

'What's in a step if not a story?' Cultivating Individual Interest and Engagement in Philippine Traditional Dance for Cultural Continuity: A Quasi-Experimental Study in Physical Education

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Abstract²: This quasi-experimental study examined how pedagogical framing influences students' motivation and engagement in Philippine traditional dances. Ninety undergraduates enrolled in Physical Education (PATH-Fit 4: Philippine Traditional Dances) from a state university in the Philippines were purposively assigned into control (n = 45) and experimental (n = 45) groups. Both classes followed the full syllabus, which included orientation, classifications, fundamental steps, drills, practice and culminating performances of two major dances. The control group received conventional instruction that emphasized lectures, memorization and drills. The experimental group, while covering the same content, was taught using individual interest-based techniques such as icebreakers, storytelling, contextual framing and reflective questioning. Pre- and post-test surveys measured individual interest and study engagement. Independent samples *t*-tests confirmed baseline equivalence, and subsequent ANCOVA and 2 × 2 mixed-design ANOVA revealed significantly greater improvements for the experimental group. Findings suggest that individual interest-based techniques effectively foster lasting individual interest and sustained engagement, supporting cultural continuity through dance education.

Keywords: Culturally sustaining pedagogy, individual interest, Philippine traditional dances, physical education, study engagement, quasi-experimental design

The preservation of intangible cultural heritage, such as Philippine traditional dances, remains an essential cultural endeavor (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2003). Integrating these practices into education ensures that transmission occurs across generations (UNESCO, 2017). Yet, the role of traditional dances within contemporary curricula remains contested (Pastera, 2024). Although these art forms are formally included in physical education programs, they are often reduced to technical routines or historical artifacts (Liu et al., 2024; Zhang, 2019). This reduction limits opportunities for learners to form meaningful and personal connections to the cultural narratives, values and artistry that these dances embody. To strengthen both cultural preservation and student learning, this study shifts the focus from maintaining form to motivating engagement. Specifically, it situates the teaching of Philippine

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traditional dance within research on individual interest and student engagement, linking cultural continuity with motivational science.

Although interest has long been recognized as a determinant of engagement in physical education (Chen & Wang, 2017), applying motivational theory to cultural movement contexts remains underdeveloped. Existing scholarship often assumes that dance instruction naturally sustains cultural identity and participation, yet such assumptions lack theoretical explanation. Competing motivational perspectives provide different mechanisms. For instance, self-determination theory (SDT) emphasizes fulfillment of autonomy and competence needs (Deci & Ryan, 1985), expectancy-value theory foregrounds perceived importance and usefulness (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), and situated learning theory positions cultural practices as socially embedded learning experiences (Lave & Wenger, 1991). However, the interplay of these mechanisms when traditional dance operates simultaneously as heritage and physical activity remains unclear. Addressing this theoretical gap requires not only demonstrating engagement outcomes but also critically examining how culturally responsive pedagogy activates interest development processes beyond generic assumptions about heritage-based motivation.

Responding to this theoretical need, motivational science on interest offers a useful lens. Within this motivational lens, interest is recognized as a central driver of sustained participation and learning (Harackiewicz et al., 2016; Lobo et al., 2022; Renninger & Hidi, 2015). Individual interest is conceptualized as a relatively enduring psychological state that develops when learners perceive value, meaning, and self-relevance in an activity (Guo & Fryer, 2025; Renninger & Hidi, 2011). In physical education, recent scholarship has demonstrated how interest contributes to study engagement, persistence, and broader well-being (Deveci Şirin & Şirin, 2015; Chen & Wang, 2017; Lobo et al., 2023). However, most existing investigations have been correlational or regression-based, focusing on measurement and prediction rather than on interventions that actively cultivate interest. This limitation positions the present study to apply and contextually expand Roure et al.'s (2021) tripartite model of individual interest. The tripartite model conceptualizes individual interest as comprising three interrelated factors: *positive affect and willingness to reengage* (PAWR), *stored utility value* (SUV), and *stored attainment value and knowledge-seeking intentions* (SAVKSI) (Roure et al., 2021; Roure & Lentillon-Kaestner, 2022). Rather than employing the model solely for measurement, this study integrates these dimensions into teaching strategies, such as storytelling and interactive activities to stimulate PAWR, contextual framing to emphasize SUV, and reflective questioning to deepen SAVKSI. This approach not only operationalizes the model's constructs through culturally responsive pedagogy but also demonstrates its adaptability beyond traditional physical education contexts.

Therefore, this study implemented and evaluated an intervention grounded in interest-based teaching of Philippine traditional dances in higher education. By contrasting a conventional teaching approach with one enriched through affective, contextual and reflective strategies, the research moves from merely predicting the effects of interest to actively cultivating it. The quasi-experimental design investigated whether individual interest can be strengthened and whether such enhancement influences study engagement. In doing so, the study applies Roure et al.'s (2021) model beyond replication, providing empirical evidence that integrates motivational theory, pedagogy and cultural preservation in the Philippine higher education setting.

Review of Related Literature

Individual Interest as a Motivational Construct

Individual interest is defined as a relatively enduring predisposition to reengage with a particular activity or domain that learners perceive as meaningful and valuable (Bautista et al., 2023; Knekta et al., 2020). It differs from situational interest, which is short-term and often triggered externally by novelty or surprise (Ainley, 2010), because individual interest develops over time through repeated experiences that foster enjoyment, recognition of utility and personal relevance (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010). Roure et al. (2021) advanced a tripartite model of individual interest in physical education, which has since informed research in movement-based contexts. The model identifies three factors: *positive affect and willingness to reengage* (PAWR), *stored-utility value* (SUV), and *stored attainment value and knowledge-seeking intentions* (SAVksi).

In the context of Philippine traditional dances, these factors can manifest in nuanced ways. PAWR may be observed when students derive emotional satisfaction and a sense of cultural pride from participating in movements and performances (Lobo, 2023), thus cultivating a desire to reengage in similar activities beyond the classroom. SUV becomes evident when learners recognize that engaging in traditional dances contributes not only to their physical fitness and motor coordination but also to fulfilling academic requirements and enhancing cultural literacy (Lobo, 2023), thereby situating dance as both heritage and a practical resource for personal development. Meanwhile, SAVksi reflects deeper internalization, wherein students begin to regard traditional dances as integral to their identity and worldview (Lobo, 2023). These perspectives motivate them to seek further knowledge about the cultural narratives, values and histories embedded in these practices, extending their engagement from mere performance toward a more profound connection with cultural continuity. Together, these examples illustrate that individual interest in traditional dances is not static but gradually shaped by affective experiences, judgments of usefulness and identity-related meanings.

Theoretical Foundations of Interest Development

The tripartite model of individual interest is supported by established motivational theories. Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) emphasizes that learners develop stronger interest when activities provide autonomy, competence and relatedness, directly aligning with PAWR. Expectancy-Value Theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) explains SUV by highlighting that learners are more willing to sustain effort when they perceive a task as valuable or beneficial to future goals. SAVksi resonates with self-schema theory (Markus, 1977), which posits that learners internalize certain domains into their sense of self, thereby motivating ongoing knowledge-seeking and sustained engagement. These theoretical anchors suggest that fostering interest requires more than exposure to content. It depends on pedagogical environments that evoke enjoyment, highlight relevance and connect learning to personal and cultural identity (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Eccles & Wigfield, 2002; Markus, 1977). Although tripartite model of Roure et al. (2021) has been widely studied in physical education, its application to traditional and cultural dance remains underexplored, leaving an important gap at the intersection of motivation, education and cultural preservation.

Study Engagement in Educational and Arts Context

Student engagement has been a central construct in educational psychology, often conceptualized through three primary dimensions: behavioral, cognitive and emotional (Fredricks et al., 2004). Behavioral engagement involves participation, persistence and effort (Hospel et al., 2016); cognitive engagement refers to investment in learning, strategy use and self-regulation (Pohl, 2020); and emotional engagement captures feelings of enjoyment, interest and belonging (Abulela et al., 2023). These dimensions underscore that engagement is multifaceted, linking action, thought and affect (Fredricks et al., 2016). Building on this foundation, Schaufeli et al. (2002) introduced the concept of work engagement, which Carmona-Halty et al. (2019) later adapted to academic settings with the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale for Student (UWES-9S). This measure emphasizes *vigor*, *dedication* and *absorption* (Carmona-Halty et al., 2019). Vigor reflects a sense of vitality, energy and persistence that enables students to sustain effort in their learning activities (Woreta, 2024). Dedication refers to feelings of enthusiasm, significance and pride that accompany meaningful participation (Meng & Zhang, 2023). Absorption captures a state of deep concentration and immersion, where students become fully engaged in the task and lose awareness of the passage of time (Amerstorfer & Freiin Von Münster-Kistner, 2021). Together, these dimensions portray study engagement as a holistic construct that encompasses physical energy, emotional investment and cognitive involvement (Carmona-Halty et al., 2019).

In movement-based education, engagement manifests in ways that extend beyond physical participation, encompassing reflective understanding of cultural meaning and deep involvement in embodied practice. Philippine research has consistently demonstrated that individual interest predicts engagement in general physical education with a large data set (Lobo et al., 2023) and domains such as martial arts (Lobo, 2025b), gymnastics (Lobo, 2025c), Philippine traditional dances (Lobo, 2023) and hip-hop (Lobo, 2025a). However, despite the strength of this relationship, most existing work has been correlational, leaving the causal mechanisms untested. In the arts, where cultural and symbolic meaning play central roles, understanding how pedagogical strategies can actively foster engagement remains an important but underexplored area.

Pedagogical Strategies for Cultivating Interest

Although interest has frequently been treated as an outcome variable, emerging literature indicates that it can also be deliberately cultivated through pedagogy (Fletcher & Ni Chróinín, 2022). Harackiewicz and Hulleman (2010) demonstrated that utility-value interventions significantly increase both interest and achievement. In the arts, storytelling has long been identified as a mechanism for emotional resonance, making abstract concepts meaningful by embedding them in human and cultural narratives (Landrum et al., 2019). Meanwhile, contextual framing enhances relevance by situating content within everyday practices, rituals or community events (Flusberg et al., 2024). Moreover, interactive activities such as games, partner synchrony tasks and embodied challenges align with constructivist principles of learning through co-creation and experiential participation (Kolb, 2015). Lastly, reflective questioning encourages learners to articulate cultural values and personal insights, which strengthens self-schema and deepens internalization of the activity (Chang, 2019). Taken together, these strategies correspond with the tripartite model of individual interest as framed in this study. Storytelling and interactive games stimulate PAWR, contextual framing highlights SUV, and reflective questioning supports SAVKSI by embedding dance into self-understanding. Yet, despite their potential, these strategies have

rarely been systematically evaluated in the teaching of Philippine traditional dances, leaving it unclear how effectively they can serve both educational and cultural preservation goals.

Research Gap and Hypotheses

The reviewed literature highlights the importance of individual interest and engagement as interrelated constructs shaping how learners connect with educational and artistic practices. Prior studies in Philippine physical education have shown that individual interest significantly predicts engagement, yet most have relied on regression-based designs and self-report surveys, leaving causal mechanisms underexamined. In the arts, empirical interventions remain scarce, despite theoretical arguments that meaning-making pedagogies can sustain participation in cultural practices. Addressing this gap, the present study employed a quasi-experimental design contrasting conventional instruction with individual interest-based teaching strategies. It is hypothesized that students taught through these strategies will demonstrate higher post-test scores in individual interest and study engagement than those taught through conventional methods.

Methods

Participants and Sampling Technique

This study examined how pedagogical framing, traditional versus individual interest-based teaching of Philippine traditional dances, affected students' individual interest and study engagement over 16 weeks. A quasi-experimental pretest–posttest non-equivalent groups design was used, appropriate when random assignment is not feasible in authentic classroom settings (Campbell et al., 1963). The participants were undergraduate students enrolled in PATH-FIT (Physical Activity Towards Health and Fitness) 4: *Philippine Traditional Dances* during Academic Year 2024–2025 at a state university in the Philippines. A total of 90 students participated (control = 45; experimental = 45).

Selection was conducted through purposive sampling, as the groups were intact classes officially enrolled in the course. Both classes were handled by the same instructor and followed identical syllabi, learning outcomes and assessment criteria to ensure consistency in content coverage, pacing and evaluation procedures. Although complete control of classroom variables was not possible, several steps were taken to minimize potential confounding factors such as prior dance experience, instructor enthusiasm and peer dynamics. Both classes were conducted under identical schedules and learning environments, and these measures collectively strengthened the internal validity of the findings within the constraints of a quasi-experimental design.

Lastly, even though random assignment was not feasible due to scheduling policies, baseline equivalence was verified through pretest measures of individual interest and study engagement, confirming no significant initial differences between groups. This approach preserved ecological validity while maintaining methodological control consistent with quasi-experimental standards (Campbell et al., 1963; Creswell & Gutterman, 2019). Demographic information (age and sex) was also gathered during the pretest to describe sample composition: 40 students (44.4%) were male and 50 (55.6%) were female, with ages ranging from 19 to 21 years ($M = 19.96$).

Instruments

During the pre-test phase, a short demographic questionnaire was used to collect information on the participants' age and sex for sample description. Individual interest in physical education was measured using the *Students' Individual Interest in Physical Education Questionnaire* developed by Roure et al. (2021). The instrument consisted of 14 items across three factors: *positive affect and willingness to reengage* (PAWR), *stored-utility value* (SUV) and *stored attainment value and knowledge-seeking intentions* (SAVKSI), rated on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*), with higher scores reflecting stronger individual interest. Previous studies have reported robust psychometric properties, and in the present study Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .75 to .86 across the factors. Study engagement was assessed using the *Utrecht Work Engagement Scale–Student Version (UWES-9S)* adapted by Carmona-Halty et al. (2019). This instrument consists of nine items covering three components: *vigor*, *dedication* and *absorption*, rated on a 7-point scale from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*always/every day*). The UWES-9S has been validated in various cultural contexts, and in this study, it showed acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .81. For this particular instrument, a composite score was used.

Procedures

The intervention was carried out over 16 weeks in accordance with the approved syllabus for PATH-FIT 4: Philippine Traditional Dances (Table 1). In the first week, pre-test measures were administered to both the control and experimental classes prior to orientation and the start of instruction. The control class received conventional teaching that emphasized lectures, demonstrations, memorization, drills and the performance of *Tiklos* and *Gayong-gayong*. The experimental class, while covering the same content, was provided with additional enhancements such as icebreakers, guessing games, storytelling, partner challenges and reflective questioning. For instance, *Tiklos* was introduced through a bayanihan narrative, while *Gayong-gayong* was contextualized through its festive Visayan origins, supported by synchrony tasks and cultural reflection activities. The detailed structure of the intervention for both groups is summarized in Table 1.

In the final week, after the class performances of either *Tiklos* or *Gayong-gayong*, post-test measures were administered. The control class concluded with the performance task alone, whereas the experimental class also articulated the cultural values acquired and their relevance to Filipino identity. Although both groups followed the same syllabus and content coverage, the difference was characterized by the pedagogical framing. The control class receiving traditional teaching and the experimental class receiving individual interest-based teaching. The same instruments were administered during both the pre-test and post-test phases. Only students who completed both the pre-test and post-test measures were included in the final analysis. Occasional absences during instructional sessions did not affect inclusion, provided that participants were present in the required assessment points.

Table 1

Intervention Protocol: Traditional vs. Individual Interest-Based Teaching of Philippine traditional dance across 16-weeks (One-semester)

| Week | Topic | Control Group (Traditional teaching) | Experimental Group (Individual interest-based teaching) |
|-------|---|---|--|
| 1 | Orientation (Pre-testing) | Teacher presents VMGO, syllabus, rules and grading system. | Same lecture plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Icebreaker where students introduce themselves using a folk-inspired movement (clap, bow, or step); - Instructor links VMGO to cultural preservation; - Students were asked <i>“What comes to mind when you hear the words ‘folk dance’?”</i> |
| 2-3 | Introduction to Philippine traditional dances and Classifications | Teacher provides basic definition, history and classifications of folk dances; students recite and take quiz. | Same lecture plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Folk-dance map” guessing activity (students identify regional origins, then corrected by teacher); - Instructor connects classifications to real-life contexts (e.g., fiestas, rituals); - Short trivia shared for each classification to spark curiosity. |
| 4-5 | Suites of Philippine traditional dances, dance terms | Teacher presents the five suites (countryside, Western-influenced, Cordillera, tribal, Mindanao) and explains dance terms; students memorize and take quiz. | Same content plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Movement charades” where students guess terms from Instructor’s gestures; - Instructor explains why correct terms ensure authenticity; - One step is demonstrated and students asked: “Which suite does this belong to?” before answer is given. |
| 5-6 | Fundamental Dance Steps (2/4 and 3/4 time signature) | Teacher introduces steps in duple and triple time; students observe, practice and perform drills. | Same steps plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - “Echo clap” activity where students mirror steps with claps/stomps; - Instructor explains how steps build coordination, rhythm and agility; - Curiosity planted with: <i>“Which dances might use these steps?”</i> |
| 7-8 | Fundamental steps (4/4, arm and feet positions) | Teacher introduces steps and arm/feet positions; students repeat and drill. | Same steps plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner “mirror game” to make practice interactive; - Instructor explains benefits of posture and balance; - Previews with: <i>“You’ll encounter these positions in Tiklos and Gayong-gayong.”</i> |
| 9 | Midterm | | |
| 10-13 | Tiklos | Teacher provides a short background on Tiklos (origin and meaning), then demonstrates the steps and | Same dance plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Instructor uses storytelling to describe Tiklos as a Waray communal practice from Leyte symbolizing bayanihan |

| Week | Topic | Control Group (Traditional teaching) | Experimental Group (Individual interest-based teaching) |
|-------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| 14-16 | Gayong-gayong | patterns. Students practice and perform. | (farmers helping each other in work, then feasting and dancing); - Explains how music was also used to call workers back to the fields; - Classmates provide rhythmic clapping during practice; - Students reflect on: <i>“What Filipino value did you notice or experience while performing Tiklos?”</i> |
| 17 | Practice time | Teacher provides a short background on Gayong-gayong (origin and meaning), then demonstrates the steps and patterns. Students practice and perform. | Same dance plus: - Instructor narrates the Visayan origin in Aklan and Capiz, telling the playful feast legend of Masiong and Gayong; |
| 18 | Final performance (Post-testing) | Groups present selected folk dances as final output (either Tiklos or Gayong-gayong) | - Highlights it as a recreational dance reflecting humor and festivity; - Students do a partner synchrony challenge (timing for 8 counts); - Reflection question: <i>“How does this dance show Filipino playfulness and community spirit?”</i> |
| | | | Same output plus: - Rhythmic applause after each group to reinforce enjoyment; - Instructor reminds students of the relevance of folk dances in community and school events; - Before performing, each group shares one cultural value they learned and answers: <i>“What does performing this traditional dance reveal about you as a Filipino student?”</i> |

Note: Weekly topics are based on the approved syllabus stipulated for the instructor teaching Philippine Traditional Dances. The enhancements indicated under the experimental group column reflect the individual interest-based strategies (PAWR, SUV, SAVKSI) integrated into instruction for research purposes.

To ensure fidelity of implementation, all instructional activities were guided by the written intervention protocol (Table 1), which outlined weekly objectives, content coverage and corresponding strategies. Both classes were facilitated by the same instructor following identical session plans and time allocations to maintain consistency. After each meeting, class progress and any minor variations (e.g., pacing adjustments or attendance-related delays) were documented in a reflective implementation log. These records verified that all planned strategies were delivered as designed and in the intended sequence.

Data analysis

Prior to statistical analysis, the dataset was screened for outliers and missing values, and no extreme or incomplete cases were identified. Data were analyzed using SPSS version 29 (MacOS). Normality was assessed, with all values falling within acceptable thresholds for skewness (± 2) and kurtosis (± 7) (Kim, 2013). Homogeneity of variances was evaluated using Levene's test (Gastwirth et al., 2009) and was met for most dependent variables, except for study engagement at pre-test ($p = .038$), where adjusted values were interpreted. Independent samples t-tests were used to establish baseline equivalence. As PAWR showed a significant pre-test difference, ANCOVA was applied to adjust post-test PAWR scores using pre-test values as the covariate. For the remaining variables, a 2×2 mixed-design ANOVA was conducted with time (pre vs. post) as the within-subjects factor and group (control vs. experimental) as the between-subjects factor. With only two measurement occasions, the assumption of sphericity is inherently satisfied (Field, 2018), which was confirmed by Mauchly's test ($W = 1.00, p = 1.00$). Although Box's M was significant in some cases, equal sample sizes preserved the robustness of multivariate tests (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). Effect sizes were reported as Cohen's d for baseline t-tests and partial η^2 for ANCOVA and mixed ANOVA. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

Ethical statement

The study was reviewed and approved by the Local Research Ethics Committee of the College of Sports, Exercise and Recreation with protocol number CSER-CRDU-2025-043. All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection, and confidentiality of responses was strictly maintained. Participation was voluntary, and students were informed that they could withdraw at any point without academic or personal consequences.

Results

Before conducting the main analyses, independent samples t -tests were performed to examine baseline equivalence between the control and experimental groups (Table 2). This procedure ensured that any posttest differences could be attributed to the intervention rather than to pre-existing disparities. Results revealed a significant baseline difference in PAWR ($t(88) = 2.47, p = .016, d = 0.52, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.10, 0.94]$), with the control group ($\bar{x} = 3.06 \pm 0.38$) scoring higher than the experimental group ($\bar{x} = 2.87 \pm 0.34$). In contrast, no significant differences were found for SUV ($t(88) = -1.04, p = .302, d = -0.22, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.63, 0.20]$), (control: 2.97 ± 0.45 ; experimental: 3.06 ± 0.39); SAVKSI ($t(88) = -0.47, p = .638, d = -0.10, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.51, 0.31]$), (control: 2.98 ± 0.31 ; experimental: 3.01 ± 0.37); overall individual interest ($t(88) = 0.51, p = .612, d = 0.11, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.31, 0.52]$), (control: 3.00 ± 0.18 ; experimental: 2.98 ± 0.18); and study engagement ($t(88) = -0.48, p = .636, d = -0.10, 95\% \text{ CI } [-0.51, 0.31]$), (control: 2.99 ± 0.66 ; experimental: 3.05 ± 0.49). Except for PAWR, no other pre-test differences were significant, indicating baseline equivalence across groups.

Table 2*Independent Samples t-Test Comparing Baseline (Pre-Test) Scores Between Groups*

| Variable | Group | $\bar{x} \pm SD$ | $t(df)$ | p -value | Cohen's d 95% [LL, UL] |
|---------------------|--------------|------------------|-----------|------------|-----------------------------|
| PAWR | Control | $3.06 \pm .38$ | 2.47(88) | .016 | $d = .520$ [.10, .94] |
| | Experimental | $2.87 \pm .34$ | | | |
| SUV | Control | $2.97 \pm .45$ | -1.04(88) | .302 | $d = -.219$ [-.63, .20] |
| | Experimental | $3.06 \pm .39$ | | | |
| SAVKSI | Control | $2.98 \pm .31$ | -.047(88) | .638 | $d = -.099$ [-.51, .31] |
| | Experimental | $3.01 \pm .37$ | | | |
| Individual interest | Control | $3.00 \pm .18$ | 0.51(88) | .612 | $d = .107$ [-.31, .52] |
| | Experimental | $2.98 \pm .18$ | | | |
| Study engagement | Control | $2.99 \pm .66$ | -0.48(88) | .636 | $d = -.100$ [-.51, .31] |
| | Experimental | $3.05 \pm .49$ | | | |

Note. Values are presented as $\bar{x} \pm SD$. Cohen's d is reported with 95% confidence intervals [LL, UL]. Significance is at $p < .05$ (2-tailed).

The ANCOVA results (Table 3) revealed a significant group effect on post-test PAWR scores after adjusting for pre-test levels ($F(1, 87) = 107.24, p < .001, \eta^2 p = .552$). Students in the experimental group (adjusted $\bar{x} = 3.68, SE = .04, 95\% CI [3.60, 3.76]$) demonstrated significantly higher positive affect and willingness to reengage than those in the control group (adjusted $\bar{x} = 3.08, SE = .04, 95\% CI [2.99, 3.16]$). The covariate (pre-test) also had a significant influence, ($F(1, 87) = 185.86, p < .001$), showing that initial baseline levels of PAWR predicted post-test outcomes. The overall model explained 73.1% of the variance in PAWR ($R^2 = .731$), underscoring a robust effect. These findings suggest that participation in Philippine traditional dance effectively enhanced students' emotional investment and readiness to persist, highlighting its value in cultivating enduring individual interest in Physical Education.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations and ANCOVA Results for Post-Test PAWR Scores Adjusted for Pre-Test Scores

| Group | N | Post-test $\bar{x} \pm SD$ | Adjusted \bar{x} (SE) | 95% CI [LL, UL] | |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|------------|
| Control | 45 | 3.18 ± 0.47 | 3.08 (.04) | [2.99, 3.16] | |
| Experimental | 45 | 3.58 ± 0.47 | 3.68 (.04) | [3.60, 3.76] | |
| Source | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | p -value |
| Corrected model | 16.923 | 2 | 8.462 | 118.291 | <.001 |
| Intercept | 0.032 | 1 | 0.032 | 0.452 | .503 |
| Pre_PAWR (covariate) | 13.295 | 1 | 13.295 | 185.863 | <.001 |
| Group | 7.671 | 1 | 7.671 | 107.244 | <.001 |
| Error | 6.223 | 87 | 0.072 | | |
| Total | 1050.734 | 90 | | | |
| Corrected total | 23.147 | 89 | | | |

Note. $R^2 = .731$, Adjusted $R^2 = .725$. Dependent variable: Post_PAWR. Covariate: Pre_PAWR.

The 2×2 mixed-design ANOVA revealed significant main and interaction effects across all study variables (Table 4). For SUV, results indicated significant main effects of time ($F(1, 88)$

$= 193.77, p < .001, \eta^2p = .688,$) and group ($F(1, 88) = 12.55, p < .001, \eta^2p = .125$), as well as a significant time \times group interaction ($F(1, 88) = 85.13, p < .001, \eta^2p = .492$). Descriptively, the control group showed only a modest gain from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 2.97 \pm 0.45$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.10 \pm 0.50$), whereas the experimental group demonstrated a more substantial increase from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 3.06 \pm 0.39$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.70 \pm 0.57$). In terms of SAVKSI, there were significant main effects of time ($F(1, 88) = 203.49, p < .001, \eta^2p = .698$) and group ($F(1, 88) = 15.02, p < .001, \eta^2p = .146$), with a significant interaction ($F(1, 88) = 94.95, p < .001, \eta^2p = .519$). Means revealed that the control group improved slightly from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 2.98 \pm 0.31$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.11 \pm 0.39$), while the experimental group progressed much more sharply from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 3.01 \pm 0.37$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.69 \pm 0.50$).

Meanwhile, overall individual interest results showed significant effects of time ($F(1, 88) = 581.96, p < .001, \eta^2p = .869$) and group ($F(1, 88) = 32.41, p < .001, \eta^2p = .269$) as well as a strong interaction effect ($F(1, 88) = 274.99, p < .001, \eta^2p = .758$). The control group exhibited a modest gain from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 3.00 \pm 0.18$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.13 \pm 0.23$), while the experimental group recorded a much larger increase from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 2.98 \pm 0.18$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.65 \pm 0.29$). Finally, in relation to study engagement, there were significant main effects of time ($F(1, 88) = 277.33, p < .001, \eta^2p = .759$), and group ($F(1, 88) = 14.92, p < .001, \eta^2p = .145$), along with a robust time \times group interaction ($F(1, 88) = 128.28, p < .001, \eta^2p = .593$). Control participants improved from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 2.99 \pm 0.66$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 3.20 \pm 0.73$), while experimental participants showed a markedly greater increase from pre-test ($\bar{x} = 3.05 \pm 0.49$) to post-test ($\bar{x} = 4.11 \pm 0.60$).

The significant interaction effects across SUV and SAVKSI factors, overall individual interest and study engagement demonstrate that the intervention not only enhanced students' recognition of the utility and value of traditional dances but also deepened their cultural connection and sustained motivation to participate. Unlike the control group, whose gains were modest, students exposed to the individual interest-based approach experienced substantial growth in valuing dance as both a cultural heritage and a meaningful learning activity. This suggests that embedding cultural narratives and reflective tasks into dance instruction can effectively cultivate personal relevance, thereby supporting cultural continuity through education.

Table 4*Means, Standard Deviations and Mixed ANOVA Results for Study Variables*

| Variable | N | Group | $\bar{x} \pm SD$ (Pre-test) | $\bar{x} \pm SD$ (Post-test) |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| SUV | 45 | Control | 2.97 ± 0.45 | 3.10 ± 0.50 |
| | 45 | Experimental | 3.06 ± 0.39 | 3.70 ± 0.57 |
| SAVKSI | 45 | Control | 2.98 ± 0.31 | 3.11 ± 0.39 |
| | 45 | Experimental | 3.01 ± 0.37 | 3.69 ± 0.50 |
| Individual interest | 45 | Control | 3.00 ± 0.18 | 3.13 ± 0.23 |
| | 45 | Experimental | 2.98 ± 0.18 | 3.65 ± 0.29 |
| Study engagement | 45 | Control | 2.99 ± 0.66 | 3.20 ± 0.73 |
| | 45 | Experimental | 3.05 ± 0.49 | 4.11 ± 0.60 |
| Variable | Source | $F(df_1, df_2)$ | p-value | $\eta^2 p$ |
| SUV | Time | $F(1, 88) = 193.77$ | <.001 | .688 |
| | Group | $F(1, 88) = 12.55$ | <.001 | .125 |
| | Time x Group | $F(1, 88) = 85.13$ | <.001 | .492 |
| SAVKSI | Time | $F(1, 88) = 203.49$ | <.001 | .698 |
| | Group | $F(1, 88) = 15.02$ | <.001 | .146 |
| | Time x Group | $F(1, 88) = 94.95$ | <.001 | .519 |
| Individual interest | Time | $F(1, 88) = 581.96$ | <.001 | .869 |
| | Group | $F(1, 88) = 32.41$ | <.001 | .269 |
| | Time x Group | $F(1, 88) = 274.99$ | <.001 | .758 |
| Study engagement | Time | $F(1, 88) = 277.33$ | <.001 | .759 |
| | Group | $F(1, 88) = 14.92$ | <.001 | .145 |
| | Time x Group | $F(1, 88) = 128.28$ | <.001 | .593 |

Note. $\eta^2 p$ = effect size measure. Time = within-subjects effect (pre vs. post), Group = between-subjects effect (control vs. experimental), Time \times Group = interaction effect.

In addition, the ANCOVA results for PAWR further underscore the effectiveness of the intervention. Even after controlling for baseline differences, the experimental group achieved significantly higher adjusted post-test scores compared to the control group, with a large effect size ($\eta^2 p = .552$). This indicates that the individual interest-based intervention was particularly successful in fostering students' PAWR with Philippine traditional dance. In other words, the intervention not only improved students' valuation and engagement (as shown in the 2×2 mixed design ANOVA results) but also strengthened their emotional connection and readiness to persist in dance participation, supporting the study's aim of cultivating individual interest as a pathway to cultural continuity. These results indicate that the intervention produced significant improvements in individual interest and engagement compared to conventional instruction.

Discussion

The findings of this quasi-experimental study provide compelling evidence that pedagogical framing exerts a strong influence on students' individual interest and engagement in Philippine traditional dance. Although interest has frequently been conceptualized as a relatively stable construct that emerges gradually over time (Rotgans, 2015), the significant increases observed across the semester suggest that deliberate instructional design can accelerate this process (Wong et al., 2020). The repeated integration of cultural storytelling, reflective questioning and interactive learning tasks across 16-weeks established conditions that enabled students to connect movements with meaning as can be supported by previously published scholarly works, both for children and young adults (Howley et al., 2022; Jefferson, 2024; Ørbæk & Engelsrud, 2021; Sööt

& Leijen, 2012). This pattern is consistent with Hidi and Renninger (2006) model of interest development, which highlights the potential for situational triggers to become consolidated into enduring forms of individual interest when appropriately scaffolded (Renninger et al., 2019). In this sense, the present study shows that instructional practices can bridge the gap between fleeting situational sparks and more stable motivational dispositions.

Roure et al. (2021) tripartite model of individual interest was particularly useful in unpacking these results. Improvements in positive affect and willingness to reengage indicate that students did not only find the dances enjoyable but also demonstrated readiness to sustain participation even when challenges arose, as supported by Lobo (2023) on his study with BPED students in the Philippines. PAWR emerges as a motivational spark, where positive emotions gradually strengthen interest through repeated engagement (Valiente et al., 2012), while also reminding educators of the value of crafting culturally rich and emotionally resonant lessons that invite students to return and invest more deeply (Cameron et al., 2024).

Additionally, growth in SUV revealed that learners began to view Philippine traditional dances as personally relevant, linking their practice to benefits such as physical coordination, discipline, cultural knowledge and social connection. This particular finding has been reinforced by the findings of Connor (2000) with older adults and Lobo (2023) with teacher education students. This underscores how interest develops when learners see lasting value in the activity (Shen et al., 2003), while also pointing to the importance of embedding lessons with outcomes that resonate beyond the classroom (Schupp, 2015).

Lastly, increases in SAVSKI further underscored how students integrated dance into their sense of self and expressed curiosity toward its historical and cultural underpinnings (Guo & Li, 2025; Li, 2024). This result has been strengthened by various studies from different age groups and contexts (Daryanti et al., 2025; Liu et al., 2024), suggesting that teaching traditional dances not only preserves cultural heritage but also nurtures identity, fosters lifelong appreciation and encourages intergenerational continuity in movement practices. This suggests how engagement moved beyond performance into identity formation and deeper cultural appreciation (Ssebulime, 2024). However, it is important to note that not all situational triggers automatically lead to sustained individual interest, particularly in shorter or less culturally embedded interventions (Renninger & Hidi, 2011). The strong outcomes in the present study may therefore reflect the extended duration and cultural relevance of the instructional strategies applied.

Research also shows that different subdimensions of interest may respond at varying rates, as affective components such as enjoyment are often triggered earlier, whereas value internalization and identity connections require more time to develop and stabilize (Harackiewicz & Hulleman, 2010; Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2013). The strong outcomes observed in the present study may therefore reflect the extended duration and cultural relevance of the instructional strategies applied, which supported not only initial engagement but also the continuing integration of personal meaning across the semester.

Taken together, these outcomes suggest that individual interest in the arts is not confined to momentary enjoyment but involves a deeper process of valuation, identity integration and meaning-making. Therefore, the experimental condition successfully operationalized the model's factors in ways that transformed how students engaged with the art form. Additionally, while the intervention was conceptually grounded in SDT and EVT to explain motivational mechanisms, the cultural integration of dance aligns with the situated learning perspective, where participation in socio-cultural practices deepens meaning and relevance (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Although the present findings strongly align with the tripartite model, it is important to clarify that the study does

not modify the model's theoretical structure. Instead, the contribution lies in demonstrating its pedagogical applicability in a cultural context, highlighting how PAWR, SUV and SAVKSI are activated when traditional dances are framed through meaning-making practices. This represents a contextual refinement rather than a theoretical extension, pointing to opportunities for further research on how cultural learning environments may differentially support the development of individual interest.

Beyond statistical significance, the pedagogical value of these results lies in demonstrating that motivation can be intentionally designed through culturally grounded instruction. The significant differences observed are not only numerical reflections of improved scores but also indicators of how meaningful, culturally grounded instruction can deepen students' sense of purpose and belonging in Physical Education. These outcomes suggest that integrating reflective and narrative-based strategies is not a supplementary enhancement but a transformative mechanism that bridges affective engagement with cultural appreciation, ultimately making learning both academically rigorous and personally meaningful.

At first glance, the rapidity of these changes might seem to contradict the theoretical position that individual interest is long-lasting and relatively stable compared to situational interest (Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2013). However, the results of this study support a more nuanced interpretation of stability. Stability does not imply immutability but rather reflects the resilience of interest once it is established (Mader et al., 2025; Mayar et al., 2022). The findings show that when pedagogical interventions are sustained, structured and culturally anchored, they can accelerate the development of interest that may endure beyond the immediate classroom (Dissinger, 2024; Meland & Brion-Meisels, 2024; Paris, 2012). Although games, narratives and reflective prompts could be categorized as situational triggers (Quinlan, 2019; Renninger et al., 2019), their repeated and meaningful application positioned them as catalysts for stabilizing interest. This dynamic view underscores that pedagogical framing can act as a bridge between the short-term sparks of situational interest and the more lasting qualities of individual interest (Rotgans & Schmidt, 2017), reaffirming the malleability of motivation in educational contexts.

In addition, although all three factors of individual interest improved, it is theoretically expected that they may not respond uniformly to instruction. Being affective in nature, PAWR can show rapid gains as enjoyment and emotional resonance are triggered through culturally meaningful activities (Hidi & Renninger, 2006). SUV may develop as students repeatedly see the usefulness of dance beyond performance, while SAVKSI involves identity connection and knowledge-seeking processes that typically strengthen over time (Linnenbrink-Garcia et al., 2013). Thus, variations in magnitude across components should be interpreted as complementary evidence of interest development's multidimensional nature rather than inconsistent responsiveness, reinforcing the need for future longitudinal follow-ups to examine durability across dimensions.

Furthermore, conventional teaching of dance often relies on repetition, memorization and performance drills (Nilsson, 1991), while technically sufficient, risk reducing the art form to mechanical execution. Students exposed to this type of instruction may perform accurately but lack deeper personal connection to the cultural values embedded in the dances (Sööt & Viskus, 2014). By contrast, the experimental class in this study experienced dance as a culturally resonant practice, contextualized through narratives of bayanihan, festivity and Filipino identity. This approach echoes broader insights in arts education that emphasize the centrality of identity, cultural context and meaning-making in sustaining engagement (Winner et al., 2013). The significant differences in post-test scores indicate that when artistic instruction is framed through cultural stories and reflective practice, it transcends technical learning and becomes a meaningful educational experience.

The study also contributes to understanding the role of arts education in cultural continuity (Huang et al., 2025; Zhang, 2023). Philippine traditional dances are often perceived as outdated or peripheral in modern curricula (Lobo, 2023), overshadowed by more contemporary or globalized forms of cultural expression (Hou, 2025). However, when instruction foregrounds cultural narratives and invites reflection, these dances become relevant and resonant to present-day learners (Guo & Li, 2025; Melchior, 2011). Students in the experimental group were not only able to execute steps with accuracy but also articulate the cultural values embedded in the performances. This dual outcome, both technical proficiency and reflective articulation, illustrates how cultivating individual interest can position dance education as a vehicle for transmitting intangible heritage (Lobo, 2023). Thus, the process serves not merely educational goals but also broader cultural objectives, positioning the classroom as a site for cultural preservation and renewal (Achille & Fiorillo, 2022).

Another important contribution of this study lies in its implications for student engagement. Engagement is a multidimensional construct encompassing behavioral, cognitive and emotional investment in learning tasks (Fredricks et al., 2004). The findings demonstrate that engagement was significantly higher in the experimental class, suggesting that increased interest translated into deeper involvement (Horwitz et al., 2015) across these dimensions. Students were not only more attentive and participatory but also more emotionally invested, as reflected in their reflections on cultural values and identity. This aligns with expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002), which posits that learners are more likely to invest effort when they perceive both value and personal relevance in a task. By strengthening individual interest, the pedagogical strategies employed in this study created fertile ground for engagement to flourish, reinforcing the reciprocal relationship between motivation and learning outcomes in the arts.

Moreover, although novelty effects or instructor-related factors such as enthusiasm could have contributed in part to students' engagement, these were minimized by maintaining the same instructor, schedule and syllabus across groups. The significant differences observed therefore most plausibly reflect the influence of pedagogical framing rather than incidental classroom factors. Finally, the results offer broader insights into the intersection of motivation, pedagogy and cultural heritage in arts education. The significant main and interaction effects across individual interest and engagement illustrate how deliberate instructional framing can meaningfully reshape the way learners relate to traditional art forms. These improvements in stored attainment value and knowledge-seeking intentions suggest a deepening sense of personal meaning aligned with the cultural relevance of the activity, without assuming changes beyond what was measured. This shift has important implications not only for physical education but also for the wider field of arts education, where similar challenges of relevance and continuity are faced. By demonstrating that culturally contextualized pedagogy can both enhance motivation and support cultural preservation, the study contributes to ongoing discussions on how arts education can respond to the dual demands of fostering individual development and sustaining collective traditions.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the pedagogical framing of Philippine traditional dance within the Physical Education curriculum significantly shapes students' individual interest and study engagement. Although conventional instruction preserved technical correctness, individual interest-based teaching fostered deeper affective investment and stronger engagement. These findings show that PE courses, often regarded as sites for physical skill development, also serve as

powerful platforms for transmitting cultural heritage when instructional approaches highlight meaning and relevance. In contemporary higher education, where globalized cultural forms dominate, it is both timely and necessary to position PE not only as a space for movement but as a venue for cultivating cultural continuity.

Implications

The findings underscore several important implications for pedagogy, theory and institutional practice. Pedagogically, the results highlight the value of moving beyond conventional, performance-focused dance instruction. Although traditional methods ensure technical proficiency, they often fail to sustain motivation. By contrast, incorporating interest-based strategies positions dance instruction as a catalyst for deeper engagement. This demonstrates that teaching traditional dances is not only about transmitting steps but also about cultivating a meaningful connection that students can internalize and sustain. From a theoretical standpoint, the study advances the application of Roure et al. (2021) tripartite model of individual interest within a Southeast Asian context. The validation of the three factors of individual interest, through culturally embedded pedagogy, confirms that these factors are not bound to Western educational traditions. Instead, they can be meaningfully activated in contexts where dance functions simultaneously as art, education and heritage. This contributes to a growing recognition that models of motivation must be examined across diverse cultural settings to avoid overly universalized assumptions. At the institutional level, the study suggests that Physical Education dance courses should be framed not as supplementary or recreational but as integral components of higher education curricula. Their ability to simultaneously promote cultural understanding and academic engagement positions them as critical spaces for holistic student development. In contemporary times, when students are increasingly immersed in globalized and commercialized cultural forms, these courses provide a necessary anchor to local traditions. Integrating interest-based pedagogy in these classes can help universities fulfill not only educational objectives but also broader cultural responsibilities. This directly aligns with global calls such as Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 on Quality Education and SDG 11 on Sustainable Cities and Communities, which emphasize inclusive, relevant and heritage-sustaining learning opportunities.

Limitations

Even though the study generated significant results, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, it was conducted in one state university with two intact classes, limiting generalizability. Future replication across diverse institutions, including local colleges and private universities, would strengthen the claims. Second, although instructors followed the same syllabus, individual differences in delivery may have introduced variability beyond the experimental design. Third, the study covered only one semester, leaving open questions about the durability of interest and engagement beyond the short term. Fourth, the measures used were self-reported, which may be influenced by social desirability or contextual biases, though validated instruments were applied. Moreover, the study did not account for attendance or absences, which could subtly affect exposure to the intervention. Neither were socio-economic background, prior dance experience or cultural familiarity with Philippine dances measured, all of which might shape receptivity to the intervention. Furthermore, although gender distribution was relatively balanced, participants represented a culturally homogeneous group from a single regional context, which may limit generalizability to more diverse cultural or gender-based populations where dance traditions and

engagement patterns differ. Lastly, although the study was designed with an adequate sample size determined during planning, no post-hoc power analysis was conducted, consistent with statistical recommendations against retrospective power estimation (Hoenig & Heisey, 2001). These limitations provide avenues for refining future studies and ensuring stronger internal and external validity.

Future Research Directions

Several pathways for further investigation emerge from this work. Longitudinal studies should assess whether the gains in individual interest and engagement observed in PE classes translate into sustained cultural participation and appreciation beyond university life. Comparative research across regions could reveal how cultural context shapes motivational responses to traditional dances, considering the diversity of folk practices across the Philippines. Additionally, expanding to other embodied art forms (such as theater, ritual performance or music-integrated PE) could test the broader applicability of interest-based pedagogy to heritage education. Mixed-methods designs, particularly those including in-depth interviews or reflective journals, may capture the nuanced ways students connect movement with meaning, thus enriching quantitative findings. Methodologically, future studies might also integrate multi-level modeling to account for class-level variance or apply experimental manipulations across different teaching styles.

Contribution of Philippine studies to Global Literature

This study contributes to the global literature by showing how individual interest and engagement can be cultivated through culturally embedded approaches to dance instruction. Even though much of the existing work on motivation has been developed in general classroom or Western-oriented art settings, the present findings demonstrate that theories such as Roure et al. (2021) tripartite model of individual interest can be meaningfully translate into contexts where dance functions simultaneously as art, heritage and education. This expands the scope of motivation research by grounding it in practices that are not only aesthetic but also tied to identity, continuity and community values.

By situating Philippine traditional dances, the study provides empirical evidence that culturally specific forms can serve as powerful sites for sustaining student motivation. This challenges the assumption that interest develops uniformly across cultures, showing instead that heritage-rich domains can activate affective, utility and knowledge-seeking dimensions in distinct ways. In doing so, the research adds to cross-cultural discussions on how learning environments can be shaped to preserve cultural traditions while also fostering meaningful academic engagement.

In a broader sense, this study in the Philippines illustrates that arts education in the global south is not peripheral but central to advancing international debates on motivation and engagement. By integrating cultural relevance with empirical testing, the study highlights how heritage-based pedagogies contribute insights that are often underrepresented in mainstream literature. The result is a more inclusive understanding of how interest and engagement can be cultivated, one that recognizes the arts not only as creative expression but also as a vehicle for cultural sustainability.

This study empirically applies the tripartite model of individual interest within a pedagogical intervention, demonstrating its flexibility when learning involves embodied cultural heritage rather than general physical activities. The findings suggest that pedagogical framing can

serve as an activating mechanism that transforms the model's factors into observable behavioral engagement. This theoretical refinement implies that individual interest is not merely a dispositional construct but one that can be intentionally cultivated through culturally contextualized teaching. Future research may further test this dynamic interpretation of the model across diverse art- and movement-based disciplines, or through longitudinal designs that examine how such interest endures beyond the classroom.

For international educators and researchers, this study highlights how culturally grounded pedagogy can inform inclusive and motivation-centered practices across diverse learning contexts. The findings illustrate that heritage-based approaches to Physical Education are transferable to settings that seek to connect movement learning with identity, meaning, and belonging. More broadly, this reinforces that culturally responsive instruction serves as a universal framework for sustaining learner engagement and preserving the richness of human traditions through education.

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