

Perceptions towards Folk Dancing of College Students in the University of Eastern Philippines

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Abstract: *This study focused on determining the perception toward folk dancing of college students in the University of Eastern Philippines. Specifically, it sought to find out the profile of the students-respondents in terms of their age, sex, college, place of birth and religion. It also looked into the attitudes of the respondents towards folk dancing; evaluate the extent of competencies learned from folk dancing as perceived by the students; identify the most effective teaching techniques applied in folk dancing as perceived by the students; determine the factors affecting the student's learning competencies; find out to what extent do the factors affect the learning competencies in terms of personal factors, instructional factors, participation in school organizations/extra and co-curricular activities and religions, and determine if there is a significant relationship of the profile and the perception of students towards folk dancing. Randomly selected as respondents were college students presently enrolled in Physical Education 121 (Rhythmic Activities) during the second semester of school year 2010-2011. A set of questionnaire was the primary data gathering tool. The collected data were collated, tabulated, and analyze using frequency counts, percentages, means, weight means, ranking and chi-square test. The findings revealed that a majority of the respondents belonged to age bracket of 15-17, were dominated by females from the College of Science, were born in Visayas and a majority were Roman Catholics. The attitude of respondents towards folk dancing was found positive. Along the competencies learned, the students rated "good" their understanding on folk dance, fundamental skills, skills in performing simple folk dance, mastery of folk dancing, develop one's self through dancing and performing dances based on their cultural tradition. On teaching techniques employed by their teachers in folk dancing, the students believed that the teachers utilized effective teaching techniques. The students perceived different factors affecting their learning competencies in folk dancing such as personal factors, instructional factors, participation in school organizations/ extra and co-curricular activities and region. These factors were perceived as "moderately serious". The test of relationship between perceptions of students towards folk dancing and age and sex were found significantly related while college, place of birth and religion were found to be not significantly related to perception.*

Keywords: Folk dance, Philippine Folk Dances

1. Introduction

Background of the Study

One great source of the country's cultural traditional is dance. Dance has been from the beginning of time a reflection of the pulse and rhythms of man as a social being. Needing only the expressive medium of one's own body for certain purposes, requiring no particular talent, dance has involved whole segments of population and is therefore more clearly than most other cultural expressions a reflection of the history of people.

Dance is a very peculiar way of expressing emotion. It is done through movement. It could be the outburst of immense passion, excitement or sentiment. It is evident when people are hysterical, demonstrative, ardent, enthusiastic, passionate, impulsive, temperament, irrational, sentimental and affectionate or high strung.

Filipinos have had a dance culture all their own even before the colonization of Spaniards for over three hundred years fifty years by Americans.

History proved that people of the early culture of the Philippines performed the activity of daily living with an awareness of their world being governed by forces beyond their control. Dance to them was a form of worship, a communication with the unseen powers by which they lived. Their dancing was full of images of their immediate world; the wind and rain, the passing of seasons, movements of birds and animals, rites of fertility, courtship, birth, death, hunting, harvesting, renewal of life in cycles, praying for

success in battle, celebrating victory and lamenting death or defeat.

Tulio pointed out that almost all important occasions in the life of the primitive man were celebrated by dancing. Dance steps are created from man's basic movements: walk, run, jump, hop, skip, slide, leap, turn and away.

The Spaniards brought to the Philippines not only their religion but also their arts. The influence of Spanish culture is felt most strongly in music, dance and dress.

However, evidence revealed that the Spanish sphere of influence did not entirely include the fierce mountain tribes of Luzon and the isolated minority groups existing in the hills of Luzon, Mindoro, Palawan and Mindanao. It is among these groups that the indigenous forms of dance in the Philippines survive to this day.

According to Tulio folk dance is the vivid intimate bond of costumes, ideals and traditions of the past through which a multitude of national characteristics in music, steps and costumes are preserved.

Dance in the Philippines today ranges from tribal dancing in isolated region performed in actual ceremonies, to the stylish revues of folk dance groups portraying the variety of ethnic style within the culture, to theatrical dance, modern dance, ballet, and contemporary social dance (ballroom dancing).

To underscore the significance of folk dance in the Physical Education curriculum, Article 1 section (2.3 and 2.6), DECS Order No. 58, s. 1990 state that:

To achieve its physical, mental, social, moral, culture and ecological mission/ goal, college service Physical Education should pursue the following objectives:

- 1) Further develop and refine skills in sports, dance and recreation.
- 2) Awaken a sense of nationalism and appreciation of one's cultural heritage through the revival and preservation of indigenous games, dance and sports.

Observations however indicate that there are only few who study the problems of the teaching and learning of folk dance. Much emphasis is given on sports activities.

In the University of Eastern Philippines, it was observed that during Physical Education nights (final examination for Physical Education 121 classes) students perform modern that folk dance. Observations also show that because of modernization, students learn faster and better modern dance. In spite of the choice of simple dance and application of several teaching techniques, a lot of students find difficulty learning folk dance.

Hence, for the above reasons, as researcher and a Physical Education instructor, it was the primary concern of this study to find out the perceptions towards folk dancing of college students in the University of Eastern Philippines.

2. Objectives of the Study

This study generally aimed to find out the perceptions towards folk dancing of the college students in the University of Eastern Philippines.

Specially, this study aimed to (1) know the profile of the students in the University of Eastern Philippines in terms of age, sex, college, place of birth, religion, (2) Find out the attitudes of the students towards folk dancing, (3) Evaluate the extent of competencies learned from folk dancing as perceived by the students, (4) Identify the most effective teaching techniques applied in folk dancing as perceived by the students, (5) Determine the factors affecting the students learning competencies in folk dancing, (6) Find out the extent of effect of the factors to the learning competencies, to wit; personal factors, instructional/ extra and co-curricular activities and religion, (7) Determine the significant relationship of the profile and the perception of students towards folk dancing.

3. Methodology

This study was conducted in the University of Eastern Philippines, University Town, Northern Samar main campus during the second semester of the school year 2010-2011. This school was formerly known as Samar Institute of Technology (SIT) located near barangay Cawayan, Catarman, Northern Samar.

On June 20, 1964, Republic Act No. 4126 was signed into law converting Samar Institute of Technology into University of Eastern Philippines.

The UEP main campus covers a land area of 481 hectares. It is composed of ten colleges, namely: College of Agriculture,

College of Arts and Communication, College of Business Administration, College of Education, College of Engineering, College of Law, College of Nursing, College of Science, College of Veterinary Medicine and the Graduate School.

The respondents of this study involved 330 college students in UEP who were officially enrolled in Physical Education 121 (Rhythmic Activities) during the second semester of School year 2010-2011.

This study utilized the descriptive survey method of research which was designed to gather, tabulated, analyze and interpret data result. Descriptive research method aimed to describe the nature of a situation as it existed at the time of the study and to explore the cause of particular phenomenon.

4. Findings

This study generally sought to discover the perceptions towards folk dancing of the college students in the University of Eastern Philippines. Specifically, it aimed to determine the profile of the respondents in terms of age, sex, college, place of birth and religion; find out the attitude of students towards folk dancing as perceived by the students; evaluate the extent of competencies learned from folk dancing as perceived by the students; identify the most effective teaching techniques applied in folk dancing as perceived by the students; determine the factors affecting the students learning competencies in folk dancing; determine to what extent do the factors affect the learning competencies, to wit; personal factors, instructional factors, participation in school organization/ extra and co-curricular activities and religion, and find out if there is a significant relationship between the profile and the perceptions of students towards folk dancing.

The study employed descriptive-survey method of research involving 330 college students presently enrolled in physical Education 121 for the school year 2010-2011, who are randomly selected to be the respondents of this study. Questionnaires were used in gathering the needed data, were collated, tabulated, and analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, means, weighted means, ranking and chi square test.

The findings revealed that a majority of the respondents were females with ages 15-17 years old; a majority were from the College of Science, were born in Visayas and a majority were Roman Catholics.

The attitude of the students towards folk dancing was described as "agree".

Along the competencies learned, the students perceived "good" their understanding on folk dancing, fundamental skill in folk dancing, skill in performing simple folk dance, mastery of folk dancing, development one's self through dancing and skills in performing dances based on their cultural tradition.

In terms of teaching techniques employed by their teachers in folk dancing, the respondents believed that the teachers utilized effective teaching techniques.

On factors affecting the learning competences, all factors: personal, instructional, participation in school organization/extra and co-curricular activities and religion were described as “moderately serious”.

The respondents’ profile in terms of age and sex were found significantly related to the perceptions of the students towards folk dancing. The colleges where the students belong, place of birth and religion were found not significantly related to perception.

Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the profile of respondents in terms of age, sex, college, place of birth and religion.

The hundred thirty college students were the respondents of this study. Two hundred twenty-six or 69 percent were on the age bracket of 15-17; eighty-three or 25 percent from age 18-20; twenty one or 6 percent were on the age bracket of 21-25.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of the Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency	Percent
AGE		
15-17	226	69
18-20	83	25
21-25	21	6
Total	330	100
SEX		
Male	127	38
Female	203	62
Total	330	100
COLLEGE		
College of Agriculture	14	4
College of Arts & Communication	23	7
College of Business Administration	8	2
College of Education	30	9
College of Engineering	71	22
College of Nursing	40	12
College of Science	138	42
College of Veterinary Medicine	6	2
Total	330	100
PLACE OF BIRTH		
Luzon	54	16
Visayas	276	84
Total	330	100
RELIGION		
Catholic	270	82
Non Catholic	60	18
Total	330	100

Attitudes towards Folk Dancing

Presented in Table 2.1 are the attitudes of the respondents towards folk dancing. Statements in odd numbers are positive statements while the negative statements are in the even numbers.

Table 2.1: Attitudes of Respondents towards Folk Dancing per Statement

Statements	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
1. I find it existing	3.9	A
2. folk dancing is old fashioned	3.7	A
3. it is interesting	3.8	A
4. Folk dancing is boring	2.5	U
5. it is a good way of socializing	3.7	A
6. Folk dancing is easily forgotten	2.8	U
7. It will lead to skills	4.0	SA
8. It is difficult	2.9	U
9. It will help me get a job	2.9	U
10. It is complicated	3.0	A
11. It contributes to good health and posture	4.2	SA
12. It is a waste of time	2.2	U
13. I love dancing	3.9	A
14. It is not appreciated at home	2.7	U
Mean	3.3	A

Table 2.2 shows the summary of interpretation of attitudes of respondents towards folk dancing. Fifty-three or 16.1% was positive, forty or 12.1% was neutral and two or .6% was negative. The result indicated what the students had varied attitudes towards folk dancing due to their different interests.

Table 2.2: Summary of Attitudes of Respondents towards Folk Dancing

Attitude	Frequency	Percent
Highly Positive	53	16.1
Positive	235	71.2
Neutral	40	12.1
Negative	2	.6
Total	330	100

Legend:

- 4.0-5.0 Highly Positive
- 3.0-3.9 Positive
- 2.0-2.9 Neutral
- 1.5-1.9 Negative
- 1.0-1.4 Highly Negative

Learning Competencies

The learning competencies are presented in Tables 3.1 to 3.7 in terms of understanding folk dance, fundamental skills in performing simple folk dancing, mastery, competencies on one’s self through dancing, skill in performing dances based on cultural tradition and summary of competencies learned.

5. Conclusions and Implications

The following conclusions are based on the findings of this study.

The majority of the respondents are 15-17 years old which can be concluded that Physical Education 121 is a required subject for first year students offered during the second semester of the school year. There are more females than males. This implies that the female students dominate the male in Physical Education classes. Respondents mostly belong to the College of Science so it can be concluded that the college has a big enrollees because of more courses offered. Therefore, almost all Physical Education teachers are handling students from the College of Science. Majority

of the respondents were born in Visayas the fact that the school, University of Eastern Philippines is located in the eastern part of Visayas particularly in Catarman, the capital town of Northern Samar. Roman Catholic dominates the religion of the respondents.

The students are interested and motivated towards folk dancing. This implies that the students have active participation and better performance towards the activities.

The students learned the theoretical and practical aspect of folk dancing. This implies that students wanted to learn folk dancing because it contributed to their skills, intellectual and personality development.

Physical Education 121 teachers employed several techniques in teaching which is suited to the learning capacity of the students that improve teaching-learning process. Teachers are knowledgeable on different teaching techniques. This implies that teachers are equipped with teaching techniques needed in teaching folk dancing.

There are factors that affect the students learning competencies in folk dancing. This resulted to difficulty in understanding and demonstrating skills in Physical Education 121. This implies that the teachers techniques used were not enough. The students need a through follow-up on their activities.

Age and sex have bearing in the students perception towards folk dancing. This implies that every human being has its own way of interpreting the art of folk dancing.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations were formulated:

- 1) Folk dancing should be given emphasis in Physical Education 121 classes.
- 2) The students should be encouraged to witness cultural shows inside and outside of the university to appreciate folk dancing.
- 3) The university should hold cultural show yearly showcasing Philippine Folk dances.
- 4) Folk dance presentations should be encouraged by the University Culture and Arts office.
- 5) Students with interest in Folk dancing should be encouraged to join organizations such as the dance troupe in order to show and further improve their skills.
- 6) Teachers in Physical Education 121 should continue attending seminars specially on folk dancing to update themselves on the current trends about this activity and for them to go on with varied teaching techniques to enhance the teaching of folk dancing and other forms of dancing.
- 7) Team teaching in Physical Education 121 should be encouraged.
- 8) Physical Education 121 classes should have more actual demonstration activities in order to improve the competencies of students' folk dancing.
- 9) It is recommended that a similar study in folk dancing be conducted that will look into other aspects such as actual performance learned, supplementary teaching materials

that improve teaching learning process and transmission of folk dances to the future generations.

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