BASKETS HAVE NO AUTHORS…
Scoping Research Project on *Uswag Artesano*: Advancing the Creativity and Adaptability of Basket Weavers in the 3rd District of Leyte

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BACKGROUND

Woven baskets are ubiquitous vessels of cultures. A simple basket embraces nature and culture, the tangible and the intangible, the function and the ornamentation, the elite and the ordinary. Basket narratives touch on environment, plant sources, climate change, master weavers, family lineage, tradition, belief system, rituals, preparation, design, technique, experimentation, function, place marking, identity building, meaning making, innovation, marketing and many more iterations of the basket in the everyday. Basket weavers extend their histories and impress their geniuses with their creations.

The Samar Leyte provinces on the eastern seaboard of the archipelago annually confront dramatic climatic ruptures. Local basket weavers of this region barely survive, plagued by incessant typhoons, loss of source materials, abject poverty, poor nutrition and lack of education. These basket weavers have been marginalized almost to oblivion.

'Baskets have no authors…' is a moving reflection of Corazon Alvina, Director of the Museo ng Kaalamang Katutubo. This powerful statement captures the marginalization of basket weavers in society while providing containers for everyone's sustainability. Enabling programs should provide for heritage safeguarding and conservation but also for artisanal recognition, celebration and eventually, dignification.

THE *USWAG ARTESANO* PROJECT

Uswag is the Bisayan term for development, for enrichment. For the weaving artisans of the Third District of Leyte, this aspiration for an improved quality of life is the same spirit that drives them to survive the annual catastrophes brought by typhoons, floods, earthquakes and landslides.

The third district of Leyte island is composed of the municipalities of Villaba, Tabango, Calubian, San Isidro and Leyte. This northwestern peninsula is flanked by Cebu island on the west and Biliran island on the northeast. As a terrestrial cul de sac, the central mountain range of low montane forest and grassland is outlined by coastal communities that access the major urban centers by land through the south, and by boat.

Known as the 'blackhole', the ascription alludes to the comparative performance of the district to other areas in Leyte and in the region. The district has consistently ranked at the bottom in development performance indicators of investment, tourism, education, and nutrition in the past decade. These figures are constantly exacerbated by the dramatic impact of natural disasters of earthquake, typhoons, floods, and landslides. Located in the eastern seaboard of the archipelago, this region had the most devastating natural calamities in history- the Ormoc Mudslide Tragedy in 1991, the 'Yolanda' Super Typhoon in 2013 and the recent 'Odette' Super Typhoon in 2021. Thus, this reality foregrounds the high poverty incidence and insurgency hotspot that plague the landscape.

This cyclical poverty has defined and confined the people and their self-worth. They have different and protracted versions of their local histories. They try to associate with big cosmopolitan cities. And they lack symbols and icons to pride themselves with. The low self-esteem accounts for the lack of sense of pride and place.

In 2019, the UST GS CCCPET through the initiative of Provincial Board Member Anna Veloso-Tuazon embarked on a cursory heritage mapping project. In broad strokes, the mapping project identified and documented the heritages- both natural and cultural, reminiscent and evident in the landscape and localities. For six months, heritage mappers composed of teachers, youth, women, historians and enthusiasts, scoured and wrote the stories of their communities.

The cultural heritage mapping surfaced themes of potencies and promises. The diversity of root crop based cuisine indicates the nutritional adaptation due to the climatological context of calamities and hazards. The exotic and enduring practices related to nature-culture spirituality attest to their remoteness in mobility and accessibility. And the dexterity and differentiation of weaving skills by artisans in all municipalities indicate the cultural functionality and aesthetics given the limited natural resources of the region.

The cultural mapping graduated to a heritage utilization project entitled "Uswag Leyte." It echoed compelling narratives, tangibly interpreted in the weaving arts of artisans. Leyte weaving artisans have been well documented in archival documents and historical literature (Lane, 1986; Bureau of Education, 1912). The seminal project initiative mapped out the locals' defining heritages and opened artisanal opportunities to imbibe new ideas and tap on new markets. The project realized heritage utilization which transformed cultural mapping concepts to upscaled artisanal products exhibited in trade fairs. For this

scoping research project, Uswag Artesano intended to deepen the capacity of weaving artisans by recognizing risks and hazards as constant and by breaking ground into education and economic sustainability.

OBJECTIVES

The scoping research project intended to develop a database that focused and deepened our understanding on the weaving heritage and potencies of the artisans in the Third District of Leyte. Anent to these objectives were questions that guided the attainment of the objectives.

1. To define the basket weaving traditions of the artisans of the third district of Leyte. (Tradition)

2. To add value to the tradition and creativity of artisans through design, skill, knowledge, and collaboration. (Organization)

3. To evolve climate change protocols to safeguard the tradition and encourage the adaptability of the artisans (Natural and Social Challenges)

4. To propose support mechanism and reinforcement, both natural and cultural, to sustain the weaving creativity and adaptability of artisans (Transmission)

Project Collaborators and Beneficiaries

1. Private sector entities- the Uswag Artesano artisans collective, a group of artisans based in the Third District of Leyte; the artisans collective has no legal personality yet and will be acting in collaboration with the following corporations (a) Abre Linea Inc. a social enterprise that works with weaving communities in Leyte and Samar, and (b) Vicente M. Veloso Memorial Foundation Inc. a non-stock, on-profit organization providing agricultural and educational assistance in Leyte, and
2. Public sector entities- the Third Legislative District through the offices of Leyte Provincial Board Member Anna Veloso – Tuazon and Cong. Vicente Veloso, which will assist in providing information needed for the hazards analysis and the flora and fauna profile of the district. On the national level, we intend to collaborate with the Design Center of the Philippines and the Department of Trade and Industry Region 8. The Department of Tourism Region 8 will also help in the promotion of the artisanal products.
3. Educational institutions- The UST Graduate School for Cultural property and the Environment in the Tropics (UST GS CCCPET) will collaborate with the TESDA Region 8 and the Department of Education to formulate prototype curriculum to introduce Basketry and Design as a course.

RELATED LITERATURE AND OTHER STUDIES

Annotating Colonial and Contemporary Perceptions on Philippine Baskets: A Literature Review of Basket Articles in the 'The Philippine Craftsman' Anthology and other studies

Introduction

Philippine baskets are unauthored life stories. Beyond the intended use to contain, baskets epitomize the sources of materials from the environment; the preparation of material into craft; the dexterity of the hands and the feet; the tradition and genealogy of the artisans; the noble function as a food vessel; the artistry of colors and patterns; the contrasts of openings and enclosures, and many other narratives that contribute to the memory and identity of a people, a heritage of the society. Even with this treasure trove of stories, baskets have remained functionally popular but relegated to uncelebrated oblivion.

The American colonial government (1900 – 1945) recognized the value of Philippine baskets from the point of view of trade and commerce. The Philippines, as an American colony, was a vital source of raw materials and labor manpower to engine the American economy. Raw materials from agriculture were processed into finished products for export to the American market. This framework was followed in many arts and crafts industries especially in the Philippine baskets.

The appreciation for Philippine baskets and other artisanal crafts were popularized through the publication of the "The Philippine Craftsman" by the Bureau of Education in 1912. This seasonal journal featured articles written by American instructors, researchers, and surveyors. The topics ranged from the characterization of source materials, techniques, design, patterns, place association, instruction, and commentaries. Timely, "The Philippine Craftsman" was reprinted into a compendium of articles in 2015 by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts in consonance to the passage of the bill on Creative Industries SB 2347 in 2022.

Probing the relevance of the art of basketry from various eras and standpoints, contemporary articles were also reviewed to dialogue with the basket themes of the colonial anthology. This dialogue on basket provided a divergent perspective of how the handicraft was perceived by academic and humanistic motivations.

This review is an annotation of articles related to basketry featured in the reprinted "The Philippine Craftsman" along with contemporary scholarly researches. The intent of this literature review is to impress a deeper appreciation of the program of the American

colonial government to strengthen the basket industry and to highlight this severe documentation of this heritage, from ideation to the transmission through standardization and commercialization. The annotation on colonial articles is juxtaposed to recent studies on Philippine basketry thereby capturing similarities and contrasts in motivations to and aspirations for the artisans.

Heritage Documentation and Appreciation

Basket research had always been grounded on identification and documentation. This activity engendered a heightened appreciation and a deeper inquiry into the art of basketry. Whether the basket mapping was undertaken in a museum collection or in the field, the universe of the basket, with its scope and limitation, must be defined.

The intent of the chapter entitled "Philippine Baskets" (Miller et. al, 2015) was to elaborate the situation of basketry in the Commonwealth Philippines gleaned from the schools' curriculum, particularly to define materials and technique, so that "the best of these may be standardized in shape, design, and workmanship ." An extensive discussion tackled basket materials that abound in the islands like palms such as coconut palm, nipa palm, buri palm, banban, rattan, air roots, bamboos, nito, orchid, abaca, pandans, sedges and rushes. Each material was profiled, in description and illustrations, in terms of typical source habitat, harvesting technique, seasonality, preparations and applicability in the typology of baskets. The second part provided case studies such as the Polangui baskets and Zambales baskets with their representative characterization based on function such as the standard work basket and the standard waste basket along with the appropriateness of materials to the structure and design of the basket. In every discussion of the basket, thorough procedural narration included the materials, dimensions, weaving, handle and rim, and sometimes even the coloring. Even though the article heavily invested on instructional illustrations on the standard of a typical basket, some allowable modifications from the main design were accommodated. Interestingly, names of teachers and innovators of baskets were also mentioned. The concluding discussion touched on the array of Philippine baskets for the continental market particularly the United States.

This chapter entitled "Some Common Baskets of the Philippines" (Parker, 2015) essayed the characterization of typical baskets of lowland Filipinos particularly the groups of Ibanags, Ilocanos, Pangasinans, Pampangans, Tagalogs, Bicols and Visayans. The author/surveyor, surmised to be an instructor of Industrial Arts, had a collection of baskets for study and reference. He contextualized the site specific lowland baskets by explaining how the baskets attain a distinct feature in form, material, technique and color, because of the setting and environment. Thus, trans-local comparison was undertaken along with international similarities from the Chinese and the Indian tradition. A most likely participant observer in many basket fairs, the author enriched his thematic discussion with a basket case study on Chinese weaving found in Calle Asuncion in

Binondo, Manila. He linguistically compared terminologies for functional baskets such as the terms for rice holding basket, winnowing basket, sieve basket, platter/tray basket. Lowland materials were generally rattan and various kinds of bamboo. The weaves were extensively discussed through description and drawing illustrations. This visually presented the hexagonal weave from the simplest technique and counts to the more complicated pattern combinations. In addition, the description was enriched by basket examples, locations and other international similarities. The color application was highlighted with the enumeration of organic sources of dying such as "Brown or black may be obtained by smoking the bamboo. A brown or reddish color may be obtained by the use of dyes made from mangrove bark (*Ceriaps candolleana)*, talisay (*almendras*) bark (*Terminalia catappa) ,* or "baroc" bark (used in coloring tuba), or from sibucao chips (*Cæsalpinia sappan*). The hands and borders were briefly discussed with the illustration of the 'labid", "lupihan" and the pinisi borders.

The study entitled "Materials, Functions and Weaving Patterns of Philippine Indigenous Baskets" (Pazon & del Rio, 2018) concentrated on the archived displays at the National Museum of Anthropology in the Entwined Spheres section. It discussed and analyzed different materials, functions, weaving patterns and cultural relevance of the different baskets in the Philippines. In particular, it elaborated on the functions clustered into carrying agricultural products, storage, ritual use, food and paraphernalia containers, and auxiliary household functions.

The articles emphasized the importance of defining the basket and its tradition in the Philippines. The colonial approach was very expansive, documenting various baskets of both local and foreign origin from the collection of the Insular Museum of Ethnology, Natural History and Commerce. The contemporary study likewise conducted a documentation study of the basket collection of the National Museum of Anthropology the Entwined Spheres Section. Fundamental to any baseline research and material survey was the physical and archival documentation to understand the ecosystem of the art of basketry.

Economic Signification and Beyond

Significance could embrace historical, aesthetic, social and religious attributes of a heritage resource. For basket, the highest value could be the functional value which foregrounds the economic potencies. The utilitarian value had been probed with diverse persuasions, surfacing commercial and social concerns.

The opening statement of the article entitled "Some Commercial Notes on Baskets" (Miller, 2015) captured the national thrust of the American colonial government on the basket industry. To wit:

"Our export basket industry must be built on the basis of utility and not from the viewpoint of a basket collector. Baskets should be made that are salable, and the essential qualities of such baskets are usefulness and beauty. They must be planned for a purpose. Utility, workmanship, design and color are the factors which must be considered in all our baskets and the lack of any one will probably destroy the commercial value of the article."

This discussion elaborated the rationale of standardizing Philippine baskets. To meet the popular demand and to cut shipment cost, the idea of nesting and telescoping (baskets can be compacted one on top of the other), the appropriate coloring, the size of the bottom and the rim. This explanation further made sense when the uses of baskets in the United States revealed that these articles were for dining tables, plaques, jardinieres, catchalls, trays, arts, gifts, waste receptacles, market, storage. The place specific cases of Polangui basket and Palawan basket were characterized along with a special feature on material technique like bamboo, coiled and lupis. Suggestions for possible design development were mentioned especially for small baskets such as vetiver baskets, scissor baskets, small baskets (Note, one of the biggest industries during the American Period was sewing and clothing industry, exemplified by the Singer Sewing Machine. Many basket functionalities were associated with clothing- clothes hamper, storage for textiles and blankets, containers for the sewing paraphernalia, basket for scissors, storage for yarns and threads etc.)

The study entitled "Unveiling the Indigenous Art and Craft of Bakat and its Economic Significations" (Inocian, R.B. et. al, 2019) probed into the intricacies of the bakat's (the woven bamboo basket of Cebu) art of weaving, its origins; processes; uses; primary materials and principles used and its economic significations in the system of production and trade. The bakat economic significations impacted the weavers life- it represented values of resiliency to hardship, adaptability to changes, passion to craftsmanship, sense of community and family centeredness.

The articles delved on the economics of basket with a contrasting attitude to its valuation and valorization. The macroeconomic program of the colonial government veered towards the standardization and commercialization of designs, materials, sizes, functions and even color to capture a bulk market in the United States. The microeconomic study of contemporary bakat in Cebu tackled the commercial aspect with an anthropological discussion on the humanistic side of the weavers. Within the purview of economic analysis, the contrasting attitudes revealed the intentional goal- one for resource extraction and export while the other is for improvement of labor conditions and human development.

Transmission and Transformation

Transmission posed the biggest challenge in safeguarding initiatives for basket heritage. This could be through tradition, education, legislation, tourism and even migration. As a process, transmission of knowledge and skill could be standardized but could likewise result in innovation and transformation.

The article entitled "Basket Weaves in Use in the Philippines" (Ayers, R. and Duka, L., 2015) investigated the weaves of the basket collection lodged in the museum of the Bureau of Education. Apparently, this was the collection of the Insular Museum of Ethnology, Natural History and Trade, the predecessor of the current National Museum of the Philippines. The collection of mainly Philippine baskets was complemented by those from Java, Sumatra, China, India and the United States and Europe. It was implied that the similarities in weaves and patterns were most likely attributed to the heavy trade, both goods and services, that was occurring even before the colonial period. The discussion showed several plates with an average of six (6) drawn illustrations. The weave illustrations were described according to the type of applicable basket, appropriate material for the weave, the strength and durability of the weave based on the items contained, the function of the basket, and other similar basket attributes both locally and internationally. This article was extremely pedagogical for basket technical training and research as a foundation course for future basket weavers and scholars.

In the article entitled "The Development of Basketry in Public Schools" (Lyman, 2015), the introduction of basketry in Philippine schools recounted the ubiquitous presence of baskets in daily lives of Filipinos and the impression of the American colonial to the diversity of baskets in the islands. Accordingly, "one of the distinguishing characteristics of native Philippine basketry is the almost total absence of the usual ribbed forms. Nearly all of these baskets are fashioned of flat splints woven tightly together at right angles, over-and-under weaves, or arranged diagonally in looser hexagonal weaves, the use of the splints as ribs or spokes in both cases being entirely incidental." As early as 1904, it was determined to include basketry in the industrial instruction of the Philippines schools. This was prompted by the extensive interest given to baskets in the St. Louis International Expo of 1904. In 1910, baskets embarked on a slow program in Philippine schools with a number of experiments in materials and forms. It was apparent that the industrial instruction had to be guided by uniform methods and standardization of outputs was required and secured. By 1914, production was no longer a problem but the disposal of the finished articles became a concern. "The Philippine Craftsman " was established to serve as an avenue to share updated and scholarly information on the basketry. The article raised two points in connection with the development of basketry in the Philippines. One was the care given to the selection of designs and the other was the emphasis on commercial work. A special effort was made in the selection of design to preserve the old decorative units and motifs peculiar to "primitive" Filipino basketry. Only such modifications as seem necessary in order to meet the demands of commercial firms were made.

The brief article entitled "Basketry in Leyte" (Swan, 2015) tackled the success of the Leyte industrial class's adoption of the Polangui basket prototype. With the standard form, design, material, structure, weave and color of the Polangui basket, this was introduced to the Leyte schools and gradually improved and modified on higher grades. The designs were evaluated and the finish was exemplary. The immediate output was the marketability and salability of the baskets. The industrial instruction reported that the increase in revenue was consistently plotted for the past 5 years. In summary "while the Leyte's success in basketry may be attributed to various causes, there is no doubt that an early recognition of the value of models and forms over which to weave has played an important part." The baskets of Leyte continue to play a necessary role in the lives of the people. Although the skill has been arbitrarily transmitted through family tradition, the basket curriculum of Leyte did not survive that the current Uswag Artesano program tries to address.

The study entitled "From Museum Collection to Field Research: An Ethnographic Account of Batak Basket Weaving Knowledge, Palawan Island, Philippines" (Novelino, 2009) began as an ethnographic research of a museum collection that eventually led to deeper understanding of the culture and society of the Batak. In particular, the fieldwork led to 'features of basketry knowledge are well transmitted while others are not." Thus, incomplete transmission can give rise to new forms of interaction between idiosyncratic 'know how' and customary knowledge leading to innovation and improvisation.

The three articles converged in the areas of documentation of the baskets and the aspect of transmission of skills and creativity. Both colonial and contemporary articles delved on the study of weaves, materials, function and form. The second colonial article pursued the promotion and dissemination of the basket handicraft in formal education for the eventual establishment of Trade and Vocational schools. The local article unraveled the significance of fieldwork study that surfaced the dimension of innovation during the incomplete act of cultural knowledge transmission. Once again, the studies began with a common appreciation of the art of basketry and concluded differently whereby the colonial thrust promoted standardization through schools while the contemporary approach highlighted the individual innovation.

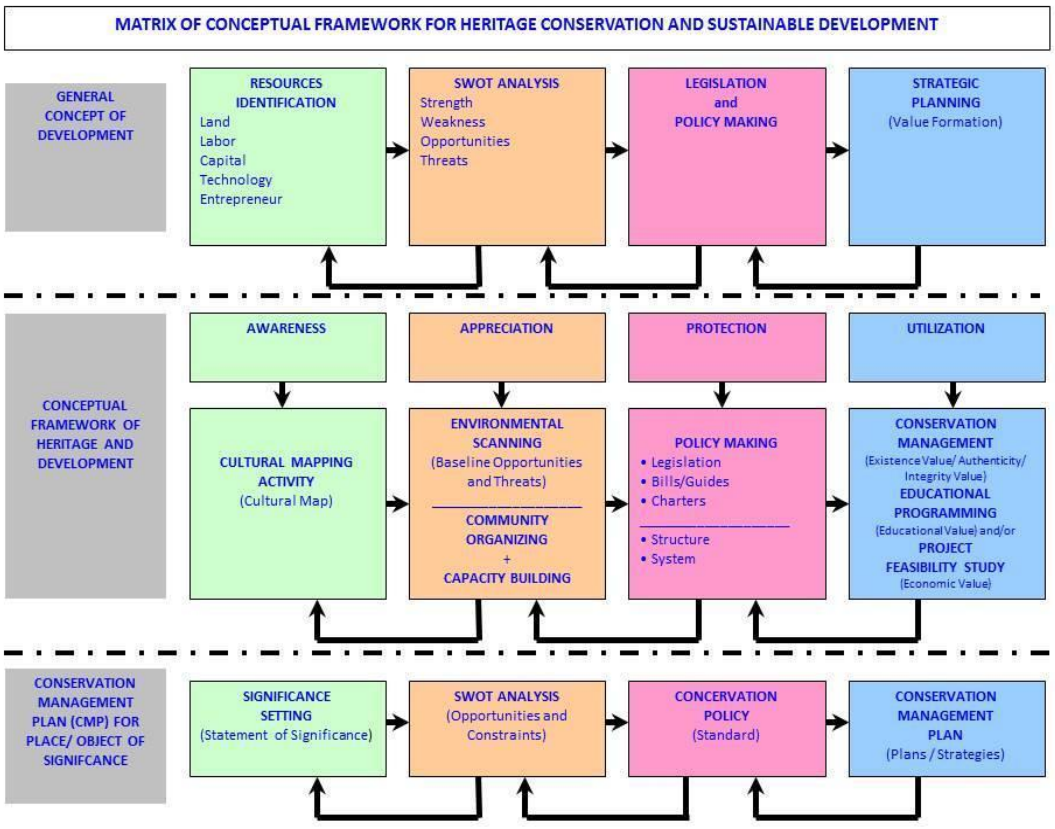
Conclusion

The basket articles in "The Philippine Craftsman" projected the colonial perceptions during American period. On the biased side, Philippine baskets were identified as primitive, including all pejorative implications, that both product and process had to be improved. Further, even with the extensive collection of baskets in the Bureau of Education Museum gathered from all parts of the archipelago, the standardization programme eroded the indigenous material, technical and aesthetic diversity of the baskets. It also provided for the cosmopolitan needs of the American and export markets

which were totally alien and disconnected to the local community. On the positive side, the documentation of baskets i.e. source materials, weaving techniques, place attachments, counts and patterns, colors and pigments, local and international comparative analysis, mode of instruction captured the colonial government's thrust to fuel the industry and improve the economy of the countryside. The upscaling and upskilling strategies were coursed through the Bureau of Instruction which required basketry in the technical, vocational education in all elementary schools of the Philippines.

The related literature and studies provided an overview of the major themes in basket research. The survey revealed that areas of discussion covered documentation i.e. the basket as object, art of basketry and the basket artisans; significance of the basket more often for utility and economics and the transmission of the basket weaving skills through tradition and formal education. These themes will be the areas of inquiry of the scoping research project.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



The review of Related Literature from the colonial experience to the contemporary studies clearly essayed three common themes i.e. understanding heritage through

documentation, signification of the heritage resources and the transmission mechanism. The conceptual framework of heritage conservation and sustainable development illustrates the transformation of basket documentation (cultural mapping) until it's eventually utilization (transmission).

METHODOLOGY

The Filipino approach to research is through Kwentuhan, Kainan, Lakaran, Pakiramdam (Storytelling, Shared meals, Shared trips, Socio-Emotional Context-building). This grounded approach to engage the artisans builds trust and honesty that elicits sincere and deep valuable information for the project research. The activity plan of the project was be ladderized modules, but the interaction blended Filipino approach, on-line platform, fieldwork, face-to-face lectures and workshops to ensure effective knowledge dissemination and engagement with hard-to-reach communities with limited digital connectivity.

For the project, the conceptual framework is diagrammed as follows:

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

A. Heritage Profile of the 3rd District of Leyte

A.1 Cultural Heritage Profile

The cultural mapping that was conducted in 2019 documented the different heritage resources of Calubian, Leyte, San Isidro, Tabango and Villaba.

Calubian

Calubian is blessed with natural resources and has more than 21 caves, some of which include Ilagkat, Ginaksan, Dangpanan, and Bulawanon. There is also a fish sanctuary in Caruyucan and Velez Farm which is home to a number of flora and fauna in Barangay Kawayan which Acacia Falls is found.

For built heritage, it has shrine, belfry, a number of ancestral houses of known families of the town, and the historical municipal hall of Calubian in Poblacion. It has also a number of movable heritage related to farming. A number of indigenous games is also documented and their Lubi-lubi Festival, an annual merrymaking celebrating the coconut, its main product. Calubian is also known for farm based products such as biko, and *salvaro*, native sweet delicacy made mainly from coconut meat; and *sinugba nga tinasik nga isda* or grilled fish in Don Luis. The town also has a lot of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) properties which include *banig* weaving made from Romblon plant and basket weaving made of sig-id, nito, batang-batang, and bamboo.

Leyte

Leyte is proud to have a number of natural heritages that they could be proud of such as Leyte Sunset View in Poblacion; Basiao Hot Spring in Sitio Luy-a (Tinocdugan); Macaratong Beach (Tinocdugan); Mahangin Cave (Palid II); Tigbawan Cave (Tigbawan); Tapol Cold Spring (Tapol); Salawad Peak in Bachao, and White Beach of Maanda (Maanda). For built heritage, the town has ruins of a watchtower in Barangay Poblacion used for defense purposes during the Spanish period against pirate attacks.

For the intangible cultural heritage, the town has the Hiraite Festival (town wide celebration); *suman* making (Sitio Mangaribo, Baco); *manban* making, a kind of rice cake wrapped in coconut leaves (Poblacion), and the popular dance *kuratsa*. Leyte is also known for a number of culinary products that are farm based such as *iraid*, *palitaw*, and *moron* (Sambulawan) to name a few. The town also practice a number of traditional games. The town is known for furniture made of bamboo, crafts making such banig, bayong, and basket weaving made of oway, nito, tukog, ragawraw, romblon, abaca and bagacay.

San Isidro

Traditions, festivities, indigenous games, social practices comprise the town's rich intangible heritage. These are the Kalankaras Festival, held for thanksgiving and merriment, the Linakaran tradition; *mañanita* or early morning birthday serenade and

Maisayaw Festival, town fiesta celebration in honor of San Isidro and its main product, corn to name a few. A number of traditional games is still practice in the town

The town's culinary heritage includes *different recipes made of root crops such as batingkol* and *koping* or kropeck made from cassava (Bunacan); *molido*, sweets made from *kamote*; *doydoy*, sweets from kamote or *balinghoy* wrapped in banana leaves. Other movable heritage properties include sudlay sa basak, a farming implement; kariton, a small cart (Crossing); pinggahan, technology in getting water; and laras and zigzagger, tools for making furniture (Capiñahan). Amakan making made of bamboo can also be found in some barangays of the town.

Tabango

Tabango is known for its natural and intangible heritage. Mt. Catur-aw in Inangatan and Dagkutanan sa Pangpag in Sta. Rosa were documented natural heritages of the town. Intangible cultural heritages of the town include *tikog* basket weaving in Gimarco; *amakan* making in Sonlogon, Campopok and nigo making in Hacienda Maria.

Villaba

Villaba has an interesting mix of heritages from natural built, movable, and intangible. These include the Filipino-Japanese World War II Veterans Memorial Shrine in Balite, and the Larrazabal Ancestral House built in the 1950s for built heritage while for natural heritage, it includes the *tabay* or underground water in Cabungahan, Lumanoy falls in Cahigan, Kasyang (acacia) pinayong in Calbugos, dao tree in Tabunok, and the Buga-buga Hills in Hibulangan.

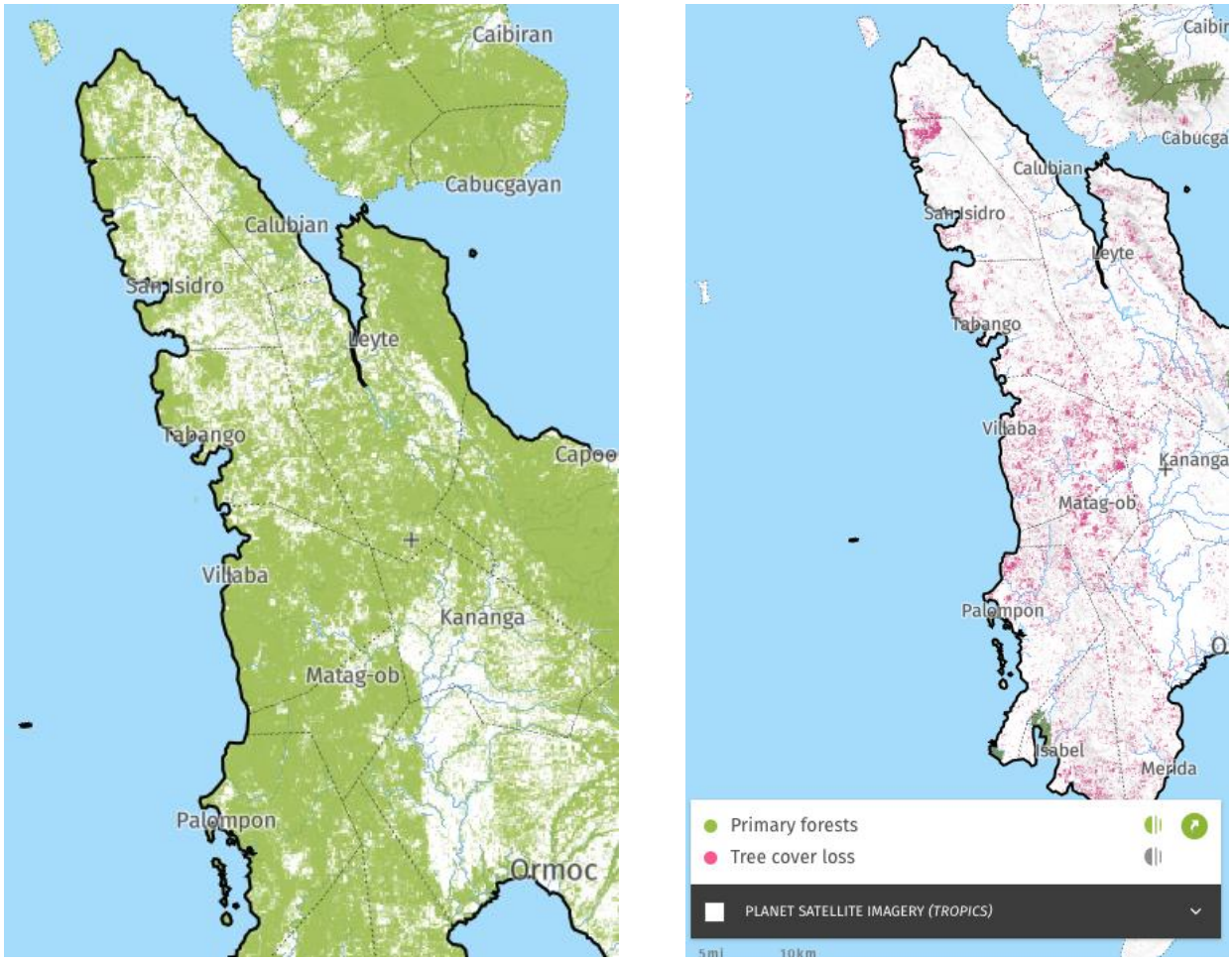
The *pukot* (fishnet) making in Sitio Puntod, Tangbubunga is included in the intangible cultural heritage. It is a contraption for catching fish. There is also *duyan* (also *duyan lanot*) making in Yolanda Village, Cahigan with Imelda Ochea as culture bearer who uses abaca in her craft. In Capiñahan, the *bugasan nga gama sa buli* (rice or corn keeper made from buri leaves are produced. *Saguran*, *sinamay*, and abaca weaving are practiced in Silad while Iligay produces *salbaro*, *puto*, *bibingka*, and *budbud*. The town also celebrates the Villa Alba Festival every year.

Conclusion

The USWAG Leyte Cultural Mapping of 2019 produced a database that encompassed the natural, built, intangible, movable heritages and the local histories of the five (5) municipalities of the Third District of Leyte. A commonality amongst the sites was the

art of basket weaving which utilized diverse wild/ruderal natural materials sourced from the forest. The small patches of remaining forests continue to be valuable sources of roots, stems, vines, leaves that become baskets, mats and containers of the everyday.

A.2 The Forest Profile of the Third District of Leyte



Forest is also the source of non-timber products used in making different crafts like baskets. According to Global Forest Watch, the Province of Leyte had 173 kha of natural forest extending over 74% of its land area but due to so many reason it lost 165 ha of natural forest. In the map from Global Forest Watch, the primary forest cover in the land area of Leyte Province shaded in green versus shaded in pink is the tree cover loss through the years that expands in the land area of Leyte. For the towns in the 3rd district of Leyte, the forest cover has decrease since 2000 to 2021. Despite the decrease in forest cover in the district, there source of materials is still intact since there are few of them who gathers these non-timber materials.

Town	Forest cover since 2000	Decrease in tree cover since 2021
Calubian	6.8 %	5.6 % (281 ha)
Leyte	12 %	7.5 % (1.17 kha)
San Isidro	6.5 %	16% (664 ha)
Tabango	4.5 %	14% (754 ha)
Villaba	12 %	17 % (1.84 kha)

Forest Management and Climate Change Ruptures

The basket artisans of the Third District of Leyte were all forest dependent for their source materials. They were composed of individuals and families who operated independently of each other. The breakdown of artisans follows:

Municipality	**Artisans**
Villaba	3
Tabango	6
San Isidro	1
Calubihan	6
Leyte	6

These artisans sourced their materials from the immediate surroundings which more often were private lands and forests. Materials that they source from the forest were uway, sig-id, nito, batang batang, coconut mid rib, banban, tukog, romblon, buli, abaca bagon. They never mentioned restrictions from the forest because most of their basket weaving were for personal functions and needs and not for commercial or mass production scale. With 22 individuals and diversity of materials, the volume of materials extracted did not dramatically impact the environment.

The artisans' relations to the forest were purely for subsistence not for any industrial or commercial endeavor.

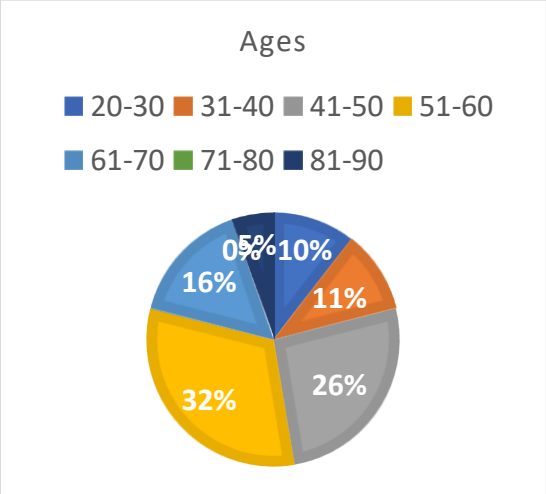
As of now, the town of San Isidro, Calubian, and Leyte is already done with their Forest Land Use Plan (FLUP) and for adoption already. FLUP of Villaba and Tabango is on-going.

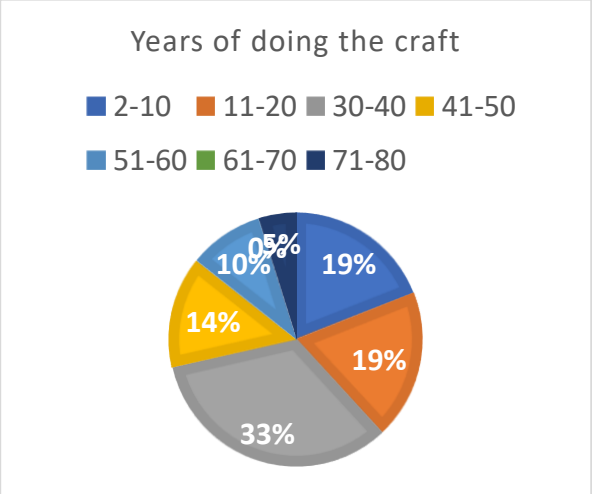
Understanding the Artisans, their Crafts and their interaction with the Environment

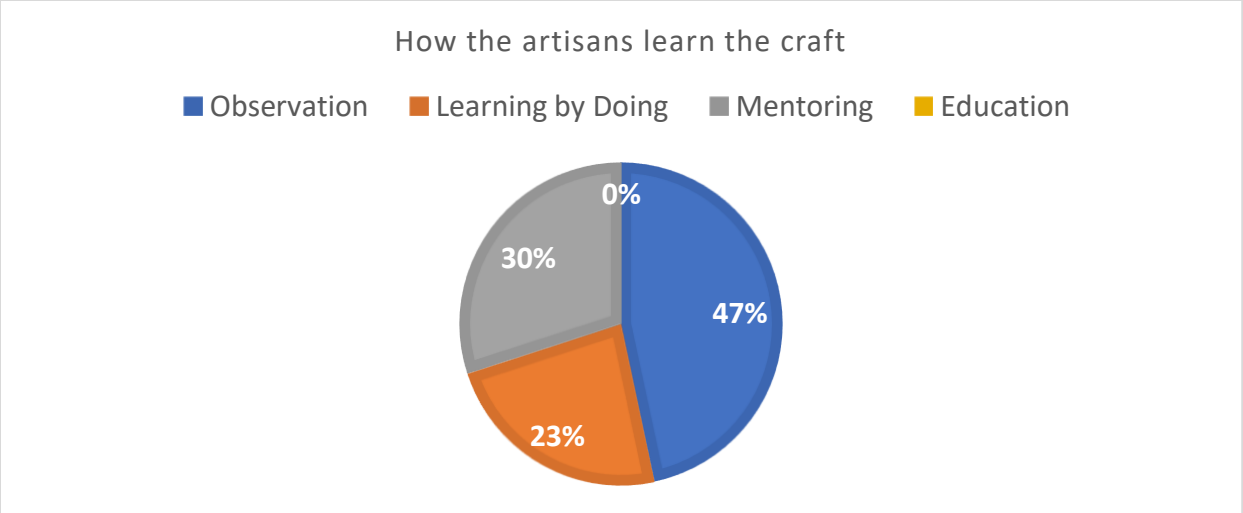
Teams of community organizers and public-school teachers personally engaged the identified basket artisans in the Third District of Leyte through '*lakaran, kwentuhan, kainan at pakiramdaman*" for a period of one month. As trust and familiarity were established, various information and expressions were shared on the art of basket making. The following summarizes some pertinent data to appreciate the ecosystem of the basket handicraft.

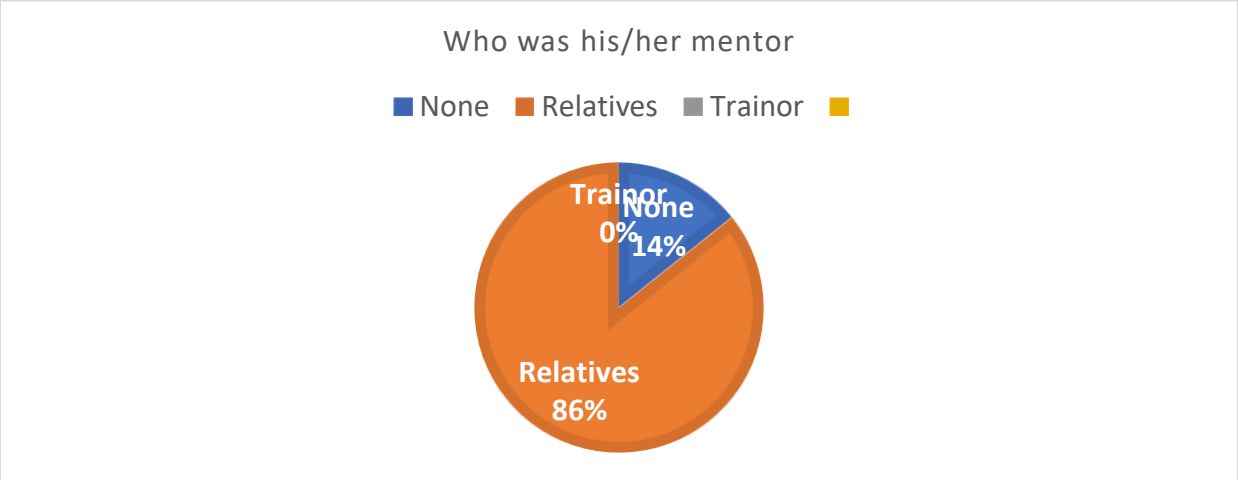
Artisans Profile

3rd District of Leyte	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**
1. Leyte	5	1	6
2. Tabango	3	3	6
3. Calubian	4	2	6
4. San Isidro	0	1	1
5. Villaba	2	1	3
TOTAL	14	8	22









A total of 22 artisans from the 3rd District of Leyte were documented, 14 males and 8 females. Majority of the artisans learned weaving through observation, some through learning by doing and by observation. Most of the mentors of the artisans were their relatives and some learned it on their own. Majority of the artisans' family knew the craft and few from the community practiced it also.

The initiative that leads to the Uswag Artesano project for the weaving community of the district were initiated by former Board Member Atty. Anna Veloso-Tuazon. Her interest in weaving products and her initiative to conduct cultural mapping project open up numerous opportunities for the few artisans found in the district. The cultural mapping activities facilitated by the UST Graduate School Center for Conservation of Cultural Property and Environment in the Tropics guide the government to where are these artisans are located and what are the products they are making.

Capacity building for design development were conducted by the Design Center of the Philippines to guide the artisans to innovate their designs and make their products to be competitive in the market. In 2021, numerous sessions online and onsite were organized to guide them in product development using new design inspired by heritage resources found in the district such as natural and intangible heritage resources like flora, fauna and local terminologies related to their environment.

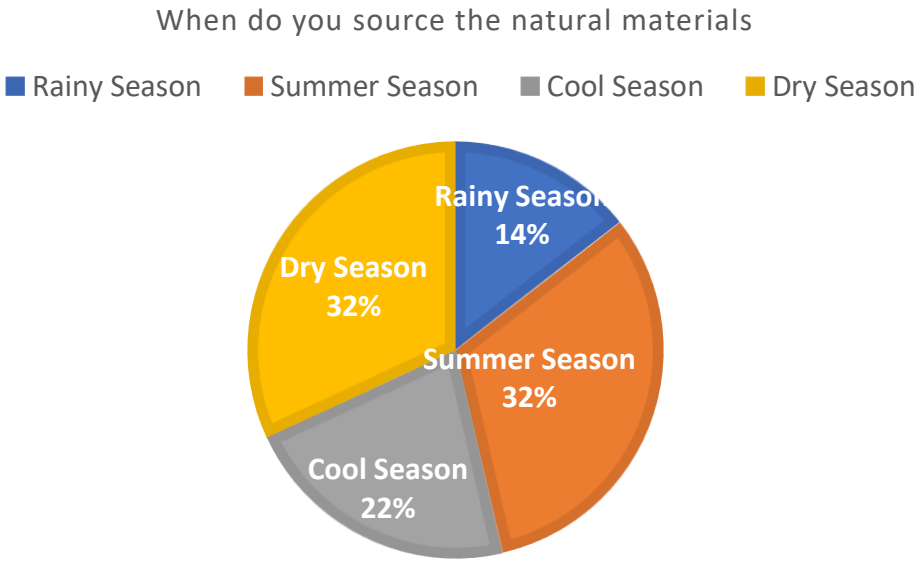
The Province of Leyte through the assistance of Department of Trade and Industries as well as Design Center of the Philippines also set-up trade fair to showcase the new products to support them in the marketing.

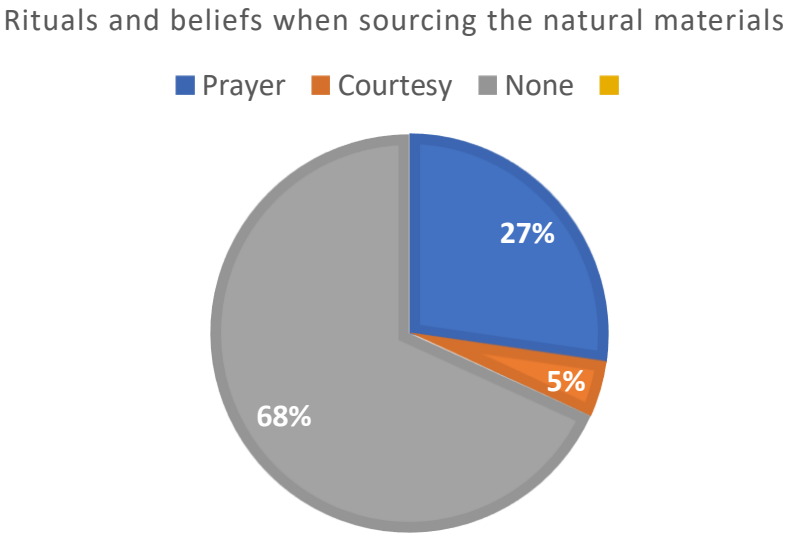
As of now, there is no formal organization yet for the artisans.

Location of the artisans and materials used

Town	**Location of Artisans**	**Materials used by the artisans**
Calubian	1. Brgy. Espinosa 2. Brgy. Don Luis 3. Brgy. Pangpang	1. Nito 2. Sig-id 3. Batang-batang 4. Bamboo 5. Romblon 6. Coconut midribs
Leyte	1. Sitio Sudlon, Brgy. Danus 2. Sitio Manga, Brgy. Palarao 3. Brgy. Baco 4. Sitio Caliktaan, Bgry. Baco 5. Brgy. Basud 6. Brgy. Bachao	1. Oway 2. Nito 3. Tukog 4. Ragawraw 5. Bamboo 6. Romblon 7. Abaca 8. Bagacay
San Isidro	1. Hacienda Maria	1. Bamboo 2. Nito
Tabango	1. Sitio Masisi, Brgy. Poblacion 2. Brgy. Omaganhan 3. Brgy. Sonlogon, Brgy. Campokpok 4. Sitio Burabod Omega, Brgy. Irangatan	1. Bamboo 2. Tukog 3. Nito 4. Batang-batang 5. Bamboo 6. Romblon 7. Buli

Villaba	1. Brgy. Buga-Buga	1. Bagon 2. Sig-id 3. Nito 4. Bamboo 5. Banban 6. Romblon



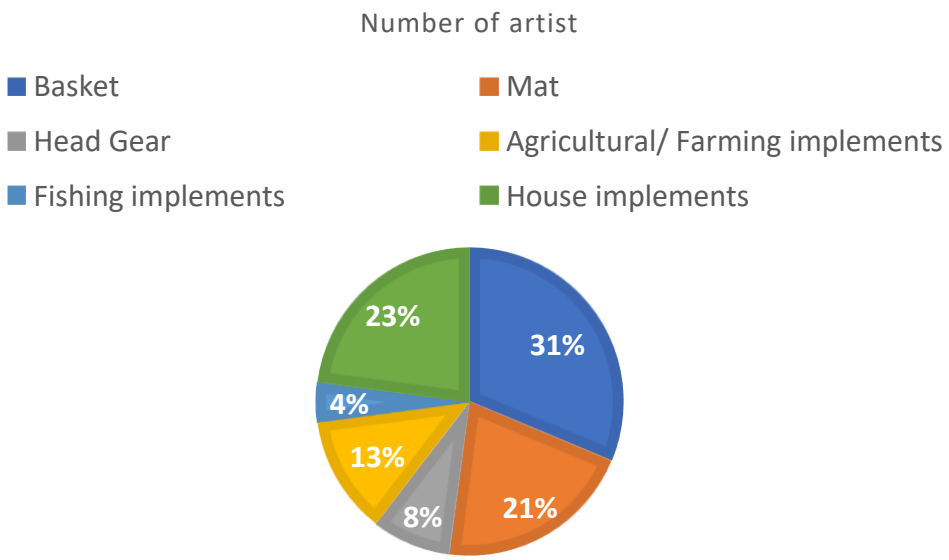


Majority of the artisans sourced their materials during the dry or summer season, some during the cool season and a handful during the rainy season. Most of the artisans did not practice any ritual or belief during the sourcing of materials, but some recited prayers for protection from harm or danger to express courtesy to the nature spirits. This represented the gradual erosion of connections to the earth with the growing number of mechanical and indifferent relations to the forest.

Product local terminology and production

Local term of craft	**English term of craft**	**Numbers of days of production per crafts**
Alat, Bukag	Basket	2-3 days
Amakan	Plated bamboo	1-2 weeks
Banig	Sleeping mat	1 week
Bayong		2-3 days
Pan-ali	Blinds	
Bobo trap	fish trap lamp	3-4 days
Fruit Basket		2-3 days
Likong-likong	Glass holder	1-2 days

Glass tray		3 hours
Duyan	Hammock	3-4 days
Kalo	Hat	1 day
Bodol lamp	jelly fish lamp	2-3 days
leaf divider		5-6 days
Leaf platter		2-3 days
nesting table		5-6 days
Nigo	Flat woven basket	5-7 days
Placemat		.5 days
Plato	Plate	5 hours (1 dozen)
Sanica	Disposable plate holder	3 hours/ 1 dozen
Saylana	Tray	3 days



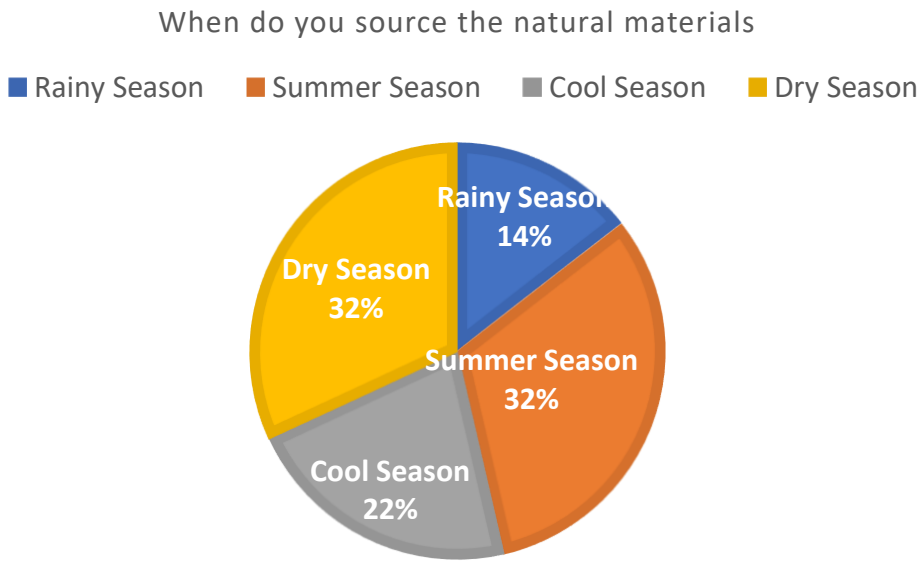
Tools use to source the natural materials

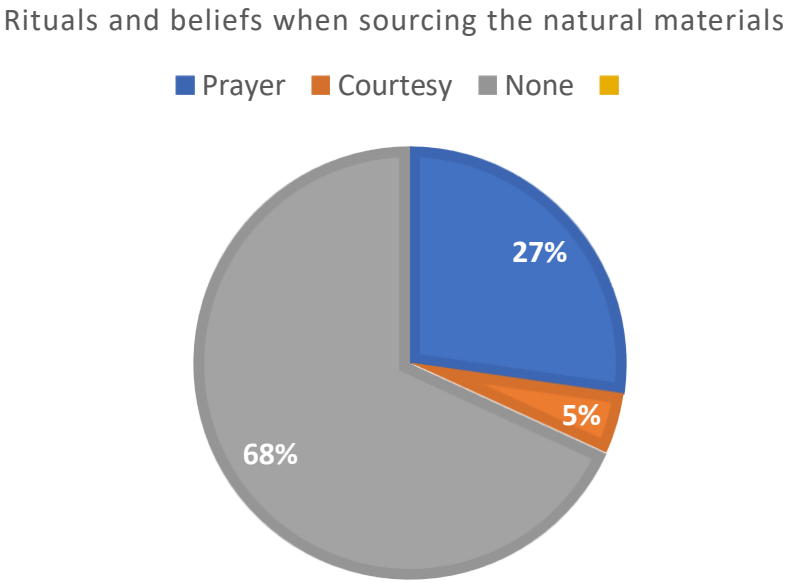
Tools	**Uses/ Description**

Sundang (bolo)	For cutting, to cut the leaves of the romblon, cutting, splitting, scraping, stripping, leaning
Kutsilyo (knife)	For cutting, cleaning, splitting, thinning
meter (ruler)	use to measure the length
kamagong stick	Guide for weaving
gunting (scissor)	pruning shears, used for cutting
Aguha (Big Needle)	Big sewing needle for sewing up sacks
Kambras (Hand Scraper)	Is a single-edge tool used to scrape metal from surface
Sanggot (Sickle)	An edge tool for cutting grass or crops; has a curve blade and a short handle

The crafts produced by the artisans were widely used for houses, farming, travel, and special occasions which provided high functional and identity value. Local terms of crafts, days of production and tools used for sourcing the natural materials were also documented in the district.

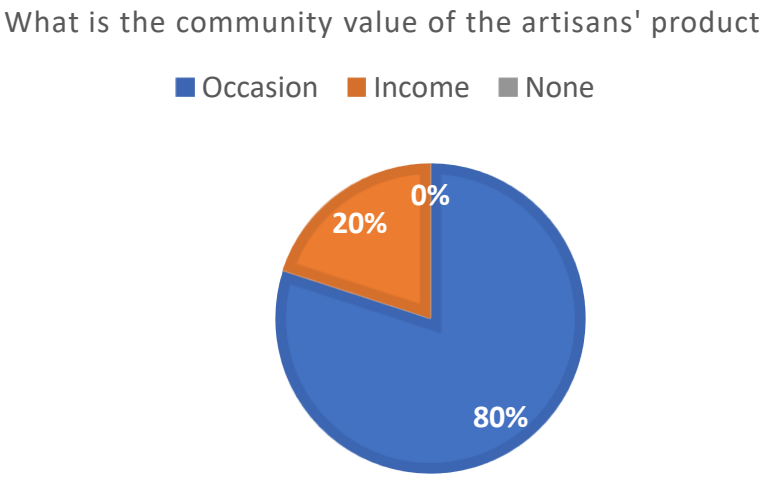
Materials sourcing and practices

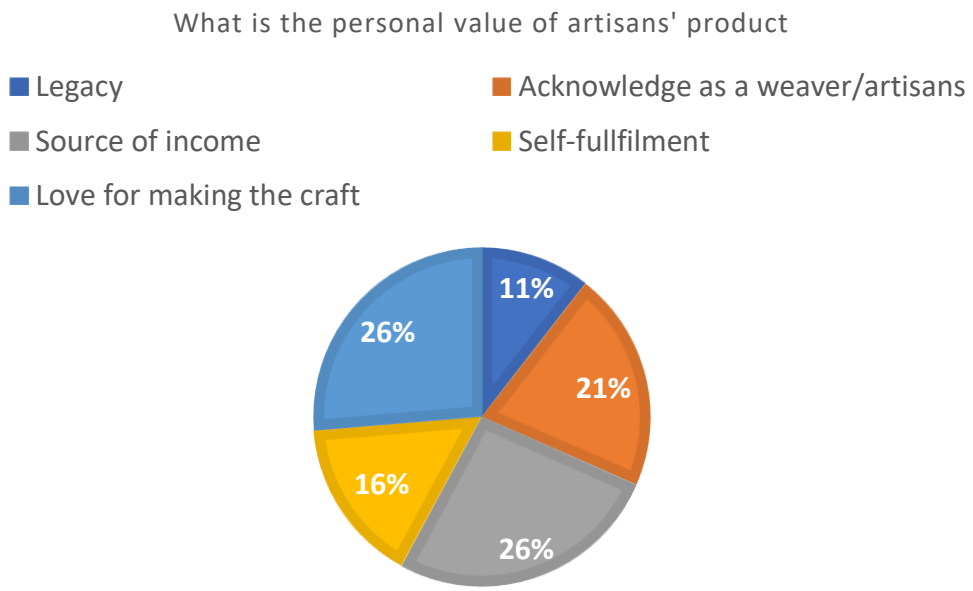


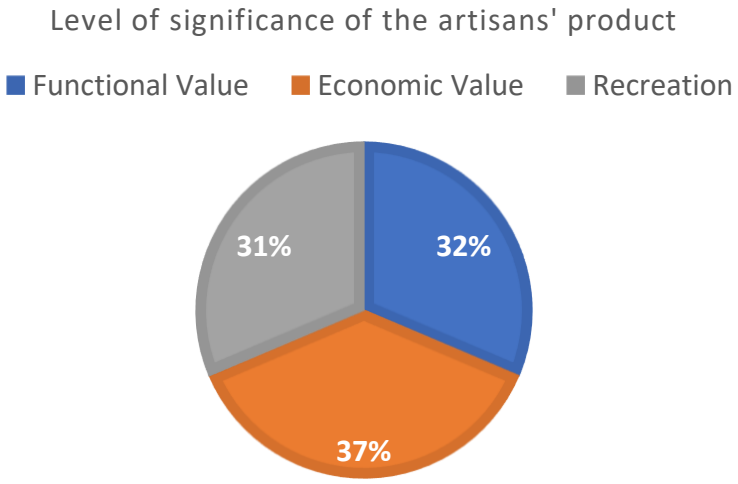


Majority of the artisans sourced their materials during the dry or summer season, some during the cool season and a handful during the rainy season. Most of the artisans did not practice any ritual or belief during the sourcing of materials, but some recited prayers for protection from harm or danger to express courtesy to the nature spirits.

Artisans Craft's Inspiration, Significance and Value



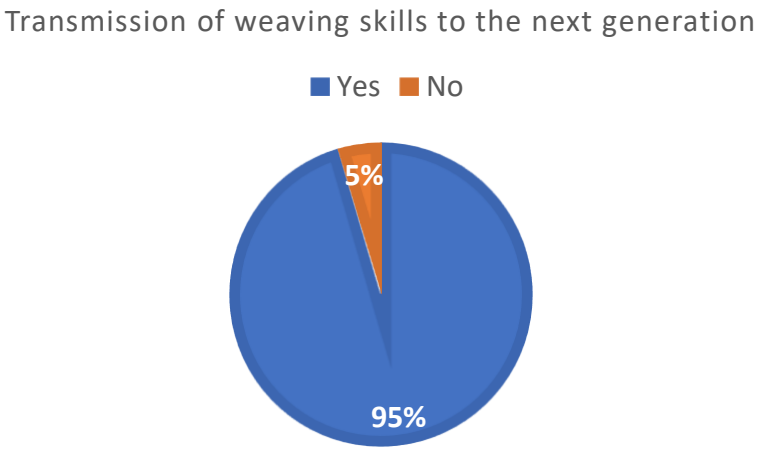




Artisans were influenced by their immediate family. Basket weaving was a source of income for the majority to help and provide the needs for their family. In terms of value, the artisans' valorization of their products were on personal, family and community levels. On a personal level, artisans regarded their basket weaving as a source of income and their passion for making the craft. It was also noted that there was the desire of the artisans to be acknowledged and be known as weavers of their community. The crafts produced by the artisans were widely used for houses, farming, travel and special occasions which provided high functional and identity value. The basket crafts had a

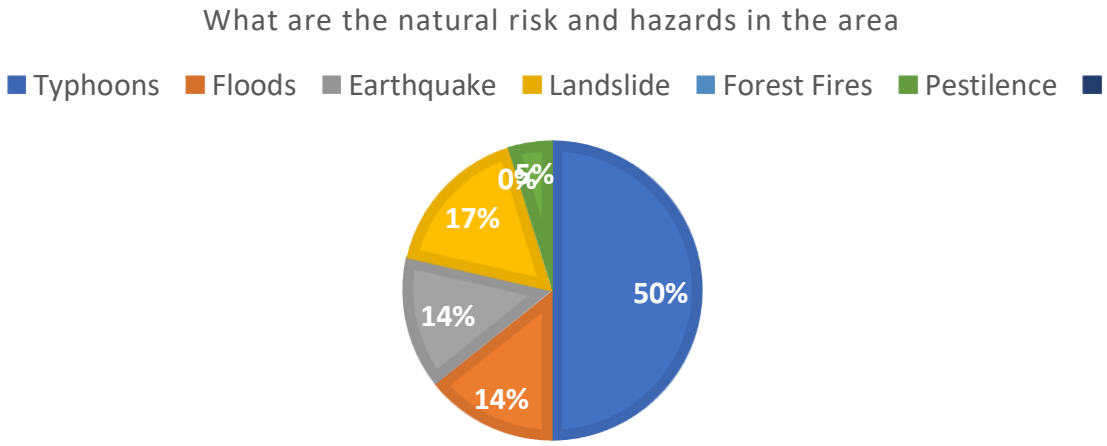
market that provided opportunities for the weavers to earn which reinforces the economic value. Other than this, weaving afforded a sense of recreation and communion for the artisans.

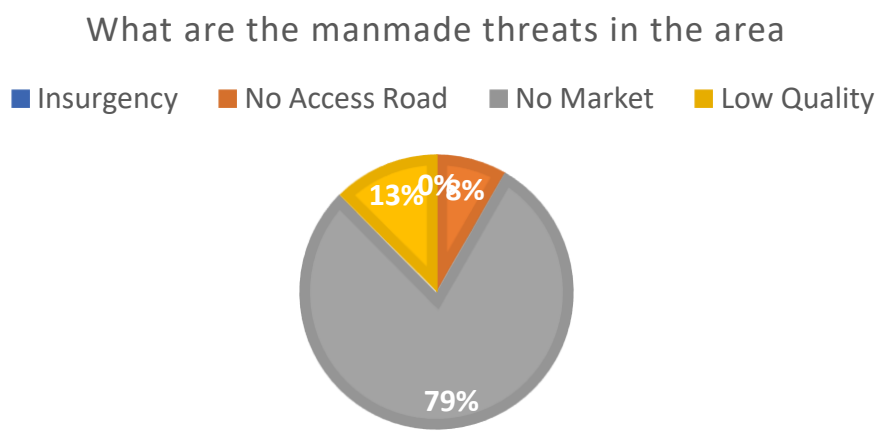
Transmission



Majority of the artisans were willing to train the younger generation as long as they were open to learning to develop the passion for the craft. They also welcomed the idea to include weaving in the school curriculum even in the informal setting.

Risk and Hazards





Typhoon Yolanda was the most destructive typhoon that they experienced in the area. This caused total damage in the natural environment which was the main source of materials. The incident forced them to look for other sources of livelihood. Some ventured into fishing, farming and migrated to other places to look for work. Pestilence and forest fire were not considered as threat by the artisans.

Man-made threats to the weaving industry were also noted in the area. The absence or uncertainty of a consumer market was the main threat to the weaving industry of the 3rd District of Leyte. Absence of access roads in the area and the low quality of the product were also raised as pressing issues.

The results of the HOME platform tackled not only documentation of baskets but also raised issues and concerns related to the sustainability of the basket tradition.

B. Organizing and Networking

For objective no. 2, 'to add value to the tradition and creativity of artisans through design, skill, knowledge and collaboration,' the study revealed the personal and unrecognized nature of basket making. Thus, the need for a strong organization and collaboration with others to inspire their creative spirit and skill, were emphasized.

Basketry Tradition in the Philippines by Corazon Alvina

The plenary article of Ms. Corazon Alvina, Director of *Museo ng Kaalamang Katutubo*, was titled "May Pinagsamahan" (In a long engagement). It underscored the close association of basket tradition to the agricultural lifecycle of the Filipinos. With the complexity of agricultural practices and landscape/seascape of the archipelago, the baskets that evolved were diverse in use and function, form and design, material and tools, that were reflected in linguistics and vocabulary. But even with this complex ecosystem, the baskets were generically treated as lowly, nondescript containers and have continued to remain

without authors. The need to organize and network was raised to recognize the artisans and acknowledge the creativity invested in every basket in every place.

Highlights of article were as follows:

-There was the need to deepen our awareness on the baskets of Leyte such as the status of the resources from nature and environment, the challenges of the basket artisans that also confront others such as weavers, potters, sculptors etc.

-There was no generic term of basket in Filipino. All ethnolinguistic groups have function specific terms of baskets that each basket has its own name. Further, baskets have no authors. The baskets are often identified according to the place of origin. Note that even during the American period research, baskets were called Polangui basket (from Albay), Zambales basket or Leyte basket.

-The Philippine climate and environment produced diverse flora resources from the forest to serve as basket materials. The alternate dry and wet seasons were most conducive to nurture biodiversity.

-Most baskets were vessels of agricultural production and produce. Depending on the terrain and function, the construction and weave were designed to accommodate utmost efficiency. Upland baskets were backpacks because the Cordillera people had to balance along the mountainous precipice and terrain. Lowland baskets were food carriers with handles, structured with a triangular grip to ensure utmost comfort to the hands.

-There was a need to orchestrate efforts on planting source materials like different species of pandan. Due to climate change and global warming, many sources were disappearing rapidly. Other causes of disruption were over collection of materials and destruction of flora due to development-mining, agriculture, land conversion, others. On the market side, there was the over-supply of plastic baskets from China that have marginalized our market artisans and massive loss of market share.

Solidarity Presentations to develop a Basket Network

Other than the plenary presentation, Dr. Marot Flores of San Carlos, Pangasinan sent a video entitled "The Last Caravan from Pangasinan" and Mr. Louie Simbe of Echague, Isabela sent their documentation of rattan makers in their municipality. Both gestures were expressions of solidarity to the capacity building effort of Leyte to the basket weavers.

C. Facing Challenges

For objective no. 3, 'to evolve climate change protocols to safeguard the tradition and encourage the adaptability of the artisans,' various sources of information were utilized such as the HOME platform, the presentations of other weaving communities prone to disasters, the biophysical profile of the Third District of Leyte.

Two representatives of prominent weaving communities shared their experiences and testimonies in the organization of artisans and the human and environmental challenges that confront the craft. The presenters were Ms. Anita Ogrimen of Basey, Samar and Archt. Juvie Lagumen of Antequera, Bohol. Some key issues that were raised touched on the organization, policy, climate change and sustainability.

Experiences of Mat Weavers of Basey, Samar after Typhoon Yolanda (Ms. Anita Ogrimen)

Ms. Anita Ogrimen, president of the BANIG nonprofit and people's organization, shared organizing challenges of basket/mat weavers along with their protocols in times of crises particularly the Yolanda Super typhoon in 2013. The following were the highlights:

A.1 Organizing

After typhoon 2013 Yolanda, "ayuda" or emergency support fund was given out to weavers. Unfortunately, it was not organized so there was no comprehensive listing. Manang Anita began the basic organizing. She initiated a mechanism whereby only registered members of organizations would receive the financial assistance. Immediately, many weavers signed up. A database was formed. At the moment, there are approximately 800 members of the BANIG and this organization is duly registered in the Department of Labor and Employment.

A.2 Source of Materials

The materials called "tikog" were actually sourced from wild areas in Basey and abundantly grown in the areas of San Miguel, Alangalang and Jaro in Leyte. Not all soil types were conducive to "tikog". After big calamities, the Provincial Local Government Unit (PLGU) provided the source materials to weavers. With foresight, it purchased a 20 hectare lot to be planted with tikog as source plots for the banig materials.

A.3 Policy Support

There was no Local Government Unit direct support from the Municipality of Basey. The PLGU had direct involvement that it proposed the bill for the protection of banig weavers and declaration of Basey as banig capital of the Philippines

A.4 Programs Support

The PLGU launched the Lara trademark in 2018 with a big ceremony, fashion show and a series of thematic lines such as Maqueda (featuring sea creatures), Amon (our icons), others. The Lara trademark received awards of recognition that reflected the high quality products of the PLGU banig industry. The PLGU had exposed the products to local and international trade fairs such as Bahandi in Manila and the FAME trade fair for international markets in the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI).

A.5 Infrastructure and equipment

Through the linkages and support of the PLGU many equipment and infrastructure had been acquired and accomplished. The Banig group had been provided a tikog flattener housed in their 2 storey building which is under construction. Land was purchased by the organization while the building was provided by the PLGU.

A.6 Funding

The annual sales of the Lara produced by the Banig organization had generated sales and revenues for operations and organizing. Sources of support were also extended by the DTI and the DOT especially during the high tourist season.

A.7 Capacity Building

The Basey weavers had always been supported by the DTI in terms of design development and color combination. The traditional designs were monochromes of beige and browns. The distinct feature of a Basey banig was the figurative designs of flowers and the iconic San Juanico Bridge images that were embroidered on the mat. After the interphase with the DTI, the mats became colorful and the patterns changed. Until now, the colors have remained and the figurative motifs have become commissioned products.

A.8 Education Transmission

The weaving tradition was programmed to be included in the curriculum of the Grade school, EPP (*Edukasyong Pangtahanan at Pangkabuhayan*) and Senior High school. The proposal was yet for implementation. The PLGU worked with UST GS CCCPET for the curriculum development and lesson exemplars to transmit the skills to the young students.

A.9 Marketing and Promotion

The weavers continued to sell on their own but they had been leveraged and protected by the organization in terms of pricing. For some time, the weavers had been abused by the middlemen who bought the products at atrociously low prices and sold them in the cities at high rates. The market was redeveloped by the LGU and the PLGU.

A10 Disaster Resilience

The organization was well provided by the PLGU. With its organized character, the support mechanism was very efficient in implementation. After Yolanda, the organization evolved to facilitate the relief operations. Eventually, the government extended the provision for the source materials and the infra to strengthen the organization and ensure the sustainability of the production.

A.11 Network/Linkages

The organization was well-connected to PLGU, LGU, DOLE, DTI, DOST, DA-FIDA (Fiber Industry Development Authority), and others. They had reached a very high level of maturity. Still the organization continues to struggle to capacitate the weavers to be dignified in their work.

Antequera Cottage Industry: The Basket Capital of Bohol (Arch. Jovie Lagura)

Antequera's Cottage industry started more than a century ago when a family engaged in making of traditional "bukag" a big and wide mouthed container made of bamboo or rattan primarily used for agricultural production. The bukag making evolved into another form of basket with a new design and materials and started the flourishing of the basket-weaving industry of Antequera. With the support from government and the local government, the cottage industry has found its way on the market specially on the foreign markets by conducting training to basket weavers to enhance their efficiency and productivity. The support provided for the industry paved the way to its peak, the basket industry has become the town's economic life.

In the 1990s, the basket weaving industry of Antequera experienced a rapid decline for so many reasons. Younger generations chooses to work in the other industry, and the discrimination to basket weavers must have been one of the reasons. No innovations on the new products and designs, lack of facilities and materials, no direct market, lack of governments' support and the absence of community associations to support the local industry. The safeguarding of Antequera's weaving industry will create more jobs by opening the industry to tourism and creative industries. It can improve the life of basket weavers and promote sustainable and eco-friendly campaigns for the community. However, a number of threats needs to combat to sustain the basket industry such as modernizations of products, lack of appreciations to local products, change of leadership and policies, lack of stable market, natural disasters, climate change, lack of management and business plan and lack of transmission of knowledge to sustain and safeguard the basket weaving industry.

D. Transmission and Transformation

For objective no. 4, 'to propose support mechanism and reinforcement, both natural and cultural, to sustain the weaving creativity and adaptability of artisans,' various presentations and case studies were referenced to perpetuate the design and skills development. In particular, presentations were provided by the National Commission from Culture and the Arts (NCCA), the ARTISTS Inc, and the Manchester School of the Arts.

National Commission for Culture and the Arts - School of Living Tradition
(Ms. Renee Talavera, Head, NCCA Intangible Cultural Heritage Unit)

Ms. Renee Talavera shared the programs of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) for the intangible cultural heritage. The NCCA serves as the over-all policy making body, coordination, and grants giving agency for the preservation, development and promotion of the Philippine culture and arts.

An NCCA flagship program is the School of Living Traditions (SLTs). It is a non-formal center of learning in the communities where cultural masters transmit their knowledge and skills on a particular art, craft, and tradition to the young members of the community for their appreciation and learning. It is the mechanism to revitalize traditional culture, empower the community and to help in the poverty alleviation of these communities. The program covers various aspects of the culture both tangible and intangible forms of expressions. Basketry is classified as traditional craftsmanship in the UNESCO ICH domain.

The traditional artists is recognized by the community as cultural masters and young members of the community who are interested to learn the craft in their community are the students. The mode of teaching is oral and practical demonstrations of the craft making.

The establishment of SLTs has different stages such as preparatory stage (Year O), training proper (Year 1 to 3), product development (Year 4) and marketing (Year 5). A number of SLTs were already established all over the country.

***Nilalang Kaalaman*: Curriculum Development for Livelihood Education**
(Ms. Ricamela Palis, Director, ARTISTS Inc.)

The significant educational reforms of the country happened in 2012 during the implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The reform introduced programs and projects to expand and improve the delivery of basic education in the country to provide the learners with the necessary skills and competence. One of the policy statements of the Department of Education was that the curriculum should be flexible to enable schools to localize, indigenize and to enhance the respective educational and social context.

The K to 12 Curriculum Guide for Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) geared towards the development of technological proficiency and was anchored on knowledge and information, entrepreneurial concepts, process and delivery, work values, and life skills. TLE was a skill subject which engaged students in an experiential, contextualized and authentic teaching-learning process.

The learning area standard stated that learners should demonstrate the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (KSVA) in TLE which would enable learners to gain employment, become entrepreneurs, a middle level manpower and/or pursue higher education.

According to Ms. Ricamela Palis, Livelihood Education is Cultural Education. Teaching should start from our experience, our home, and our community. "*Edukasyong may hugot*" or contextualized learning should be promoted. *Hugot* is a Filipino word which means to draw or to pull out, a personal deep sentimental or emotional feeling, coming from deep within. Teaching should not just be for content and competency, teaching is for meaningful learning that leads to faster acquisition and longer retention. Weaving is like a story with a start, middle and end, it has chapters, character, settings, and plot. It is an adventure with obstacles and success. The knowledge on basket weaving should be thought about its "*Pinagmulan*" or sources, "*Pinagdadaanan*" or process, and "*Pinaglalaanan*" or Uses. The knowledge about basket and weaving of basket will lead to the ability to weave basket. This ability is based on knowledge about the basket. This knowledge and ability will elevate to skills in basket weaving.

The Digitization of Cordillera Weaving: Designing a New Oral Tradition (Manchester School of Arts)

Prof. Alice Kettle, Rachel Kelly and Dr. Michelle Stephens of the Manchester School of Arts presented the case study of textile weaving communities in Northern Luzon.

Textile weaving knowledge in Cordillera is passed through oral tradition where the teachers of weaving are mostly elderly women. The impact of oral tradition is now in critical state and weaving tradition may soon become extinct.

The group of weavers are identified by their ethnolinguistic language which represents identities specific to their place, rituals, belief, work and culture.

The project focus is to preserve the Cordillera Weaving tradition through digitization of the weaving patterns. Upon closer investigation, the project revealed the diminishing number of younger weavers who continue the vanishing tradition.

Field visits were conducted to Cordilleran weaving communities, workshops and home interaction were undertaken to understand, investigate and capture evidence and data such as knowledge about the weaving community and its traditions.

1. Sabangan Weavers of Ilocos Sur

The weaving products of this community demonstrated a high level weaving work and commercial potential. Weaving tradition was part of the family's communities and oral tradition. An elderly weaver and her apprentice granddaughter worked together to finish the product. Climate change and increasing typhoon season were also affecting the weaving community.

2. The Manobo Community

The weaving is declining due to lack of interest from young women which could lead to the end of weaving in the community. The introduction of the weave drafting process has gained the attention of the weavers. The weavers saw the potential of the process on how they could use it and have their own expression of signature.

Members of these communities have attended the Learning Tool Kit Development Workshop. The methods used in preparing the tool kit is a pedagogic process to meet the project aims and collect the data required through a Lego Visualization method. This method is use to replicate how oral teaching and learning works.

Initial findings of the activity:

1. Participants feel the pressures on how they will work on the demands from the range of voices from their past, present and the children looking towards the future
2. Participants recognize that the weaving community face a potential demise of their culture and tradition
3. Weaving at home with family and community is an important part of the weaving experience
4. The value of weaving is a source of income especially now that typhoon is occurring across all seasons, the weavers can work in all weather conditions
5. The teaching weave drafting methods may encourage sustainable weave learning framework to evolve

Recommendations:

1. Weaving learning can be efficient through the use of small portable looms because is it independent, quick, low resource, learning can take place in different settings. This option enable learners to develop in a constructive way.

2. Within the oral tradition, the cycle is regenerated in each generation but a slow process. The use of small portable looms encourage learners to learn independently and experientially as well as by instruction

Sustainability

There is the imperative need to develop a K-12 weave curriculum to equip the children and students with knowledge and skills to develop their heritage.

The case study presented by the Manchester School of Arts can be a process reference to kick off the 3rd District of Leyte programs for education particularly in sustaining the basket weaving tradition. The experiences of the textile weaving communities reflects the basket weaving communities of the district. The learning toolkit development framework could be adopted and applied in the Technology and Livelihood Education.

INSIGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Research and analysis on the relevance and possible applications of this knowledge on contemporary craft production and wider environmental conservation.

The Uswag program began in 2019 based on the cultural mapping of the Third District of Leyte. The project produced volumes of heritage data which highlighted the commonality of basket weavers in all municipalities and the diversity of basket materials and basket designs.

The culmination of the Uswag Leyte program was an exhibition of almost 200 designs and selected prototypes of woven products, a close collaboration between the basket weavers and the government design agency i.e. Design Center of the Philippine (DCP of the Department of Trade and Industry).

Capitalizing on the experience of USWAG Leyte, the USWAG Artesano was developed as a scoping research project of the British Council Woven Networks. A deeper research was conducted through the HOME platform which covered issues and concerns related to climate change and the environment. Since the previous Uswag projects already proved that new design could be undertaken with a collaboration framework, the next phase was to analyze and formulated climate change sensitive programs.

Further, the DCP designers visited the site to actually interact with weavers. The field immersion happened in July 2022 and provided a deeper appreciation of the close relation of weavers to their surroundings. Without the trappings of comfort and convenience, the designers developed a new attitude of respect and humility to the artisans surviving amidst a challenging natural environment and an assertive advocacy toward ecological responsibility.

Recommendation for knowledge dissemination which can include either creation of new higher education degree, capacity building activities, on line learning offer or others was of high priority as a safeguarding measure of intangible cultural heritage.

The last module of the basket weavers assembly focused on transmission mechanism specially on the part of education. Th intent of the module was to look into different modes of transmission, where the Manchester School for the Arts presented through video the experiments they conducted with indigenous peoples' community last year. Other pedagogical approaches were also introduced such as the School of Living Tradition (SLT) program of the NCCA and the cultural education lecture of Ms. Rica Palis of NCCA-PCEP.

Given the network of the Third District of Leyte to the Education sector, it is contemplated to develop modules and lesson plans which can be integrated to the existing curriculum of the K-12. In particular, the development of a module for TESDA schools regarding Leyte baskets.

As the basket weaving community gets capacitated, the national basket network emerges in formative stage and the LGU of the Third District of Leyte asserts a critical role, no further collaboration may be necessary at this point.

Insights

- Research and documentation through anthropological studies or cultural mapping is fundamental to understanding and appreciating the art of basketry-the basket, the basket making, the basket weaver and the basket environment. As self-effacing craftsmen, basket weavers feel valued during the act of engagement because of the interest of researchers and the sincerity of designers to learn from their mastery.

- The world of the basket weaver is not only confined to their immediate environment but encompasses the family, the community, the organization, the school, the local governments and the national government. To uplift the basket sector, a robust organization and an enabling network should be advanced.

- Natural and man-made challenges continue to dramatically impact on the lives of basket weavers. For climate change concerns, sustainable source of materials is critical to ensure the livelihood of the weavers. For man-made concerns, the market for basket assures income and earnings in the everyday. These risks could be mitigated by a well-informed and capacitated organization.

- Transmission of the basket weaving skills had been envisioned towards education curriculum development. Yet, there are other modes of transmission can be nurtured such as tourism, design, entrepreneurship and legislation.

For recommendation

1. **The HOME Platform developed a systematic database for the basket weavers of Leyte which can be applied to the other basket weaving organizations in the country.**

2. **The establishment of the Basket Network of the Philippines. As a product of the scoping research project, founding members are Villaba/Tabango/San Isidro/Calubian/leyte (Leyte), Basey (Samar), Antequera (Bohol), Echague (Isabela), San Carlos (Pangasinan), Brooke's Point (Palawan), Nueva Era (Ilocos Norte), Itbayat (Batanes), and Anilao (Iloilo).**

Policy Recommendations Pursuant to Woven Networks Scoping Grant

To preserve, grow, and promote our basketry and woven craft traditions, the following policyrecommendations are proposed:

1. Streamline national, regional, and local government intervention by aligning intangible heritage preservation efforts with work currently being done for identified priority industries to accelerate growth in domestic and international markets. This can be harmonized with the Transformational Agricultural Value Chain sub – guideline 1.1 to promote appropriate, affordable, and accessible technology and community – oriented innovations that build on indigenous knowledge systems and are friendly to small scale producers.[1] To achieve this, national and local government can engage in skills investment and work together to capacitate trainors in schools and learning centers to teach the craft tradition, incentivize incubators to assist in the formation of commercially viable value chains, and share success stories of community based innovations thataddress accessibility issues and constraints faced by small scale producers, demonstrating the transformation of artisans and craftsmen into empowered leaders and stakeholders. Government can also partner with private sector for investments in fintech support to facilitate information sharing with value chain partners.

   Incentivize and empower craftsmen and artisans as stakeholders in value chain strengthening through intellectual property recognition and capacity building, set up community-based initiativesthat integrate the artisan's family and/or community (community-based initiatives) in environmentally sustainable value chains, award innovative upskilling grants in favor of these

community-based initiatives and their enabling ecosystems, and measure impact and performance indicators to track year on year improvements. This can be harmonized with the Transformational Agricultural Value Chain sub – guideline 1.2 to enable small scale producers to reap their fair share of the wealth generated by agricultural value chains, and sub-guideline 1.4 enabling them to be the main actors of their own development. National and local government can achieve this by enabling and encouraging investments in (a) developing the community's capacities to perform functions beyond production, such as semi-processing and processing, distribution, marketing, and allied services,[2] (b) capacitating and empowering small scale producers, whether individually or in groups, as entrepreneurs, leaders, and stakeholders, as contemplated by Transformational Agricultural Value Chain sub-guideline 2.2,[3] (c) adopting innovation strategies that focus on technical assistance and capacity building addressing specific knowledge gaps, providing access to input or technology to increase productivity and improve product quality, and (d) recognition and intellectual property attribution to craftsmen and artisans as co-makers, repositories of traditional knowledge, and co-equal stakeholders through whom thecommunity can access financial support, legal services, information, appropriate digital technology, and extension services.

2. Establish a Basketry and Woven Craft Traditions Knowledge Development Center that will serve as a design archive, resource center and library documenting community traditions and stories, innovation hub, research and development center, registry of local artisans and locally available materials and natural fiber, and physical and digital platform that will facilitate value chain formation, and address accessibility issues and constraints faced by small scale producers. To help balance social impact with financial sustainability, innovations in the craft can be promoted as a means of income and product diversification to complement current agribusiness projects and augmenting income streams through the innovative use of indigenous materials to depict core and distinctive traditions of the community. This can be harmonized with the Transformational Agricultural Value Chain sub – guideline 1.3 to ensure the resilience of small scale producers to natural, social and economic disasters.[4]

3. Strengthen and stabilize domestic supply chains and deepen participation in global value chains by (a) leveraging intermediaries to (i) help oversee the production process and ensure product quality, and (ii) bridge gaps in financial literacy for local artisans to access funding from investors,
(b) fostering a stronger sense of kinship amongst artisans through peer learning fora, nurturing grounds, and practitioner hubs, (c) greater intra-government collaboration to catalyze growth and identify the right assistance

to ensure the community artisans receive meaningful support, and (d) ensuring a stable and sustainable supply of natural resources through the development of an environmental supply-side policy that maps the needs of the community, regulates the sustainable management of natural resources, minimizes the risk of disruption, and protects against the threat of overharvesting and harmful long-term consequences.[5]

4. Expand market access for local artisans by investing in (a) a product marketing strategy that focuses on well-made and well-designed niche/functional products made in smaller quantities thatcan be sold at a premium, utilizes indigenous material, and spotlights core and distinctive cultural heritage, and (b) shared logistics services and production facilities to address distance constraints of low-access communities, help lower costs, and increase efficiency in production.[6]

5. Develop inclusive and creative economies by boosting support for local creative enterprises that provide innovative solutions to intangible heritage preservation, and sustain support through government procurement[7] with social impact measurement targets and monitoring embedded into government contracts or supply agreements. Government should be the off-takers of the heritageproducts to boost economic activity in the rural areas where the raw material is grown and post- harvest processing intervention begins. By capacitating and providing post-harvest, transport, storage and environmentally friendly packaging subsidies to community aggregators or consolidators providing product quality checks, tech support, and efficient value chain services that facilitate the consolidation of products of the small scale producers network, government can help artisans and small scale producers collectively meet the minimum order quantity/scale requirements of procuring government entities.

6. Identify barriers to scaling, and develop innovative and sustainable business models to overcome challenges in sustainability and scaling through the establishment of a resilient, eco-friendly, supply chain encompassing a stable source of raw materials, last mile logistics management and sustainable supply chains, and mentorship programs that integrate best practices in sustainablebusinesses.

7. Enter into public and private partnerships for efficient and stable value chain development, andpromote, align, and incentivize multi-stakeholder collaboration by forging strategic partnerships with NGOs, development partners, intermediary organizations, inclusive business owners, aggregator networks, and capital providers to sustain mentorship programs and ensure the sustainability of gains made through business continuity planning,

partnership building, and network support. Invest in champions who help build ecosystems and movements, share the community's sense of purpose, and drive growth. Incentivize corporate support, and incentivize/reward the innovations that effectively address bottlenecks/gaps in the value chain.

8. Build movements and ecosystems around green growth and circular economy.

3. Climate Change protocols should include formal organization of weavers, close coordination with LGU/PLGU, projects on environmental responsibility and protection of source materials, programming of capacity building for weavers for alternative livelihood.

Climate Change Protocols

The current protocols on climate change in the Third District of Leyte delved primarily on flooding and landslides. Based on the DRRM profile of the different municipalities in the District, the 5 municipalities were characterized by loose soil compactness vulnerable to massive landslides due to heavy rains. In this regard, the standard protocol was for the evacuation of some barangays that are landslide prone. (See DRRM Report on the Third District of Leyte).

According to the feedback of the HOME and the case study presentations of catastrophe stricken places of Basey, Samar and Antequera, Bohol with high concentration of mat and basket weavers, weather was the most critical concern that destroys the vegetation of the source materials. These declarations emanate from organizations that have wide membership base (800 members for Basey, Samar and 500 members for Antequera, Bohol). Thus, climate change ruptures impact heavily on a number of stakeholders/weavers.

The following are attributes of a preliminary climate change protocol.

Preliminary Climate Change Protocol for Basket Weavers

a) Organization

Basket weavers should be organized to cohesively operate and efficiently receive support from agencies. Individual basket weavers should register to an organization. The organization should be registered to the Department of Labor and Employment and to the local government unit.

b) Source Materials

Location of source materials should be located and identified. Areas of source materials should be protected both by communal agreement between basket weavers and by land owners. For public land as source of materials, local barangay ordinance should be encouraged to protect the area.

In Leyte, basket weavers owned their patch of forest. In Calubihan, they ask permission the landowner who allowed material extraction.

Local government units should be encouraged to develop territories as cultivated sources of materials to serve as buffer in times of catastrophe.

c) Alternative sources of livelihood

Basket weavers consider the practice not as an industry but as an additional source of income. In time of calamity, they immediately shift to other sources of income such as farming and fishing. Other sources of income should be introduced to the basket weavers to diversify their income stream to buffer during critical times.

d) LGU Support

Basket weaving organizations should collaborate with their local government units. Local government units should extend support through policy formation, capacity building and promotions and marketing. In times of calamity, LGU should extend emergency assistance in form of materials, financial and food support.

LGU should likewise provide recovery program for basket weavers by marketing, financial, technical support.

e) Emergency Fund

Emergency fund should be developed by the organization and the LGU to provide access to basket weavers. Though a micro financing scheme, it should serve to encourage backyard industry until it returns to regular cycle of production.

f) Disaster Action Plan

Before Disaster
During Disaster
After Disaster

4. Transmission should consider programs not only for commercial standardization but more so towards creation and innovation.

All these multidisciplinary ways to advance the art of basketry forward in the Third District of Leyte is a concrete expression of recognition, celebration and ultimately, the dignification of basket artisans, truly *Uswag Artesano*.

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