

## **Dance in the Philippines: Various Lenses of Dance Education and Management**

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Philippines is known for its rich culture and traditions. Evident to its colorful celebrations that can be seen is its costumes, music, and dances. Dances that depict Philippines' tradition, custom, way of life and living can be seen in the traditional dances and folk dances. Philippine folk dances are as rich as the history itself- which are rarely seen at the present generation. This paper walks through the different dances in the Philippines, the way dances have been propagated, and the proposed framework than can be used in propagation and dissemination of dances through research work.

Key words: dance; folk dance; propagation; framework

### **Introduction**

#### **Categories of Philippine Folk Dance**

Dances in the Philippines can be categorized in many ways. They can be classified according to their nature. Geographical location can be one. For instance, dance that is local to a particular place, one that has no other form variations of this dance- can be classified as local or regional dance. Whereas, dances that have different versions in the different places in the Philippines is called national dances. There are also dances that depict love and marriage. These are known to be marriage and courtship dances. Dances that depict rituals as part of celebration of life, thanksgiving, good harvest, and death are called ritual dances. Dances that display the living and its occupation can be classified as occupational dances. Playful and gay dances can be called as comic dances. Those dances that

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display happy festivities during patron saints' celebrations that are performed in the streets are called festival dances. These are some of the examples on how to categorize dances according to their nature.

Philippine folk dances also have its classification according to suites, and these are as follow: Cordillera dances, Spanish Influence dances, Muslim dances, Lumad dances, and the Countryside dances.



Figure 1. *Takiling*. ([www.skyscanner.com.ph](http://www.skyscanner.com.ph))

Cordillera dances are the dances of the people on the highlands of the north. Ethnolinguistics group such as the Benguet, Bontoc, Apayaw, Kalinga, Ilunggot, Itneg, and Gadang are the people who performed and formulated these dances. Dances are mostly depicting war, thanksgiving, marriage, and the normal way of life of the people.



Figure 2. *Jota Manilena* (<http://hereinthephilippines.blogspot.com>)

More than 300 years that the Philippines was colonized by the Spaniards, the Filipinos acquired not only their way of living, but also the dances that they have. Jota, Fandanggo, Flangeco, Habanera were the dances learned by the Filipino that were converted to localized dances that we now call Spanish Influence dances which are also known as Maria Clara Dances, in honor of the lady in the novel set in the Spanish Occupation Era written by Jose Rizal.



Figure 3. *Singkil* ([muslimdances.wordpress.com](http://muslimdances.wordpress.com))

The Muslims primarily living in the island of Mindanao showcasing their rich culture, costumes, and instrument can be considered as the most colorful and extravagant suite in the Philippine Folk Dance. Manarano Epic of Darangen is one of the most popular stories converted into dance by the Maranao people of the south- which is called Singkil. Another dance uses Pomelo leaves from Jolo Sulu and the Pangalay dances of Tausugs that depict the movements of the waves. These are some of the most prominent dances in the south.



Figure 4. *Dugso* (<http://ietpepolrawrr.blogspot.com>)

Non-Christians and non-Muslims of the Philippines are considered as the people who perform the Lumad dances. These people believe that the gods and goddesses are part of nature, the trees, the waves, the wind, the mountains, and the like. Their dances focus on rituals, celebrations, births and even deaths.



Figure 5. *Tinikling*(<http://jacaban-humanities.blogspot.com>)

The Barrios Fiesta and celebrations are the main feature of the Countryside or the Rural Dances. Beautiful celebrations of Fiestas in honor of the Patron Saints and gathering are the characteristics of these dances.

### **Dissemination and Preservation of Philippine Folk Dances**

Tradition is being thought in and out of the four corners of the classroom, in academic disciplines, and in social tradition and customs. The efforts of the Commission on Higher Education to preserve the culture was the primary goal of establishing the Bachelor's Degree in Cultural and Arts Education which aims to engage in classifying the conceptual foundations of value-laden creative expression such as visual arts, music, drama, and dance. The Philippine Folk Dance Society continues to develop and disseminate mechanism to teach the teachers of dance the culture and tradition of dances in the Philippines. Its annual workshop teaches the teachers the new researched dances and review the dances that were researched in the past. The National Commission on Culture and the Arts projects such as Sayaw Pinoy and National Day of Dance bring the nation's best dance groups to the different regions of the country to perform and to teach the people the dances that they are experts in.

Dance Education involves the teaching of tradition, techniques, styles, and methodologies in

teaching dance- the four ways that dances are thought in the Philippines. Maybe handed down, through dance literature, dance videography, and through dance performance of dance staging and production. Dances can be handed down from one generation to another. This method usually happens in the ethnolinguistics groups in the Philippines. The tribal leaders and chieftain are responsible for the transfer of the culture from one generation to another. The dance literature is the widely used method of teaching dance. Francisca Reyes Aquino, one of the National Artist for Dance introduced the dance literature with her six volumes of Philippine Folk Dances. Dance videography is another method. One of the most prominent in this method of teaching is the late national artist Ramon Arevalo Obusan. Obusan went to the far land places of the Philippines to create a videography of the dances of the people and teach the dance to his dance group, the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Dance Troupe. Bayanihan, the National Dance Company of the Philippines is known for their grandiose dance productions and staging of dances which pave their way to be the best known group in teaching dances through dance production.

#### **Proposed the Philippine Folk Dance Documentation Framework**

Dance Heritage Coalition, Inc. (2016) stated that dance being the highest form of art receives the least number of research outputs, merely, because of the lack of availability of resources as well as very few individuals who passionately want to do research and documentation. Domingo (2018) proposed the Philippine Folk Dance Documentation Framework. This framework seeks to address the needs of the dance researchers to make dance research a bit simpler and more organized. There are five levels in this framework- first, Ethical Consideration. This stage includes the prior knowledge, resources, permits and approval, study of published and unpublished dances, and social recognition. Second is methodology. This includes immersion, participation, communication, analysis of related literatures, and field notes, memo, and journal. Third is actual dance documentation. This includes context, use of technology, dance elements, movements, transcriptions, and notation. Fourth is evaluation which includes narratives, documentation and evidences, dance presentation, annotations, revalidation by source, authorities, and experts. The last level is the output that includes quantitative research study, media utilization, education and community programs, staging, and special training and instructions.

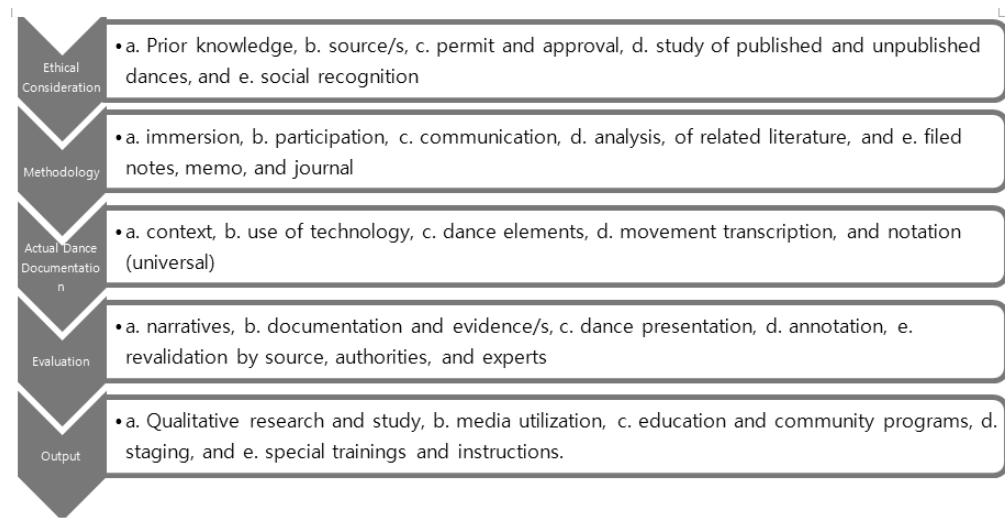


Diagram. 1. *Proposed the Philippine Folk Dance Documentation Framework. . Domingo (2018)*

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