



Dimensional influences of the Pahinis Festival: Basis for localized learning materials

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Abstract

This study explores the history and cultural significance of Pahinis Festival in Laua-an, Antique. It focused on the history and origin of the festival and its cultural and economic significance. The findings of the study then served as the basis for the development of localized and contextualized learning materials that can be utilized in teaching Araling Panlipunan. Data were sourced from existing related articles and through interviews with ten study informants who were representatives from business, tourism, local government unit, craftsmen/artisans, and elders. The study was conducted for a three-month duration in Laua-an, Antique. Data gathered were presented and analyzed using a thematic analysis. This study found that the Pahinis festival was based on the common practice of pahinis, a cleansing ritual performed before the start of the muscovado sugar processing. The festival contributes to local economy and the tourism industry, providing opportunities for locals to earn additional income and to promote local products particularly the muscovado sugar. This study recommends a thorough research on the history of the Pahinis festival including the its evolution as well as the changes cultural elements and activities through the years of celebrating it. An enhancement of the educational and cultural value of the Pahinis festival is needed to create an immersive and enriching experience for attendees while fostering a deeper appreciation for the community's traditions.

Keywords: *dimensional influences, festival, learning materials, localized*

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Introduction

Festivals abound in the Philippines. Different significant occasions in the community have different festivals. It is said that festivals' success may be defined in terms of social and cultural goals. In the present times where the dominant treatment of festivals is that they are being marketed as a tourist attraction, looking back into what festivals are all about is needed more than ever. It should be emphasized that festivals also have other important roles to play, from providing new recreational opportunities to establishing a community identity, and from cultural development to preserving traditions (Masuna et al., 2019).

In the town of Laua-an, the Pahinis festival is widely celebrated. *Pahinis* is a local term for cleaning and preparing equipment, tools, paraphernalia, and materials before the production of brown sugar (Magno, 2016). Knowing the various dimensional influences of the festival leads to an understanding of its role in the locality. The information that gathered in this study is of great importance in creating learning materials for the Department of Education in Laua-an District aligned with the agency's contextualization, localization, and indigenization of curriculum and instruction. It is for these aforementioned reasons that this study was conducted.

This study explores the history and cultural significance of *Pahinis* Festival in Laua-an, Antique, emphasizing its history and origin, and cultural and economic significance.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative-ethnographic research design where the history and cultural significance of the Pahinis festival is described. In this study's subject, the Pahinis festival of Laua-an, Antique, employing a qualitative research design helped disclose the behavior and perception of a target audience about that topic. The study instrument used was researcher-made questionnaires specifically in the key-informant interview. It contained questions on the Pahinis festival. An informed consent form was also used for the participants' consent and for transparency. Both instruments were subjected to validation by experts from the panel and one outsider/external expert to ensure appropriateness and coherence of the framing of questions while at the same time being sensitive to various contexts of the topic being studied.

Interview questions were crafted after the research topic and goals were established. Letters were sent to participants to invite them to participate in the study. A personal invitation was also conducted as most participants reside in Laua-an. To guarantee that the research was carried out

ethically, asking for consent was carefully prepared. Participants were informed of the details of the consent, which guarantees the protection of their privacy and identification as well as their consent to have the conversation recorded on audio. Participants in this study were all made aware of the study's objectives and that they will not be compensated for taking part.

This study generally predicted that the advantages to the participants will surpass any potential risks or pain they might have had because of their involvement. The researcher ensured the protection of participants' anonymity as privacy and confidentiality were covered in the informed consent. Regarding privacy, the researcher made sure that all the information disclosed by the participants were treated with utmost confidentiality by strictly adhering to the provisions of Republic Act 10173 or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

Findings

This study provided a brief discussion of the history and origin of the festival. Data were sourced from existing related articles and through interviews with ten study informants for a three-month duration in Laua-an, Antique. The ten study participants were composed representatives from five sectors namely: business, tourism, local government unit, craftsmen/artisans, and elders. This was to manage the quality of data to be gathered and the time to be spent. Data gathered were presented and analyzed using a thematic analysis.

This study presents the following findings that Pahinis festival was conceptualized and organized during the term of then Laua-an Mayor Aser Baladjay. The festival name was based on the common practice of *pahinis*, a cleansing ritual performed before the start of the muscovado sugar processing. Various activities are part of the Pahinis festival celebration that are categorized as modern performances, and rituals and traditions. Modern performance includes social dancing, giving of recognition and awards, sports tournament, and pageant, among others. Activities related to rituals and traditions include the *pahinis* ritual, the *sipal dinumaan*, and *komedya*, among others. The festival has been focusing and highlighting cultural traditions and the town's indigenous people, and thereby ensuring knowledge transfer in the process. Also, the festival has been as source of pride and unity for the people of Laua-an. In the economic aspect, the festival is significant in terms of contributing to local economy and the tourism industry. It also provides opportunities for locals to earn additional income and to promote local products particularly the

muscovado sugar. The festival and its various aspects provide various topics for learning materials that can be utilized by teachers handling Araling Panlipunan.

Conclusion

This study indicates that local leadership played a role in bringing this festival to fruition and its naming suggests a connection between the festival and a popular traditional practice in muscovado sugar making. Pahinis festival celebration is characterized by a blend of modern performances and a commitment to preserving rituals and traditions. The inclusion of diverse activities indicates a well-rounded and inclusive approach to celebrating both contemporary and historical aspects of the community's culture. The Pahinis festival in Laua-an is more than a mere celebration as it serves as a vehicle for preserving and promoting cultural traditions, recognizing the indigenous population, facilitating knowledge transfer, fostering community pride, and building unity among the people of Laua-an. The Pahinis festival is not only a cultural celebration but also a key player in the local economy. It contributes to economic growth, provides opportunities for income generation, promotes local products, and plays a role in the broader tourism industry. This economic aspect adds another layer of importance to the festival within the community. The Pahinis festival presents a rich educational resource that can enhance learning experiences in various subjects. It offers opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, cultural studies, language learning, and the exploration of indigenous education, making it an asset for teachers handling Araling Panlipunan.

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