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Lingaw-Sadya Festival: A Celebration of Success and Thanksgiving in Balamban, Cebu

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Abstract

The Lingaw-Sadya Festival has had no written documentation of its history until today. Clarity will also be needed concerning the festival dance category and the exact date when it should be performed and celebrated. The term Lingaw-Sadya was a combination of two Cebuano words: "Lingaw", meaning fun, and "Sadya," meaning happiness. The primary objective of this design was to document the Lingaw-Sadya Festival. The researcher utilized a descriptive-qualitative research design. The study was attended by ten prospective Balambanganons coming from the local government unit, tourism, choreographers, and dancers. Purposive snowball sampling was utilized in choosing these participants. The results revealed that the Lingaw-Sadya festival commemorates the achievements of

Balambanganons. The concept of the festival differs each year; it showcases everything to tourist spots in Balamban that give pride to their municipality. The dance was a free interpretation along with their five basic steps: Panaghiusa, Pag-Ampo, Pasalamat, Hudyaka, and Lingaw-Sadya. Seminar workshops on the nature and proper execution of the basic steps are necessary, especially for the Balambanganons and the new generation of choreographers or dance artists. It is recommended to disseminate this dance literature for valid reference to all the schools and barangays for Balambanganons to be fully aware of what the Lingaw-Sadya festival is and how the basic steps are properly executed. Keywords; Festival, Lingaw-Sadya Festival, Documentation, Creativity and Uniqueness, Tourism.

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Introduction

Documentation is intended to retain access to experiences throughout time. There is a common belief that dance is transitory, and so evades documentation. Dance is multifaceted, perhaps the most intricate of all expressive arts. However, the Dance Heritage Coalition, Inc. (2006) ^[23] noted that despite dance being the highest form of art, it receives the fewest research outputs due to the lack of available resources and the small number of people who are passionate about conducting research and documentation. Related studies reveal that dancing is an embodied discipline that is difficult to record, document, and preserve due to the fact that dance movement incorporates both sophisticated bodily and cultural knowledge (Bang, 2022). The process, performance event, and cultural impact are all key components of dance documentation. If each of these three components of the dance event can be preserved and studied, future generations will be able to assess its value and cultural effect (Dance Heritage Coalition, Inc., 2006) ^[23]. With this, the researchers will document the Lingaw-Sadya Festival of Balamban, Cebu, including its nature and background, dance properties, and unique movements.

Festivals honor the values, philosophies, identity, and continuity of a community. Probably more typical of the contemporary approach to labeling events as festivals, Getz (2005, p.21) defines them as "themed, public festivities." Festival is a phenomenon, a social phenomenon that occurs in the vast majority of human societies. The vibrant diversity and dramatic intensity of its dynamic choreographic and artistic characteristics, the indicators of profound significance behind them, its historical origins, and the participation of the "natives" have long captivated casual visitors, consuming both tourists and writers. (Falassi, 2007). Festivals contribute to the enhancement or preservation of local culture and heritage (Xie, 2004). Festivals are linked to cultures and places, giving each an identity and aiding in the bonding of people to their communities. The Lingaw-Sadya Festival is a means through which the town of Balamban Cebu, gives tribute and honors to its patron saint, Francis of Assisi. Lingaw-Sadya is derived from the words "Lingaw," which defines enjoy, and "Sadya," meaning lively. The

celebration also reflects the character and personality of the Balamban people known as Balambanganons, for they constantly try to see the good in everything. It is a unique festival that combines merrymaking, entertainment, and cultural heritage, making it a must-see event for tourists and locals alike. Thus, the festival's name embodies the idea of celebrating joy and happiness in a simple and genuine way. However, the festival has no dance literature; thus, undocumented.

There are a lot of unrecorded festivals, especially in distant locations where festivals are also disregarded, which leaves a vague notion of how it should be done. This is also a result of the festival's facilitator's ignorance of the entire procedure. Less research has investigated those involved in staging festivals or the factors and processes contributing to their outcomes (Gursoy *et al.*, 2004). Dancing is a field of the humanities that has gotten less attention than others. This void has multiple causes, including a lack of historical documentation and a lack of reference materials and publications (Parsons, 2010). Presently, technology continues to progress and develop, and the preservation of the traditional culture and arts of the Philippines can be at risk in terms of the Filipinos' inclination and disinclination towards both the Filipino culture and arts (Tabuena *et al.*, 2022) [6]. According to the Balamban Tourism Office, the Lingaw-Sadya Festival has no written documentation of its history until today. A clarity will also be needed concerning its festival dance category and the exact date if when it should be performed and celebrated, thus interchanging. Another issue with the subject matter is the exact dance, the people are disoriented mentally when celebrating, and the coherence in terms of the concept of the festival.

A related study stated that confirming the need for this type of study (dance research) is the fact that reliable dance documents might assist in the rebuilding of dances that are culturally outmoded and have been eliminated from the current repertory (Smigel, 2006) [23]. In the Philippines, the majority of individuals feel that culture presents dancing as a component of customs and traditions, a form of expression, a leisure activity, and an entertainment vocation (Domingo, 2018) [10]. According to Libby Smigel, 2006, Long-term and short-term needs and purposes for dance documentation vary. The documentation of a dance, in the larger scheme of things, ensures that it is accessible to students, academics, cultural commentators, and others for performance, study, and critique. Various types of documentation make it possible to recreate a dance in different settings and eras. Documentation may be used in the near future for audience development, grant applications, rehearsal aids, and other purposes.

Purpose of the Study

The study aimed to document the Lingaw-Sadya Festival in the Municipality of Balamban, Cebu Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following:

1. What is the nature and background of the Lingaw-Sadya Festival?
2. What are the dance properties present in the dance?
 - 2.1 Male and Female Dance Components.
3. What are the unique movements of the dance?

Materials and Methods

Design

The researchers utilized a Descriptive Qualitative research

design. A qualitative descriptive design may be deemed most appropriate as it recognizes the subjective nature of the problem, the different experiences participants have and will present the findings in a way that directly reflects or closely resembles the terminology used in the initial research question (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2017). The movements of the dances require written analysis which movement will be described through an interview, observation, documentation and integrates purposive snowball to provide a comprehensive description of dance literature of the festival (Reeves, *et al.*, 2013). The primary objective of this design is Documenting the Lingaw-Sadya Festival. Documentation is one of the most visible safeguards against irreversible cultural deprivation. (T.K. Gireesh Kumar, 2022). Descriptive Qualitative research design is the best way to document the Lingaw-Sadya Festival of Balamban, Cebu.

Informants and Sampling Design

The study was participated by the ten (10) prospected Balambanganons coming from the local government unit, tourism, choreographers, dancers, and private sectors was selected to participate in the study. This includes municipal counselors, tourism officer, municipal workers and members of Lingaw-Sadya Dance Company. Purposive snowball sampling was utilized in choosing these participants. The participants should meet the following criteria: (1) A resident of the municipality of Balamban for at least 7 years; (2) Witnessed or participated in the Lingaw-Sadya Festival for at least 3 years; (3) Ages 18 years old and above; and (4) Has the knowledge of the Lingaw-Sadya Festival. The idea of "Data Saturation" will be utilized to indicate when there will be enough data (Fusch & Ness, 2015).

Locale



This study was conducted in Balamban, Cebu. Balamban is a 1st class municipality that has quickly developed into an industrial town in Cebu with a total land area of 337.00 square km that has served as a home for approximately 95,136 Cebuanos especially because of its growing shipbuilding industry and great landscape for tourism in the modern time as the Trans-Central Highway connects the area to the mountainous region of Cebu City.

Balamban, Cebu is located 31 km North 40 Degrees about 30 minutes West of Cebu City along the northwestern coast of Cebu which is bordered by the town of Asturias on the North, City of Toledo on the South, Tañon Strait on the West, and City of Danao and Compostela on the East with

the coordinates: 10° 28'N 123° 47'E (Proudly Filipino Inc., 2022).

Instrumentation

Due to the nature of the research, the researchers will function as the main instruments of the study (Creswell, 2007). A semi-structured interview will be used as the secondary tool for collecting the data with the help of guiding questions (Creswell, 2007). Additionally, cell phones and video recorders will be used in conducting the interview. During the interview, the responses of the informants will be recorded using cell phones. On the other hand, a video recorder will be used to capture the informant's actual execution of the Lingaw-Sadya dance.

Data Gathering Procedure

Data gathering began only after the researchers have received ethical permission from the Research Ethics Committee. A transmittal letter was sent to the dean of Cebu Normal University's college of teacher education. To request permission to conduct the inquiry in the municipality of Balamban, Cebu, a transmittal letter was sent to the tourism office and the town mayor. The informed consent form was distributed to the respondents, and an in-depth interview will be conducted with the approval of the local mayor and acknowledged by our professor of creative research. The data from these interviews offered strong support for the information gathered. Still and video cameras were used to capture the information. Numerous viewings of the recorded film were done to clearly document or note each step pattern executed by the dancers. Both the video and the images were very useful in describing the dance components that was used.

Data Analysis

As a method, the Movement Analysis of Francisca Reyes Aquino's was used for notating and transcribing dance movements and was followed in order to create dance literature, study of movement, and dance analysis. Dance notation is the symbolic representation of dance movement; it is similar to movement notation in that it can only be used to convey specific types of dances and human movement. Technical exercises, choreographic documentation, analysis, and reconstruction are all done with it. The dancing instructions were recorded and analyzed using Francisca Reyes Aquino's notation technique. Furthermore, Aquino's notation excluded dancing terms in favor of using local terms for the dance movement.

Rigor of the study

Credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability—the four Guba and Lincoln (1989) recommended strategies—were applied to each parameter in the study to establish trustworthiness.

Credibility. According to Maher *et al.* (2018), ensured that the study's measurements were accurate and a true portrayal of the participants' opinions. This could be achieved by building trust between the parties and forming rapport before the data collecting. The researcher invited important informants before the interview and gave them a briefing on the topic of the study. By doing this, the researcher got to know them better and it was simpler to establish rapport after the interview has begun. Also, at this stage, the researcher might do a more thorough screening of the key

informants to make sure they met the requirements. The researcher used a purposive technique in which potential key informants who did not meet the requirements could not participate. The interview transcripts were converted to text before being manually coded by the researcher with support from professionals. This made sure that just the exact words spoken by the key informants were used. Words from the key informant was translated. An expert will verify and check the informants' verbatim translations. Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis of the data was applied. By carefully choosing important informants, going over their recordings and transcripts frequently, and immersing oneself in the culture under study, the credibility of the Documentation of the Lingaw-Sadya Festival will be addressed.

Dependability. Reliability was rigorously used to ensure that adequate details will be presented and the study will make it easier for other researchers to repeat the work (Maher *et al.*, 2018). The documentation of Balamban Municipality's Lingaw-Sadya Festival was discussed in this study by the researcher. Based on the key informants' responses, all data was acquired. When the interview recordings have been transcribed, the researchers made sure that the data have been validated by the key informants. An open-minded query was posed, and further action were depended on key informants' responses. A group of research professionals reviewed the questions and provide feedback for validity. When the data has been evaluated, the findings were verified by a specialist for additional confirmation of the phenomenon under investigation.

Confirmability. To maintain the confirmability of the study, the researcher used an appropriate data analysis method to prevent biases and suit the study's nature. The manuscript clearly outlined the data analysis process, which involved manual coding with the assistance of an expert using Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis. This was done to ensure accurate data analysis. The researcher reviewed and verified the data analysis process to ensure that it was based on the informants' responses and free of bias. All details were double-checked to maintain the study's confirmability.

Transferability. The study's capabilities were linked to different contexts or lines of investigation through transferability (Maher *et al.*, 2018). The focus of the study is Documenting the Lingaw-Sadya Festival of Balamban, Cebu. The study's instrument and investigator are the researchers. Recordings and field notes, including the researcher's notes, interview transcripts, manuscripts, and data analysis methods, were used. The study's specifics were presented, including how the quantity and credentials of key informants were chosen. The researchers gave other researchers the opportunity to determine whether the study could be applied to their own.

Ethical Considerations

The research study underwent an ethical review which was later approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee (REC). The researchers proceeded to give informed consent to the participants who voluntarily cooperated with the study and the confidentiality between the key informants and the researchers was practiced throughout the data collection. Appreciation was shown by the researchers through giving complimentary gifts to the participants for their cooperation.

Results & Discussion

Meaning: A festival dance showcasing the success and development of its town and the people that gives pride to Balamban, Cebu.

Dance Culture: Lowland

Place of Origin: Balamban, Cebu

Ethnolinguistic Group: Balambanganons

Classification: Creative Dance/Free Interpretation

Performer: Men and Women

Background/context:

The Lingaw-Sadya Festival started in the municipality of Balamban, Cebu, way back in 2016. It was founded by Mr. Jose Gary Napoles, with the help of other committee heads, Mrs. Ceres Luzano of LGU, Mr. Bernard Montilia, a local historian, Mr. Lito Piloto, an elder and Mr. Rosendo Laya of tourism. The Lingaw-Sadya was originally from a not-established festival in Balamban, Cebu, "Balang-Balang," which means to carry and transport people or goods from one side to another, and was later established as the "Lingaw-Sadya Festival" under the administration of Mayor Alex Binghay.

The term Lingaw-Sadya is a combination of two Cebuano words: "Lingaw", meaning fun, and "Sadya," meaning happiness. The name is associated with the founder's vision for making a festival that focuses more on the celebration of accomplishments and milestones, the big bloom of the economy, and helping Balambanganon's life progress. According to Ephraimuel Jose L. Abellana (2016) ^[1], this town was only a fourth-class municipality more than ten years ago, but due to municipal commitment, a strong sense of responsibility, and a vision for the Municipality of Balamban, which was and is, first and foremost, things changed. Balamban, which was formerly home to individuals with low incomes, has transformed into a multifaceted 1st class municipality with an internationally renowned shipbuilding sector, creating and supporting thousands of jobs.

The founder envisioned the festival through dancing and singing as a form of celebration of the success and development of the Balambanganons. (Napoles, 2023), *"let's say achievement in the family, achievement to the community"*.

The primary reason why the Lingaw-Sadya festival was created is because of the Pasigarbo sa Sugbo. Balamban already has their festival but unfortunately, it has no jingle yet. As a result, the LGU decided to change it so that they can participate in Pasigarbo sa Sugbo. For this reason, the Lingaw Sadya Festival was created. The jingle was later on made, (Napoles, 2023), *"If other municipalities are paying 500,000 and 400,000 jus for a jingle, in Balamban, No! I made it by hand, and I made it by my brain, and I made it by my heart."*

The Balamban fiesta is held every 4th of October in honor of the patron saint, St. Francis of Assisi. Prior to the implementation of the festival, the Balambanganons had this practice in which they had a week-long-activity featuring various activities such as sports competitions, beauty pageants, and food fairs and street dancing. This event showcases the colorful and vibrant costumes, music, and dance traditions in Balamban while showing how fun and happy they were when celebrating. (Napoles, 2023), *the day they launched the festival they had a parade at night since*

the concept of the festival was "Mardigra" for the reason that the people celebrate their achievements usually at night.

The lingaw-Sadya festival has been celebrated for almost 6 years. Lingaw Sadya Festival was celebrated on July 24 which is the Foundation day of the town. However, the Foundation day has no evidence yet. As a result, the celebration of Lingaw Sadya Festival was moved to the day where the opening salvo of the feast starts. The municipal mayor suggested celebrating the fiesta on Foundation Day however there was no exact date. From 24th of July it was moved to 23rd of September.

The Lingaw-Sadya Festival is a celebration of the town's unity, resilience, and merry-making. It serves as a reminder of the importance of embracing the development of the municipality and its people. Local festivals and events are used to attract tourists who in turn make contributions to the development of the community (Whitford and Dunn, 2014) ^[25]. The festival aims to promote tourism, showcase local talents and crafts, and provide entertainment to both locals and tourists. The festival also plays a significant role in promoting the town as a tourist destination in Cebu, Philippines.

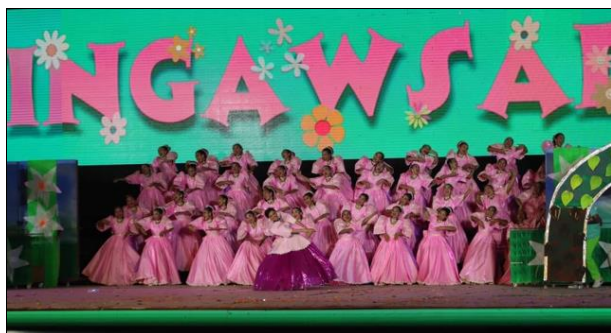
Dance Properties

Male & Female Components

Costume, Accessories, Props & Footwear

It was highlighted by the proponent that there was no fixed or definite costume, accessories, props and footwear in the Lingaw-Sadya Festival. The festival was made to give Balamban a sense of pride with what it is known for and what it can showcase more - from its delicacies to its tourist attractions. They will depend on the concept that was based on their own attractions, small wins, and significant happenings that will give pride to the town. For example, if the artist wanted a concept of Buwakan ni Alejandra which is one of their tourist attractions, then they can integrate costumes, accessories, props, and footwear that is flowery or floral-patterned with vibrant colors. Nevertheless, the dance artists have the freedom to explore potentialities of their creative works based on the wide range of possible research materials. (Dindo Fuentes 2023) *Just like last year in 2022, we used the shades and colors that can be seen on the ship like red, maroon, and black. Red reflects the ship, the girl's upper costume is white as if they are the sky, and blue for their skirt as if they are the sea. Our costume will depend on the concept.*





Picture 1: Photos from Cebu Provincial Tourism Office; Pictures of Diverse Costumes of the Lingaw-Sadya Festival

Movements Peculiar to the dance/Basic dance steps

Lingaw-Sadya Dance Terms

Panaghiusa: Movement of unity of every Balambanganon in all the challenges of life especially in peace and development where it is seen as oneness.

Pag-Ampo: Movement of prayerfulness and the Balambanganons' honoring faith to Saint Francis of Assisi.

Paghalad: Movement of gratefulness for the Balambanganons' graces received from Saint Francis of Assisi especially for the development he gave to the town of Balamban.

Hudyaka: Movement of shout and dance for joy at hearing Balambanganons' prayer and request.

Lingaw-Sadya: Form showing the culture and customs of the Balambanganon who celebrate and proud of the things and events that bring prosperity and honor to the town of Balamban.

Contextualized Basic Movements of the Lingaw-Sadya Festival

Legend:

- R - right
- L - left
- ct. - count
- SWR - sideward right
- SWL - sideward left
- M - measure

**Figure 1
Panaghiusa**

Starting Position: From a normal standing position, feet are parallel, arms placed in a rest position.

- A. Both girl and boy facing in front, Step R to L raise your R hand, (ct. 1) directing to left, landing to your right (ct. 2) making a circular motion following the L hand (ct. 3) and close your feet together (ct. 4) and slightly bend your knees with your body.....(1M)
- B. Repeat A in the opposite direction..... (1M)
- C. Facing partner holding both hands sideways..... (1M)

- D. Take a turn to R while holding both hands sideways..... (1M)
- E. Repeat A in opposite direction (1M)

**Figure 2
Pag-Ampo**

Starting Position: From a normal standing position, feet are parallel to the ground, arms are at rest position.

- A. Both girl and boy are facing in front, step forward R while R hand is raising in front chest level and L hand on chest (ct. 1, 2) and repeat the movement in the opposite side (ct. 3, 4)..... (1M)
- B. Take full turn L with as is hand position..... (1M)
- C. Step R forward with both arms raising in front (ct. 1, 2) and take turn R with as is hand position, ending facing in front (ct. 3, 4)..... (1M)
- D. Wave both hands to R while marching (ct. 1,2) and repeat the movement in the opposite side (ct. 3,4)..(1M)

**Figure 3
Pasalamat**

Starting Position: From a normal standing position, feet are parallel to the ground, arms are at rest position.

- A. Both girl and boy are facing in front, step R while raising R arm in front (ct. 1, 2) Turn R while arms are at rest position (ct. 3, 4)..... (1M)
- B. Repeat figure A in the opposite side..... (1M)
- C. Point R foot forward while L arm is at second position and R arm is making a forward circular movement to almost a bow position..... (1M)
- D. Step R foot backward while waving both hands to R (ct. 1, 2) and repeat the movement in the opposite side (ct. 3, 4)..... (1M)

**Figure 4
Hudyaka**

Starting Position: From a normal standing position, feet are parallel to the ground, arms are at rest position.

- A. Take a R full turn while the arms are on second position (ct. 1, 2) Raise both arms on the side upwardly (ct. 3, 4)..... (1M)
- B. Repeat A in opposite direction (ct. 1, 2, 3, 4)..... (1M)
- C. Raise both hands creating a circular motion starting at your L (ct. 1, 2) Reverse (ct. 3, 4) (1M)
- D. Place both hands to your chest then twist your body to your L twice (ct. 1,2, 3) then raise both hands (ct. 4).....(1M)

**Figure 5
Lingaw-Sadya**

Starting Position: From a normal standing position, feet are parallel to the ground, arms are at rest position.

- A. Do the change step while raising both hands from R to L..... (1M)
- B. Raise both hands upward and take full turn from your R..... (1M)
- C. Raise both hands raising upward while taking four steps forward.....(1M)
- D. While both hands are in the fifth position raise your R foot (ct. 1) the L foot (ct. 2) then repeat R foot (ct. 3) then L foot (ct. 4) going backward.....(1M)

The Lingaw-Sadya dance is a traditional dance that showcases the culture and customs of Balamban, a town in the Philippines. The dance involves a combination of both locomotor and non-locomotor movements. These movements are performed in pairs, and it represents the unity of every Balambanganon in all the challenges of life, especially in peace and development. The Lingaw-Sadya dance is an important part of Filipino cultural heritage. As discussed in literature on Filipino folk dances, the dance serves as a representation of cultural identity and a way to express pride in one's origin (Candia, 2017) [8]. Dances like Lingaw-Sadya have been identified as key components of the larger effort to preserve Filipino cultural traditions (Rivas, 2019) [21]. The importance of dance in Filipino culture has been highlighted in various studies, which underscore the significance of dance as a way of preserving cultural traditions (Mariano, 2020) [18].

The dance incorporates five basic steps. These steps are significant in the proper execution of the dance. The steps include Panaghiusa, Pag-Ampo, Paghalad, Hudyaka, and Lingaw-Sadya, which is essential in showcasing this cultural heritage (Velarde, 2020) [26]. These steps involve various movements that express unity, prayerfulness, gratefulness, shout, dance for joy, and showcase Balamban's culture and customs. Literature emphasizes the need for ongoing efforts to preserve cultural heritage, including traditional dances like Lingaw-Sadya (Cordova, 2017) [9].

The Lingaw-Sadya dance is an essential part of Balamban's cultural heritage. It serves as a way to express their identity and to pass on their traditions to future generations. The dance represents their oneness as a community and their pride in their town's development and prosperity. Furthermore, the influence of traditional dance on contemporary dance in the Philippines has been identified as an area of research interest (Gardoqui, 2021) [12]. Overall, literature on the role of dance as a tool for promoting cultural diversity and preserving cultural traditions supports the importance of traditional Filipino dances, including Lingaw-Sadya.

Conclusion

The Lingaw-Sadya festival commemorates the achievements of Balambanganons. The concept of the festival differs every year, showcasing the success and development of its town and the people that give pride to Balamban. The dance is free-interpretation along with their five basic steps: Panaghiusa, Pag-Ampo, Pasalamat, Hudyaka, and Lingaw-Sadya. This led to the conclusion that the festival provided Balambanganons with the chance to learn about their heritage, exhibit their creativity and individuality, and deepen their dedication via dance.

Recommendation

The LGU of Balamban, especially the Tourism Office, should keep on promoting the Lingaw-Sadya festival, especially its authenticity and uniqueness. Seminar workshops on the nature and proper execution of the basic steps are necessary, especially for the Balambanganons and the new generation of choreographers or dance artists.

Moreover, dance literature for the festival was produced out of this research. It is recommended to disseminate this dance literature to all the schools and barangays for the Balambanganons to be fully aware of what the Lingaw-Sadya festival is and how the basic steps are properly

executed.

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