

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted at Nakiangan, Abatan, Buguias Benguet to Document the practice of Denet .

Specifically, it aimed to determine the communicated values of Denet among the farmers; to determine its perceived significance to the farmers, environment, and to the community; to determine the changes occurred to the ritual and to determine the challenges/threats in performing Denet ritual.

There were two manbunongs in the community who were chosen as the key informants of the study. Other information about the ritual was also gathered from 30 farmers who had requested for the performance of Denet ritual in their garden/farm.

Using descriptive statistics to interpret the data, it was found out that there are values being communicated in Denet and the practice is significant to their livelihood, community and environment so they want to sustain the preservation of the practice.

It is then therefore important that the farmers in Nakiangan should continue practicing Denet. Further, compilation of Denet prayers should be done in order not to be forgotten. Lastly, more studies on Denet ritual should be conducted in some parts of Buguias to validate and strengthen the findings of this study.



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INTRODUCTION

Rationale

Modernization is the word that describes the world today, the development of new technologies affects the lives of the people. People adapt new ideas, and develop new views towards community issues. According to Keith (1983), traditions, cultures and indigent practices which mark the history and beginning of our development seem to be losing their traces.

History tells us that before the Philippines was colonized and influenced by the other foreigners who came in the Philippines many years ago, Filipinos were said to be rich in culture. Filipinos have their own traditional beliefs and practices which are performed during thanks giving and other occasions.

In Benguet, particularly in Buguias, there are numerous traditional beliefs and practices that were handed down by our ancestors. *Sangbo, Cañao, Pakde and Denet* are some of the traditional practices that are mostly performed in Buguias. But today, some practices have become obsolete and are being altered because the farmers have been acculturated with some modern ways. Some no longer believe in traditional ways. Financial limitation is also one factor that affects the gradual disappearance of these practices. Before, people can afford to perform such practices even if it requires a lot of animals to be butchered, but today, most farmers they could no longer afford to butcher big animals like pigs and cows.

Denet is one of the rituals of Buguias that is still being practiced by the farmers frequently. It is a ritual performed by appealing to the gods and goddesses to give good graces and control over nature to protect the crops of farmers from insect pests and



diseases. This is done by the farmers in Buguias, either after planting or before harvesting.

It could easily be perceived that modernization may contribute to the gradual disappearance of traditional practices over time. The practice *Denet* serves as a channel for farmers in sharing indigenous practices with each other, and as claimed by Baucas (2003), this practice also brings progress to the farmers and can cure illness. In order for the practice not to be forgotten, the study was designed to keep record of the practice of farmers in Nakiangan, Abatan, Buguias, Benguet.

Statement of the Problem

Generally the study documented *Denet* and its communicated values among the farmers in Nakiangan, Abatan, Buguias, Benguet

Specifically, it answered the following:

1. What is *Denet* and its origin?
2. How *Denet* is being practiced and what are the symbolical meanings of the processes done?
3. What are the communicated values in *Denet*?
4. What are the perceived significance of *Denet*
 - a. to the farmers?
 - b. to the environment, and
 - c. to the community?
5. What are the changes in the performance of *Denet*?
6. What are the challenges being encountered in practicing *Denet*?



Objectives of the Study

Generally the study aimed to document the practice *Denet*.

Specifically, it:

1. Narrated the origin of *Denet*
2. Described how *Denet* is being practiced and the symbolical meanings of the processes done.
3. Determined the communicated values in *Denet*
4. Identified the perceived significance of *Denet* to the farmers, environment and community
5. Determined the changes in performing *Denet*
6. Determined the challenges being encountered in practicing *Denet*

Importance of the Study

This research may serve as a reference material to the barangay officials of Nakiangan about *Denet*. It may also serve as reference for other farmers who don't know the practice for them to understand and appreciate it.

Also, the results of the study may serve as an information material for the young generation who does not know enough about the practice. The practice of *Denet* does not only serve as a channel for sharing indigenous practices but also for learning the values that may have been communicated by the practice. Lastly, this may serve as reference material to communication students and to those who will be conducting related research.



Scope and Limitations

The study focused on the practice *Denet*, its values being communicated, its perceived significance to the farmers, environment and to the community.



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Characteristics of Rituals

According to Katelyn *et.al* (2009), ritual is performed by a leader of some sort (has a lot of knowledge/status or priest) it is attended by a community/group of people and it has a structure made up of rites with sacred object that has a symbolic meaning.

Moreover, according to Fiar-od (2009), Rituals is a systems of cultural rites to preserve the environment, it is addressed to deities, environmental or ancestral spirits as helpers to control any natural phenomenon and is being performed with utmost respect of seniority rule anchored on the COE's unique hierarchical structure and is also being hosted by individuals or by a group.

Traditional Practices

The Benguet inhabitants have several rituals that they perform occasionally and when it becomes necessary. These rituals are their folk medicine, and they can perform these rituals for their own social and economic uplift (Baucas, 2003).

According to Baucas (2003), Benguet tribes believe that their gods, goddesses and spirits can only assist and favour them if they perform appropriate rituals.

Meanwhile, according to Fiar-od (2009), Cordillera rituals have been handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth, even when the Americans came and introduced Christianity. With the Igorots' competence of their Indigenous knowledge, such rituals are structured even today as to steps and procedures per Se, in application of the customary laws, indigenous knowledge, and their Christian belief as well.



Belief System in Rituals

According to Sacla (1987), the Ibaloy and Kankanaey believe in the existence of the sky world and underworld spirits. The sky world spirits believed to own the bounties of this earth such as gold, bronze, copper, iron, animals, fishes and plants, while the underworld spirits are the keepers of these riches.

It is also held that the sky world spirits share these bounties to those who believe in them and withhold these to those offend them. The underworld spirits share power in dispensing of these bounties so that man's quest for these riches without honouring these spirits offends them. When the spirits are offended they become vengeful and may cause sickness, death, misfortune and poverty to man. The victims of these malevolent spirits must perform rituals to appease the unseen spirits (Sacla, 1987).

Through out the ages, the farmers' top enemies are the locusts, rats, insects and other unnamed plant disease. The control of these infestations was serious problems to the farmers Be Cause of the lack of scientific control of these pests and diseases. When these infestations became rampant until beyond control, the people believe it to be caused by the spirits. They further believe that the prevalence of rodents, insects and other diseases are attributed to the disturbed spirits during working period.

The people also believe that the spirits have the power to call and spread out these pests and diseases to infest the farm. In order to stop these infestations, the farmers resort to the use of rituals to appease the offended spirits and request the said spirits to call back the pests and diseases (Sacla, 1987).



According to Sacla (1987), their belief of appeasing the spirits to void and be free of misfortune inflicted upon man resulted to a belief system which became the basis of the healing and thanksgiving rituals. These rituals became parts of the thought ways and life ways of the people.

Meanwhile, according to Allad-iw (2005), Among the Kankanaey of Kibungan, Benguet, they believe that the bile-reading practice persists as this is performed in rituals related to their lives as indigenous people. Patricio Bokilis, a 60 year old elder in the town of Kibungan, explained to NORDIS how the elders in their area read the bile of a sacrificed animal based on its position or size. If there is a good sign, there is also a bad sign based on the interpretation of the bile. These are the *beded*, *pokdos*, *kelwed*, and *paas*. The *beded* is when the bile appears to be blackish. Any ritual with such bile is not good as it symbolize a failure of achieving the purpose of the ritual, Bokilis added.

If the bile of the offered animal is hanging from the liver, it is called *pokdos*. This is a bad sign as it symbolizes that the person for whom the ritual was performed might give up before achieving the purpose of the offering. Another bad omen is the *kelwad* where the tip of the bile is pointing to either the left or right side. This symbolizes that the purpose of the ritual will not be achieved because the acts are not directed for its achievement. The *paas*, on the other hand, symbolizes a bad omen as the bile has no water.

When the bile of the offered animal shows any of the bad signs, the elders will make another offering until the bile of the offered animal manifests any of the good signs, based on the position or size of the bile. Bokilis claims that they usually have the good omen based on the bile of the added animal or animals.



Rites and Rituals

Numerous ceremonies and rituals are performed to implore the deities during important events like birth, marriage, death and other celebrations. These deities are also invoked for good health and bountiful harvest, for the termination of an illness befalling a family member and for voiding an evil omen. Most of the time, these rituals necessitate the butchering of appropriate sacrificial animals and the drinking of tapey or wine. The chanting of the appropriate prayers by the *manbunong* is never absent in the ceremonies, (Cordillera Schools Group Inc. 2000).

According to Baucas (2003), most rituals require more than two animals, several kinds of ritual materials including the food to be consumed. Other rituals will just require an animal and few ritual materials.

Meanwhile, according to Allad-iw (2005), the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera have rituals and rites performed in connection with their lifestyle and life cycles. These are performed in connection with birth, marriage, sickness, death, agricultural, and even political and economic activities. Community holidays, based on their declaration, are observed with a specific period of time and taboos imposed.

These rites and rituals are the people's means of communing with Kabunian, the Igorot god, with their dead ancestors, or with the spirits in their environs. The bile of the animal offered, as interpreted by indigenous priest or elder, determines the success or failure of the prayer or the ritual.

Denet Ritual

According to Sacla (1987), after planting, the farmer expects a bountiful harvest, while the farmer knew that his good harvest is dependent on the care of the plants, still he



expects more harvest and so, he consults the elders for possibilities. An elder consulted in this matter recommends the performance of *denet*. This is the ritual performed by appealing to the good graces of the gods and goddesses, Kabunyan, believed to have control over nature and protect the crops of the farmers. A chicken is offered for this purpose. The farmer performs the *denet* hoping for a bountiful harvest.

Moreover, according to Baucas (2003), as observed in the prayers, the native priest or *manbunong* invokes the assistance and blessings of god masiken, god pati and god bangan. Kabunian is also addressed to bless the sponsors of this ritual.

Values in Rituals

In the study of Celino (1983), she found out that there are values derived by the Daklan Tribe from common rituals. These values include renewal of community relationship, renewed and revered relationship with the dead, respect for and obedience to elders and senior citizens of the community, strengthen family ties, enhancement of cooperation in the community through rituals and development of desirable traits.

Meanwhile, in the study of Nuval (2010), one of his conclusion claimed that rituals produce a value laden citizens. His claim was supported by his own findings that a ritual has their own values. In the case of ba'diw, values are told through stories. The values include discipline, morality, relationship with others, lessons learned from experiences, shared relationship with others, and reconciliation for family members.

Significance of Rituals

According to Fiar-od (2009), Rituals are identified with series of invocations and performances. There is butchering of animals, it includes praying and chanting by



individual or group. Communal meal as part of the ritual is a concept tied up with sharing and spirituality. Agricultural rituals also include the butchering of chickens or pigs to appease spirits in control of nature by the power of a super being.

Moreover, in the study of Nuval (2010), he cited that Ba'diw (oldest way of storytelling in the form of chants among Ibalois) practice gives impact and significance to the societal development of the community like agriculture, politics, community relations, family ties, health and education.



METHODOLOGY

Locale and Time of the Study

The study was conducted at Abatan, Buguias, Benguet. Abatan is 85 kilometer away from the city of Baguio and it is known as the meeting place of different people. It is composed of nine sitios.

Sitio Nakiangan was the target place of the study; it is the biggest in the nine sitios of Barangay Abatan (Figure 1). It is composed of 143 household and is two kilometers away from the center of the town. The main source of livelihood of people is farming.

Sitio Nakiangan was the target place of the study because as observed, farmers practice *Denet*.

The study was conducted from December 2011 to January 2012.

Respondents of the Study

The information needed in the study was gathered from two key informants who are *manbunongs*. They are Ismael San Pedro Sr., 61 years old, and Manuel Og-oget, 71 years old. They were chosen through purposive sampling with the following criteria: Must have administered *Denet* in the place and must be residents in the place.

Information was also gathered from 30 farmers. They were chosen through purposive sampling with the following criteria: Must be a farmer and must be practicing *Denet*.



Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. The profile includes sex, age and civil status.

Age. Twelve (38%) of the respondents belong to the age range 46-55, followed by 66-75 (22%). Only one of the respondents belongs to 76-85 years old.

The finding implies that older farmers in their middle-age perform Denet more than the younger farmers.

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile of respondents

PROFILE	FREQUENCY N=32	PERCENTAGE %	RANK
Age			
36-45	6	19	3
46-55	12	38	1
56-65	3	9	4
66-75	7	22	2
76-85	1	3	5
TOTAL	32	100	
Sex			
Male	27	84	1
Female	5	16	2
TOTAL	32	100	
Civil Status			
Married	26	81	1
Widowed/er	5	16	2
Single	1	3	3
TOTAL	32	100	



Sex. Twenty seven (84%) of the respondents are males. This finding implies that males attend Denet more than females since males are the head of the family and are the one responsible in farming activities. This is supported by Rosenthal, C.J and Marshall; V.W. in their study entitled “The head of the Family”. They stated that the position of the head of the family is dominated by males’ incumbents.

Civil Status. Twenty-six (81%) of the respondents are married, few (16 %) are widowed/er and only1 (3%) is single.

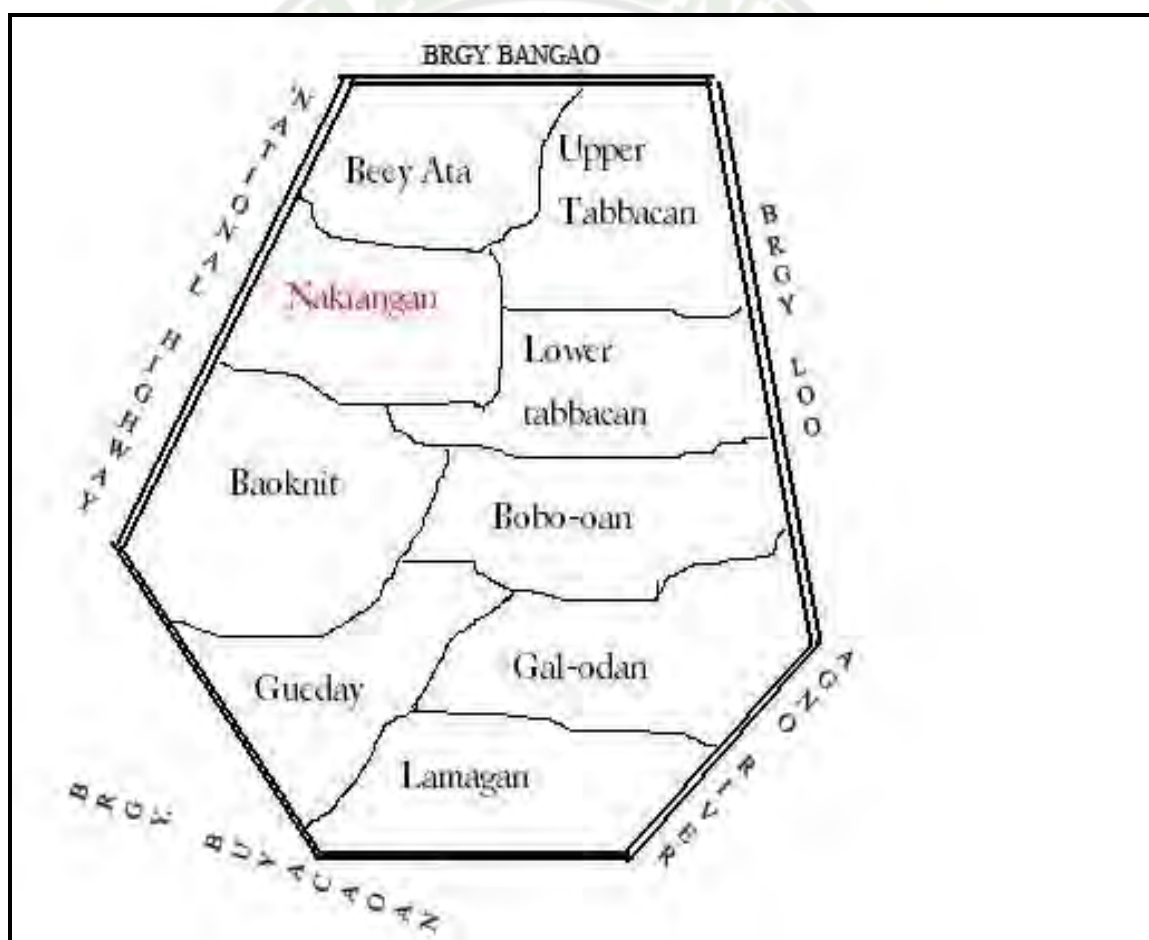


Figure 1. Map of Abatan Showing the locale of the study



Data Collection

An interview schedule was used to gather information from the key informants and respondents. The questions were translated into the dialect of the respondents during the interview. Observation was done by the researcher with video and photo documentation during a performance of *Denet*.

Data Gathered

The data gathered include the description of *Denet*, the communicated values in *Denet*, the perceived significance of practicing *Denet* to the farmers, environment and to the community, the changes in the performance of *Denet*, and the challenges encountered in practicing *Denet*.

Data Analysis

The data were consolidated, analyzed and discussed in a narrative form.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description and Origin of Denet Ritual

Description of Denet. *Denet* is a simple ritual, usually performed in the garden, as a form of thanksgiving. This is done because the farmer expects for a bountiful harvest. There were more or less than 10 farmers who were present during the performance of *Denet* and a *manbunong* was requested to officiate or administer the ritual.

Og-oget stated that aside from the garden, *Denet* could also be held in the rice field. Moreover, he added that anybody can attend *Denet* even if they were not invited.

Origin of Denet. According to the key informants, the origin of *Denet* is legendary. San Pedro Sr. and Og-oget related the legend of *Denet* in an interview. They narrated that, long time ago, there were two gods, *Kabigat* and *Pati* who went for hunting with their dog. On their way, the dog was left behind and was barking at something so *Pati* returned to check on it. *Pati* saw a wild bird (*beya-an*) sprinkling water from the spring. *Pati* ordered *Kabigat* to throw his spear to the wild bird but to their surprise, the water spring became wide like a rice field so the two brothers planted it with “*sabog*” (oats) and “*paguey*” (rice). The plants grew healthy and the farm magically expanded so they were surprised. They informed their grandmother *Bangan* about it and she ordered them to get a healthy chicken and perform *Denet* in their rice field to thank their ancestors so that they will harvest more. When they performed *Denet*, their harvest multiplied making them rich. Then they said, “Let us introduce and teach this ritual to the earth people, so that if they will perform it, they will remember us in their prayers and we will not be forgotten.”



They first threw *Denet* to the Western part of the world but the people don't know how to perform it so they got it back and threw again to the Eastern part. *Lumawig* was the one who caught it and so he performed it in his rice field. His harvest multiplied and he became rich.

As time passed by, *Denet* was shared to the nearby places until it reached Buguias. It was observed before that the people who performed the ritual became rich.

According to the key informants, in the legend, *Lumawig* was a god who came down to earth and married a lady from Bontoc, Mountain Province. It was believed that he also introduced other rituals and traditional practices like the *Cañao*.

Moreover, the key informants stated that they learned the practice of *Denet* through stories they heard from their forefathers and through personal observations.

Processes and Materials Prepared for the Ritual

It was found out in the study that in the ritual, there were required materials to be used to each process (Table 1).

Before the ritual. Consultation with the manbunong and setting of the date for the ritual.

When the farmer is about to harvest his crops and is expecting for a bountiful harvest and good selling of his harvested crops, he consults the *manbunong*.

After the consultation, the manbunong with the farmer will set the date for the ritual. It would be before the harvesting day.



During the ritual. During the ritual the following activities are done: Preparation of the materials to be used; setting –up of pudong; pouring of rice wine or gin to the cup; placing of gin at the foot of the pudong; praying over the native chickens; butchering of



two native chickens; reading of chickens' bile; cooking of the meat; putting of chicken feathers around the pudong; and praying over the cooked meat.

The preparation starts when the manbunong will prepare wood and 13 pieces of runo grass (bel-lang) to be used in setting- up *apudong*. They used runo grass since it has been the practice and are readily available in the garden.

Pudong(Figure 1)is a symbol made with 13 pieces of runo grass tied together to signify that Denet is taking place in the area. It is being put-up at the corner of the garden.



Figure 1. Pudong at the corner of the farm

The mabunong will set-up a pudong at the corner of the garden to signify the unseen spirits that they are performing Denet in the garden. He will put –up the wood then after that, he will again put the 13 pieces of runo grass around it then tie with a rope.

Og-oget stated that the *pudong* should be the first thing to be set-up because it serves as a proof and evidence not only to the people but also to the unseen spirits that



Denet was held in the garden and it is believed that when wine is placed at its foot, the unseen spirits will recognize immediately that they are performing *Denet* in the garden.

After setting-up the *pudong*, the *manbunong* together with the farmer will sit together. The farmer will pour wine to the cup then give it to the *manbunong* to invoke his prayer which may go this way:

KANKANA-EY LANGUAGE	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
<p><i>Ayagan mi amin ay toton-od yaib-a ay Nateysiaksidenteya suicide, sapaykoma Ta naurnos kayo ay umali ay makitunossinan Panagdenet mi. Umali kayo ta inumentako nan san Miguel ay ensagana mi.</i></p>	<p>(We call all the relatives who died through accidents and suicides, may you come together in an agreement of goodwill in performing this ritual. Come and let us drink the wine we prepared.)</p>



Figure 2. The *manbunong* with the farmer praying for the offering of the gin

Moreover, San Pedro Sr. stated that the wine/gin is offered to call for the spirits of their dead ancestors. He added that this is the most important thing to be prepared during the ritual because the ritual is useless and not effective without this.



After the prayer, the sponsor farmer will drink the wine that was poured earlier. Then pour again another wine to the cup then put it at the foot of the *pudong* to serve as drink for the unseen spirits.

There were also two native chickens to be prepared. It should be a rooster and a hen (see Figure 3). The *manbunong* together with the farmer will hold the two native chickens. The *manbunong* then will invoke his prayer as follows:

KANKANA-EY LANGUAGE	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
<p><i>Dakayo ay ap-apoyatoton-od mi ay natey, Umali kayo ta mandenettako. Mantinulongtako ay mangidatonsinan ritual tan siya di enya-at yoedidi. Kanayon da ay ayagandakayo aymangidatonyamangikararag sin Denet tan amuda ay wada kayo am-in sisa. Dakayo ay panglakayenedidi, kanayon ay ma-ay-ayagan kayo tan sigedyamaire respeto kayo. Bendisyonan yon nan Denet mi tapnumabunga nan maapityaumad-ado din manok. Bendisyonanyo et edawatyo di mayat sin pamilya.</i></p>	<p>(To you our dead relatives come and let us perform Denet. Let us help one another in offering because you always did this ritual in the past. They always call on you to offer and pray over the <i>Denet</i> because you are all there. To you leaders in the past, they always call on you because you were good and respected, Bless this ritual so there will be bountiful harvest and there more be chicken, bless and give good graces to the family.)</p>



Figure 3. The manbunong with the farmer praying over the native chickens



After the prayer, two farmers will get the chicken and each of them butchers the chicken they got. The chicken wings are whipped one after the other (*mapiyak din manok*) until the muscle of the wings swell as seen by the thick red coloring of the skin of the chicken wings. It is believed that when they butcher the chicken through slicing the neck (*mauguan*), when blood falls to the ground, bad luck will come to the sponsor farmer and blessings will not come into his family and relatives.

Og-oget stated that when they butcher two native chickens, the spirits will take good care of these and let them produce more offspring, thus it should be a rooster and a hen (see Figure 4).



Figure 4. The farmers butchering of the two native chickens

The meat of the chicken will be sliced and be given to the *manbunong* to read the bile. In reading the bile, there is a good sign and a bad sign based on the position and color of the bile. When the bile shows any of the bad signs like bile is hanging from the liver and appears to be blackish, the *manbunong* will make another offering until the bile of the



offered animal manifests any of the good sign like when the bile is in its right position and is good in size. Interpretation is based on the position or size of the bile. It is believed that when the bile is in its right position, the crops will be productive and it will be sold with high price.

The *manbunong* will invoke his prayer. He will call on *Kabunyan* (*Kankana-ey* term for the supreme God) and the prayers invoking the supreme *Kankana- ey* god to bless the offering of the chicken. He calls all the name of dead relatives, dead priests, to help offer the sacrificial animals of the day.

The *manbunong* also calls on god *Pati* and *Kabigatand* asks for continued blessings like riches, bountiful harvest for the sponsor and their children as well as for the farmers present in the gathering (see Figure 5).



Figure 5. Manbunong reading the chickens' bile

The Key informants claim that they usually have the good sign based on the bile of the chickens being butchered.



On the other hand, San Pedro Sr. stated that in some other parts of Buguias, the bile of the chicken shows one of the bad sign so they butchered another offering but it still shows the bad sign, so they butcher pig as their sacrificial animal. The prayer may go this way:

KANKNA-EY LANGUAGE	ENGLISH TRANSLATION
<p><i>Sik-a ay Kabunyan ay kangangato-an, napo-an di amin ay pamendisyon, bendisyonam nan idaton mi ay manok en sik-a. Bendisyonam din nay denet. Maawagan kayo (nagan di ton-od/ib-a ay natey) dawaten mi ay mantinulong kayo ay mangidaton sin nay Denet tan siya di siged ay in ya-at yoedidi. Kanayon da ay man adawag en dakayo ay mangidatonyamangikararag sin Denet tan wada kayo am-in es-sa. Maawagan kayo (nagan di panglakayen/ manbunong ay natey), ap-apon di manbunongedidi, ayagan da dakayo tan sigedyamairespeto kayo Asimaawagan da Pati en Kabigat ay nangibingay sin Denet sin epogawedkalutaan, Bendisyonanyo nan Denet mi et din mulaadu di lames naduanmaibingayabe di swerte sin ib-a na</i></p>	<p>(We ask you almighty God, the source of all blessings, bless this chicken, bless this Denet ritual offering. We call on you (name of) dead relative) may we ask all of you to come together to offer this offering of ritual. Since by tradition, you always did so, they always call all of you to offer and pray over the Denet because you are all there, we call on you (name of dead priests/elders) the leader of all priests in the past. They call on you because you were always good and respected. Then we call on gods Pati and Kabigat who shared this practice to earth people, to bless this ritual so that there is luck, bountiful harvest and good graces to the relatives.)</p>

The manbunong will end his prayer after giving the bile to the farmer. The meat of the chicken will be sliced and cooked. While cooking, it is believed that the pot should not be covered (Figure 6) so that good luck will come and so that the owner of the pot will always have food to be cooked in it. While cooking, the manbunong will get the feathers of the chicken and placed it around the pudong to inform the spirits that they already butchered sacrificial animals.

When the meat is already cooked, they will place it in a basin then the manbunong will invoke again his prayer.





Figure6. Photo of uncovered pot

The prayer would be the combination of the prayer he invoked when he prayed during the offering the gin and the prayer in the reading of bile. The prayer may go this way:

KANKNA-EY LANGUAGE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION



Ayagan mi amin ay toton-od yaib-a ay
Nateysiaksidenteya suicide, sapaykoma Ta
naurnos kayo ay umali ay makitunossinan
Panagdenet mi. Umali kayo ta
inumentako nan san Miguel ay ensagana mi.

Sik-a ay Kabunyan ay kangangato-an, napo-an
di amin ay pamendisyon, bendisyonam nan
idaton mi ay manok en sik-a. Bendisyonam din
nay denet. Maawagan kayo (nagan di ton-
od/ib-a ay natey) dawaten mi ay mantinulong
kayo ay mangidaton sin nay Denet tan siya di
siged ay in ya-at yoedidi. Kanayon da ay man
adawag en dakayo ay
mangidatonyamangikararag sin Denet tan wada
kayo am-in es-sa. Maawagan kayo (nagan di
panglakayen/ manbunong ay natey), ap-apon
di manbunongedidi, ayagan da dakayo tan
sigedyamairespeto kayo Asimaawagan da Pati
en Kabigat ay nangibingay sin Denet sin
epogawedkalutaan, Bendisyonanyo nan Denet
mi et din mulaadu di lames
naduanmaibingayabe di swerte sin ib-a na

We call all the relatives who died through
accident and suicide, may you come together in
peacefully and in goodwill in performing this
ritual. Come and let us drink the wine we
prepared.

(We ask you almighty God, the source of all
blessings, bless this chicken, bless this
Denet ritual offering. We call on you
(name of) dead relative) may we ask all
of you to come together to offer this ritual
since by tradition, you always did so, they
always call all of you to offer and pray
over the Denet Because you are all there,
we call on you (name of dead
priests/elders) the leader of all priests in the
past. They call on you because you were
always good and respected. Then we call on
gods Pati and Kabigat who shared this
practice to earth people, to bless this ritual
so that there is luck, bountiful harvest and
good graces to the relatives.)

After the ritual. The serving of the meat and pouring of wine at the foot of the
pudong would be done to give drinks to the unseen spirits and at the same time to end the
ritual.

After the prayer, the meat will be counted and divided according to the number of
farmers present in the gathering. Each will receive an equal share of meats.

Furthermore, most of the processes occurred during the ritual stage followed by
after the ritual and then before the ritual.

In the actual performance of *Denet*, there were four prayers invoked by the
manbunong, during the praying for the offering of gin, praying over the native chickens, in
reading the chickens' bile and in praying over the cooked meat.

Values learned in the practice of *Denet*



It was found out in the study that there were values being communicated in *Denet*. *Enhancement of cooperation among farmers*. All of the respondents claimed that they support each other. Whenever their co-farmer holds *Denet* in his garden, they will attend and will assume important roles/tasks like butchering and cooking the chicken. Also, there is an equal meat sharing scheme for each farmer who attended the gathering.

Honor to ancestors. All of the respondents claimed that the memory of their beloved dead relatives occupy a special place in their hearts.

Prayers during *Denet* ritual include asking and thanking the dead for their guidance, which explains the deep respect for them.

Respect for and obedience to elders. Twenty seven (84%) of the respondents claimed that in *Denet*, one value they could learn is the respect for the elders. The community folks/elders who are given the task to administer such ritual are often consulted for advice, their suggestion and observations about rituals are final and should be upheld.

Table 3. Values communicated in *Denet*

VALUES *	FREQUENCY N=32	PERCENTAGE %	RANK
Enhancement of cooperation among farmers	32	100	1.5
Honor to ancestors	32	100	1.5
Respect to elders	27	84	3
Sharing of blessings	7	22	4
Strengthen family ties	5	16	5

*Multiple Responses



Moreover, the most requested groups to initiate/administer *Denet* are the manbunongs/elders. This is supported by the Cordillera Schools Group Inc. (2000), when they stated that the chanting of the appropriate prayers by the *manbunong* is never absent in the ceremonies. Also, the best part of the meat and the first wine/gin are given to them.

Sharing of blessings. Seven (22%) of the respondents claimed that *Denet* ritual calls on the farmers who attended the gathering to partake its wine and food. Cooked slices of meat were equally given to all who were present in the gathering.

One of the respondents added that when the sponsor farmer do not have any native chicken, co-farmers who has a native chicken will volunteer to provide the sacrificial animal for free or the sponsor farmer may give payment.

Strengthen family ties. Five (16%) of the respondents claimed that *Denet* could strengthen the bonding of the family. The presence of the family members is important. They also feel important in participating to the ritual.

The findings imply that only few identified strengthen family ties as one of the values being communicated in *Denet* because according to Og-oget, the youth are not interested to join in this kind of activity. The children therefore usually do not join their parents in *Denet*. This was supported during the actual performance of *Denet*. As observe, 32% of the respondents who were present during the gathering belonged to age bracket 46-55.

Perceived Significance of *Denet*



In an interview, most of the respondents claimed that *Denet* should be preserved because it is a practice taught by their forefathers and is significant in their lives as farmers, to their environment and to their community.

To the farmers. The respondents claimed that they find satisfaction and fulfillment in their lives as *Denet* is viewed as an act of thanksgiving for prosperity and bountiful harvest. They stated that *Denet* prevents them from bankruptcy since their crops produce a good harvest. Moreover, they added that through *Denet*, they established their relationship with their co-farmers. There is friendship being built.

To the environment. The respondents claimed that *Denet* prevents their garden from soil erosion and any calamity. Also, their crops from any plants diseases and insect pest. Moreover, according to the key informants, when their farm is not productive and is prone to soil erosion and they perform *Denet*, their crops grow healthy and they will also have bountiful harvest.

To the community. The respondents claimed that they share in a common ritual through the participation of other farmers. It was observed that friends and relatives meet in a spirit of gathering together. Moreover, one of the respondents stated that through the ritual they established good relationship with each other and they share each other's experiences.

The finding implies that performing *Denet* is significant to the farmers' livelihood, environment and community.

Changes/Innovations that have occurred in the practice of *Denet*

It was found out that there were several changes that have occurred over time in the practice of *Denet*.



Wine. Respondents claimed substitution of rice wine to any intoxicated beverage.

Before, they used *tapuey* (rice wine) to call for the spirits and as a drink in *Denet*. Today, farmers seldom make *tapuey*. They only do it when there are big occasions/celebrations to be done.

Pudong. The key informants also added the use of *pudong* has changed. Before, *pudong* should be placed in every corner or terrace of the garden, but now, they only put *pudong* in one corner of the garden. Og-oget stated that whether they distributed the *pudong* in the corner of the garden or not, the ritual would not be affected.

Meat. Before, the meat should not be eaten in the garden. It should be brought home because they usually performed *Denet* during night time. But now, they can eat it in the garden because they usually performed *Denet* during day time. San Pedro stated that they can perform *Denet* at any time. Moreover, when the meat is not enough for the number of farmers present in the gathering, they can butcher another chicken, either native or commercial.

The finding implies that there were changes incurred in the use of one material and two processes but it did not significantly change the whole ritual itself.

Challenges/Threats in the Practice of Denet

As shown in Table 3, 22 (69%) of the respondents also claimed that proliferation of modern religious beliefs can be considered as challenge in *Denet*.

Og-oget stated that there are few sectors of the church that criticize and consider cultural practices as “paganistic” activity so some farmers who were converted to Christianity no longer practice *Denet*.



Thirteen (41%) respondents claimed that lack of interest among the young generation is also a challenge. Og-oget explained that youth today do not appreciate the ritual. They spend more their time in front of the computer or television rather than joining the ritual. Also, he added that youth considered the Denet as for adults only.

Moreover, ten (31%) of the respondents claimed that *manbunong* today are few so no one will replace them when they die. They observed that the decreasing number of *manbunong* contributed to the gradual disappearance of *Denet*. They explained that the death of *manbunongs* would mean that no one could already overlook on the ritual because they are the only qualified to administer such ritual and that people will no longer seek their advice.

Also, ten (31%) of the respondents claimed that economic aspect is considered as a challenge in practicing *Denet*. Every ritual requires the offering of sacrificial animals. Besides, it requires every farmer to raise chickens and if he does not raise any, he is obliged to buy two native chickens and gin for the ritual. Also, during the ritual, if the meat is not enough for the number of farmers present, they need to butcher again another chicken.

Table 4. Perceived challenges/threats in the practice of *Denet*

Perceived challenges/threats *	FREQUENCY N=32	PERCENTAGE %	RANK
Proliferation of religious beliefs	22	66	1
Lack of interest among teen-agers	13	41	2
Economic aspect	10	31	3.5
Declining numbers of <i>manbunong</i>	10	31	3.5

*Multiple responses



The finding implies that the proliferation of religious beliefs ranks first as one of the perceived challenges in the practice of *Denet* because as observed, there were four denominations in the place in which members of the community belong to.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

The study was conducted at Nakiangan, Abatan, Buguias Benguet to determine the communicated values of *Denet* among the farmers; to determine its perceived significance to the farmers, environment, and to the community; to determine the changes occurred to the ritual and to determine the challenges/threats in performing *Denet* ritual.

This study also aimed to produce a video documentary and photos on the performance of the ritual.



There were two *manbunongs* in the community who were chosen as the Key informants of the study. Other information about the ritual was also gathered from 30 farmers who had requested for the performance of *Denet* ritual in their garden/farm.

Personal interviews with the key informants and the respondents were done to gather all the necessary information about the ritual. Video camera and digital camera were also used to document the actual ritual that was performed.

The origin of *Denet* in Buguias is legendary. It was based on the legend story of Pati and Kabigat who were known to be gods of the place. *Denet* is a ritual and isa form of thanksgiving is important in the lives of the farmers in Buguias specifically in Sitio Nakiangan, Abatan, Buguias, Benguet. They believed that the performance of the ritual is an assurance of a bountiful harvest and abundant blessings.

There were three stages in the ritual and most of the processes occurred during the ritual stage. Four prayers were also invoked by the *manbunong* in *Denet*.

Furthermore, most of the respondents claimed that enhancement of cooperation among farmers was the best communicated value in *Denet*. Only few suggested strengthen family ties because older respondents mostly attend *Denet* than youth.

Moreover, the respondents claimed that performing *Denet* is significant to their livelihood, community and environment so they want to sustain the preservation of the practice.

On the other hand, the respondents claimed that there are minimal changes incurred in the practice of *Denet*, but they are still performing *Denet*. Moreover, the



respondents claimed that proliferation of modern religion greatly affects the practice of *Denet*.

Conclusions

The study concludes that:

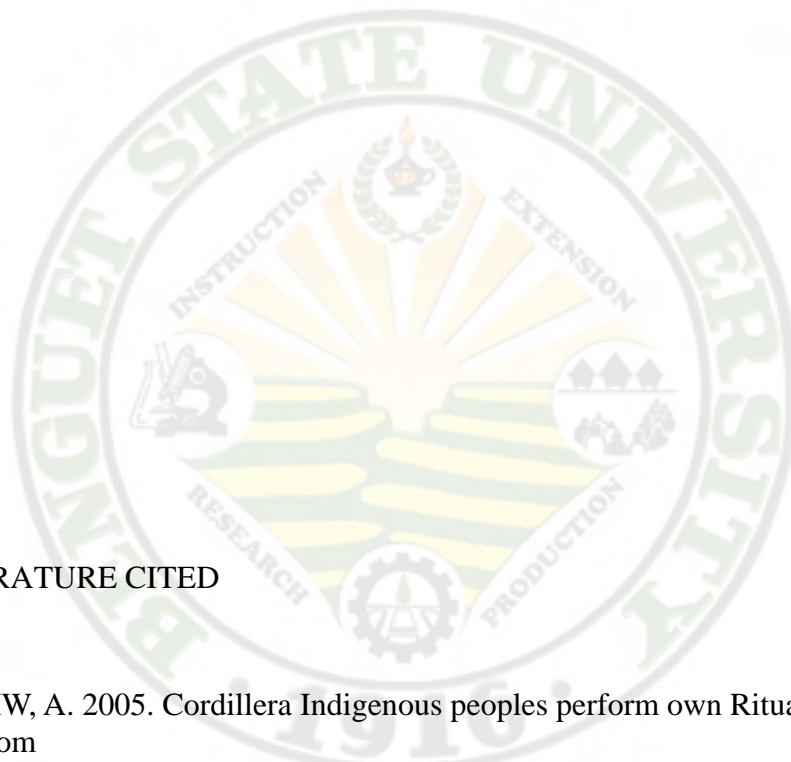
1. Rituals may originate from legends.
2. *Denet* just like any other rituals is based on beliefs.
3. There are communicated values in the performance of *Denet*.
4. There are perceived significance of *Denet* to farmers.
5. Changes that occurred in the practice of *Denet* were based on the availability of the materials and convenience of the participants.
6. Diversity in religious beliefs is still considered as a threat in the continuous practice of other indigenous activities.
7. The farmers believe in the intercession role of the spirits of the dead relatives for the success of the ritual.

Recommendations

The researcher recommends the following:

1. More studies on *Denet* ritual should be conducted in some parts of Buguias to validate and strengthen the findings of this study.
2. As recommended by San Pedro Sr. a compilation of *Denet* prayer should be done in order for it not to be forgotten because today, *manbunongs* are decreasing in number and no one will replace them.
3. Farmers should continue practicing *Denet* because there are values being learned.





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APPENDIX A

Guide Questionnaire For the Key Informant (*Manbunongs*)

NAMUNA AY APIT: DENET AND ITS COMMUNICATED VALUES AMONG THE FARMERS OF NAKIANGAN, ABATAN, BUGUIAS, BENGUET

I. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Name :(Optional) _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____



Civil Status: ___Single___Married___Widow___Widower___Separated

II. History/ Origin of *Denet* practice

1. Describe *Denet*

2. How did *Denet* start in your community?

3. How did you learn practicing *Denet*?

4. What are the rituals in *Denet*?

5. What are the beliefs in *Denet*?

III. What values can you learn in the practice *Denet*?

___Renewal of community relationship

___Strengthen family ties

___Respect to elders



_____Enhancement of cooperation among farmers

_____Honor to ancestors

Others, please specify_____

IV. What are the perceived significance of *Denet* in the following?

a. in you as farmer?

b. in your environment?

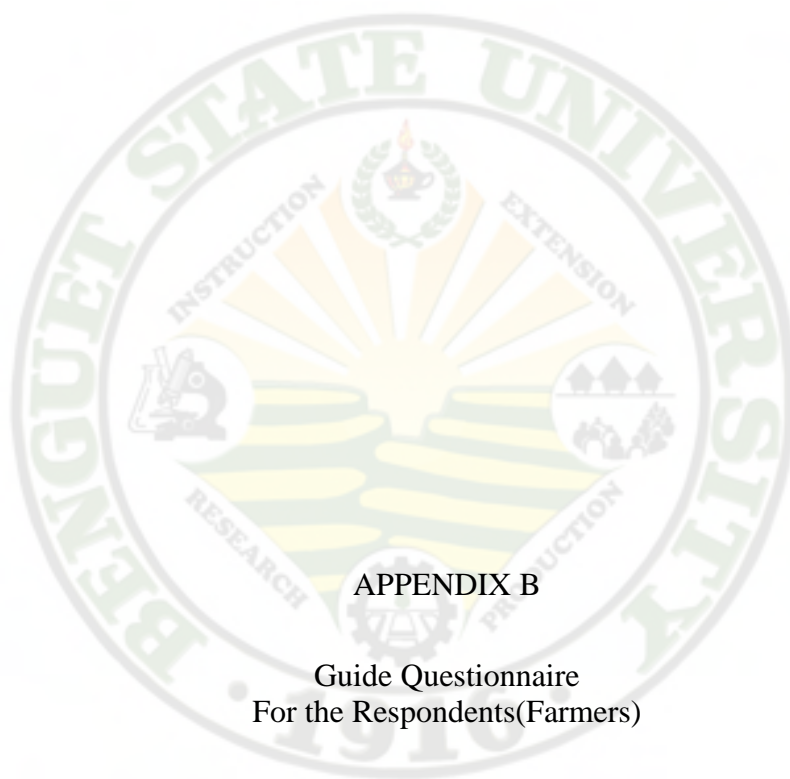
c. in your community?

V. What are the changes/ innovations you noticed in the practicing of *Denet*?

MATERIALS		PROCESSES	
Before	Now	Before	Now



VI. What are the challenges/threats you encounter in the practice of *Denet*?



APPENDIX B

Guide Questionnaire
For the Respondents(Farmers)

NAMUNA AY APIT: DENET AND ITS COMMUNICATED VALUES AMONG THE FARMERS OF NAKIANGAN, ABATAN, BUGUIAS, BENGUET

I. Socio-demographic profile of the respondents

Name :(Optional) _____

Sex: _____

Age: _____



Civil Status: ____Single____Married____Widow____Widower____Separated

II. What values can you learn in the practice *Denet*?

____Renewal of community relationship

____Strengthen family ties

____Respect to elders

____Enhancement of cooperation among farmers

____Honor to ancestors

Others, please specify_____

III. Perceived Significance of practicing *Denet*

1. What is the significance/meaning of practicing *Denet* in the following:

a. In you as farmer?

b. In your environment?

c. In your community

2. Do you want to preserve the practice?

If YES, Why?_____

If NO, Why not?_____

IV. What are the changes/innovations you noticed in the practice of *Denet*?



MATERIALS		PROCESSES	
Before	Now	Before	Now

V. What are the challenges/threats you noticed in the practice of *Denet*?

APPENDIX C

Photos of the Researcher and respondents



Name

Researcher together with the Key informant



Researcher together with Henry Osed



Researcher together with MatisPaa-ayas

