# How the Kalanguya Festival Started in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya

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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, focusing on its origins, cultural significance, and impacts on the local community. Specifically, the research explored how the festival serves as a mechanism for preserving and transmitting the cultural heritage and traditions of the Kalanguya Indigenous people in the context of modernization and cultural change. A qualitative historical-ethnographic approach was employed to gain a deeper understanding of the festival's historical development, cultural meanings, and role in community life. Data were gathered through documentary review and semi-structured interviews with 20 key informants, including community elders, youth performers, artisans, educators, and municipal officials. The collected data were analyzed thematically to identify recurring patterns and insights related to cultural preservation and community participation. Findings revealed that the Kalanguya Festival was established in 1996 and later institutionalized through Ordinance No. 30-2002 as a response to the gradual decline of traditional Kalanguya practices, values, and identity. The festival functions as a cultural repository where rituals, dances, music, crafts, and oral traditions are continuously practiced, showcased, and shared across generations. It also strengthens community cohesion, reinforces cultural identity, promotes intercultural understanding among residents and visitors, and contributes to local economic development through tourism and indigenous handicrafts. However, the study identified challenges affecting the sustainability of the festival, including over-commercialization, diminishing use of the Kalanguya language, and reliance on informal mentorship for cultural transmission. The study concludes that sustained government support, strengthened cultural education programs, and active community engagement are essential in preserving the authenticity of the festival and ensuring its continued role in safeguarding Kalanguya heritage and identity in the Philippines.

**Keywords:** Kalanguya Festival, Indigenous heritage, cultural preservation, intergenerational transmission, community identity

## INTRODUCTION

### Rationale

Cultural festivals have long served as important spaces where communities sustain and express their intangible cultural heritage. Beyond their celebratory nature, festivals function as living cultural spaces where beliefs, rituals, and artistic traditions are actively practiced and transmitted across generations (UNESCO, 2003). For many Indigenous communities, festivals represent deliberate efforts to protect cultural knowledge in response to globalization, modernization, and social transformation (Feng, 2024). These roles position cultural festivals as both cultural and developmental mechanisms within Indigenous societies.

In the Philippine context, Indigenous cultural festivals are closely linked to the objectives of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act of 1997 (Republic Act No. 8371), which recognizes the rights of Indigenous Peoples to preserve, protect, and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions. IPRA affirms the importance of cultural integrity and self-determination by encouraging Indigenous communities to sustain their traditional practices within both local and national frameworks. Festival serves as tangible expressions of these rights by providing spaces where indigenous identities are publicly recognized and culturally reinforced.

Cultural festivals also contribute to broader development goals, particularly Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities, which calls for the safeguarding of cultural heritage, and SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities, which emphasizes social inclusion of marginalized groups. By promoting indigenous visibility and participation, festivals help reduce cultural marginalization and support inclusive community development. In addition, the transmission of Indigenous knowledge through festivals supports SDG 4: Quality Education, particularly its emphasis on inclusive and culturally responsive learning.

At the national and local levels, documenting Indigenous cultural festivals is essential because many traditions are at risk of disappearance due to migration, formal education, religion, and economic shifts (Condeza & Mongas, 2024). The Philippine Indigenous people, such as Igorot including the Kalanguya, Lumad, and Aeta , experience increasing pressure to assimilate into dominant lowland cultures (Damayon et al., 2025). Despite the legal protections provided by IPRA, the survival of Indigenous cultural practices depends largely on community-led initiatives that actively sustain and transmit cultural knowledge.

Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya represents one of the major settlements of Kalanguya people due to historical migration patterns from Ifugao, Benguet, and upper Cordillera into the lowland frontier settlements of Nueva Vizcaya (Nantes Jr., Maslang, & Damayan, 2022). Santa Fe's strategic geography at Dalton pass historically facilitated trade, movement, and agricultural expansion, contributing to the development of a distinct Kalanguya cultural community. However, accounts from local community elders and local studies indicate that modernization, lowlander migration, and integration into formal education have contributed to the decline of traditional practices. Younger generations participate less frequently in rituals, and cultural knowledge traditionally held by elders is gradually diminishing (Tallungan et al., 2023).

It was in response to this perceived cultural decline that the Kalanguya Festival emerged in 1996. Local elders, educators, and municipal leaders initiated the festival to provide a public space for revitalizing threatened traditions, creating cultural visibility, and reinforcing collective identity (Manila Standard, 2025). The festival was later institutionalized through Ordinance No. 30-2002, transforming it into an official annual event (Santa Fe Municipal Records, 2002). This collaboration reflects SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals, highlighting cooperation between Indigenous communities and local government units.

Studying indigenous festivals like the Kalanguya Festival is academically significant because they highlight the dynamics of cultural resilience, adaptation, and identity formation. They serve as case studies of how communities negotiate heritage conservation in the face of modernity and socio-economic change (Estrella, 2025). For local history research, the festival provides a window into the evolution of Kalanguya social structures, ritual practices, and community- government relations.

Thus, this study is necessary because it documents an Indigenous festival that continues to shape cultural identity in Santa Fe and contributes to a deeper historical understanding of how the Kalanguya community preserves heritage within a rapidly modernizing society. Despite its 27-year-old history, limited academic literature documents how the festival began and evolved, which this study addresses.

**Statement of the Problem**

This study answers the question:

How did the Kalanguya Festival originate, develop, and contribute to cultural preservation, identity formation, and community life in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya?

**Objectives of the Study**

**General Objective**

To examine the origins, development, and cultural significance of the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya.

### Specific Objectives

This study specifically aims to:

1. Trace the historical beginnings of the Kalanguya Festival and identify the key cultural and social motivations behind its creation.
2. Document and describe the traditional cultural practices, rituals, art forms, and performances showcased in the festival.
3. Analyze community perspectives, including those elders, educators, youth, artisans, and LGU officials, on the meaning and importance of the festival.
4. Assess the role of local governance, policies, and institutional support in sustaining the festival through the years.
5. Identify the festivals impacts on cultural preservation, social cohesion, and local economic activities.
6. Examine the challenges encountered in maintaining the authenticity and sustainability of the festival amidst modernization and commercialization.

## THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Preservation Framework (2003), which views festivals as forms of intangible cultural heritage that must be safeguarded through continuous transmission, community participation, and cultural adaptation. UNESCO emphasizes that cultural heritage survives when communities actively practice, preserve, and pass traditions to younger generations. Safeguarding mechanisms include intergenerational transfer of knowledge, continuity of rituals and practices, participation of community members, and protection against threats to authenticity.

In the context of the *Kalanguya Festival*, the framework explains how the festival functions as a community-based preservation space where ancestral knowledge is maintained through rituals, dances, oral traditions, handicrafts, and communal performances.

The study operationalizes this framework by examining who transmits cultural knowledge, how traditions are taught, what practices are preserved, and what cultural elements are vulnerable to decline or modification. Through festival participation, elders, ritual specialists, artisans, and educators collectively safeguard Kalanguya identity and heritage.

The framework also allows the study to examine threats to cultural preservation. UNESCO identifies commercialization, modernization, language decline, and disruption of cultural activities as risks to the continuity of intangible heritage. In this study, these risks are evident in the gradual decline of ritual specialists, reduced use of the Kalanguya language among youth, and interruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges demonstrate the vulnerability of Indigenous heritage when transmission mechanisms weaken.

The study is further guided by the Sense of Community Theory developed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The theory explains that communities develop cohesion and belongingness through four elements: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs, and shared emotional connection.

Membership is reflected in the participation of Kalanguya residents in rituals, dances, cultural games, and communal activities that reinforce collective identity. Influence is observed in the active role of elders, educators, municipal officials, and community leaders in organizing and sustaining the festival. Integration and fulfillment of needs are demonstrated through the economic opportunities, tourism activities, and social support generated during the celebration. Shared emotional connection emerges through communal rituals, performances, feasting, and cultural gatherings that strengthen emotional bonds among community members.

These frameworks guide the interpretation of findings by explaining how the Kalanguya Festival preserves Indigenous cultural heritage while simultaneously strengthening social cohesion, cultural identity, and community solidarity in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya.

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework of this study illustrates how cultural practices, community leadership, institutional support, and socio-economic conditions influence the conduct and sustainability of the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. These factors collectively shape festival activities such as traditional rituals, dances, storytelling, music, handicraft exhibitions, and cultural performances. Through these activities, the festival serves as a mechanism for preserving Indigenous cultural heritage and transmitting cultural knowledge across generations.

The framework further demonstrates that active participation in festival activities contributes to cultural preservation, strengthens Kalanguya identity, promotes intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge, enhances community cohesion, and provides economic opportunities for local artisans and entrepreneurs. The framework recognizes that support from local government agencies, educational institutions, and Indigenous cultural leaders is essential in sustaining the festival amid modernization, tourism development, and social change.

**Influencing Factors**

• Cultural Practices

• Community Leadership

• LGU and Institutional Support

• Educational Programs

• Socio-Economic Conditions

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**Kalanguya Festival Activities**

(Rituals, Dances, Music, Storytelling, Crafts, Cultural Games)

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**Outcomes**

• Cultural Preservation

• Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer

• Indigenous Identity Formation

• Community Cohesion

• Local Economic Benefits

**Significance of Study**

Understanding the Kalanguya Festival provides insights into the mechanisms of cultural transmission in Indigenous communities. This research benefits:

- Scholars and students are interested in cultural studies, anthropology, and heritage preservation.
- Local government policymakers for creating effective strategies for cultural tourism and community engagement.
- Kalanguya community members by documenting and reinforcing cultural knowledge for future generations.

**Scope and Delimitation**

The study focuses on the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, covering its establishment in 1996 to the present. While other Indigenous festivals exist in the Philippines, the research limits itself to the Kalanguya Festival of Santa Fe, examining their cultural, historical, artistic, and social practices.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Indigenous festivals are widely recognized as important forms of intangible cultural heritage because they preserve rituals, oral traditions, communal practices, music, dances, craftsmanship, and Indigenous knowledge systems across generations. UNESCO (2003) explains that intangible cultural heritage includes social practices, festive events, oral traditions, performing arts, and traditional knowledge continuously recreated by communities in response to their historical and social environments. Festivals therefore function not merely as celebrations but as mechanisms for safeguarding cultural continuity and collective memory. In many Indigenous societies, festivals serve as important heritage platforms where traditions are publicly performed, transmitted, and reaffirmed through communal participation.

Recent studies emphasize that Indigenous cultural heritage remains vulnerable to globalization, modernization, migration, and commercialization. Pastera (2024) observed that younger generations in the Philippines increasingly encounter Indigenous traditions through festivals, performances, and local celebrations, demonstrating the importance of public cultural events in sustaining awareness of intangible heritage. However, the study also noted that modernization and generational gaps threaten the continuity of Indigenous knowledge and language transmission. Similarly, UNESCO's 2024 periodic report on Philippine intangible cultural heritage stressed that Indigenous communities continue to face risks associated with cultural assimilation, language decline, and weakening intergenerational transmission systems. These challenges reinforce the need for community-based safeguarding initiatives that actively preserve cultural practices through community engagement and education.

Scholars further argue that festivals function as sites of identity formation and cultural negotiation. Scholars have argued that Indigenous festivals provide communities with opportunities to affirm cultural identity while adapting to changing social conditions. Through public celebrations and cultural performances, communities reinforce shared values, collective memory, and cultural belongingness (Smith, 2006).

In the Philippine context, festivals such as Kadayawan, Panagbenga, and other Indigenous celebrations have been examined as mechanisms for preserving traditional knowledge and promoting community participation. Reyes and Guiab (2024) observed that these festivals preserve agricultural traditions, ritual practices, and Indigenous craftsmanship while simultaneously promoting tourism and cultural awareness. Arcilla (2017) also described Indigenous festivals as "living archives" because they preserve embodied cultural memory through repeated performance and participation. Studies on Cordillera tourism further reveal tensions between cultural preservation and commercialization. Talamayan (2022) explained that Indigenous cultural performances may simultaneously preserve identity while also becoming commodified through tourism activities. This tension demonstrates the continuing challenge of balancing cultural authenticity with economic sustainability.

Existing studies on the Kalanguya people primarily focus on migration, oral traditions, agricultural systems, and Indigenous belief structures. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts (2020) documented Kalanguya rituals, traditional leadership systems, and Indigenous practices associated with communal identity and spirituality. Tallungan et al. (2023) emphasized the role of oral narratives and Indigenous knowledge systems in preserving sociocultural values among Kalanguya communities. These studies highlight the importance of

elders, ritual specialists, and community participation in sustaining Indigenous traditions despite social and cultural change.

Despite these contributions, limited scholarly research specifically examines the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya as a mechanism for cultural preservation, identity formation, and community cohesion. Existing literature rarely discusses how the festival emerged in response to cultural decline, how it operates as a safeguarding mechanism for intangible cultural heritage, and how it strengthens the continuity of Indigenous knowledge across generations. Furthermore, there remains limited historical documentation regarding the evolution of the festival and its role in sustaining Kalanguya identity within a rapidly modernizing society. This study addresses these gaps by examining the historical origins, cultural functions, and social significance of the Kalanguya Festival using a historical-ethnographic approach grounded in Indigenous voices, community narratives, and heritage preservation frameworks.

## RESEARCH DESIGN/ METHODOLOGY

### Research Approach

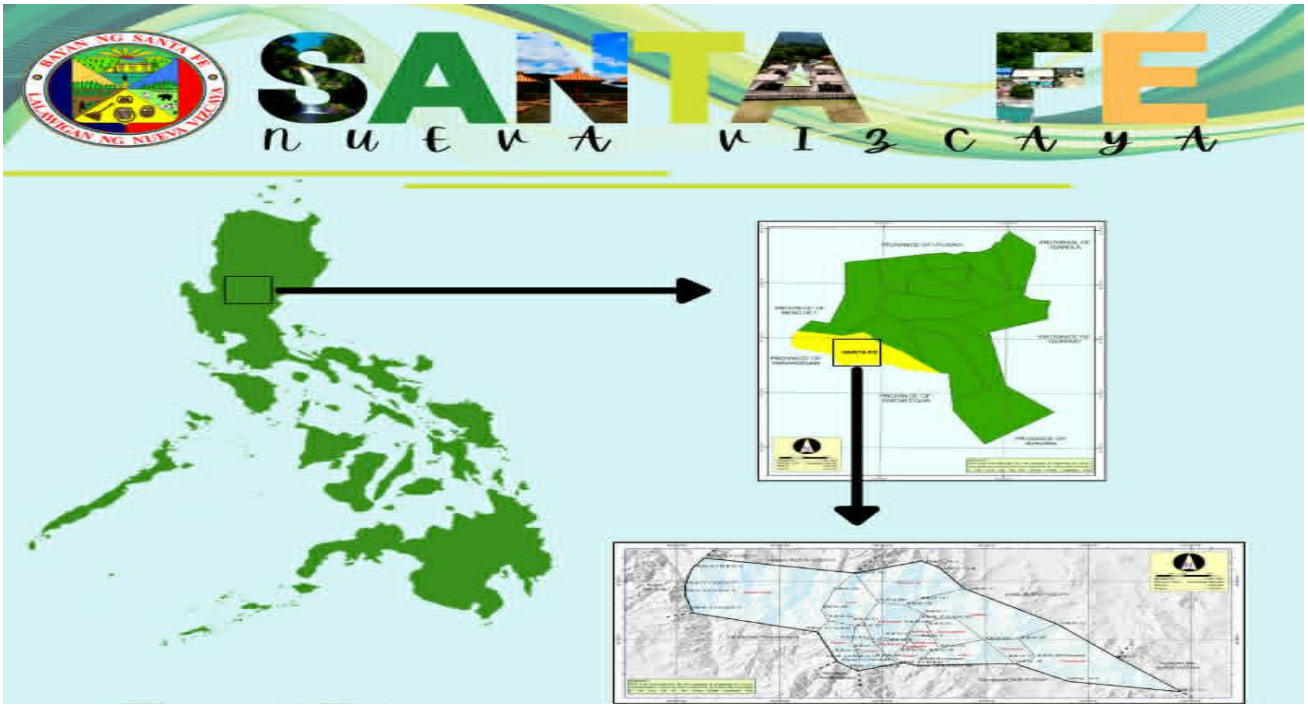
This study adopts a qualitative research design, specifically a historical-ethnographic approach, to investigate the origins, evolution, and contemporary significance of Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya.

Historical ethnography allows the researcher to integrate documentary evidence, oral histories, and participant observation, providing a rich narrative that captures both the historical foundation and contemporary practice of cultural events (Creswell, 2014; Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

### Research Locale

The research was conducted in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, a rural municipality strategically located along Dalton Pass. Santa Fe is historically and culturally significant as a center of Kalanguya settlement. The municipality has a population of approximately 17,578 (PSA, 2024), with a majority of Kalanguya residents.

The festival site includes Municipal Gymnasium, Barangay centers, and ritual spaces, which serve as venues for dance competitions, cultural games, and ritual reenactments. These locations were selected because they are integral to the practice of festival rituals and performances, enabling observation of cultural events in their natural community context.





**The Map of Santa Fe and the Municipal gym in Barangay Población.**

(Source: Santa Fe, Municipal records)

**Sampling and Participants**

A purposive sampling strategy was employed to select participants with knowledge, experience, and authority regarding the Kalanguya Festival (Patton, 2015). Key informants included:

| Objective | Participants | Role/Contribution |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Historical origins | Elders (*nangkaama*) | Provide oral histories of the festival's beginnings |
| 2. Traditional practices & rituals | Youth performers, artisans, elders | Share information on dances, music, rituals, and crafts |
| 3. Community perspectives & impacts | Municipal officials, educators, elders, youth | Provide insights on cultural significance, social cohesion, and economic impacts; highlight governance support and challenges |

Sample size: 20 key informants: 5 elders, 5 municipal officials, 5 educators, and 5 youth/artisans. The purposive approach ensured depth of information rather than statistical generalization.

**Data Collection Methods**

**Documentary Review:**

- Municipal ordinance
- Published ethnographies, journal, and historical accounts
- Festival records, posters, and media coverage (Manila Standard, 2025)

This provided historical context and formalized documentation of festival evolution.

**In- depth Interviews:**

Semi-structured interviews (oral and written) were conducted with elders, municipal officials, educators and youths/artisans. Interview questions were organized according to the specific objectives:

- Objective 1: Historical beginnings

Question: Can you describe how the Kalanguya Festival started?
Data source: elders, municipal records

- Objective 2: Cultural practices, rituals, and art forms

Question: Which rituals, dances, or crafts are central to the festival?
Data source: elders, youth performers, artisans

- Objective 3: Community perspectives, impacts, and sustainability

Question: how does the festival influence social cohesion, cultural preservation, and local economy?
Data source: municipal officials, educators, elders, youth

**Voice informants:**

The study ensured that the voices of key informants reverberate throughout the research, with direct quotes included in Chapter 4 to illustrate historical accounts, cultural practices, and community perceptions.

Interviews were audio-recorded for those with consent and transcribed.

**Ethical Considerations**

This study observed ethical standards in conducting qualitative and ethnographic research involving Indigenous communities. Prior to conducting interviews, informed consent was secured from all participants. The researcher clearly explained the purpose of the study, interview procedures, and intended use of the information gathered. Participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequence.

To ensure confidentiality and privacy, the identities of informants were protected through the use of general participant labels such as “Elder,” “Youth Performer,” “Municipal Official,” and “Artisan.” Audio recordings, transcripts, photographs, and research documents were securely stored and used strictly for academic purposes.

The researcher also practiced cultural sensitivity and respect for Indigenous customs throughout the conduct of the study. Rituals, oral traditions, and sacred cultural practices shared by the Kalanguya community were treated with respect and were documented only with the permission of participants and community leaders. Care was taken to avoid misrepresentation or unauthorized disclosure of sensitive Indigenous knowledge.

Possible risks and vulnerabilities were also considered during the research process. Some participants expressed concerns regarding cultural decline, language loss, and commercialization of traditions. To minimize discomfort, interviews were conducted respectfully and participants were allowed to skip questions they did not wish to answer. The study ensured that the voices and perspectives of the Kalanguya community were represented accurately and respectfully throughout the research.

**Data Analysis**

Data were analyzed using thematic content analysis to identify patterns, recurring themes, and relationships aligned with each research objective (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Documentary sources were triangulated with interview data to ensure credibility and reliability. Themes were organized according to specific objectives, allowing each section of chapter 4 to directly answer the research questions with evidence from participants.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents, analyzes, and interprets the findings of the study regarding the origins, cultural significance, and impacts of the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. The findings are based on documentary reviews, municipal records, and interviews conducted with elders, educators, youth performers, artisans, and municipal officials. The discussion is guided by the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Preservation

Framework (2003) and the Sense of Community Theory of McMillan and Chavis (1986), which explain how the festival functions as a mechanism for cultural preservation, community participation, and identity formation.

**Historical Beginnings of the Kalanguya Festival**

The Kalanguya Festival formally began in 1996 as a response to the perceived decline of Indigenous traditions among the Kalanguya people in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. Prior to the establishment of the festival, many traditional practices such as rituals, chants, dances, and communal ceremonies were primarily performed within households or clan-based gatherings. Elders observed that younger generations were gradually losing familiarity with these traditions due to modernization, migration, formal education, and exposure to dominant lowland culture.

One elder explained:

“Before the festival, our rituals were only done in our homes. Our children did not know the meaning of our dances and chants. We wanted a way to show everyone our traditions.”

This finding reflects UNESCO's concept of heritage safeguarding through knowledge transfer across generations. The festival became a cultural mechanism through which traditional knowledge could be publicly practiced, preserved, and passed on to younger generations. By transforming private rituals into organized communal celebrations, the Kalanguya community created a community-based heritage platform where ancestral knowledge continues to survive through performance and participation.

The creation of the festival was also influenced by the collective efforts of elders, educators, and municipal officials who recognized the importance of preserving Indigenous identity amidst rapid social change. According to municipal records and interviews, the festival was later institutionalized through Ordinance No. 30-2002, which officially recognized it as an annual municipal celebration. This institutional support ensured continuity of festival activities and strengthened the partnership between the Indigenous community and the local government.

Using McMillan and Chavis’ Sense of Community Theory (1986), the establishment of the festival reflects the element of membership because it reinforces the collective identity and belongingness of the Kalanguya people. Participation in festival activities allows residents to publicly affirm their Indigenous identity and cultural heritage. The element of influence is also evident through the active role of elders, educators, and municipal leaders in organizing and sustaining the festival.

The findings support existing scholarship on Indigenous cultural festivals as important mechanisms for preserving heritage and strengthening cultural identity. UNESCO (2003) emphasizes that cultural traditions remain viable when they are continuously practiced and transmitted within communities. Similarly, Arcilla (2017) described festivals as important repositories of cultural memory because they preserve embodied cultural knowledge through repeated communal performance and participation. The experiences shared by Kalanguya elders and community members demonstrate how the festival serves as a platform for sustaining cultural memory and reinforcing Indigenous identity amid social change.

The researcher interprets these findings as evidence that the Kalanguya Festival emerged as a proactive cultural response to the perceived erosion of traditional practices and Indigenous identity. Rather than allowing cultural practices to remain confined within family settings, community leaders transformed them into public cultural expressions that could be collectively preserved and transmitted. This demonstrates the Kalanguya community’s agency in safeguarding its heritage while adapting to changing social conditions.

**Traditional Cultural Practices, Rituals, and Art Forms**

The Kalanguya Festival serves as an important cultural platform where traditional dances, rituals, music, handicrafts, and communal practices are preserved and transmitted across generations. Informants emphasized

that these cultural expressions are not merely performances for entertainment but mechanisms for teaching history, values, spirituality, and Indigenous identity.

One youth performer shared:

"Every step we dance tells the story of our ancestors. I feel very happy whenever I join the festival."

Traditional dances and musical performances accompanied by *gangha* or *gangsa* (flat gongs) and *sulibao* (drums) narrate ancestral stories, agricultural cycles, and communal experiences. Elders explained that younger participants learn discipline, respect, and cultural values through dance rehearsals and performances. This demonstrates UNESCO's principle of continuity and adaptation because traditions are actively practiced while being transmitted to younger generations.

Handicrafts such as basketry, weaving, broom-making, and agricultural displays also form an essential part of the festival. Local artisans explained that the festival provides opportunities to showcase Indigenous products while simultaneously teaching traditional skills to younger generations.

One artisan explained:

"Visitors buy our crafts and ask how we make them. That is why we teach younger people so they can continue our traditions."

This finding reflects the safeguarding mechanism of intergenerational transfer because ancestral knowledge is preserved through mentorship and active participation. The festival therefore functions not only as a cultural celebration but also as an educational space where practical Indigenous knowledge is transmitted.

Ritual reenactments such as the *Timbal* wedding ceremony, *Padit* thanksgiving ritual, and *Bahliw* poetic exchanges further demonstrate the spiritual and moral dimensions of the festival. Elders explained that these rituals teach youth about kinship, respect, communal responsibilities, and spiritual beliefs.

One elder stated:

"Through rituals like the *Timbal*, we teach the youth about respect, kinship, and our values. This is not just a show; it is our identity."

This finding supports Arcilla's (2017) concept of festivals as "living archives" because ritual performances preserve embodied cultural memory and Indigenous spirituality. UNESCO (2003) also emphasizes that rituals and oral traditions are important forms of intangible heritage that require continuous safeguarding through community participation.

Using the Sense of Community Theory, the festival reflects shared emotional connection because communal rituals, performances, and celebrations strengthen emotional bonds among residents. Participation in these activities creates collective memories and reinforces solidarity within the community.

The researcher interprets these findings as an indication that the festival functions not only as a cultural event but also as an educational institution where Indigenous knowledge is actively transmitted. Through participation in dances, rituals, and handicraft production, younger generations acquire cultural competencies that contribute to the continuity of Kalanguya identity and heritage.

**Community Perspectives on Festival Significance**

Informants consistently described the festival as an important symbol of cultural identity, unity, and pride among the Kalanguya people. Elders, educators, youth performers, artisans, and municipal officials emphasized that the festival strengthens relationships among community members while promoting understanding between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents.

One elder stated:

"We celebrate not just to entertain visitors. We celebrate to remind ourselves who we are."

Similarly, a youth performer explained:

"I learned that preserving our cultural dances will make our traditions known in different places."

These statements demonstrate that the festival functions as an important mechanism of identity formation. Through participation in cultural performances and communal activities, younger generations develop greater appreciation for their heritage and Indigenous identity.

Municipal officials also emphasized that the festival promotes intercultural dialogue and social cohesion within Santa Fe.

One official explained:

"The festival is a bridge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents. It helps everyone understand and respect our culture."

This finding reflects the element of membership in the Sense of Community Theory because the festival defines collective belongingness while fostering inclusivity and mutual respect. Shared participation in rituals, games, parades, and communal gatherings strengthens social relationships and creates a sense of emotional attachment among residents.

The findings support Hicks-Alcaraz and Oishi (2019), who argued that festivals function as platforms for negotiating community identity and promoting intercultural understanding. Through public celebration, Indigenous communities can assert their history, values, and traditions while engaging with broader society.

The researcher interprets these findings as demonstrating the important role of the festival in strengthening Indigenous identity and fostering intercultural understanding. The festival provides a shared cultural space where both Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents can interact, thereby promoting mutual respect, cultural appreciation, and social cohesion.

**Role of Local Governance and Institutional Support**

The local government of Santa Fe plays an important role in sustaining the Kalanguya Festival through policies, funding, and collaboration with schools, cultural organizations, and community leaders. The passage of Ordinance No. 30-2002 institutionalized the festival as an annual municipal celebration and provided formal recognition to Kalanguya cultural heritage.

One municipal official explained:

"The elders asked for our support because they feared their culture would disappear. That is why we pushed for the ordinance."

Through municipal support, the festival continues to receive organizational assistance, funding, tourism promotion, and coordination with schools and cultural advocates. Educational programs that integrate Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) into school activities also contribute to the preservation of Kalanguya traditions.

This finding reflects the UNESCO safeguarding mechanism of community participation and institutional support. UNESCO (2017) emphasized that successful heritage preservation requires collaboration between communities and governing institutions. The partnership between the Kalanguya community and the municipal government demonstrates how local governance can strengthen Indigenous heritage safeguarding efforts.

Using the Sense of Community Theory, the role of local officials and educators reflects the element of influence because leadership structures shape decisions regarding cultural preservation, festival organization, and community participation.

The researcher interprets these findings as evidence that cultural preservation is most effective when community initiatives are reinforced by institutional support. The partnership between Kalanguya cultural leaders and local government officials has enabled the festival to remain sustainable and relevant despite social and economic changes.

**Festival Impacts on Culture, Society, and Economy**

The findings reveal that the Kalanguya Festival produces cultural, social, and economic benefits for the community. Culturally, the festival revitalizes traditional dances, rituals, language, crafts, and Indigenous practices by encouraging active participation among younger generations.

One young artisan explained:

"I can now make baskets like my grandmother, and I also teach others."

This demonstrates UNESCO's concept of cultural continuity because traditional knowledge is actively preserved and transmitted through mentorship and participation.

Socially, the festival strengthens community cohesion and emotional connection through communal activities such as cultural games, feasting, parades, and performances.

One barangay council member shared:

"During the parade and games, everyone comes together. It feels like one big family."

This finding reflects the shared emotional connection component of the Sense of Community Theory because communal participation creates feelings of unity, belongingness, and collective identity.

Economically, the festival promotes tourism and provides income opportunities for artisans, food vendors, and local entrepreneurs. Informants explained that visitors purchase handicrafts, traditional food, and agricultural products during the celebration.

One artisan stated:

"Tourists buy our crafts and food. The festival helps our livelihood."

The festival therefore fulfills not only cultural functions but also economic and social needs within the community. This reflects the integration and fulfillment of needs dimension of the Sense of Community Theory because the festival contributes to both heritage safeguarding and community welfare.

The researcher interprets these findings as demonstrating the multidimensional value of the Kalanguya Festival. Beyond preserving cultural heritage, the festival contributes to social solidarity and economic development, thereby supporting both cultural sustainability and community well-being.

**Challenges in Maintaining Authenticity and Sustainability**

Despite its positive contributions, the Kalanguya Festival continues to face challenges related to cultural preservation and sustainability. Informants expressed concerns regarding commercialization, language decline, and the decreasing number of ritual specialists and cultural mentors.

One elder explained:

"It is good that we have the festival, but we must ensure that our rituals, dances, and language continue at home and in schools."

Not all informants viewed the current development of the festival entirely positively. One elder expressed concern that some cultural presentations have become increasingly performance-oriented and less educational in nature.

One elder remarked:

"Some young performers can dance very well, but they do not always understand the meaning behind the rituals."

Similarly, another community member noted:

"Many visitors enjoy the celebration, but some come mainly for entertainment and commercial activities rather than learning about Kalanguya culture."

These observations suggest that while the festival has significantly contributed to cultural preservation, concerns remain regarding the balance between cultural authenticity and tourism-oriented activities. Maintaining this balance is essential to ensure that the educational and cultural objectives of the festival are not overshadowed by commercial interests.

This concern reflects UNESCO's concept of threats to authenticity. While tourism and modernization provide opportunities for visibility and economic growth, excessive commercialization may reduce rituals and performances into spectacles rather than meaningful cultural practices.

Language decline among younger generations also demonstrates the vulnerability of intangible cultural heritage when knowledge-sharing across generations weakens. Elders emphasized that cultural preservation should not be limited to annual festival celebrations but should continue within households, schools, and everyday community life.

The COVID-19 pandemic also revealed the vulnerability of cultural activities when the festival was suspended. Informants expressed fear that younger generations might gradually forget traditional practices without continuous participation and mentorship.

These findings support UNESCO's (2003) argument that safeguarding intangible heritage requires continuous community engagement, cultural education, and institutional support. Long-term sustainability therefore depends on balancing modernization and tourism development with cultural integrity and authenticity.

## SYNTHESIS OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that the *Kalanguya Festival* functions as a holistic cultural preservation initiative that strengthens Indigenous identity, safeguards traditional knowledge, and promotes community cohesion. Through rituals, dances, handicrafts, oral traditions, and communal participation, the festival serves as a dynamic mechanism of cultural continuity where Kalanguya heritage continues to be shared across generations.

The study further reveals that community engagement, youth involvement, and institutional support are essential in sustaining Indigenous traditions. The festival not only preserves cultural practices but also strengthens emotional connection, belongingness, and solidarity among residents.

Using the UNESCO Cultural Heritage Preservation Framework and the Sense of Community Theory, the study demonstrates that the *Kalanguya Festival* is both a safeguarding mechanism for Indigenous heritage and a social institution that reinforces community identity, participation, and collective memory.

Overall, the festival reflects the Kalanguya community's active effort to preserve and revitalize their cultural heritage while adapting to modernization and contemporary social change.

# CONCLUSION

## Summary of Findings

This study examined the origins, development, cultural significance, and community impacts of the Kalanguya Festival in Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya. Findings revealed that the festival was established in 1996 in response to growing concerns regarding the gradual decline of Kalanguya traditions, language, and cultural practices. The initiative was later institutionalized through Municipal Ordinance No. 30-2002, ensuring its continuity as an annual celebration of Indigenous heritage.

The study found that the festival serves as a significant platform for preserving traditional dances, rituals, music, handicrafts, oral traditions, and cultural values. Through active participation in festival activities, younger generations are exposed to Indigenous knowledge and practices that might otherwise be lost. Elders, educators, artisans, youth participants, and municipal officials consistently identified the festival as an important symbol of Kalanguya identity, pride, and cultural continuity.

The findings further revealed that local government support, educational initiatives, and community participation have played essential roles in sustaining the festival. In addition to its cultural significance, the festival contributes to social cohesion by strengthening relationships among community members and promoting intercultural understanding. It also generates economic opportunities for local artisans, food vendors, and entrepreneurs through tourism-related activities.

Despite these positive contributions, the study identified several challenges affecting the long-term sustainability of the festival, including commercialization, declining use of the Kalanguya language, dependence on informal mentorship, and the decreasing number of ritual specialists. These concerns highlight the need for continued efforts to preserve both the authenticity and educational value of the festival.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are proposed:

### Department of Education (DepEd)

DepEd should strengthen the integration of Kalanguya Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices (IKSP) into local curricula through cultural immersion activities, storytelling sessions, traditional arts instruction, and language preservation programs. Schools may also collaborate with community elders in implementing culturally responsive learning activities.

### Local Government Unit (LGU) of Santa Fe

The LGU should continue providing financial support, logistical assistance, and infrastructure development for the Kalanguya Festival while ensuring that tourism promotion remains culturally sensitive and community-centered. Periodic reviews of cultural preservation policies should also be conducted.

### National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)

The NCIP should collaborate with Kalanguya elders and cultural practitioners in documenting oral histories, rituals, language resources, and traditional knowledge systems to support long-term preservation efforts.

### Kalanguya Elders and Cultural Practitioners

Community elders and cultural leaders should establish structured mentorship programs that facilitate the systematic transmission of cultural knowledge, rituals, language, and traditional skills to younger generations.

**Researchers and Future Scholars**

Future studies may examine the long-term impact of the Kalanguya Festival on language revitalization, youth Indigenous identity formation, Indigenous tourism, and heritage preservation.

**Final Reflection**

The Kalanguya Festival embodies the community's resilience, adaptability, and commitment to their roots. Through collaboration across generations and governance structures, it continues to evolve while honoring tradition. Its sustainability relies on shared responsibility, cultural sensitivity, and ongoing engagement to ensure future generations inherit a living, vibrant cultural legacy.

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**Dedications**

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