

Students' Awareness of Filipino Culture: Basis for Designing a Contextualized Module in Teaching Understanding Culture among SHS Students

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Abstract

Certain social values, beliefs, religions, and customs vary among different cultures to which people are linked. A sense of unity and belongingness within a certain group of culture is what called cultural heritage. Tracing and studying cultural heritage provide us with a better understanding of a certain culture and helps us understand and respect each other's culture. Using a mixed-method design, this study explored the 300 senior high school (SHS) students' awareness of Filipino culture as a basis for designing a module which will be useful in teaching. Quantitative and qualitative data were used to reveal the SHS students' awareness levels and perceptions of Filipino culture and heritage using a survey questionnaire and an interview. A total of 50 of these SHS students were also interviewed by applying the principle of saturation. Findings revealed that the students' awareness levels of traditional dresses, dances, and food are low. Results from interviews and root cause analysis reveal the low awareness levels of students of their own culture which are contributed to by the following: (a) vanishing of cultural heritage; (b) meagre preservation and integration of Filipino culture in teaching; and (c) Filipino cultural heritage dilemma. Furthermore, the relationships between participants' profiles and levels of awareness showed that gender and tribe are significantly correlated to their level of awareness of the Filipino cultural heritage. Thus, the result shows an evident support for designing a module in teaching an Understanding Culture Society and Politics (UCSP) core subject as there is a need to integrate culture awareness in all other subjects.

Keywords: students' awareness, Filipino culture, understanding culture, designing module, Philippines

Introduction

In many parts of the world, cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that is handed down from generation to generation. According to Camus (1942), "Without culture, and the relative freedom it implies, society, even when perfect, is but a jungle. This is why any authentic creation is a gift to the future." In addition, C.S. Lewis, a British novelist and poet; once said that education is very important in values formation: however, if values are separated from education, it seems to make people uneducated at all. In connection to this, education experts, teachers, and parents should play a vital role and be the forefront of instilling learners with cultural values at school and home. Youngsters should be made aware of cultural values so that they can pass on the knowledge to other generations (Lewis & Otieno, 2017). Culture is dynamic and not static. Change is a challenge, and we accept change brought by

the influence of foreign countries. However, despite being dynamic, Filipino citizens must preserve and love their own culture. Passing the cultural values to others is best described as cultural heritage (Srivastava, 2015; Shimray et.al 2017). Cultural heritage awareness (CHA) is a vital element in the promotion and protection of any cultural heritage.

Filipino people are known as settlers who adapt easily to different environments. In many parts of the world the Filipino culture is applauded owing to its uniqueness. This includes cultural dances that are very important to tell other people what they ought to know about our culture. However, to preserve one's own culture, CHA is important, particularly among the younger generation. Cultural awareness is the foundation of literate national communication. Srivastava (2015) pointed out that cultural values should be imparted to younger generation as one of the ways of cultural preservation. The younger generation should be trained to love and promote their own culture. This involves the ability to stand back and become more aware of their *katutubong kasuotan* and *katutubong sayaw* (cultural dress and cultural dance).

Based on personal experiences and observations, many SHS students are not interested in the subject Understanding Culture which is one of the core subjects in the SHS curriculum. Furthermore, they lack interest in studying the Filipino culture. This problem is commonly experienced by the SHS teachers in Tukuran Technical Vocational High School. The students' attitude and lack of interest in understanding their culture may be attributed to student's lack of awareness of their own culture – the Filipino culture. Therefore, this study assessed the awareness level of SHS students on Filipino culture as a basis for designing a module to be used in teaching the Understanding Culture module.

Research Questions

In realizing the objective of this research, the following questions were posed:

- 1) What is the profile of the participants of the study in terms of gender and tribe?
- 2) What is the awareness level of SHS students of Filipino culture and heritage?
- 3) What are the perceptions and opinions of SHS students of Filipino culture and heritage?
- 4) What aspects of the Filipino culture and heritage are commonly known and observed by the SHSs in various cultural presentations?
- 5) Are there significant relationships between participants' profile and level of awareness of Filipino culture and heritage?
- 6) What is the proposed intervention to enhance students' interest in learning and understanding Filipino culture?

Methods

Participants

The participants of this study were the SHS students of Tukuran Technical Vocational High School of the year 2018-2019 who was purposively selected. A total of three hundred (300) SHS students were considered for the survey. For interviews and focus group discussions, the participants were selectively chosen using random and convenience sampling. Out of three hundred students only fifty students were selected; the number of interviewees was determined using the principle of saturation.

Design

The study employed a mixed-method design to assess the awareness level of SHS students of Filipino culture. A mixed method offers a better opportunity to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative and qualitative data interactively (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Root cause analysis was employed, which is a qualitative approach that complements the findings from the survey and

interviews to enable the depth of understanding of the research topic and scope as well as enabling the data collection within a short period (Palinkas et. al, 2015; Warfa, 2016).

Research Study Context

This study was conducted in in the Senior High School Department of the Tukuran Technical Vocational High School. The school is located in the heart of the town in Tukuran. It is said to be one of the top performing schools in the region, both in academic and extra-curricular activities.

Materials

A researcher-compiled survey questionnaire in a Likert form was used to obtain the necessary information from the students. There were four sections to the questionnaire (A, B, C, and D). Section A focuses on gathering information on the respondents' personal data, whereas sections B, C, and D focus on questions that elicit replies relating to the participants' awareness levels of Filipino culture and heritage, their perceptions and opinions of Filipino culture and heritage, as well the Filipino culture and heritage commonly known and observed by the SHS in various cultural presentations. On a four-point Likert scale, participants were asked to rate their responses, namely strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and strongly disagree (SD). Another instrument used in the data gathering was the interview question guide. This was used during individual and group discussions among the 50 students who participated voluntarily in the interview from the 300 sample who answered the survey questionnaire.

Procedure

Prior to data collection, the entry protocol was strictly observed. A questionnaire compiled by the researcher was then distributed to the participants and was retrieved after the participants had answered the items successfully. There was no time limit given for answering the survey questionnaire to give the participants ample time to reflect on and recall what they had observed and experienced about their cultural heritage. To obtain qualitative data, interviews were conducted with the 50 participants who had voluntarily participated. The interviews focused mainly on their perceptions of commonly known Filipino culture and heritage. The purpose of the interview was to triangulate their responses in the survey questionnaire. During the interviews, the principle of saturation was applied to limit the number of the interviewees.

Results

Profiles of the Participants

The gender and tribe of the participants were considered in this study. It is believed that the awareness and perceptions of participants regarding Filipino culture vary according to these two criteria. As shown in Table 1, the participants of the study were mostly female (73.7%), with a mean of 1.3933 and SD of .92093. Male participants only comprised 26.3% of the total with a mean of .3033 and SD of .46047. The data on Table 1 also shows that the majority (217 or 73.7%) are Cebuano, with a mean of .7567 and SD of .74339. It is also noted that Bol-anon garnered the lowest frequency (1 or .3%), having a mean of .0033 with SD .05774. Regardless of percentage composition, it can be deduced from the data that the SHS students of the Tukuran Technical Vocational School comprise nine (9) different tribes. These tribes each have their own unique cultural heritage as well.

Table 1: Participants' Profile

Profile		F	%	Mean	SD
Sex	Male	79	26.3	.3033	.46047
	Female	221	73.7	1.3933	.92093
Tribe	Cebuano	217	72.3	.7567	.74339
	Maranao	4	13.7	.0133	.11489
	Iranun	41	6.7	.1367	.34407
	Maguindanao	6	2.0	.0200	.14023
	Subanen	20	1.0	.0667	.24986
	Ilocano	6	2.0	.0200	.14023
	Ilonggo	3	1.3	.0100	.09966
	Bol-anon	1	.3	.0033	.05774
	Waray	2	.7	.0067	.08151

Level of Awareness on Filipino Culture and Heritage

The questionnaire on the level of awareness was designed using a Likert scale. It consists of three categories, namely Filipino traditional dances, cultural dress and traditional food. Each category consisted of five questions.

Table 2: Participants' Level of Awareness of Filipino Culture and Heritage

Filipino Culture & Heritage	Mean	SD	Rank
A. Awareness of Filipino Dances			
Knowledge and awareness of the different traditional dances	1.7233	.71776	Low
My performance in some Filipino traditional dances	1.8433	.71682	Low
My awareness of cultural dance of our tribe	1.8467	.69626	Low
My performance of cultural dance of our tribe	1.8567	.68142	Low
My participation in different cultural dance presentations	1.8667	.73304	Low
B. Awareness on Cultural Dress			
Knowledge and awareness of the different traditional types of dress	1.8367	.72922	Low
My experience of wearing Filipino traditional dress	1.8833	.69618	Low
My awareness of cultural dress of our tribe	1.8533	.70247	Low
My experience of wearing our own cultural dress	1.8833	.68162	Low
My experience of different cultural dress presentations	1.7733	.70018	Low
C. Awareness of Filipino Traditional Foods			
Knowledge and awareness of the different Filipino traditional foods	1.7567	.74339	Low
My experience of cooking Filipino traditional foods	1.8700	.70812	Low
My experience of cooking our own traditional foods	1.8033	.73470	Low
My experience of eating Filipino traditional foods	1.9067	.75267	Low
My experience of eating the traditional foods of our tribe	1.8033	.75269	Low

Legend on Level of Awareness (Based on mean) or search the standard measure of level

<i>Very High (VH)</i> = 4.0 - 5.0	<i>Average</i> = 2.0 - 2.99
<i>High (H)</i> = 3 - 4.99	<i>Low (L)</i> = 1 - 1.99
	<i>Very Low (VL)</i> = 0.5 - 0.99

As shown in Table 2, the participants' (SHS students) level of awareness of Filipino dances, cultural dress, and traditional foods was low. This means that they are not familiar with the Filipino culture. Results of the interviews showed that the majority of them expressed their opinions about the Filipino culture in a confused manner. A common statement was as follows:

The reason why we don't dance and wear our traditional dresses, and no longer cooperated with cultural activities is that we don't know what is really the original cultural dance and dresses look like. There are many styles appeared already that is not similar on the Filipino cultural dresses shown in the historical books. Many Filipino cultural dresses today are becoming sexy clothing no longer a conservative one. Similar with the foods we don't know also what is the original cultural food that we have. As millineals, we don't have so much knowledge about the past.

As observed, the young generation of today, the so-called millennials, were mostly influenced by social media and foreign fashions and arts such as Korean pop icons owing to the bandwagon effect. This bandwagon effect detracts from the young generation's studying, preserving and appreciating their own culture since they tend to take famous artists from western and other Asian countries as their roles models. Therefore, educators should inculcate their own cultural heritage and teach them about their own culture to preserve and promote this heritage. A module is a necessary tool to enhance and increase the awareness level of the students about the Filipino culture.

Perceptions and Opinion of SHS Students of Filipino Culture and Heritage

Students that provided responses for this study described their perceptions and opinions of Filipino culture and heritage covering three categories, namely (a) Filipino cultural dances, (b) Filipino cultural dress, and (c) Filipino traditional foods. Based on the information collected from the survey questionnaire, interviews, group discussions, and observation during the conducting of the interview and focus group discussion, three themes were generated as follows: (a) Eminent Cultural Heritage; (b) Preserving and Enhancing Filipino Culture; and (c) Filipino Cultural Heritage Dilemmas.

Theme 1: Eminent but Vanishing Cultural Heritage

Results of interviews and focus group discussions among the participants revealed that the Filipino cultural dances symbolize the identity of Filipino as the pride of the country, the symbol of a tribe, traditional identity, a Philippine symbol, as well as other meanings. They also portray beliefs, values and practices of the past. However, when they were asked what can they say about the Filipino cultural dances, a common statement was as follows:

Well, it has the different styles and that's make it unique. It also one way of promoting the beauty and meaning of the Filipino culture. It symbolizes the identity of Filipino cultural heritage and tribes, and it portrays beliefs, values and practices in the past.

When they were asked how important the Filipino cultural dances are to Filipinos, common responses revealed that Filipino cultural dances are very important among Filipinos because they symbolize the Filipino identity among other races and cultures. According to them, it is very important to commemorate the Filipino ancestors. The majority responded as follows:

As students; Filipino cultural dances are very important to us because it is a proof, that we love our cultural dance and it give us our identity. Embracing Filipino cultural dances made us recognized by other races, and it it really shows who we are, how our ancestors acted before. It also symbolizes how elegance the Filipino culture, and it shows how conservative we are. It is important to preserve and embrace our own cultural dances to contributes and gives values our own and share to others how rich Filipino culture is. This is the culture that we are known as a Filipino people, and we must adapt and preserve our culture for the next generation to follow and preserve our unique culture as well.

When they were asked about Filipino cultural dress and how important it is, many said that it is unique, beautiful, elegant, vibrant and conservative in style. Moreover, it is important because it provides knowledge of what the traditional dress or dress style was in the past. It furthermore

shows the uniqueness of Filipino ancestry, signifying its more formal attire than that worn today. When they were asked about the Filipino traditional foods, they said, “Yummy!” and “Very delicious” and “It is really different from other foods, particularly when it was cooked and prepared by the elders. The taste is unique and very delicious”. When they were asked how important the Filipino traditional food is among Filipinos, their comments were as follows:

Filipino foods are important because it plays integral part in bringing the whole family together, kana ila giingun sa commercial the family that eats lives happily forever (according to the words of the advertisement, namely that the family that eats lives happily forever). They also added: “It represents the mastery of Filipinos in cooking food. The Filipino delicacies really taste good.” Based on their statement, Filipino traditional foods help preserve Filipino uniqueness, and passing this on to the next generation makes Filipinos identifiable to other countries. Generally, their comments related to the following:

Filipino traditional foods are very important among Filipino people because it helps a lot to the Filipinos not only in business but it represents the image of the Filipino people. Filipino traditional foods represent the Filipino culture and uniqueness among other cultures abroad.

The participants were also asked in what Filipino cultural heritage they were interested. They said that in terms of cultural dress, they were interested in wearing *Tausug, Barong Tagalog, Barro’s Saya, Subanen, Igorot, and Filipiniana*, while for Filipino traditional foods they indicated *Pig lechon, chicken adobo, unbatched chicken egg, banana cue, camote cues and kaldereta*. In general, common views were the following:

In the Filipino cultural heritage, we are much interested in the cultural dances, that is very difficult to learn and not commonly performed in many occasions. However, we find it difficult to determine those dances because we don’t know the name, but we appreciated it because each Filipino cultural dance has its own meaning, particularly among different Filipino tribes.

Another interesting cultural heritage in the Philippines are the historical tourist spots found in our country, in which some of them are documented and can be found in some books. We are very interested to know these historical places because we are not sure if it is still existing today.

In terms of Filipino traditional foods, we are very much interested on the Filipino foods that are known throughout the world which is labeled as only made in the Philippines.

A further question posted was: What is the representation of the Filipino cultural heritage? In general, they responded that:

It represents hard work, uniqueness of individual, unity as well as purity. It also represents the way how Filipino worship their Gods specifically among different Filipino tribes/ethnic groups like the traditional dances. Filipino cultural heritage also shows the versatility of Filipinos, the identity of Filipino people, hope, happiness, thanksgiving, creativity, originality and bounciness. In general, it represents who we are, what we are, and how capable we are...being a Filipino.

A few participants mentioned that:

It represents originality, creativity, and bounty of the Philippines. It represents the creativity of Filipinos, showing that our country has beautiful creations, it also represents formality and identity of every tribe.

However, when they were asked how familiar they are with the Filipino culture and heritage, they looked sad and most of them confessed the following:

We are not so familiar with all of the Filipino culture and heritage because there are many modifications has been made and we cannot identify what is the original Filipino cultural heritage looks like.

This revelation is a sign that the original Filipino cultural heritage is vanishing slowly owing to the modernization of its styles and designs. Moreover, the new generation is strongly influenced by the western countries and Asian K-pop idols. This is a wake-up call to all educators to take action on this by inculcating original Filipino cultural heritage in the young minds of the students. Teachers should integrate cultural heritage in non-culture subjects as well. Furthermore, contextualized learning and instructional materials should be designed to increase the number of reading materials relating to the Filipino cultural heritage.

Theme 2: Preservation and Integration of Filipino Culture in Teaching

Participants of the study, namely 50 SHS students of the Tukuran National Vocational School, were asked a series of questions during interviews and focus group discussions. Excerpts below are related to the interviews and focus group discussions on the following questions and answers:

Q: Is there a need to preserve the Filipino cultural dances? They all answered, “Yes”.

Q: In your own small ways, how can you help in the preservation of the Filipino cultural dances? The following sums up their responses:

For me, I will value and preserve the Filipino cultural dances through preserving the original steps of the dances for the next generation to recognize it (Student 5).

The majority of the students had responded along these lines:

Ab! it is very important because it help us Filipinos to improve our skills and discover new about dancing. Appreciating and practicing our cultural dances help us learn more about it. In this way, we can introduce these cultural dances to my fellow young ones and even to my peers, by giving value of our dances, giving respect to my nation and appreciated it, by sharing and teaching them particularly those who doesn't have knowledge about the Filipino cultural dances. We can share it through the social media since we are now technologically advance.

Q: Is there a need to preserve the Filipino cultural dresses? They all answered “Yes because we will no longer a Filipino if it will vanish. A follow-up question was posed, asking them if they were to rate the preservation of the Filipino culture at present, what their rating would be. All of them gave a rating of 5 and they said:

Only very few activities or almost none at all about promoting the preservation of our Filipino cultural heritage as what we observe now. In fact, the cultural dresses that we have are modified from the original dresses which are different from what we saw in books. Likewise, as of now, we seldomly saw books about Filipino cultural heritage. The dances are modernized as well same as with our Filipino traditional foods. We are afraid that our Filipino cultural heritage will disappear in the future. Therefore, we need to preserve and protect our own cultural heritage.

During interview, the participants were asked how, in their own small way, they could help in the preservation of the Filipino cultural dress. Generally, they responded:

By wearing them in formal gatherings, then save it in the social media, the beauty of our traditional dresses, we should wear it to the programs where the cultural dress that we have are fitted.

When they were asked whether there is a need to preserve the Filipino traditional foods, they all said “Yes”. A follow-up question was also asked:

Q: In your own small way, how can you help in the preservation of the Filipino traditional foods?
They all responded saying:

By learning how to cook our Filipino delicacies that can be used also to teach other people through patronizing our own which through cooking and selling them. the original version.

The study by Tuan (2007) emphasized that cultural heritage must be preserved to maintain one's own integrity as a people of a particular culture. Educators have an important role and responsibility in the preservation of cultural heritage. They have their technical and methodological capacity and ability to take a flexible and pragmatic approach to teach students cultural consciousness and respect for the cultural diversity encompassing all tribes (Taylor, 2013).

Theme 3: Filipino Cultural Heritage Dilemmas

Participants of the study, namely SHS students, were asked about their perceptions and opinions on Filipino cultural heritage dilemmas. The manner of expressing their thoughts varied but there was common agreement among them, even at their young age. The following questions and answers were excerpts from the interview and focus group discussions:

Q: In your experience, what are the common problems and dilemmas of Filipino cultural dances?
The majority mentioned the following:

The common problems that may encountered in Filipino cultural dresses is that we are not able to find the same or original garment and materials needed in making dresses like the barong tagalog and Filipiniana.

Another issue is the modifications of the Filipino cultural dresses that become sexier and more seductive, unlike the original design which was more conservative.

Likewise, many young generations are influence by the Korean pop icon dress styles, hip-hop dances and all other modern dances, and dresses. For us, we noticed and experienced that there are also some twist steps in the cultural dances now which is different from the original, so we find it difficult to identify what is really the original steps for cultural dances before.

They also added: *That is the reason why we are no longer interested to dance our cultural dances because we don't know what is the original steps, so we need orientations and we need knowledge from the past cultural dances. If we also have some cultural events, we find it difficult to secure Filipino cultural dresses.*

Filipino Culture and Heritage as Commonly Known and Observed by the SHS Students in Various Cultural Presentations.

As shown in Table 3, data revealed that traditional dance *tinikling* (*Singkil* dance) is the most commonly known (172 or 57.3%) and observed by the students in the study, followed by *sayaw sa bangko* (Bench dance) (145 or 48.3%) while the least known (4 or 1.3%) is the traditional dance, namely *magkasuyo*. In the aspect of cultural dress, findings revealed that *barong tagalog* is commonly (184 or 61.3%) known and observed by the students. This is because this dress is usually worn on special occasions and in school. However, Meranao traditional dress (a frequency of 66 and included 22.0% out of 300 students) is the least familiar among the students. This is because the research locale is dominated by Cebuanos (Table 1).

With regard to the familiarity of the students with Filipino traditional foods, many of them are familiar with a variety of Filipino foods. However, *bikol* express and *buko* (young coconut) rated the highest frequency of 192 or 64.0%, and the least known (69 or 23%) traditional food is *rhum*. Despite the varied responses, overall results indicate that most students are not familiar with the

Filipino culture and heritage considering that the percentage did not even reach 75%. This proves a strong support for developing the designed teaching module template in Understanding Culture, a SHS core subject.

It was also noted in the interview and focus group transcript that the students encountered dilemmas in understanding the Filipino culture:

The common problems that may encountered in Filipino cultural dresses is that we are not able to find the same garment and materials needed in making dresses commonly the barong tagalog and Filipiniana.

Another problem is the improper wearing of the cultural dress. In this generation it really changes a lot, it is sexier now than before, and the design is usually influenced by Korean style and western countries.

They also added that: *The style and materials of cultural dresses that we have now is different from the past. Today the style is sexier, and the garment is not the same as before.*

Generally, Table 3 depicts the fact that many of the SHS students are no longer familiar with all the traditional dances, dress and traditional foods of the Filipinos. This finding is an alarming situation that needs to be acted upon through intervention programs. The education sector should look into this situation and formulate an action plan to address this situation to prevent the extinction of the Filipino cultural heritage.

Table 3: Students' Knowledge and Observation of Filipino Cultural Heritage

Cultural Heritage	F	%
Cultural Dances		
1. Subanen dance	108	36.0
2. Singkil dance	74	24.7
3. Tausug dance	110	36.7
4. Igorot dance	104	34.7
5. Pandanggo sa Ilaw	57	19.0
6. Itik-Itik	80	26.7
7. Tinikling	172	57.3
8. Sayaw sa Bangko	145	48.3
9. Binasuan	30	10.0
10. Pandanggo Oasiwas	10	3.3
11. Maglalatik	49	16.3
12. Kuratsa	29	9.7
13. Kappa Malong- Malong	93	31.0
14. Surtido	9	3.0
15. Pantomina	6	2.0
17. Polkabal	10	3.3
18. Magkasuyo	4	1.3
Traditional Dress		
1. Maria Clara	128	42.7
2. Barong Tagalog	184	61.3
3. Meranao dress	66	22.0
4. Tausug dress	110	36.7
5. Igorot dress	104	34.7
6. Baro't saya	142	47.3
7. terno	92	30.7
Traditional Foods		
1. Bikol express	192	64.0

2. Chicken adobo	191	63.7
3. Balut	188	62.7
4. Kare-Kare	185	61.7
5. Kinilaw	191	63.7
6. Sinigang	190	63.3
7. Lechon	181	60.3
8. Tapsilog	173	57.7
9. Halo-Halo	190	63.3
10. Buko	192	64.0
11. Rhum	69	23.0

Relationships between Participants' (SHS Students) Profile and their Awareness Levels of Filipino Culture and Heritage

Table 4: Relationship of the SHS Students' Profile and their Awareness Level of Filipino Culture and Heritage

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	r	Significant Value	
Gender and Level of Awareness	Gender	1.7367	.44118	.257**	.000
	Level of awareness	1.7133	.74812		
Tribes and Level of Awareness	Tribe	1.8567	1.60355	-.255**	.000
	Level of awareness	1.7133	.74812		

The results of the Pearson r computation reveal that gender is significantly correlated with the level of awareness, while the level of awareness varies according to gender (with r .257** and the significant value of 0.000). Likewise, it is also indicated that tribe is significantly correlated to the level of awareness (r of -.255** and the significant value of .000). This result indicates that acquiring knowledge of cultural heritage in terms of the level of awareness varies with gender and tribe.

Discussion

Based on the statements of the participants, the Filipino cultural heritage will more or less become extinct if there is no intervention or action plan being made by the government and the education sector. The young generation of today is influenced by Korean and western styles, not only in clothing and dances, but also in food. Young people are copying the styles of the Korean as they are influenced by the Korean dramas. Likewise, Filipino food chain businesses are adopting western foods, and only a very few are still promoting Filipino traditional foods. This is particularly the case in the cities or urban areas.

In support of the perceptions and opinions of the participants as revealed by the study, ICOMOS (2002) mentioned that cultural heritage is often expressed as either intangible or tangible. Cultural heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, objects, artistic expressions, and values. It is believed that we cannot appreciate something we do not understand. As such, education experts, teachers and parents should be at the forefront in instilling learners with cultural values, both at school and home.

The findings that showed a significant relationship between gender and tribe regarding the level of awareness of cultural heritage imply that awareness is directly or indirectly influenced by these variables. This result also supports the earlier study of Srivasta (2015) on the awareness of national symbol, history and religion, performing arts and visual arts which indicated that gender and tribes influence individual awareness. According to Penna (2019), using cultural heritage is essential and very helpful in conceptualizing contemporary education preservation, integrating cultural heritage in teaching and learning processes. He also added that cultural heritage education is necessary: it should be part of the curriculum and be based on the ability of the learners to understand the diversity of their cultural heritage.

Overall, the results signify that since most students have concerns about knowing about their Filipino cultural heritage, motivation from educators would have a significant impact. As once stated by British novelist and poet, C. S. Lewis, “Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a clever devil”. Awareness of one’s own culture originated from understanding the origin of the culture, making the students aware of their own culture and values. When students are familiar with their own culture, they learn to reflect upon it and start to understand other cultures as well. The school and teachers have a significant role and responsibility in inculcating culture among students, particularly those from different backgrounds. Learning about other cultures is an excellent opportunity to broaden people’s understanding of cultural diversity (Lewis & Otieno, 2017). Raising citizens’ awareness about their historical cultural heritage is essential (Dönmez & Yeşilbursa, 2014).

According to Ocal (2016), it is necessary to teach cultural historical heritage education in Social Studies teaching. He reiterated that universities and educators have a responsible role to fill to protect the cultural heritage and successfully hand it down from generation to generation. Based on the findings of his study, he recommends that there should be a compulsory cultural historical heritage course for candidate teachers. Learning cultural and historical heritage is the best way of preserving one’s cultural heritage, reflecting people’s lifestyle, values, beliefs, and traditions (Tümertekin & Özgüç, 2015). Moreover, the study of Eslit (2023) revealed that folklore has cultural and historical significance, and it reflects the diversity of the Philippine culture. He emphasized that the cultural heritage and identity of the Filipino people should be promoted and preserved in contemporary society as a means of understanding and preserving the country’s cultural heritage. Likewise, proper framing and support is necessary to preserve cultural heritage (Bairagi et al., 2020). Bernardo et al. (2022) also pointed out that understanding each culture is necessary to understand the differences between distinct groups of people. It is important to teach culture in the classroom to provide students with a way to understand the world around them. To promote cultural awareness it is necessary to incorporate teaching materials that reflect a variety of cultures. By exposing students to different cultures, they will be more likely to develop an appreciation for cultural diversity. Learning about other cultures can help students to develop empathy and respect for others (Mary, 2022). Cultural heritage preservation should contextualize and understand all diverse experiences of cultural minorities.

Proposed Intervention to Enhance Students’ Interest in Learning about and Understanding Filipino Culture

Yakap Kultura Module

Based on the findings of the study, the crucial role of the educators is to inculcate the young minds of the learners about their own culture and heritage. Therefore, the *Yakap Kultura* Module (Embracing Culture Module) is the action plan to enhance the awareness of students about Filipino culture to embrace and preserve their own culture. This module will be used in teaching the UCSP subject in SHSs. Moreover, the activities in the *Yakap Kultura* Module are contextualized

and differentiated. Integrating cultural values and heritage in education brings positive effects on several aspects such as a sense of belonging, identity, and cultural appreciation.

Innovation, intervention, and strategy in the implementation of the module

As part of innovation, intervention, and strategies in promoting and recognizing the importance of the Filipino culture, the Tukuran Technical Vocational High School, specifically the Grade 12 students, were tasked with performing different *katutubong sayaw* (cultural dances) and presenting various *katutubong kasuotan* (forms of cultural dress) in a variety show called *Yakap Kultura* (Embracing Culture). This production showcases and promotes the beauty of Filipino culture, not only in the Philippines but globally as well.

As such, the output of this study is the designing of a module, the *Yakap Kultura* Module (Embracing Culture Module) that serves as intervention program which will be used in teaching Understanding Culture, a component of the Understanding Culture, Society and Politics (UCSP) subject to SHS students to enhance their understanding of their own culture. Furthermore, the module will be contextualized and designed to enhance students' interest in learning and appreciating their own culture. Similarly, the module contains strategies for teaching the subject as well as values that encourage both teachers and students to help preserve and nurture the Filipino culture. The content of the module remains the specified core subjects, however, contextualized in the Philippine setting. The Filipino cultural heritage includes Filipino traditional dances, traditional dress and traditional foods of the various regions in the Philippines. The strategies specified in the module will be contextualized and differentiated. In teaching the subject Understanding Culture, students will be exposed to different activities about Filipino culture through a variety show, showcasing the Filipino culture and traditions.

Furthermore, this module can also be used by other subjects to integrate the Filipino historical cultural heritage and contextualizing it as it is applied in the lesson being taught. This is one way of helping one another to preserve the Filipino cultural heritage. Studies conducted by Alajmi (2013) and Averill (2012) suggested that cultural heritage not only be taught in social sciences and history subjects but can be also taught in other subjects. They propound the applicability of arts across all subject areas. Likewise, Ocampo and Delgado (2014) pointed out in their study that there is a need to assess Philippine education particularly in terms of effectively teaching cultural heritage in elementary and secondary education. They also revealed that school administrators in the Philippines admitted that applying concepts of cultural heritage was not given much emphasis because of the curriculum itself which needs to be revised. As such, this study is timely and relevant to solve the problems of integrating the Filipino cultural heritage and teaching it effectively through the *Yakap Kultura* Module that will be designed as the output of this study. With this module, teachers will be guided and equipped to provide the necessary academic knowledge and information about Filipino historical cultural heritage.

Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the awareness level of the SHS students of Filipino culture as a basis for designing a module to be used in teaching the understanding of culture. Using a mixed-method design of research, major findings indicated that the students' levels of awareness of Filipino cultural heritage regarding the aspects of cultural dances, dress and foods are low. They also perceived that the Filipino cultural heritage is now being modified with the passing of time and from generation to generation because it has not been preserved as what it was originally. The students' awareness of cultural heritage is also influenced by age and tribes. Thus, this study concluded that Filipino cultural heritage is disappearing as it is influenced by the different generations as well as the influence from other culture and countries. The Filipinos have not been able to preserve the original Filipino cultural dances, dress and foods successfully since there are

some changes being observed. As such, action should be taken to address the vanishing Filipino cultural heritage and to preserve the authenticity of the Filipino cultural heritage.

Limitation and recommendations of the study

Considering that this study was only conducted among SHS students in a single school, the results of this study could not be generalized to be true all over the Philippines. Thus, it is recommended that further studies could be conducted similar to this study, or by using another design, and more variables could be investigated.

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