

PHILIPPINE AND SOUTH AFRICAN EXPERIENCES ON FOLK LITERATURE RESEARCH: RELEVANCE, GAINS, AND CHALLENGES

¹*Connie Makgabo, ²Genevieve J. Quintero

¹Sepedi Methodology Senior Lecturer, Faculty, University of Pretoria, South Africa

²Cultural Studies Professor, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Philippines, Philippines

*Corresponding Author Email: connie.makgabo@up.ac.za

Article Info	Abstract
<p>Article History Received: January 2024 Revised: March 2024 Published: April 2024</p> <p>Keywords Folklore; Indigenous cultures; Oral traditions; Philippine folklore; South African folklore;</p>	<p><i>Folkloric studies have accelerated in the Philippines and South Africa because the Academe acknowledged the urgency to collect, preserve, and publish the oral traditions of indigenous communities. Oral traditions embody the history, values, and world views of these indigenous cultures, which need to be preserved for posterity. This paper discusses the relevance, gains, and challenges in conducting folklore research in the Philippines and South Africa, which share similarities, including their colonial pasts and number of indigenous communities. The paper contemplates the relevance of folklore research outputs in different fields thereby contributing to the discourse on the value of folklore research. This qualitative study uses textual analysis to focus on insights related to folklore research, using secondary data including journal articles, book publications, and textual references. The study reveals that although there is extensive research in the field of folklore in both countries, there remain gaps that need to be filled, such as the collection, preservation, and recognition of representative folklore from other regions and cultural communities. South Africa, for instance, has 12 official languages, and the Philippines has 110 ethnolinguistic groups. There are still languages and indigenous oral traditions that are developing, and folk literature that needs to be recorded, preserved, and published. These oral traditions/folk literature play an important role in revealing people's cultural identities and preserving heritage, which is imperative in nation-building. The findings highlight the importance of continuing research about folklore and the need to preserve indigenous knowledge systems. When written down and published, folklore becomes tangible and preserved for posterity, providing present and future generations the opportunity to learn, understand, and appreciate their cultural legacy.</i></p>
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INTRODUCTION

Storytelling is the oldest means of transmitting information, especially about values and cultural knowledge. Indigenous cultural communities, for instance, use folklore in the form of oral traditions such as myths, legends, folktales, songs, and riddles. These cultural communities share their histories, the stories of their heroes and heroines, and the stories about their people and their land in the form of stories. Countries such as the Philippines and South Africa share similarities in their historical and cultural experiences. Both were colonised by European powers, and both have a significant number of indigenous groups that co-exist with mainstream society. Also, in both countries, indigenous literature is an essential part of the survival of the tribal cultures and traditions. History provides an explanation of the experiences of colonised nations, but what is recorded does not embody how previously colonised people perceive themselves. Their stories, myths, legends, folktales, and epics reflect the groups' significant

cultural customs and traditions, values and beliefs, ideals, and world views, which they have preserved and passed on from one generation to the next by word of mouth. Agung, Suryman and Sayuti (2024) point out that “A folklore study is all-encompassing since it includes our society's spiritual and material aspects. Folklore has been used to recreate ancient beliefs, traditions, and rituals. For example, folklore studies can help us comprehend our ancestors' rich folklore and mystic heritage.”

The use of stories through folklore has characterised many indigenous sociolinguistic groups from all over the world since time immemorial. Myths, legends, folktales, and folk epics embody valuable indigenous knowledge systems and transmit knowledge. Even modern societies depend on stories for information, entertainment, and to reflect on life events. This is evidenced by the fascination of films and the need to keep abreast of the latest news. This assertion is echoed in the article Agung, Suryman and Sayuti (2024), which stated that “Folklore helps us understand society, cultures, communities, groups, and individuals. Studying folklore develops analytical skills and cultural sensitivity. Most importantly, it engenders understanding of and respect for others, as well as better understanding of ourselves.”

Although extensive research has been done in the field of folk literature in South Africa and the Philippines, there are still gaps that relate to the relevance and significance of teaching folklore. South Africa, for instance, has 12 official languages, and the Philippines has 110 ethnolinguistic groups. Languages and indigenous oral traditions are still developing, and there are oral traditions and folklore literature that need to be recorded, preserved, and published. For example, in South Africa, isiNdebele is a language that is still developing, and there is little evidence of recorded texts (Jiyana, 2022). These oral traditions in folk literature play an important role in foregrounding people's cultural identities and preserving their heritage, which is imperative in nation-building.

With no evidence of the origin of folk literature (Dorson & Dorson, 1972), other than knowing that it was passed from one generation to the next by word of mouth, its origin is assumed to have started with human language. In the Philippines, the objective of folkloric research, which has flourished since the beginning of the 20th century, is to salvage what remains of the oral traditions of the indigenous communities. The works of Manuel (1963), Demetrio (1970), Ramos (1971), and Eugenio (1995) are especially notable since they have provided direction and developed further interest in the study of folk literature among scholars and folklorists. Their books, based on their research, include recordings of folk literature genres such as myths, legends, folktales, folk epics, riddles, and folksongs from indigenous cultural communities in different parts of the country. These oral traditions carry indigenous knowledge and values considered to be significant among the indigenous people. They reflect the cultural traditions handed from one generation to the next by word of mouth.

In South Africa, research on folklore depicting oral narratives where animals function as characters and are given human attributes to fulfil their roles has been explored widely by researchers (Serudu 1990). Those narratives often present animals resorting to trickery, a hallmark of the folklore, in striving to be distinguished from their counterparts, Kgopa (1998, p. 73) attests that in such oral narratives, animals appear as human characters to point out moral values; hence, the stories are told mainly for the purpose of reprimand. Some folk stories emphasise bravery, which is one of the values held in high esteem in Sepedi society. Others are crafted to show that some animals earn the respect of other animals through deceit (Kgopa & Mathe, 2021). Msimang (1990) points out that the effectiveness of these narratives, the approaches to literary studies, modern or traditional, even in the present era, come increasingly into the limelight.”

This paper aims to shed some light on the relevance, gains, and challenges of conducting folk literature research in both the Philippines and South Africa. It examines the gains, trends, and challenges in folklore research and discusses the contributions of folklore research outputs

in a variety of fields, including education, governance, nation-building, and cultural studies. Specifically, the paper is guided by the following questions: What is the status of folklore research in the Philippines and South Africa? In what aspects are they similar? What is the relevance of conducting folklore research in the Philippines and South Africa? What are the gains of folklore research in the Philippines and South Africa? What are the challenges? No research comparisons have been made between the two countries in folklore. This is the first paper that focuses on similarities in terms of the history of colonization and cultural characteristics of both the Philippines and South Africa.

RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative study used interpretivism and textual analysis to focus on in-depth insights related to folklore research. Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2020) explain interpretivism as the method whereby the researcher does not begin with concepts that are determined a priori but instead conducts research from experiences in fieldwork. It also uses secondary data such as journal articles, book publications, and textual references related to folklore research. Textual analysis was used in the analysis of the data. This method examines the structure, content, and meaning of the text and how it relates to the historical and cultural context in which it was produced (MonkeyLearn, 2023). Among the texts that were read and analysed were the research-based publications of notable folklorists from the 20th century, as well as selected contemporary works of emerging scholars and folklore researchers in the Philippines and South Africa. Ethical clearance was obtained and the principles outlined by the University of Pretoria to conduct this study were adhered to.

Research Design

This article is premised on studying indigenous knowledge systems, emphasising the need to preserve and enhance access to local or traditional knowledge (Boven & Morohashi, 2002). This framework is fundamental to preserving cultural identity, sustainable development, and the well-being of indigenous communities. Recognising and respecting these knowledge systems is essential to promoting diversity and ensuring a more inclusive approach to development and environmental efforts (Senanayake, 2006). Indigenous knowledge systems contain the unique knowledge confined to a particular culture or society. It is also known as local knowledge, folk knowledge, people's knowledge, traditional wisdom, or traditional science. This knowledge is generated and transmitted by communities over time (Fernandez, 1994). Therefore, the indigenous knowledge systems framework refers to the complex and interconnected beliefs, practices, and wisdom developed by indigenous communities over generations.

Literature Review

Folklore, which includes traditional stories, beliefs, customs, and social practices, has significant cultural, historical, and social value. In addition, folklore is an essential part of cultural heritage. Kondi, et.al (2019) distinguishes two meanings of folklore; first as “a body of material” which refers to stories, songs, and beliefs, and second as a “separate science” which is closely allied with literature and history. On the other hand, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) defines folklore as the study of a particular mode of cultural production. Also, Dundes (1965, p.1) says the criterion used to define folklore is the means by which it is transmitted.

As authentic indigenous knowledge experts tell folk stories of a particular language, they carry traditions and wisdom with cultural relevance and pass it down through the generations within a community. Lester (1969, p. vii) corroborates this idea by saying folktales are stories that give people a way of communicating with each other and giving their explanations of why the world is the way it is. It is through these folk stories that children learn who their parents are and who they will become in the future. Therefore, since folk stories carry

wisdom, culture, and traditions, preserving them is vital for enriching and promoting a deeper understanding of the culture and heritage of indigenous people. As this study focuses on both the Philippines and South Africa, the literature review looks into literature from both these countries.

Folklore in the Philippines

Eugenio (1987) notes that in the Philippines folklore became a subject of interest in the 19th century with the emerging call for nationalism and valuing cultural heritage. She further points out that in the history of nations, there is a close connection between the rise of nationalism and an interest in its folklore. As the goal of collecting and preserving folklore such as folk narratives grew, Manuel (1980) “stressed the indispensability of preserving the traditional materials in the vernacular” . He further recommends that to achieve this, it is imperative to set up “archives of traditional literature in every town or province”. Aside from conducting extensive research on folklore, Manuel also points out the importance of publishing these folklore studies “in order to disseminate this information and let others share the enjoyment of folk studies and literature”.

Despite the growing number of Philippine folklore research studies in recent years, it is undeniable that there are several ethnolinguistic communities in the country whose folklore and oral traditions are yet to be recognised and have yet to find their place in written form. Hornedo (1980), in his review of the book *Myths and Symbols Philippines* by Francisco R. Demetrio, wrote: While it is true that studies of truly national scope are in great demand today - FR Demetrio's book has tried to meet that demand by using the word "Philippines" in his title – the present work reflects a certain disproportion in the representation of parts of the country. The bulk of data is biased in favor of the Visayas and Southern Philippines. Nonetheless, there is a vast treasury of Philippine folklore that waits to be recorded and preserved, considering that the country has 110 ethnolinguistic groups, as per the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2013).

Folklore in South Africa

Folklore in South Africa has been an important part of the people’s way of expressing their culture for centuries. However, it was not written down at first. In South Africa, folklore originates from the historical and oral tradition. The basis of this belief lies in the main role, which is played by the environment and animals as characters. In addition, there are other characters, although few, such as human beings, objects, and plants. This folklore reflects realities about African people’s ways of life while conveying the community’s values about their culture. Given that South Africa consists of various ethnic groups, South African folklore demonstrates ethnicity. Each ethnic group has its own type of folklore, which is found in the form of traditions and customs, folk songs and dances, proverbs and idioms, folktales and poetry, which form the identity of each of these ethnic groups (Król et al., 2022).

The African oral tradition displays a wealth of richness in its contribution to African philosophical thinking, in addition to the other sources of philosophical ideas within Africa (Nsamenang, 2011:57) Ong (1984) argues that the oral tradition came before oral literacy. This means that orality, a feature of folklore, existed long before textuality. The oral tradition of storytelling served as a means of transmitting cultural knowledge, historical events, and moral lessons (Serudu, 1990). Serudu further states that South African folk stories started to gain some attention beyond the local oral tradition when European settlers, the missionaries, arrived in South Africa in the 17th century. South Africa's folklore stories experienced change as a result of the indigenous people’s interaction with other cultural traditions. European missionaries and explorers documented and collected some of these indigenous stories.

Folklore, as part of people’s oral tradition, includes tales, music, dance, legends, oral history, proverbs, popular beliefs, and customs. This body of expressive culture is part of many

countries globally, including Europe, Asia, and Africa, and can be traced back centuries. Folktales do not have an original storyteller, passed from generation to generation by word of mouth. Owing to the oral nature of folktales being verbally transmitted, they are usually told differently from one person to another, and their cultural perspectives are shaped by the teller's background and experiences. Although they were not written down from the outset, today, they are being collected, documented, and published.

According to Yang and Lin (2021), folklore can be defined and understood as a value, principle, and thought that lives in every generation, and within that value, some ideas and values develop, such as ethics and norms, that influence the behaviour of citizens of another young generation. South African folklore demonstrates ethnicity, given that South Africa consists of various ethnic groups that have their own type of folklore, as previously stated. (Król et al., 2022). This means that different groups in South Africa, with their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds contribute to the development and maintenance of their own folklore. Also, South African folklore is significant because it signifies the country's history, among other matters. In short, folklore is passed down orally, from person to person, from generation to generation (Makgopa et al., 2012). Folk literature preserves culture since it embodies the cultural heritage of specific communities or regions. In addition, it reflects each community's beliefs, values, customs, and traditions.

Folk literature often originates from the oral tradition in which storytelling is used as a means of transmitting knowledge and cultural understanding. Storytelling is important to give community members a sense of unity through shared experiences. Folk literature is not only for transmitting knowledge and cultural understanding. It is also valuable for presenting wisdom to the members of the community. Communities use folk literature to address a variety of issues that concern the people. Issues of love, justice, morality, and social inequality use storytelling to provide the community with a platform for discussion and reflection. In addition, folk literature sparks imagination, stimulates creativity, and encourages critical thinking. At the same time, it fosters a sense of ownership, pride, and cultural value among community members.

By conducting folklore research, folklorists have established goals and methodologies relevant for ongoing and future studies in the field. Reference and reading material, such as books featuring the folklore of indigenous cultural communities, are made available by them. As a result, more scholars are becoming interested in pursuing folklore research, especially in graduate schools. This type of research also yields discussions on emerging themes from folklore materials (that is, nation-building, cultural identity, and gender studies) which are being studied and explored. The tourism industry has also benefited from folklore research inasmuch as folklore knowledge is now utilised (Diko, 2023), especially in promoting authentic cultural indigenous knowledge and traditions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Gains in Folklore Research

It was pointed out in a discussion by Dundes (1965, p. 269) that folklore is used for entertainment during storytelling. Also, these stories are used to show and validate cultural practices and rituals. In addition, folklore is used to foster morality in both the young and society. Furthermore, folklore is used to maintain cultural stability by conforming to cultural norms, as seen in indigenous knowledge systems, where the emphasis is on the need to preserve and enhance access to local or traditional knowledge. Traditional knowledge, which includes fostering morality and conforming to cultural norms, is based on people's knowledge, traditional wisdom, or traditional science.

Philippine folklore research in the early 20th century has mostly been conducted by foreign scholars and the clergy. Notable works, such as that of Jesuit Priest Francisco Demetrio, whose published works include the *Encyclopedia of Philippine Folk Beliefs and Customs*

(1970) and *Myths and Symbols Philippines* (1978), became reference works for other folklore scholars. Demetrio founded the Folklife and Folklore Research Center at Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro, Philippines (Madigan, 1996).

Another Philippine folklorist who was instrumental in promoting folklore research in the country is E. Arsenio Manuel. His extensive research yielded several publications that provide a guide and inspiration to folklorists and scholars. His books include *Treasury of Stories, Philippine Myths and Legends* (1995), and *A Survey of Philippine Epics* (1963). Manuel also wrote the book, *Guide for the Study of Philippine Folklore* (1985), which provides a clear direction and methodology for the conduct of folklore research. The guide set out to do the following: (1) collect and systematically record oral traditions in the language of each ethnic group; (2) preserve, archive, and classify the materials gathered; (3) translate these materials into one or more common languages for study purposes; and (4) publish them for the use or enjoyment of the nation and the world (Manuel, 1985).

Damiana Eugenio is another trailblazer in Philippine folklore research. Like Demetrio and Manuel, Eugenio yielded significant research and publications that immensely contributed to the pool of knowledge in the field. Noteworthy is the seven-volume series that contains an *Anthology of Philippine Folklore* and is now used as reference and pedagogical material in the teaching of Philippine folklore. The sequence of volumes is as follows: Volume 2, the *Myths* (1992, 1994, 2001); Volume 3, the *Legends* (2001, 2002, 2005, 2011); Volume 4, the *Folktales* (1989, 2001, 2006, 2011); Volume 5, the *Riddles* (1994); Volume 6, the *Proverbs* (1992, 2002, 2006); and Volume 7, the Folk Songs.

Teacher, editor, and writer for over 45 years, Maximo D. Ramos contributed to the emerging interest in folklore research in the country with his book, *The Creatures of Philippine Lower Mythology*. Clark (2020:51) noted that the book was a pioneering study of the beings of the otherworld often mentioned to horrify Filipino folk. But this book was meant as a tool to get at the roots of Philippine culture and help develop the latter and was not intended to cause shivers.

What can be considered as another of Ramos's contributions to Philippine folklore research was his role in initiating The Aswang Project. Clark (2020) wrote: In 1971, The Philippine Folklore Society published *The aswang syncrasy in Philippine folklore, with illustrative accounts in vernacular texts and translations*, which was a bold attempt to present to the reader and to students of Filipino society and culture one of the dominant Filipino beliefs, the aswang.

Clark (2020) added that "Ramos' legacy has fired the imagination of Filipino students and inspired them to know more about their own folkways and folklore and to write them down for others to enjoy and appreciate". Despite the limitation in accessing or using the Filipino language in his publications, Ramos showed the Filipino student that one can master the English language and use it to their advantage in portraying Philippine reality. Furthermore, because the setting is Filipino and the experiences are part of the Filipino tradition, his writings appeal to children and adults.

Alburo (1992), in an article titled "Continuing and emerging directions in contemporary Philippine folklore studies", noted that "the majority of researchers in the field come from graduate schools". Several graduate theses and dissertations in the fields of education and the social sciences are geared towards collecting and recording the oral tradition, including myths, legends, folktales, folk epics, riddles, proverbs, and folksongs. Several of these have been published and are now used as pedagogical instruments in basic and higher education institutions. The National Commission on Culture and the Arts has been instrumental and supportive in these publications pursuant to its mandate of promoting the preservation of indigenous knowledge systems.

South Africa saw a growth in scholars' interest in folklore and documenting the cultures and traditions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Scholars and missionaries recognised the value of indigenous knowledge as an essential aspect of the cultural heritage that folklore stories carried and started to collect them. Wilhelm Bleek, from Germany, was one of the most notable figures in the study of South African folklore. He worked with his sister-in-law Lucy Lloyd in the late 19th century to record the oral stories of the /Xam people, an indigenous group from the Cape region. The /Xam people were the San people's dominant South African population in the 18th and 19th centuries. The ||Xegwi San tribe's ancestors were famous for their rock paintings found in the Drakensberg mountains. The *Bleek and Lloyd Collection* became a significant resource for understanding South African folklore and language (Serudu, 1990).

In the 20th century, the study of African culture and literature developed, and interest in South African folklore further expanded. Folklore began to be recognised as an essential aspect of the country's identity and cultural expression (Mashige, 2002). In post-apartheid South Africa, there has been a renewed focus on preserving and promoting indigenous languages, traditions, and folklore. The government and various cultural organisations and institutions have supported initiatives to document, research, and revitalise indigenous folklore, recognising its importance in fostering a sense of cultural pride and promoting intercultural understanding. The emphasis is placed on the preservation and promotion of indigenous languages, traditions, and folklore. Now, folklore knowledge is not only transferred orally but in writing as well through African literature (Mashige, 2002; Seymour-Smith, 1986).

The Sepedi language has seen a gradual development in the documentation and writing of folktales. The move from oral preservation to written folktales became visible in 1945 when Mamabolo documented a collection of the missionary Van Warmelo's folktales. Another contribution was made by Joubert, Hoffmann, Grobler and Kosch between 1868 and 1962 titled, *Ethnography from the mission field : the Hoffmann Collection of Cultural Knowledge* (Joubert, 2015). The above contributions showed that missionaries were the first to document and write down Sepedi folktales. This was followed by Mongokoane's (1975) book, *Sekolo sa borakgolokhukhu*. Mongokoana considered this collection to be the grandparent's traditional school because of the moral values that the folktales taught the people.

The years 1988 to 1990 saw an incline in the number of books written. In 1988 Masola, wrote and published a book titled, *Bohwa bja rena*, which includes folktales, Sepedi traditional values and practices, proverbs, and tricksters. The same year saw two folktale books being published, *Tša borena* (Lemekoana, 1988) and *Phukubje le tšhwene le dinonwane tše dingwe* (Kgobe, 1988), which contained folktales collected from a variety of language speakers through storytelling. This was followed by the publication of *Moepathutse* (Makopo, 1990) and *Dipheko tša bagologolo* (Serudu, 1990). Both books contained folktales, traditional values, rituals, and proverbs, including stories about tricksters, in Sepedi. The two books have been used for academic purposes at both schools and higher education institutions since then. Even though they are mostly used as reference books, they form the basis genres for Sepedi folktales. In addition, Makgamatha's folktale book, *Keleketla* (Makgamatha, 1990), and Mabuya and Khathi's book, *Nokana ye e šutšago* (Mabuya & Khathi, 1986) were published in the same year. Both these titles are widely read at schools as part of the prescribed books for traditional literature.

Later, a few authors started to take a keen interest in writing and publishing more books on folklore. Between 1992 to 2015, there was evidence of keen interest from Sepedi language speakers to publish more folktale books and, as the years went by, there were a good number of books published. Folktales were then included in the school curriculum as one of the genres learnt at school up to Grade 12 level. This encouraged more authors to collect, document, and publish the folktales.

Challenges in Folklore Research

South Africa and the Philippines experienced European colonialism, which introduced new cultural elements and shaped the folklore landscape but urbanisation, globalisation, migration, and Westernisation have also contributed to the fading of oral traditions. The fact that stories are told by word-of-mouth results in variations and adaptations of the same story. The same folktale can be told differently for a variety of reasons. Some storytellers make their own additions and omissions if they have forgotten some parts of the story or add their own interpretations to suit the story's purpose at the time.

Language diversity in the South African context, where there are 12 official languages, and in the Philippine context, with its 110 ethnolinguistic groups, poses a challenge for the government providing and promoting resources. Also, English hegemony presents a challenge for both Philippine and African language speakers to focus on their folk stories, as most people prefer English folk stories. In South Africa, stories that are translated from English and other languages into Sepedi are likely to alter their essence because there is no balance between maintaining the authenticity of the folk stories as part of oral tradition and bringing out the cultural and indigenous aspects of a particular cultural group.

Many folktales are told to instil moral values and teach the listeners some important aspect of culture. This aligns with the indigenous knowledge systems, which, according to Boven and Morohashi (2002), emphasise the need to preserve and enhance access to local or traditional knowledge. How a folktale is presented and understood is mostly influenced by cultural nuances, beliefs, and values. Folk literature is deeply rooted in specific cultural and linguistic contexts. Understanding the customs, beliefs, rituals, and social structures of the communities where the folklore originated is crucial for accurate interpretation. However, the lack or scarcity of folk literature or written sources makes it difficult to trace the origins of a variety of stories that are told.

Despite the remarkable and noteworthy gains achieved by Philippine and South African folklorists, there are still challenges that need to be resolved. There is a need for more publication of reference and reading material on folklore. It is unfortunate that there seems to be a lack of financial support for the publication of folklore materials. In addition, there is still an extensive number of indigenous cultural communities in both countries whose folklore has yet to be recorded. More research is required and there is a dire need for researchers to take on this challenge and conduct more research to reach these communities. A further concern is that royal households from these communities possess exclusive knowledge about their folklore, still mostly in oral form. Unfortunately, these narratives are only shared with select, privileged audiences, thus depriving the general public of the opportunity to know and learn from these stories. Another concern is about using folklore materials in the classroom. Learners may lack interest in reading folklore when teachers are not knowledgeable or passionate about teaching it.

In South Africa, even though traditional literature is one of the genres available to be taught at school, this is the genre least preferred by teachers and learners. The fact that there is a choice of genres out of five, namely novel, drama, poetry, short stories, and folktales, the last one is mostly subject to rejection. This creates a legacy and culture of no folktales being taught throughout the learners' school career. It is evident that not all indigenous cultural groups and schools have access to technology. The few folk stories which are online would not be accessible to everyone. Also, global media are dominant in shaping entertainment preferences, and they could eclipse traditional storytelling methods. The storytelling of folk tales is a difficult genre to compete with modern forms of entertainment in media. Furthermore, urbanisation and migration trends can contribute to the erosion of indigenous languages and cultural practices as people adapt to new environments and lifestyles. And, as elderly traditional storytellers disappear, there is a risk that the knowledge and nuances of storytelling might be

lost. Therefore, efforts must be made to document these storytelling traditions and pass them on to younger generations.

Despite these challenges, folk literature research offers rich insights into cultural heritage, oral traditions, and the collective imagination of communities. By addressing these challenges through careful methodology, collaboration with communities, and a nuanced understanding of cultural context, researchers can contribute to documenting, preserving, and appreciating folk literature. A lot still needs to be done to promote and enhance the awareness and love of folklore not only in the Philippines and South Africa but in all nations and cultures in the world. Most importantly, it is essential to educate and encourage people about the value of folklore in order to restore cultural identity, dignity, and moral values.

CONCLUSION

When written down and published, folklore becomes tangible and preserved for posterity, providing present and future generations the opportunity to learn, understand, and appreciate their cultural legacy. An essential aspect of these research projects is the recording and publishing of materials in the original versions or languages used by the native informants from indigenous communities. The researchers of folklore from the Philippines and South Africa have succeeded in recording and preserving the still-existing oral traditions and lore from various indigenous cultural communities of their respective countries. They not only study and archive these intangible cultural legacies but also make them available as sources of valuable information and records of pre-colonial cultures. As Quintero and Nabayra (2018) stated that as soon as we become conscious of their worldview, we begin to learn how our ancestors understood what life was all about. We learn about their feelings, behaviors, habits, attitudes, standards, and norms of human behavior. When this happens, our ancestors are beginning to communicate with us.

There is a need and an urgency to continue to record, translate, and publish what still remains of the oral traditions from the indigenous communities, especially since the bards and storytellers are getting older and fewer. Using the written texts of the oral traditions as instructional materials for learners who understand the language will stimulate appreciation of their culture and their own language. When written down and published, folktales become tangible and preserved for posterity, providing present and future generations the opportunity to learn, understand, and appreciate their cultural legacy. An essential aspect of these research projects is the recording and publishing of materials in the original versions or languages used by the native informants from indigenous communities.

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