

Cultural Heritage in Teaching Philippine History Through a Contextualized Method Among Second Year Architecture Students in Batangas State University

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Abstract

As an educator in Readings in Philippine History, the researcher identified significant challenges regarding student involvement and motivation when engaging with traditional historical topics. This study addresses these difficulties by integrating local cultural heritage to make the curriculum more resonant for specialized students. The study aimed to determine the effectiveness of a contextualized approach using cultural heritage-based activities as intervention materials to improve the academic performance of students in the course Readings in Philippine History.

A descriptive research design was employed involving second-year BS Architecture students at Batangas State University-Alangilan Campus. Data were collected through assessments and analyzed using frequency, rank, weighted mean, and composite mean to evaluate the impact of the contextualized intervention.

Findings revealed that incorporating local culture and heritage into the curriculum was highly effective for the learners. The contextualized approach to activities achieved a high level of student engagement and improved mastery of the subject matter through localized context. The study concludes that a contextualized approach tailored to diverse learning styles is an effective strategy for teaching Philippine History. Consequently, the researcher developed proposed enrichment activities focused on contextualized learning to further enhance the integration of heritage in higher education.

Keywords: *Contextualized Teaching and Learning, Cultural Heritage Integration, Philippine History Education, Architecture Students, Academic Performance, and Engagement*

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in promoting learners' understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage. However, in the context of teaching Readings in Philippine History, traditional instructional approaches often result in low student engagement, particularly among second-year Bachelor of Science in Architecture students who tend to prioritize their major courses. As observed by the researcher, students experience difficulty in connecting historical concepts to real-life and professional applications, leading to decreased motivation and participation in class. Philippine policies, such as the 1987 Constitution, Republic Act No. 10066, and CHED Memorandum Orders, emphasize the integration of cultural heritage and history into education to promote nationalism and critical thinking.

In response to this problem, this action research proposes the use of a contextualized teaching approach that integrates the local culture and heritage of Batangas City into the learning process. By associating course materials with Batangas City's cultural and heritage assets, such as the Feast of Sto. Niño, Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan), and the Sublian Festival, students are given opportunities to explore how these traditions reflect the city's identity. They are encouraged to actively engage in tasks such as researching the historical significance of local sites, analyzing their contribution to the city's identity, and proposing preservation plans in the context of modern development. Learning activities may include field visits, interviews with local historians or community elders, and the creation of outputs such as architectural designs and heritage conservation proposals. These activities aim to transform learning into a more meaningful and relevant experience by linking historical knowledge to students' future roles as architects.

This study seeks to determine how contextualized instruction can improve students' engagement, motivation, and understanding of Readings in Philippine History. Grounded in the researcher's classroom observations, the intervention is designed to address the identified learning gaps by fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and adaptability. Ultimately, this action research aims to demonstrate that contextualized learning not only enhances academic performance but also develops students' appreciation of cultural heritage and their responsibility as future professionals in preserving the nation's identity.

Review of Related Literature

This part presents literature reviewed by the researcher, which is found relevant and helpful to the study being conducted at present. The following literature and studies present valuable information about the contextualized approach in teaching and cultural preservation, which includes motivation, the learning process, and achievement.

In particular, Republic Act No. 10066 highlights the importance of protecting and conserving cultural heritage, emphasizing the role of education in fostering awareness and responsibility among learners (Angara, 2020; Sembrano, 2023). Similarly, Alcantara (2020) explains that students develop stronger emotional and intellectual connections to their heritage when learning materials are grounded in their own communities, including local traditions,

events, and symbols. Moreover, Zialcita and Tinio (2020) emphasize that heritage structures, such as ancestral houses, serve as concrete representations of history, allowing students to better understand sociocultural practices and historical developments.

In the local context, studies highlight the importance of Batangas City's cultural heritage—such as the Sublian Festival, Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan), and the Feast of Sto. Niño—in shaping Batangueño identity. For instance, Dela Cruz (2020) notes that the Sublian Festival not only reflects religious devotion but also strengthens cultural pride among community members. Likewise, Rivera (2020) found that student participation in cultural activities enhances their understanding of local history, religion, and traditions. These findings suggest that direct engagement with cultural practices can make learning more meaningful and relevant.

With regard to instructional strategies, research on contextualized teaching and learning (CTL) shows that linking lessons to real-life and local contexts significantly improves students' interest, motivation, and academic performance (Lorbis, 2020; Pinoliad, 2020; Luceñara et al., 2023). In addition, De Guzman (2023) explains that the use of local landmarks, oral traditions, and community-based materials helps students connect abstract historical concepts to real-world experiences, thereby improving comprehension. Notably, for architecture students, exposure to heritage structures and community-based activities enhances their awareness of cultural identity and encourages them to integrate preservation concepts into their design practices (Cejas, 2022; Aquino-Ong et al., 2022).

However, several challenges affect the implementation of contextualized teaching, including limited instructional materials, time constraints, and a lack of resources (Garcia & Lopez, 2020; Santos, 2020). These barriers may hinder teachers from fully applying innovative and localized teaching strategies. Nevertheless, studies consistently demonstrate that contextualization remains an effective approach in improving engagement and learning outcomes, particularly when lessons are anchored in students' cultural and historical contexts.

Statement of the problem

1. What is the level of awareness about the local culture and heritage of Batangas City, in terms of:

- 1.1 Sublian Festival;
- 1.2 Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan); and
- 1.3 Feast of Sto. Niño

2. To what extent does the integration of contextualized local cultural heritage teaching enhance architecture students' performance in the following areas:

- 2.1 Appreciation of Batangas City's history;
- 2.2 Preservation of Batangas City's history; and
- 2.3 Application of heritage knowledge in architectural learning?

3. How effective is the integration of contextualized local cultural heritage teaching in enhancing architecture students' appreciation and preservation of Batangas City's history?
4. What difficulties are encountered by the students in integrating contextualized local cultural and heritage in the preservation of Batangas City's history?
5. Based on the analysis, what contextualized learning activity may be proposed?

Objectives

This study aims to inculcate Batangas City's local culture and heritage among architecture students by contextualizing the teaching of Readings in Philippine History and fostering cultural preservation into architectural design and practice.

Materials and Methods

This part describes the research design, subjects of the study, data gathering procedure, data gathering instrument, and data analysis plan.

Research Design

This study aims to inculcate Batangas City's local culture and heritage through a contextualized approach among second-year BS Architecture students in learning Readings in Philippine History. The study utilized a descriptive research methodology and employed a researcher-made questionnaire to examine the effectiveness of the contextualized approach, students' level of awareness of local culture and heritage, and the challenges encountered.

The questionnaire was used to gather data on students' performance, level of understanding, and experiences using the contextualized strategy. According to Sevilla (2020), the descriptive method focuses on describing existing events, practices, beliefs, processes, and trends, and analyzing observable conditions to provide accurate interpretations, with or without the use of statistical tools.

Subject of the Study

The participants of this study were 40 Second Year BS Architecture students, composed of 20 males and 20 females from Batangas State University, Alangilan Campus, and were conducted during the First semester of the school year 2025-2026. The participants came from the sections under the supervision of the researcher, since she is also the teacher in Readings in Philippine History. No sampling technique was used since the entire population or a section, was part of the study.

Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher gathered information from websites, books, and related studies to design a self-constructed questionnaire as the primary data-gathering instrument. The instrument underwent the processes of construction, validation, administration, retrieval, and scoring.

Construction. The questionnaire was developed using a quantitative approach, based on literature such as books, journals, dissertations, and online sources. It consisted of four parts: (1) level of awareness of Batangas City's local culture and heritage, specifically the Sublian Festival, Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan), and Feast of Sto. Niño; (2) students' performance using a contextualized approach; (3) effectiveness of integrating contextualized cultural heritage in enhancing appreciation and preservation; and (4) challenges encountered by respondents. The draft was reviewed and revised based on the evaluator's suggestions.

Validation. The instrument was validated based on clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance of items, incorporating feedback from evaluators and validators.

Administration. Upon approval from the Dean, the finalized questionnaire was distributed to the target respondents using printed copies.

Retrieval. The questionnaires were collected from second-year BS Architecture students of Batangas State University–Alangilan, ensuring completeness of responses.

Scoring of Responses. The gathered data were tallied, tabulated, and statistically treated for analysis.

Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, the researcher followed systematic steps to gather data. The questionnaire was first presented to the adviser for review and suggestions before administration. To proceed, the researcher obtained permission from the Dean of the College through a formal letter and prepared a waiver or consent form to secure respondents' agreement to participate. The questionnaire was then distributed to respondents in printed form, with anonymity ensured in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10173). Respondents were given sufficient time to complete the survey. Upon retrieval, all questionnaires were tallied, and the data were provided to a statistician for analysis and interpretation using appropriate statistical techniques.

Data Analysis Plan

To interpret the data gathered, the following statistical measures were used to answer the research questions.

Weighted mean. This was used to measure the weight of responses assigned for the quantitative analysis, as well as to determine the responses distinctive to the responses of a group. This was

used for measuring the understanding, effectiveness, and difficulties of the local culture and heritage of Batangas City.

Composite Mean in statistics and research design refers to composite measures of variables or measurements based on multiple data items. It was applied in this study to determine the average mean of all the indicators. This was used for measuring the understanding, effectiveness, and difficulties of the local culture and heritage of Batangas City.

Frequency. This was used to determine the number of respondents in a particular item.

Ranking. This refers to the data transformation in which numerical or ordinal values are placed by their rank when the data are sorted. To rank results based on the understanding, effectiveness, and difficulties of the local culture and heritage of Batangas City.

Results and Discussions

Table 1. Level of Awareness About Local Culture and Heritage

<i>As students are aware of their cultural heritage knowledge in terms of the Sublian Festival...</i>	WM	VI	Rank
1. I am aware of the Sublian Festival's religious and historical roots.	3.55	Very Aware	3
2. I am familiar with the traditional music and dancing techniques performed at the Sublian Festival.	3.28	Aware	4
3. The Sublian Festival plays a significant role in preserving Batangueño culture	4.38	Very Aware	1
4. I can explain why Batangas City celebrates the Sublian Festival every July.	3.08	Aware	5
5. The Sublian Festival, in my opinion, promotes pride and unity among community members.	4.30	Very Aware	2
Mean	3.72	Very Aware	
<i>As students are aware of their cultural heritage knowledge in terms of Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan)...</i>			
1. I understand what "Haying Batangan" means and what it means for Batangas.	2.33	Unaware	4
2. I am aware of the traditional customs observed during Lupakan at Awitan.	2.43	Unaware	3
3. I am familiar with the traditional cuisine and music that accompany this celebration.	2.63	Aware	2
4. I can explain the relevance of Haying Batangan in preserving Batangueño traditions	2.30	Unaware	5
5. I believe that participating in Haying Batangan helps to develop community relationships.	3.50	Very aware	1
Mean	2.64	Aware	
<i>As students are aware of their cultural heritage knowledge in terms of the Feast of Sto. Niño...</i>			
1. I understand the historical context of the Feast of Sto. Niño. In Batangas City.	3.30	Aware	4
2. The Feast of Sto. Niño holds religious and cultural significance.	3.93	Very aware	2
3. I understand the significance of the Feast of Sto. Niño residents of Batangas exercise their religion.	3.60	Very aware	3
4. I can discuss noteworthy events or festivities that took occurred on the Feast of Sto. Niño.	2.85	Aware	5

5. The Feast of Sto. Niño is a significant reflection of Batangas City's spiritual and cultural heritage	4.08	Very aware	1
Mean	3.55	Very Aware	
Composite Mean	3.30	Aware	

Legend: 3.50 -4.00 Very Aware (VA)
2.50 -3.49 Aware (A)
1.50- 2.49 Unaware (U)
1.00- 1.49 Very Unaware (VUN)

As shown in the table, the respondents' level of awareness of Batangas City's local culture yielded an overall mean of 3.30, verbally interpreted as aware. However, in terms of the Sublian Festival, respondents showed very aware with a mean score of 3.72. It was ranked 1st (weighted mean = 4.38), indicating that students recognize its significant role in preserving Batangueño culture. This supports the use of a contextualized approach, as supported by Cejas (2022), who found that direct exposure to heritage enhances students' awareness of local identity and influences their design practices.

In contrast, respondents were generally aware of Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan), with a mean score of 2.64. While participation in the activity was ranked 1st (weighted mean = 3.50, aware) for fostering community relationships, knowledge of its traditional cuisine and music ranked 2nd (weighted mean = 2.63, aware), and the ability to explain its relevance in preserving traditions ranked the lowest (weighted mean = 2.30, unaware). Meanwhile, respondents were very aware of the Feast of Sto. Niño, with a mean score of 3.55. It ranked 1st (weighted mean = 4.06), indicating that students recognize it as a significant reflection of Batangas City's spiritual and cultural heritage.

Table 2: Extent of Integration of Contextualized Activities

<i>As a result of the use of contextualized activities in the lesson Appreciation of Batangas City's history, students...</i>	WM	VI	Rank
1. Show more interest in Batangas City's history and customs.	3.65	Great Extent	2
2. Recognize the cultural significance of regional holidays, including the Feast of Sto Niño, Haying Batangan, and Sublian.	3.30	Moderate Extent	5
3. Demonstrate a better understanding of Batangas' role in the country's history.	3.63	Great Extent	3
4. Take pride in Batangas City's historic identity.	3.70	Great Extent	1
5. Participate completely in conversations about Batangas culture.	3.40	Moderate Extent	4
Mean	3.54	Great Extent	
<i>As a result of the use of contextualized activities in the lesson, Preservation of Batangas City's history, students...</i>			
1. Recognize the importance of protecting cultural traditions and landmarks.	3.75	Great Extent	1
2. Participate in programs that promote the preservation and understanding of local heritage.	3.50	Great Extent	5
3. Show consideration for Batangas City's historical and cultural landmarks.	3.70	Great Extent	2
4. Encourage the next generation to uphold Batangueño traditions.	3.63	Great Extent	4

5. Encourage neighborhood activities that aim to preserve local history.	3.68	Great Extent	3
Mean	3.65	Great Extent	
<i>As a result of the use of contextualized activities in the lesson, Application of heritage knowledge in architectural learning, students...</i>			
1. Incorporate Batangas City's historical and cultural characteristics into architectural designs.	3.50	Great Extent	5
2. Use heritage skills to design places that reflect the local culture.	3.55	Great Extent	2.5
3. Recognize how Batangas' past has influenced its architectural styles.	3.55	Great Extent	2.5
4. Use cultural sensitivity to create designs that honor legacy.	3.53	Great Extent	4
5. Show off your creativity by combining traditional and modern design elements.	3.73	Great Extent	1
Mean	3.57	Great Extent	
Composite Mean	3.59	Great Extent	

Legend: 3.50- 4.00 Great Extent (GE)
2.50 - 3.49 Moderate Extent (ME)
1.50 - 2.49 Slight Extent (SE)
1.00 - 1.49 Not Performed (NP)

As reflected in the table, the extent of integration of contextualized activities yielded an overall mean of 3.59, interpreted as to a great extent. For Appreciation of Batangas City's History, the mean score of 3.54 indicates that respondents performed to a great extent, with "students take pride in Batangas City's historic identity" ranked 1st (weighted mean = 3.70). This supports Munisah et al. (2020), who emphasized that fostering local cultural heritage strengthens national identity.

Similarly, in Preservation of Batangas City's History, the mean score of 3.65 shows performance to a great extent, aligning with Aquino-Ong et al. (2022), who found that contextualized heritage instruction enhances students' attitudes and understanding of preservation.

Lastly, for Application of Heritage Knowledge in Architecture Learning, the mean score of 3.57 also indicates performance to a great extent. This is supported by Lardizabal et al. (2023), who stated that applying acquired knowledge improves academic performance and independent learning, and by Atondo (2022), who highlighted the importance of developing contextualized instructional resources.

Table 3: Effect of Using a Contextualized Approach on Students' Performance

<i>As a result of using the contextualized approach in lessons about Batangas City's cultural heritage (Sublian Festival, Haying Batangan, and Feast of Sto. Niño), students...</i>	WM	VI	Rank
1. Incorporating Sublian Festival rituals into architectural lectures has greatly improved my understanding of Batangas' cultural identity.	3.75	Very Effective	3.5
2. The Sublian Festival lessons successfully inspired me to consider cultural symbols when designing buildings.	3.53	Very Effective	10
3. Lessons from the Sublian Festival have successfully encouraged me to include cultural aspects in my future architectural ideas.	3.70	Very Effective	5.5
4. Learning about the Sublian Festival has helped me have a better grasp of Batangas' cultural and historical identity.	3.88	Very Effective	1
5. My understanding of the relationship between culture and design has grown greatly as a result of incorporating Haying Batangan practices into architectural education.	3.75	Very Effective	3.5
6. The lessons I learnt about Haying Batangan have encouraged me to participate in events that promote the preservation of Batangas' history.	3.63	Very Effective	8
7. My plan to include regional customs into future design projects is heavily influenced by my knowledge of Haying Batangan.	3.68	Very Effective	7
8. The Feast of Sto. Niño teachings are effectively urged to incorporate religious architectural heritage into my projects.	3.58	Very Effective	9
9. The Feast of Sto. Niño is being taught. My understanding of how religious traditions shaped Batangas' historical architecture has significantly improved.	3.80	Very Effective	2
10. The integration of Feast of Sto. Niño, incorporating into courses has helped me comprehend the cultural and spiritual significance of Batangas City.	3.70	Very Effective	5.5
Composite Mean	3.70	Very Effective	

Legend: 3.50- 4.00 Very Effective (VE)
2.50 - 3.49 Effective (E)
1.50 - 2.49 Moderately Effective (ME)
1.00 - 1.49 Ineffective (I)

As shown in the table, the effect of using a contextualized approach on students' performance yielded a composite mean of 3.70, interpreted as very effective. This supports Chaparro et al. (2022), who emphasized the importance of integrating heritage elements in history education to improve teaching methods and align instructional practices with meaningful learning.

Additionally, Luceñara et al. (2023) highlighted that contextualized teaching and learning enhance students' academic performance, comprehension, and competence by utilizing varied instructional strategies. Furthermore, contextualization supports the concept of adult learning, where students are more motivated and actively engaged in the learning process.

The highest mean (3.88, very effective) indicates that learning about the Sublian Festival helped students better understand Batangas' cultural and historical identity. This finding is supported by Jian (2025), who stated that participatory and contextualized learning activities

enhance students' active involvement and commitment to heritage preservation, particularly among architecture students.

Table 4: Difficulties Encountered by the Students Using the Contextualized Approach

<i>As experienced by students, their difficulties in using the contextualized approach...</i>	WM	VI	Rank
1. I am having difficulties connecting past events to current concerns.	1.00	Strongly Disagree	10
2. Local resources or materials for contextualization are lacking.	1.08	Strongly Disagree	9
3. I find it challenging to connect national history topics to the experiences of our local community.	1.58	Disagree	2.5
4. Researching and developing contextualized learning activities requires a significant amount of time.	2.58	Agree	1
5. I don't feel prepared to investigate history from a local perspective.	1.58	Disagree	2.5
6. Instructors rarely give examples that are relevant to our local environment.	1.35	Strongly Disagree	4
7. I am not motivated to study in odd local situations.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	6.5
8. It can be challenging to collaborate with peers on contextualized tasks.	1.33	Strongly Disagree	5
9. I have problems recognizing the significance of historical sites or events in my community.	1.30	Strongly Disagree	6.5
10. Instructors do not give much information on how to apply contextualization effectively.	1.28	Strongly Disagree	8
Composite Mean	1.44	Strongly Disagree	

Legend: 3.50- 4.00 Strongly Agree (SA)
2.50 - 3.49 Agree (A)
1.50 - 2.49 Disagree (D)
1.00 - 1.49 Strongly Disagree (SD)

As shown in the table, the difficulties encountered by students using the contextualized approach yielded a composite mean of 1.44, interpreted as strongly disagree, indicating minimal challenges overall. However, the highest weighted mean (2.58, agree) was on the indicator that “researching and developing contextualized learning activities requires significant time.” This aligns with Tica-a and Wangdali (2023), who identified challenges such as lack of contextualized resources and limited knowledge of local literature and culture.

Similarly, Ventura and Gutierrez (2024) recommended the formation of educational groups to support teachers in developing contextualized instructional materials and integrating them into learning strategies. In addition, Santos (2020) highlighted constraints such as inadequate facilities, unreliable internet access, and limited classroom space, which hinder the use of innovative and technology-based instruction.

Despite these challenges, contextualization remains a valuable approach, as it connects learning to real-world contexts, particularly local culture and history, thereby enhancing student engagement, interest, and overall academic performance.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the respondents generally showed awareness of their cultural heritage, particularly in relation to the Sublian Festival, Haying Batangan (Lupakan at Awitan), and the Feast of Sto. Niño. However, the use of contextualized activities in teaching Readings in Philippine History was implemented to a great extent, particularly in the areas of appreciation, preservation, and application of heritage knowledge in architecture. The results further revealed that students' performance improved significantly after exposure to contextualized learning activities. Despite this, respondents acknowledged challenges, particularly the time required in researching and developing contextualized outputs. Nevertheless, the proposed enrichment activities were found to be responsive to students' needs and have the potential to enhance participation, collaboration, and academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion drawn from the findings, the following recommendations were that teachers and administrators incorporate contextualized and varied learning activities to strengthen students' appreciation and preservation of local culture and heritage while enhancing critical thinking and motivation. Teachers should also utilize appropriate strategies, resources, and instructional materials that promote meaningful and engaging learning experiences. Curriculum developers may consider integrating cultural preservation and appreciation across tertiary education through contextualized and active learning approaches. Moreover, students should be guided in improving their research and contextualization skills through collaborative tasks, structured activities, and the use of community and digital resources. Finally, the proposed enrichment activities may be implemented, along with orientation, feedback, and reflection, to help learners better understand and benefit from contextualized learning, ultimately improving their academic performance.

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