

# Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) in Weaving Indigenous Cultural Awareness among Filipinos: A Thematic Analysis on the Insights of Grade 12 Students

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## **ABSTRACT**

Philippine regional indigenous cultures and arts are known for their distinctiveness and practicality. However, the Filipino youth's low level of Indigenous Cultural Awareness (ICA) poses a threat to preserving the country's rich heritage. Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR), a core subject in the Senior High School (SHS) curriculum, aims to deepen the students' understanding of regional arts and cultural diversity. This study examines CPAR's role in fostering ICA among Grade 12 students of Manila Science High School and identifies its areas of improvement. Using a qualitative phenomenological design, data were collected from eight students through their reflective narratives. Thematic analysis of ten textual themes revealed five structural themes: (1) cultural awareness and representation; (2) experiential learning; (3) multidisciplinary integration; (4) personal identity and values formation; and (5) CPAR and technology as advocacy tools. The findings of the study indicate that CPAR contributes to the formation of cultural awareness, appreciation of indigenous arts, and fostering of skills. Hence, developing the course proves to be necessary to maintain its effectiveness and to further increase its significance. Some of these approaches include the revision of the CPAR implementation in the existing curriculum, such as the inclusion of more regional cultures and arts, discussion of social and environmental problems faced by indigenous communities, strengthening the lessons' authenticity, and the integration of experiential learning methods and interdisciplinary approaches. The study highlights the importance of educational reforms to integrate regional arts into the curriculum effectively, thus benefiting educators, students, and policymakers in their efforts to safeguard indigenous culture.

**KEYWORDS:** Philippine regional indigenous cultures and arts, indigenous cultural awareness, Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions, Senior High School curriculum, thematic analysis, appreciation of indigenous arts

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Background of the Study**

Filipino indigenous cultures and arts are widely celebrated locally and internationally for their distinctiveness, beauty, and above all, practicality. Hence, fostering Indigenous Cultural Awareness (ICA), especially among the youth, is essential for preserving this rich heritage. Instilling cultural awareness, national pride, and indigenous art appreciation in younger generations is vital steps toward safeguarding

and preserving the Filipinos' cultural identity and values (Srivastava, 2015). To address such objectives, Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) was established as a course in the Philippines' educational system, particularly in Senior High School.

Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) is one of the core subjects in the Philippine Senior High School (SHS) curriculum. This subject provides students with a comprehensive understanding of the various regional artistic practices and their corresponding disciplines. Included in this subject's discussions are the cultural, historical, and social contexts of the regions that shaped their unique forms, crafts, and styles (Department of Education, 2019).

However, a study by Villa (2023) revealed that Filipino SHS students have a low level of ICA regarding Filipino indigenous culture and arts from different regions in the country, such as traditional materials, dances, clothing, foods, among others. The study concluded that Filipino indigenous culture is gradually fading due to generational shifts and foreign influences. Therefore, immediate action is necessary to highlight the significance and potential of the CPAR course, as well as to improve the current educational curricula in order to address the Filipino youth's poor level of ICA regarding traditional cultures and arts from the regions, so as to aid in the preservation of the Philippines' indigenous heritage.

### **Objectives**

This study aims to assess the significance and impact of the CPAR subject in helping students develop their indigenous cultural awareness and perspectives, traditional art appreciation, resourcefulness, creative expression, identity, and critical understanding of regional diversity in the Philippines by collecting themes from students' responses to a questionnaire. Likewise, the study aims to identify the essential areas for improvements of CPAR concepts and the course's integration into existing educational curricula in order to address the Filipino youth's poor level of ICA.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Based on these objectives, the researchers formulated the following research questions:

1. How does the integration of CPAR in the existing curriculum affect students' awareness and understanding of Philippine indigenous cultures and arts from the regions?
2. How do CPAR concepts or lessons affect students' attitudes and perspectives towards Philippine indigenous cultures and arts from different regions?
3. What are the key areas of improvement in the current implementation of CPAR concepts and teaching strategies to better achieve the course's objectives?

Due to the low level of awareness of indigenous cultures and arts among the Filipino youth, gathering insights from SHS CPAR learners and conducting a thematic analysis are necessary to highlight the course's importance, impact, and areas for improvement, to address the problems and meet contemporary educational and societal needs.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Three perspectives—awareness of indigenous culture and arts, significance of the course, and areas of improvement of the course's concepts and integration into the existing curricula—are the main focuses of this theoretical framework.

### ***Sociocultural Theory***

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory explains how social interaction and cultural influences affect our attitudes. It seeks to understand how these societal factors impact individuals on how they learn, develop, and grow (Cherry, 2024). In the context of CPAR, this theory is applicable on how students gain cultural awareness through activities such as lectures, group presentations, various performing arts, and arts and

craft projects. Students can create an awareness of Filipino culture through these interactions, and confidently build an appreciation of the Philippines' cultural heritage.

### ***Experiential Learning Theory***

According to Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, learning is all about doing. This theory explains how experience creates knowledge. Concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation create a cycle, which is then transformed into effective learning (Dave, 2023). Through hands-on activities that are developed, students develop real-life experiences, true learning occurs. For instance, a student is tasked with creating an indigenous product (ie., basket, mat, lamps, etc.) inspired by traditional Filipino themes that they have never experienced doing before. Next is the reflective observation, wherein the student reflects on this experience and tries to understand what it means. In the given example, the student might think how they incorporated indigenous symbols or motifs into their work, and how these reflect the cultural values they were taught in CPAR. From this, the student creates new ideas based on their reflection. Finally, the student may be tasked to create another piece, but this time, carefully referencing their previous knowledge beforehand. Through this, the student experiences firsthand how CPAR encourages the preservation of heritage and the significance of preserving Filipino culture.

### ***Critical Pedagogy***

According to Paulo Freire, Critical Pedagogy is where the teacher does not teach but is instead learning while conversing with their students. The student's actions are not limited to receiving but has a real opportunity to recognize reality and act upon this recognition (Karuny, 2022). The importance of allowing students to challenge and criticize current systems is encouraged, and marks the beginning of teaching. Students are able to spot deficiencies by critically examining how indigenous cultures are portrayed or are missed. For example, they might observe that smaller cultural communities are overlooked due to bias towards a well-known indigenous tribe. Promoting discussion allows students to push for a more inclusive portrayal of the many cultures. The student's cultural understanding is then enhanced, and respect for heritage grows from this reflective process, which helps in identifying where CPAR could more effectively address varied cultural contexts.

### ***Culturally Relevant Pedagogy***

According to a research by Ladson-Billings (1995), it is important to match the current curriculum with a range of cultural backgrounds to guarantee inclusivity. Further research by the Department of Education (2021) suggests that CPAR's existing structure requires enhancements to more effectively represent indigenous populations that are underrepresented and ensure regional diversity in its scope.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study benefits educators, policymakers, and students, as it highlights the role of CPAR in fostering cultural awareness among Filipinos. It explores how integrating regional arts into education can deepen students' connection to Filipino heritage and promote cultural consciousness.

**Educators.** The findings of this study may help teachers in emphasizing the importance of CPAR as a tool for integrating indigenous arts into education which will allow teachers to instill a stronger sense of cultural identity in their students. With this, educators can help encourage appreciation for indigenous traditions and artists.

**Policymakers.** Policymakers will benefit from the insights of this study by recognizing how education on Philippine regional and traditional arts can promote cultural awareness to the youth which then fosters a deeper sense of nationalism. Likewise, this study underscores the value of formulating policies that will

prioritize the preservation of Filipino heritage through education, the improvement of the CPAR course, and the inclusion of regional arts in the curriculum.

**Students.** The study also addresses the currently low state of cultural awareness among Filipino youth and demonstrates how CPAR can serve as a platform for identity formation and nationalism. By engaging with regional arts through this course, students develop a deeper awareness and appreciation of indigenous culture, arts, and traditions, which can help foster or strengthen their nationalism, values, and identity.

### **Scope and Delimitations**

This study focuses on the significance of the CPAR course and is limited to qualitative data, in the form of responses to a questionnaire collected from SHS students enrolled in the CPAR course of the A.Y. 2024–2025 through reflective narratives and thematic analysis.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR).** A core subject in the Senior High School (SHS) curriculum in the Philippines, designed to introduce students to diverse artistic practices, forms, and cultural expressions across the country's regions.

**Indigenous Cultural Awareness (ICA).** The understanding and appreciation of native traditions, arts, practices, beliefs, and values that define the unique cultural heritage of Filipino communities, as well as the challenges they face in the contemporary era.

**Indigenous Culture and Arts.** The different cultures and arts, like traditions, skills, techniques, crafts, chants, among others, from various regions in the Philippines that are formed, practiced, and nurtured by indigenous communities, which are then emphasized in the CPAR subject.

**Thematic Analysis.** A qualitative research approach used in this study to systematically identify, examine, and categorize recurring themes from the reflective narratives of Grade 12 students, providing insights into CPAR's significance and how it can be further developed.

**Reflective Narratives.** Written accounts or responses of Manila Science High School Grade 12 students that express their thoughts, insights, feelings, experiences, and reflections based on the guide questions provided by the researchers about CPAR's significance and possible improvements.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically a Phenomenological approach, to assess the significance of CPAR in fostering indigenous cultural awareness among Filipino youth and the course's potential areas of improvement. Through this design, the researchers will be able to identify key themes and insights that reflect the students' perspectives on CPAR's influence on cultural consciousness, as well as the course's future developments and areas for improvement.

### **Locale**

The study will be conducted at Manila Science High School (MSHS), located in Ermita, Manila. The school was chosen for its commitment to educational excellence and its location in the National Capital Region, providing access to a wide range of students with diverse backgrounds, values, and perspectives, especially students who were born in urban areas who are not often exposed to indigenous cultures and arts.

### **Sampling Method**

The respondents of this study will be Grade 12 students from Manila Science High School. Eight (8) students from 12–Charles will be selected to provide a diverse range of insights through reflective

narratives. The study will use convenience sampling wherein the researchers of this study will also be the respondents who are Grade 12 students that have completed CPAR course in the first semester of A.Y. 2024–2025.

### **Data Gathering Procedure and Research Instrument**

The study will be conducted through a Thematic Analysis. The qualitative data for this study will be collected through an interview, specifically a structured questionnaire, consisting of four open-ended guide questions which will be answered by the respondents through reflective narratives, with the use of Google Docs. Using the structured questionnaire approach, the respondents will answer the following open-ended guide questions:

1. How do Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) concepts influence students' understanding and appreciation of indigenous cultures?
2. In what ways can Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) concepts be effectively integrated into existing educational curricula to enhance indigenous cultural awareness?
3. How does the use of Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) in education affect students' attitudes toward indigenous cultures and their contributions to Philippine society?
4. How can the integration of Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR) concepts be improved to better address the diverse indigenous cultures across the Philippines?

### **Treatment of Data**

The collected data will be analyzed using thematic analysis. The researchers will read through the data multiple times to become familiar with the content and context of the responses.

Initial codes will be generated by identifying significant words, phrases, or sentences relevant to the research question. These codes will be noted and labeled systematically. The researchers will group the initial codes into potential themes by looking for patterns and connections across the data. Themes will be identified based on recurring topics related to the influence of contemporary regional arts on students' awareness of indigenous cultures.

For the Textual Themes, the researchers will identify ten (10) common themes from the data, focusing on the patterns and significant ideas related to the students' perceptions and experiences with the CPAR subject.

The researchers will then generalize and discuss five (5) key themes, as part of the Structural Themes, that capture the broader ideas from the textual themes. These Structural Themes will help summarize the primary factors and influences related to students' awareness of indigenous cultures through CPAR, as well as the subject's areas for improvements.

The identified themes will be reviewed, refined, and redefined. This process involves checking the consistency of the themes with the coded data and ensuring that each theme accurately reflects the students' experiences and perceptions. Once the themes are finalized, they will be clearly defined and named. The researchers will describe the essence of each theme concerning the research question.

Finally, the researchers will conclude and reflect on the findings as they analyze how the identified themes contribute to understanding the role of CPAR in enhancing students' ICA and how these insights may influence future educational practices or cultural advocacies for the betterment of the educational curriculum and the CPAR course.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study reveal the significant role of CPAR in cultural awareness, appreciation, and



advocacy among students. Ten textual themes emerged, highlighting the subject's impact on cultural preservation, interdisciplinary learning, and the deepening of students' connection to the Filipino heritage, as well as the possible areas of improvement of CPAR concepts and its integration into existing curricula.

### **Theme 1: CPAR Enhances Students' Indigenous Arts Appreciation**

The results of the study highlighted that the CPAR subject has made a significant influence on students' appreciation and understanding of indigenous cultures. Respondents expressed how their engagement with CPAR fostered a deeper respect for cultural traditions and practices. As one participant shared, “CPAR fosters awareness and helps us all develop respect for these cultural traditions.”

Participants emphasized that CPAR provided opportunities to explore cultural traditions in ways they had never experienced before. For example, a student recounted their experience with traditional dances during the "Indak Sayaw" activity of the Buwan ng Wika. They noted how their dance performance taught them about the storytelling aspect of indigenous movements and their connection to ancestral values and history. This immersive engagement shifted their perspective on indigenous art forms, from being mere historical remnants to living, dynamic expressions of Filipino identity.

When asked about the significance of learning indigenous arts through CPAR, students often highlighted the subject's role in reshaping their mindset about the value of traditional practices. One student remarked that they initially viewed indigenous culture as outdated, but later realized that it represents resilience, resourcefulness, and creativity. They explained, “Our Indak Sayaw performance demonstrates how traditional dances benefit to maintain the values and stories of our ancestors.”

Participants also suggested that their newfound appreciation for indigenous cultures has motivated them to advocate for the preservation of these traditions. For example, one respondent mentioned that after learning about T'boli weaving, they felt inspired to support local artisans and promote indigenous crafts on social media. This response shows how CPAR extends its influence beyond the classroom, empowering students to become cultural ambassadors in their communities.

The findings align with established research on the role of arts education in cultural preservation and identity formation. Subjects, like CPAR, provide students with a platform to explore their cultural heritage in meaningful ways, reinforcing a sense of belonging and pride in their identity. Experiential learning methods, such as performance and hands-on art-making, have been proven to deepen engagement and understanding compared to traditional lecture-based approaches.

### **Theme 2: CPAR Helps Foster the Students' Character, Identity, and Skills**

The study revealed that CPAR significantly influences students' understanding of Filipino identity by connecting them with the indigenous cultures, values, and character. One participant stated:

Through these CPAR lessons, I quickly learned about the values that various indigenous communities from different regions in the country have, which helped me reflect on my own character and identity as a Filipino. Learning about their values, such as treating nature with sacredness, emphasizing the importance of undividedness within a family and a community, practicing the philosophy of “kapwa,” preserving their traditions for future generations, among others, has influenced and motivated me into forging a better character and identity which are rooted from these indigenous communities' values.

Students revealed that, before taking the CPAR course, they had limited understanding of indigenous cultures, often perceiving them as outdated or irrelevant. However, the subject shifted their perspective, showing them how these traditions contribute to the distinct character and identity of the Filipino people. A participant reflected that learning about indigenous arts and crafts allowed them to understand the values, resilience, and creativity that define Filipino identity across generations.

Many students acknowledged that CPAR provided a more nuanced understanding of their roots. By learning about diverse practices, such as T'boli weaving or Kalinga tattooing, they saw how indigenous cultures shape the collective heritage of the Philippines. In fact, a respondent noted, “CPAR opened my eyes to the fact that our identity as Filipinos is a beautiful blend of various indigenous influences that we often overlook.”

Additionally, the participants also pointed out how CPAR activities helped foster and develop their skills and talents. For instance, a respondent narrated how his artistic skills, creativity, and resourcefulness were significantly improved after doing projects such as creating indigenous arts using locally available materials. He said, “Who knew that natural resources from common plants can be transformed into wonderful and practical pieces of art...” Another student stated, “Through CPAR activities, we students are exposed to the techniques and skills applied by indigenous artists in creating their art, which also enhances our very own resourcefulness and creativity.”

These results reflect Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory since social interactions, hands-on activities with peers, class projects, among others, were shown to affect our attitudes, values, skills, and perspectives. These societal factors impact the students on how they learn, develop, and grow (Cherry, 2024).

Likewise, these findings also align with the Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, which argues that education plays a critical role in fostering a sense of belonging and pride in one’s heritage (Ladson-Billings, 1995). CPAR enables students to see themselves as part of a wider cultural narrative which empowers them to embrace their identity while also valuing diversity within Filipino traditions. With this, students develop a stronger connection to their heritage and, hence, are more likely to preserve it for future generations.

### **Theme 3: CPAR Concepts Form Students as Advocates and Guardians of Nature**

The results of the study show that one of CPAR’s major contributions is instilling in students the appreciation, love, and concern for the Philippines’ natural resources and treasures, locally referred to as “likas na yaman.” Through CPAR concepts, indigenous materials, such as kawayan (bamboo), Narra, pandan, abaca, clay, anahaw, banana leaves, among others, were emphasized, especially since these materials are commonly found throughout the country. According to a participant, “We felt as if we were truly immersed into our Filipino culture, which ultimately deepened our connection and positive outlook on indigenous arts and to the preservation of nature.”

This result suggests that CPAR concepts should continue to highlight the significance of the country’s natural resources as these are integral to indigenous cultures and arts. In essence, the environment and indigenous arts exist because of the harmonious union and dependence between the two. Hence, preserving one must also mean preserving the other. Likewise, protecting and preserving nature are essential and sacred beliefs of indigenous communities, another reason why this aspect of CPAR must be heavily prioritized and highlighted in its lessons and activities.

Some students propose the integration of the traditional processes done by indigenous communities in creating their art, as opposed to merely describing the final products. With this, students will be exposed to how various indigenous communities utilize the resources from nature, while at the same time, showing respect and preserving it for future generations. Teaching to the students about the procedures done by indigenous communities will also open new perspectives, such as the intricacy and sacredness of Filipino traditional art, especially its connection to the environment.

### **Theme 4: CPAR Concepts Help Point out the Challenges Faced by Indigenous Arts**

The study shows that CPAR serves as a platform for raising awareness about the challenges faced by indigenous cultures in the modern era. “CPAR concepts introduce students to the challenges faced by

indigenous peoples and their cultures due to modernization and industrialization,” according to one participant. This revealed how the subject helps students understand the impact of contemporary societal changes on the survival and continuity of indigenous traditions.

Students shared that learning about these challenges shifted their perception of indigenous communities. Previously, many viewed these groups as isolated or static, but CPAR lessons revealed the active struggles indigenous peoples face to preserve their identity in the face of urbanization, cultural commodification, and resource exploitation. A participant explained, “Understanding how modernization impacts indigenous communities made me realize how much they need our support.”

Participants also reflected on the nature of modernization, noting how it threatens cultural practices while offering tools for preservation. One student stated, “While modernization introduces threats like deforestation and the gradual fading away of culture, it also provides platforms for awareness and advocacy, like through social media and digital archiving.” This nuanced understanding demonstrates how CPAR fosters critical thinking about the complexities of cultural sustainability.

Participants recommended incorporating case studies and interactive discussions or lessons about specific threats to indigenous cultures and arts, such as land disputes, environmental degradation, and the injustices faced by indigenous peoples such as the deprivation of basic human rights, which pose a negative impact, especially on the sources of indigenous materials and the integrity and dignity of the Filipino people. These lessons can help widen the scope of CPAR concepts as the lessons will not be merely about informing the students about indigenous artworks and artists, but also molding the students’ minds and hearts as advocates and guardians of the country’s heritage, peoples, and natural resources. Some participants also suggested integrating advocacy projects into the curriculum, where students could propose solutions or campaigns to address these challenges. Collaborating with NGOs or cultural preservation groups was another idea to make lessons more action-oriented.

#### **Theme 5: Hands-On Activities Promote Deeper Connections with CPAR Concepts**

The results of the study revealed that hands-on learning and cultural immersion are among the most impactful aspects of the CPAR subject. These approaches allowed students to actively engage with indigenous cultures, which helped transform theoretical concepts into meaningful practical experiences. For instance, a participant responded:

This subject has instilled within me important lessons with the help of various activities, such as performing a musical presentation that exhibit the significance and diversity of indigenous arts, making my own version of a feather duster from bamboo sticks and chicken feathers, dancing traditional folk dances, preparing local delicacies from different regions during our Barrio Fiesta, and the like. Although it is not what we call a direct interaction, I consider it as the same case since we are able to interact with the lives of various indigenous groups which aided me in appreciating indigenous and traditional arts and materials by directly showing me their history, cultural significance, purpose, and meaning to the Filipino people.

When participants were asked how these activities impacted their understanding of indigenous cultures, they pointed to the power of experiential learning. One respondent shared that performing a traditional dance made them feel connected to their ancestors’ way of life, stating, “It was as if I was stepping into their shoes, understanding their stories, struggles, and values through movement.” This connection between the physical act of creating or performing and the historical and cultural significance of the practice demonstrates the effectiveness of hands-on learning.



These results show that the integration of hands-on or physical activities or projects into the current curriculum is essential and is highly helpful for the teachers in instilling the CPAR concepts and values to their students. Through these activities, lessons do not merely pass through the students' minds, but instead they retain the information since these activities become part of their memory, experiences, and interest.

#### **Theme 6: CPAR Complements Other Subjects or Courses**

The results revealed that CPAR concepts possess significant potential to complement other areas of learning, creating a multidisciplinary approach to education. One participant explained that, "CPAR concepts can easily be integrated into other areas of learning, for example, indigenous dances could be incorporated into the Health-Optimizing Physical Education (HOPE) course." This shows how CPAR improves cultural awareness across multiple disciplines, which enriches the academic experience while promoting the integration of Filipino traditions into everyday education.

When students were asked how CPAR could be applied beyond its own subject, they identified opportunities in physical education (PE), history, and social studies. For instance, incorporating indigenous dances into the HOPE curriculum was seen as a way to enhance both physical fitness and cultural awareness. A participant elaborated that such integration would ensure students engage with Filipino traditions while learning teamwork, coordination, and physical discipline.

Students also suggested that CPAR principles could be integrated into visual and language arts related subjects, such as *Komunikasyon at Pananaliksik sa Wika at Kulturang Pilipino (KPW)*, *Pagsulat sa Filipino sa Piling Larang (PFPL)*, English, Literature, Arts, Humanities, among others. They explained that indigenous crafts and stories could provide creative reading materials, helping students understand the cultural significance of artistic forms while improving their technical and linguistic skills. A respondent emphasized that this would allow students to see indigenous art not merely as a separate topic but as an essential part of their broader education.

The findings align with educational theories that advocate for interdisciplinary approaches, where subjects reinforce one another to create a more cohesive learning experience (Sollano & Cuartero, 2019). Teachers can offer students a holistic education that values cultural relevance alongside academic rigor. This strategy also strengthens cultural pride by demonstrating the relevance of indigenous traditions in contemporary fields.

Participants recommended that educators work to create thematic links between CPAR and other subjects to ensure a seamless curriculum integration. For example, one suggestion involved organizing school-wide events where students showcase their indigenous projects or performance tasks across different disciplines, such as traditional Filipino dance performances for their HOPE subject, creative nonfiction pieces for their Literature and PFPL subjects, or even art exhibits of traditional crafts.

#### **Theme 7: Inclusion of Lesser-known Traditions and Practices in CPAR**

The study highlighted that CPAR's curriculum could better reflect the diversity of indigenous cultures by including lesser-known traditions and practices from various regions. One participant suggested, "To better reflect the diversity of indigenous cultures, CPAR should incorporate less well-known traditions and practices from other regions." This recommendation suggests the need for equitable representation of the rich and varied cultural heritage found across the Philippines.

Students noted that while the subject already covers major indigenous traditions, such as those from Luzon and Mindanao, some groups remain underrepresented. For example, participants expressed interest in learning about the Aeta's oral chants, the Matigsalug tribe's traditions, the unique weaving styles of the Mandaya people, or even the lesser-known traditional festivals in the country, like the Kaamulan Festival

in Bukidnon or the Bodong Festival in Kalinga. These insights reflect a demand for a more inclusive curriculum that acknowledges the full spectrum of the country's indigenous diversity.

Respondents also emphasized that incorporating lesser-known traditions would foster a greater sense of belonging and pride among students from underrepresented regions. A participant explained:

With the help of incorporating unfamiliar traditions, this subject can encourage a shift in mindset which therefore promotes a deeper understanding of the past. This approach sparks a sense of pride among students, as they come to see various cultural heritages as a source of strength and wisdom and can further contribute to the preservation of these cultural aspects and devise sustainable solutions to mitigate the influences of modernization.

The findings align with educational equity principles, which emphasize the importance of inclusivity in representing diverse cultural narratives. When students see a wider range of cultures reflected in the curriculum, they are more likely to engage and develop a deeper connection to the subject matter since the subject becomes more personal, especially to the Filipino people. Additionally, fostering representation within CPAR supports the goal of preserving endangered practices by educating the broader population about their existence and their significance to the Filipino people.

To address these concerns, participants suggested collaborating with local cultural experts to expand the curriculum. They also proposed creating modules that highlight specific regional traditions from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, to ensure balanced representations.

#### **Theme 8: Integration of Technological Tools in CPAR**

The study revealed that integrating technology into the CPAR curriculum has the potential to enhance students' engagement with indigenous cultures. A respondent highlighted, "Resources like videos, online archives, and interactive exhibits can potentially help in immersing students into the CPAR concepts." Essentially, this would connect the impact of traditional learning with the opportunities brought about by modern tools. This suggests that utilizing modern tools can bridge gaps in accessibility and offer students immersive experiences that traditional teaching methods cannot fully provide.

Students noted that online tours of cultural landmarks, such as ancestral houses or weaving villages, could simulate the feeling of being present in those environments. One participant explained, "Modern approaches can bring us closer to these traditions, especially for those of us who cannot visit these places due to distance or cost." Similarly, online archives of traditional music, oral histories, and art could serve as a repository of knowledge, allowing students to explore cultural materials at their own pace. A respondent shared, "Technology has the potential to significantly improve inclusivity and accessibility. Both urban and rural students may be able to discover the depth of indigenous artwork with the use of resources."

These findings align with contemporary educational research, which emphasizes the role of technology in creating inclusive and interactive learning environments (Wellington, 2019). Studies show that technology can democratize access to cultural resources, particularly for students in remote areas or those with limited access to museums and heritage sites (Gaudêncio, 2019). Additionally, these tools cater to diverse learning styles, providing visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners with tailored experiences. Training educators to effectively use these technologies would further ensure successful implementation.

#### **Theme 9: Field Work and Educational Trips are Impactful in CPAR**

The results of the study also emphasized the importance of fieldwork and direct engagement in enhancing students' understanding of indigenous cultures. Participants remarked along the lines of, "Field trips to nearby museums and cultural landmarks can give students an up-close perspective." This highlights how

immersive, real-world experiences allow students to connect more deeply with the cultural arts and traditions that they study in CPAR.

Students shared that these field trips often bring cultural lessons to life, which then provide them with opportunities to witness and interact with indigenous art forms firsthand. Many participants noted that fieldwork also fosters emotional connections to the cultural heritage they encounter. One respondent shared, “I believe that seeing traditional artworks and performances in-person would make me realize more the richness of our culture and the importance of preserving it.” Such experiences often leave lasting impressions which encourage students to take an active role in advocating for cultural conservation.

These findings align with Experiential Learning Theories, which suggest that direct interaction with subject matter significantly enhances comprehension and retention. Fieldwork offers a sensory and emotional depth that classroom-based learning cannot fully replicate, hence making it particularly effective for cultural education. It connects students to the artists of indigenous traditions, which ensures that cultural narratives are passed down authentically and respectfully (Dave, 2023).

Participants proposed that the educational system should allot time and budget for such activities, as expanding the use of field trips to include visits to indigenous communities can provide even greater immersion, retention of memory, and application of learnings. They also suggested organizing follow-up activities, such as reflection papers, student-led presentations, or art projects inspired by their field experiences, to reinforce their learning.

#### **Theme 10: Enhancing CPAR Concepts’ Authenticity Through Indigenous Artists**

The study revealed that collaboration with indigenous people and community artists plays a pivotal role in enriching CPAR lessons. A participant shared, “Interacting with indigenous people or cultural experts, such as conducting interviews, surveys, or questionnaires, could further improve the authenticity and scope of CPAR lessons.” This emphasizes how the direct involvement of cultural custodians ensures that indigenous traditions are taught accurately and meaningfully, which can provide students with firsthand insights into their heritage.

Conducting further research and studies involving indigenous communities, traditional local artists from different regions in the Philippines, or cultural experts, practitioners, or professors can significantly improve and enhance the content of CPAR lessons since these people may have unique perspectives, experiences, and narratives which can be included in the curriculum that cannot be found elsewhere in other books or references. This can also address the lack of resources or reference materials in planning and creating the content, performance standards, and learning competencies for the CPAR course. Additionally, using primary sources of information can give a deeper sense of authenticity to the lessons, which can have a more significant impact on the students since they will be given the opportunity to have a more immersive, meaningful, and personal connection with the lessons.

Likewise, a student recounted an experience where a collaboration brought cultural practices to life which made learning indigenous arts more engaging and impactful. For instance, the student recalled a workshop in Manila City Hall when he was in eleventh grade which was led by a traditional local artist from Romblon who not only demonstrated his artistic skills but also shared the stories and values embedded in his designs. He also narrated his journey as he took on the path towards the nomination to the Gawad sa Manlilikha ng Bayan (GAMABA) award. According to the student, that interaction deepened his understanding of the cultural significance behind the art, beyond its aesthetic appeal, especially since he had a direct interaction with the artist by personally having the opportunity to ask him questions. For the student, this face-to-face interaction with indigenous or traditional artists can have a significant impact on

one's learning; hence, this can also be integrated into the CPAR curriculum. Although this may be challenging, support and cooperation from policymakers can make this possible through the proper allotment of resources and time.

The findings align with cultural education theories that emphasize the role of community involvement in authentic learning experiences (Aronson & Laughter, 2015). Collaborations with indigenous artists ensure that lessons are grounded in lived experiences and cultural realities, therefore reducing the risk of misrepresentation or oversimplification. This approach also empowers indigenous communities by recognizing their authority and expertise in preserving and sharing their heritage.

Participants suggested integrating more workshops, storytelling sessions, and live demonstrations led by cultural practitioners. Workshops where students work closely with indigenous artists could further deepen their learning and appreciation. They also recommended establishing partnerships with local cultural organizations to facilitate these collaborations.

Based on the responses of the participants, as well as the textual themes extracted from these statements, it is evident that CPAR leaves a positive impression on the students as the subject helps students appreciate the diversity of traditional Philippine arts, look for the barriers that prevent further education with regards to the traditional arts and culture, and pursue the enhancement of the subject for the generations to come. Hence, five Structural Themes were formulated and will be discussed to generalize the ten Textual Themes.

### **Structural Theme 1: Enhancing Cultural Awareness and Wider Representation**

CPAR is highlighted as a necessity for cultural awareness, and in ensuring the representation of indigenous practices. CPAR repeatedly emerged as changing students' ideas of indigenous cultures and helping them appreciate and understand the cultures of indigenous communities. CPAR provides students with rich experiences that connect them to indigenous traditions, including traditional dance performances, storytelling and art-making.

According to the statements of the participants, CPAR has given the participants the opportunity to explore and learn about the culture and traditions of indigenous communities and has helped them appreciate and understand the culture of communities. With their newfound appreciation, they have also fostered a deeper respect for cultural traditions and practices. CPAR also helps in changing the mindset of the participants wherein a participant once viewed indigenous traditions as outdated but after taking the subject has now realized what the traditions truly represented.

Participants explained how CPAR broadens cultural understanding by linking historical customs to their contemporary significance. For example, students discovered storytelling elements woven into indigenous dances and ancestral values reflected in crafts. Describing indigenous engagements sheds light on the ways in which Filipino culture has been influenced by indigenous practices, which formalize respect for the inherent resilience and creativity of those practices.

CPAR also made the participants interested in indigenous practices, and due to this, CPAR has also made students more aware of the cultural diversity of the indigenous communities in the Philippines. Especially with regard to what each had to offer on how their unique cultures and traditions played an important role in giving the communities their identities. One participant noted that the subject helped him look beyond what he sees in books and the internet and that there is more to be seen aside from what we see from the media.

However, the results of this study also emphasized the need for CPAR's curriculum to better reflect the diversity of indigenous cultures by including lesser-known traditions and practices from various regions.

While major indigenous communities and cultures are already covered, participants highlighted the underrepresentation of other regions' indigenous arts, as well as traditional festivals. These insights underscore the demand for a more inclusive curriculum that represents the rich and varied cultural heritage of the Philippines.

Additionally, the study highlights the importance of collaborating with indigenous people, community artists, or cultural experts, such as professors, certified researchers and writers, and anthropologists, to enrich CPAR lessons by ensuring authenticity and deepening the student's engagement. Participants suggested methods like interviews and surveys with traditional artists or cultural experts, which then emphasizes their unique perspectives and experiences that can provide insights beyond standard or textual references. This approach can address the lack of reference materials while enhancing the curriculum's content, performance standards, and learning competencies. This approach fosters a more immersive and meaningful connection for students by offering firsthand understanding of their cultural heritage.

The emphasis CPAR places on the diversity of indigenous traditions developing in contemporary times makes it a transformative tool for raising cultural awareness, enhancing understanding of students towards traditions, and encouraging equitable representation. It empowers students to advocate in preserving culture, sustaining and celebrating Filipino heritage, for generations to come.

### **Structural Theme 2: Experiential and Immersive Learning For Students**

This study points to the great contribution of hands-on learning in the CPAR curriculum in the form of art activities, projects, and cultural performances. Through active participation in cultural-specific activities, from performing native dances and indigenous art forms, students transform mere text-book learning into embodied experiences, connecting for them the bridge between cognition and practice. Students actively engage with and immerse themselves in Filipino indigenous traditions through this, creating a deeper sense of ownership of their cultural roots.

Students vividly remembered activities that immersed them in the processes and narratives of indigenous cultures. For example, making a product from local materials, performing traditional dances, or even preparing dishes originating from other regions gave a firsthand appreciation of the ingenuity, resourcefulness, and cultural significance of such practices. Such experiences allow students to transcend abstract concepts and feel the values, history, and stories embedded in the traditions they study.

Experiential learning also brings emotional attachment to enhance comprehension and retention. The cultural activities will allow the students to be in a physical space where they learn the difficulties, values, and way of life their ancestors went through. A student who participated in a traditional dance expressed that dancing gave them a sense of standing and walking in the shoes of their ancestors, which deepened their respect and appreciation for the cultural narrative behind the performance.

Further adding to the effect of experiential learning are field trips and immersion in communities. Visiting cultural centers, museums, natural and cultural landmarks, and indigenous communities will help students view authentic cultures. Seeing actual live demonstrations and directly engaging with traditional practitioners or artists leave an impression, which helps the students to become advocates for preserving cultures and the environment. The participants termed the experiences "eye-openers" because of their function in cultivating a wholesome appreciation for Filipino traditions and reconciling this disconnection between modern lifestyles and traditional practices.

Immersive experiences give substance to experiential learning in terms of sensory and emotional aspects, hence making them valuable for cultural education in the Philippines. The direct engagement with artists



and experts of indigenous traditions allows students an authentic and respectful understanding and experience of the country's vast cultures.

### **Structural Theme 3: Curricular Integration Through Multidisciplinary Approaches**

The results of the study also point to the potential of CPAR concepts to blend with other fields of knowledge. Hence, an educational method could also be multidisciplinary in approach. It will thus become possible for instructors to link the CPAR concepts with different subjects, for instance physical education, language studies, history, or even technology.

Participants pointed to how CPAR principles, for example, indigenous dances could add richness to the HOPE or PE curriculum. These dances provide avenues through which students get fit as they also enhance team spirit and cultural awareness. For example, performing traditional movements requires coordination and discipline where it can be seen that there is value in adding cultural traditions to learning in daily life. CPAR's concern with indigenous crafts and narratives may also be related to subjects like Arts, Filipino, Literature, Humanities, among others. By using these cultural elements as topics for creative projects or group presentations, it can help bring out artistic techniques and linguistics skills as students try to dig into the deeper meaning that lies within Filipino indigenous traditions. This multidisciplinary approach can enrich academic content and underline the relevance of cultural heritage in different subjects.

The participants also pointed out the technological integration throughout the CPAR course. The study reveals how technology in cultural education, through CPAR, can fill the gap between tradition and modernization. With the use of technology, learning becomes engaging while also being accessible to students, especially those who are in the urban areas where indigenous people and artists are uncommon, so that they can appreciate and understand the cultures of indigenous communities better. The available tools to immerse the users in experiences connecting the physical and digital learning include videos, online archives, and interactive exhibits. For example, take students around ancestral houses or weaving villages and experience, despite geographical distance, by using available resources online. These modern methods give access to cultures and arts from various regions in the Philippines, which caters for new and appropriate learning styles and learning resources to both the urban and rural settings of students.

By weaving CPAR into multiple disciplines, educators can create a more dynamic, inclusive, and meaningful learning environment for the learners. This approach not only enriches students' academic experiences but also empowers them to value and advocate for Filipino cultural heritage across all areas of their lives. In essence, integrating CPAR into multiple fields helps promote cultural awareness throughout the country, even outside the schools, since more people will have the possibility to be exposed to such knowledge whenever they engage in these fields or disciplines.

### **Structural Theme 4: Formation of Personal Identity and Values**

The results imply that the CPAR subject has a massive effect on the students' self-concepts or their identity, even on their moral values, principles, and perspectives. The participants exhibited that they have a different outlook after the subject. It has enabled the participants to analyze the basis of their identity as Filipinos which had the fundamental importance of fostering a sense of one's belongingness and pride in the Filipino heritage within each of the participants.

Involvement of indigenous peoples and community artists in CPAR lessons has been essential in shaping students' character, talents, skills, and outlook. When students work with local artists or cultural experts, they get first-hand experience and insights of indigenous practices from the community themselves. Alternatively, students also develop their indigenous art and culture awareness and appreciation through hands-on activities. Such involvement provides them with an avenue to understand the relevance and

significance of the culture, thus improving their emotional connection and attachment to the culture. Also, these first-hand experiences enable them to further develop and nourish their skills, creativity, resourcefulness, and their will to preserve and take care of nature since indigenous Filipinos regard nature and the environment as sacred; hence, they utilize and optimize whatever resources they get.

Knowledge exchange, in turn, deepens emotions that are also important in the construction of the Filipino identity. Respondents stated that it is important to preserve the way of life of the indigenous communities as it plays a vital part in their identity as Filipinos. It is the “Filipino-ness” of indigenous arts, its embedded concepts, used natural resources, and utilized techniques in its formation, that form the very foundation of the Filipino identity which stands out as unique globally. Through CPAR concepts, discussions, and activities, students can clearly grasp this underemphasized fact.

### **Structural Theme 5: CPAR and Technology as Tools for Advocacy**

Through CPAR concepts, students gain insights on how modernization has posed threats to the survival of indigenous traditions. Participants in the study highlighted how these lessons have changed their understanding of “*indigenouism*”, from considering them as out-of-date to recognizing their significance and the struggles they face for cultural preservation. This just shows CPAR’s potential to become a tool for advocacy in fostering a deeper awareness of the societal and environmental factors that impact indigenous communities. Students suggested enhancing the CPAR curricula by adding lessons and discussions about contemporary issues—such as environmental degradation and abuse, political disagreements, gaps in laws and policies, impact of global trades and interactions, lack of interest among the youth on Philippine culture, poor level of art appreciation in the society, and more. Incorporating these topics aside from discussing the indigenous arts and artists will help students in identifying the roots of the problems that the country’s indigenous communities are facing; hence, opening the learners’ minds on how to find or form possible solutions.

Although modernization has evidently brought various problems, participants still noted that it is a double-edged sword since it also offers tools or platforms to call for movement like social media campaigns. Based on the results of the study, it will be beneficial and helpful if the utilization of online platforms like social media is integrated into the CPAR content and performance standards, such as through projects or group works, in order to meet the course’s objectives of increasing awareness throughout the country and the Filipino people. With the ever-evolving world, digital propagandas—such as through publication materials and cultural preservation campaign videos—become more impactful and attention-grabbing to audiences as compared to traditional brochures, printed essays, thick books, or journal articles. Although these traditional approaches must not be neglected, it would definitely be helpful if modern approaches were also utilized, so as to adapt to the Filipino youth’s contemporary interests.

CPAR has the potential to connect tradition and technology, which not only gives the students the correct knowledge and perspectives but also the tools to advocate the appreciation, preservation, and promotion of indigenous culture and arts. By fostering critical thinking and utilizing technological tools, CPAR gets to empower students to become active advocates for the preservation of the Philippines’ rich heritage and natural treasures. Its integration of meaningful lessons and solutions makes CPAR a powerful tool for shaping a generation that values both the country’s cultural heritage and its natural treasures.

The results gathered in this study evidently signify that CPAR has a positive impact on students. It has made students who have taken the subject become more aware and awake of the state of the Philippine traditional arts and the challenges they face from different sectors and aspects of society. Its impact is more than that of helping students appreciate but rather making students who actively promote Philippine

indigenous arts from the regions and seek the betterment of the curricula to spread information and awareness.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Contemporary Philippine Arts from the Regions (CPAR), in its essence and core, is not just an informative course, but a campaign for the Filipino people as it fosters cultural awareness, art appreciation, natural preservation, and engagement in students. By connecting the learners through the richness of Filipino indigenous arts, CPAR instills in the youth the pride in the country's cultural heritage.

The CPAR course has been an eye and heart-opening experience for students as it has imparted an expanded perspective of Filipino heritage. Students obtained a better understanding of the richness and diversity of indigenous cultures through hands-on activities, performances, and reflective learning. Based on the insights of the participants, this course has evidently enabled students to appreciate Filipino culture as a living part of their identity, rather than a meaningless remnant from the past. Essentially, through CPAR, the learners become more immersed and connected to the various cultures and values from different Philippine regions, even across different time periods, making them one with the entire Filipino community, history, and culture, which showcases the Filipino philosophy of “pagkakaisa” (oneness).

Another important aspect of this study is addressing how CPAR concepts have affected the students' attitudes and perspectives towards Philippine indigenous cultures and arts from different regions, reflecting the research questions. Through the inclusion of CPAR into the existing curriculum, students are motivated to show support for cultural preservation, as they get to understand how important they are in maintaining and improving Filipino traditions despite all of modernization's challenges. According to the responses of the participants, CPAR has motivated them to give greater value to traditional arts and crafts, which adds a deeper understanding of common sayings such as “Tangkilikin ang sariling atin” and “Piliin ang Pilipinas.” Likewise, the students also realized the importance of preserving and taking care of nature, as well as optimizing the natural resources that one acquires from it, especially since indigenous peoples consider the environment as sacred. Students also pointed out that, through CPAR, they became more aware about the true beauty of the arts in different regions in the Philippines, and not just the well-known indigenous communities or products. Through this course, they were enlightened on the historical, social, spiritual, practical, and cultural aspects of various pieces of art from the regions, hence contributing to the depth of their significance. This newfound role as guardians of the country's indigenous culture and the environment has inspired students to view themselves as vital members of the preservation of the Filipino traditions and heritage. These ideas significantly highlight how important CPAR is to the educational system since it ensures that future generations of students embrace modernization while still staying true to their cultural, traditional, and indigenous roots—their Filipino identity.

Although CPAR has been proven to have great impact, based on the results of the study, there are still plenty of opportunities to increase, widen, and highlight its significance and objectives to the society and to the Filipino youth. Expanding representation for lesser-known traditions and cultures, improving CPAR concepts' authenticity, raising immersive and interactive learning opportunities through hands-on activities, enriching interactions with indigenous peoples and their artworks and traditions, and highlighting the various factors that cause societal and environmental struggles of indigenous communities are all methods in improving the CPAR course and its coverage of essential concepts.

Specifically, revising the CPAR curriculum only proves to be necessary, according to the study's results, in order to adapt to the contemporary demands so that students will continue to be connected and aware

of their Filipino identity, especially through indigenous culture, traditions, and arts. CPAR lessons should be broadened to include less well-known indigenous people and art forms from regions in Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, so that more indigenous communities and their cultures and values will be represented. This provides a more balanced and comprehensive representation of Filipino culture, hence allowing students to explore the colorful diversity of the Philippines' cultures. Through this approach, students will get to obtain new perspectives, or even strengthen their existing principles and outlooks.

Additionally, including into the curriculum the struggles being faced by indigenous communities and cultures from different fields or sectors may also help in guiding the learners to identify the sources of problems and their possible solutions. Therefore, CPAR lessons should be carefully planned and formed with the help or guidance from indigenous artists, cultural experts, traditional art practitioners, historians, or anthropologists to guarantee the authenticity and accuracy of the concepts. This enables the topics to become more personalized since reflective narratives and insights from the previously stated people will be integrated into the content, therefore allowing the students to feel a deeper connection with the important ideas embedded within the lessons.

Lessons should also emphasize the connection between indigenous traditions and current technology with the aim to make the subject more pertinent, significant, and interesting for students, especially since adapting to the contemporary demands of the ever-evolving world is essential. Likewise, technology can provide platforms for advocacies like cultural and environmental preservation and promotion, reflecting the main objectives of the CPAR course. These can also be integrated into the performance standard of the course so that students will have the opportunity to create their own advocacy to be part of a greater movement.

Additionally, collaborations between different subjects of various disciplines can also help in the attainment of CPAR's objectives. In particular, some subjects or areas of knowledge, such as Literature, Language, Humanities, Arts, HOPE, and History, can integrate CPAR concepts and contextualize them based on the subject matter. This approach will ensure that CPAR concepts will be able to encompass multiple disciplines or aspects simultaneously, which can contribute to the overall impact of the course.

Conducting field trips to museums, cultural heritage sites, and indigenous communities could also be established to give students the opportunity to interact face-to-face with cultural traditions and elements. Interactive experiences like these may significantly improve students' understanding and appreciation of indigenous traditions, as well as their retention of the CPAR concepts.

Alternative learning methods, such as classroom-based lectures or presentations, should be used in schools with limited resources in order to achieve similar outcomes; however, objectives must be frequently rechecked to ensure that these lectures still meet the standards. According to the results of this study, some approaches that can help attain these standards include experiential learning and hands-on activities, such as creating pieces of art or indigenous products, playing traditional instruments, gathering local natural materials, transforming raw materials into beautiful and practical artworks, and more. This improvement to the CPAR curricula will help develop and enhance the skills, creativity, techniques, and resourcefulness of the students.

In this modern era, CPAR plays an important role of educating the Filipino youth and spreading awareness about Philippine indigenous culture and arts from the regions, ensuring that the youth stays connected with their Filipino roots and identity as they venture to the modern world. By implementing these revisions, CPAR can strengthen its credibility as an important educational tool to foster culturally mindful and socially responsible individuals. Through the gradual improvements of the CPAR course, especially

with its implementation and the content of its concepts, more Filipinos will be given the chance to develop their indigenous cultural awareness and art appreciation, hence strengthening their Filipino identity.

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