



Research Article

Personal Hygiene Practices Among IPS Community in Panaytayan: An Assessment

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About Article

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ABSTRACT

This research study provides an in-depth assessment of the personal hygiene practices prevalent among the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) community of Panaytayan, aiming to document, analyze, and understand their traditional and contemporary hygiene behaviors. Recognizing the gap in literature regarding the specific hygiene practices of IPs and the impact of socio-economic factors on these practices, this study employs a descriptive method of research. The primary objective is to catalog the range of personal hygiene practices, including bathing, oral care, handwashing, hair care, and clothing hygiene, within the Panaytayan community, and to explore the underlying cultural, environmental, and economic influences that shape these practices. The study concluded that personal hygiene practices are seldom practiced by the Hanunuo Mangyan of Panaytayan. The result may be due to some social, economic, cultural, financial, and knowledge barriers, such as water scarcity, inadequate sanitation, discrimination, poverty, and limited access to hygiene products, education and services. Thus, with the highlighted needs for each indicator reflected as results on the answered questionnaire, it is suggested that an extension activity should follow this research endeavor, which will focus on information dissemination on the importance of always practicing the personal hygiene practices and put more efforts on providing the community meaningful inputs that should change their mindset on the importance of being holistically healthy. The proposed extension program is entitled "Project BODY": B-athe regularly, O-ral Hygiene, D-ress clean, and Y- clean your hands). The main objective of this initiative is to improve the personal hygiene practices of the Mangyan community residing in specific areas of Panaytayan, Mansalay.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Mangyan is the collective name for the eight indigenous groups living in Mindoro, each with its own name, language, and set of customs. There are around 300 million indigenous peoples in the world. In the Philippines, of the projected population of 94 million in 2010, about 15% belong to indigenous groups (MHC, 2019). Mindoro is the seventh-largest island in the Philippines, with an area of 10,224 square kilometers and two provinces - Oriental and Occidental. Of the total population of one million, the indigenous population is estimated to be 100,000.

Mansalay is a 2nd class municipality in the province of Oriental Mindoro and is notable for its indigenous Mangyan population. The town is home to 13,000 to 15,000 Hanunuo Mangyans, making it the largest among the groups of Mangyans. Considered one of the most highly cultured and civilized, they are best known among the eight Mangyan groups in the province.

In the verdant landscapes of Panaytayan, Mansalay, where tradition and nature intertwine, the Indigenous Peoples (IPs) uphold a lifestyle that is both a testament to their cultural heritage and a reflection of their intimate relationship with the environment. As modernization slowly permeates these communities, the interplay between traditional practices and contemporary influences becomes increasingly complex, especially in the realm of personal hygiene. This study embarks on an exploratory journey to assess the personal hygiene practices among the IPs of Panaytayan, aiming to document, analyze, and understand how these practices are influenced by cultural traditions, environmental conditions, and the evolving socio-economic landscape.

Personal hygiene, a fundamental aspect of human health and well-being, encompasses various practices essential for the maintenance of cleanliness and the prevention of disease. Among indigenous communities, these practices are not only routines of health maintenance but are also deeply embedded in the cultural fabric, often carrying symbolic meanings and reflecting a profound knowledge of the natural world. However, the sustainability of these practices and their adaptation to changing environmental and social conditions present a unique challenge for IPs, raising questions about the preservation of traditional knowledge, the accessibility of resources, and the impact of external influences on health behaviors.

The Indigenous Peoples of Panaytayan, Mansalay, are custodians of a rich cultural heritage, living in close harmony with their surroundings yet facing the pressures of modernity. This study, through a comprehensive assessment of their personal hygiene practices, seeks to shed light on the current state of these practices, identifying the factors that influence hygiene behaviors, and exploring the implications for public health and community well-being. This research aims to provide a holistic view of the hygiene practices within the Panaytayan community, offering insights that could inform culturally sensitive health promotion and sustainable development strategies.

In doing so, the study not only contributes to the academic understanding of health practices among indigenous communities but also aims to support the IPs of Panaytayan in maintaining their health and well-being amidst the challenges of the 21st century. Through this exploration, we hope to bridge

the gap between traditional knowledge and modern health practices, fostering a dialogue that respects and integrates indigenous wisdom in the pursuit of holistic health and sustainable living.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Nuwagaba (2020) reported low knowledge and practice of hand hygiene among university students and residents of a slum in Uganda, with lack of soap being a major barrier.

Ethiopia (2020) health care workers at Jugal Hospital reported using soap and water, but also faced constraints due to a lack of these resources.

Hall (2019) indicates that poor bathing practices are prevalent among indigenous communities, leading to negative health impacts. These practices are influenced by a lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation, and hygiene services.

Tiwari (2018) and Durey (2017) both highlight the impact of historical and structural factors, such as poverty, discrimination, and limited access to education and services.

Durey (2021) highlighted that the provision of oral health care to Indigenous communities has been inadequate, with limited education and training for dental professionals in working with these populations.

Osteria (1988) concluded that Hanunuo Mangyans of Mindoro face significant health challenges, including poor environmental sanitation and inadequate knowledge of curative and preventive care.

Ghanepour (2010) found hairdressers in other regions have lack of comprehensive health knowledge and practice, highlighting the need for training and education.

Legiawati (2022) added the prevalence of hair disorders, such as alopecia, in other populations underscores the importance of addressing these issues among the Mangyan people.

Hall (2019) and Jiménez (2014) both highlight the challenges of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in remote Indigenous communities, with Hall (2019) specifically noting the negative impact of crowding on residents' ability to maintain healthy hygiene levels. This is further exacerbated by cultural, financial, and knowledge barriers, as discussed by Hall (2018) in the context of menstrual hygiene management.

Torres-Slimming (2019) emphasizes the need for interventions that prioritize WASH-related Sustainable Development Goals, underscoring the importance of understanding and responding to local contexts.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used the descriptive method to assess the personal hygiene practices among IP's community in Panaytayan, Mansalay. Descriptive research, as discussed by Haneem (2017), is a valuable tool for understanding the current state of a population or phenomenon. This type of research is particularly useful in fields like education, nutrition, and epidemiology, as highlighted by Koh (2000). This study made use of purposive sampling technique in drawing the respondents. A self-made questionnaire was utilized as an instrument in gathering responses from the respondents. Statistical tools used were weighted mean and ranking.



4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Level of Awareness of The IPS Community in Panaytayan, Mansalay in Terms of Personal Hygiene Practices

Table 1. Mean on the assessed practices related to personal hygiene of Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan, Mansalay in terms of hand hygiene

Hand Hygiene	Mean	Rank	Description
1 I wash my hands with water and soap.	2.78	3	Sometimes
2 I use antibacterial soap and water when washing my hands.	2.83	2	Sometimes
3 I trim my nails regularly.	3.17	1	Sometimes
4 I wash my hands with water and soap before and after using the restroom.	2.75	4	Sometimes
Overall Mean	2.88		Sometimes

The overall mean score of 2.88 showed a low level of hand hygiene practices among the IPs community in Panaytayan. The result may be due to some social and behavioural barriers to hand hygiene, such as water scarcity, lack of soap, and community tolerance of dirtiness. This is similar to the study of Nuwagaba (2020) reported low knowledge and practice of hand hygiene among university students and residents of a slum in Uganda, with lack of soap being a major barrier. In Ethiopia, health care workers at Jugal Hospital reported using soap and water, but also faced constraints due to a lack of these resources (Ethiopia, 2020).

Table 2. Mean on the assessed practices related to personal hygiene of Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan, Mansalay in terms of body hygiene

Hand Hygiene	Mean	Rank	Description
1 I bathe and wash my hair with shampoo and water daily.	1.70	2	Seldom
2 I put on deodorant everyday.	1.38	3	Never
3 I use cotton buds for cleaning my ears two or three times a week.	1.20	4	Never
4 I shave at least once a week.	2.83	1	Sometimes
Overall Mean	1.78		Seldom

As reflected on the table, the Hanunuo Mangyan of Panaytayan have little knowledge on body hygiene practices (1.78). Research indicates that poor bathing practices are prevalent among indigenous communities, leading to negative health impacts (Hall, 2019; B, 2017). These practices are influenced by a lack of access to safe drinking water, inadequate sanitation, and hygiene services (Hall, 2019).

It can be gleaned from the table that oral care has been seldom practiced (1.77) The lack of oral care among indigenous people is a complex issue influenced by a range of social, economic, and cultural factors. Tiwari (2018) and Durey (2017) both highlight

Table 3. Mean on the assessed practices related to personal hygiene of Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan, Mansalay in terms of oral care

Hand Hygiene	Mean	Rank	Description
1 I brush/clean my teeth once daily using toothpaste or betel nut.	2.69	1	Sometimes
2 I brush my teeth whenever needed, especially after eating sweets.	1.88	2	Seldom
3 I change my toothbrush every three months.	1.00	4	Never
4 I avoid tobacco use.	1.50	3	Never
Overall Mean	1.77		Seldom

the impact of historical and structural factors, such as poverty, discrimination, and limited access to education and services. The provision of oral health care to Indigenous communities has been inadequate, with limited education and training for dental professionals in working with these populations (Durey, 2021).

Table 4. Mean on the assessed practices related to personal hygiene of Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan, Mansalay in terms of hair care

Hand Hygiene	Mean	Rank	Description
1 I wash my hair with a clean water everyday.	2.93	3	Sometimes
2 I use shampoo or Gugo to my hair.	3.39	2	Sometimes
3 I apply coconut oil to my hair to make it smooth.	1.92	4	Seldom
4 I comb my hair three times a day.	3.98	1	Often
Overall Mean	3.05		Sometimes

As shown on the table, hair care practices have been practiced sometimes (3.05). The Hanunuo Mangyans of Mindoro face significant health challenges, including poor environmental sanitation and inadequate knowledge of curative and preventive care (Osteria, 1988). This lack of knowledge and access to health care may contribute to a poor level of hair care among the Mangyan people. Studies on hairdressers in other regions have found a lack of comprehensive health knowledge and practice,

Table 5. Mean on the assessed practices related to personal hygiene of Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan, Mansalay in terms of clothes hygiene

Hand Hygiene	Mean	Rank	Description
1 I change my clothes daily.	1.51	4	Never
2 I wash my clothes frequently.	2.55	3	Seldom
3 I change my clothes after I sweat.	2.82	2	Sometimes
4 I wear clothes twice before I wash them.	4.03	1	Often
Overall Mean	2.73		Sometimes



highlighting the need for training and education (Ghanepour, 2010). Additionally, the prevalence of hair disorders, such as alopecia, in other populations underscores the importance of addressing these issues among the Mangyan people (Legiawati, 2022).

The findings show that clothes hygiene was not always practiced by the Hanunuo Mangyan tribe in Panaytayan (2.73). The poor level of changing and washing clothes among Indigenous peoples is a complex issue influenced by a range of factors. Hall (2019) and Jiménez (2014) both highlight the challenges of water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in remote Indigenous communities, with Hall (2019) specifically noting the negative impact of crowding on residents' ability to maintain healthy hygiene levels. This is further exacerbated by cultural, financial, and knowledge barriers, as discussed by Hall (2018) in the context of menstrual hygiene management. Torres-Slimming (2019) emphasizes the need for interventions that prioritize WASH-related Sustainable Development Goals, underscoring the importance of understanding and responding to local contexts. These studies collectively underscore the need for a holistic approach that addresses the multifaceted challenges faced by Indigenous communities in maintaining proper hygiene, including the changing and washing of clothes.

4.2. Proposed Intervention Program

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers propose an extension program entitled: "Project Body : (BODY – B-athe regularly, O-ral hygiene, D-ress clean, and Y- clean your hands). The main objective of this initiative is to improve the personal hygiene practices of the mangyan community residing in specific areas of Panaytayan, Mansalay.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that personal hygiene practices are seldom practiced by the Hanunuo Mangyan of Panaytayan. The result may be due to some social, economic, cultural, financial, and knowledge barriers, such as water scarcity, inadequate sanitation, discrimination, poverty, and limited

access to hygiene products, education and services. Thus, with the highlighted needs for each indicator reflected as results on the answered questionnaire, it is suggested that an extension activity should follow this research endeavor, which will focus on information dissemination on the importance of always practicing the personal hygiene practices and put more efforts on providing the community meaningful inputs that should change their mindset on the importance of being holistically healthy.

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