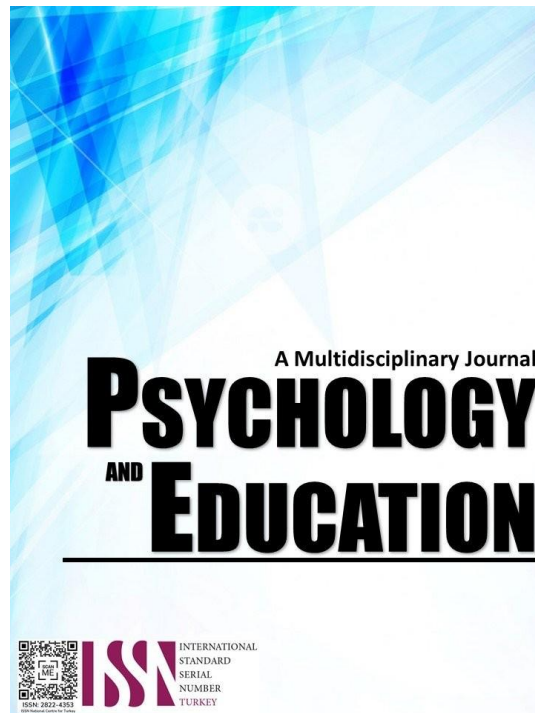


# LA TORTA FESTIVAL OF ARGAO, CEBU: A CULTURAL AWARENESS



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## La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu: A Cultural Awareness

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### Abstract

This study intends to determine the awareness and interest of youth in the La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu. This research aims to provide a program that can boost the interest and awareness of our youth despite many hindrances caused by modern technology. The program is based on the result of this study. Based on the result, the students exhibit a slightly agreeable level of awareness about the festival. The result for knowledge was falling within the "Slightly Agree" category. Students generally display a slightly agreeable attitude toward the festival. The overall result for the festival's significance is moderately positive. Students are inclined to promote the festival through social media, in the "Slightly Agree" category, this means that students are not fully promoting festival in social media. Moreover, significant intercorrelations are identified among demographic factors (age, gender, grade level, and school location) and the level of interest in the festival. Age, gender, and grade level are found to be statistically significant factors associated with interest, while school location does not appear to have a significant impact. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. It is highly recommended that it is necessary to organize workshops and educational sessions to enhance their understanding of the festival's history, cultural significance, and dance traditions. These sessions are engaging, informative, and promote the use of social media platforms among youth to share their festival experiences, images, videos, and stories. This helps to create a sense of community and increase awareness among youth.

**Keywords:** *festival, awareness, cultural*

### Introduction

One of the well-known festivals in Cebu Province is the La Torta festival in Argao Municipality. This municipality is located in the southeast of Cebu Province, sixty-seven kilometers and forty-two minutes away from the heart of Cebu City. The town was mostly known for its popular delicacy, the Torta. It is like a cupcake made with egg yolks, sugar, flour, raisins, and cheese. The uniqueness of this daintiness was due to the pork lard and tuba being two of the best ingredients.

La Torta certainly brings a classy, festive, and more colorful dance show that is located in Argao. The La Torta festival shows and expresses thanksgiving and blessings to honor St. Michael Archangel, the patron saint of Argao. This is to depict the history and practices of the culture and folklore of the town's people in Argao.

Moreover, according to Hines and Atherton (2015), cultural responsiveness encompasses an entity's ability to take into account and evaluate its own cultural context in order to uncover unconscious biases and assumptions that could affect its presence, even though a festival can support novel ideas and new needs distinct from local culture that could eventually become a local public symbol. That case is not preoccupied with the Greek festival marketplace (Skoultos, 2014).

In the Philippines, the religion is mostly Christianity. One of the most celebrated festivals in the country is the Sinulog festival which every Cebuano exquisitely celebrates through dancing. This grandiose event in the city is highly localized in its history. It examines the significant aspects of Cebuano culture, flexibility, and the value of using space in an optimal way in a crowded city. This consists of different versions of cultural dances.

The Sinulog dance highlights the celebration, which is both informative and educational for all the spectators and believers of Sr. Santo Nino. This is also well participated by students in varied schools and the business sectors to promote our local tourism.

The researchers witnessed the vibrant culture that Argao offers while growing up there, from ancestors' homes to stunning people, exquisite food, and cultural heritage. In reality, the researcher spent most of my formative years assisting my grandmother in baking a total utilizing our wooden oven passed down from our ancestors, one of the town's feelings of pride, the La Torta de Argao. It evolved from a straightforward homemade treat into an annual festival when the town started the La Torta Festival.

The researchers participated in the dance festival in during the researchers elementary and high school years. Moreover, the experience was extraordinary in the life of the researcher. The gathering took place in a sizable outdoor space with numerous people. This extraordinary event honors La Torta, a classic treat that has come to symbolize Argao's gastronomic legacy. The festival celebration is held in the center of the community and offers a mouthwatering variety of foods and festivities, draws both locals and tourists. La Torta festival perfectly encapsulates Argao's illustrious history and culinary prowess.

Indulging in local cuisine is a remarkable experience, to immerse in its lively culture that lasts a lifetime. The La Torta festival has been observed for many decades as one of the known delicacies in the province of Cebu. However, the researcher has query of the matter. The researcher is doubtful of the knowledge of the young generation about the La Torta Festival as the inhabitants of Argao have commemorated it.

This study is based on the Philippine Republic Act No. 10066 "National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009" which is An Act Providing for The Protection and Conversation of The National Cultural Heritage, Strengthening the National Commission For Culture And The Arts (NCCA) And Its Affiliated Cultural Agencies, And For Other Purposes.

Youths nowadays, are not fully aware about the significance of the festival to our culture that gradually eradicate the cultural identity. Most of our youths are not knowledgeable and aware that through our culture the attitudes and norms are develop. Festival is a means of cultural identity that strongly invites tourist and promote the beauty of our own place that contributed to economic progress. They are not aware about the essence of festival that is to bring out the history that realize the importance of tradition and culture

The factor that makes the Filipino history and culture decline is the lack of interest of our youths to our own culture, they shifted to the adaptation of the western culture and arts or modernization globally through imitating other foreign people manner of dancing like (tik-tok), and the styles of the Asian people like Korean attitudes and behavior. Our youths adapting specifically the music and TV shows. Filipinos are now adapting also the Japanese and Korean culture in cuisine like (kimchi and samgyupsal).

In addition, this study focuses on the La Torta festival of Argao, Cebu. It determines the awareness and interest of our youths in festival of La Torta and its significance to culture. This festival is celebrated yearly to commemorate the famous delicacy and to emphasize its significance to our history and cultural practices by means of colorful dance showdown in Argao to show a thanksgiving honor of St. Michael the Archangel, Argao's patron saint.

The level of cultural awareness in terms of the general knowledge of festival dances should be determined among the secondary students of Argao, Cebu because most of the youth of today are evidently more engaged in the trending dance in social media. The engagement of youth to the modernization of dances became an obstacle to cultural awareness among them and gradually eradicate the cultural identity. This study aims to determine the cultural awareness of youth on La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu.

## Research Questions

This study determined the significance of La Torta Festival to the history and culture of Argao, Cebu. The study is conducted in the school year 2023-2024. Specifically, the study sought to answer the following:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:
  - 1.1. age;
  - 1.2. gender;
  - 1.3. grade level; and
  - 1.4. school location?
2. What is the level of interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu in terms of:
  - 2.1. awareness;
  - 2.2. knowledge;
  - 2.3. attitude;
  - 2.4. significance; and
  - 2.5. promotion of culture?
3. Is there a significant inter-correlation among the five interest variables of La Torta Festival?
4. Based on the findings, what activities can be designed for the promotion of Cultural Awareness of La Torta Festival?

## Methodology

### Research Design

In this study, a descriptive design of research was applied and the basis of finding any data considered as a tool of this research, significance of the La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu. This study utilized descriptive correlation techniques in investigating the research problem. Descriptive-correlation method is a tool to measure the relationship of the variables with varying levels of measurement (Downie, and Heath, 2010).

### Participants

The study used quota sampling to determine the sample size. A quota of 100 males and 100 females were considered as participants of this study making a total of 200 Junior high school students. They were from the six secondary schools of Argao, Cebu. Those who were recruited have the following characteristics: 1) they are regular or bonafide high school student enrolled in the current school year, 2023-2024; 2) they are dancers or proponents of La Torta Festival dance; they were willing to become participants of the study and 4) they have signed the informed consent. On the other hand, the exclusion criteria of retrospective respondents who did not meet the stipulated inclusion criteria was automatically excluded to participate the study. The research population distribution is shown in Table 1.

**Sampling Technique.** In this study, it used the simple random sampling technique. In this sampling, everyone has a chance to become respondents of this study and equal distribution of the population. Simple random sampling goals is to select respondents or population

of the study. Creswell (2012) explains that a slight variation of the simple random sampling procedure is to use systematic sampling.

The students were recruited by random sampling and snowball sampling. Most of the students were recommended by the Physical education teachers. Some were informed through the snowball sampling from their classmates. A few volunteered to become respondents. The equal number of gender groups was planned to have equal representations from each group. Additionally, the equal grouping was done to have balanced perceptions from the two groups to avoid bias results.

Table 1. *The Research Population*

<i>School</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
School A	24	26	50
School B	20	18	38
School C	10	12	22
School E	15	20	25
School F	23	15	38
School G	8	9	17
Total	100	100	200

## Instruments

The study made use of a researcher-made questionnaire. The items were patterned from the content of the survey questionnaire in an unpublished article. The survey questionnaire was composed of two major parts. The first part was composed of the demographic profile of junior high students. The second part was composed of statements on the level of cultural awareness of the youth about the La Torta festival in Argao, Cebu.

**Validity.** The questionnaire and rubric was content validated by three experts in the field of festival. The alignment and distribution of the items, processes and representatives of the items to the factors being measured were considered. One expert was a choreographer of festival dances. The second expert was a physical education teacher of a university who has been involved as a judge in festival dance competitions. The third expert was a qualitative researcher and was teaching instrumentation in the graduate school of a university. All the three experts were doctorate degree holders.

**Reliability.** After the content validation, some items were revised and improved. To check the reliability of the questionnaire, a pilot testing was done with 20 Junior Highschool Students of Argao, Cebu. Who were not part of the study. The Cronbach Alpha of the questionnaire yielded a value of 0.90 which is greater than .70, hence the research tool was considered reliable.

**Scoring and Evaluation.** The items in the questionnaire can be answered in a five-point scale using the following options with its assigned points.

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Assigned Points</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Ranges for mean</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Strongly Agree	5	meant that the participant conformed to a great extent to the idea/statement.	4.20-5.00	Very much aware
Agree	4	meant that the participant conformed to the idea/statement.	3.40-4.19	Much aware
Moderately Agree	3	meant that the participant neither conformed or dissented the idea.	2.60 – 3.39	Aware
Disagree	2	meant that the participant dissented with the idea	1.80-2.59	Less Aware
Strongly Disagree	1	meant that the participant dissented to a great extent	1.0-1.79	Not Aware

## Procedure

This part contains discussions of data procedures for pre-data gathering, actual gathering and post data gathering.

**Pre - Data Gathering.** After the design hearing, the researcher made revisions to the proposal based on the suggestions of the panel members. With the assistance of the adviser, the protocol and other required forms were submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for technical and ethical review. When the Notice to Proceed (NTP) was released by the IRB, this means data gathering could start. So the researcher wrote a letter to the Dean of graduate school of education, asking permission to conduct the study and start the gathering of data. When approved the researcher wrote a letter to the School Heads of selected schools in Argao, Cebu asking permission to conduct a survey to the students of Junior High School. Upon approval, the researcher randomly selected respondents from the specific schools and let them sign the informed consent before the distribution of the questionnaires.

**Actual Data Gathering.** On the day of the data gathering, the researcher once again explain the purpose and mechanics of the survey to the respondents to give them an idea about the said survey. The teachers also helped in explaining to the students of the reason the research and assisted them while answering the questionnaire. The administration of the questionnaire was done in the classroom during the vacant time of the students or right after classes so as not to distract the students and teachers' class sessions. The activity lasted for 15-20 minutes. The questionnaires were retrieved on the same day. Data gathering was done during Fridays, and all the questionnaires were done after six weeks for all the six schools.

*Post - Data Gathering.* The data gathered were encoded, tallied, and tabulated in preparation for the data analysis. The data was analyzed with the help of a statistician. The data was kept in a computer and protected by a password to ensure confidentiality. Only the researcher and an authorized person have access to the data. The data was to be disposed when the study has been done or after it would be published in a reputable journal.

### **Data Analysis**

After cleaning the data, statistical treatment was done to answer the identified problems of the study. To present the demographic profile of the participants, descriptive statistics was used, specifically the frequency distribution and percentage.

To measure the level interest of the respondents in the five constructs or variables, namely, level of awareness, knowledge, attitude, significance and promotion of culture related to the concept of “La Torta festival”, the mean and standard deviation was used.

To determine the correlations between variables, the chi-square of independent sample was applied. This was utilized to determine the relationship between the demographic profile and cultural awareness of the youth. This is a widely used test for the degree of association between two categorical (2) variables and when the data is not normally distributed. The computation of the Cramers V was also done to determine the extent of correlation. In all statistical treatment, the .05 level of significance was set.

### **Ethical Considerations**

The researcher followed the standards mandated by the school as the ethical guidelines in conducting the research. Primarily, compliance with the protocols of research ethical considerations was observed in this paper. Then the voluntary consent of participation having been informed of their rights to continue or withdraw their participation in the study without any prejudice to them asked. They were likewise assured that the data gathered from them would be used solely for the purpose of research and that utmost secrecy be observed in the treatment and use of all data.

The researcher ensured methodological cohesions by being a responsive investigator through acquiring adequate sample and attending to rational ethics to assure credibility. The study used adequate number of respondents which conforms to the inclusion criteria described in the respondents’ section. Supporting the findings with the literature and previous studies helped to establish reliability of data gathered.

These are the points that were required to ensure that this study is securing the rights of each respondent or human rights were protected, that the benefits out-weigh the risk if there are any, that content, comprehension and documentation implied consent were observed, authorization to access private information was prepared before to continue the research for the gathering of data. The researcher secures that communication and appointments, privacy, measures, interview and conflict of concentration was taken into deliberation too.

#### *Protection of Human Rights*

The safety and protection of human rights of the respondents and their family were maintained throughout the conduct of this study. Implied consent given to the respondents started upon the commencing of the study. The respondents were informed that if they do not want to participate or they wish to withdraw from this study, they can do so anytime they wish and they would still be treated fairly. This study adhered to the three broad ethical principles articulated by Belmont Report which are the following:

*Beneficence.* This study is realized through the effort of the researcher to help the teachers as well as the research locale and research respondents to improve the Cultural Awareness of the Youth. This were done through the formulation of an Intervention Plan based on the research findings.

*Respect.* Through implied consent, the researcher would observe the cues of the respondents, if the respondents were positively cooperative in the discussion about the intended research. The research asked them either implicitly or explicitly if they were willing to join the research activity. No controlling interference came from the researcher, it was their personal choice to withdraw or respond to the study presented to them.

*Justice.* Respondents were treated fairly by the researcher whether they respond or withdraw from the study. All respondents who wished to withdraw would still be provided with a copy of the Intervention Plan which would help them to be a better teacher. This proposal research study abides to the following principles mentioned above by respecting the respondents, ensuring no harm will come to the respondents and ensuring the confidentiality of the respondents.

#### *Risk-Benefit Assessment*

*Potential benefit to participants.* The respondents may widen their appreciation and understanding the La Torta festival.

*Risk.* It might be a risk for the teachers because they may have other things to do that is why the researcher made sure that the teachers were in their free time and relaxes moment to avoid conflict physically and mentally.

#### *Comprehension and Documentation of Informed consent*



*Participation of the respondents were completely voluntary.* The following were provisions provided in the consents form.

*Respondent's Status.* The respondents will be the students of Junior High School in Argao, Cebu, specifically Argao National High School, Bulasa National High School, Talaga National High School, Usmad National High School, Cansuje National High School and Hilario P..Davide Sr. National High School.

*Study Goals.* One of the goals of this study was to measure the knowledge and the level of awareness and interest to festival dance.

*Type of Data.* The respondents were given questionnaires which they answered voluntarily, and the results of each were used for the data of this study.

*Procedure.* The researcher distributed questionnaires after sending letters to the principal to conduct the study. The respondents were given 20- 30 minutes in answering.

*Nature of the Commitment.* The researcher asked the participants to answer the questionnaire for 20 – 30 minutes in accordance to their free will.

*Sponsorship/Funding.* This study was in compliance to an academic requirement for Masteral Degree and all the expenses and necessities incurred were shouldered by Commission on Higher Education scholarship named SCHOLARSHIPS FOR INSTRUCTORS' KNOWLEDGE ADVANCEMENT PROGRAM (SIKAP

*Participant Selection.* The study focused on the student's knowledge about the Cultural Awareness of the Youth in La Torta festival.

*Potential Risk.* The researcher gave assurance to the participants that whatever information gathered remained confidential.

*Potential Benefits.* The students may widen their appreciation and understanding of festival dances specifically La Torta festival with the contribution to the community.

*Alternatives.* The researcher informed the respondents of the given schedule to when they would answer the questionnaire.

*Compensation.* This study has no compensation between the researcher and respondents.

*Confidentially Pledge.* The researcher informed the respondents of the survey that the data gathering of the study were kept as *confidential and private*. Their responses to the survey were all anonymous to keep their identity and information. The researchers exerted effort and safety to ensure the privacy of the information of the respondents.

*Voluntary Consent.* The respondents have the right to ask for their voluntary answers from the given questionnaire, thus still, the respondents have the right to participate in the said study or otherwise have the right to decline their cooperation.

*Right to Withdraw and Withhold information.* The respondents have the right to withdraw and withhold information if necessary.

*Contact information.* The researcher contacted the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the University of the Visayas, located at 5th Floor, Inday Pinning Building Colon Street, Cebu City and they can be reached through the telephone no. 253-7401 local 166 or email at uvrec@gmail.com for further information, comments or complaints at any time during the research study.

The researcher is currently employed at the University of the Visayas under the College of Arts and Sciences, PE Department who is residing at Ed Kintanar Street, Lamacan Argao, Cebu, and can be reached through mobile no. 09153304548 or email at jeligue74@gmail.com.

#### *Authorization to Access Private Information*

The authorization, whether it is being obtained separately or part of the consent form must include the following: First, the School Head of Argao, Department of Education would receive the information. Second, the type of information that were disclosed were the confidentiality of the information. Last, is the need for the respondent's authorization to access their identity which would be obtained for the date that is created as part of the researcher, as well as information already were kept in institutional record.

#### *Confidentiality Procedures*

*Privacy and Confidentiality.* Confidentiality of the participants was strictly maintained to ensure privacy of the information given. The disclosure of the participant's identity was based on the participant's permission. No identity was exhibited. Pseudonyms were used, no picture were taken and the subjects' academic records were kept confidentially and were not disclosed. With that, a certification of confidentiality was available in the study.

#### *Debriefing, Communications, and Referrals*

This human research debriefing refers to a conversation between the researchers and the respondents that happened after the research undertakings and this also refers to the questioning of the respondents or instructing at the end of the mission. It is also the position sitting counterpart of the knowledgeable approval as well as being there to perform in a method so as the respondents would benefit feel respected. This is the respondent's opportunity to ask a question to the researchers. Thus, the researchers fully explain the research

and discuss the perception for the respondents to the research experience. In this study, the researchers immediately collect the checklist right after and explain to them that their participation is appreciated and commended by the researchers which could really help them understand the study as well as their parents.

### *Incentives and Compensation*

The principle of respect for autonomy will be observed thus the participants were given enough time to decide whether to participate in the study or not. There were no monetary or financial incentives involved in this study; however, a token of appreciation to each respondent as a form of incentive was given. But it is assured in this study that these incentives would not affect their responses. Incentives were given as a consideration for the time and effort they allotted for the survey as their routine work schedule can be disturbed.

### *Conflict of Interest*

There were no identifiable of interests related to the study since there was no collaboration involved. The subject was selected because the condition applies to the criteria for the study without any strong influence or biases from other individuals or institutions. If the faculty or the adviser made use of this study, they would be required to sign an agreement and the researcher would become a co-author. Thus, the researcher declared that there was no potential conflict of interest arising from financial, familial, or proprietary considerations or the study site

## **Results and Discussion**

This section indicates the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data gathered in this study. The data were obtained from the standardized questionnaire given on the assessment of the La Torta Festival of Argao, Cebu.

### *Demographic Profile of the Respondents*

Table 2 provides an overview of the profile of the respondents participating in the study. Respondents are categorized based on four key demographic variables: Age, Gender, Grade Level, and School Location.

Table 2. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Age	12 years old	21	10.4%
	13 years old	62	30.8%
	14 years old	50	24.9%
	15 years old	40	19.9%
	16 years old	13	6.5%
	17 years old	14	7.0%
Gender	Male	100	50%
	Female	100	50%
Grade Level	Grade 7	60	29.9%
	Grade 8	62	30.8%
	Grade 9	43	21.4%
	Grade 10	35	17.4%
School Location	Rural	144	71.6%
	Urban	56	27.9%

*n=200*

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution and the percentage of the demographic profile of the respondents. The age distribution demonstrates a wide range of ages, with the majority falling within the 13 to 14-year-old bracket, constituting 55.7% of the total sample. This underscores the study's efficacy in encompassing perspectives from these crucial age groups. Conversely, limited participation is evident among 16 and 17-year-olds, representing a mere 13.5%. Gender distribution is even-handed, evenly splitting between male and female respondents at 50% each, ensuring a balanced gender representation. Regarding grade levels, Grades 7 and 8 dominate, collectively making up nearly 60.7% of the sample, while Grade 10 exhibits the lowest representation at 17.4%, potentially influenced by the hierarchical structure of the educational system. It's noteworthy that 144 respondents (71.6%) originate from rural school locations, indicating that the majority of schools are in rural areas, with a smaller portion in urban areas.

### **The level of interest of Junior High School Students in terms of Awareness**

Table 3 reveals that statement number 1, "I am familiar with La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu," received the highest mean score of 4.68, signifying a strong consensus among students regarding their familiarity with the festival. This high level of agreement indicates that a significant portion of the surveyed students is well-acquainted with La Torta Festival, suggesting its notable presence within their awareness. A festival's cultural significance and its presence within the local community can contribute to an individual's sense of identity with the place or festival. This sense of identity can then influence their behaviors and perceptions related to the festival (Yi and Lee, 2020).

Conversely, the lowest mean score is associated with statement number 4, "I can identify where the dance originated," with a mean score of 2.19, indicating disagreement among students regarding their ability to pinpoint the dance's origin. This finding implies that there may be gaps in students' knowledge about the historical roots of the festival's dance. Festivals are described as providing opportunities for individuals to be exposed to a variety of cultural experiences. They act as a showcase for new ideas and contribute to the preservation and promotion of local culture. By attending festivals, individuals can learn about different cultural skills and talents, which can enhance their understanding and appreciation of diverse cultures (Yilmaz, 2020).

Table 3. *The level of interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival in terms of Awareness*

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I am familiar with La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.	4.68	0.46	Strongly Agree
2. I already dance La Torta.	2.21	0.40	Disagree
3. I know the purpose of La Torta.	2.24	0.43	Disagree
4. I can identify where the dance originated.	2.19	0.39	Disagree
5. I am aware of the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.	4.60	0.49	Strongly Agree
Overall Mean	3.18	0.19	Somewhat Aware

*n=200 Parameter: 1.00-1.80 – Strongly Disagree/Not aware; 1.81-2.60- Disagree/Less aware; 2.61-3.40–Slightly Agree/Somewhat aware; 3.41-4.20=Agree/ Much aware; 4-21-5:00- Strongly Agree/Very much aware*

The overall mean score for all statements in Table 3 is 3.18, placing it within the "Slightly Agree" classification. This outcome suggests a moderate level of consensus among the student body concerning their awareness of the La Torta Festival. This implies that while there is a positive baseline awareness of the La Torta Festival among students, there is also room for growth and deeper engagement. It highlights the potential for educational and community-building efforts to enhance students' understanding and connection to the festival's cultural heritage. Festivals are seen as platforms for cultural exchange and interaction, allowing attendees to gain insights into different traditions, customs, and practices. Overall, festivals play a significant role in enhancing cultural awareness and knowledge within communities (Yilmaz, 2020).

### The level of interest of Junior High School Students in terms of Knowledge

Table 4. *The level of interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival in terms of Knowledge*

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. La Torta Festival is held every 29th of September in the town of Argao.	4.63	0.48	Strongly agree
2. I can distinguish the meaning and translation of the words La Torta.	2.4	0.60	Disagree
3. I can perform the basic steps of La Torta.	2.46	0.60	Disagree
4. I have experienced La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.	2.7	0.57	Slightly agree
5. I know very well the history of La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu.	2.49	0.32	Disagree
Overall Mean	2.94	0.32	Somewhat knowledgeable

*n=200 Parameter: 1.00-1.80 – Strongly Disagree/Not aware; 1.81-2.60- Disagree/Less aware; 2.61-3.40–Slightly Agree/Somewhat aware; 3.41-4.20=Agree/ Much aware; 4-21-5:00- Strongly Agree/Very much aware*

Table 4 reveals that the statement with the highest mean score is "La Torta Festival is held every 29th of September in the town of Argao" with a mean score of 4.63. This suggests that a significant portion of the students strongly agree with this statement, indicating a strong awareness or knowledge of the festival's date and location. Having knowledge of the festival's date and location can be important for both residents and visitors to plan their attendance and make the most of the cultural experiences offered during the festival (Yilmaz, 2020).

The statement with the lowest mean score is "I know very well the history of La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu" with a mean score of 2.49. This indicates that, on average, students tend to disagree with their knowledge of the history of the festival in Argao, Cebu, suggesting a lack of in-depth knowledge in this area. According to the research of Van Vliet (2021) historical knowledge can be seen as a motivation for attending festivals.

The overall mean score for all the statements is 2.94. This falls into the "Slightly Agree" category according to the provided note. It suggests that, on average, students have a slightly favorable attitude or knowledge level about the La Torta Festival, but it's not a strong agreement. Understanding the history of a festival can add depth and context to the overall festival experience, allowing attendees to appreciate the cultural significance and traditions associated with the event (Yilmaz, 2020).

### The level of interest of Junior High School Students in terms of Attitude

Table 5 presents the level of interest of junior high school students in giving value to the history and culture shown from the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu in terms of attitude.

Table 5 reveals that the statement number 3 "Viewing La Torta festival increases my desire to know more about it" got the highest mean score of 3.45. This suggests that students agree that watching the festival sparks their interest and curiosity, indicating a positive attitude toward the festival. This implies that the festival serves as a compelling catalyst, kindling students' inquisitiveness and fueling



their motivation for deeper exploration.

**Table 5. The level of interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival in terms of Attitude**

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I find it very exciting.	2.7	0.62	Slightly agree
2. I felt it was an invaluable experience by attending the festival.	2.42	0.62	Disagree
3. Viewing La Torta festival increases my desire to know more about it.	3.45	0.49	Agree
4. I annually participate in the festival.	2.27	0.46	Disagree
5. The music of the La Torta Festival is the best festival jingle all over the province of Cebu.	2.68	0.59	Slightly agree
Overall Mean	2.71	0.31	Somewhat good

*n=200 Parameter: 1.00-1.80 – Strongly Disagree/Not aware; 1.81-2.60- Disagree/Less aware; 2.61-3.40–Slightly Agree/Somewhat aware; 3.41-4.20=Agree/ Much aware; 4-21-5:00- Strongly Agree/Very much aware*

According to Yilmaz (2020), by witnessing the various activities and events at a festival, attendees may develop a sense of intrigue and a desire to explore and learn more about different aspects of the festival. This can lead to a deeper engagement with the festival and a heightened curiosity to discover more about the traditions, art forms, and cultural expressions showcased during the event. Therefore, it can be inferred that watching the festival can generate interest and curiosity in individuals, encouraging them to further explore and engage with the festival's offerings.

However, "I annually participate in the festival" got the lowest mean score mean score of 2.27. This indicates that students tend to disagree with participating in the festival annually, suggesting a relatively lower level of active involvement. This, in turn, implies that there is a lower level of active involvement or commitment from the students in terms of participating in the festival on an annual basis. Choosing not to partake in a festival can lead to a dearth of exposure to a diverse range of cultural experiences and novel concepts that are frequently presented at such gatherings. Festivals often serve as important social and cultural events within a community, providing opportunities for individuals to come together, celebrate, and engage with their cultural heritage (Yilmaz, 2020).

The overall mean score for all the statements is 2.71 and interpreted as "Slightly Agree". It suggests that students have a slightly favorable attitude toward the La Torta Festival. This implies that students exhibit a level of cultural appreciation and engagement with the La Torta Festival. While it may not represent overwhelming enthusiasm, it does suggest a genuine interest or recognition of the festival's significance within the community. This could be seen as a positive sign of cultural continuity and a willingness to participate to some extent. Studies have explored the motivations of festival attendees and have found that interest and recognition of the festival's significance within the community can be important factors (Van Vliet, 2021).

### The level of interest of Junior High School Students in terms of Significance

**Table 6. The Level of Interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival, Cebu in terms of Significance**

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I can share to my classmates what the dance steps signifies.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
2. I know very well the historical and cultural significance of La Torta.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
3. The festival always shows Cebuano traditions and the Spanish Catholic practices.	4.60	0.49	Strongly Agree
4. I can share to my classmates the "torta" symbolism of the festival.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
5. I can distinguish La Torta festival props and its cultural significance.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
Overall Mean	2.92	0.57	Somewhat significant

*n=200 Parameter: 1.00-1.80 – Strongly Disagree/Not aware; 1.81-2.60- Disagree/Less aware; 2.61-3.40–Slightly Agree/Somewhat aware; 3.41-4.20=Agree/ Much aware; 4-21-5:00- Strongly Agree/Very much aware*

Table 6 presents the level of interest of junior high school students in giving value to the history and culture shown from the La Torta Festival in Argao, Cebu in terms of significance.

The table reveals that statement number 3, "The festival always shows Cebuano traditions and the Spanish Catholic practices," got the highest mean score of 4.60, indicating a strong consensus among students regarding the festival's role in showcasing these cultural elements.

This highlights the festival's capacity as a means for promoting cultural learning and safeguarding heritage, prompting conversations on how to harness this cultural awareness in a wider educational framework and cultivate a more profound link between students and their cultural legacy. This exposure to diverse cultural experiences can contribute to cultural learning and understanding within a community (Yilmaz, 2020). Moreover, festivals can serve as platforms for promoting cultural learning and safeguarding heritage within the community (Van Vliet, 2021).

Conversely, statements number 1, 2, 4, and 5, which include "I can share to my classmates what the dance steps signify," "I know very

well the historical and cultural significance of La Torta," "I can share to my classmates the 'torta' symbolism of the festival," and "I can distinguish La Torta festival props and its cultural significance," all received the lowest mean score of 2.68, suggesting a slightly agreeable stance. These results highlight areas where students could benefit from additional exploration and comprehension of particular facets of La Torta Festival's cultural and historical complexities. This emphasizes the potential for customized educational endeavors aimed at enhancing students' grasp of these subtle aspects, thereby cultivating a more holistic understanding of their cultural heritage and the festival's importance within that context. Festivals offer a chance to explore different cultures, traditions, and customs. They provide opportunities for individuals to increase their cultural knowledge and learn about cultural events. Festivals can be seen as educational experiences that promote cultural learning and understanding (Van Vliet, 2021).

The overall mean score for all statements in Table 6 falls within the "Slightly Agree" category, indicating that students hold a moderately positive view of the significance of La Torta Festival, with variations in their levels of agreement across specific aspects of the festival's cultural and historical importance. This comprehensive perspective indicates a well-rounded recognition of the festival's cultural significance, along with varying levels of familiarity with its finer intricacies among students. Festivals hold significance in terms of social connections, cultural exploration, family togetherness, and enjoyment. They contribute to the fabric of the community by providing opportunities for individuals to engage, learn, and celebrate together (Van Vliet, 2021).

### The level of interest of Junior High School Students in terms of Promotion of Promotion of Culture

Table 7. *The level of interest of Junior High School Students in giving value to the History and Culture of La Torta Festival in terms of the Promotion of culture*

Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1. I joined a social media group about the festival.	2.76	0.63	Slightly Agree
2. I share/post images and videos of the festival in my social media group.	2.81	0.63	Slightly Agree
3. I share/post the history of the festival in the social media.	2.76	0.63	Slightly Agree
4. I can perform very well the dance steps of La Torta.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
5. I enjoy dancing La Torta with my friends.	2.68	0.59	Slightly Agree
Overall Mean	2.74	0.46	Moderate Promotion

*n=200 Parameter: 1.00-1.80 – Strongly Disagree/Not aware; 1.81-2.60- Disagree/Less aware; 2.61-3.40- Slightly Agree/Somewhat aware; 3.41-4.20=Agree/ Much aware; 4.21-5.00- Strongly Agree/Very much aware*

Table 7 unveils that statement number 2, "I share/post images and videos of the festival in my social media group," garnered the highest mean score of 2.81, indicating a slightly agreeable inclination among students to actively promote the festival through digital media. This suggests that students are willing to engage in online activities that showcase the festival's cultural aspects. Online activities such as social media posts, live streaming of performances, virtual tours, and interactive discussions can be utilized to highlight and promote the cultural elements of festivals. These activities can provide a platform for individuals to engage with the festival's cultural aspects, even if they are unable to physically attend the event (Van Vliet, 2021).

Conversely, the lowest mean score was associated with statement number 4, "I can perform very well the dance steps of La Torta," which also received a mean score of 2.68, suggesting a moderate agreement regarding dance proficiency. This finding may signify that while students are interested in the festival, their ability to participate actively in its performance may vary. Ability is a complex entity that includes factors such as awareness, experience, knowledge, skills, accessibility to information, and financial resources. These factors can influence an individual's ability to participate in organizing a festival or actively engage in its performance. It is important to consider these factors when assessing one's ability to participate in a festival (Van Vliet, 2021).

The overall mean score for all statements in Table 7 falls within the "Slightly Agree" category, signifying that students exhibit a moderately favorable disposition toward participating in activities that promote the culture of La Torta Festival through social media engagement. This general agreement highlights the potential for leveraging students' enthusiasm for online promotion to further enhance the festival's cultural reach and encourage broader community participation. These activities can provide a platform for individuals to engage with the festival's cultural aspects, even if they are unable to physically attend the event (Van Vliet, 2021). Social media plays a significant role in showcasing the cultural aspects of the festival and engaging visitors emotionally, ultimately influencing their decision to join the festival (Wu, 2020).

### Intercorrelation Among Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Interest of Junior High School Students in the Festival

The study hypothesized that the five constructs about La Torta Festival was intercorrelated. To test the hypothesis the chi-square of independent sample was used. Table 8 presents the correlation matrix.

Table 8 presents the significant intercorrelation among profile of the respondents and the level of interest of junior high school students in the festival. The table reveals that the chi-square test results indicate that age, gender, and grade level are statistically significant factors associated with the level of interest in the festival among junior high school students. However, school location does not appear to have a significant impact on students' interest in the festival based on the provided data.

Understanding the factors affecting attendees' subjective well-being can help festival organizers develop strategies to better manage and promote cultural events. According to Van Vliet (2021) age and gender as demographic characteristics can influence festival

attendance. The study by Van Zyl & Botha (2021) showed that young people (18-25) mainly attend festivals for socialization and escape, while older people (26 and above) attend festivals for family togetherness.

Table 8. *Intercorrelation Among Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Interest of Junior High School Students in the Festival*

Demographic profile	Awareness		Knowledge		Level of Interest				Promotion of Culture		Overall	
	X2	Sig	X2	Sig	Attitude	Significance			X2	Sig	X2	Sig
Age	44.48**	.001	115.173**	.000	173.025**	.000	136.149**	.000	205.063**	.000	287.518**	.000
Gender	12.340*	.015	17.321**	.015	13.384	.063	34.619**	.000	27.845**	.001	57.148*	.024
Grade Level	27.504**	.007	98.006**	.000	169.585**	.000	91.652**	.000	171.549**	.000	230.932**	.000
School Location	3.947	.413	29.048**	.000	48.287**	.000	28.424**	.000	51.384**	.000	101.392**	.000

\*\*, Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

\*, Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

## Conclusion

The high school students show a positive inclination to promote the festival through social media, indicating the potential for online platforms to play a role in expanding the festival's reach. In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the enthusiasm of high school students toward promoting the La Torta Festival Dance in their municipality. The findings reveal a positive correlation between students' interest in and promotion of the festival. Moreover, the study identifies key demographic factors—age, gender, and grade level—that are intricately linked to the level of interest and active involvement in promoting the cultural event.

The strong inclination of high school students to support the La Torta Festival Dance suggests a vibrant cultural engagement within the student population. This positive attitude towards the festival not only signifies an appreciation for local traditions but also highlights the potential for students to play a pivotal role in preserving and promoting cultural heritage within their community.

The correlation observed with age, gender, and grade level adds depth to our understanding of the factors influencing students' involvement. It indicates that certain demographic characteristics play a significant role in shaping individual interests and actions towards the promotion of cultural events. These insights can inform targeted outreach strategies and engagement initiatives, ensuring that promotional efforts align with the diverse preferences and characteristics of the student body.

As cultural preservation becomes increasingly important, harnessing the energy and enthusiasm of high school students for events like the La Torta Festival Dance can contribute to a sense of community pride and identity. The findings of this study provide a foundation for further exploration and development of strategies to enhance cultural participation among high school students, fostering a deeper connection between the younger generation and local traditions.

In summary, this study not only sheds light on the positive inclination of high school students towards promoting the La Torta Festival Dance but also underscores the importance of considering demographic factors in crafting effective strategies for cultural engagement. The findings provide a foundation for future research and community initiatives aimed at nurturing cultural awareness and participation among the youth, ultimately contributing to the vitality and sustainability of local cultural traditions.

This study further validates that the theory of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky that social interaction and community building is vital for the development of higher-order thinking skills. Like festivals provide an avenue for young learners to interact with the people in the society and contribute to community building, thus, they develop their cognitive skills through social learning.

Through this study, the concepts "sociocultural perspective" and "sociocultural awareness" are not just applicable in the fields of psychology but also in exploring the various parts of culture such as festivals. This suggests, theoretically, the impact of the society we live in is based on the culture and history that we have.

In conclusion, this study is additional research-based evidence that supports and further strengthens the existing Theory of Sociocultural Awareness in the context of culture and tradition.

In light of these results, recommendations for community organizers, educators, and policymakers may include tailored programs that cater to the varying interests and preferences of students based on age, gender, and grade level. Creating platforms for students to actively participate in the planning and execution of cultural events can further strengthen their sense of ownership and commitment to preserving and promoting local traditions.

Moreover, the following were recommended:

Develop and implement inclusive educational policies that ensure equitable representation and engagement across all age groups within

the school curriculum. This can involve incorporating cultural festivals like La Torta into educational programs, ensuring that students of all ages have opportunities to learn about and participate in such events. Additionally, policies should aim to address any disparities in participation among different age groups, genders, and grade levels to ensure equal access to cultural education experiences.

Design targeted educational interventions to enhance students' awareness, knowledge, attitude, and engagement with cultural festivals like La Torta. This can include organizing interactive workshops, cultural exchange programs, and field trips to immerse students in the historical and cultural significance of the festival. Moreover, educators should leverage digital platforms and social media to amplify the promotion of cultural events and encourage student participation and advocacy.

Conduct further research to explore the underlying factors influencing students' interest and engagement in cultural festivals, particularly focusing on the role of socio-economic background, family influence, and prior exposure to cultural activities. Additionally, longitudinal studies can provide insights into the long-term impact of educational interventions on students' cultural awareness and appreciation. Furthermore, comparative studies across different regions and cultural contexts can shed light on the universal principles underlying youth engagement with cultural heritage and inform the development of effective educational strategies.

"Exploring Socio-Demographic Factors Influencing Junior High School Students' Interest and Engagement in Cultural Festivals: A Comparative Analysis"

"Longitudinal Study on the Impact of Educational Interventions on Junior High School Students' Cultural Awareness and Engagement: Insights from La Torta Festival"

"Cultural Education in Rural vs. Urban Schools: Understanding Differential Patterns of Participation and Engagement among Junior High School Students".

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