

CUSTOMARY CONFLICT RESOLUTIONS AMONG TRIBES: YOUNG INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' (IP) PERSPECTIVES IN FOCUS

ARIEL E. SAN JOSE, JONEL MARK D. SARNO, CARLO A. MAGONALIG, AMELYN L. LARO, JULIE ANN U. DESEO

Southern Philippines Agri-Business and Marine and Aquatic School of Technology, Institute of Human Service,
Malita, Davao

Corresponding Author: ariel.sanjose@spamast.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

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Globalization and neoliberalism have changed human thinking, including that of indigenous cultures. This qualitative-exploratory research aimed to ascertain the personal views, opinions, and perspectives of indigenous students on their customary conflict resolution laws within the context of their liberal education. Thirty-six self-identified Tagacaolos, Blaans, Manobos, and Tausugs participated in the study. Focus group interviews were used to obtain the information. Results revealed

that most tribes recognized the authority of their tribal leaders in solving misunderstandings. The most egregious wrongdoings committed were theft, and the three most popular punishments were payment to the aggrieved party, public shaming, and banishment. Some participants considered the customary conflict resolution as inhuman and preferred the modern society's way, but few conservatives wanted to preserve the tradition. The findings suggest that academic institutions may develop educational materials that discuss tribal



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customary laws, not only for knowledge dissemination but also to preserve the norms of indigenous peoples regarding conflict resolution.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and neoliberalism have significantly impacted and altered human thought. The old and indigenous cultures are slowly fading away and being transformed. According to McManus (2020), this transformation has a massive impact on identity. The young and new generations of indigenous people are being forced to assimilate (Long, 2019), are migrating to rural areas (Mattiace et al., 2019), and are being encouraged to pursue education (Davis et al., 2017). Thus, the merging and inclusion of indigenous people into a new society results in a loss of their indigenous identity and legal status (Warren, 2017; Weaver, 2020).

In Australia, extensive consultations were conducted to recognize and integrate customary indigenous laws with existing legal laws (Crawford et al., 1988). Maintaining customary laws of indigenous people is crucial in the preservation of their cultural heritage and knowledge systems (Xanthaki, 2017) because these laws are grounded in folk culture and manifest the real and living legal feelings of a nation (Hanim & Noorman, 2018).

Davao Occidental is home to more than four ethnic tribes, including the Tagacaolo, Blaan, Manobo, and Muslim communities. The Tagacaolo, which constitutes the most significant number, settle in the upland areas of Malita and Sta. Maria, the Blaan, dwell in the uplands of Jose Abad Santos and Sarangani; the Manobo live in the lowlands of Malita and the uplands of Don Marcelino and Jose Abad Santos; and the Muslims reside in the coastal areas of Malita, Jose Abad Santos, and Sarangani (Provincial Government of Davao Occidental, 2017). The young generations of these indigenous peoples' groups pursued their tertiary education in the Southern Philippines Agribusiness and Marine and Aquatic School of Technology (SPAMAST), the sole state college in the provinces of Davao del Sur and Davao Occidental (Robante, 2017). As a state college and government arm, it must preserve and develop the cultures and traditions (Official Gazette,

2017). Thus, this qualitative-exploratory investigation was conducted. This research aims to determine the perspectives, opinions, and views of young indigenous students on their customary laws regarding conflict resolution. The findings of this study may be beneficial in promoting consciousness and recognition of those norms.

Research Questions

This qualitative-exploratory research aims to ascertain the personal views, opinions, and perspectives of indigenous students on their customary conflict resolution laws, despite their liberal education. Notably, this investigation sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the tribal customary conflict-resolution procedures followed in solving the conflicts?
2. What are the consequences/punishments for those who committed the injustice?
3. How do the participants view the conflict resolution procedures of their tribe?
4. What practices can the participants share with others regarding conflict resolution in their tribes?

Theoretical Lens

This study is anchored on Morton Deutsch's Cooperative Model and Roger Fisher and William Ury's Principled Negotiation. In Morton Deutsch's Cooperative Model, the nature of conflict and the objectives of the contradicting parties are essential in identifying the orientation that a party would bring to the negotiating table to solve the conflict. He contended that a cooperative disposition on the part of the parties would foster an atmosphere of trust and ultimately lead to mutually beneficial settlement options. On the other hand, Roger Fisher and William Ury's "Principles of Negotiation" proposed four principles to resolve conflicts effectively: separate the conflicting parties from their problem; focus on interests rather than positions; generate a variety of options before settling on an agreement; and insist that the agreement be based on objective criteria. The primary objective of this model is to develop a method for achieving mutually beneficial agreements.

Significance of the Study

This study may give benefits to the following individuals or groups of individuals:

National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP). The findings of this study may help this government agency fulfill its mandate to protect, promote, and preserve the customs of the Indigenous People.

(IP), In this case, the young generations of Tagacaolo, Blaan, Manobo, and Tausug have perspectives on their customary tribal conflict resolutions.

Southern Philippines Agribusiness Marine and Aquatic School of Technology (SPAMAST). The findings of this study may serve as the basis for the administration to create Indigenous Peoples (IP) documentation, enriching students' knowledge of the different tribes in Davao Occidental.

Social Science Teachers. The findings of this study may serve as the basis for this group of faculty to include in their syllabi topics on customary tribal conflict resolutions of the different tribes in Davao Occidental.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Conflict Resolution among Tribes in Mindanao

Maranao Tribe. A study by the Pailig Development Foundation, Inc. (2007) on rido in Mindanao reveals that the most common measure to put an end to a rido, particularly among the Maranao, is an initiated or forced marriage to ensure a strong and lasting good relationship between two feuding families. Traditional tribal leaders, such as a Sultan, Datu, or Elders (as part of the barangay government), would be primarily responsible for settling disputes in their jurisdictional area. If, however, a rido cannot be nipped in the bud by traditional leaders' early intervention, then the conventional dispute resolution approach should be applied. According to Sumaguina (2000), conflicts perpetrated by blood-related Maranao are typically resolved through the 'Kokoman-akambetabara'a (kinship scheme of social justice). The mediation mechanism is fundamental because it possibly determines the resolution or failure of the conflict. Salerno (2011) mentioned that rido holds pride, self-identity, and belongingness among the Maranao; however, it also promotes violence, vendetta, chaos, and dehumanization. Sumaguina (2000) further observed that even law enforcers would not dare assert their authority to regulate the feuding who are usually heavily armed and strongly backed by their respective supporters.

Aeta Tribe. For several thousand years, the Aeta way of life has remained largely independent of mainstream Philippine culture. However, their traditional livelihoods and way of life are threatened by the increased economic activities and encroachment of lowlanders in their traditional lands (Bodley, 2008; Balilla et al., 2013). The usual trouble occurs between families due to the husband's family's failure to pay for the bandi. Another cause of conflict was eloping with someone one is not acquainted with. A divorce is also uncommon, but it can be done by mutual consent. Divorce may be grounds for laziness, abuse, unfaithfulness, and the like. A council of both the kin groups agrees on the subject. The culpable partner loses child custody. After the divorce, both parties are free to remarry. If the woman is guilty, she has to return the bandi (Sumaguina, 2000).

Tribes of Agusan Provinces, Caraga Region. These tribes are said to have a culture of warriors in which revenge was considered a religious act. Customary laws are based on the right to vengeance, which is commonly performed as a ritual act. Revenge by killing is allowed for the following offenses: adultery, fornication, rape, and murder (Ragandang, 2018). When one cannot avenge himself for the guilt, he has the right to accuse a relative of guilt as a form of vendetta. All other offences are settled with fines levied. Customary law upholds reverence for the property of the individual. Testimony and arbitration are paired with a trial by ordeal for offences like fraud or non-payment of debts. Examples of trials by ordeal are plunging the offender's hands into boiling water, diving in water, or placing one's hand under a candle.

Innocence is proven if one of the suspects passed the ordeal unscathed (Barnes & Magdalena, 2016).

Higaunon Tribe. This tribe represents one of the region's oldest and most established tribes. They had lived in Mindanao for thousands of years and are genuine aboriginal people; they were probably the first to settle in the area. They stayed undisturbed in their ancestral woodland homes, naturally working the forest. The tribe is nomadic, journeying from one mountain to another (Claessen, 2018). This tribe has a datuship hierarchy, with the chief datu keeping the emblem of authority, the giling. The giling remains the supreme cornerstone of social organization, as well as the protector of traditional values, which are still fundamentally intact. This tribe has strict observance of traditional laws and the land that shaped their culture. They have their way of resolving conflicts that arise within the tribe. In most cases, conflicts involve relationships between spouses within the tribe (Sumaguina, 2000). According to Ragandang (2017), Higaunons have maintained to this day their dispute resolution scheme, which is locally called paghusay (meaning "to settle"). They settle all sorts of disputes with their tribal council consisting of a supreme datu, 11 delegates, three baes (women delegates), and 15 alimaong (tribal police), as long as those crimes take place within their jurisdiction. Cabanes (2017) noted that the Higaunon criminal justice system typically varies depending on the type, intent, and frequency of the crime. Penalties include compensation in the form of livestock, tibod, property, non-ancestral domain inheritance, and tribe banishments.

Subanen Tribe. In settling conflicts, the Thimuays of Lapuyan employ oral laws. Penalties and sanctions are imposed on the offenders. These penalties include a collection of damages, the death penalty, public contempt, and supernatural sanctions. Such penalties are viewed as an effective means of maintaining peace and order within the Subanen tribe. Moreover, oral traditions and laws of the Subanen are passed from generation to generation.

In settling these conflicts, however, cases are either solved or remain unsolved (Humpa, 2002).

Bagobo Tribe. The Bagobos have the most effective way of searching out thieves through 'bongat.' This consists of two small containers made from the joints of a bamboo tree. They contain a mysterious powder, which was used to detect thieves in this manner: if one had been robbed and wished to find out who had done it, they took an egg and made a hole in it. Then, a pinch of powder from the bongat is added to the egg, which is then placed in the fire. It is believed that wherever the thief is, he would be compelled to disclose his guilt because of the sharp pains all over his body. He could even be put to death simply by breaking the egg, but since the one performing the bongat may not want the thief killed, he could just wait for the thief to confess. Afterwards, as a remedy for the pains caused by the bongat, the guilty one is bathed in water mixed with the other powder from the bongat (Ragandang, 2017).

Manobo Tribe. The Manobo celebrate the culture of retaliatory killing as

a form of punishment. When a murder is committed, an immediate response called pangayaw is made. It is a pattern of vengeance wherein a warrior leader (bagani) from the offended party retaliates by killing the perpetrator (Barnes & Magdalena, 2016; Montillo-Burton et al., 2016). Moreover, the Manobo must seek redress for all wrongs done. The 'tawagan' system permits a Manobo to kill or seize anything, provided that he has tried all other means to settle the dispute amicably. Minor offenses, such as theft, slander, failure to pay debts, deception that causes damage to another person, and disrespect towards another person's property, are punishable. However, when the credibility of the suspect is doubted, it is verified through a trial by ordeal ritual called 'to-tugo'. The ritual may be done through the hot water ordeal, the diving ordeal, or the candle ordeal (Sumaguina, 2000).

Isama. Among the Isama of Mindanao, death was the punishment rendered for those who committed grave acts like murder and homicide. Less severe acts, such as theft and robbery, were punishable by cutting off the fingers or hands of the culprit. The number of fingers to be cut depended on the gravity of the offense as judged by (Buendia et al., 2006).

METHOD

Research Design

This study used the qualitative-exploratory method. Qualitative method recognizes human beings in humanistic and interpretative approach (Jackson et al., 2007); to unveil and understand the reasons why and how such event happens (Rosenthal, 2016 & Holtrop et al., 2018); to explore participants' point of view (Rust et al., (2017); and to reveals personal experiences and insights and does not use statistical tools, experimental or survey design procedures (San Jose et al., 2017). The qualitative method is appropriate in this study because the primary purpose is to gather the IP students' personal knowledge, views, and perspectives on their tribal customary conflict resolution.

Moreover, the exploratory method is the process of investigating an issue that has not been explored or examined. The exploratory method is commonly used to have a better understanding of the issue; however, it does not draw any conclusions (Form Plus, 2020). Moreover, the exploratory method typically employs a qualitative approach, utilizing focus groups and in-depth personal interviews to gather participants' insights (Hurley et al., 2017; Kelly, 2008; Mittal, 2010; Steward & Shamdasani, 2017). In this study, the participants are formed into focus groups. Further, validated interview guides are used to gather information.

Research Instrument

A researcher-created interview guide questionnaire is used to gather pertinent information for the study. In formulating the interview guide

questions, the researchers ascertained that all questions are open-ended and encourage narratives from the participants. The interview guide is

composed of four main questions. Moreover, probe questions are added to collect further information.

Research Participants

The participants in this study are 36 self-identified Indigenous Peoples (IP) first-year college students at SPAMAST. They are enrolled during the second semester of the 2019-2020 school year. These participants belong to the Tagacaolo, Blaán, Manobo, and Tausug tribes. They are formed into five focus groups with six to eight members.

Scope and Limitations

This study aims to determine the personal views, opinions, and perspectives on the customary conflict resolutions of their tribes among IP students. It does not ascertain their level of satisfaction with the procedures or identify the factors relevant to conflict resolution. Moreover, this study employs a qualitative method; therefore, no rigorous statistical analysis is applied. Furthermore, only first-year college IP students enrolled during the second semester of the 2019-2020 school year are involved in the study. Due to the limited number of participants involved, San Jose (2012) mentioned that the study's findings cannot be generalized to represent the views, opinions, and perspectives of all IP students. The findings may only be valid for those who participated in the study.

Gathering of Information

To gather information from the participants, the researchers followed the following steps.

Formulation of proposal. The formulation of the proposal arose because the researchers sought to understand how the new generation of tribal children, who will soon become public servants as police officers and public administrators, perceive their customary tribal conflict resolution processes.

Construction of research questions. Readings on tribal conflict resolution were done. Through these readings, the research questions were constructed. The research questions focused on four main points. The first question addressed the processes involved in conflict resolution, and the second focused on the consequences. Third, the participants' views on the processes of conflict resolution within their tribe were gathered; and fourth, the participants were asked to share the practices on conflict resolution within their tribe with others.

Obtaining consent. Ethical considerations are paramount in qualitative research. Hence, prior to conducting the study, consent was obtained. Moreover, participants' identities were never mentioned in any part of the research paper.

Conduct of interviews. During the interviews, the students were grouped into focus groups. Students were grouped according to tribes. Since the students were already familiar with each other, animosity was not an

issue. Each focus group was assigned to have a discussant and a scribe. The discussant moderated the group, while the scribe recorded the responses of each group member. At the end of the interviews, the group confirmed their answers to each question.

Data analysis. The answers of the focus groups were memoed according to the thoughts expressed. After memoing, the answers were coded into themes. Thematic coding, as described by Gibbs (2007), involves classifying responses to establish a framework of thematic ideas. Then, vertical and horizontal analyses were made. In the vertical analysis, the data analyst sought patterns in the responses and identified themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the thematic analysis are presented in Table 1. For better understanding, the researchers categorized the results into three columns. The theme emerged from the occurrence of patterns during the coding process. The core ideas refer to the specific ideas that suggested the theme. The frequency of response dealt with the rate of occurrence of the idea. The theme is General if the occurrence of the responses was 50% or more; Typical if the responses occurred 21-49%; and Variant if the responses occurred 20% or less.

Recognition of the tribal authority of the tribal leader

Generally, the participants recognized the authority of their tribal leaders whenever there were misunderstandings among the tribe's members. It was common knowledge to all tribe members that all conflicts should be reported to the tribal leader for mediation and possible resolution. Both the aggrieved and offender parties were invited to hear their statements regarding the conflict.

Ang bangi ginareport dayon sa IP leader aron kini masulbad dayun og dili na magdako (FGD1). (The conflict is immediately reported to the tribal leader so that it will be resolved and will not create any further trouble.)

Table 1. *Thematic Analysis on the Conflict Resolution among Tribes*

Theme	Core Ideas	Frequency of Response
Recognition of the Authority of the tribal leader	- settling the conflicts in the presence of a tribal leader	General
Consideration of the punishment	- Agreeing on what punishment may be given to the offender - payment - shaming in public - banishment - “kallep” (a traditional punishment ritual)	General
Valuation of the tribal conflict resolution	- considering the old ways as inhumane and unfair - living in a community with unity, respect and cooperation - preserving the traditional ways - putting laws in their hands	Variant
Best practices worth sharing	- hearing both parties - giving pieces of advice	Typical
	- letting the tribe members know the consequences of doing wrong - following the beliefs of their ancestors	Variant

Husayon ang mga nagbikil atbang sa tribal leader (FGD 2). (The conflict between the two parties is resolved in the presence of the tribal leader.)

In the presence of the tribal leader, both parties were given advice to settle the conflict and avoid becoming a source of further trouble. The source of the conflict would also be discussed.

Tagaan og maayong tambag ang mga nagbikil para dili modako and panag-away (FGD2). (The two parties are given pieces of advice to settle the issue.)

Mag-istorya og hisgutan and butang nga hinungdan sa panagbangi (FGD 3). (There is a conference to discuss the cause of the quarrel).

Kung dili masulbad, ipa-agi sa “kallep” mosalom sa tubig ang unang moahon sya ang guilty (FGD4). (If the conflict is not resolved, then “kallep” will be done, where the first one to come out of the water is considered guilty.)

The recognition of the tribal leader's authority to settle conflicts between erring parties was also practiced among the Maranao tribe, the largest Muslim tribe.

Cultural-linguistic groups in the Philippines and the Higaunon tribe of Bukidnon (Pailig Development Foundation, Inc. 2007); tribal leader was also recognized in Papua New Guinea to facilitate effective development their communities (Ambang, 2007); also in Kurdish Aghas tribe, tribal leader's presence was sought to come to an agreement and resolve conflict of the bickering parties (Mohammed, 2020); tribal leaders protects the interests of the community and believed to have sacred responsibility (Tsosie, 2019). This implies that respect for elders among tribe members is a universal concept and is not isolated to one tribe. Similarly, in a modern political system, the barangay captain, an official who holds authority over his sovereign community, together with his council, is respected and their guidance is sought to resolve domestic disputes. However, in some troubled countries like Afghanistan, constituents do not believe in their tribal leaders because of corruption (Ali, 2019), because most of them became warlords (Ozdemir, 2019).

Consideration of punishment

Most wrongdoings mentioned by the participants in their tribes were stealing. The five tribes had three common punishments given to the guilty party. The first step was to provide payment to the aggrieved party, which also determined the amount of compensation to be awarded. Most often, the amount asked was huge. Moreover, the guilty party needed to sign a document stating that he/she will not commit such wrongdoings again. The second was shaming in public. The guilty party would be paraded through the community or would knock on each house and inform the households that they had committed something wrong. Third was banishment. The person who committed the wrongdoing would be asked to leave the community.

Among the tribes, only the Tagacaolo implemented "kallep" if a conflict was not resolved. In the "kallep", both parties were asked to prepare. The parties were commanded to plunge into the water and hold their breath as long as they could, and the first one to emerge would be considered guilty. However, both parties were allowed to hire someone to do the ordeal.

The punishments rendered to the offender were similar to those of the tribal communities in the Caraga region and Manobo, where crimes are settled by the imposition of fines. However, for crimes like theft or non-payment of debts, testimony and arbitration are combined with a trial by ordeal, which involves plunging the suspect's hands into boiling water, diving into water, or placing one's hand under a candle. Someone is considered innocent if he/she passed the ordeal unharmed (Sumaguina, 2000).

Punishments for offenders who commit wrongdoing in a tribe, according to Van Prooijen (2017), are intended to effectively enforce a set of well-established norms, whether or not offenders will be subject to disciplinary

sanctions or a target of public ridicule. Among the Inuit and African tribes, punishment is often carried out by deified animals and spirits imitating nature and natural surroundings (Danisova, 2018). In Siberia, a husband can punish his wife if she steals from him, and on the fourth occasion, he can even drive her away from the house (Raisanovsky, 2017). In Islamic law, the stealing of an enslaved person is severely punished (Gouda, 2016). The results of the study show that the imposition of punishments varies among tribes.

Valuation of the tribal conflict resolution

Interestingly, the participants typically considered the traditional way of resolving conflicts to be inhumane and unfair. They preferred the new society's way of dealing with those who committed wrongdoing.

The old concept of resolving conflict was cruel. Now, it is better because of the legal process (FGD3).

Ang karaang pamaagi kay dili patas (FGD4). (The old ways were unfair.)

Few other participants mentioned that respect for one another, unity, and cooperation can be observed among all members of the tribe, which can help prevent wrongdoing from happening.

To resolve the conflict within our tribe is to become more respectful of one another. The best thing to do is unity, cooperation, and avoiding bad behavior (FGD2).

The conservatives mentioned that this kind of conflict resolution may be preserved because it symbolizes their identity and represents the name of their tribe. This may imply that traditional ways should not be influenced or replaced by the new ideas of conflict resolution. As tribes, they had their ways of dealing with conflicts.

For us Tagakaulo, kini dapat ma preserve kay kani nagsimbolo sa pangngalan sa among tribu (FGD4). (For us, Tagakaulo, this should be preserved because it symbolizes our name as a tribe.)

There were still a few other participants who favored the traditional ways; however, for them, it was sometimes inevitable to resolve the conflict, and the situation worsened, resulting in a duel between both parties. In this case, both parties took the law into their own hands.

Tama ra ang pamaagi sa pagsulbad sa problema sa kumunidad pero dili jud malikayan na anaay sitwasyon nga maabot nga dili madala sa husay giagi sa brutal na paagi (patyon ug atbangay) (FGD5). (The process of solving the conflict in the community is all right; however, there are inevitable situations when the conflict is not resolved, the feuding parties engaged into duel.)

The results showed that the participants had different views on how their tribes resolved conflicts. It was noted that some participants wanted their tribal customary conflict resolution practices to be preserved, as they were a significant part of their own identity. Roy (2005) mentioned that recognition of customary laws of indigenous people is a challenge, and failure to acknowledge them would mean the demise of these norms. The preservation of customary tribal laws would enable tribal people to live according to their holistic philosophy, which is guided by unwritten laws, traditions, and practices acquired through oral teachings (Yazzie, 1988; Melton, 2005). However, some considered those practices unfair and inhumane because the process did not assess logical reasoning, but instead relied on someone's physical agility. This view, according to Caughman (2017), was caused by the young tribal generations' exposure to contemporary liberal ideology in which they are involved. The new generations' assimilation into modern society deculturized them (Menzies, 2019). It even changed them to be less spiritual (Watts, 2016). Moreover, Roy (2005) and Sjoberg (1995) observed that customary laws erode when the constitutional and legal systems provide no formal recognition of the indigenous peoples' law practices. Likewise, few others were reflective and proposed to have respectful constituents so that all would experience peace and order.

Best practices worth sharing

It was typical of all tribes that they did not want the conflict to escalate. Hence, they wanted to settle the issue among themselves. They discussed with both parties the best way to resolve the discord. Moreover, it was also typical for the elders of the tribe to explain to the community members the consequences of wronging others.

Mag inis-istoryahan kini sa matagbalay sa nabiktima like sa nakawatang og kopras. Kini ginasettle usa sa panimalay bago kini i-blotter (FGD1). (There is a conference with the victims. The conflict is settled first in the household level before it is blottered in the police.)

Ginabusay, ginatambagan og ginahatagan og chance ang mga taong nakabuhay og dili maayo (FGD2). (The conflict is settled and those wrongdoers are given pieces of advice and chance.)

Ginapasabot sa tanan aron motagam ang mga tao. People in the tribe know the consequences sa dili makabuhay og maayo (FGD3). (It is explained to the tribe members so that the tribe members will not commit the wrongdoings. The tribe members knew the consequences of the wrongdoings they committed.)

In contrast, few others appreciated the preservation of their ancestors' beliefs and traditions. This implies that, despite their modern lifestyle, they still value their roots and origins.

*Ang tinuohan sa katigwangan anaa gihapon (FGD5).
(The beliefs of the elders are still practiced.)*

Although not universal, it is evident from the participants' responses that they sought peace and order within their tribes. This was an indication that they had a high regard for the tribes to which they belonged. They considered their tribes as a community of their people, an abode.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Conclusion

The participants have a high regard for their tribal leaders, whom they turn to whenever a conflict needs to be resolved, implying that they believe their tribal leader is someone who can unite them. It is also revealed that stealing is the most common crime committed. This implies that most offenders do not respect others' property because they lack respect for others' property. Likewise, it was also found that tribes have commonly practiced punishment. This suggests that these tribes may be interrelated, as they are found in the same province. Interestingly, the participants' perspectives on the conflict resolution process vary. It shows that modern concepts of justice systems have already influenced some participants, while others have realized that these customary laws should be preserved. This further implies that the change in living conditions and way of life greatly influenced the participants' views. Despite these challenges, the results show that participants still observe the principle of cohabiting with each other as a tribe, guided by the principles of their ancestors, within their communities.

Implications

The study's findings suggest that academic institutions catering to indigenous students may develop educational materials that discuss tribal customary laws, not only for knowledge dissemination but also to preserve indigenous peoples' norms of conflict resolution. Moreover, the promotion and respect of tribal people's customary belief system can be achieved through forums where tribal leaders can be invited for a discussion. Ultimately, the government agency responsible for the welfare of indigenous peoples must recognize their customary laws and systems by accepting legal and procedural pluralism as a viable legal and administrative reality.

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