



Beyond the Placebo: Understanding Health-Seeking Behaviors and the Psychological Reality of Binisayang Tambal (Faith Healing)

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Abstract:

Binisayang tambal, a traditional practice of faith healing found in many Filipino communities, continued to influence how people understood health, healing, and well-being. Although modern health care had developed, some people still depended on traditional healing because of their spiritual beliefs, cultural experiences, family influence, and trust in local healers. This study explored the health-seeking behaviors and psychological experiences of those who chose binisayang tambal as a healing practice. Participants' lived experiences, perceptions, beliefs, and reasons for seeking faith healing were explored using a qualitative phenomenological research design. The participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their direct experience with binisayang tambal and their willingness to share their experiences. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common patterns and meanings across participants' accounts. The findings revealed that binisayang tambal was perceived not just as a means of coping with physical ailments but also as a source of spiritual understanding, emotional reassurance, and social connection. Trust in faith healing was influenced by personal experience, family support, cultural traditions, and the social environment of the participants. The practice also provided participants with a sense of comfort, mental relief, and belonging, which strengthened their belief in its effectiveness. The study concluded that binisayang tambal was more than an alternative healing practice, as it was also an important part of the participants' cultural and social life. Understanding these beliefs could assist health care providers in developing more culturally sensitive practices that respected traditional practices and fostered meaningful relationships between patients, communities, and modern health care providers.

Keywords: *Binisayang tambal, faith healing, health-seeking behavior, lived experiences, traditional healing*



Introduction:

Spiritual belief, traditional reliance, and cultural heritage play a significant role in how individuals view health, healing, and well-being. Across many communities, people tend to follow various faith healing practices, such as binisayang tambal. Finding comfort in its ways and strength in its healing when facing ailments or injuries. These individuals possess life experiences that reflect their trust in spiritual power and their belief in restoring the body, prioritizing these rituals rather than modern healthcare.

Faith healing in predominantly religious and developing countries like the Philippines has been passed down through many generations and is continuously being observed (Varela, 2023). Central to this cultural landscape is binisayang tambal (faith healing), a practice-based system where local healers, Mananambal, may utilize a wide variety of treatments for their patients, including decoctions, poultices, fumigation, anointing, cupping, prayers, incantations, and diverse magical procedures (Clark, 2022). For many believers, these rituals are not an alternative but the primary source of healing of the body; no matter advancements in medicine, faith healing remains a significant part of Filipino culture, particularly in rural areas (Olquino, 2024).

Faith and healing are two features that are difficult to separate from each other in folk medicine practice in the Philippines. In most cases, one leads to the other, and in other cases, one reinforces the other. Faith plays a significant role in the effectiveness of healing, while on the other hand, healing seems to have the effect of strengthening or reawakening a person's religious faith. That is why folk medicine in the Philippines falls within the realm of religion because the mananambal operates within the context of one's understanding and interpretation of one's religious belief. The mananambal acts as an instrument in the execution of the will of the mananambal's religious Deity or deities—it is rare to find otherwise (Ozoa, 2019). In some places in the Philippines, it may be called Traditional healing, which is a part of the Filipino culture that has been passed down through many generations and is continuously being practiced, especially in far-flung barrios and barangays in the country. From the old name babaylan, the traditional healers now operate under various names, such as albularyo, manghihilot, mangluluop, mangtatawas, and faith healers (Rebuya et al., 2020). Many Filipinos rely on these types of healers and their healings across both rural and urban demographic places in the Philippines. Due to these healers, there is a systemic reliance on binisayang tambal that often leads to delayed medical consultations, underreported illnesses, and complicated health outcomes, largely because modern healthcare providers and traditional practitioners operate in total isolation from one another.

Most current studies on binisayang tambal examine how the healing practice fits into Visayan society and culture, or test herbal ingredients in a laboratory to determine if they possess the actual chemical properties necessary for healing, similar to modern medicine. Consequently, there is a lack of research about the mental state of the patients. Only a few studies have looked beyond the concept of the placebo effect to understand the cognitive and emotional reasons why believers feel these spiritual healings truly work. We still don't fully understand the actual firsthand experiences, what motivates them internally, or the deep psychological comfort that makes someone trust spiritual power over modern clinical science.

To address this gap, the purpose of this study is to delve into the individuals who choose binisayang tambal and to truly understand what they are experiencing mentally. Specifically, this research aims to explore the patients' personal stories and uncover the trust, emotional relief, and experiences that make them believe faith healing actually works to cure the body. Ultimately, this study is important for both medicine and culture. For healthcare professionals and policymakers, understanding how patients mentally work out decisions can create healthcare



strategies that are more culturally sensitive and understanding. Instead of pushing traditional believers away, this connects modern medicine with cultural heritage, showing how faith and the mind work together to heal.

Research Questions:

1. Why do people choose binisayang tambal over modern healthcare? (What roles do trust, comfort, and culture play?)
2. How do people compare and make sense of how well binisayang tambal works versus modern medicine?
3. How do people decide when to see a doctor and when to see a mananambal?

Literature Review:

Systems of belief and some cultural traditions play a huge role in shaping how individuals view illness, well-being, and body reactions. Traditional faith healing, known as "Binisayang tambal" in the Visayas region of the Philippines, is not merely an alternative for healthcare but a personal experience through which individuals view recovery and suffering.

Economic Factors Influencing Health-Seeking Behavior

According to psychological and phenomenological researchers, high cost of healthcare services could lead to debt and greater poverty and may drive poor people to reduce expenditures for basic needs such as food and clothing (Varela, 2023). Because of this, they use faith healing as an alternative to cut costs. In a similar article, it states, due to financial constraints, poor and low-income Filipinos frequently turn to folk medicine services and products because of their affordability. Modern medical practitioners charge expensive fees for their services, while in contrast, albularyos or folk healers open-heartedly accept anything their patients can give them as a form of gratitude or payment. This is the current situation of the Philippine healthcare system due to the fact that the country has a mixed health system of both private and public sectors, the advent of exponentially growing private sectors, and the lack of an effective means to properly standardize private for-profit physicians (Rondilla et al., 2021). These studies indicate that high costs in the Philippine healthcare system drive low-income families into debt and force them to sacrifice basic needs for medical care. As a result, poor Filipinos turn to affordable albularyos (folk healers) not just out of tradition, but as a vital economic survival strategy.

Faith, Belief, and Psychological Influences on Healing

International studies have found that faith and belief systems impact the emotional as well as immunological states of believers in ways that we are just beginning to understand. However, the clinical implications of prior studies are limited (Béres et al., 2024). Faith healing has been practiced in various cultures for many decades and is an accepted mode of treatment in different cultures. Beliefs about mental illness can affect patients' willingness to seek and adhere to treatment, so it is important to consider cultural, traditional, and folk methods for conceptualising and managing mental illnesses (JCDR - Belief System, Cultural Belief, Faith Healers, Mood Disorders, n.d.-b). Faith and belief systems significantly influence both emotional and physical immune states, yet faith healing remains a deeply rooted, culturally accepted form of treatment whose clinical implications are not yet fully understood by modern science. Because these traditional beliefs heavily dictate a patient's willingness to engage with and adhere to medical care, healthcare providers must consider cultural perspectives when conceptualizing and managing mental illnesses.



Religion plays a significant role in how patients perceive, experience, and cope with the issue of sickness and challenging life events. In most cases, religion acts as one of the most potent sources of hope, support, and strength among those patients struggling with various chronic illnesses. The belief in a supreme being and participation in religious activities can help patients cope with fear, uncertainty, and emotional distress associated with the process of getting sick. Spiritual beliefs shape people's understanding of the causes of disease, the process of healing, and the place where they go for help. For example, in a township in South Africa, Bosire et al. (2021) discovered that some patients use prayer and blessed church water either prior to consulting with healthcare professionals or in addition to medical treatment. Thus, it is apparent that many people do not regard health solely as a physical thing but rather as a process that involves healing of the whole person (body, soul, and mind).

Moreover, a lot of research has shown that religion plays an important role in the interpretation of the health and well-being problem among other Africans. Thus, religion and spirituality provide guidance and encouragement for people to deal with different diseases (Chiroma, 2020). Also, religious and spiritual beliefs of people can be used to get the approval of their relatives, religious institutions, and the whole community when experiencing health problems. This means that spiritual healing is one of the key aspects of people's healthcare since it allows people to cope with their pain and find a sense in their life.

Similar findings have also been observed globally, where spiritual healers play a vital role in the health-seeking experiences of many individuals. In Germany, spiritual healers offer diverse methods grounded in traditional religious roots or modern movement influences, defining their practice through laying on of hands, prayer, and meditation to connect with a transcendent source (Stöckigt et al., 2015). Research demonstrates that such spiritual practices function as an intuitive, multi-layered therapeutic process where deep trust and spiritual connection shape the overall healing experience (Stöckigt et al., 2015). Reinforcing this global paradigm, another study asserts that spirituality provides essential meaning, context, and purpose during health crises, operating as an integral component of integrative health care (Steinhorn et al., 2017). Furthermore, clinical investigations in Europe confirm that spiritual healing is frequently sought out as a complementary intervention for managing complex chronic conditions, such as persistent pain (Abbot et al., 2001). Together, these findings emphasize that across diverse geographic and cultural contexts, interpersonal trust and spiritual connection remain key mechanisms driving health-seeking behaviors alongside conventional medical systems.

Traditional Healing as Cultural Identity and Indigenous Knowledge

Traditional healing is an essential component of the lives of indigenous people. It serves a unique purpose as a means of spiritual connection to nature and the environment. The role of traditional healing in the lives of Lumad and Mananambal is to achieve a balance of spiritual, emotional, and physical well-being through ancestral prayers and the use of medicinal plants (Batucan & Mori, 2024). Researchers explored the practices of traditional healers in the Panay Bukidnon and found that local healers rely on local knowledge and community trust to manage the health conditions of their patients by using their extensive understanding of nature (Cordero et al., 2022). Studies on Filipino faith healing practices uncovered the importance of spiritual coping mechanisms in sustaining positive emotional wellbeing and cultural identity of the community members (Luyosen, 2024; Varela, 2023). In general, the reviewed studies demonstrate that traditional and faith healing practices are integral parts of the health care system that should be maintained and supported.

Instead of being an outdated healing practice, traditional healing systems evolve along with the changes that happen in the culture, religion, and society of the community. For example, research conducted on the traditional healing



system of the Philippines named Tambal Binisaya reveals how Visayan traditional medicine reflects the beliefs of the past, including the veneration of spirit guides or abyans and harmony of the elements of the body, as well as the beliefs of Catholicism (Crisol & Oledan, 2022).

Research carried out among the Lumad and Mananambal healers indicates the relevance of the traditional healing system as a part of the healthcare system in the region. The Lumad and Mananambal healers continue practicing the inherited prayers, rituals, and medicinal plants that maintain the harmony of the body and soul and their balance with nature (Batucan & Mori, 2024). These traditional practices have not been ousted from society but continue to exist widely because many people go to these healers for help (Jardeleza et al., 2025).

The Psychological Reality of the Placebo Effect

The placebo effect has been recognized as an important psychological phenomenon that can influence a person's health outcomes. The placebo effect is a beneficial health outcome resulting from a person's anticipation that an intervention will help. How a health care provider interacts with a patient also may bring about a positive response that's independent of any specific treatment (Placebo Effect, n.d.). This suggests that a patient's expectations, beliefs, and trust in the person providing care can contribute to improvements in their condition, even when the treatment itself has no direct therapeutic effect. The findings highlight that healing is not solely based on medication or medical procedures but is also influenced by psychological and interpersonal factors. This concept is relevant to the present study because it helps explain why some individuals report positive experiences after consulting traditional faith healers, where trust, confidence, and the healer-patient relationship may play a significant role in their perceived recovery.

In related research, they studied the effect of placebo treatments by reviewing 202 trials comparing placebo treatment with no treatment covering 60 healthcare problems. In general, placebo treatments produced no major health benefits, although on average they had a modest effect on outcomes reported by patients, such as pain. However, the effect on pain varied from large to non-existent, even in well-conducted trials. Variations in the effect of placebo were partly explained by variations in how trials were conducted, the type of placebo used, and whether patients were informed that the trial involved a placebo (Hróbjartsson & Gøtzsche, 2010). These findings suggest that the placebo effect does not consistently produce objective health improvements, but it can influence how individuals perceive symptoms such as pain through their expectations and beliefs. This supports the present study by providing a psychological perspective for understanding why some individuals who seek Binisayang Tambal may perceive positive healing experiences, even when those experiences are shaped by trust, belief, and the healer-patient relationship.

Summary

Based on this related literature, they have only explored faith healing from cultural, religious, psychological, and economic perspectives. Most of this research has focused on the healing practices themselves, but not the lived experiences of the patients. These studies also discuss why individuals continue to seek faith healers because of financial limitations, cultural beliefs, and emotional support. However, there remains limited research that specifically examines the psychological reality behind Binisayang Tambal, particularly from the lived experiences of those who actively choose it over or alongside modern healthcare. Most studies describe the practice itself rather than exploring how patients perceive its effectiveness, develop trust in healers, and construct meanings of healing.



This gap provides the basis for the present study, which seeks to understand the reasons and factors that influence individuals to choose Binisayang Tambal for healing.

This study focuses on understanding the lived experiences of individuals who have sought healing through Binisayang Tambal. Specifically, it explores the factors that influence their decision about where and why they seek healthcare from the "mananambal" because of their experiences. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the study aims to describe participants' perspectives without testing the medical effectiveness. The findings will be limited to the experiences of the selected participants and may not represent all users of Binisayang Tambal in other communities. Furthermore, the study does not compare the clinical outcomes of faith healing with modern medicine but instead seeks to understand the personal reasons why individuals choose to use Binisayang Tambal as their primary health practice.

Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative research design to investigate the inculturation of folk traditions among Binisayang Tambal practitioners and patrons in Tanjay City. Qualitative inquiry was uniquely suited for this study as it allowed for an in-depth, contextual exploration of the participants' lived experiences, beliefs, and cultural practices without stripping away their subjective meanings. By gathering rich descriptive data through observations and interviews, this approach captured the complex integration of cultural rituals with traditional doctrines from the perspective of the community itself.

Research Design

This study employed an Exploratory Qualitative Research Design. This design was highly justified because the syncretic integration of folk healing practices like Binisayang Tambal remained under-researched and deeply rooted in localized cultural nuances. An exploratory approach allowed the researchers to uncover hidden dimensions, discover new insights, and thoroughly map out how these two distinct systems coexisted and adapted over time. Rather than testing predetermined hypotheses, this design provided the necessary flexibility to explore the "how" and "why" behind the participants' health beliefs and religious adaptation.

Research Locale

Tanjay City, located in Negros Oriental, served as the research locale for this study because binisayang tambal (faith healing) remained an active, daily practice alongside modern healthcare. Known for its strong local traditions and heritage, Tanjay offered a clear view into why residents still turned into traditional healers for their health and peace of mind. The city spans across busy town streets, quiet inland farming patches, and coastal fishing shores. This mix made Tanjay a fitting place to see how traditional healing was practiced across different neighborhoods, home settings, and distances from clinic doors.

To gather a clear picture of these practices, the research took place across five specific barangays: Barangay 6, Barangay Sta. Cruz Viejo, Barangay Azagra, Barangay Novallas, and Barangay Polo. Barangay 6, located right in the town center, was chosen to see how binisayang tambal stayed relevant even where modern pharmacies, private clinics, and government health offices were situated just streets away from family homes. Meanwhile, Barangay Sta. Cruz Viejo sat in a semi-rural area where families regularly balanced both worlds—visiting local health centers for



medical check-ups, yet still seeking out neighborhood healers when dealing with traditional health concerns that clinic doctors might not address.

The remaining three barangays highlighted how daily routines, home environments, and location shaped healthcare choices. Barangay Azagra and Barangay Novallas were inland farming communities where long distances from the city center, daily agricultural work, and close community ties made local healers (mananambal or albularyo) an accessible, affordable, and trusted source of care right within the neighborhood. Down by the shore, Barangay Polo showed how fishing families, daily life near the sea, and coastal living influenced local health habits and herbal remedies. By examining these five distinct barangays together, the study captured a clear, detailed, and realistic picture of how local geography, daily life, and shared culture kept the trust in binisayang tambal alive.

Research Participants

The participants for this study must be residents of Tanjay City who personally have experience with using Binisayang tambal or faith healing. To make sure that every participant has sufficient experience with the practice to provide insights, they must have sought Binisayang tambal at least twice within the past year. Participants for this study must also be willing to be part of a recorded interview, where they will be asked questions that relate to their personal experiences, reasons for seeking faith healing, and views about the practice. The audio recording will be useful to the researchers to document the responses accurately and to avoid missing information during the interviews. Every participant who is below 18 years of age may participate, but parental or guardian consent must be obtained before doing the interview.

Research Instrument

This study used a researcher-made semi-structured interview guide as the main research instrument. The researchers used this type of interview because it gave them a clear set of questions to follow while still allowing the conversation to remain flexible. The questions were open-ended, so the participants could freely share their experiences, beliefs, and views in their own words. When some answers needed more explanation, the researchers asked additional questions to better understand what the participants meant.

The interview guide contained open-ended questions about the participants' experiences with Binisayang Tambal (faith healing), the meaning they gave to these experiences, and the challenges they faced. It also asked about the reasons that influenced their use or practice of Binisayang Tambal (faith healing) and their views about its role in healthcare. The questions were prepared based on the objectives of the study and the related literature. This helped the researchers keep the discussion connected to the topic while giving the participants enough opportunity to explain their experiences.

The researchers used an audio recorder to accurately capture the participants' responses and explanations. The audio recorder helped prevent important information from being written down incorrectly during the survey. It also let the researchers review the responses after the process of gathering all the data and ensure that the information recorded was complete and accurate.

The researchers made sure to inform the participants about using an audio recorder and asked for permission before using an audio recorder. All audio recordings that were collected were used strictly for research purposes and kept



confidential. After the process of reviewing the participants' responses, the audio recordings were secured to protect the privacy of participants.

To check the validity of the research instrument, the interview guide was reviewed by experts and tested before the actual interviews. The research experts looked at the questions and checked if they were clear, relevant, appropriate, and related to the objectives of the study. The researchers then used their comments and suggestions as a basis for improving the interview guide.

The interview guide was also tested with individuals who were similar to the target participants but were not included in the actual study. This pilot test helped the researchers determine if the questions were easy to understand and properly arranged. It also showed which questions needed changes, especially those that were confusing, repeated similar ideas, or might have led participants toward a certain answer.

After the pilot test, the researchers made the necessary changes to the interview guide before they started the actual interviews. During data collection, the participants' responses were audio-recorded with their informed consent. Field notes were also used to record important observations, including verbal responses and non-verbal cues. According to DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019), semi-structured interviews and detailed documentation could help researchers gather rich and in-depth information about participants' lived experiences and perspectives. In this study, these methods helped the researchers better understand the participants' experiences with Binisayang Tambal (faith healing).

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis served as a practical qualitative method for identifying, organizing, and understanding recurring patterns or themes within descriptive data. This framework allowed the researchers to systematically explore the participants' personal experiences, cultural beliefs, and views concerning binisayang tambal (faith healing), as well as the key factors that shaped their decisions in seeking treatment. This study specifically adopted the six-phase framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) to systematically process, code, and organize the descriptive interview responses into meaningful patterns.

The Six Phases of Thematic Analysis

The six phases of thematic analysis developed by Braun and Clarke (2006) outline a structured procedure for analyzing qualitative data. The first phase is familiarization with the data, which involves reading and listening to the raw responses repeatedly to grasp what the participants shared. The second phase is generating initial codes, which requires identifying important points in the data and giving them descriptive labels. The third phase is searching for themes, which entails organizing the initial codes into broader categories. The fourth phase is reviewing themes, which involves checking the themes against the collected data to verify their accuracy. The fifth phase is defining and naming themes, which focuses on finalizing the name and main idea of each theme. Finally, the sixth phase is producing the report, which consists of presenting the overall findings in a clear, organized format.

Application of the Framework

To carry out the analysis, the researchers systematically applied each of these six phases to the gathered data.



In the first stage, after completing the data gathering, the researchers transcribed all the recorded interviews word-for-word to ensure accuracy. The team then spent time going through the written transcripts multiple times while jotting down early ideas, which helped the researchers get a clear, deep understanding of the participants' stories before starting any formal analysis.

In the second stage, once the team was thoroughly familiar with the interview content, the researchers went through the transcribed data to pull out significant participant statements that answered the research questions, assigning initial codes to label the main idea of each statement.

In the third stage, after the coding was done, the researchers sorted through the different codes and grouped similar ones together. By looking at how these codes connected, the team built main themes that captured the core patterns across the participants' responses.

In the fourth stage, the researchers simply double-checked each generated theme to make sure everything was accurate, making sure no important details were missed and that each theme truly made sense with what the participants shared.

In the fifth stage, after double-checking everything, the researchers wrote down a short, straightforward explanation for each theme and gave them clear, simple titles so anyone reading the paper could instantly understand what each category was about.

In the sixth stage, the researchers organized the results into a structured data table displaying the interview questions, the significant statements featuring in-vivo codes in quotation marks, the initial codes for each participant, and the corresponding themes.

Overall, the six-phase thematic analysis framework by Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a clear and structured guide for processing the qualitative data. This systematic approach enabled the researchers to thoroughly analyze and understand the lived experiences, decisions, and health-seeking behaviors of individuals who practiced or relied on binisayang tambal (faith healing).

Data Gathering Procedure

Pre-Data Gathering:

Before conducting the research, the researchers prepare the necessary documents, research materials, and interview guide based on the objectives and research questions of the study. The researchers identify possible participants who have experiences or knowledge about Binisayang Tambal (faith healing) and who meet the criteria needed for the research.

The researchers submit the required documents to the research adviser for evaluation and approval. After receiving approval, the participants are informed about the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, and their rights as participants. Those who voluntarily agree to participate provide informed consent before the interview process begins.

Data Gathering:



The researchers conduct individual semi-structured interviews with selected participants who have experiences related to Binisayang Tambal. The interviews are arranged based on an agreed schedule, time, and location that are comfortable for the participants.

An interview guide is used to maintain consistency while allowing participants to freely share their thoughts, experiences, beliefs, and perceptions regarding faith healing. The questions focus on their reasons for seeking Binisayang Tambal, their health-seeking behaviors, and the psychological effects they experience.

With the permission of the participants, the interviews are audio-recorded to ensure accurate documentation of the gathered information. The researchers also take field notes to record important observations and additional details that may help in understanding the participants' experiences.

Post Gathering:

After completing the interviews, the collected responses are transcribed, organized, and reviewed for analysis. The researchers carefully examine the gathered information to identify common themes, patterns, and important ideas related to the experiences of individuals who seek Binisayang Tambal.

The collected data are analyzed using a qualitative approach to understand the connection between faith healing, health-seeking behaviors, cultural beliefs, and psychological experiences. All interview recordings, transcripts, and field notes are kept confidential and securely stored. The researchers ensure that ethical guidelines are followed to protect the privacy and rights of all participants.

Trustworthiness of the Study

This study established its rigor through the trustworthiness framework developed by Lincoln and Guba (1985), which consisted of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. These criteria ensured that the findings accurately reflected the experiences lived by the individuals who sought binisayang tambal (faith healing) rather than conventional health practices.

To recruit potential participants who had genuine, first-hand experience with binisayang tambal, the researchers employed purposive sampling to ensure credibility by selecting individuals who engaged in traditional Visayan healing practices. Thorough and semi-structured interviews were held in familiar settings where these healing traditions took place to gather stories of their psychological experiences and health-seeking behaviors. All interviews conducted were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure the accuracy of all information, carefully preserving the phrasing and raw descriptions provided by the participants.

To guarantee that these accounts were captured, member checking was conducted by returning the full transcribed interviews and preliminary interpretations to the participants, enabling them to review, validate, or correct the records so their personal experiences were documented accurately and without researcher bias. The procedure of data collection continued until data saturation was attained, marked by the point where no new information or significant insights arose within this context. Finally, credibility was cross-verified through literature triangulation, where the gathered narrative data were cross-examined against existing academic literature, prior empirical studies, and established frameworks on traditional Philippine healing and health-seeking behaviors to systematically compare, support, or contextualize the findings.



To ensure transferability, this study carefully documented the research setting, participant profiles, data collection procedures, and resulting data. To facilitate this, the study provided a thick description by describing the culture and history of the research setting, the participants' backgrounds and personal experiences, and the steps followed during data collection. The study also included relevant excerpts from the data, participants' narratives, and contextualized data displays to make the research process more transparent and traceable. Through these detailed descriptions, future researchers were able to better assess whether the findings were relevant, meaningful, and applicable to similar faith-healing communities and culturally rooted practices.

To support dependability, the researchers documented the entire research journey. By tracking the choices of the researchers during participant recruitment, interviewing, transcription, coding, and theme generation, the researchers created a clear audit trail. This documentation included detailed records of the research procedures, methodological decisions, revisions made throughout the study, and reflections during the data analysis process. Maintaining a comprehensive audit trail enabled others to understand how the findings were developed and ensured that the research process was logical, consistent, and well-documented.

The researchers also followed Braun and Clarke's step-by-step thematic analysis guidelines to ensure that the data analysis was consistent and highly transparent. Applying these guidelines systematically helped ensure that the identified themes accurately represented the participants' lived experiences with faith healing and were grounded in the collected data. This process strengthened the dependability of the study by demonstrating that the findings were derived through a careful, organized, and transparent analysis of the participants' shared experiences.

To make sure the study's findings were truly based on the participants' actual experiences, the researchers preserved a reflective journal to monitor and manage any personal biases throughout the research process. This journal allowed the researchers to reflect on their assumptions, decisions, and interpretations while maintaining objectivity during data collection and analysis. By using audio recordings, exact transcripts, participant reviews, and a detailed record of the research process, the findings were transparent and strictly rooted in the data rather than personal opinions. The researchers also ensured that the interpretations and themes were supported by the participants' narratives, allowing the findings to accurately reflect their lived experiences with faith healing. Maintaining these records provided a clear basis for the study's conclusions and allowed others to understand how the findings were developed. These steps were taken to ensure the overall trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and validity of the study.

Ethical Considerations

To ensure that the rights and dignity of all participants were safeguarded throughout the study, the researchers first secured official permissions and courtesy clearances from the proper local authorities, including the respective barangay captains of Barangay 6, Sta. Cruz Viejo, Azagra, Novallas, and Polo, before starting any data collection. Following approval, informed consent was gathered directly from every participant using the local Visayan language (Bisaya). The research team clearly explained the goals, methods, and voluntary nature of the project so participants could make a fully informed choice. Each participant was reminded that they had complete freedom to skip uncomfortable questions, pause the audio recording, or leave the study altogether at any time without facing judgment, penalty, or disruption to their standing in the community.

To maintain privacy and create a safe environment for open dialogue, strict confidentiality protocols were followed. Personal details such as real names, exact household locations, and identifiable family references were removed from all transcripts, replaced with pseudonyms, and kept locked and accessible only by the researchers. Because



talking about binisayang tambal (faith healing), spiritual beliefs, and personal health journeys was deeply personal, the researchers maintained an empathetic, open-minded, and non-judgmental attitude at all times. All interviews took place in peaceful, familiar home locations chosen by the participants themselves to ensure their physical and emotional comfort, ensuring that no part of the research process pressured them or interfered with their personal health choices.

Findings and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study based on the data gathered from the participants. Through the analysis of their responses, the researchers identified themes that describe the participants' health-seeking journey, experiences with Binisayang Tambal, and perceptions of traditional healing. The themes derived from the participants' narratives reflect their reasons for seeking traditional healing, their experiences during the healing process, and the changes they perceived after the practice.

CODES	THEMES
Long-term/prolonged illness Ineffective medical treatment Skin discoloration Frequent headaches History of hyperventilation Medical consultation/treatment Transition to faith healing	Health-Seeking Journey
Family and social influence Healer's reputation Seeking another healer Support systems Belief systems	Social Influence and Support
Delayed improvement Fear of medical treatment Personal belief of traditional healing No doctor consultation Ineffective medical treatment Ritual/spiritual treatment Belief in spiritual causes Family influence on faith healing	Perceptions of Modern Medicine
Spiritual explanation of illness Alignment with personal beliefs Acceptance of healer's explanation Validation through experience	Spiritual Understanding



Simple healing setting Religious environment Ritual materials Perceived healing/ improvement Lack of relief from medical treatment Emotional and physical experiences	The Healing Experience
Observed successful healing Trust/belief in healer Change from disbelief to belief Personal experience of healing Perceived life change	Trust and Belief
Emotional distress Prayer as coping Continued belief in faith healing Persistence in seeking healing Positive mindset after recovery Spiritual gratitude Improved functioning and social life	Psychological and Emotional Effects

Theme 1: Health-Seeking Journey

The health-seeking journey represents the step-by-step process that individuals go through when dealing with physical illness before deciding to try Binisayang Tambal. It shows the physical and mental stress of suffering from long-lasting or unexplained health problems that do not get better with regular medical treatments. Because of these persistent health issues, individuals gradually change their approach, moving from hospital visits to alternative healing methods in search of lasting relief. This journey helps people cope with ongoing illness by encouraging them to explore other options when standard medical care does not bring recovery. Additionally, it highlights the physical and emotional pain that comes with chronic sickness, showing how long-term suffering motivates people to look for help elsewhere. The continuous physical symptoms, the repeated trials of different medical treatments, and the eventual decision to see a faith healer are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 1 shared,

"I was sick for five years. I underwent many laboratory tests and took maintenance medicine, but I never recovered."

Participant 3 noted,

"I had frequent headaches. The doctor's medicine did not cure me, but after faith healing, my headaches disappeared."

Participant 4 recounted,



"I have had high blood pressure for a long time, and my blood sugar was also high. Now it is normal. I also had a catheter for six months."

Participant 6 shared,

"I experienced hyperventilation when I was in elementary school and was hospitalized because of it. When it happened again, my mother decided that I should also receive Binisayang healing."

This theme aims to explore the health-seeking journey as a natural response to unresolved physical pain. Based on the responses of the participants, the health-seeking journey is seen as a movement from initial sickness to frustration with medical results, and finally to traditional healing. The health-seeking journey happens naturally when people reach the limits of their original treatment and look for other ways to feel better. Trying different health options is an important part of finding complete relief and well-being. In this process, Binisayang Tambal serves as an important alternative when other methods fail. Rondilla et al. (2021) explain that health-seeking behavior in the Philippines is strongly driven by ongoing symptoms and the lack of improvement from initial treatments. In this context, the long-lasting illnesses of the participants encouraged them to try traditional healing. Oliquino (2024) explains that faith healing remains a common choice when modern medicine does not give clear results. In this context, Binisayang Tambal meets the ongoing need for recovery. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) state that understanding how people seek care requires looking at how they evaluate the success of their treatments, while Niranjan et al. (2024) explain that patients with long-term health issues often turn to culturally familiar healing methods. In this context, the health-seeking journey acts as a practical guide that leads individuals from health uncertainty toward traditional healing solutions.

Furthermore, this step-by-step journey shows how long-lasting illness puts a heavy strain on both physical and mental strength. When regular medical treatments do not give good results over time, individuals experience growing stress and a drop in their daily well-being. Turning to Binisayang Tambal is not a sudden reaction, but a thoughtful decision made when standard care no longer brings relief. By trying alternative healing, patients take active steps to find recovery on their own terms. Jardeleza et al. (2025) note that people in rural communities often turn to practical health choices when modern clinical treatments fail to resolve ongoing health problems. Ultimately, Binisayang Tambal serves as a helpful bridge that guides individuals from chronic suffering back toward health and recovery.

Theme 2: Social Influence and Support

Social influence and support refer to the guidance and encouragement provided by family, friends, and neighbors when a person considers Binisayang Tambal. It shows how recommendations from trusted people play a major role in deciding whether to see a traditional healer and choosing which healer to visit. Because of this social support, individuals feel less nervous and more comfortable trying traditional remedies, knowing that people they trust have had good results. It helps individuals handle health crises by providing shared beliefs, financial help, and company during visits to the healer. Additionally, it emphasizes the strength of family ties and community ties, which help keep traditional practices alive and accepted in the community. The advice from relatives and neighbors, the sharing of positive recovery stories, and the active help of family members are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 4 recounted,

"My neighbor. I told him about my illness, and he felt sorry for me. He then went to our house."

Participant 6 recalled,



"My grandmother strongly believed in Binisayang healing. Whenever someone in our family became sick, including my cousin, they would go to Azagra, so that is how we came to know the faith healer."

Participant 7 noted,

"My aunts suggested that faith healer because they said the healer was good and had already helped people with illnesses."

This theme aims to explore social influence and support as a key factor that guides individuals toward traditional healing. Based on the responses of the participants, social influence and support bring trust, direction, and comfort to the healing process. Social support works daily in local communities, where family members and neighbors regularly share health advice and personal stories. Having support from others is essential when making health decisions because it reduces worry and builds confidence in traditional choices. In health decision-making, social support connects sick individuals with trusted traditional healers. Rebuya et al. (2020) explain that community networks play an important role in keeping trust in local healers alive. In this context, advice from neighbors and friends makes Binisayang Tambal feel like a reliable option. Batucan and Mori (2025) explain that traditional health decisions are deeply rooted in family relationships and shared cultural beliefs. In this context, family members act as primary decision-makers who guide sick relatives toward trusted healers. Bosire et al. (2021) point out that social support helps people cope better during times of illness, while Bais et al. (2016) note that community approval helps pass down traditional practices from generation to generation. In this context, social influence and support bring people together, linking personal health needs with community traditions.

In addition, encouragement from family members and neighbors provides emotional comfort that reduces the loneliness of being sick. When trusted relatives recommend a healer, help arrange travel, or go along during the visit, they show empathy for the patient's suffering and share the burden of seeking help. This collective involvement builds hope, turning health recovery into a shared community effort rather than a lonely fight. Chiroma (2020) highlights that in faith-centered communities, healing is a shared social process where love and support from others help restore emotional and spiritual well-being. Therefore, choosing Binisayang Tambal is a collective decision that honors family advice, strengthens community ties, and promotes mutual care.⁶

Theme 3: Perceptions of Modern Medicine

Perceptions of modern medicine represent how individuals view the strengths and limitations of doctors, hospitals, and prescription drugs. It shows that while people respect modern medical care, they also recognize its boundaries, especially when dealing with chronic pain, temporary symptom relief, or conditions that doctors cannot easily explain. Because of these views, people separate illnesses into two types: those that can be cured by pills and clinical treatments, and those that require traditional or spiritual help. It helps individuals understand why certain medical tests or hospital visits might not fully solve their health problems. Additionally, it highlights the high cost, long waiting times, and formal atmosphere of hospitals, which contrast with the simple and comfortable environment of traditional healing. The heavy reliance on laboratory tests, the short-term relief from prescription pills, and the feeling that medical care is incomplete are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 1 shared,

"I had many laboratory tests and took maintenance medicine for years, but I was never cured."

Participant 4 recounted,



"I went to the hospital many times. I kept going back to the hospital in Bais and had laboratory tests."

Participant 7 added,

"My mother gave me paracetamol and put a cold cloth on my forehead. After several days I still did not recover, so we went to a doctor, and I was given medicine, but it still did not help. That was when my mother sent me to the faith healer."

This theme aims to explore perceptions of modern medicine as a practical way people evaluate their health options. Based on the responses of the participants, modern medicine is seen as helpful for quick treatments, but limited when it comes to long-lasting or unexplained health issues. Modern medicine is often used alongside traditional healing, creating a combination where individuals visit doctors first and turn to faith healing if they do not get better. Evaluating medical outcomes is important so that people know when it is time to try other methods. In healthcare choices, views on modern medicine serve as a point of comparison. Crisol and Oledan (2022) explain that traditional healing works alongside modern care, filling gaps when medical treatments do not fully solve the problem. In this context, the limits of pharmaceutical drugs lead patients to explore traditional options. Clark (2022) explains that folk belief systems divide illnesses into natural conditions that doctors can treat and unnatural conditions that need traditional healing. In this context, participants' experiences show a clear line between physical sickness and spiritual health issues. DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) highlight that how patients feel about medical care depends on their connection with the healthcare provider and the success of the treatment, while Niranjana et al. (2024) explain that hospitals can sometimes feel overwhelming for people looking for simple and personal care. In this context, perceptions of modern medicine explain why integrating Binisayang Tambal makes sense to patients.

Moreover, these views show the practical and financial challenges that come with modern medical care. Beyond health outcomes, the experience of visiting busy hospitals, taking continuous lab tests, and paying for expensive medicines can create financial stress and feelings of frustration. When prescription drugs only bring short-term relief without solving the main problem, patients begin to look for more complete ways to heal. Howe et al. (2019) explain that patient satisfaction depends greatly on whether healthcare providers show warmth and personal care along with medical skill. When formal clinics lack this personal touch, Binisayang Tambal offers a comfortable alternative where patients feel listened to and treated as whole individuals.

Theme 4: Spiritual Understanding

Spiritual understanding refers to the beliefs and cultural ideas that link health and sickness to spiritual forces, natural balance, or unseen elements. It reflects traditional Visayan beliefs, where physical illness can be caused by encounters with unseen spirits (*dili ingon nato*), environmental disruptions, or spiritual harm (*gidaot*). Because of this spiritual framework, individuals have a clear way to explain why some illnesses do not show up on medical tests and can only be cured through spiritual rituals. It helps individuals find meaning in unexpected or long-lasting sickness by offering a cultural explanation for their condition. Additionally, it emphasizes traditional rituals like prayers (*orasyon*), offerings (*halad*), and spiritual checks, showing that spiritual balance is essential for physical health. Recognizing spirit-related sickness, performing diagnostic rituals, and trusting in divine or spiritual help are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 1 shared,

"If the illness is physical, doctors can treat it. But if it is caused by spirits or supernatural forces, doctors cannot cure it."



Participant 4 recounted,

"The doctor did not know that I had been spiritually harmed. If I had not received faith healing, I would not have known that I was spiritually harmed."

Participant 6 stated,

"For me, there was nothing lacking or unclear because it depends on whether a person believes in Binisayang healing and traditional practices."

This theme aims to explore spiritual understanding as a cultural framework for making sense of illness and recovery. Based on the responses of the participants, spiritual understanding brings clear answers and cultural logic to unexplained sickness. Spiritual understanding works as a guide that helps individuals identify the cause of their symptoms and choose the right treatment. Having a spiritual perspective is an important part of traditional healing because it gives meaningful explanations for personal suffering. In Binisayang Tambal, spiritual understanding is the main tool used to identify the root cause of an illness. Clark (2022) explains that the Cebuano traditional health system is based on a worldview that sees health as a balance between the body and the spiritual world. In this context, identifying spiritual harm allows patients to seek spiritual cures. Varela (2023) explains that spiritual views help people handle physical pain by finding deeper meaning in their experiences. In this context, spiritual understanding connects personal beliefs with the healer's methods. Crisol and Oledan (2022) note that mixing traditional Catholic practices with local beliefs creates a comforting spiritual system for patients, while Bais et al. (2016) explain that traditional knowledge offers practical spiritual answers that fit everyday life. In this context, spiritual understanding serves as a strong foundation that supports faith healing practices.

Furthermore, a spiritual framework offers patients peace and clarity when an illness seems difficult to explain. When medical tests show normal results despite ongoing pain, individuals can feel confused and hopeless; however, understanding sickness through traditional spiritual beliefs brings clear answers. Viewing an illness as a disruption in spiritual or natural balance gives patients a clear path to recovery through prayers, traditional rituals, and spiritual guidance. Steinhorn et al. (2017) emphasize that addressing spiritual needs alongside physical health fulfills deep human needs for hope, connection, and meaning during times of sickness. As a result, spiritual understanding elevates Binisayang Tambal from a simple physical treatment into a complete approach that heals both body and spirit.

Theme 5: The Healing Experience

The healing experience covers the personal, calm, and practical interactions that take place between the patient, the traditional healer, and the healing environment. It is characterized by a peaceful atmosphere with gentle touch, open conversation, burning incense, sacred altars, and direct personal attention. Because of these features, the healing experience creates a strong feeling of comfort and safety, which is very different from the busy and rushed environment of modern clinics. It helps individuals feel listened to and truly cared for, as the healer pays attention to both physical pain and emotional worries. Additionally, it emphasizes quick physical sensations, such as feeling lighter, feeling warmth, or noticing a sudden drop in pain, showing that the rituals have immediate effects. The quiet atmosphere of the healer's home, the reassuring touch during the check, and the quick relief from pain are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 5 explained,

"The house I went to had many religious images, and I smelled incense, which helped calm me."



Participant 6 recalled,

"We had to travel through the hills to get there. The place looked like a church, although it was not actually a church. Inside, there were statues and an altar with a lot of money placed in front of it."

Participant 7 added,

"The atmosphere in the faith healer's house was calm. I could smell incense and something like the smell of herbal ointment. There were statues and saints, and there was also water that was given to me to drink or used during the ritual."

This theme aims to explore the healing experience as a comforting and personal process that aids recovery. Based on the responses of the participants, the healing experience brings physical comfort, personal connection, and quick relief from discomfort. Healing sessions take place in simple, familiar, or sacred settings where gentle elements like incense, statues, and quiet prayers help the patient relax. The quality of the interaction between healer and patient is essential in traditional care for building trust and reducing fear. In traditional care, the healing environment is a primary reason why patients feel better. Stöckigt et al. (2022) explain that spiritual healing relies heavily on a calm setting, personal presence, and caring touch. In this context, the quiet environment of the healer's home helps patients feel relaxed in both mind and body. Ozoa (2019) explains that visiting a mananambal combines physical treatment with spiritual reassurance, creating a complete sense of care. In this context, simple physical touch and unhurried talks make the treatment feel effective. Béres et al. (2024) show that faith-based settings and peaceful surroundings can create real improvements in bodily and emotional health, while DeJonckheere and Vaughn (2019) note that warm personal connections are necessary for patient comfort. In this context, the healing experience works as a comforting encounter that treats the patient as a whole person.

Additionally, the quiet surroundings and traditional rituals during healing play a major role in lowering physical stress and helping the body relax. The presence of familiar scents, sacred statues, soft prayers, and gentle physical touch creates a peaceful setting that calms the mind. As patients enter this quiet space, their initial worry fades away, making room for real physical comfort and emotional relief. Kaptchuk (2002) notes that meaningful rituals, personal attention, and symbolic settings trigger real physical responses that support overall recovery. Therefore, the welcoming environment of Binisayang Tambal acts as an active part of the healing process, helping patients move away from daily stress toward lasting peace.

Theme 6: Trust and Belief

Trust and belief refer to the growing confidence and faith that individuals have in Binisayang Tambal and the traditional healer. It shows a process that often starts with curiosity or necessity and turns into strong trust after seeing actual physical recovery or seeing others get cured. Because of this trust and belief, patients stay committed to the treatment, which gives them hope and keeps them positive during the healing process. It helps individuals overcome doubt and criticism from others because their confidence is backed by real results, such as walking again, feeling less pain, or staying healthy over time. Additionally, it highlights faith in God and respect for the healer's gift, showing how personal belief connects human actions with divine help. The change from doubt to confidence, the reliance on personal health improvements, and the expression of gratitude are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 1 shared,

"I personally witnessed many people recover through this healer, so I trusted him."



Participant 4 recounted,

"I believe the faith healer was effective because my neighbor had been helped by the faith healer. At first, I did not believe, but after receiving the treatment, I began to believe. I had spent six months going back and forth to the hospital and could only lie down, but now I can walk around again. I now go to church every Sunday to thank God, and I am happy that my body has recovered."

Participant 7 added,

"I think the ritual felt powerful because many people trusted it. Even before they were healed, their belief seemed to make them feel that they were getting better. After receiving the treatment, however, there are times when actual changes happen a few days later because of what they did."

This theme aims to explore trust and belief as key factors that keep people confident in traditional practices. Based on the responses of the participants, trust and belief grow stronger through personal recovery, seeing others get cured, and shared spiritual faith. Trust and belief develop throughout the healing journey, turning initial doubt into strong confidence as health improves. Having trust and belief is essential in healing because a positive mindset helps support physical recovery. In Binisayang Tambal, trust and belief serve as main pillars of recovery. Hróbjartsson and Gøtzsche (2010) and the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH, 2020) explain that positive expectations and trust play an important role in bringing real bodily relief during health treatments. In this context, confidence in the healer helps patients feel physical relief faster. Batucan and Mori (2025) explain that trust in traditional healers comes from real results and word-of-mouth recommendations rather than official medical licenses. In this context, getting well firsthand solidifies trust in the healer. Ozoa (2019) notes that personal success builds confidence in traditional care, while Varela (2023) states that belief gives patients a helpful framework for recovering their health. In this context, trust and belief serve as active forces that keep faith healing trusted and relevant.

Furthermore, growing trust builds strong confidence in the treatment, helping patients stay positive despite doubts or criticism from others. As real health improvements happen—such as reduced pain or restored movement—initial hesitation turns into deep gratitude toward both the traditional healer and spiritual guidance. This strong belief gives patients a positive mindset that supports long-term healing. Abbot et al. (2001) states that personal faith and confidence in a treatment lead to better pain relief and a higher quality of life for people with long-term illness. Ultimately, trust and belief serve as active forces that maintain physical strength, support traditional wisdom, and build lasting hope for the future.

Theme 7: Psychological and Emotional Effects

Psychological and emotional effects describe the mental relief, reduction in anxiety, emotional calm, and return to daily activities that individuals experience after receiving Binisayang Tambal. It shows a clear shift from feelings of worry, stress, and fear of death to feelings of relief, peace, and hope for the future. Because of these positive emotional changes, individuals can return to their daily routines, go back to work, spend quality time with family, and carry out responsibilities without constant fear of being sick. It helps individuals deal with long-term emotional stress by giving them peace of mind and a clear path forward. Additionally, it highlights how patients respond to doubters, as they confidently share their positive recovery based on real improvements in their daily lives. The relief from fear, the return to work and family life, and the confident feelings about recovery are demonstrated by the statements of the participants.

Participant 1 shared,



"I became anxious and even thought about ending my life because of my illness, but I kept praying to God."

Participant 3 stated,

"I was able to return to my normal daily activities."

Participant 4 recounted,

"I am really afraid of dying because I still have grandchildren and future grandchildren. I want to be able to see them, especially because one of my grandchildren was only born about a month ago."

This theme aims to explore psychological and emotional effects as major outcomes of traditional healing that improve overall life quality. Based on the responses of the participants, psychological and emotional effects bring peace of mind, reassurance, and the ability to return to regular daily life. Emotional well-being improves as physical pain fades and patients regain control over their daily routines and family roles. Rebuilding emotional health is an important part of overall recovery. In health outcomes, feeling mentally relieved is a clear sign of getting better. Varela (2023) explains that spiritual healing experiences provide deep mental relief by reducing fear and restoring inner peace. In this context, faith healing helps patients handle the heavy emotional strain caused by long-standing sickness. Niranjana et al. (2024) explain that traditional health practices serve as effective ways to lower stress and improve mental well-being within a supportive culture. In this context, the comfort given by the healer eases fears of dying or getting worse. Stöckigt et al. (2022) point out that spiritual healing helps people adjust mentally and improves overall quality of life, while Rondilla et al. (2021) note that getting back to work and daily duties is a main indicator of health in local communities. In this context, psychological and emotional relief serves as clear proof of the positive impact of Binisayang Tambal.

In addition, the emotional relief experienced by participants goes beyond physical health to help rebuild personal identity and daily life routines. Overcoming constant fear, worry, and helplessness allows individuals to reconnect with loved ones, return to work, and fulfill family duties with confidence. Regaining control over daily activities improves self-worth and eases the emotional weight built up during long periods of sickness. Tanji and Hoshi (2008) highlight that mental stability and purposeful daily actions are key parts of personal strength and well-being. By lifting the heavy emotional strain of illness, Binisayang Tambal restores mental balance and empowers individuals to look forward to the future with confidence.

Conclusion

This research sought the preferences and views of people who choose binisayang tambal over common medicinal practices. It demonstrates how it has evolved from just being an alternative to a standalone health practice that people use as their primary choice for healing, also diving into their full belief in it. Binisayang tambal is not just a physical cure for chronic and unresolved ailments, but also a way of spiritual understanding, social connection and emotional reassurance. Its widespread use is a reflection of its importance to health and to community life, shaped by common cultural values, family support and prevailing social environments. The results demonstrate the significance of binisayang tambal in affecting patients' trust, mental relief and involvement in their cultural and social environment.

The study also shows how important it is to promote health care approaches that are respectful of and open to cultural traditions. The acceptance of binisayang tambal as a valid way of healing and coping may aid healthcare professionals and policymakers in helping health recovery and psychological comfort of patients and promoting cultural context awareness in clinical practice. Hospitals and clinics can foster meaningful patient-provider



relationships and relieve health differences through valuing traditional heritage and implementing culturally sensitive policies. Local communities and families also play an important role in building mutual care and spaces that are safe for people to express their health needs and to promote a feeling of belonging

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommend that healthcare professionals develop a more culturally sensitive approach when communicating with individuals who practice or rely on binisayang tambal. Healthcare workers should respect patients' cultural and spiritual beliefs while also providing clear information about the importance of proper medical consultation, especially when dealing with serious or persistent health conditions. Understanding the reasons behind a person's trust in faith healing may help healthcare professionals communicate with patients more effectively.

The researchers also recommend that individuals who practice binisayang tambal consider seeking professional medical advice when their condition does not improve or when symptoms become serious. Faith and traditional practices may provide comfort and emotional support, but they should not prevent individuals from receiving appropriate medical attention when necessary.

For individuals who do not believe in binisayang tambal, the researchers recommend practicing respect and avoiding judgment toward those who choose to use it. People may have different beliefs, experiences, and reasons for trusting traditional healing practices. Disagreement with the practice should not lead to discrimination, ridicule, or negative treatment of its users. Instead, open-minded and respectful discussions may help create better understanding between individuals with different views about health and healing.

For local health offices and community leaders, the researchers recommend creating health education programs that acknowledge local traditions while promoting safe health-seeking behaviors. These programs should avoid immediately dismissing traditional beliefs and instead explain when professional medical care is necessary. This approach may encourage community members to become more open to healthcare services without feeling that their cultural practices are being disrespected.

For future researchers, it is recommended to conduct similar studies with a larger and more diverse group of participants from different communities in the Visayas. Future studies may also include the perspectives of mananambal, family members, and healthcare professionals to provide a more complete understanding of binisayang tambal. Future research may also explore how family influence, personal experiences, religious beliefs, healthcare accessibility, and previous experiences with medical treatment affect a person's decision to seek faith healing.

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