

An analysis of stakeholders' support mechanism for the preservation of weaving in an indigenous community

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ABSTRACT

With the fast influence of modernization, many people have to adapt to meet the demand of the changes in society, including the indigenous communities. Some parts of their culture are being at risk due to the high call of alteration. In these communities, customs and traditions should be protected to preserve their culture, heritage, and their identity as a tribe. Thus, the purpose of the study was to make an analysis of stakeholders' support mechanism for the preservation of weaving in an indigenous community. The research design of the study followed the quantitative research design complemented with qualitative data to analyze the stakeholders' support mechanisms. Quantitative data were analyzed with the application of the Prince Chart and Prince Method of Calculation, while qualitative data were perused through content or textual analysis. The research participants of the study were the thirty (30) respondents who answered the survey questionnaire adopted from the UP-NCPAG, and ten (10) informants who went through an in-depth interview (IDI). The results of the quantitative data analysis showed that the issue position elicited affirmative score, while the power and priority scored high. It also showed a 100% probability of support from the stakeholders, which denotes certainty of implementation. On the other hand, the qualitative data and findings reinforced and validated the quantitative data and findings. The study arrived at a conclusion that there is high optimism and likelihood that the proposed development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o will become a reality which will lead to the preservation of weaving the indigenous community.

Keywords: Blaan culture and tradition, Stakeholders, Support mechanisms, TESDA, Weaving

1. INTRODUCTION

With the fast influence of modernization, many people have to adapt to meet the demands of the changes in society, including the indigenous communities. Some parts of their culture are being put at risk due to the high rate of alteration. In these communities, customs and traditions should be protected to preserve their culture, heritage, and identity as a tribe.

Indigenous groups from different parts of the globe are struggle due to different factors such as new technology and pandemic. The women from Nigeria are striving to ensure to ensure that aso-ofi (cloth woven by hand on a wooden loom) cloth from regains widespread acceptance since it is more than a means of subsistence for them. It is a communal activity that has been passed down from generation to generation and must not be lost (Adebulu, 2022). Also, the 2000-year-old Peruvian textile legacy may be lost in this generation due to global change because there are so few elders still engaged in traditional weaving, according to the textile industry. Theirs is also an insufficient promotion to schools to this old way of hand-loom (Buskirka & Conrad, 2010). Likewise, in India, similar factors that limit the handicrafts industry include the absence of suitable raw materials, inadequate infrastructure, a lack of operating capital, ignorance of suitable technologies, a lack of entrepreneurial abilities among artisans, and competition from manufactured goods (Press Information Bureau Government of India Ministry of Textiles, 2011).

Philippines practice respective weaving traditions, making it one of the oldest local industries observed in the country (The Manila Times, 2014). This preservation allows them to have a stronghold that their community is unique among the Philippine handloom weaving like Blaans' *Tabih* in Amgu-o, Landan,

Polomolok, South Cotabato. They are able to produce a *Manlilikha ng Bayan* (GAMABA), or National Living Treasure, Yabing Masalon Dulo. Unfortunately, there are only two (2) master weavers among the 450,000 population estimated by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA, 2020) inhabiting in South Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat, and Sarangani Province that are still actively designing and weaving their own designs together with Fu Gusiye Buan, due to the elderly's failure to pass this skill to the younger generations (Ordoña, 2019).

On the other hand, because of the high demand for this fabric, both in the local and international arena, the government has initiated an initial action to respond to the call for cultural preservation. Fu Yabing was conferred as one of the GAMABAs during a formal conferment held at Malacañang Palace on October 24, 2018, through NCCA's School of Living Traditions (SLT). The SLT aims to teach distinctive traditions to the younger generations in their communities so that these crafts are kept alive for the next generations. According to Bernan Joseph Corpus, chief of the Plan/Policy Formulation and Programming Division of the NCCA Secretariat, the tradition must be ensured to be alive according to Blaans' tradition (Manipon, 2019). Today, the LGU of Polomolok, South Cotabato, is willing to restore the honorarium that it has extended to the master weaver. The Department of Tourism is also doing its part not only to showcase the Blaans as among the tribes in "The 12th Paradise in Region 12" but also to help them earn as they preserve their culture and traditions (Espejo, 2014).

It is, therefore, the right time for the government and stakeholders to focus and work on policies and appropriate measures that would further support, strengthen, and promote the goal of safeguarding and preserving the culture and traditions of the exceptional skills of Blaans, especially the younger generations through education. As a result, the significant move to develop National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato, which involves both the public and private sectors, is critical to providing the Blaans with more opportunities to preserve generations of dreams in weaves that will last a lifetime.

2. STUDY CONTEXT

2.1. Blaan dreamweavers

Southern Mindanao is home to the Blaan tribe. This indigenous group's name is derived from the terms Bla and An, which signify Opponent People. In South Cotabato, the Blaans were well-known for being hunters and food gatherers. In the once vast exposed area of cogonal terrain known as Kolon Datal, now Koronadal City, they engaged in wild animal hunting and the harvesting of root crops, cereals, herbs, and fruits. Additionally, they have a plan for weaving with abaca fiber. In the Blaan culture, rituals must be observed before weaving the characteristic patterns, but only the weavers are able to identify these ceremonies. Blaans should seek heavenly advice before to constructing any profile or design. They held the belief that the *l'nilong* (fairies), who are well-planned guardians of nature, communicated models or plans to the dreamer (de Jong, 2009).

Further, Blaan means equivalent or pair and suffix of a conveyed ownership or possession. The Blaans live in Sarangani, Davao Occidental, and Davao del Sur, and their other complement was "to bali" (now Tboli), which meaning "those of the opposite side." Prior to being relocated into the uplands as part of President Manuel L. Quezon's Commonwealth Government resettlement program, the Blaans ruled the plains and valleys of the Koronadal and Allah Valleys. The Blaan tribe has a very small number of significant members. However, its indigenous weaving, known as *Mabal Tabih*, is among the most intricate and vibrant in Mindanao; some even compare it to the Tbolis' Tnalaks (Espejo, 2015).

Likewise, the Blaans are a people who live on the Sarangani and Balut Islands, as well as the South Cotabato and Davao del Sur coasts in the SOCCSKSARGEN and Davao Regions, and both. They speak both Cebuano and the Blaan language. Their primary means of subsistence are fishing, swidden farming, hunting, making tools and weaponry, and food foraging. The men weave mats, the women baskets (Philippines' Ethnic Groups, 2019).

Amata (2019) noted that one of the first Blaan settlements in Mindanao, Barangay Landan in the municipality of Polomolok, South Cotabato, has retained its tribe status to this day. This tribe is located in Sitio Amgu-o, one of the sitios in Landan, a remote tribal community at the base of Mount Matutum in South Cotabato. The Blaan Tribal Village in Sitio Amgu-o is adamant about defending Blaan heritage, customs, and culture. One of the most prominent non-Islamic Indigenous Peoples (IP) of Southern Mindanao in the

Philippines is the Blaan tribe. They are highly known for their rich cultural legacy, which includes their traditional weaving and beadwork.

Meanwhile, in Lake Sebu, South Cotabato, Dreamweavers are frequently observed. Only a select number are aware that Polomolok, South Cotabato, also has Blaan Dreamweavers. This is how young ladies begin their journey as *Mabal Tabih* dreamweavers in the Blaan tribe. Their mothers do not teach them how to weave since, in accordance with their custom, they would fail. Instead, the young women carefully watch the weavers at work and attempt to weave a *Tabih*, or handwoven coloured abaca. Under the guidance of their mentors, the girls learn to retain their concepts and translate them into distinctive and elaborate patterns (Ordoña, 2019).

In addition, Fu Yabing Masalon Dulo is located in Sitio Amgu-o, Polomolok, South Cotabato in the Fu Yabing Weaving Center. The Blaan word for grandmother is Fu. One of the two remaining master craftsmen from the Blaan *Mabal Tabih* is this Fu. She has a great deal of devotion to this skill and is also highly envious, careful, and protective. She is unique among all Blaans in the area in the art of *Tabih* weaving because of this. The main *Mabal* of the Blaan is Fu Yabing. The National Commission on Culture and the Arts gave her the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) award for preserving and advancing the *Tabih* Weaving Tradition (Amata, 2019). As stated by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts (2019), Proclamation No. 126, s. Bai Yabing Masalon Dulo was named one of the three Manlilikha ng Bayan (National Living Treasures) of the Philippines for 2016 by the 2017 constitution, which was signed on January 6.

Through Republic Act No. 7355, otherwise known as *Manlilikha Ng Bayan* Act, the government institutionalized the *Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan* or the National Living Treasures Award in 1992. Section 2 of RA 7355 states that the Act seeks to: recognize the importance of traditional folk artists as a singular conduit between skills of the past and the future; revitalize a community's artistic tradition, thereby protecting a valuable fact of Philippine culture; provide mechanisms for identifying and assisting qualified traditional folk artists in transferring their skills to the community, and create opportunities for popularizing their works locally and internationally.

Therefore, in Southern Mindanao, Dreamweavers include both Tbolis and Blaans. The latter have a method for constructing dreams. Additionally, Blaans created a Manlilikha ng Bayan, demonstrating that their remarkable and nuanced art merited recognition for their trade. Because there aren't many of them, young people must develop the talents, and the government must act to effectively protect and promote them.

2.2. Blaans' *Mabal Tabih*

The craft of weaving involves weaving together threads, filaments, skeins, or strips of various materials to create fabric or cloth (Todd, 2010). Filipino inventiveness and creativity are evident in many different art forms, but what distinguishes the weaving culture is its power to unite people as strong, energetic individuals assured by live tradition and vibrant textile designs and themes (Sorilla IV, 2017). Nevertheless, among the fine textiles produced by the Blaans in Mindanao are the *Tabih*s. Before one piece of cloth is created, a process that takes months begins with the cutting of the abaca plant, continues with the stripping and drying of its fiber, dyeing, weaving, and ends with pressing and softening the produced fabric. Despite the loom being set up in a shared and standard way, the masters of the *Mabal* art complete the *Tabih*'s design separately (Espejo, 2014).

Mabal Tabih is a Blaan textile produced by handweavers in Sarangani and South Cotabato. It is well known that the Blaans are expert embroiderers, and the *Tabih* is often painstakingly embellished with stitching. Weaving has a rich spiritual history in Blaan society. It is usually exclusively carried out by strong women and is believed to be a gift from the goddess of weaving, Furalo. While *Tabih* refers to both the fabric and the native tubular skirt, *Mabal* in Blaan means "woven" or "to weave." The Blaan weave the *Tabih* with abaca fibers and a back-strap loom. The fibers are colored using the warp tie-dye resist ikat technique and natural dyes made from nearby plants. Designs usually feature crocodiles and little curls. In addition to the tube skirts, they covered tools like knives and created clothes for men out of abaca material (Sorilla IV, 2017).

Each *Tabih* is a unique piece of art that takes several months to complete. Abaca fabric is completed and handwoven on back strap looms to create *Tabih*. But it's a scant native textile now. Only a select few expert weavers are currently capable of creating this abaca cloth. A *Tabih* refers to the typical Blaan tubular skirt and is an essential component of their existence for the Blaan. It is more than just an item of clothing to them. Their ties to one another and the place they dwell on are represented by this cloth (de Jong, 2016; Manipon, 2019).

Therefore, the *Tnalak* tradition has been superbly preserved by the Tbolis. They were able to transmit this knowledge to the next generation, establishing its status as one of the native fabrics in the Philippines. On the

other hand, the *Tabih's* identity is still being accepted on both domestic and foreign markets. One of the unique things that the next generation, especially the young Blaans, should learn about is this painstakingly and intricately woven fabric.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1. Stakeholders' support mechanisms

Stakeholders are groups or persons who are concerned about or aware of the school's needs and necessities. Parents, school administrators, board members, local government officials, alumni, and socio-civic groups are among those who contribute to the growth of the school community (Business Mirror, 2018). In education, a stakeholder is someone who is invested in the success and well-being of the entire institution. Administrators, teachers, staff members, community members, business leaders, parents, students, families, local and elected officials such as school board members, state representatives, and municipal councilors are all included. Advocacy groups, local businesses, organizations, committees, cultural institutions, and media sources are examples of stakeholders. Organizations that represent specific groups, such as parents-teachers organizations, teachers unions, and associations representing school boards, principals, superintendents, or teachers in specific academic fields, are also considered stakeholders (Glossary of Education Reform, 2014).

Additionally, stakeholders are crucial in managing schools. They collaborate with school administrators to build environments that are conducive to learning and teaching. Stakeholders are represented on the working group that develops the School Improvement Plan and considers their involvement in making the school conducive to learning. Likewise, through actively participating in school events, programs, and projects, stakeholders are responsible for achieving the learning results (Pelayo, 2018).

Sustainable Series (2009) explained that a stakeholder is a group or individual who cares about an organization's ability to accomplish its objective, bring about the desired results, and maintain the viability of its facilities, products, and outcomes throughout time. Stakeholders come in two varieties: internal and external. Internal stakeholders are individuals who regularly control what happens in the school system and work there on a daily basis. They include district employees, academic staff, and to a lesser extent, school boards. External stakeholders, on the other hand, are those who are not involved in the day-to-day operations of the schools but who have a strong, rigid, and tight focus on school outcomes but who do not directly control what causes those outcomes.

In addition, the availability of a wide range of extracurricular opportunities, better housing conditions, assistance for parents in finding employment, and improved access to healthcare and other services are just a few examples of how external stakeholders can help address learning barriers outside of the immediate school environment. Different stakeholders can contribute solutions that are tailored to the individual needs of each student while also bringing opposing and complementary points of view to the discussion of learning difficulties. Any sort of collaboration must be centered on the complex requirements of the students in order to take a whole-person approach (School Education Gateway, 2016). Hereafter, the Stakeholder Response Mechanism or Support Mechanism can assist affected individuals, groups, and other project and program stakeholders in facilitating conversations, beginning or restarting dialogue, improving understanding of the facts, mediating disputes, and starting other actions that may have an impact on resolving concerns and conflicts (UNDP, 2019).

Accordingly, stakeholders can also be groups of people or organizations with an interest in the school on a personal, financial, professional, civic, or other level. The success of the school and its well-being are the main objectives of the stakeholders' involvement. The ultimate goal of the students, parents, teachers, administration, and community is to assist all of our children in achieving the desired educational outcome. To improve education and enable all of our kids to study to their full capacity, there are a variety of stakeholders that each need to play their part properly (Mortera, 2015).

As stated in the Philippine Star's article by The Freeman (2018), the Cebu City Department of Education is extremely appreciative of its stakeholders for their steadfast support. There were 82 external stakeholders present, including representatives of foundations, NGOs, LGUs, and various commercial sectors. Through their tremendous assistance in assisting the less fortunate schools in providing the learners with a quality education and a child-friendly learning environment, they remained true to their mission. The DepEd representatives highlighted them in terms of networking and partnership. DepEd must always have partners,

hence it is necessary for the Department to enhance its support network in schools. The OIC-SGOD Chief of the DepEd Cebu City Division, Dr. Joelyza M. Arcilla, said, "With the cooperation of the partners, we can make future better than today."

In general, stakeholders are groups or people who collaborate and network to support educational institutions or groups of people in achieving their goals. They are crucial, essential, crucial, and vital because they serve various institutions' demands that are unmet due to a particular establishment's or the community's own deficiencies. To reach its full potential, a community that is a direct stakeholder must collaborate with both the partners and beneficiaries.

3.2. TESDA National Certificate II

The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority was established by Republic Act 7796, often known as the "Technical Education and Skills Development Act of 1994." (TESDA). This Act has combined the duties of the previous National Manpower and Youth Council, the Office of Apprenticeship at the Department of Labor and Employment, and the Bureau of Technical-Vocational Education at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (BTVE-DECS) (NMYC). The government organization in charge of overseeing technical education and skills development (TESD) in the Philippines is called TESDA (TESDA, 2019). TESDA's responsibilities include integrating, coordinating, and monitoring skill development programs; restructuring initiatives to promote and develop middle-level workforces; approving skill standards and tests; creating an accreditation system for organizations engaged in middle-level human resources development; funding programs and projects for technical education and skill development; and supporting trainer training programs (RA 7796).

Subsequently, TESDA is expected to delegate training responsibilities to local governments, reform the apprenticeship program, involve industry and employers in skill development, develop a skills development plan, develop and manage training incentives, host skill competitions, and manage skill development funds. As for National Certificate, every person who studies vocational courses is assessed by TESDA. Based on the well-defined competency standards, the assessment procedure attempts to determine whether the alumni or employee can undertake to the criteria presented in the workstation. Those who meet the stated competency standards will be certified. This ensures middle-level workers' productivity, quality, and global competitiveness. TESDA seeks to assess and certify the competencies of middle-level skilled employees through the Philippine TVET Competency Assessment and Certification System (TESDA Manual, 2017).

Internationally, a National Certificate is also required for students studying vocational courses. The National Certificate was 'created' after World War I as a failing supernumerary for the long-standing 'Science and Art' type of technical tests, the inadequacies of which had become increasingly evident. The Board of Education began conversations with the Institution of Mechanical Engineers on this matter in 1920, because they were concerned about the current uncertainty in the courses and disciplines offered in technical colleges and institutions (Foden, 2007).

The National Certificate (NC) has been used to assess skill competency, particularly among Filipinos who wish to study abroad. Dina Esmas, Capiz Director of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), stated that if a Filipino holds a TESDA National Certificate, it is simple for her or him to obtain work overseas, particularly in ASEAN countries. She also stated that you can use the NC as proof that you are qualified for the position you are seeking for. Apart from professionalization, the competency testing and certification of middle-level workers, quality, productivity, and global competitiveness are ensured (Guillermo, 2017).

The research conducted by Manalo et al. (2018) on the "Effectiveness of TESDA National Certification to Cruise Line Operation in Culinary Arts Graduates of 2015 and 2016" showed that TESDA National Certification is presently being evaluated in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for its effectiveness in improving persons' competences and skills for future employment in the industry. The more National Certification one obtains, the more competent that individual is, and this will assist the holder in becoming hired efficiently.

Moreover, since TESDA online courses are now more easily accessible in the modern day, many Filipinos are urged to enroll in them. The sixth year of TESDA Online Programs (TOP) has just passed. With 1, 223, 857 registered users, more than 1.2 million users have registered and profited. Some users have enrolled in several courses, and at least 441, 052 of them have finished online courses. According to research by the

Philippine Institute on Development Studies, 56 percent of respondents cite the development and improvement of their abilities as the main reason they chose to enroll in TOP. Comparatively, 18.8% (18.8%) of respondents enrolled in TOP for professional reasons. Additionally, TOP can assist and connect with even the most vulnerable zones in the Philippines (Nazario, 2018).

Therefore, due to the mind-numbing growth required to master the competence needed to be an internationally competitive skilled worker, the National Certificate serves as a gauge of an individual's ability level. However, allowing remote-area Filipinos—especially those from indigenous communities—the chance to receive a national certificate for their traditional talents will help them maintain their culture and protect their identity as society develops.

3.3. Challenges of Blaans towards traditional weaving preservation

The traditional textile industry has been struggling since the new trends in fashion has changed for the past years. Even though they are rapidly disappearing, the Blaan people nevertheless uphold many of their traditional skills and rituals (Manipon, 2019). Many people are concerned that mabal *Tabih* will become a vanishing and fading tradition and a forgotten art of the Blaan with the passage of time. The demand for *Tabih* and traditional blouses has exploded as a result of the developing re-institutionalization of their customary knowledge. Modernization has forced some tribe members to give in. A few pupils are interested in studying under Fu Yabing and Fu Gusiye (Espejo, 2014).

More specifically, the indigenous Mindanao people depend on weaving as one of their traditional skills to meet both their community's economic requirements and the demands of their culture. Modernization thus poses a threat to their traditional customs. The erosion of community identity is more likely if there is no system in place to ensure that the customs are carried down through the generations. According to Helena Lacna Lumbos, president of the Lamlifew Tribal Women Association, "young people aren't particularly interested in weaving because it is tough and time-consuming." (Alfonso, 2002).

The traditional art has been impacted by technology and commercialization, even though weaving defines the customs and habits of the indigenous peoples. Fabric companies may now readily manipulate woven textile pattern copies. Today, bags with an indigenous design can be produced without using real materials. Additionally, the number of elderly weavers has decreased and they are getting older along with their crafts. The fact that younger generations show less interest in the continuation of their creative industries than previous generations is also concerning (The Manila Times, 2019).

On the other hand, in India, due to competition from the power loom industry, marketing issues, infrastructure limitations, and increased yarn prices, handloom weavers are having difficulty making a living. Similar factors that limit the handicrafts industry include the absence of suitable raw materials, inadequate infrastructure, a lack of operating capital, ignorance of suitable technologies, a lack of entrepreneurial abilities among artisans, and competition from manufactured goods (Press Information Bureau Government of India Ministry of Textiles, 2011).

In addition, the Indian handloom sector has a long history that dates back thousands of years. In contrast, the industry faces several issues such as low productivity, globalization, limited working capital, rapid technological development, and so on. As a result, in the modern economy, the handloom sector will have to play to its many strengths. The wise plan is to strike a balance between preserving the profession's traditional history and introducing current sophisticated technology weavers into the weaving sector. The women in Nigeria's Aso-Ofi (handwoven cloth made from loom) is also struggling. Even at that, the women artisans, generally untrained, are intensifying their efforts to guarantee aso-ofi achieves popular acceptability again. Making traditional textiles is a religion in Iseyin, Nigeria not merely an art or a job. The old town is regarded as the birthplace of aso-ofi, also known as aso-oke, which is said to have begun there centuries ago. According to the World Integrated Trade Solution, textiles imported into the nation include brocade, ankara, damask, or lace materials from China, Japan, the United States, Malaysia, and India (WITS). It is a collective pastime that has been passed down from generation to generation and must not be lost (Adebulu, 2022).

The weavers in the Philippines struggle, and so do Peru's. The textile systems that have evolved in Peru throughout the centuries provide a treasure trove of special methods, designs, patterns, and symbolic meanings. Textiles from Peru pay homage to Pachamama, Mother Earth, and show how weavers value the cycle of life, the passage of time, and our connection to other species and the natural world. The 2000-year-old Peruvian

textile legacy may be lost in this generation due to global change because there are so few elders still engaged in traditional weaving, according to the textile industry. There is also an insufficient promotion to schools to this old way of hand-loom weaving (Buskirka & Conrad, 2010).

Therefore, weavers face difficulties for numerous reasons. The traditional weaving of the Dream weavers is fading, thanks to modernization. Due to its tediousness, young generations are not as interested. Due to advanced machinery that produces fabrics faster than is typical for weaving, commercialization has also contributed to a decline in culture. This will undoubtedly disappear if it is not loved and used.

3.4. Support to preserve the weaving tradition

Due to the strong demand of Blaans for the culture and traditions of weaving to be preserved, the government, with the assistance of non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, is helping the *Tabih* Weaving regain some of its former confidence. Hence, the most skilled traditional Blaan weaver is thought to be Dulo. Her award from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts was the Gawad Manlilikha ng Bayan. Her success gave the previously unknown village recognition. The distant village of Amguo in Barangay Landan has gained consideration and some of its necessities as a result of this admiration (Ordoña, 2019).

Subsequently, under the direction of Governor Steve Solon's Sulong Tribu Program, the School of Living Traditions (SLT) in the province of Sarangani continues to carry out its curriculum. While the Local Government Unit of Polomolok, South Cotabato, led by Mayor Honey Lumayag, is eager to renovate the honorarium the LGU paid to the master weaver (Espejo, 2014). The Department of Tourism is also doing its share to help the tribes in the 12th Paradise in Region 12 not only be showcased but also to make money while maintaining their cultural practices through sustainable tourism (Amata, 2019). More of this, there are helpful non-governmental groups, such as Gina Lopez's "I LOVE Foundation," whose heart made a Wellness Village a reality in 2017. By supplying equipment to produce additional Blaan fabrics, this program has fostered culture preservation in addition to generating sustainable ecotourism (Canoy et al., 2019).

Besides, "Fadlog Tubad Blaan," remarked Maricel Salinda Kasaligan, a Blaan from Malungon, Sarangani Province. She is looking for potential partners to help restore and maintain her Blaan tribe's distinctive culture. Kasaligan claimed that Blaans require assistance in generating a living for the Blaan community, young, and the urban poor. At the same time, they must strive for long-term preservation for future generations. She went on to say that "in order to achieve this, the Blaan tribe, the local government, other cultural groups, private persons, and trade and industry must work together." "We can't do it on our own," she insisted. She also stressed that there are those that help them market, but regrettably, some take advantage of them, and she hopes that if other people want to help, they will do so from the heart, putting their self-interest aside (de Jong, 2016).

The weaving industry in the Philippines has become an age-old tradition, yet this usual history is also a type of art that is rooted in the rich culture of the Filipinos, according to Norma Respicio's latest book, "Journey of a Thousand Shuttles, The Philippine Weave." This book won the National Book Award for art in 2015. It was released in 2014 by the National Commission on Culture and the Arts and was partially supported by the US Embassy in Manila (Sembrano, 2016).

4. RESEARCH GAP

To sum up, the literature review shows that support mechanisms of stakeholders in the community are essential and crucial to the preservation and promotion of cultural traditions among the tribal communities, particularly hand weaving. Studies have shown that the challenges of modernization and commercialization have saddled handweaving. Blaans need the support of stakeholders to protect their cultural traditions, not by force but through education. Developing a recognized national competency on weaving is one possible way to uplift their culture back to the limelight amidst modernization.

The review indicates that no study was conducted on the analysis of stakeholders' support mechanisms to the development of National Certificate II Weaving. Thus, the present study is a seminal study that aimed to determine the issue position, power and priority of the various stakeholders, and their probability of support to the development of National Certificate II Weaving.

5. RESEARCH METHOD

5.1. Research design

This study employed a quantitative research design complemented with qualitative data in analyzing the support mechanisms of the various stakeholders, particularly their issue position, power and priority to the development of National Certificate II Weaving. Creswell (2014) explains a quantitative way to analyzing a concept by defining specific assumptions and using data collection to support or refute the assumptions. However, quantitative methods have limitations in that they frequently reveal only the part of an issue that can be expressed mathematically and do not completely account for on-the-ground reality. Qualitative approaches can assist address this void by giving essential first-hand experiences and contextualizing quantitative study findings. Similarly, formulating research questions for quantitative studies necessitates a thorough grasp of underlying issues, which qualitative techniques may supplement (Graf et al., 2021).

In addition, triangulation of data across qualitative and quantitative methods is an important requirement of a mixed methods design. Triangulation involves the seeking of accounts from multiple perspectives and corroboration of facts or findings from various sources. This approach uses evidence from different sources to establish or prove the findings (Pierce, 2008).

5.2. Research site

The study was conducted in Sitio Amgu-o, Barangay Landan in the Municipality of Polomolok, Province of South Cotabato. Barangay Landan is home to one of the oldest Blaan settlements in Mindanao. It is predominantly situated in Sitio Amgu-o, a far-off tribal village located at the foothills of Mt. Matutum in South Cotabato. The Blaan tribal village in Sitio Amgu-o is vigorous in its efforts to protect and preserve Blaan culture, traditions and heritage.

5.3. Research respondents and informants

The respondents of this study were the stakeholders who are concerned with the development of National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato. There were thirty (30) respondents who were asked in a face-to-face interview to answer the items in the questionnaire. They were the three (3) barangay officials of Landan; five (5) weavers of Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato; four (3) principals from public and private schools; eight (8) Technology and Livelihood Education teachers of Landan and Kinilis, Polomolok, South Cotabato; one (1) culture bearer of Sitio Amgu-o; two (2) municipal officials of Polomolok; two (2) DepEd officials of South Cotabato; two (2) TESDA officials of South Cotabato; two (2) from non-government organizations; and two (2) from the business sector of Polomolok, South Cotabato.

The respondents were selected through purposive non-probability sampling. The inclusion criteria was based on the criterion of having interest or stake in the development of National Certificate II Weaving. Non-probability sampling includes any sampling procedure (purposive, quota, or accidental) that does not result in a random selection process (Dane, 1990). Exploratory projects or studies may not require a representative sample; purposive, accidental or quota non-probability sample may be all that is needed. Purposive sampling involves selecting specific units of interest (Dane, 1990). In this study, the purposive selection of stakeholders as research respondents was guided by the consideration that they have interest or concern in the development of National Certificate II Weaving.

For the in-depth interview (IDI), the researcher identified ten (10) informants from among the 30 stakeholders. These were one (1) principal; one (1) weaver; one (1) tribal leader; one (1) barangay official; one (1) municipal official; one (1) Technology and Livelihood Education teacher; one (1) TESDA official; one (1) DepEd official; one (1) from non-government organization; and one (1) from business sector.

5.4. Instruments

For the quantitative data, this study adopted a tool developed by the University of the Philippines-National College of Public and Administration and Governance (2012) on stakeholders' analysis. This tool measures the issue position, power and priority of each stakeholder, as well as its probability of support to the development of National Certificate II Weaving. This study used a questionnaire containing a five-point scale adopted from the UP-NCPAG (2012) study.

For the qualitative data, the researcher prepared guide questions for the conduct of in-depth interview (IDI).

The objective of the IDI was to dig deep into the support mechanisms of the stakeholders and how they manifest their support to the development of National Certificate II Weaving. The IDI-generated data were integrated with the quantitative data, and the researcher tried to find out whether both data reinforce each other.

5.5. Tool of analysis for quantitative data

The responses of each stakeholder in all items contained in the questionnaire were tallied and computed using a five-point scale and the Prince Chart.

Issue position scale

Scale	Interpretation
+5	Firmly in favor of the issue and is unlikely to change
+4, +3, +2, or +1	Lower level of firmness on the stakeholder's support
½	Neutral
-4, -3, -2, or -1	Lower level of opposition
-5	Firm opposition

Power and priority scale

Scale	Range	Description	Power	Priority
5	4.50-5.00	Very High	Can veto or prevent the implementation on the development of the proposed project with the little or no interference by other stakeholders	High priority to the implementation on the proposed project
4	3.50-4.49	High	Has substantial power	Has substantial concern
3	2.50-3.49	Average	Has substantial power	Has substantial concern
2	1.50-2.49	Low	More than minimum power	Shows some concern
1	1.00-1.49	Very Low	Slight amount of power	Slight interest or concern for the development

Probability of Support

The probability of support to the proposed development of National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato was calculated using the Prince Method of Calculation. Here are the steps of Prince Method of Calculation:

Calculation 1: Issue Position times Power times Priority = Prince Score

Calculation 2: Sum of all positive scores plus ½ Neutral Scores

Calculation 3: Sum of all scores ignoring signs and parentheses

On the other hand, the probability of support indicated in the result of the Prince Method of Calculation was construed using the interpretation of probability.

Below is the process on how to calculate the probability of support to the proposed development of National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato:

Calculation 4: Probability of Support = Calculation 2 divided by Calculation 3

Interpretation of probability

Percentage	Interpretation
100%	Certain to be implemented
60%-99%	Likely to be implemented
40%-59%	Uncertain; Likely to continue being disputed without resolution
1%-39%	Unlikely to be implemented; Most likely to be killed as a proposal
0%	Never will be implemented; In case of 0% support of a proposal, there is no public policy issue

5.6. Tool of analysis for qualitative data

Qualitative data were analyzed and interpreted using content or textual analysis. The researcher looked for significant patterns, relationships or comparisons in the data obtained from in-depth interviews. The qualitative data and findings were then integrated with the quantitative data and results. This mixed data analysis strengthened the study through triangulation of methods and data sources.

Content analysis, also called textual analysis or text mining, is basically an analysis of content in the form of words, texts, transcripts of speeches or conversations, pictures, ideas, themes, or messages (Pierce, 2008). Qualitative content analysis is interpretive in nature, and essentially involves the reading of texts or contents of messages or communications to determine the extent of bias in terms of supportive, critical, or more or less neutral accounts (Pierce, 2008). Lastly, the results were translated in English.

6. DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

To gather the data needed for this study, the researcher wrote a letter, duly noted by the Thesis Adviser and the Dean of the Graduate School, asking permission to conduct the study to the gatekeepers in the research site, particularly the Municipal Mayor of Polomolok, the Barangay Captain of Landan, the tribal leader of Sitio Amgu-o, and the head of schools located within the research site. Then, a letter was sent individually to all the research respondents/informants for the conduct of the interview.

The interview was conducted in a language that was understood by the respondents/informants, with particular reference to the Blaan tribal leader, culture bearers, and weavers. With permission from the respondents/informants, interviews were recorded. During the conduct of the interview, the researcher explained the purpose of the research and instructions were made very clear to the respondents/informants.

7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The researcher followed the ethical principles and practices in the conduct of the study, such as disclosure of the purpose of the study, confidentiality of information, anonymity of the research participants, doing no harm to the participants, and respect of cultural practices (Philippine National Guidelines on Health and Health-Related Research, 2017).

During the data collection phase, it is important to explain to the research participants how the data will be used and analyzed. It is also important to inform the participants that they are involved as research collaborators. The purpose of doing research is not just to mine data and leave the research site as if the participants are mere commodities or objects. That is why the researcher has the obligation to go back to the participants after the completion of the study to present and discuss with them the findings for checking or verification (Merriam, 2008; Creswell, 2014). Likewise, the researcher takes note of the multiple perspectives of the participants, including discrepant or incongruent data.

8. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

8.1. Issue position, power, and priority of the stakeholders on the development of NC II weaving

The data for determining or measuring the issue position, the power, and the priority of the stakeholders are presented in Tables 1a, 1b, and 1c, respectively.

8.2. Issue position of the stakeholders

The stakeholders' issue position was measured using the following UP-NCPAG tool:

Table 1a: Issue position of the stakeholders

Stakeholders	Scale (M Score)	Interpretation	Remarks
DepEd - South Cotabato Heads	+4.5	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
TESDA - South Cotabato Heads	+5	Firmly in favor of the issue and is unlikely to change	AFFIRMATIVE
School Principals	+5	Firmly in favor of the issue and is unlikely to change	AFFIRMATIVE
TLE Teachers	+3.29	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
LGU Polomolok Officials	+4	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
Barangay Landan Officials	+4.67	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE

Blaan Culture Bearer	+5	Firmly in favor of the issue and is unlikely to change	AFFIRMATIVE
Blaan Weavers	+4.4	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
Concerned Non-government Organizations	+4.5	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
Concerned Business or Corporate Entities	+3.5	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE
Overall Mean	+4.39	Lower level of firmness of the stakeholder's support	AFFIRMATIVE

The figures in Table 1a show that TESDA-South Cotabato heads, School principals, and Blaan culture bearer have identical mean score of +5. This means that they are all firmly in favor of the issue and are unlikely to change their position with regards to the development of NC II Weaving. On the other hand, Barangay officials, DepEd-South Cotabato heads, concerned non-government organizations, Blaan weavers, and LGU-Polomolok officials have mean scores that range from +4 to +4.67. These five groups of stakeholders are supportive of NC II Weaving development, but the level of their firmness of support is lower. The result suggests that there is a possibility that they may change their position on the issue. The remaining two groups of stakeholders, the concerned business or corporate entities (+3.5) and the TLE teachers (+3.29) have mean scores below +4, but they are also firm, albeit at a much lower level, of their support to the development of NC II Weaving. The position they take on the issue may change in the future, but the likelihood is a bit lesser. Notably, no one of the ten groups of stakeholders is opposed to the NC II Weaving development.

The overall mean score of +4.39 across the ten groups of stakeholders leads to a strong inference that all the stakeholders firmly support, at varying levels, the development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato.

8.3. Power of the stakeholders

The researcher used the UP-NCPAG tool in measuring the power of the stakeholders relative to the development of NC II Weaving as follows:

Table 1b: Power of the stakeholders

Stakeholders	Scale (M Score)	Description	Interpretation
DepEd - So. Cot. Officials	4	High	Has substantial power
TESDA - South Cotabato officials	5	Very High	Can veto or prevent the implementation on the development of the proposed project with little or no interference by other stakeholders
School Principals	4.33	High	Has substantial power
TLE Teachers	3.43	High	Has substantial power
LGU Polomolok Officials/Heads	4.67	Very High	Can veto or prevent the implementation on the development of the proposed project with little or no interference by other stakeholders
Barangay Officials/Personnel	4.33	High	Has substantial power
Blaan Culture Bearers	5	Very High	Can veto or prevent the implementation on the development of the proposed project with little or no interference by other stakeholders
Blaan Weavers	4	High	Has substantial power
Concerned Non-government organizations	3	Average	Has substantial power
Concerned Business or Corporate entities	3	Average	Has substantial power
Overall Mean Score	4.08	High	Has substantial power

As shown in Table 1b, three groups of stakeholders claimed that they have 'Very High' power, namely: TESDA-South Cotabato officials; LGU Polomolok officials/heads; and Blaan culture bearer. This is interpreted as having the power to veto or prevent the implementation on the development of NC II Weaving with little or no interference by other stakeholders. Such power could also be used to throw support to the development of NC II Weaving with a very high likelihood that the other stakeholders will acquiesce.

Five groups of stakeholders believed that they have 'High' power. These are: DepEd - South Cotabato officials; School principals; TLE teachers; Barangay officials/personnel; and Blaan weavers. It means that these stakeholders possess substantial power to exert strong influence on the development of NC II Weaving, either blocking it or pushing hard for it.

The remaining two groups of stakeholders (concerned non-government organizations and concerned

business or corporate entities) expressed the view that their power is also substantial, but at a lower level. The data suggest that these stakeholders may significantly influence the development of NC II Weaving.

Under the legal environment in Philippine context, the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), pursuant to RA 7796, has the authority to, among others, approve skills standards and tests, develop an accreditation system for institutions involved in middle-level manpower development, and fund programs and projects for technical education and skills development. From a power perspective, it is quite clear that TESDA is a critical player with reference to the development of NC II Weaving.

The local government unit (LGU) of the municipality of Polomolok is also a very critical player. Without the support of LGU-Polomolok, in terms of logistics and policy support, the proposed development of NC II Weaving could go rough sailing. Obviously, the municipal government exerts strong influence over barangay officials under its jurisdiction, as well as to the tribal leaders. As mentioned by Espejo (2014), LGU-Polomolok, under the leadership of Mayor Honey Lumayag, is willing to restore the honorarium that the local government unit extended to the master weaver.

The Blaan culture bearer is likewise considered as a significant player since he is one of the gatekeepers of the tribal community. His influence on the preservation and promotion of Blaan traditions, cultural practices, and indigenous knowledge is considered strongly significant. Hence, without his support, initiatives leading towards the development of NC II Weaving may not gain any foothold.

8.4. Priority of the stakeholders

The researcher used the UP-NCPAG tool in measuring the priority of the stakeholders relative to the development of NC II Weaving.

Table 1c: Priority of the stakeholders in the development of weaving

Stakeholders	Scale (M Score)	Description	Interpretation
DepEd - South Cot. officials	3	Average	Has substantial concern
TESDA - South Cot.officials	2	Low	Shows some concern
School Principals	5	Very High	Highest priority to the implementation on the development of the proposed project
TLE Teachers	4	High	Has substantial concern
LGU Polomolok Officials/Heads	4.67	Very High	Highest priority to the implementation on the development of the proposed project
Barangay Officials/Personnel	4.67	Very High	Highest priority to the implementation on the development of the proposed project
Blaan Culture Bearer	5	Very High	Highest priority to the implementation on the development of the proposed project
Blaan Weavers	5	Very High	Highest priority to the implementation on the development of the proposed project
Concerned Non-government Organizations	3.5	High	Has substantial concern
Concerned Business or Corporate Entities	4	High	Has substantial concern
Overall Mean Score	4.55	HIGH	Has substantial concern

As shown in Table 1c, five out of the ten groups of stakeholders, have mean scores that fall within the 'Very High' scale. These are: LGU Polomolok officials/heads; Blaan culture bearer; School principals; Blaan weavers; and Barangay officials/personnel. This means that these five groups of stakeholders give highest priority to the development of NC II Weaving. It is remarkable to note that LGU Polomolok officials/heads and Blaan culture bearer are very critical players in terms of power, while the School principals, Blaan weavers, and Barangay officials claimed that they have substantial power.

Three groups of stakeholders - TLE teachers, concerned NGOs, and concerned business or corporate entities - fall within the 'High' scale. This is interpreted as having substantial concern in terms of priority they give to the development of NC II Weaving. Substantial concern could likely be translated into giving strong support to the development of NC II Weaving.

DepEd - South Cotabato officials and TESDA - South Cotabato officials have mean scores of 3 (Average) and 2 (Low), respectively. This suggests that DepEd South Cotabato officials also show substantial concern to the development of NC II Weaving, while TESDA - South Cotabato officials only show some concern. It is significant to note that TESDA - South Cotabato officials are very critical actors from a power perspective

because TESDA is vested by law with the authority to, among other things, approve skills standards and tests and fund programs and projects for technical education and skills development. It is crucial, then, for the other groups of stakeholders to act purposively in the same direction with strong collaborative efforts in pursuit of the same goal. What is consoling is that, TESDA - South Cotabato officials show some concern. Though not substantial at the moment, this concern could be upped at the right time with the solid support of the other stakeholders.

8.5. Probability of support of the stakeholders to the Development of National Certificate II in weaving

The researcher used the Prince Method of Calculation to determine the probability of support of the stakeholders to the proposed development of National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato.

Table 2: Probability of support based on the prince method of calculation

Project	Sum of All Positive Scores Plus ½ Neutral Scores	Sum of All Scores Ignoring Signs and Parentheses	Probability of Support Scale	Remarks
Development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato	741.31	741.31	100%	Certain to be implemented

The results of the calculation using the Prince Method, as presented in Table 2, show a 100% probability of support from the various groups of stakeholders. This denotes that the proposition of developing NC II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato is certain to be implemented. Moreover, implementers can expect very promising support from the stakeholders to pursue this project.

The very high probability of support makes sense when juxtaposed to the earlier results on the issue position, power, and priority of the stakeholders. For one, all the groups of stakeholders are firmly in favor of the issue, i.e., all of them are supportive of the proposed development of NC II Weaving. For another, all the stakeholders have power, individually and collectively, that can be harnessed to influence policy making or decision making on the proposed development of NC II Weaving. Furthermore, the overall score across the ten groups of stakeholders, in terms of priority, is high which denotes substantial concern.

The biggest challenge is for the Blaen gatekeepers - the Blaen tribal leaders, culture bearers, and weavers - to act with dispatch the compliance of the requirements, particularly the development of a curriculum prescribed by TESDA, in accordance with established procedures. As proponents, they may solicit technical assistance from the other stakeholders and from individuals who have technical expertise on curriculum development.

The quantitative data results clearly suggest that most of the stakeholders would really want to extend support in their own ways to the development of NC II Weaving, due to the high demand of culture preservation. As pointed out by Espejo (2014), many are worried that *mabal tabih* will become a “vanishing and dying tradition” and a lost art of the Blaen. The results also find support from Canoy et al. (2019) and Amata (2019) who stated that there are a lot of stakeholders who are working hand-in-hand with the Blaen community to fulfill their needs such as the Local Government of Polomolok’s School of Living Tradition (SLT) in Sitio Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato led by National Commission on Culture and Arts’ recipient of *Gawad ng Manlilikha ng Bayan* Fu Yabing.

9. SUPPORT MECHANISMS OF THE STAKEHOLDERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL CERTIFICATE II WEAVING

One informant, who is a Blaen culture bearer of Sitio Amgu-o, has been actively involved in pushing for the development of NC II Weaving for three years now. He has been cooperating with potential agencies about weaving. He emphasized that learners’ readiness towards the implementation of the program is a must. How he can show his support and how he has been involved are captured in the following statements, respectively:

“First, we support the upright loom weaving for NC II with the assistance of PTRI-DOST, NCCA, DOST. Second, students must be willing and have interest in the upright weaving. Third, students

should pass the process of upright loom weaving. And lastly, students have to decide if she/he wants to undergo with the full weaving process or short-term process.”

“I got involved in making the weaving guide for 3 years. But this is not specific for Amgu-o weaving. Weavers who involve in making the guidelines will first be given assessment to have the National Certificate. The weaver expert in upright weaving will be hired as resource person to train the persons who make request for upright weaving.”

The advocacy and commitment of the Blaans culture bearer informant for the development of NC II Weaving finds support from a Blaans weaver participant. She pointed out that the help of the Blaans weavers is through promotion and helping other Blaans by showing the products that they have made to uplift the tradition of the tribe to those Blaans who are no longer that familiar to their tradition.

“Of course, our tribe is not that known to everyone. Prioritize those Blaans who are not familiar with the tradition. We will also provide them project, activities that Blaans do . . . so that they will also be uplifted.”

The local government units (LGUs), both at the municipal level and barangay level, have their distinct mechanisms of support to the proposed development of NC II Weaving. The participant from LGU-Polomolok mentioned that the LGU have already provided funding support for the concreting of roads so that Amgu-o will be accessible to people who would like to visit or help the community. He said:

“. . . we have funding support for the reconstruction of the concrete roads going to the area. So, as you can see, the Amgu-o can now be accessed through concreted roads through government agencies . . . through the line and government agencies and networking activities.”

Furthermore, the informant representing LGU-Landan explained the support mechanism of the Barangay Council to the proposed development of NC II Weaving. He stated that the Council could support through sharing their ideas and knowledge to those people who would like to know the traditional weaving of the Blaans. Thus, the knowledge should be put into action and present the product so that people could benefit from this. Basically, it gives livelihood to the people in the community.

“The help that we could offer, knowledge, perhaps.. Yes, knowledge to the children. What are the ideas?”

“We already have knowledge, knowledge, and in that knowledge, not only knowledge but it should be put into action and that action, they will know that they have done and will present it to the people or in public that, perhaps, on the next day, it’ll be beneficial and it’ll be a form of livelihood like what happen to Amgu-o or another place . . . Lamlibaw, Klinanon, they have tried it. Those who joined the training and the mothers who are not doing anything and they’re being taught by the tribe for their own benefits. There are a lot of visitors whom they had met and can really help them.”

Facilities, tools, equipment, venue, and students are the mechanisms through which the institution can support the implementation of the NC II Weaving, according to another informant who is a principal of a private school and who is also the present Head of the Tribal Leaders in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato. His views are articulated in the following quotes:

“My support is we have facilities. There are students, of course, we have students.”

“. . . you know those facilities, tools, equipment, and venue. The students, of course, we are not just encouraging the tribe, but you know what, I keep telling you, anybody, not only the tribe, but we have to look beyond ourself, beyond this present time. So, what are those practices before, the

conqueror came. I do believe that it will be beneficial to many of the students both tribes and non-tribals because we are trying to advocate who we really are before the conqueror came."

The views of the aforementioned school principal are backed up by a Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) teacher participant. He really likes the project to be pushed though. Financial support is not possible since their teachers in the area just receive allowance once a year. The support that they can extend is motivation to their learners to embrace their culture and tradition.

"Maybe, not only maybe, but I really, I really like to push through this because we need NC II Weaving here."

"I can't say financial support because we are also incapable of financial support. Perhaps, is, the way to, that, our students need motivation so that we can preserve the culture. Actually, only elders know this skill. But, the bead-making, this (shows the beadworks), the kids have mastered this."

Research informants representing the non-government organization (NGO) and the business sector agreed that they can offer advertisements and school improvements because they are indirectly involved in the development of National Certificate II Weaving. The NGO informant said that they can extend support by advertising the project using tarpaulins and fliers.

"As a service-oriented organization (Rotary Club of Polomolok 101), we can support through publicity. We can help by providing maybe tarps and fliers with announcements regarding the offering of NCII Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato."

The business sector informant, on the other hand, mentioned that they can aid through giving armchairs and making social media posts to promote local tourism in the area. His remarks are quoted below:

"It does not have direct support mechanisms to the Development of National Certificate II in Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato. The organization indirectly supports the constituents of Amgu-o through education support by helping in school improvements (giving of armchairs) and also promoting the Blaan Wellness and Tribal Village through social media posts and good comments so that more tourists will visit the place and will see and appreciate especially the weaving talent of the Blaans."

On the other hand, an informant from TESDA-South Cotabato observed that there has not yet a program about weaving. She remarked: *"There's another weaving, but on the flowers and the corn, but, not the Tnalak. I don't know if there's somebody pursuing it."* Then, she added that this kind of effort is very hard to start with because assessment tools and course curriculum will be made and a long process is expected after this program is being implemented. But, of course, they should be assured that resources such as people, expert, and finances should be given to them before developing the curriculum. Her comments are encapsulated hereunder:

"Since, we are going to develop assessment tools. So, I told you a while ago, you cannot develop an assessment tool unless we have to develop first the curriculum. Yes, curriculum first. Curriculum development, and, then, in the curriculum, assessment tools should be involved . . . Then, of course, people, resources, and expert, industry expert."

The DepEd-South Cotabato informant is not yet familiar with the proposed development of NC II Weaving, so they have not been involved yet. But in case this is being realized, they will immediately coordinate with TESDA. She reflected: *"Probably, I can use ALS (Alternative Learning System) as a stepping stone for our students to come for a formal training through TESDA NC II program."*

Based on the responses of the research informants, it is established that they are very willing to support the proposed development of NC II Weaving, directly or indirectly, depending on the capacity and the availability

of the resources of their institution. Only few of them have knowledge on this matter, which is why only few people are involved in the development of NC II Weaving. However, varied support mechanisms are necessary to extract the fullest potential of this proposal. Some of them can be curriculum developers who should work hand-in-hand to create a very comprehensive curriculum. Others can offer services, equipment and tools. Besides, words of encouragement and knowledge-sharing are very imperative to help other people boost their confidence to be hopeful of their culture and tradition, especially, young Blaans, who will be the next generation of weavers. Further, advertisement and publicity will also be a great help since the world is already closer to one another through internet and we could communicate to people immediately in just a click. Lastly, funding of the government will always be a priority because projects and programs won't be realized once the developer is financially incapable. These stakeholders have shown that they can be partners of development.

10. MANIFESTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS' SUPPORT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL CERTIFICATE II IN WEAVING

The research informants shared different expressions of their support to the development of National Certificate II Weaving. Each of them plays a vital role in the success of the proposed program or project. Each effort should be noticed and given recognition because it will also give them the opportunity to participate and be a part of this new journey.

Foremost, the proposed development of NC II Weaving will have to pass through TESDA, the lead government agency in assessing skills. The agency admitted that the National Certificate II curriculum will be very difficult to start with and it takes a brilliant brain to put this up. This should undergo many processes before it gets to the reality. The curriculum that will be made by the master weaver or expert will be submitted to the division, but if the proposal is presented properly, this will be elevated to the TESDA central office. The latter will then provide funds for development of curriculum.

“Yes, if there'll be no brain to put this up, it would be very hard to start with. Since the development of, its curriculum development, the central office usually, our central office manages, handles it. But, if the proposed paper is good, we can elevate it.”

“... if the proposal's good, the central office will fund it. So, we are going to gather those industry experts, that's it, and then, we'll make a process to come up with. So, usually, we have Development Curriculum. They will facilitate it.”

It appears from the above quotes that TESDA-South Cotabato informant is emphasizing the tedious process or procedure that one has to go through on the matter of curriculum development. However, the office is willing to recommend and submit to the TESDA central office, if the proposal is good. This manifestation of support should be taken as a positive note for the other stakeholders to push hard for the development of NC II Weaving.

The LGU-Polomolok informant highlighted the point that they manifest their support to the proposed development of NC II Weaving by integrating it in the Annual Development Plan and Annual Investment Plan of Barangay Landan, and eventually in the Comprehensive Development Plan of the municipality. His views are quoted below:

“Well, we will integrate that into, of course, in the barangay development plan of Barangay Landan. It is very timely now that we are in the process of updating the barangay plans and Landan is among those barangays in our priority list for updating the local development investment program or annual investment program in the barangay plans. So, we will integrate an amount there to be funded by the barangays and eventually by the municipal government in our local development and investment program. So, integrating barangay development plans for them, and eventually to the comprehensive development plans of the municipal.”

The informant of the Barangay Council of LGU-Landan asserted that he would extend any form of help that he could. He noted that only two members of their Barangay Council are non-Blaan. Another manifestation of

support is through personal development such as attending seminars and conferences about weaving. This helps weavers to expand their horizon and knowledge when it comes to the traditional skill. The Blaen culture bearer expressed his views: “Well, we show our support as weavers through attending trainings, seminars, workshop, and conferences. Whenever invitation sent to our association, we cooperate and participate.”

For the school principal, TLE teacher, and Blaen culture bearer, co-monitoring, facilitating, helping the people who are in the authority and aiming for culture preservation are the other ways of manifesting support to the development of NC II Weaving. The school principal, in particular, claimed:

“I, whoever facilitates this project, I will work hand in hand with that person. . . co-monitoring and facilitating the project into from start to fulfillment . . . ah . . . to finish something like that of the finish of the program . . .”

Another way to show the support to the development of National Certificate II Weaving is through looking for assistance for the learners once it is being performed through the help of Alternative Learning System (ALS) of the Department of Education. The DepEd-South Cotabato informant was optimistic in saying: “We can look for an aid in the program of ALS-DepEd to support students in the community.”

The informants from the NGO and the business sector, as earlier mentioned, will manifest their support through promotion and publicity. This will help a lot in promoting local tourism and interest in Blaen culture and tradition.

Hence, overall, the stakeholders manifest their support to the development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o in different and multiple ways, depending on the nature of their job or position.

When asked about the extent of their support to the development of NC II Weaving, the research informants shared the common view that the Blaen community is worthy of this program since they are longing for this for a long time now. All of them expressed their support, in one way or another, to the program or project.

A DepEd-South Cotabato informant has suggested that they could spearhead the trainings. TESDA-South Cotabato has committed to recommend to the TESDA central office if the proposal is good, particularly on curriculum development.

In addition, the Blaen culture bearer and the school principal in Amgu-o have rated 9/10 or 90%/100% the support that they can contribute to this proposal. An informant from the Barangay Council of Landan, and a TLE teacher informant unswervingly said that they would give their one hundred percent support.

LGU-Polomolok has guaranteed that their support is to the maximum because they are worthy of the support. The research informant said:

“ Well, it’s to the maximum because they are worthy of our support because of their living conditions, the way we live, the way they act. You can really see that they really need the help. They deserve nothing less from the government. As far as the Local Government Unit of Polomolok is concerned, we are prepared to extend the necessary assistance from this onward.”

In summary, the extent of the stakeholders' support is varied, from limited to full or maximum. On the whole, it is significant to highlight the fact that all the stakeholders have the willingness to extend support to the proposed development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o.

11. REASONS OF STAKEHOLDERS’ SUPPORT

Norma Respicio’s latest work, “Journey of a Thousand Shuttles, The Philippine Weave”, discusses weaving in the country not only as an age-old tradition but also as an art rooted in the rich Filipino culture. This book was published by the National Commission for Culture and Arts in 2014 and won the 2015 National Book Award for the art category (Sembrano, 2016).

In line with this, the research informants cited several reasons for their involvement in the development of National Certificate II Weaving. For the informants who belong to the Blaen tribe, their main reason for getting involved or engaged is primarily for culture preservation. They want to learn the skill, increase the number of weavers, and advocate their own origin. They have started without other’s help but, of course, if there will be help from outside of the community, they will welcome it wholeheartedly. Along the same vein, the projection of Blaen culture and tradition to the national and international arena is also an utmost concern.

A Blaán informant, who is a principal of a private school, at the same time the Head of the Tribal Leaders, made candid remarks:

“Because it is very important. This is about the tribal craft, art and craft . . . first of all, I am also afraid that these practices might get lost with our youth. The second thing is, that it’s co-beneficial for non-Blaán youth to see that we have a history, long history . . . I think, we are also evolving in our technology, expertise, and intelligence. If this will vanish, what landmark is left for us? . . . So, I am like that . . . even before, I didn’t have any support when I put up this. I didn’t have any support from the government, and when I encouraged the weavers, Fu Yabing and others, they started here. All the weavers started here. So now, if there’s help coming, why not?”

A Blaán TLE teacher informant was emphatic on the necessity and urgency of preserving Blaán culture and tradition. He asserted:

“. . . we want to preserve what we are. Since, the generation, if you’re going to ask me, if I want it to be started tomorrow? I would really like it. Because, I pity the weavers in our community because they’re already old like Fu Yabing. We don’t know yet when will be the end of their life. All I want is, as long as they are still here, there are already children who learnt from them”.

A Blaán member of the Barangay Council of Landan shared his thoughts on why the proposed development of NC II Weaving has to be supported. He said:

“There is a need to support because, first, our tribe is given the importance, they were given importance. The discovery, the discovery of the knowledge that’s hidden for how many years, is now revealed in public. So, this is the time to share, not only in Barangay Landan, but, in our country as well. Just recently, Sir Jao met the President.”

A Blaán culture bearer informant highlighted the need to have more weavers and to make Blaán weaving known outside. On the other hand, a Blaán weaver informant raised the need of sharing the knowledge to the members of her tribe. Their observations are quoted, respectively, below:

“We need to involve to increase the number of weavers in the local and national. To introduce the Blaán weaving since the Blaán weaving is not yet known worldwide.”
“Of course, I am part of the tribe, we have a lot of relatives, we need to share the knowledge to them.”

An informant from LGU-Polomolok presented a policy perspective. He remarked:

“The LGU is mandated to extend the necessary assistance in the form of development programs to the area. This is our mandate being a Local Government Unit. So we have an obligation to our constituents. They, being the constituents, we have an obligation to extend the necessary development program for them. Not only that because . . . our brother Blaáns they belong to the low-income families, and, so they need the assistance of the Local Government Units. That’s the primary reason why we are to extend the necessary assistance to them.”

Similarly, there are also stakeholders who will really put their best foot forward because it is the function of the institution to provide training and develop the skills like the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Technical and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). The statements of DepEd-South Cotabato and TESDA-South Cotabato informants are herein quoted, respectively:

“We can ensure that our teachers-volunteers or ALS teachers can help in promoting the program and we can even spearhead the training itself.”

“Ah, TESDA’s involvement is when it comes to skills development. It is really the primary government agency that addresses skills development. That’s the best answer there.”

The research informants were also asked about the expected benefits that will accrue once the proposed development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o is being realized. They enumerated several benefits. The advocacy of the Blaans’ Weaving Education will be promoted not only within the community but, as well as, to non-Blaans in which the younger generation will be the primary vessel of the knowledge that will be shared to them. This will also boost the local economy in terms of local tourism, livelihood, and job creation. The expected benefits are encapsulated in the following relevant quotes from some participants:

Principal of a private school and the Head of Tribal Elders: *“So the benefit of that, first of all, our skills will be known and then, it will pass to the next generation. And then, those non-Blaan students or youth, they will be encouraged to even advocate it if they will not be going to practice it. And of course, it’s going to be, you know, this is already a tourist spot, it also encourages . . . economic boosting and livelihood . . .”*

TLE teacher : *It helps us, in the life of the Blaans because, if you know how to do it, if you have NC II, you make one, you’ll have financial income.”*

Blaan Weaver: *“...Of course, we could get something like SSS, Philhealth, these can help you. We will have free medications, right Ma’am, for the kids, most especially, for the elders like us.*

Concerned NGO: *“The people of Amgu-o will surely benefit from this proposed NCII Weaving by preserving the skills of only a few Blaans and passing to the younger ones. If the younger ones will know and learn the weaving skills, it can help them financially soon.”*

Concerned business sector: *“The expected benefits once the proposed development of National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o is realized are the following: more skilled Blaans in weaving and those who aspire to become skilled weavers may be served, it will improve tourism, it will provide sustainable livelihood in the place.”*

LGU-Polomolok: *“It will, well, in line with the IPRA Law, in line with the Republic Act 8371 other known as the Indigenous Peoples’ Rights Act of 1997. This is among the provisions in the IPRA Law for the preservation of the rich cultural heritage of the Indigenous People and among them is the tribal attire. So, we have to be proud with our tribe and we have to be proud with the way we dressed.”*

It is quite clear, therefore, that the reasons articulated by the stakeholders for their involvement or engagement in the proposed development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o and the expected benefits that will accrue thereof are quite essential and provide strong justifications for the realization of the proposed project or program.

12. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study was designed to analyze the support mechanisms of the stakeholders in the development of the National Certificate II Weaving in Amgu-o, Landan, Polomolok, South Cotabato.

12.1. RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the results or findings and conclusions made, the following recommendations are hereby proposed:

- The concerned stakeholders shall take affirmative actions to develop a comprehensive curriculum, like inviting all the possible stakeholders to a conversation so that the services, resources or any form of support would be properly disseminated to the potential stakeholders.
- The Blaans gatekeepers (Tribal leader, Culture bearers, and Weavers) of Sitio Amgu-o should actively

collaborate and spearhead efforts towards the development of the curriculum, in accordance to the traditional weaving, without disturbing the authenticity of the craft so that the potential stakeholders could extend their help in anyway.

- The stakeholders should focus on raising and looking for support not only within their institutions but support from external stakeholders.
- The authenticity and preservation of the culture should be the primary reason for doing the extra miles.

12.2. CONCLUSIONS

This study is an analysis of the stakeholders' support mechanisms to the proposed development of NC II Weaving in Amgu-o using convergent or concurrent mixed methods research design. In this design, it is fundamental to establish whether the qualitative data reinforce and validate the quantitative data.

The quantitative data that were generated from the thirty (30) respondents who answered the survey questionnaires reveal the following results. First, the data on the issue position of the stakeholders indicate that all the stakeholders firmly support, at varying levels, the development of NC II Weaving. Second, the data on the stakeholders' power led to an inference that all the stakeholders have power, individually and collectively, that can be tapped or mobilized to influence policy making in the proposed development of NC II Weaving. Third, the data on the priority of the stakeholders show that the overall mean across the ten groups of stakeholders is 'High', which means that the stakeholders, collectively, have substantial concern for the development of NC II Weaving. Fourth, the data on the probability of support of the stakeholders reveal a very high probability of support, which suggests that the proposed development of NC II Weaving is certain to be implemented.

The qualitative data that were generated through in-depth interviews of ten research informants complemented the findings of the qualitative results. The qualitative data provide significant findings that validate the results of quantitative analysis. First, the stakeholders are very willing to extend support to the proposed development of NC II Weaving, directly or indirectly, at various levels contingent on the capacity of their institution. Their mechanisms of support are multiple which include services, equipment, tools, knowledge-sharing, advertisement, and publicity. Second, the data reveal that the stakeholders have different ways of manifesting their support to the development of NC II Weaving. Among these are integration in the Barangay Annual Development Plan and Investment Plan and in the Municipal Comprehensive Development Plan, recommendation of the proposal to the TESDA central office, co-monitoring, facilitating, helping the people who are in the authority and aiming for culture preservation, spearheading trainings, seeking assistance, and promotion. Third, the qualitative information indicate that the stakeholders have legitimate reasons to support the proposed development of NC II weaving. The foremost reason is the preservation of Blaang culture and tradition. Other reasons include promotion of local tourism, job generation, livelihood, and financial windfall.

Based on the analysis of this research, it is clearly established that the qualitative data and findings reinforced and validated the quantitative data and findings. No incongruencies or contradictions were found within and between the two sets of data. The study has sufficiently met the requisite of trustworthiness.

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