

Awareness and Level of Acceptance of Cultural Terms in the Province of Laguna

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DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.909000271>

Received: 04 September 2025; Accepted: 11 September 2025; Published: 08 October 2025

ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the level of awareness and acceptance of Laguna State Polytechnic University students to the cultural terms of Laguna Province. The research used a descriptive method and a quantitative Likert scale survey of 200 students selected by *purposive sampling*. Cultural terms are categorized into economic terms, customs and traditions, and celebrations.

The results show that respondents' overall level of acceptance of cultural terms ranged from "Acceptable" to "Highly Acceptable." Particularly high acceptance is in terms associated with social, religious, and basic ceremonies. Meanwhile, the level of Awareness presented a more complex picture, with results ranging from "Aware" to "Moderately Aware." There are terms, especially in the economic sphere, that seem to be less familiar to young people, suggesting the impact of modernization on traditional languages. The study emphasizes the need to deepen, protect, and pass on cultural designations to the next generation in order to preserve local identity and national culture.

Keywords: Acceptance, Awareness, Culture, Cultural Terms and Laguna

INTRODUCTION

The Philippines is a country rich in languages and cultures, and one of the provinces that showcases the country's rich history and traditions is Laguna. Laguna is located in the southeastern part of Manila, and is surrounded by natural resources such as Laguna de Bay. The capital of the province is Santa Cruz, and it consists of six cities and twenty-four municipalities. Laguna is known for its stunning landscapes, such as Mount Makiling and Mount Banahaw, as well as beautiful lakes. Apart from natural resources, the main occupations in the province are farming, fishing, manufacturing, tourism, and commerce. According to Patrick (2020), Laguna is also rich in Pistas and traditions, such as the Coconut Pista in San Pablo City, Turumba Pista in Pakil, Pinya Pista in Calauan, and Tsinelas Pista in Liliw, which showcase the history and culture of each town and city.

The language and culture of a place serve as a reflection of the identity of the people in the community. Despite the rich culture and traditions of the Laguna people, the rise of modernization coincided with the strong influence of foreign cultures, particularly the English language from the United States. Continued globalization and the faster advancement of technology have brought about new terms and languages that are used in everyday life. Young people, including students, prefer the use of Filipino and foreign languages in their communication, which gives them more satisfaction and a sense of modernity. However, this type of language and culture has had a profound impact on the history and traditions of the people of Laguna, and indeed of the entire Philippines. According to experts, the influence of foreign culture causes a lack of appreciation for the country's indigenous languages and traditions (Malaluan et al., 2024).

Therefore, it is very important to take steps to preserve and disseminate the local languages and traditional terms that describe the culture and history of the people of Laguna. Native languages and indigenous terminology become tools to reflect the identity of each community. However, in the face of modernization

and the ever-increasing number of foreign influences, there is a greater need for programs that promote the language and culture of Laguna. These programs will emphasize the appreciation of the local languages and traditions of the people, and will sustain the colorful history and culture of the province.

In a study by Francisco et al. (2023), they found that some students had low awareness of the phonological characteristics of Philippine English, but they had a positive reception of its grammar. On the other hand, a study by Secretaria et al. (2024) found that students have a high level of cultural awareness of indigenous communities in Bukidnon, but have an average level of cultural confidence. This shows that there can be differences in awareness and acceptance in different aspects of a language, where they may accept words but do not fully understand them and they may understand them but do not use or accept them as part of their way of life. Therefore, the researchers in this study aimed to determine both students' awareness and acceptance of cultural terms that revolve around economic categories, beliefs, traditions, and Pistas in the province of Laguna.

In this study, respondents' level of acceptance reflected their use and retention of it for future generations. This is supported by Rogers (2003) quoted by Atkin et al. (2015) in their study which stated that the degree of acceptance of an idea, habit, or product is reflected in the adoption and continued use of it in people's actual lives. On the other hand, awareness refers to the students' understanding of the meaning of the cultural terms they witness in the community. According to a study by Formanes et al. (2024), the level of awareness refers to the level of knowledge or understanding of a particular concept, issue, or culture. The researchers determined the level of awareness by examining how they understood and expressed aspects of their culture through social media. If students are knowledgeable enough and understand what it means and they use social media to express it, it can show a high level of awareness. In this regard, we can liken it to the concept of measuring the level of awareness of respondents in cultural bodies in the province of Laguna.

Each data collected from the respondents revolved around cultural terms in Laguna which included words heard or witnessed at Binyag, Kasal, Pamamanhikan, death, Pista, Paghahalaman, fishing, coconut, and words related to a specific product that was popular in the town. These cultural terms were chosen and based on a study by Carada (2019). Cultural terms are divided and grouped into three categories according to the idea or concept contained in them.

By analyzing and interpreting collectible cultural terms, researchers hope to help students better appreciate and preserve traditional knowledge that reflects the history and culture of their community. In this way, they will be part of the consolidation of local identity and the dissemination of traditional languages and cultures not only within their province but also throughout the country.

Statement Of The Problem

In this study, the researchers will answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of awareness of the respondents to cultural terms?
2. What is the level of acceptance of cultural bodies by respondents?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study uses a descriptive research or descriptive method, it is a method that describes the state of an object or event in order to generate proofs and statements on the discovered experience. The researchers developed a likert scale with a quantitative method to gather respondents' responses based on their awareness and acceptance of cultural terms in Laguna province.

The scale consisted of a 4-point scale, measuring respondents' acceptance, starting with the lowest level of "Totally Unacceptable" (1) and ending with the highest level of "Totally Acceptable" (4). Whereas in Awareness, the lowest is "With Little Awareness" (1) and the highest is "Highly Aware" (4). The statements in the survey focused on aspects of language acceptance and awareness, particularly in Laguna cultural terms.

The respondents of this research involved two hundred (200) students from Laguna State Polytechnic University, selected based on purposive sampling. Purposive sampling allows researchers to select students with high potential to provide meaningful information about the research topic. The respondents were selected because they were residents or studying in Laguna.

In this research, the researchers used a structured survey questionnaire generated through Google Forms as the primary data collection tool. The questionnaire focuses on measuring the level of awareness and acceptance of the cultural terms found in the province of Laguna.

The Google Form link is distributed to participants through various online platforms such as Facebook Messenger, email, and group chats of students from Laguna State Polytechnic University. In this way, it has become easier and faster to distribute and collect responses, especially for students who actively use technology in their daily communication.

Before they answer the form, an explanation of the purpose of the research and a reminder about the confidentiality of their answers are included in the introduction to the questionnaire. The response was voluntary and the researchers ensured that no one was coerced or obligated to participate.

After the stipulated data collection period, the responses to the Google Forms spreadsheet were generated and from it the organization and analysis of the data was carried out according to the research objectives.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Level of Acceptance - Economic

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. Paghahalaman	3.33	A
2. Pangisdaan	3.12	A
3. Niyugan	3.35	A
Kabuuan	3.27	A

Markers: 3.50-4.00 Highly Acceptable (HA), 2.50-3.49 Acceptable (A), 1.50-2.49 Unacceptable (DK), 1.00-1.49 Highly Unacceptable (DLK)

Table 1 shows the level of respondents' acceptance of culturally relevant economic terms. Based on mean scores, the indicators of "Paghahalaman" (3.33), "Pangisdaan" (3.12), and "Niyugan" (3.35) were all in the "Acceptable" (A) category. A total mean of 3.27 also indicates an "Acceptable" level of acceptance of economic terms. This shows that the students have a positive acceptance of cultural terms associated with the main occupations in Laguna, such as farming, fishing, and coconut cultivation.

Table 2 Level of Acceptance - Habits and Traditions

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. Binyag	3.31	A
2. Kasal	3.42	A
3. Pamamanhikan	3.57	HA
4. Patay	3.56	HA
Kabuuan	3.47	A

Markers: 3.50-4.00 Highly Acceptable (HA), 2.50-3.49 Acceptable (A), 1.50-2.49 Unacceptable (DK), 1.00-1.49 Highly Unacceptable (DLK)

Table 2 presents the level of respondents' acceptance of cultural terms related to practices and traditions. It should be noted that "Binyag" (3.31) and "Kasal" (3.42) are at the level of "Acceptable" (A). Meanwhile, "Pamamanhikan" (3.57) and "Patay" (3.56) got the "Totally Acceptable" (HA) interpretation. The overall mean of 3.47 was in the "Acceptable" (A) category. This indicates a higher acceptance of terms associated with the social and religious ceremonies that continue to be performed in Laguna.

Table 3 Level of Acceptance - Celebration

Indicator	Mean	Interpretation
1. Pista	3.52	HA
2. Salita Kaugnay sa Tiyak na Produktong Sikat Sa Bayan	3.51	HA
Kabuuan	3.52	HA

Markers: 3.50-4.00 Highly Acceptable (HA), 2.50-3.49 Acceptable (A), 1.50-2.49 Unacceptable (DK), 1.00-1.49 Highly Unacceptable (DLK)

Table 3 shows the level of acceptance of cultural terms associated with Pistas. It is noteworthy that both "Pista" (3.52) and "Salita Kaugnay sa Tiyak na Produktong Sikat sa Bayan" (3.51) showed "Totally Acceptable" (HA) interpretations. A total mean of 3.52 also indicates "Highly Acceptable" (HA). This shows that students have a very high acceptance of terms connected with Pistas and popular products, reflecting their active presence in their Awareness and experience. Laguna is known for Pistas such as the Coconut Pista and the Pinya Pista.

Table 4 Level of Awareness - Economic

Indicator	%	Interpretation
1. Paghahalaman	47.75	MA
2. Pangisdaan	35.95	MA
3. Niyugan	56.36	A
Kabuuan	45.04	MA

Markers: 76-100 Highly Aware (HA), 51-75 Aware (A), 26-50 Moderately Aware (MA), 1-25 Slightly Aware (SA)

Table 4 shows the level of awareness of the respondents to culturally relevant economic terms. "Paghahalaman" (47.75%) and "Pangisdaan" (35.95%) were at the level of "Moderately Aware" (MA). Meanwhile, "Niyugan" (56.36%) showed a "Aware" (A) interpretation. The total percentage of 45.04% was in the "Moderately Aware" (MA) category. This suggests that although the words are generally accepted (according to Table 1), awareness of them, especially of technical terms such as "end" and "halaout" associated with Paghahalaman and niyugan, is not yet very high, which may be due to modernization and lifestyle changes.

Table 5 Level of Awareness - Habits and Traditions

Indicator	%	Interpretation
1. Binyag	33.64	MA
2. Kasal	54.03	A
3. Pamamanhikan	59.45	A
4. Patay	67.16	A
Kabuuan	53.54	A

Markers: 76-100 Highly Aware (HA), 51-75 Aware (A), 26-50 Moderately Aware (MA), 1-25 Slightly

Aware (SA)

Table 5 shows respondents' level of awareness of cultural terms related to practices and traditions. It should be noted that "Binyag" (33.64%) is at the level of "Moderately Aware" (MA). Meanwhile, "Kasal" (54.03%), "Pamamanhikan" (59.45%), and "Patay" (67.16%) showed "Aware" (A) interpretations. The total percentage of 53.54% was in the "Aware" (A) category. Although students are aware, there is a difference in its level, suggesting that some terms may not be fully understood or used.

Table 6 Level of Awareness - Celebration

Indicator	%	Interpretation
1. Pista	51.38	A
2. Salita Kaugnay sa Tiyak na Produktong Sikat Sa Bayan	60.76	A
Kabuuan	59.29	A

Markers: 76-100 Highly Aware (HA), 51-75 Aware (A), 26-50 Moderately Aware (MA), 1-25 Slightly Aware (SA)

Table 6 (referred to as Table 3 in the document) shows the level of awareness of the cultural terms associated with the Pistas. Both "Pista" (51.38%) and "Word Related to a Specific Product Popular In Town" (60.76%) showed "Aware" (A) interpretations. The total percentage of 59.29% was in the "Aware" (A) category. As with the level of acceptance, awareness of terms associated with Pistas and popular products was higher compared to other categories, reflecting students' familiarity with them.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research conducted, it has been proven that cultural terms that are part of the traditions, beliefs, and way of life in Laguna Province continue to be recognized and accepted by the youth, especially students from Laguna State Polytechnic University. Terms related to *Binyag*, *Kasal*, *intercession*, *burial*, *Pista*, *Paghahalaman*, *fishing*, *coconut*, and *local products* are considered part of their cultural Awareness, although there are differences in the level of acceptance and knowledge by category.

In general, respondents' level of acceptance of cultural terms ranged from "Acceptable" (A) to "Highly Acceptable" (HA). The high acceptance of terms such as *pouring*, *begging*, *mourning*, *Coco Pista*, and *coconut* shows their active presence in the Awareness and experience of the students. This suggests that words continue to be used in everyday contexts, especially in social and religious ceremonies, and in economic activities such as agriculture and fishing.

Meanwhile, the level of Awareness presented a more complex picture. Although many of the respondents ranged from "Aware" to "Highly Aware," the presence of those with "Moderately Aware" and "Minimal Awareness" also emerged, especially in terms that are technical and rarely used in the current generation. For example, in fields such as *Paghahalaman*, *Pangisdaan*, and *coconuts*, there are terms that seem less familiar to young people, such as *end*, *halabas*, and *mamalaki*. It shows that modernization and changes in livelihoods and lifestyles have a direct impact on young people's knowledge of traditional languages.

An important observation from the results is the difference in the level of acceptance and awareness depending on the level of experience or exposure of the respondents. There is a heightened acceptance of terms that are still used in ceremonies, celebrations, and products that are part of everyday life. On the other hand, there is less acceptance and awareness of words that are less spoken or talked about in the present day.

Research suggests the need to deepen, protect, and pass on cultural terms to the next generation. These words are not just a simple term but a medium of history, culture, and identity of the people of Laguna. If educational institutions, local governments, and the community as a whole do not act to propagate and preserve them, there

is a risk that they will disappear from the Awareness of the new generation entirely. Awareness and acceptance of cultural terms should be recognized as an important step in affirming local identity and national culture. It is an invitation to all, especially the youth, to rediscover, use, and be proud of our own language and culture.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Teachers. It encourages the integration of cultural terms into lessons and learning activities, such as cultural discussions, creative presentations, and the use of local examples from the community. In addition, there will be a greater focus on emphasizing cultural terms that are gradually disappearing from the Awareness of young people. It is also important to continue to actively participate in trainings and seminars for teachers regarding the teaching of the local language and culture so that they can be more effective in their responsibilities.

For the future researchers. It is recommended that they further expand the scope of the study so that more people can be included and have a deeper understanding about the awareness and acceptance of cultural terms in different regions of the Philippines. Moreover, it would be worthwhile to conduct a more in-depth analysis of words that are currently largely extinct in order to determine the reasons for their absence from the active language of the community. They would also do well to learn how to more effectively transmit and disseminate local words using modern technology and media.

To the government. Programs and projects aimed at promoting and reviving the local language and culture, such as seminars, Pistas, and exhibitions featuring cultural terms, are encouraged to be supported through the allocation of adequate funds. Policies that promote the integration of local cultures and designations into the curriculum at all levels of education should be implemented. It is also important for the government to work with schools and non-governmental organizations to ensure comprehensive and systematic cultural preservation.

Thanksgiving

The researchers would like to thank everyone behind this study who helped.

Funding Information

This study was funded by the researchers.

Declaration of Problem

There were no obstacles or difficulties in carrying out this study.

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