



Research Article

Dancing Through Time: Reflections of Male Students on the Rich Tapestry of Philippine Folk Dance

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ABSTRACT



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This study delves into the shifting perceptions of male students concerning Philippine Folk Dance, a vibrant aspect of the country's cultural heritage. To gain a comprehensive understanding of these perspectives, a detailed survey was conducted among a diverse cohort of male students, encompassing various backgrounds, ages, and levels of familiarity with this traditional art form. The findings revealed a compelling consensus among the participants, illustrating that their engagement with Philippine Folk Dance significantly enhanced their understanding of the Philippines' cultural heritage and historical context. Many participants shared their experiences, noting that through the practice and appreciation of folk dance, they gained insights into the country's rich past and the broader cultural narratives that shape Filipino identity. Moreover, the students articulated that participating in folk dance allowed them to connect with their roots, fostering a sense of belonging and pride in their cultural heritage. They emphasized that the dance forms serve as a powerful medium for storytelling and expression, illustrating Filipino society's diverse traditions and values. This study ultimately underscores folk dance's vital role in promoting cultural awareness and identity among young individuals, indicating its potential to bridge generational gaps and enhance appreciation for the nation's artistic expressions.

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INTRODUCTION

The rich diversity of dances in the Philippines reflects the unique cultural tapestry woven by its various ethnic groups, each representing a distinct set of social, historical, and environmental contexts (Bautista, 2018). Dances originating from the mountainous regions are often inspired by the majestic landscapes surrounding them. For example, the Cordillera communities' festival, courtship, and war dances echo the rugged terrain and the fearless birds soaring above, showcasing a deep connection to their environment and a celebration of their vibrant culture (Bautista, 2018; Agustin, 2021).

In contrast, the coastal people's dances are fluid and rhythmic, mirroring the gentle ebb and flow of the sea. A prime illustration of this is the pangalay dance performed by the Sama, which embodies grace as dancers skillfully move either languidly on the ground or with remarkable agility on bamboo poles, capturing the essence of marine life and the fluidity of water (Dela Cruz, 2019).

On the other hand, dances from the lowland areas reveal a playful spirit and a flair for intricate embellishments. These dances often include lively movements that entertain and engage performers and spectators. For instance, in the Kuomintang, dancers incorporate expressive hand movements (Gonzales, 2020), while the fandango sa law features performers balancing lighted glasses, showcasing skill and artistry (Rondilla, 2017). Additionally, many regional variations of the jota employ bamboo

castanets, adding a percussive layer to the dances that further highlights the creativity and enthusiasm of Filipino dance traditions (Fernandez, 2016). Thus, each dance serves as a form of entertainment and a storytelling medium that passes cultural narratives down from generation to generation.

The wide variety of cultures in the country is a testament to the diverse traditions and practices that exist across its different regions, stretching from the northernmost provinces to the southern islands and islets (Maboloc, 2020). Each area has unique characteristics shaped by history, geography, and local customs. For instance, traditional festivals and indigenous practices may be more pronounced in the northern regions, while southern areas reflect the vibrant influences of both ancestral and contemporary cultures (Sarmiento, 2020).

Most Christian citizens have notable distinctions tied to their respective regions, showcasing a tapestry of customs, traditions, and dialects that highlight local identities (Reyes, 2018). From the colorful street parades in urban centers to the quiet observance of rituals in rural villages, these regional variations enrich the nation's cultural landscape.

In addition to the Christian majority, the presence of the Muslim population in Mindanao and the Sulu archipelago adds another layer of cultural complexity (Ishmael, 2016). This group, with its distinct practices, beliefs, and languages, plays a vital role in the country's cultural fabric. Moreover, the country is home to

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approximately 50 other ethnolinguistic groups or tribes, each contributing to a diverse mosaic that constitutes a significant portion of the total population (Laguador, 2021). Their unique languages, artistic expressions, and traditional way of life highlight the myriad influences within the nation's borders, making it a vibrant and multifaceted society.

Many influences, including significant contributions from Indian, Chinese, Indochinese, Indonesian, Malay, Spanish, and American cultures, shape the Philippines' diverse cultures (Pérez, 2019). These varied influences are vividly reflected in the numerous forms and purposes of traditional Filipino dances and in the associated music, movements, props, and costumes.

Each dance serves as a window into the rich tapestry of Filipino identity, encapsulating visual elements and deeper connections to the people's heritage. The process through which dances are learned, performed, and evolved is integral to their meaning (Almario, 2020). Dances are not merely borrowed; they are transformed and assimilated into the community's cultural fabric, showcasing the Filipino people's distinct characteristics, values, and collective experiences.

This cultural exchange through dance allows individuals to express their personal and communal aspirations, reflecting their history, struggles, and triumphs. As the Chinese proverb suggests, "A nation is typified by its dances," underscoring that these artistic expressions go beyond mere performance; they embody national identity and memory, illustrating the hopes and dreams that resonate within the hearts of the dancers and their audiences alike (Zhang, 2018).

Research Objectives

The primary aim of this study is to thoroughly explore whether there exists a significant difference in the perceptions of male students at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) regarding Philippine Folk dance before and after their enrollment in the Human Kinetics 12 (HK12) Philippine Folk Dance course. This investigation seeks to understand the impact of structured folk dance education on male students' attitudes toward this traditional art form. To achieve this overarching objective, the study intends to focus on several specific goals:

1. Enumerate the Male Student Population: Conduct a detailed assessment to quantify the typical number of male students participating in a Philippine Folk Dance class. This data will not only provide insight into gender representation within the context of folk dance but also allow for analysis of participation trends and potential barriers that may affect male enrollment in such classes.
2. Analyze Perception Trends: Systematically examine the evolution of male students' perceptions towards the Philippine Folk Dance course during the first semester of the academic year 2022-2023. This analysis will collect qualitative and quantitative data through surveys or interviews to identify

aspects of the course that influence students' attitudes, such as cultural significance, physical activity, and peer dynamics.

3. Identify Influencing Factors: Investigate and categorize the factors contributing to perception shifts among male students before and after completing the HK12 Philippine Folk Dance course. This will include exploring personal motivations for enrolling, the impact of peer influence, teaching methodologies employed in the course, societal perceptions of folk dance, and any other relevant socio-cultural elements that may shape their views.

By addressing these goals, the study aspires to provide a comprehensive understanding of how engagement in Philippine Folk Dance education influences UPLB male students' perceptions, ultimately contributing to discussions around cultural appreciation and gender roles in the context of traditional arts.

Theoretical Framework

This study leverages the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) as its foundational framework. UTAUT posits that factor—effort expectancy, performance expectancy, and social influence—play crucial roles in shaping a person's behavioral intention toward adopting a specific information system or technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). Specifically, effort expectancy refers to the perceived ease of use associated with the technology; performance expectancy pertains to the degree to which individuals believe that using the technology will enhance their performance; and social influence involves the effect of peers and social networks on a person's decision-making process regarding technology acceptance.

Furthermore, UTAUT suggests that facilitating conditions, encompassing the resources and support available to users and behavioral intentions, significantly predict usage behavior in adopting the technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003). This means that individuals consider their expectations of performance and effort and weigh the available support and guidance when deciding to embrace a new technology or system.

The significance of this framework within the context of this study is particularly notable in understanding how performance expectancy and behavioral intention can forecast male students' decision-making processes. In the specific case of choosing to engage with Philippine Folk Dance as part of the HK12 course offerings, the anticipated performance of participating in this cultural activity can be a critical determinant of their intention to enroll. Suppose male students perceive that participating in the Philippine Folk Dance will positively affect their academic or personal goals. In that case, this belief will likely influence their willingness to take the course. The interplay of perceived performance benefits and social factors can determine their ultimate choice.

Conceptual Framework

Unified Theory of
Acceptance and use of
Technology (UTAUT)
Performance Expectancy
Effort Expectancy
Social Influence



Behavioral Intention
to take Philippine Folk
Dance as HK12 (PE 2)

METHODOLOGY

Population and Sampling

In this study, the Snowball sampling method, a form of referral sampling, was employed to determine the participant samples. This technique is categorized as a non-probability sampling method, meaning that it does not guarantee that every member of the target population has a chance of being included. Instead, existing participants or subjects are tasked with referring or recruiting additional subjects from among their acquaintances or social networks (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981).

This method is particularly beneficial when the characteristics sought among the samples are rare or challenging to identify. It effectively uncovers hidden populations that might not be easily accessible through traditional sampling methods (Heckathorn, 1997). One significant advantage of the Snowball sampling technique is its efficiency: it can rapidly gather data, which is crucial given the time constraints often faced in research studies (Getto et al., 2016).

For this investigation, 20 participants were recruited. The sample was divided into two groups: 10 participants enrolled in the Philippine Folk Dance course, denoted as HK12, and another 10 participants not enrolled in that course. It is important to note that the study did not utilize complete enumeration due to the limited timeframe available for research, making the Snowball sampling method a suitable choice to efficiently gather the necessary data within the given constraints (Noy, 2008).

Research Instrument

A comprehensive survey was conducted to evaluate the results of the study. The research employed a standardized online questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents via a link created in Google Forms to facilitate participation. This method was chosen because it allows a broader reach to potential participants and tends to yield a higher response rate than traditional survey methods. Using Google Forms, respondents could easily access the questionnaire from their devices at their convenience, thus encouraging greater engagement and more accurate data collection. The online format also enabled the researcher to quickly compile and analyze the responses, ensuring a timely assessment of the gathered data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In a recent survey, twenty male students were invited to share their perspectives on Philippine Folk Dance, mainly focusing on its significance within their educational experience. Among these participants, ten students were either enrolled in or had previously taken Philippine Folk Dance as part of their HK 12 curriculum. The remaining ten students had no experience with the subject.

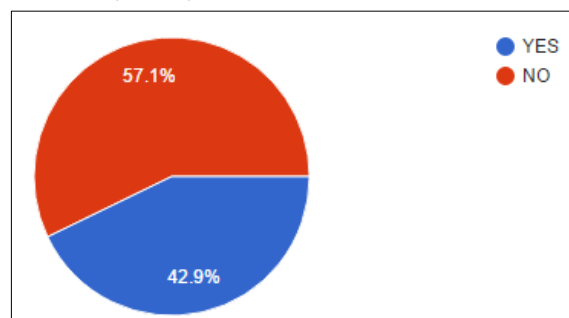
The findings garnered from the study presented compelling insights regarding the experiences of students who participated in Philippine Folk Dance during their Human Kinetics (HK) classes. Six of the ten students involved in the Folk Dance program articulated their perspectives, emphasizing that this cultural practice serves as an essential vehicle for preserving and promoting Filipino culture. They articulated that engaging in the dance allowed them to connect with their cultural roots and fostered a deeper appreciation for the rich historical narratives that influence their identities as Filipino citizens. Through the intricate movements and traditional rhythms, these students discovered layers of meaning within their heritage, enhancing their understanding of the traditions, beliefs, and stories that form the foundation of their cultural identity.

In contrast, the feedback from the other four students revealed a disinterest in the subject matter. They articulated that

Philippine Folk Dance failed to resonate with them, considering it neither appealing nor relevant to their tastes and cultural backgrounds. This varied response highlights male students' perceptions of Philippine Folk Dance's significance and educational value. Some students felt disconnected from the dance's traditional aspects and preferred more contemporary or globally recognized forms of artistic expression. Their comments suggest a gap between the curriculum's offerings and the student body's interests, indicating a need for a more tailored educational approach that considers diverse cultural preferences and personal experiences.

I don't know. Hehe
I feel confident.
I haven't took the subject.
I feel a greater appreciation Philippine culture
I feel that it helps us enhance our knowledge about our culture
I dont like the subject
I find it interesting how dancing says a lot about our culture
I dont feel anything significant
It's okay
I feel that it is a great avenue for learning and enhancing skills.
I think that it promotes nationalism
I find it interesting

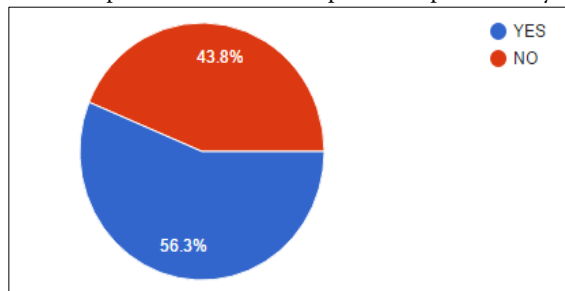
The results presented below reveal a significant divergence in participants' sentiments before their enrollment in the subject. As illustrated by the accompanying pie chart, 57.1% of respondents indicated "NO," suggesting that the majority held a contrasting perspective before engaging in the course. This statistic underscores the participants' skepticism or disinterest toward the subject matter. Conversely, 42.9% responded "YES," indicating that their feelings or opinions evolved positively due to their involvement in the course. This data reflects a compelling shift in perceptions and suggests that the course was impactful enough to influence a considerable portion of the participants, signaling potential strengths in the course content and delivery. Overall, the findings highlight the transformative potential of educational experiences in altering preconceived notions and enhancing understanding among learners.



When respondents were asked about the factors that influenced their change in perspective regarding Philippine Folk Dance, they expressed that actively engaging with the subject enabled them to explore the intricate tapestry of the Philippines' rich cultural heritage and historical narrative. This deep dive gave them insights into the origins and variations of these traditional dances. They highlighted their significance as a form of artistic expression that embodies the Filipino spirit. As a result, respondents developed a profound appreciation for the artistry,

storytelling, and community values encapsulated within each dance, leading to a genuine respect for this cultural treasure.

Furthermore, the accompanying pie chart vividly illustrates that an overwhelming majority of Philippine Folk Dance class participants would enthusiastically recommend it to their peers. The data reflects that their experiences have been profoundly transformative and fulfilling, fostering a sense of connection to their roots. The participants express eagerness and excitement to invite others to embark on this journey of cultural exploration, recognizing that engaging with Philippine Folk Dance is not merely an educational endeavor but a vital opportunity to celebrate and preserve an essential aspect of Filipino identity.



The findings of the study revealed that male students who had not previously enrolled in the Philippine Folk Dance class exhibited minimal interest in pursuing this subject further. When prompted to elaborate on their reasons, a significant number expressed a distinct lack of enthusiasm for dance as a discipline, identifying it as an activity that does not resonate with their interests or values.

In addition, many students strongly preferred participating in sports rather than dance, indicating that they find athletic activities more engaging, fulfilling, and aligned with their cultural identity and social circles. This prevailing trend underscores a broader cultural narrative that prioritizes sports—often viewed as a more masculine and socially acceptable outlet—over dance, which some may perceive as less rigorous or "manly." This perception raises questions about how societal norms influence students' choices and may contribute to a disconnect between the artistic and athletic avenues available in an educational setting.

I am not interested
I am not interested
Because there are many choices in PE 2 and my priorities are sports.
n/a
Not into dancing
huh?
N/A
I answered yes.
I'm not into dancing
I dont find it necessary to take up Phil Folk Dance
I like sports better. I dont think that this would be fun.

The pie chart presents a detailed analysis of students' opinions concerning the inclusion of Folk Dance in their HK12 curriculum. The findings reveal a significant disparity in student preferences: a substantial majority, 66.7% of respondents, expressed a clear disinterest in enrolling in Folk Dance. This overwhelming response suggests that many students may perceive the subject as less relevant or engaging compared to other available options.

Conversely, a smaller yet noteworthy segment of the respondents, accounting for 33.3%, conveyed that they would be

open to considering Folk Dance in their academic pursuits. This group may appreciate the cultural significance and physical benefits of folk dancing, indicating a potential avenue for increased interest through targeted educational initiatives.

Overall, this data underscores a pronounced divide among students regarding the desirability of Folk Dance in their curriculum choices. It highlights an opportunity for curriculum developers to investigate the underlying reasons for the prevailing disinterest and explore strategies that might enhance its appeal.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate a significant shift in men's appreciation for Philippine culture and traditions following their participation in courses dedicated to Philippine Folk Dance. Participants reported a profound transformation in their perspectives, suggesting that active engagement with folk dance is a powerful medium for fostering a deeper understanding and connection to the rich cultural heritage of the Philippines.

However, it is vital to acknowledge that individual skills, interests, and personal backgrounds heavily influence one's capacity to grasp and thoroughly appreciate the intricacies of Philippine Folk Dance. Particularly among the current generation, there appears to be a tendency to shy away from immersing themselves in the elaborate tapestry of traditional dance forms. This reluctance may stem from societal norms and expectations that often discourage youthful engagement in such artistic expressions, viewing them as outdated or irrelevant.

Moreover, many young men grapple with societal pressures surrounding their masculinity, which can impede their willingness to participate in activities such as folk dance. The apprehension of being judged or perceived as unmasculine significantly contributes to their hesitation to enroll in these courses. Additionally, some students might participate in folk dance classes not out of genuine interest but due to limited elective options or the necessity of fulfilling graduation requirements, including earning their HK units.

While it is understandable that these factors create a barrier to participation, we must shift our focus towards inspiring and motivating these students to seize the opportunity of folk dance. By emphasizing the importance of rejoicing in and preserving our traditional forms of dance, we can encourage them to go beyond superficial judgments and explore the cultural significance and inherent joy of engaging with our heritage. In doing so, we can foster a deeper, more meaningful connection to our traditions among younger generations, nurturing an appreciation for the beauty of our cultural legacy that can resonate throughout their lives.

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