rubin, H. J. (2011). Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data. Sage Publications.
<https://methods.sagepub.com/book/qualitative-interviewing>