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## **Revitalizing Cultural Education: A Documentary Study on the Indigenous Dances of the Applai Tribe in Northern Philippines and their Implications for Arts and Dance Educators**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This qualitative study used ethnographic research methods to explore the dances, music, musical instruments, costumes, and props of the Applai Tribe in Cagayan province, Northern Philippines. Key informants, including elders and chieftains, were interviewed using an in-depth interview questionnaire, and an exhibition of dance and music performance was requested to capture visual and contextual aspects. Information was dissected through episodic and content examination, utilizing open coding, pivotal coding, and particular coding. The study revealed that the Applai dances convey the identity and heritage of the tribe as a people, reflecting their relationship with the earth and their intimate connection with nature. The study also found that the basic musical instruments used in the dances are the gangsa, solibao, and metal tong, with 2/4 time signatures and accented notes in their rhythms. The study concludes that the Applai dances are treated with utmost importance in the community and recommends further research into the tribe's culture and traditions.

**Keywords:** Ethnographic research, indigenous dance, cultural identity, traditional costumes, community essence

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Indigenous peoples of the Philippines possess a rich cultural heritage that has been passed down from generation to generation. Among these cultures is the Applai Tribe, an indigenous community located in the northern part of the country. The Applai Tribe has preserved their traditions and customs, including their unique style of dancing, which is an integral part of their communal identity.

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of documenting and preserving the cultural heritage of indigenous communities. In a study conducted by Valiente-Neighbours and Ybanez-Sabio (2016), it was found that documenting and studying the culture of indigenous communities can promote their recognition and respect, as well as contribute to the development of their communities. Similarly, a study by Angara (2017) emphasized the role of indigenous cultural heritage in promoting social and ecological sustainability.

One of native individuals of Cagayan territory is the Applai of Nabbotuan Solana, Cagayan. Authentic records of the Applai in Solana uncovered that they are traveler clan from Mountain Region having a place with the Igorot clan (NCIP, 2018). They have unmistakable culture and propagated such lifestyle from one age to another. Notwithstanding, there is a shortage of writing and studies with respect to the Applai of Solana, Cagayan. They are the most un-concentrated as affirmed by both the nearby government and the provincial office of the Public Commission of Native Individuals. Essentially, NCIP (2018) records showed that Applai social expressions connected with ancestral dance, went with conventional music and customs are not totally reported and dissected by different specialists (anthropologists, sociologists, antiquarians, and instructors).

Aside from the absence of documentation on the Applai social expressions, recording and dissecting their moves utilizing semiotics tends to the regressive idea by government and rich individuals who view the native dance as something unremarkable (Chielotam, 2015). All things considered, the documentation and examination will be an important stage in re-appreciating and deciphering the native dance as an interconnecting pole between the Applai people group and the world at large. Yet, in particular, the documentation and examination of Applai moves places into a basic assessment the confusion that the satisfaction in different native moves is simply founded on their feel, examples and styles disregarding their open strength (Akas, 2015).

In conclusion, the Applai Tribe's indigenous dances are more than just a form of entertainment. These dances hold deep meaning and significance to the community as they represent the tribe's way of life, values, and beliefs. Through dancing, the Applai Tribe expresses their connection to nature, their ancestors, and their community. It is a way for them to maintain a strong sense of identity and preserve their cultural heritage.

However, the Applai Tribe's traditional dances are at risk of being lost as younger generations are becoming more assimilated into modern society. Therefore, it is important to document and study the Applai Tribe's indigenous dances to preserve their cultural significance and promote their continued practice.

This examination article means to encapsulate local area through the native moves of the Applai Clan in Northern Philippines. Through a narrative report, the specialist inspected the public embodiment of the clan's moves, investigate their social importance, and dissect how they add to the conservation of the clan's social legacy. Thusly, we desire to reveal insight into the significance of reporting and safeguarding the social customs of native networks in the Philippines and all over the planet. Doing as such, will usher the sharing of the informative strength of their moves through a social instructive media that guarantees the enthusiasm for neighborhood understudies, instructors, and other culture lovers.

## METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a subjective examination configuration, utilizing ethnographic exploration techniques to reveal and dissect information on the dance, music, instruments, ensembles, and props of the Applai clan in Cagayan region, Northern Philippines. Key sources, for example, seniors and clan leaders were evaluated utilizing a top to bottom meeting survey, and a presentation of dance and music execution was mentioned to catch visual and context oriented perspectives. The review utilized purposive testing of review members who were learned about the conventional moves, including elderly folks, barangay authorities, artists, and other local area individuals. The review fostered an inside and out interview poll as an exploration instrument, which was approved by Native People groups specialists. Information examination was directed through narrative and content investigation, utilizing open coding, pivotal coding, and specific coding.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Indigenous Dances of the Applai

Among the Applai, dance is an integral part of daily life. Traditional dances have been passed down from generation to generation and are rich with cultural symbolism. The Applai dances are an essential part of the "cultural development" of their society because of the crucial role they play in reinforcing the Applai people's sense of cultural identity. Had nan hicu gway harharaon mi hija ran mas nawhos-or jas mangmang tod pigha han kaob nan kina hiru vi yas taku jas hija ran mangipayla han inwharun nan kaob nan uvili, as one of the participants commented. Kapu han naag-akammu chaavi akas taku; nu hiru ran galad mi han whijag; ja ran pijoon mi akas ohay taku. (Our dances are an essential part of our community's cultural growth and development, and they help to solidify our sense of shared heritage. These dances represent who we are as a people, what we cherish, and what we hope for as a whole.

The research shows that three (3) traditional dances are widely practiced within the Applai community. The dances pattong, takik, and tuppaya fall into this category.

**Table 1: Indigenous Dances that are Predominantly Performed by the Applai**

Dominantly Performed Dances	Dance Classification
Pattong	Community dance; merry-making
Takik	Wedding dance
Tuppaya	War dance

The Applais consider pattong to be one of their most celebrated dances. The sources say it is a dance of celebration and joy in the community. Oon mi had nan pattung oha han maipaypalajad gway hara ravi tan ipappayla ran lagha jas lajad gway. Ad hadu avod nan tarok mi majakan nan hinuvili ta maaragha achavi han lohan gway taraon gway magwagwat mi yay taku, avod nan tarok mi yay taku. (Pattong is a well-known dance within our community that symbolizes joy and celebration. We are a joyful people, and when we are elated, we like to share the good news with everyone. There are people of all ages taking part. However, the chieftain is expected to start the dance and be followed by the elders. Adults and children alike in the village may then follow. Pattong is the most popular dancing style among Applais because it is used as a generic term for gatherings at which multiple dances are performed, each of which complements the others. In pattong, neither singing nor speech are necessary. For the Applai dancers, it is a serious but enjoyable hobby. Men typically lead in a circle, with the ladies following. The dance is characterized by jumping and skipping around. Depending on the direction of travel and the location of the gong, anywhere from seven to fourteen men will take the lead in the dance, while the women will follow suit. The Applai's ability to express themselves freely via movement is exemplified through their dance, which has great symbolic significance. One source claims that the Applai' tendency for movement, change, and flow, as well as their degree of independence, are all articulated through pattong. The Applai's inner existence is shown via the physicality of their dance movements, which are

primarily motivated by joy and celebration. Dancing, with its rhythmic motions, steps, and gestures, has long been regarded as one of the best means of expression among the Applai.

In contrast, takik is traditionally performed at Appaian weddings. A pair dances while the musicians play around them. A group of musicians, led by the groom, dance to the sounds of gongs, a metal tong, and a solibao (an ethnic drum). There is no need for vocals or conversation throughout the dance. The standard musical ensemble consists of six players. To achieve musical unity, each musician contributes their own unique rhythm. The musicians follow the beat of the solibao. Instead of joining the dancers, the solibao player squats and alternately hits the solibao on post with his right and left hands. After the bride and groom's dance, the party continues with a male leader and a female follower dancing in a circle. Had nan takik oha han panahr gway hara. Aher gway manahagwa hija ran manghi paylaan cha han lagha ancha ajat cha gway mai tagwid cha han uvili). (Our wedding dance is called a Takik. The newlyweds share their happiness and blossoming romance with their friends and family.

Tuppya, on the other hand, is a fake dueling dance that has a war conflict or duel movement for men. Since only males go to fight, only men dance in this performance. The dance is an expression of manhood, much as real men are courageous, brave, and strong. This dance represents the Applais tradition of headhunting in days gone by. More heads hunted by a male indicates greater authority and dominance within the group. As seen in the motions of dodging punches and shoots by ducking, weaving, giving ground, jumping from the ground, and crouching, war is a metaphor for the heroic man in battle and the rigors of imposed endurance. The motions of attacking, such as firing arrows and striking with various implements, are also included. Physical health and cerebral prowess are both celebrated through the dance. Had nan tuppaya, ket haran nan larawhan. Irawhan mi ran ikaw vi han taku gway mangi payla han lagwighan han ugwa vi yay ikaw han idi agwad nan ukali vi yay mang kutod das whaag to irawhan mi. As the Laotian proverb goes, "had chay hara vi manghipayla han turod nan lalarai jas ilagha mi ran nangawhaan mi a uvili." War dance is our form of theatrical fighting. We have a history of resorting to head-hunting to protect our land from those who would otherwise violate our sovereignty. The community comes together to celebrate a triumph, and the dance symbolizes the valor and power of the warriors who led the charge.

### **Steps of the Pattong Dance and its Communicative Essence**

Pattong is one of the most popular dance among the Applais performed after taking the pangal of a head hunted person or animal placed at the center of the circle formation, it is considered a community dance of festivity and merry-making and appropriate for mass participation. Sometimes performed in a "Damara" means salon for weddings, in "Dap-ay" means barangay hall for social gatherings, in front of the house of the celebrants, or at a space provided for the celebration. It is also played in the ator during fegnas, after rice planting, after harvest season or during peace pact celebrations, and in the church, during town fiestas for thanksgiving.

### **Costume and Accessories**

#### **Female**

Igorot Tapis, White Igorot Belt, White Blouse ( short or long sleeves) Lubay, Head gear, Bongor

#### **Male**

Igorot Baag, topless or with Vest, Lingling-o, suklang, acupan

#### **Music**

Composed of four parts: Gong A,B,C,and D

#### **Count**

1,2 or 1 and 2 : to a measure in 2/4 time signature

#### **Formation**

in circular motion, male (X) will lead the entrance of the dance followed by female (O)

### **Basic Movements Particular to the Dance**

parallel standing position (Pagdippa),

rocking step (Min pasangu pasanud)

-Figure I

(Min pasangu pasanud)

Music A.

(a) male lead dancer on their bending trunks of the body and knees position while moving forwardly as they play the gangsa followed by female in a circular motion on (cts.1,2,3,and 4). Boys holding flat gangsa.....4 M

(b) Female remain in their parallel standing position spread out hands, like the flapping wings of a fowl with palms closed facing outward and a little bit sway Pagdippa thumbs up (4cts).....16 M

(c) Male play gangsa as they go around the “Panga” with the set of dancers .....8 M

-Figure II

( Mintilttil-ay)

Music B

(a) Male and Female dancers execute side skip R/L (cts.1,2,3, and 4), with bending of the bodies and knees dragging and going outward and inward direction using Mintilttilay movements.....16 M

(b) Female dancer repeat figure 1b Pagdippa.....8M

(c) Male and Female dancers repeat figure 2b, proceeding in a straight line formation and execute the same figures in place Pagdippa (cts 1,2,3,and 4).....8M

(d) Repeat (c) figure 2 Pagdippa.....8M

-Figure III

(Tummayaw)

Music C

(a) Dancers set themselves on their original line formation, Male dancer continue playing gangsa with the same footwork(cts.1,2,3,and 4), Female repeat figure 1b on (cts.1,2,3,and 4) Pagdippa, then lastly, Female dancers insert at the back of the Male dancers with the basic movement as arms open like a flipping wings using Tummayaw, as Male dancer take the lead for the Female dancers to follow as to form one straight line to exit.....16M

### Signification or symbolism of the steps

The study reveals that the steps of the pattong are basically following the movements of life found in nature. These include birds, rooster, and wild boar, among others. Following the movements of different life forms around them signifies that they are one for and with nature. Pattong is carried out with the help of three people. Men often do a dance move similar to Figure I(a), the rocking step, in which they shift their weight from one foot to the other and back again. It is typically a two-step dancing move that is completed in the space of two musical beats. Rock back and rock forward are the two simplest forms. The rock back involves a full weight shift backwards, followed by a shift back to the front foot as the rear foot remains planted. The rock forward involves a full weight shift to the front foot, followed by a weight shift to the back foot while the front foot remains planted. The males bend the trunk of their body and in their knees position while moving forwardly as they play with their gongs as to execute feet the same feet figure. (Nan pinaha-whu pahurud winno erchan gway nagwa han whatu, manghi payla han kahugtup nan taro mi han luwhung, gway manghi payla han manghang ngatod jas nantachoran nan luta). (Min pasangu pasanud or the rocking step signifies our intimate relationship with the earth, acknowledging it as a provider and burial ground).

Figure I(b) is executed by females in parallel standing position. The females remain in their parallel standing position spread out hands, like the flapping wings of a fowl with palms facing outward and a little bit sway. while Figure I(d) performed by women, it consists of an oblique sideways upraise of the hands, fingers close together, palms up. The men begin going around the women as they play the gongs and perform these figures.

Figure II (a) is performed by both males and females by doing the side skip with bending of the bodies and knees dragging and going outward direction II(b) wherein females repeat Figure I(b) In Figure II(c) the males and females execute first Figure II(b) then proceed in a straight line formation while executing the same figure in place.

For Figure III(a) the males and females set themselves on their original line formation. The males to continue playing gongs with the same footwork while the females repeat figure I(b) Lastly, the females insert at the back of the males with the basic movement as arms open like a flipping wings, while males take the lead for the females to follow as to form one straight line to exit.

The different figures executed in dancing pattong convey several communicative meanings. The Min pasangu pasanud (rocking step likened to a rooster’s movement) and mintilttil-ay (skip with bending of the bodies and knees dragging and going outward direction) signify the Applai’ intimate relationship with the earth, acknowledging it as their provider and burial ground. The informants revealed that executing rocking step is symbolic of Applai groundedness in life which is close to sayings “keep your feet on the ground”. (Had nan i-gwa vi hanna Min Pahanwhu Pahurut ihun nan hija ran mangitachor hanna pijoon mi oon han whijag. Ahichog han whag-whaka gway "Itachor ru ran iim ha luta). (Executing the rocking step is symbolic of our groundedness in life which is close to sayings “keep your feet on the ground). It also a form of respect to the earth which is the source of life because the land is life – it provides all things needed for human survival. They acknowledge that the earth is their provider as it is their source of food. Also, they recognize that the earth is their burial ground and that they are one with it. There is consensus among the informants on the belief that human beings are



believed to be rooted in the earth from the moment of their conception, and that this connection must be severed after death. It's a never-ending cycle; as one person dies and is buried, another is born.

On the other side, the pagdippa (a standing stance that resembles a bird's wings being spread) represents autonomy and individuality. The sources stated that birds are inherently suited for flight. The Applai see the birds as a symbol of their will to pursue lofty ideals and succeed in spite of the obstacles they may encounter along the way. A small number of our informants also said that their ancestors acknowledged birds as spiritual ambassadors and believed that birds are messengers from the underworld. They are the personification of calm, change, independence, and power. In this sense, the pattong dance's fluttering wings appear to be communicating with the Applai's departed forebears.

Meanwhile, ityag mu lim-am (raising hands obliquely sideward up, with fingers close together and palms facing upward) and tummayaw (arms open like a flipping wings) signify prayers offered to the great and supreme Deity. It was noted by the informants that raising hands in pattong is a way to approach their deities in prayer and supplication. It signifies reaching out to receive something requested. It is also indicative of thanksgiving especially so that pattong is a festivity and merry-making dance – glorifying the Supreme Being for the blessings and bounty obtained in life. Interestingly, the flapping of the wings signifies the Applai' freedom and independence. They consider themselves like the bird with wings which allows them to explore their world. One study participant has this to say: (Had nan pagdippa hija ra mangi pap-paila han kayan oon nanboha taku han ahin tatakura kapu tan chiavi ket kaya vi manghayat han pacha vi). (Pagdippa signifies freedom and independence because we are free-loving people).

### Costumes used and their communicative essence

Costumes and textiles have occupied a prominent place in the life of the Applai, since pre-historic times. They naturally utilized whatever materials which were conveniently available in their environment. Over time, the design of Applai costumes reflect the spirit, consciousness and the vibrancy of their community in which they live. The presence of the Applai costumes prove that clothes are natural part of their life and the use of accessories of their unclothed body is not ugly, on the contrary, it is beautiful and pleasing. (Had nan hihilupon mi, hija ran mangi paila gway oha ran hilup gway hija ran ahigtup nan whijag vi, ihun nawho ruchum gway ailijan han uchum gway ili. Uuharon mi ran ihun charan wharanghat tan karkaru vi maiparang nan kina wharun nan longag mi ancha hara vi). (Our costumes are reflections that clothes are natural part of our life like any other ethnic group. The use of accessories enhances the beauty of our bodies while dancing).

Results of interview reveal that the three traditional dances (pattong, takik, and tuppaya) are performed using the same costumes. In this section, the male and female costumes are discussed as well as the accessories used during the foregoing dances.

### Male Costumes

According to the informants, the males use ba-ag (G-string), regardless of socio-economic status. According to this data, the pattern and color of one's ba-ag can be utilized to tell one's socioeconomic status apart from that of the poor. Men with higher social and economic standing wear ba-ag with more color combination and more complex design. (Had nan arahi ran wha-er ususaron mi ket pijoo ra ipayla ran itatachor vi han whijag nan oha ay taku, ru whanang winnu apus. Had nan agwad mawhalin na ancha whanang chi charan agwad nan wharu ran kuray ra gway maijannatup han ila ancha langa ra). (The type of ba-ag used is a statement of one's class in the community. Its design and color would distinguish the rich from the poor. Men with higher social and economic standing wear ba-ag with more color combination and more complex design).



Figure 1. The baag and accessories as the primary costume of Applai men in their dances

The ba-ag serves the primary function of hiding a man's privates. The ba-ag, a long loincloth woven by hand, is worn wrapped around the waist to keep it in place. The typical dimensions are 2.5 meters in length and 0.5 meters in width. It's worn with a belt-like loop around the legs and twisted back over the back loop above the buttocks so that it hangs in two rectangles in front of and behind the waist.

Red is the dominant color of the ba-ag, according to the informants. Among the Applais, red symbolizes bravery, independence, war and blood. (Had nan Chilag hija ran manghi junnura han uuharon mi. Kapu tan hija ran mangi papayla han kina turod, mano-ohaan, lawhan, jas chara vi). (Red is a dominant color in our costume. This is because it symbolizes bravery, independence, war, and blood). According to the interviewees, the color red is symbolic of bravery because of the group's history of engaging in headhunting. Headhunting was practiced primarily as a means of protecting their land against invaders who disregarded their sovereignty. The Applai' characteristic of being a warrior or who enjoys independence in their home is also represented by the color red. The black in the ba-ag represents the spirit of their ancestors and the earth, complementing the red. All of our informants agreed that wearing black is a way to honor their heritage and express gratitude to the people who gave them life. Interestingly, the older male informants mentioned that the ba-ag is more than just clothing; it may also be used as a pocket. At the bottom of their ba-g, some men keep their pipe, tobacco, matches, betel nut, and flint.

Males also wear vest which is exclusively used by those who come from higher social status. Not all have the means to buy the fabrics used for the vest thus, the vest is a show of social delineation among men in the tribe. Vest are also inherited from their parents as they are passed on as a treasure from generation to another. However, in the modern time, those who have the means buy their vest in Tabuk, Baguio and other provinces in Cordillera Administrative Region. The vest is worn by men without a shirt in it. Notably, the shoulders of the vest lie on men's body. The vest is V-shaped and reaches waist level. When not used, the Applai keep their vest in a wooden cabinet called "caban". Like the ba-ag red is also the dominant color of the vest.

### Female Costumes

The three traditional dances are performed by women using tapis, also called as lufid. Tapis is used by women of all classes. You wear a tapis by wrapping it around your waist and tying the ends together to keep it in place. The typical length of this enormous rectangular piece of woven clothing is three to four feet, and its typical width is also three to five feet.



Figure 2. Applai women wear the tapis or sometimes known as lufid in their dances

Tapis of the costumes used are inherited from their parents. These are specially designed and handwoven clothing. The designs are mostly red, black and white, two other important colors in their culture, interspersed in red. The Applai people associate the color red with boldness, freedom, fighting, and blood. In contrast, black

represents prohibited topics or matters concerning the Applai ancestors' spirits. This is the spirit of the age (Had da whoran khitit hija jaran ran mangipa payla han ahvin, Karu chachi mijan natup han ispiritu nan appapu vi yay nerpas moy). (The color black is often used to represent taboo topics or topics associated with ancestral spirits. When black color is used in burial ceremonies, it is used as a social status delineator. Usually, the black color is associated with these prayer rituals because black is mysterious, godly and important. Ancestor worship is weighty, sacred, mysterious, heavenly and not something ordinary like humans. Like other ancient culture, the Applai believe that when one passes away to the underworld, one must be buried by performing a special ritual. There are varied designs on the red costumes and they all represent the material things or natural things that this culture possesses. These designs include mountains, to symbolize their natural habitat. They believe that trees, mountains, rivers, rocks and everything in nature has a spirit and must be respected.

Another design embedded in the Applai costume is the sword because they like to embellish their bravery and pride in being battle-hardened by tribal wars. Frog and snake are common designs in their red native costumes to signify the circle of life. These animals are representatives of other things in nature that play important roles not just in the natural environment but to people's lives. Another embedded design in the "tapis" is a man-like figure linked together to symbolize their "ug-ug-bo" or "bayanihan" or coming together, sharing together and helping each other attitude towards each other. One thing a person from an outside culture will notice is that Applai are very ethnocentric and even though one is not family, they all help each other within their own culture. Again, these reflect the red color symbolism which to them, is "blood" or genealogy. The culture and demeanor of the wearer's tribe are reflected in the design of their tapis.

In wearing the tapis, first, set the tapis and open by holding tip to tip part. Second, start wrapping it around waist starting at the back portion and as to wrap it, left over right. Significantly, the opening must be at the left side of the waist. And then, wrap over the belt on top of the tapis on waist level. In using the belt, called wakes, first, set the belt by holding both ends. Second, start wrapping it around the waist starting at the front portion on belly part as to wrap it. The tightening of it will be at the back portion so the excess of the belt will fall like a tail at the back of the body.

### **Male Accessories**

In dancing, Applai males use Lingling-O and suklang. However, they are exclusively used by males who are of higher status or a male who is brave enough to catch wild boar or crocodile in the jungle during hunting. (Had nan linglingwho anchahurang, hija ran usussaron nan agwad turod na ay lalarai, gway uvoy mangharup pas ugha, ancha hilay onad whilig nu panag aarup). (Lingling-O and suklang are exclusively used by males who are of higher status or a male who is brave enough to catch wild boar or crocodile in the jungle during hunting).

The lingling-o used by Applai men and women is used as either an earring or a necklace pendant by the Applai. The lingling-o for men is made of the teeth of wild boar or crocodile or tusks of a particular animal. The size of the lingling-o depends on the sizes of the teeth or tusks extracted from the hunted wild boar. Not all have the courage to find one and catch to extract the teeth of a particular animal that is why not all men possess it. The color of the teeth (white or cream) depends on how old it was and how many generations it has been used.

Meanwhile, the lingling-o for women is made of stone such as gold, silver, jade and bronze and it used either as an earring or a necklace. It is usually a double-headed pendant or amulet which is considered as a fertility symbol and symbol of prosperity and love. This accessory is an heirloom that is handed down from one generation to another. Mothers consider it as one of the most precious accessory that they can pass on to their daughters.

However, only male Applai wear the distinctive suklang hat. The hat, made of basket weave, is fastened in place at the nape of the neck with a cord and is typically concealed by the wearer's front hair. Rattan is used in its construction, and it is embellished with red bamboo and yellow reeds. Men wear the suklang on their arms, particularly when out hunting. This fits up with the common notion that while shooting wild boars, the animal's spirit enters the hunter. Suklang comes in a wide variety of shapes and sizes, and its design, materials, and style all indicate the Applai man's position in society. The Applai place a high value on suklang, hence it is often passed down through generations.

### **Instruments used in the dances**

In performing patpong, takik and tuppaya dances, the use of gong or gangsa is common. According to the informants, one complete set of gong has different sizes and sounds and it is tuned to different notes, depending on the occasion. Notably, it is played to make the event become lively. (Oha ay whu-u gway kangha agwad irah hawhali nan uvarajan, jas khangha, jas had nan ihura agwad nan man hawhalijan nan mahurhurut rut han oha ay lagha jas ayyajam. Hija ran ayaylan cha gway hija karu luvaghaan nan oopgwa). (One complete set of gong has different sizes and sounds and it is tuned to different notes, depending on the occasion. Notably, it is played to make the event become lively).

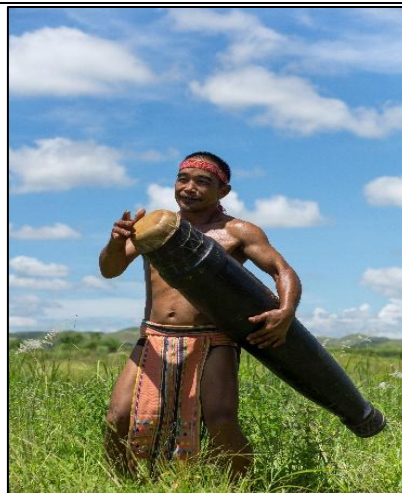


The Applai gong is a flat that is played in an ensemble of two or more gongs of varying sizes. Each piece of gong is made of bronze or brass depending on the status of the owner. Applai males play the gong using their bare hands while in a sitting and standing position with a single gong resting on their lap.



**Figure 3. The Applai gansa is played in an ensemble of two or more gongs of varying sizes**

Solibao is another instrument designed for takik dance. It's a hollow wooden drum with a skin made from pig, cow, horse, or reptile that's struck with the palm of the hand. The solibao, like the gong, is exclusively male and is typically played alongside the gangsa and the metal tong as part of an ensemble.



**Figure 4: The solibao is a hollow wooden drum covered with pig, cow, horse, or lizard skin**

The third instrument used by the Applai is the metal tong which is made of any metal available in the area. According to the informants, males primarily play this instrument to create another harmony by striking two stainless steel of approximately 7 inches. Customarily, the metal tong is played along with the gangsa and the solibao in takik dance.



**Figure 5: The metal tong is made of any metal available in the area to create another harmony in an ensemble**

The communicative essence of gong in the lives of the Applai is valuable. The informants are unanimous in saying that the gong symbolizes dynamic cooperation of functional harmony. (Had nan kangha mangi pappayla han takus paghahawhalijan gway manghi-ooha han ma oopgwa gway agwad nan manoohaan nanlohan. (The gong symbolizes our people's dynamic cooperation of functional harmony). The gong, which comes in various sizes and are beaten by different men to provide the rhythm along with the solibao and metal tong, signifies the cooperation and oneness of the Applai. The distinct tempo, beat or musical rendition of each man playing the gong, solibao and metal tong reflect the values of the Applai to collaborate in realizing a common goal. This collaborative effort is seen in hunting, planting, war and different festivities where everyone is involved. Significantly, this value of cooperation is evident when dancing the pattong, takik, and tuppaya. As claimed by one participant: Playing the different sizes of gong together with the solibao and metal tong reflects the realization of unity in diversity in our community.

In addition, the Applai's three dances, which feature the gong, solibao, and metal tong, signify nobility and thanksgiving during significant events like weddings, family reunions, healing of the sick, final rituals of a burial, or the acknowledgement of a prominent individual in the community.. It demonstrates the greatness and majesty of the Applai in celebrating life from its birth to death. The informants expressed that Applai can transmit universal life energy to any place in the universe through sound of the gong and other instruments that they use. They believe that these instruments have the ability to renovate the body's cells for good health, to empower intuition and bravery, as well as to liberate one from fear of death. The synergy tones of the varied instruments mirror the state of their body, emotions, mind and spirit resulting in a happy and abundant life. In a nutshell, "holism" is expressed in Applai culture whenever members of the tribe combine two or more vibrating musical instruments to create a new sound.

#### **Educational Policy Implications**

Based on the findings of this study, there are several educational implications that can be drawn for arts and dance educators. These include:

**Integrating Indigenous dances into the arts and dance curriculum:** The Applai dances can be used as a rich resource for educators to teach students about cultural traditions and values, and to promote appreciation and understanding of Indigenous cultures. By integrating these dances into the curriculum, educators can provide students with a broader perspective on the diversity of human culture.

**Teaching the significance of costumes, props, and musical instruments in dance performance:** The study highlights the importance of costumes, props, and musical instruments in conveying the identity and heritage of the Applai tribe. Educators can use this information to teach students about the cultural significance of these elements in dance performance, and how they can be used to communicate specific meanings and messages.

**Encouraging students to explore their own cultural heritage:** By studying the dances and traditions of the Applai tribe, students can be inspired to explore their own cultural heritage and understand the importance of preserving their own cultural traditions.

**Fostering a sense of community:** The study reveals that the Applai dances play a significant role in fostering a sense of community among the tribe. Educators can use this knowledge to create opportunities for students to engage in collaborative dance and music activities, which can help foster a sense of community and belonging.

Overall, this study highlights the importance of cultural education and the need to integrate Indigenous knowledge into the arts and dance curriculum. Educators can use the findings of this study to promote a deeper understanding of Indigenous cultures and traditions, and to foster a sense of appreciation and respect for cultural diversity.

#### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Applai dances are treated with utmost importance as it conveys their identity and heritage as people. The three dances have basic movements called the Min pasangu pasanud (rocking step likened to a rooster's movement) and mintilti-ay (skip with bending of the bodies and knees dragging and going outward direction). Also, the pagdippa (parallel standing position with spread out hand and flapping wings (bird's movement), the ityag mu lim-am (raising hands obliquely sideward up, with fingers close together and palms facing upward) and tummayaw (arms open like a flipping wings). These movement reflects the relationship with the earth - acknowledging it as a provider and burial ground. The costumes worn by men and women who perform pattong, takik, and tuppaya are the same. Men wear ba-ag while women wear tapis. The designs are mostly red, black and white, two other important colors in their culture, interspersed in red and this signified numerous things about who they are as a tribe. These costumes articulate their joyfulness, aggressiveness, freedom, animism, and intimate connection with nature.

The basic musical instruments used in the three dances are the gangsa (ensemble of two or more gongs of varying sizes), solibao (a hollow wooden drum covered with animal skin) and metal tong. The pattong, takik, and tuppaya have 2/4 time signature. There are accented notes in the rhythms of the three dances as shown by the accent marks. The driving forces in the maintenance and transmission of Applai dances are (a) dance performance in different occasions; (b) Gimung, (c) Advice of elders and parents, and (d) formal instruction. These instruments reveal their harmonious relationship as people as well their strong connection with the physical world and realm of spirituality.

Given these findings and conclusions, it is suggested that the Applai be given assistance in transmitting their dances through the establishment of a School of Living Traditions and other forms of support from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Local Government Unit of Solana, and private and civic groups with advocacy of preserving indigenous dances. Furthermore, in order to ensure the survival of their culture and traditions, the young and educated Applai members should aid in documenting and spreading their dances via accessible technology and online platforms. Finally, the Department of Education and other educational institutions can play an important role in ensuring the continued existence of the Applai dances by effectively incorporating them into the curriculum and creating instructional materials for subjects like MAPEH and Araling Panlipunan, which feature prominently in the dances.

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