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## ASSESSMENT OF THE 2014<sup>th</sup> MATAGOAN FESTIVAL OF THE CITY OF TABUK, KALINGA, PHILIPPINES

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**Abstract:** *A festival is an event ordinarily stage by a community, centering on some unique aspect of that community and its traditions often marked as a local or national holiday. They are mostly celebrated to promulgate the cultural heritage of nations thus highlights various aspects of a society. Matagoan Festival showcases the vast cultural traditions of the City of Tabuk as well as native products of the various indigenous communities of the city. This descriptive research focused on the assessment of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival of the City of Tabuk.*

*The study delved into the level of attainment of the objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival and the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered in the celebration of the festival. The study revealed that the objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival are very much attained while the problems encountered in the celebration of the Matagoan Festival are very much serious.*

**Keywords:** *Matagoan Festival, Bodong, Dornat, Festival, Cultural Heritage, Cultural Practices, Tabuk City Festival*

### INTRODUCTION

A festival or a gala is an event ordinarily stage by a community, centering on some unique aspect of that community and its traditions often marked as a local or national holiday.

Festivals are mostly celebrated to promulgate the cultural heritage of nations. Festivals at national level help to promote solidarity and patriotic spirit in the society while religious festivals bring convergence and propagate acceptance of all kinds of religion in different geographical segments.

International festivals help to increase brotherhood and remove ethnic racism. Celebrations of all kinds of festivals in a country improve the overall image of the country and show the acceptance of cultural diversity.

Festivals often serve to meet specific purposes. They are associated with celebration and may also provide entertainment which was particularly important to local communities before the advent of mass produced entertainment. These celebrations offered a sense of



belonging for religious, social or geographical groups. Festivals that focus on cultural or specifically ethnic topics also seek to inform members of their traditions and the involvement of the community elders sharing stories and experience provides a means for unity among families.

The Matagoan Festival started in the year 2002 on the month of June during the time of then Mayor Camilo T. Lammawin Jr. For this reason they created an ordinance that prohibits killing in Tabuk and declared it as a matagoan zone and not as a battle ground of the upland people. As a result, it became the birth of Matagoan Festival wherein the games of the festivities are more indigenous sports to promote peace among sub-tribes and preserve their culture through this festival.

Nowadays, Matagoan Festival showcases the vast cultural traditions of Tabuk as well as native products of the various indigenous communities of the city. It is also a festival of indigenous songs and dances. Matagoan festival, popularly known as “Zone of Life” is a colorful event which is celebrated during the founding anniversary of the City of Tabuk in the month of June. This showcases the products, cultural traditions (music and arts) of the City of Tabuk and it is a weeklong activity.

Tabuk City is richly endowed with three assets; these are the Environmental Resources, Cultural Practices and Outdoor Activities. During the celebration of Matagoan Festival there are various activities that will be experience by the guests and even the local people. Tabuk City caters activities that will satisfy the adventurous, artistic and excited spirits of the visitors, aside from being the rice granary of the Cordillera, Tabuk is also known as the white water rafting destination of Northern Luzon.

The City of Tabuk can offer and experience the best thing in line with agro-tourism, culture, adventure and nature as well as the people will enjoy the famous hospitality of the Tabukeños and the bountiful blessings of the place. The festival will not just be a big help to the tourism industry of the city but even to the economic progress and social development of Tabuk and its people.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

This study was conducted to assess the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival in order to find answers to the following objectives:



1. To determine the level of attainment of the objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival.
2. To determine the degree of seriousness of the problems encountered in the celebration of the festival.

## **HYPOTHESES**

The researcher was guided by the following hypotheses:

1. The objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival are moderately attained.
2. The problems encountered in the celebration of the festival are moderately serious.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Celebrations are important to civilizations as an affirmation of their spirit of nationhood, a testimony to their accomplishments and above all, their sense of pride, continuity and joyousness. Filipinos, who happen to know what fun is all about own a calendar of fiestas and festivals, one big party a day, 365 days a year, to honor their saints and traditions whether they live in the crowded centers of commerce and population or in some quiet, remote village, farm or tribal community.

If one wants to catch Tabuk City at its most colorful and most lively time, attend the Matagoan Festival which is held on the Foundation Day of the city every June 24. During the street dancing, the thoroughfares of the city fairly burst with colors as the participating ethnic groups don their native customs. The vivid bright colors of Cordillera ethnic groups dominate the more subdued hues of the Tagalogs and Ilocanos.

When it was first celebrated in June 2002, the Matagoan Festival was meant to showcase the rich mix of cultures of the city acknowledged as a veritable melting pot. Thus, aside from the street dancing, "Nataguan di Tago," where the Cordillera ethnic groups present their rituals for special occasions in the life cycle. For example, the Guilayons ensure the good fortune and health of their members through the gabbok, a ritual performed by the mandadawak on newborn children.

Former Mayor Camilo T. Lammawin Jr. picked Matagoan as the name of the festival in reference to the role of the town to the whole province. The English equivalent of the Kalinga term matagoan is "zone of life." With its wide lands and its being the center of education, government activities and commerce, Tabuk is host to myriad activities intended for the survival and improvement of individual and family life of its residents. To disrupt



these activities through disturbances in the peace is precisely what the MBCC wants to avoid.

One of the intents of putting its culture to the fore during the Matagoan Festival is to attract visitors to the city so aside from the usual cultural activities, the originators have come up with unique culture-based gimmicks.

The festival is also an opportunity for Tabuk to show off the city's tourism destinations. To carry this out, treks to Matambong and Bangabanga Falls in Amlao and water rafting on the Chico River are organized. The city is claiming the title as White Water Rafting Capital of the North.

Apart from attracting tourists and giving its own residents a chance to take a good look and appreciate the varied culture of the city and its tourism spots, the Matagoan Festival also aims to boost local trade and industry. To accomplish this, the LGU has chosen to retain the Patawid Agro-industrial Fair as a permanent feature of the festival. The fair showcases local agricultural and industrial products the whole duration of the festival.

With the theme "Timpuyog, Gagat, ken Disiplina, Tabuk Rumang-ay Ka," was the city's theme for the five-day revelry on its 7th Founding Anniversary and 13th Matagoan Festival that started from June-23 up to 27, 2014.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The descriptive-survey method was employed by the researchers in the study with a set of questionnaire as the main instrument in gathering the needed data for a reliable and accurate answers to the specific questions posed in the study.

The respondents of the study were the members of the Barangay Council of the forty three(43) barangays of the City. The data was collected through self-administered questionnaires to fifteen(15) members of each Barangay Council. In addition, thirty(30) respondents from the City Government were chosen through random sampling. Therefore, the total number of respondents was 675.

The researcher asked permission from the City Mayor for the conduct of the study. When the permission was granted the researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents personally. The researcher had the opportunity to explain to their respondents the purpose of the study. A constant follow-up was made on the progress in filling up the questionnaires until it was retrieved.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the population of the study as to age.

**Table 1. Population of the study as to Age**

Age	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
18-26	13	1.90	5
27-35	77	11.40	4
36-44	238	35.30	1
45-53	193	28.60	2
54-above	154	22.80	3
Total	675	100.00	

The table shows that majority of the respondents belong to the age bracket of 36-44 years old with 238 or 35.3% of the total population while the least got 13 or 1.9% from the age bracket of 18-26 years old.

Table 2 presents the population of the study as to gender.

**Table 2. Population of the study as to Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Male	348	51.60	1
Female	327	48.40	2
Total	675	100.00	

The table shows that majority of the respondents are males with 348 respondents or 51.6% while the female respondents comprise of 327 or 48.4% of the total population.

Table 3 presents the population of the study as to educational attainment.

**Table 3. Population of the study as to Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Elementary Graduate/Level	37	5.50	4
High School Graduate/Level	147	21.80	3
College Graduate/Level	302	44.70	1
Vocational Graduate	189	28.00	2
Total	675	100.00	

The table shows that the biggest number of respondents are college graduates with 302 or 44.7% of the total population while the elementary graduates garnered the least with 37 respondents or 5.5% of the total population.



**Level of Attainment of the Objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival**

**Table 4. Level of Attainment of the Objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup>**

Matagoan Festival(N= 675)

OBJECTIVES	VMA	MA	MoA	LA	NA	WM
1. To challenge ourselves to become good citizens of the country	535 (2675)	66 (264)	25 (75)	33 (66)	16 (16)	4.59
2. To develop and cultivate the talents, skills and abilities of the Tabukeños	528 (2640)	115 (460)	32 (96)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.73
3. To train the people to have strong advocacy for peace, justice, truth and respect to human dignity as active agents of change	571 (2855)	48 (192)	56 (168)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.76
4. To commit ourselves in peaceful and service oriented activities to become responsive to local and global development	520 (2600)	89 (356)	66 (198)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.67
5. To contribute and initiate in the maintenance of peace and order inside the city	530 (2650)	90 (360)	55 (165)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.70
6. To provide knowledge about the advocacy and objectives of the festival	526 (2630)	105 (420)	44 (132)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.71
7. To lift up the city for a better change through Matagoan Festival	444 (2220)	175 (700)	56 (168)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4.57
8. To showcase the cultural heritage of the Kalinga's	454 (2270)	92 (368)	107 (321)	22 (44)	0 (0)	4.45
9. To preserve the values our people richly left us through all the cultural heritage of our race	380 (1900)	237 (948)	47 (141)	11 (22)	0 (0)	4.46
10. To remind our youth of how our people lived in there times. That is why all the cultural heritage are showcased in the Matagoan Festival	374 (1870)	155 (620)	145 (435)	1 (2)	0 (0)	4.34
<b>TAWM</b>						<b>4.60</b>

The table shows that the obtained total average weighted mean is 4.60. It indicates that the objectives of the festival are very much attained.

Objective No. 3 which is “To train the people to have strong advocacy for peace, justice, truth and respect to human dignity as active agents of change” obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.76 which is described as very much attained. Tabuk City was dubbed to be the Zone of Life or Matagoan thus the primary objective of the festival itself is to advocate peace among the various tribes of the City.

Included in the cultural fare during the festival is the dornat or the renewal of the bodong. The bodong is the native peace pact practice prevalent among Kalinga tribes which still exists during these days. The Matagoan Bodong Consultative Council(MBCC), the peace-making arm of the LGU, sees the need of enacting the dornat during the festival to highlight its importance in keeping peace among native Kalinga tribes.



The Kalingas have practiced for generations the bodong or peace pacts among their sub-tribes to settle disputes. This system has prevented early generations from engaging in tribal wars. To prevent bloodshed, a bodong council is created which initiates a meeting and dialogue among the tribal members affected by a dispute. In that sense, the bodong is akin to today's judicial dispute resolution or amicable settlement.

But as elders are the participants in a bodong, informing the youth about the practice has become important. Many breaches in peace pacts had been committed by the youth in the past because they were not made aware of the relations among other tribes. This gave rise to the Matagoan Bodong Council(MBC) in 2005 which is in charge of the culture-based "Matagoan" peace program of Tabuk. As a tradition in the celebration of the Matagoan Festival, the dornat among bodong-practicing tribes has become part of the program.

Objective No. 2 which is "To develop and cultivate the talents, skills and abilities of the Tabukeños" obtained the second highest weighted mean of 4.73 which is described as very much attained. One of the priorities of the festival is to become an instrument in showcasing the peoples' talents, skills and abilities. The participants in the 2014 Matagoan Festival staged the dornat rituals, bamboo musicale and cultural dance presentations. There was also a singing showdown called "The Voice of Tabuk" to showcase the singing prowess of the Tabukeños. In addition to the highlights of the Matagoan Festival was the search for Ms. Tabuk City.

The Agri-Indigenous games featured the Kariada contest, horse racing, and coconut grating. As well as veterinary games which included sheep slaughter skills, pinikpikan preparation, Muscovy sa Kalunsuran, and organic pig catching. All these events made Matagoan Festival not only to showcase the culture of Tabuk but also an avenue for the people to display their abilities, talents and skills.

Objective No. 10 got the lowest average weighted mean of 4.33 which is described as very much attained. "To remind our youth of how our people live in there times. That is why all the cultural heritage are showcase in the Matagoan Festival," the festival showcased the living culture and tradition of the forefathers of the City thus, this objective remind us to preserve the vast cultural heritage of Tabuk for the next generation. The respondents perceived that this objective was the lowest since the residents of the City are not aware of



the very essence of the festival as well as its objectives. They are only familiar with the celebration of the festival.

### Degree of Seriousness of the Problems Encountered in the celebration of the Festival

**Table 5. Degree of Seriousness of the Problems Encountered in the celebration of the Festival (N= 675)**

PROBLEMS	VMS	MS	MoS	LS	NS	WM
1. Unstable peace and order situation	198 (990)	321 (1284)	154 (462)	2 (4)	0 (0)	4.06
2. Lack of support of community members	406 (2030)	59 (236)	77 (231)	97 (194)	36 (36)	4.04
3. Lack of finance to support all activities	459 (2295)	110 (440)	91 (273)	15 (30)	0 (0)	4.50
4. Lack of materials to be used	372 (1860)	118 (472)	157 (471)	13 (26)	15 (15)	4.21
5. Lack of security guards	391 (1955)	201 (804)	67 (201)	1 (2)	15 (15)	4.41
6. Lack of space to be used	314 (1570)	301 (1204)	24 (72)	21 (52)	15 (15)	4.32
7. Poor Relationship of city officials to the people of the different barangays	372 (1860)	118 (472)	157 (471)	13 (26)	15 (15)	4.21
8. Lack of dissemination of the activities	378 (1890)	205 (820)	55 (165)	21 (42)	16 (16)	4.35
9. Lack of cooperation of the city employees	371 (1855)	222 (888)	64 (192)	17 (34)	1 (1)	4.40
10. Inadequate preparation	153 (765)	437 (1748)	81 (243)	1 (2)	3 (3)	4.09
11. The personnel assigned to different activities are not doing their job	307 (1535)	211 (844)	154 (462)	3 (6)	0 (0)	4.22
12. Time schedule of different activities are not properly followed	378 (1890)	222 (888)	63 (189)	12 (24)	0 (0)	4.43
13. Garbage are thrown every where	482 (2410)	145 (580)	43 (129)	5 (10)	0 (0)	4.64
14. Program schedule of different activities were not on time	396 (1980)	177 (708)	67 (201)	35 (70)	0 (0)	4.38
15. Uncooperative committee members	354 (1770)	220 (880)	87 (261)	14 (28)	0 (0)	4.35
16. Limited participation of barangay officials in the different activities	285 (1425)	198 (792)	176 (528)	16 (32)	0 (0)	4.11
<b>TAWM</b>						<b>4.30</b>

The table shows that the obtained total average weighted mean is 4.30 which falls into the descriptive equivalence of very much serious. It indicates that the problems encountered in



the celebration of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan festival are very much serious as perceived by the respondents.

The celebration of Matagoan Festival is a vibrant thread in our cultural tapestry. As the townsfolk gather in thanksgiving and fete, the optimism, joy, and hope this event brings permeate the daily pursuits and journey towards socio-economic progress. With renewed spirits, it seizes the opportunities for development brought about by the era of revitalization. Let us cultivate the seeds of change and continue working together to build the equitably progressive community that we have long aspired for.

Problem No. 13 which is “garbage are thrown everywhere” obtained the highest weighted mean of 4.64 which is described as very much serious. The festival is the perfect opportunity to come face-to-face with waste. The festival generate tons of waste and a mighty headache not just for Tabuk City Hall but all those worried about the mindless consumption that compounds the insult by disregarding its impact on the ecology. Yet, waste will remain a problem if the same generators of trash will not be involved with its solution. The festival-goers left behind mostly food wrappers and packs. These food containers were made of non-biodegradable plastic. Plastic wrappers and consumer item packaging are the biggest contributors of solid waste in the locality. Nothing much can be done to reverse the effects of peoples’ negligence, but measures can be taken to avoid such an eco-debacle.

Problem No. 3 which is “Lack of finance to support all activities” obtained the second highest weighted mean of 4.50 which is described as very much serious. Scarcity of financial resources poses an extensive problem in the celebration of the festival. The celebration needs to be well funded for the community as well as the tourists to enjoy what the festival has to offer. But in reality, the fund allotted in the celebration is not enough to subsidize all the activities being conducted. Every barangay has to source out funds for their respective barangay to use in joining the festival because the City Government cannot provide the needed finances to procure printed shirts to use during the parade, materials in making floats and other paraphernalia’s that the people need in the activities that they will be joining.

Problem No. 2 which is “Lack of support of community members” obtained the lowest weighted mean of 4.04 which is described as much serious. The support of the community is no longer a problem since this event is one of the most anticipated and participated



undertaking of the city. The festival is an event which is celebrated collectively by the Tabukeños to propagate the cultural heritage of the city as well as it promotes solidarity and patriotic spirit in the society.

## **FINDINGS**

The following are the findings of the study:

The study revealed that the objectives of the 2014<sup>th</sup> Matagoan Festival are very much attained as evidenced by the obtained total average weighted mean of 4.60.

The objectives were realized thus it promoted responsible community-based tourism that the locals enjoyed, had increased the socio-economic benefits as well as it developed the tourism industry with dignity, respect and have nurtured local cultures. Likewise, it enriched the tourism experience and built pride and confidence among local communities. The festival also created opportunities for tourists and locals to increase better understanding of the different cultures, customs, lifestyles, traditional knowledge and beliefs of the cultural groups of the City of Tabuk.

The study also revealed that the problems encountered in the celebration of the Matagoan Festival 2014 of the City of Tabuk are very much serious as evidenced by the obtained total average weighted mean of 4.30.

There are a myriad of factors affecting the commemoration of the festival. The organizers and people involved in the planning and implementation experienced challenges and problems. The organizers loses focus, important interests ignored, effective alternatives where not formulated, poor planning results in lost time and money, among others. Despite the occurrence of various problems and concerns successful plan and innovative alternatives address real problems. During the celebration there were shortcomings of festival management and organization of activities but the organizers stand tall and focused their efforts on problems with greatest concern and ensure that multiple goals are explicitly considered throughout the duration of the festival.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the aforementioned findings of the study, the following are the conclusions:

The City of Tabuk can offer and experience the best thing in line with agro-tourism, culture, adventure and nature as well as it can offer its famous hospitality of the Tabukeños and the bountiful blessings of the place. The Matagoan Festival will not just be a big help to the



tourism industry of the city but even to the economic progress and social development of Tabuk and its people. The native culture-inspired activity which has become a permanent feature of the Matagoan Festival attracts the participation of various town folks. This annual celebration is one of the very important events of the city because it also staged the city's founding anniversary.

The Matagoan festival bring people together in a celebration of the rich cultural heritage, enabling families, neighbors and communities to rekindle the spiritual ties, to honor ethnic roots and renew relationships, to feed and entertain guests and to partake in a spectacle of excitement and fun.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following are hereby recommended:

1. The City Government must develop more innovative and creative sound plans, programs and activities of the Matagoan Festival to cater to the changing demands of time. Likewise, they must keep on evaluating the celebration in order to know what to improve in the succeeding years of the festival.
  - 1.1 The festival must strengthen local communities and forge a sense of identity and belonging for people of all ages. The City Government must motivate a greater participation of the youth because they act as a bridge between cultures and serve as key agents in promoting intercultural understanding.
  - 1.2 The festival organizers must come up with varied activities to showcase the cultural heritage of the Kalingas'.
2. Along the celebration of the festival the city government cannot get rid of issues and concerns thus, they must identify and immediately address the problems that currently exist and that have been experienced in the past and are expected to recur or could recur in the future.
  - 2.1 In order to achieve "zero-waste celebration of the festival," the City Government must consider the following: The organizers should ensure a sufficient number of recycling stations with clearly labeled bins for biodegradable and non-biodegradable discards. Volunteers must be designated in every recycling station to guide the public on the proper sorting of discards. Food vendors must be persuaded against using disposable containers and utensils since its disposal has



been environmentally problematic and be encouraged to use reusable or compostable alternatives such as banana leaves.

2.2 The City Government must allocate enough funds for the celebration of the festival. They must distribute certain amounts to the different committees to make sure that the programs that they are doing will satisfy the public. If funds for the festival are scarce, the City Government can resort to soliciting funds from sponsors and other private entities who are willing to help.

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