Examining the Social and Cultural Implications of Philippine Folk Dance

to College of Arts and Sciences (Cas) Students in One State University in the Philippines

John Michael D. Aquino[+] (Philippines)

Abstract

The researcher aims to examine the social and cultural implications of Philippine Folk Dance to students in particular to their perceptions, attitudes, and how it affects the identity of the Filipinos. This study employed a phenomenological research design and purposive sampling in choosing the participant based on the given criteria. Semi-structured interviews was utilized and employed validated interview guide from the field expert and pilot testing. Thematic analysis was used in analyzing the data. The results revealed that the perception of the students profound admiration for the meaning, purpose, and beauty of traditional dances. Also emphasized are the value of cultural heritage preservation and the contribution of folk dancing to the development of Filipino pride, patriotism, and a feeling of identity. Additionally, Strong feelings of appreciation, pride, uniqueness, expressions, cultural ties, and engagement for their personal development. Moreover, folk dance has a significant effect on students' social and cultural identities.

Keywords: *Social & Cultural Implications, Philippine Folk Dance, Patriotism, Cultural Identity & Heritage*

[+] John Michael D. Aquino, Instructor 1, College of Teacher Education, Laguna State Polytechnic University, Philipppines.
email: johnmichael.aquino@lspu.edu.ph.

Received 11/3/23 – Revised 10/8/25 – Accepted 11/16/25

Introduction

Physical Education (PE) is essential to the health and wellbeing of all citizens across the country. It plays an important role in developing physical fitness, improving motor skills, and providing an opportunity for social interaction and team building. The inclusion of PE in Article XIV of the Republic of the Philippines focuses on education that affirms the importance of PE in the country and the need for its continued study (Aquino, 2022). Additionally, in accordance with Article XIV, section 14 of the Constitution, the State shall actively strive to foster the preservation, enrichment, and dynamic evolution of a Filipino national culture that is unified in its diversity, while also allowing for free artistic and intellectual expression. To ensure the culture is promoted and preserved, Philippine folk dance is one of the culture that should be highly valued and celebrated. Moreover, CHED Memo No. 20 in 2013 affirmed that to produce graduates who are thoughtful and knowledgeable, institutions of higher learning should instill in them values that are reflective of a humanist orientation, particularly those that are deeply rooted in the culture.

The Philippine folk dance is an important part of the country's cultural heritage. For a sustainability of expressive culture, dance is a form of social expression, and a way for people to connect with their past, celebrate their identity, and express their emotions (Bravo et al., 2022). It is also a way for people to stay connected to their roots and appreciate their unique cultural heritage (Sathittham et al., 2021). Folk dance is a powerful tool for unifying communities as it is often performed in large groups and helps to strengthen social bonds (Peterson, 2016). In addition, folk dance has been part of Philippine culture for centuries. It is a part of the Filipino identity, and its practice has been passed down from generation to generation. Folk dances vary from region to region, with each region having its own unique style and movements. These dances are typically performed during special occasions, such as festivals, weddings, and religious events.

Consequently, the Philippine folk dance provides an opportunity for people to connect with their past and to express their culture. It is a way for people to show their pride in their identity, and to celebrate their culture. It is also a way for people to express their emotions, such as joy, sadness, and love. Folk dance is a form of cultural expression that can be used to express feelings that cannot be expressed through words (DEM Domingo, 2018). It has a strong social and cultural impact. It brings people together and helps to create a sense of community. It fosters social cohesion and allows people to appreciate their cultural heritage. It is also a way for people to express their creativity and to explore their culture. Likewise, the Philippine folk dance can be used to raise awareness of important social issues. It can be used to promote understanding and respect for different cultures, to promote social justice and equality, and to bring attention to important causes (Ashley, 2012).

The literature review demonstrates the significant role that folk dance plays in the development of Filipino culture and identity. The reviewed studies indicate that folk dance has a positive effect on identity formation, socialization, and cultural values (Reyes et al., 2020). Specifically, they found that folk dance provides a form of self-expression, a way for participants to connect with their culture, and a method for participants to interact with one another in a meaningful way. The findings of these studies shows that folk dance should be seen as an integral part of Filipino identity and culture. Thus, folk dance can be seen as a tool to promote socialization, cultural values, and identity formation in the Philippines.

As such, folk dance should continue to be encouraged and supported as part of Filipino culture and identity (Potocnik, 2020).

However, research on the social and cultural implications of Philippine folk dance is still relatively scarce. There is a need to further explore the impact of these dances on local communities, and their role in sustaining cultural heritage, identity and pride (Andressen, 2013). Additionally, more research is needed to understand how folk dances can be used to foster peace, solidarity and cooperation in the region. Furthermore, there is a need to examine how folk dancing can be used to promote education, health and well-being, and how it can be used to empower marginalized populations in the country (Lobo, 2023).

The Philippines has a rich and varied cultural heritage, and folk dance is one of its most prominent features. Philippine folk dance is a reflection of the country's history, values, and beliefs (Cariaga, 2014). It is an important part of Filipino culture, and is an integral part of traditional festivals and celebrations. The purpose of this study is to explore the social and cultural implications of Philippine folk dance among College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) students in one state university in Laguna, Philippines. Specifically, this research will examine the participants' perceptions of the importance of folk dance, their attitudes towards it, and its effects on their cultural identity. This qualitative research study will use open-ended interviews as the primary method of data collection.

This study provides an in-depth understanding of the social and cultural implications of Philippine folk dance among CAS students in the university. It contribute to the existing literature on the cultural importance of folk dance and its effects on cultural identity. The results of this study was useful for educators and policy makers in understanding the importance of folk dance and its implications for cultural identity, and inputs in making interventions that would increase students' engagement in and appreciation of Philippine folk dance.

Conceptual Framework

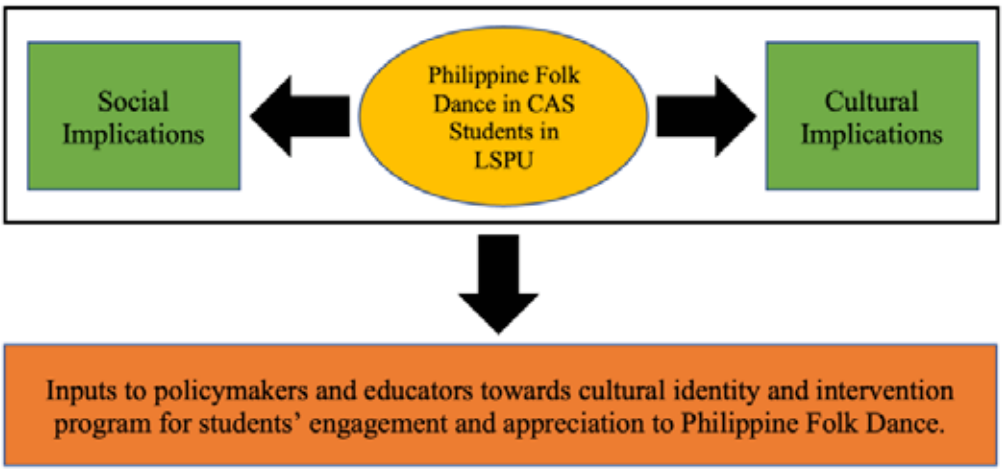

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

Figure 1 explains the goal of this study which is to evaluate the social and cultural implications of Philippine Folk Dance on 1st Year College students at the CAS in the university across the five programs. Specifically, the study seeks to explore how dance can be used

to foster cultural identity, appreciation, and engagement among students. The researchers used an interviews as a technique in gathering essential data to gain insight into the students' attitudes and beliefs about folk dance and its relationship to cultural identity. The results of the study used to inform policymakers and educators on how to create and implement intervention programs that can increase student engagement and appreciation of Philippine Folk Dance. Ultimately, this study help to promote the appreciation of Philippine culture and identity among students, which lead to greater understanding, respect, and tolerance of different cultural backgrounds.

Research Questions:

The researcher aims to examine the social and cultural implications of Philippine Folk Dance to CAS students in particular to the following research questions;

1. What are the participants' perceptions of the importance of Philippine folk dance?
2. What are the participants' attitudes towards Philippine folk dance?
3. How does Philippine folk dance affect the social and cultural identity of the participants?

Methodology

Research Design

Qualitative research under a phenomenological approach utilized by the researcher to explore the lived experiences of participants in relation to a particular phenomenon (Qutoshi, 2018). In this case, the phenomenon being studied is the social and cultural implications of Philippine folk dance among college of arts and sciences students. Through this approach, researcher gained an in-depth understanding of the meanings and interpretations of the participants in relation to their engagement in Philippine folk dance. These insights used to inform interventions that would increase students' engagement in and appreciation of Philippine folk dance.

Participants

This study explored the experiences of CAS 1st year students in one state university in Laguna, Philippines who have recently taken a PE 2 class which was focused on rhythmic activities. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants. The purpose of this is to ensure that the sample was represented of the population, and to ensure that the participants have all taken the same PE 2 class (Campbell et al., 2020). The data gathered from this study was used to gain insights into the students' experiences and perceptions of the class, which in turn used to inform future PE 2 classes and have intervention programs for current students.

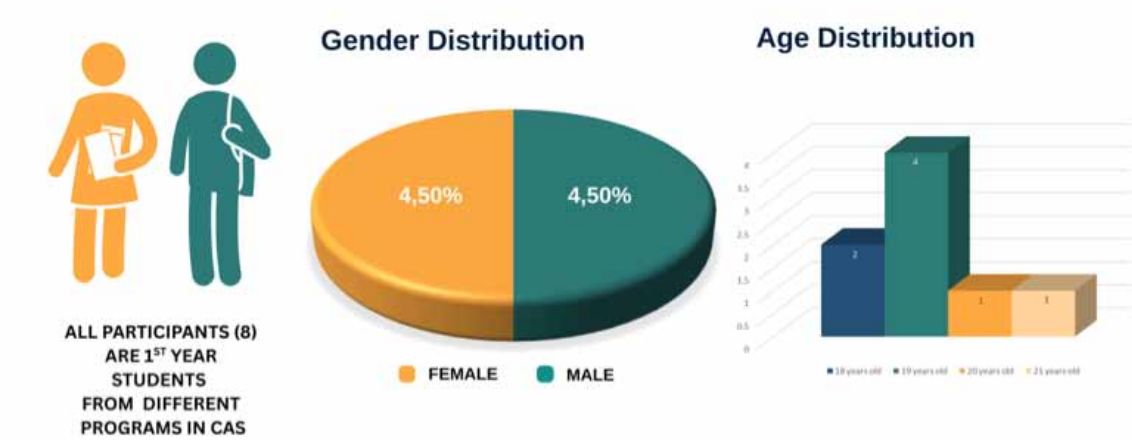

Figure 2. Research Participants' Profile.

Figure 2 demonstrated the primary information of the research participants. This consisted of 4 males and 4 females across the programs of CAS to examine also the differences of interest between genders when participating in folk dance. The age of the participants ranged from 18 years old to 21 years old.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilized semi-structured interviews that retain some of the structure of traditional interviews, while allowing for some flexibility (Galleta, 2013). The interviews focused on the participants' perceptions of the importance of folk dance, their attitudes towards it, and its potential effects on their cultural identity. The purpose of the interviews was to gain an understanding of the participants' views on folk dance and its role in their cultural identity.

An interview guide as research instrument employed in this study. It is a document used by interviewers to structure and guide an interview which includes a list of questions to be asked and a structure for the conversation (Roulston & Choi, 2018). The purpose of the guide is to ensure that the interviewer covers all of the key topics and points during the interview, while giving the candidate a chance to provide meaningful answers and feedback.

Moreover, validating an interview guide as a research instrument was an important step undertaken by the researcher in order to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the data that was collected (Birt et al., 2016). This process involved testing the questions to ensure that they are clearly worded, capture the intended information, and are not biased or leading in any way. To validate the interview guide, the researcher reviewed it with field experts using content validation, conducted a pilot study to assess its appropriateness and effectiveness, and evaluate the guide. This process helps to identify any potential issues and guarantee that the guide was valid and effective for the main study.

Data Gathering and Analysis

The process of conducting interviews was an important aspect of the current research. The researcher identified the target population, decide on selection criteria for the participants, create a list of questions, design the interview structure, and conduct the interviews. After the interviews have been conducted, the researcher transcribed the interviews and code the data according to the themes that emerge. The data was then analyzed using thematic analysis to draw conclusions about the results. Finally, the researcher presented the results of the analysis in a clear and concise manner. Interviews were important tools for collecting data and provide valuable insights into a research topic. They help to uncover information that would not be obtained through other methods such as surveys, questionnaires, and focus groups.

Ethical Considerations

In conducting the phenomenological research about the social and cultural implications of Philippine Folk Dance in College of Arts and Sciences Students in Laguna, Philippines, ethical considerations were taken into account. Firstly, it is important to ensure respect for all participants by informing them of the research goals, purpose, risks, and benefits before they agree to take part. Secondly, informed consent was obtained from all participants, which include an explanation of the research and its purpose, the expected duration of the

research, the risks and benefits of participation, and the participants' right to withdraw from the research at any time. In addition, the researcher made sure that all data collected were confidential and anonymous, as well as take steps to protect the participants from physical, psychological, or any other harm. Furthermore, the researcher made sure to store the data securely and only use it for the purpose of the research. Finally, the researcher allowed access to the results of the research to the participants, or allow access to the results in a manner that is appropriate to the research.

Results and Discussion

This section presents all the gathered and analyzed data that address the research questions.

Figure 2 demonstrates the thematic map shows the emerging themes and subthemes that describe the role of Philippine folk dance among CAS students. Derived from the analysis of their insights and reflections, the map captures the multidimensional significance of folk dance as both an artistic and cultural expression. Three major themes surfaced including Students' Perceptions towards the Importance of Philippine Folk Dance, Attitudes of CAS Students towards Philippine Folk Dance, and Social and Cultural Identity Concerns of CAS Students which encompassing interconnected subthemes that reveal how students interpret, value, and experience folk dance. Collectively, these themes underscore the role of Philippine folk dance not only as a medium for cultural appreciation and identity formation but also as a catalyst for personal development, social connection, and national pride.

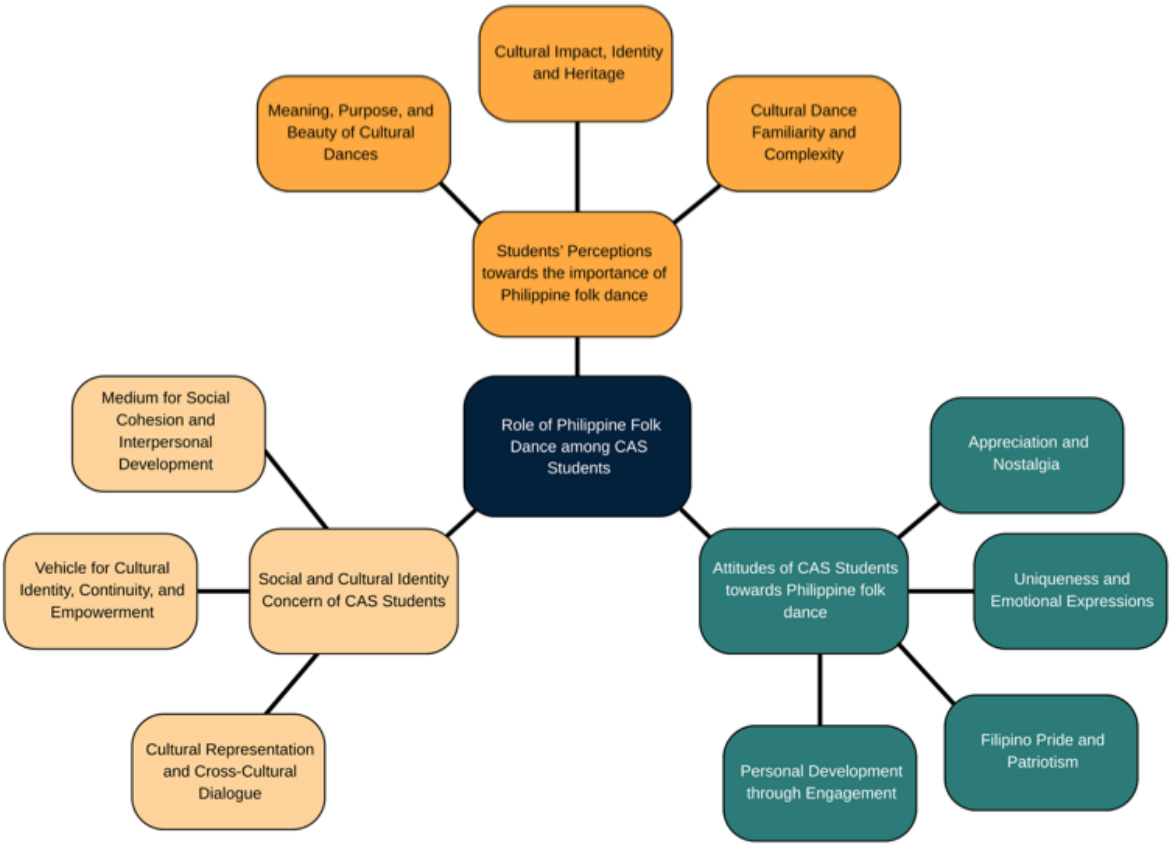

Figure 3. Thematic Map of Emerging Themes and Subthemes on the Role of Philippine Folk Dance among CAS Students.

Students' Perceptions towards the importance of Philippine folk dance

The students' participants experienced the significance of Philippine folk dancing. The participants show a profound admiration for the meaning, purpose, and beauty of traditional dances. They appreciate folk dancing in expressing Filipino identity, cultivating cultural awareness and understanding. Also emphasized are the value of cultural heritage preservation and the contribution of folk dancing to the development of Filipino pride, patriotism, and a feeling of identity.

Meaning, Purpose, and Beauty of Cultural Dances

The research participants acknowledges the beauty, purpose, and meaning that are ingrained in Philippine folk dancing. They contend that comprehension of its setting enables one to more fully appreciate its beauty, symbolism, and cultural significance.

CAS Female 1 mentioned that *"Philippine folk dance is familiar yet astonishing every time I encounter it. Ever since I was a kid, it is commonly danced during school events like foundation day or as PE subject requirement. And as time goes by, I came to realized that it may seem simple to do, but once you try to deep dipper into it and try to understand its very context, you'll better see its beauty, purpose, and significance."*

The dancing style is seen as embodying Filipino identity and highlighting Philippine culture and traditions. Additionally, Filipino folk dance is renowned for its distinctiveness and variety throughout the nation's various areas. The many community groups' values and lifestyles are represented by the dancing styles. knowledge the many Filipino folk dances helps one have a deeper knowledge of the country's rich cultural diversity. CAS Male 1 stated that *"it impacted me by understanding the culture and basic steps of folk dance that is relevant to their way of living."* By emphasizing how consistently each step in Philippine folk dance is performed, it puts it into perspective with other current dance forms. The statement implies that doing the dance correctly calls for accuracy and technique, both of which demand dedicated practice.

Bautista (2017) looked at the cultural importance of Filipino folk dance in upholding and fostering Filipino identity. It underlined how Filipino folk dances serve as a symbolic depiction of their identity, embodying the values, customs, and past of the Filipino people. Juris (2015) examined how cultural dances, such as folk dances, convey rich symbolic connotations that embody the beliefs, habits, and rituals of a specific culture in their study on the aesthetic qualities of dance. They emphasized how crucial it is to comprehend the cultural setting in order to truly appreciate the exquisite beauty and meaning of these dances. Meanwhile, folk dances help Filipinos feel a feeling of pride and belonging on the function of folk dance in forming Filipino identity (Namiki, 2017). The study emphasized the positive effects of folk dance activities on people's feeling of Filipino identity and their ability to become acquainted with their cultural heritage.

Furthermore, Bautista (2017) also investigated the variety of Philippine folk dances among several locations in a study piece. It underlined how the varied dance forms and styles that can be found all around the country represent the distinctive customs and ways of life of local communities. The general cultural landscape of the Philippines is richer and deeper as a result of this diversity. Pitsi et al. (2015) examined the effect of folk dance education on students' cultural knowledge and enjoyment. The results showed that instruction in

Philippine folk dances deepened students' awareness for the nation's cultural variety and improved their comprehension of their own cultural history.

Cultural Impact, Identity and Heritage

Filipino folk dance provides a significant impact on people's sense of cultural identification since it helps them understand their culture, the past, and the meaning of the fundamental dance moves. CAS Female 2 declared that *"the Philippine folk dance is known for its own uniqueness and its variation throughout the whole country. It is important because it is one of the things that are keeping our culture alive and it also gives us a sense of identity."* It fosters pride in and a love of their nation and culture. Folk dance is more than just a type of dance; it has deep symbolic value that emphasizes how important it is to respect and embrace one's cultural heritage.

CAS Female 3 added that *"the Philippine folk dance serves as a form of identity to us Filipinos. This dance mirrors the lifestyle and customs the early Filipinos had. As a Filipino and a student, I am grateful that we are able to preserve this culture because it gives me a sense of pride since this was also used to express emotions which I also able to do when performing."*

As a means of comprehending and conserving Filipino culture, the significance of studying Philippine folk dance is underlined. The dancing style is regarded as a depiction of the Filipino people's origins and customs, helping them to gain a better understanding of their own history. The folk dance of the Philippines is regarded not as a rich but as a lively aspect of the nation's cultural history. The dancing style is regarded as crucial for preserving Filipino history and culture, highlighting their rich legacy, and encouraging a sense of national identification and patriotism among Filipinos. Moreover, folk dancing in the Philippines is seen as a crucial component of conserving and transmitting cultural heritage. CAS Female 3 acknowledge that *"we get to learn more of our cultural heritage and the traditions here in the Philippines. It is important to preserve it by still be able to learn and continue to keep it alive up until now and to the future generations because folk dance had a huge contribution to our pride as Filipinos."* It makes it possible to understand and value cultural customs and virtues. Folk dance preservation is regarded as essential to upholding Filipino identity and pride for generations to come.

Filipinos view Philippine folk dancing as a means of self-identification as stated by CAS Male 3 *"it shows the identity of every places or locals" as agreed by CAS Male 2 as he mentioned that "the importance of it is to show the belief and culture of different local municipalities."* It still serves as a vehicle for the self-expression of early Filipinos, reflecting their way of life, traditions, and emotions. Folk dancing gives people a chance to express their experiences while also feeling proud of and connected to their cultural heritage.

Philippine folk dance displays the variations and continuities in the traditions and customs of the country's numerous ethnic communities. CAS Male 4 mentioned that *"we all know that different places have different dances that represents their culture, practices and traditions that reveals their identity."* It greatly contributes to the country's cultural identity by serving as an indication of the depth and beauty of its heritage. Folk dance underscores the value of conserving and valuing these traditions while highlighting the diversity of Filipino culture. Respecting the dance style is equivalent to respecting one's own Filipino identity.

In a study of Patrick (2021), it investigated how Filipinos' feeling of cultural identity is influenced by Philippine folk dancing. It emphasized how folk dance functions as a kind of identity, representing the way of life, traditions, and feelings of the first Filipinos. The study underlined how taking part in traditional dance events helps people feel proud of and connected to their Filipino ancestry. Steinberg (2018) highlighted the significance of learning and protecting Philippine folk dance as an avenue of gaining an understanding of Filipino culture in their study on the preservation of heritage cultures through folk dance. They emphasized how important folk dancing is for preserving cultural heritage and fostering national identity because it displays the origins, traditions, and past of the Filipino people.

Filipinos use folk dance as a means of self-expression and emotional connection Cenabre-Galindon (2022). Shay (2014) pointed out how folk dance demonstrates the differences and similarities in the traditions and customs of the country's several ethnic communities. This was emphasized as a way for people to convey their feelings and emotions while becoming proud of and connected to their cultural heritage. Folk dance, they highlighted, contributes to the Philippines' cultural identity by showing the richness and beauty of its legacy and displaying all aspects of Filipino culture.

Cultural Dance Familiarity and Complexity

The remark of being exposed to Philippine folk dancing at a young age and its appearance at school functions underscore its familiarity. The statements or participants also conveys the person's ongoing sense of awe and respect for the dance style, suggesting that it never ceases to amaze them as CAS Male 2 stated that *"it is memorable and worth remembering.*"

The assertion stresses that although Philippine traditional dance may seem straightforward, looking more closely at its surroundings exposes its complexity. CAS Male 4 mentioned that *"it is fun, a little bit hard but I enjoyed it. And it is somehow stress relieving in our school workloads.*" The dance style is characterized as exceptionally difficult and constantly offering a fresh experience. It is regarded as a satisfying and beneficial pastime that offers a vacation from academic work and reduces stress. The difficulties involved with learning folk dance are highlighted by the acknowledgement of these challenges and the requirement for practice and patience.

Moreover, Lobo (2023) found that early exposure to cultural dance, such as through school activities or festivals, helps people become familiar with Philippine folk dancing. Likewise, Buerdon (2015) note how participants continually express amazement and respect for the dance form, underscoring how this exposure aids people in developing a feeling of connection and appreciation towards their cultural heritage. This implies that people are never bored by Filipino folk dancing, even as they get older. The study highlights how important this ongoing appreciation is for preserving cultural practices.

The intricate nature of Philippine traditional dance and the satisfaction it provides to participants (Santa & Tiatco, 2019). The study underlines that although the dance may at first seem simple, deeper inspection exposes its complicated structure. Additionally, Rodriguez-Jimenez et al. (2022) emphasize the alleviating stress effects of participating in folk dance. CAS students frequently find the dance to be demanding but pleasurable, and it gives them feelings of fulfillment and an escape from academic burdens. Participants said that taking part in dance activities, such as folk dancing, helped them relax and gave them a productive way to unwind from their regular academic commitments.

Attitudes of CAS Students Towards Philippine Folk Dance

Strong feelings of admiration, appreciation, pride, uniqueness, expressions and cultural ties used to describe how CAS students feel about Philippine folk dance as well as engagement for their personal development. The students exhibit a sincere interest in folk dance and excitement for it, realizing its importance and value in all facets of their lives.

Appreciation and Nostalgia

A number of expressions make one feel nostalgic, thinking back on "*the good old days*" as stated by CAS Female 4 and how the Philippine folk dance recalls back pleasant memories. Folk dance participation has been characterized as joyful, memorable, and deserving of memory. CAS Male 2 attested that *"the importance of folkdance is celebrating and appreciating our own culture*." It also emphasized as a vital component of Filipino cultural appreciation and celebration. It provides a more thorough comprehension and understanding of the distinctive identities of various local municipalities by showcasing the values and cultures of those communities.

CAS Female 3 stated that *"My attitudes toward Philippine folk dance are to respect and give appreciation to our very own culture. It is important that we give respect to Philippine folk dance because this represents our identity. If we respect it, we are also respecting ourselves as Filipinos who are part of it. Let us also appreciate our culture and be proud of our own. Proper knowledge in different Philippine folk dance is also important to fully understand our cultural heritage*." It is underlined how important it is to appreciate and value Philippine folk dancing. Different folk dances must be properly understood and known in order to completely appreciate and value cultural heritage. Conversely, it is a way to reflect on the past and to appreciate and commemorate the predecessors who utilized dance to communicate their feelings, way of life, work, and religion. It is regarded as a means of protecting and honoring the history and heritage of the country.

People can discover and appreciate the depth, vibrancy, and astounding essence of their cultural roots by participating in Philippine folk dancing. CAS Male 3 mentioned that *"it made me aware and realize being a patriot through the dance I learned because it is not just a dance, but it has something deep meaning in performing folk dance*." It fosters a sense of patriotism and nationality by giving insights into the customs, way of life, and traditions of the earliest Filipinos. People can better comprehend and identify with their heritage through folk dancing.

Mortel (2016) focused on the role that exposure to folk dance plays in fostering cultural awareness and identity in Filipino teenagers. It is believed that appreciating folk dance is a way to honor and value Filipino culture, preserve cultural history, and comprehend the various identities of nearby towns (Bandala, 2018). The significance of having a thorough understanding of the various Philippine traditional dances is also discussed. Shay (2014) highlights the intricate nature of Philippine traditional dance and the need for more investigation. The study emphasizes how the dance is both demanding and entertaining for participants, leading to feelings of appreciation and fulfillment. Furthermore, the act of engaging in folk dance is described as pleasurable, memorable, and deserving of remembered who connects Philippine traditional dance with remembering pleasant memories. This idea is consistent with the idea of folk dance as a way to remember and pay tribute to the

forefathers who utilized dance to convey their feelings, way of life, profession, and religion. Folk dancing is viewed as a means of preserving and honoring the Philippines' history and cultural heritage.

Uniqueness and Emotional Expressions

Filipino folk dance is characterized as a type of emotional expression which reflects a variety of feelings, beliefs, and customs. CAS Female 2 shared that *"At first, when the word "folk dance" comes to my mind, my initial thought would be that it is a dance that has complicated dance moves and will be difficult when performed. As we tried to practice and perform a folk dance, my thoughts about the Philippine folk dance still hasn't changed since but now, I feel proud of our culture because dancing really is a common way of expressing one's feelings, but the way the Philippine folk dance expresses it is much more unique than the others."* Its distinctiveness is emphasized, especially when compared to other dance genres. The dance style is regarded as a representation of the vibrant national history.

Filipino folk dance is renowned for using movement and choreography to express a variety of feelings, beliefs, and customs. Paradela (2022) stress the importance of emotional expression in traditional dances and how they function as a medium for narrative, festivities, and cultural representation in their study of Philippine folk dance. Folk dancing stands out from other dance genres due to its unique emotional expression, which also enhances its cultural significance. Likewise, Filipino folk dance is special because it can convey a wide range of feelings in a distinctive and culturally meaningful way (Okamura, 2013). It differs from other types of dance in terms of emotional expression, and its intricacy and difficulty add to its distinctive qualities. Filipino folk dance is an important part of the nation's cultural heritage since it is used as a tool for cultural representation, narratives, and the preservation of the country's past.

Filipino Pride and Patriotism

Engaging in Philippine folk dancing fosters feelings of nationalism and pride. CAS Male 2 stated that *" I am humble and being patriotic person because of the learnings in folk dance."* It is regarded as an embodiment of cultural pride along with a means to honor and advance Filipino traditions and culture. CAS Male 1 shared that *"I am very proud in our rich culture and tradition that we must celebrate and promote for the next generations and present in international stage."* On national as well as international stages, folk dancing is regarded as a way to highlight the diversity of the nation's culture and customs.

It highlights the importance of folk dancing in exhibiting the diversity and cultural identity of the Philippines for present and future generations, as well as on international stages. Folk dance from the Philippines is valued as a cultural artifact that exemplifies the distinctive traditions and customs of the nation's various regions. Folk dancing contributes to the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage, generating a sense of national pride and identity (Kim et al., 2019; Lixinski, 2013). Additionally, Filipinos can exhibit their cultural pride through folk dancing on venues around the world as well as domestically. It acts as a vehicle for cultural representation and diplomacy, allowing the sharing of Filipino traditions and customs with a larger audience on a global scale. Folk dance has a significant role in promoting Filipino identity and increasing global awareness and appreciation of Philippine culture (Lobo, 2023).

Personal Development through Engagement

Folk dance participation has been characterized as supporting personal development. CAS Male 4 mentioned that *"through dancing, I developed different attitude like patience and appreciation on what have before."* It fosters dispositions like humility, appreciation, and patience. People gain greater comprehension and appreciation for historical customs and practices through dancing.

The participants observation regarding the acquisition of dispositions like tolerance and appreciation is consistent with studies on the advantages folk dancing has for individuals. Folk dancing gives people a platform to develop positive attitudes and values including self-control, tenacity, cooperation, and respect. Kico and Liarokapis (2022) attested the advantages of dancing, particularly folk dance, reported improved patience, a greater respect for cultural heritage, and their own development as a result of their participation in dance activities. Meanwhile, Folk dancing gives people the chance to learn more about and develop a deeper appreciation for traditional ways of life. Participants develop understanding of the cultural meaning and symbolism behind the motions by learning and practicing traditional dance moves. A higher appreciation for cultural customs and heritage results from this understanding. Harris (2022) stated that folk dance plays an important part in fostering a sense of respect and admiration for other cultures by encouraging participants to show their love for the dance form.

Consequently, Folk dancing gives people a platform to express their own and gain self-confidence. Individuals can improve their rhythm, stage presence, and physical coordination by acquiring and executing dance routines. Improved self-esteem and self-expression are benefits of the skill cultivation and achievement process. Ingram (2013) illustrated that folk dance has a positive effect on people's self-esteem by demonstrating how participants experienced happiness and fulfillment with their dance. Folk dance frequently involves participation from a group or community, promoting interpersonal communication and cooperation. Participants gain the ability to cooperate, synchronize their motions, and work toward a common objective. This feature of folk dancing aids in the growth of social abilities, teamwork, and a sense of identity.

Social and Cultural Identity Concern of CAS Students

Understanding the social and cultural identity of students is essential in exploring how Philippine folk dance shapes their sense of self and belonging. For students, participation in folk dance goes beyond artistic performance; it becomes a medium for cultural expression, social connection, and identity formation. Through shared movement, rhythm, and tradition, students engage in experiences that nurture community bonds and reinforce pride in their Filipino heritage.

Medium for Social Cohesion and Interpersonal Development

Philippine folk dance significantly contributes to the social dimension of identity formation among students. Participation fosters camaraderie, teamwork, and harmony, encouraging students to work collectively and develop a shared sense of belonging. The cooperative nature of folk dance practices builds interpersonal relationships and strengthens community bonds. As expressed by CAS Male 1, *"Folk dance serves as a venue for fostering social cohesion and interpersonal development."* Through group performances, participants learn collabora-

tion and unity, promoting respect and mutual support within the academic and cultural setting. This aligns with Lobo (2023), who emphasized that folk dance enhances the social fabric by encouraging participants to act as cooperative and socially responsible members of their communities.

Vehicle for Cultural Identity, Continuity, and Empowerment

Folk dance plays a vital role in maintaining and strengthening cultural identity among students. It reconnects them to their heritage, traditions, and rituals – instilling pride in their Filipino roots and deepening their appreciation of national identity. CAS Female 2 articulated that *"Filipino folk dance offers individuals a way of expressing oneself and empowerment by teaching us about the symbolism, implications, and purposes underlying each movement, costume, and musical element."* Through this, students not only preserve cultural traditions but also gain a sense of empowerment and belonging. Supporting this, Camacho et al. (2012) asserted that the teaching and performance of folk dances enable the transmission of cultural heritage to future generations. Engagement in such art forms enriches students' understanding of the historical and social contexts of Philippine culture while enhancing self-expression, confidence, and pride in their ethnic identity.

Cultural Representation and Cross-Cultural Dialogue

Beyond personal and local identity, Philippine folk dance as revolutionize in modern trends and also serves as a powerful medium for cultural representation and global communication that promotes artistic ingenuity and synergistic collaborations (Chandnasaro, 2025). Students recognize that performing folk dances allows them to become carriers of culture, showcasing the richness and diversity of Filipino traditions to both local and international audiences. As expressed by CAS Male 3, *"When we perform folk dances, we are not just dancing; we are showing the world who we are as Filipinos."* Similarly, CAS Female 4 shared, *"Through folk dance, I feel proud to represent our culture and let others see the beauty of our traditions."*

These statements illustrate how participants view themselves as cultural ambassadors who embody and promote Filipino heritage. Their performances become living expressions of identity that encourage appreciation and understanding beyond cultural borders. Patrick (2014) emphasized that folk dance serves as a platform for cultural exchange and national representation, allowing others to witness the vitality and distinctiveness of Filipino heritage. Through these expressive acts, students not only affirm their individual identities but also cultivate a collective sense of national pride and cultural solidarity.

Philippine folk dance profoundly shapes both the social and cultural identity of its participants. It strengthens social bonds through teamwork and shared experience, reinforces cultural continuity and empowerment by deepening pride and self-expression, and extends cultural identity beyond local boundaries through representation and intercultural dialogue. These intertwined experiences demonstrate that folk dance is not merely a physical performance but a transformative cultural practice that connects individuals to their heritage, their peers, and the broader global community.

Although the findings strongly support the role of folk dance in strengthening cultural identity and social cohesion among students, these interpretations must be viewed in light of the limited participant pool involved in this pilot study. The rich narratives provided meaningful depth; however, broader policy or curricular recommendations should be approached cautiously until similar patterns are confirmed across larger and more demographically varied groups.

Implications to University Practice

The findings of this study highlight the essential role of cultural arts specifically folk dance as a tool for strengthening students' identity formation, social cohesion, and sense of belonging within the state university setting. For institutions seeking to promote holistic formation, the integration of Philippine folk dance should extend beyond compliance-based curricular requirements and be approached as a strategic tool for values formation, student engagement, and cultural continuity.

State Universities and Colleges and other academic institutions may consider formalizing co-curricular or extracurricular folk dance programs, establishing peer-led cultural performance circles, or embedding community-based cultural immersions in General Education courses. Faculty training may also be strengthened to ensure that cultural instruction is not only technical but contextually grounded in heritage discourse. Furthermore, the strong emotional resonance expressed by participants demonstrates that folk dance activities can serve as low-cost but high-impact interventions for student well-being and identity affirmation, especially in institutions serving diverse or marginalized populations.

Limitations of the Study

This study provides valuable insights into the social and cultural implications of Philippine folk dance among CAS students, certain limitations were acknowledged. First, the sample size was limited to only eight (8) first-year students from a one state university campus, which restricts the generalizability of the findings. As a phenomenological approach, the goal was depth over breadth; however, the small and localized sample means that the perspectives gathered may not represent the experiences of students from other regions, socio-economic backgrounds, or academic disciplines. Additionally, gender and age variations were minimally represented, preventing deeper comparative analysis across demographic groups. Future studies may involve larger and more diverse cohorts drawn from multiple universities across different regions of the Philippines to validate and expand on the insights generated in this pilot investigation.

Conclusion

Folk dancing in the Philippines is viewed as an important and treasured component of the research participants' cultural legacy. They recognize the importance that folk dancing plays in presenting Filipino identity and emphasizing the nation's numerous cultural traditions, and they enjoy the beauty, meaning, and symbolism that are embedded in it. Folk dance is viewed as a crucial tool for protecting and enhancing participants' cultural identities, inspiring feelings of great pride, connection, and nostalgia. It promotes a sense of patriotism by helping people better appreciate their unique culture, history, and customs. Participants can express their sentiments, ideas, and experiences while experiencing an overwhelming feeling of Filipino pride thanks to the distinctiveness and emotional manifestations inherent in Philippine folk dance. Folk dance also has a great effect on human growth, encouraging qualities like tolerance, appreciation, and humility. Folk dance fosters social cohesion and solidarity among participants by encouraging collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of purpose. It acts as a forum for cultural representation and exchange, enabling participants to introduce more people to the variety and richness of Filipino cultures. Philippine folk dance, in its whole, plays a significant part in forming the social and cultural identities of its players, encouraging a profound feeling of identity, appreciation for culture, and empowerment.

Recommendations

The results of the study will be the inputs to policymakers and educators towards cultural identity and intervention program for students' engagement and appreciation to Philippine Folk Dance. Additionally, it is recommended for administrators and teachers that folk dance has to be more known and understood by the students through holding cultural events, workshops, and educational programs that emphasize the value and elegance of Philippine folk dance. Likewise, recognize and include Philippine folk dance in the curriculum that can promote a sense of cohesion and respect for various cultural traditions. Additionally, the students may recognize the advantages of participating in Philippine folk dance for their personal growth. Encourage people to take part in dancing activities as a way to cultivate crucial traits. Draw attention to the beneficial effects that folk dance may possess on wellbeing and personal growth. For future researchers, it is recommended that this study be replicated in other universities, including both urban and rural institutions, as well as schools with strong performing arts programs versus non-arts institutions that may effect on people, communities, and cultural identity. Exploring gender-based or age-based contrasts in perceptions of folk dance may also offer further insight into how cultural identity is shaped differently across populations.

References

Andresen, Third H. Filipino American Phenomenon: Community-Based Organization Influence on Ethnic Identity, Leadership Development, and Community Engagement. PhD diss., University of Washington, 2013.

Aquino, John Michael. "Students' Evaluation in the Developed Video-Based Learning Materials for Physical Education in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)." *Edu Sportivo: Indonesian Journal of Physical Education* 3, no. 2 (2022): 111–124.

Ashley, Linda. *Dancing with Difference: Culturally Diverse Dances in Education*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2012.

Bandala, Ibylou. "Pistang Pamana, Pistang Naaayon: A Socio-Cultural and Environmental Sustainability Framework for Town Fiestas." *KnE Social Sciences* (2018): 594–610.

Bautista, Regina Angelica S. "Embodied Indigeneity: Translating Tradition for the Philippine Contemporary Dance Stage." *Academia.edu*, April (2017).

Birt, Linda, Suzanne Scott, Debbie Cavers, Christine Campbell & Fiona Walter. "Member Checking: A Tool to Enhance Trustworthiness or Merely a Nod to Validation?" *Qualitative Health Research* 26, no. 13 (2016): 1802–1811.

Bravo, Carrie Danae, Feliz Danielle Dimalanta, Kate Ashley Jusay, Martina Ysabel Vitug & Almighty Tabuena. "Inclination State on the Philippine Culture and Arts Using the Appraisal Theory: Factors of Progress and Deterioration." *Participatory Educational Research* 9, no. 1 (2022): 388–403.

Buedron, N. F. "Perceptions Towards Folk Dancing of College Students in the University of Eastern Philippines." *International Journal of Science and Research* 6, no. 10 (2015): 2092–2094.

Camacho, Leni D., Marilyn S. Combalicer, Youn Yeo-Chang, Edwin A. Combalicer, Antonio P. Carandang, Sofronio C. Camacho, Catherine C. de Luna & Lucrecio L. Rebugio. "Traditional Forest Conservation Knowledge/Technologies in the Cordillera, Northern Philippines." *Forest Policy and Economics* 22 (2012): 3–8.

Campbell, Steve, Melanie Greenwood, Sarah Prior, Toniele Shearer, Kerrie Walkem, Sarah Young, Danielle Bywaters & Kim Walker. "Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples." *Journal of Research in Nursing* 25, no. 8 (2020): 652–661.

Cariaga, Jane. "Documentation and Notation of the Traditional Dances of the Yogads of Isabela." *Researchers World* 5, no. 4 (2014): 71–82.

Cenabre-Galindon, Gretchen Marie. "Beyond Movement: Understanding the Significance of Indigenous Dances of the Applai Tribe of Northern Philippines Through Semiotic Analysis." *Res Militaris* 12, no. 6 (2022): 2393–2403.

Chandnasaro, Dharakorn. "Revolutionizing Dance: Advanced Choreographic Trends of the 21st Century." *Journal of Urban Culture Research* 30 (2025): 51-61. https://doi.org/10.14456/jucr.2025.4

Commission on Higher Education (CHED). *General Education Curriculum: Holistic Understandings, Intellectual and Civic Competencies* (CMO No. 20, s. 2013). www.ched.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/CMO-No.20-s2013.pdf (accessed September 1, 2023).

Domingo, John Paul R. DEM. "Direct from the Connoisseurs: Articulating Philippine Folk Dance Documentation Practices." (2018).

Galletta, Anne. *Mastering the Semi-Structured Interview and Beyond: From Research Design to Analysis and Publication*. New York: NYU Press, 2013.

Harris, Sophia A. "'Folk Belongs to the People': Exploring Balkan Music in Sydney, Australia." PhD diss., Macquarie University, 2022.

Ingram, Mallory. *Unfolding Self-Esteem: Adolescent Girls' Self-Esteem and the Dance/Movement Therapy Intervention of Improvisation and Planned Movement Formation: A Pilot Study.* (2013).

Juris, Jeffrey S. "Embodying Protest: Culture and Performance Within Social Movements." In *Anthropology, Theatre, and Development: The Transformative Potential of Performance*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2015. 82–104.

Kico, Iris & Fotis Liarokapis. "Enhancing the Learning Process of Folk Dances Using Augmented Reality and Non-Invasive Brain Stimulation." *Entertainment Computing* 40 (2022): 100455.

Kim, Soojung, Michelle Whitford & Charles Arcodia. "Development of Intangible Cultural Heritage as a Sustainable Tourism Resource: The Intangible Cultural Heritage Practitioners' Perspectives." In *Authenticity and Authentication of Heritage,* 34–47. Routledge, 2021.

Lixinski, Lucas. *Intangible Cultural Heritage in International Law.* Oxford: OUP Oxford, 2013.

Lobo, Joseph. "Protecting Philippine Dance Traditions via Education of Tomorrow's Pedagogues." *Journal of Ethnic and Cultural Studies* 10, no. 1 (2023): 98–124.

Mortel, Darlene Marie Escarez. "Katotohanan ng Ating Bayan: Identity, Cultural Work, and the National Democratic Struggle of the Filipina/o People in the United States." PhD diss., University of Hawai'i at Manoa, 2016.

Namiki, Kanami. *Ramon Obusan, Philippine Folkdance and Me: From the Perspective of a Japanese Dancer.* Manila: Anvil Publishing, Inc., 2017.

Okamura, Jonathan Y. *Imagining the Filipino American Diaspora: Transnational Relations, Identities, and Communities.* New York: Routledge, 2013.

Paradela, Teilhard. "Audiences Exposed: Communication and Discipline in the Philippines in the Twentieth Century." PhD diss., University of British Columbia, 2022.

Patrick, Declan. "Filipino Folk Dance in the Academy: Embodied Research in the Work of Francesca Reyes Aquino, Sally Ann Ness, and Benildanze." *Asian Theatre Journal* (2014): 399–416.

Patrick, Declan. "National Identity in Philippine Folk Dance: Changing Focus from the Cariñosa to Tinikling." In *Cultural Memory and Popular Dance: Dancing to Remember, Dancing to Forget*, 177–192. Routledge, 2021.

Peterson, William. *Places for Happiness: Community, Self, and Performance in the Philippines.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2016.

Pitsi, Athina, Nikolaos Digelidis & Athanasios Papaioannou. "The Effects of Reciprocal and Self-Check Teaching Styles in Students' Intrinsic-Extrinsic Motivation, Enjoyment and Autonomy in Teaching Traditional Greek Dances." *Journal of Physical Education and Sport* 15, no. 2 (2015): 352–361.

Potocnik, Robert. "Heritage Preservation Education: Teachers' Preconceptions and Teachers' Implementation in Visual Arts Classes." *CEPS Journal* 10, no. 2 (2020): 49–76.

Qutoshi, Sadruddin Bahadur. "Phenomenology: A Philosophy and Method of Inquiry." *Journal of Education and Educational Development* 5, no. 1 (2018): 215–222.

Reyes, Valerie M., RJ Neil C. Laguatan & Jimbarry S. Ordillas. "Students' Personal Experiences and Interest in Philippine Folk Dance: Basis for Dance Program Intervention." *Journal of Education and Human Resources* 1, no. 2 (2020).

Rodríguez-Jiménez, Rosa-María, Manuel Carmona, Sonia García-Merino, Germán Díaz-Ureña & Pedro J. Lara Bercial. "Embodied Learning for Well-Being, Self-Awareness, and Stress Regulation: A Randomized Trial with Engineering Students Using a Mixed-Method Approach." *Education Sciences* 12, no. 2 (2022): 111.

Roulston, Kathryn, and Myungweon Choi. "Qualitative Interviews." In *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection,* 233–249. Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2018.

Santa, E. D. & Allan Tiatco. "Tourism, Heritage and Cultural Performance: Developing a Modality of Heritage Tourism." *Tourism Management Perspectives* 31 (2019): 301–309.

Sathittham, Rungnapa & Nantida Chandransu. "The Practice of Creative Music and Dance Performances of the Asli Mala Group." *Journal of Urban Culture Research* 22 (2021): 92-103. https://doi.org/10.14456/jucr.2021.7

Shay, Anthony. *Choreographing Identities: Folk Dance, Ethnicity and Festival in the United States and Canada.*Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2014.

Steinberg, David Joel. *The Philippines: A Singular and a Plural Place*. New York: Routledge, 2018.