

The Kalinga People's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion: Narratives and Lessons from the Underground

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the intricacies of the Kalinga community's commitment to diversity and inclusion, exploring narratives and lessons embedded in their underground practices. The study navigates three interpretations of "underground" in Kalinga's cultural ethos: challenging societal norms, sustaining commitment amid challenges, and radical practices in the face of adversity.

Examining Kalinga's principles, the research investigates conflict resolution strategies, approaches to sustainability, and intergenerational transmission of wisdom. The community's thriving while preserving identities, languages, and customs inspires a diverse global society and academia.

The study employs a qualitative approach, utilizing in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. The research engages Kalinga community members across generations, ensuring diverse perspectives. Interviews focus on cultural practices, historical accounts, and personal narratives, providing rich insights into the community's commitment to diversity and inclusion. Participant observations involve immersion in community activities, ceremonies, and dialogues, enhancing understanding of daily practices and rituals that shape their ethos.

Findings from document analysis include historical records, community publications, and relevant literature, enriching the historical and cultural context. Thematic analysis is applied to identify recurring patterns, allowing for a comprehensive exploration of the underground practices.

This Research not only sheds light on the commitment's historical roots but also challenges existing perspectives, encouraging positive change. The Kalinga people's commitment to diversity and inclusion transcends the boundaries of mere historical or cultural significance, emerging as a dynamic force with the potential to reshape contemporary understanding. As the research unfolds, it calls upon stakeholders in higher education, communities, and the global stage to remain open to the underground lessons uncovered—lessons that possess the transformative power to redefine notions of diversity, inclusion, and the collective strength emanating from cultural heritage.

KEYWORDS: Diversity and Inclusion/Cultural Resilience.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

This paper offers a comprehensive examination of the intricate web of cultural plurality and inclusivity among the Kalinga indigenous people, emphasizing the importance of understanding and celebrating diversity as a means of fostering unity, respect, and communal well-being within indigenous communities. The insights drawn from this paper will hold relevance not only for preserving Kalinga heritage but also for promoting inclusivity and cultural appreciation worldwide.

In a world that is constantly evolving, where diversity and inclusion have become vital pillars of progress, it is essential for us to draw inspiration from the experiences and wisdom of cultures that have long championed these values. Today, we focus our attention on the Kalinga people and their remarkable journey in upholding diversity and inclusion, often hidden in the depths of the underground, far from the spotlight.

The Kalinga community, nestled within the breathtaking landscapes of the Philippines, has a rich tapestry of traditions, histories, and practices that exemplify their enduring commitment to embracing differences and

fostering inclusivity. Through this lecture, We aim to shed light on the invaluable lessons we can learn from their culture and heritage, lessons that are not only pertinent to our diverse global society but also profoundly relevant to the academic world.

We will delve into the heart of Kalinga's principles and practices, exploring how they have thrived as a community while preserving their unique identities, languages, and customs. We will explore the strategies for conflict resolution, their approach to environmental sustainability, and their means of passing down wisdom through generations.

As we engage in this intellectual journey, let us keep in mind that the lessons we uncover today have the potential to inspire us all in our respective roles within higher education, in our communities, and on the global stage.

Kalinga is a province located in the Cordillera Administrative Region of the Philippines, and situated in the island of Luzon. It is known for its stunning landscapes, rugged terrain, and rich cultural heritage. It is bordered by the provinces of Apayao to the north, Cagayan to the northeast, Isabela to the east, Mountain Province to the south, and Abra to the west.

The province's natural beauty is characterized by its stunning mountain ranges, cascading waterfalls, and lush rice terraces. Kalinga also boasts a number of significant landmarks, including the famous Chico River, which is known for its challenging rapids and is a popular destination for rafting enthusiasts. The Chico River serves as a source of water for irrigation and agriculture and has been a focal point in discussions surrounding development and environmental preservation.

Kalinga's geographical landscape harmoniously interweaves with its vibrant cultural tapestry. This province is home to a diverse array of indigenous ethnic groups, with the Kalinga, I-Fontok, Balangao, Ilocano, and Gaddang communities being the most prominent. Each group contributes its own unique languages, traditions, and customs, creating a colorful mosaic of heritage. Notably, since 1985, the Maranaw Muslims have become an integral part of this diverse society, finding their place in Tabuk City.

The landscape is dotted with traditional villages and rice terraces, reflecting centuries of indigenous agriculture and land management practices.

Kalinga, offers a remarkable case study in the relentless pursuit of diversity and inclusion. Beyond its picturesque landscapes, Kalinga's promise of harmony and unity is rooted in its age-old practices and a lesser-known underground practices. In this article, we uncover the invaluable lessons that this hidden facet of Kalinga has to offer.

Conceptual Framework

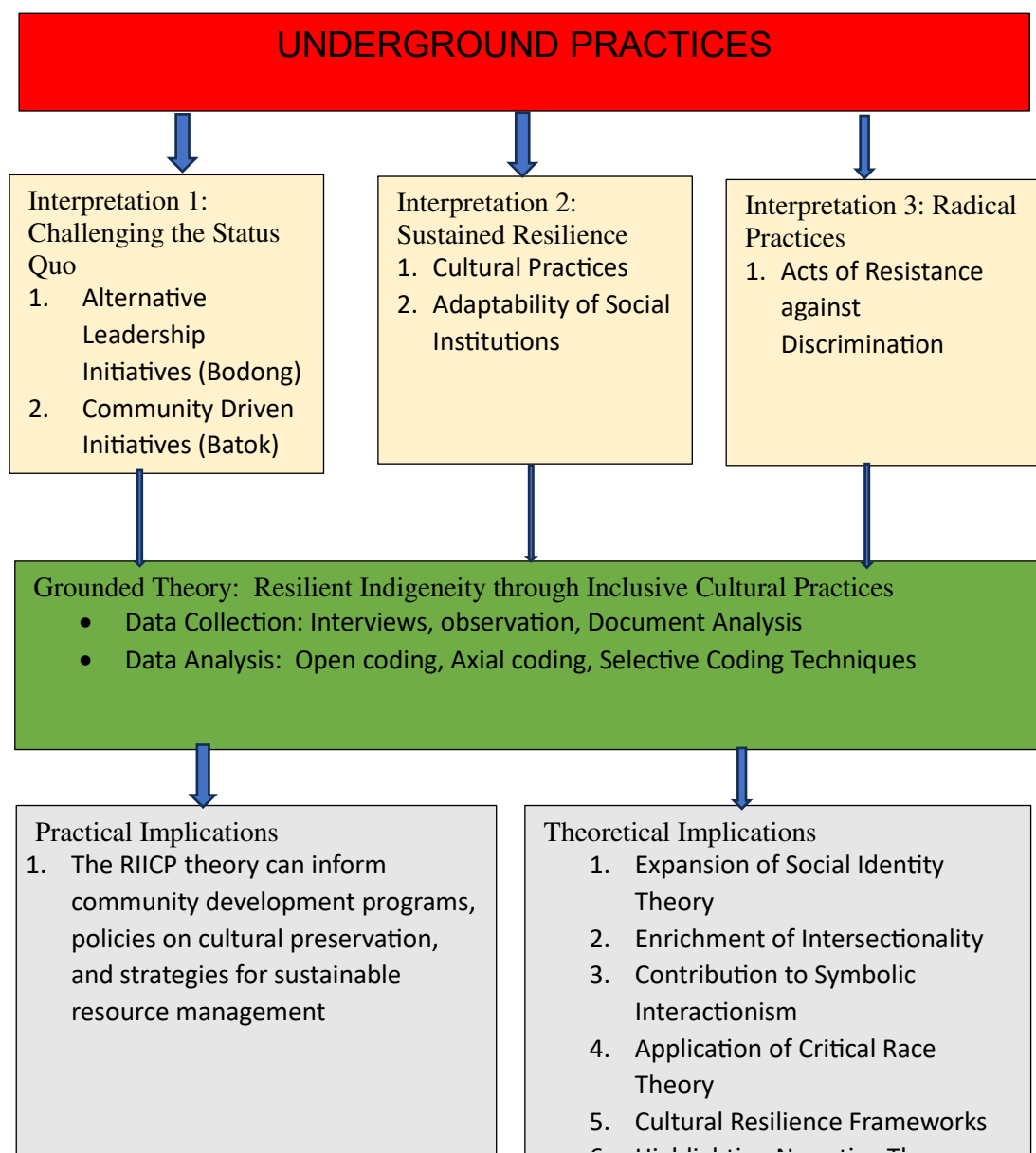
In exploring the multifaceted aspects of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion, various theoretical frameworks offer insightful perspectives. Intersectionality, as articulated by Davis (1981), provides a lens through which we can analyze the complex interplay of gender, ethnicity, and class within the community, shedding light on how these intersecting identities contribute to Kalinga's dedication to diversity. Cultural Resilience, as conceptualized by Lowe (2015), becomes a valuable framework to understand how Kalinga, amidst external pressures, resiliently preserves and adapts its cultural practices, values, and beliefs, maintaining a unique identity while committing to diversity and inclusion.

Tajfel and Turner's (1979) Social Identity theory, when applied to Kalinga, allows for an examination of how the community's commitment shapes social identities, fostering a sense of belonging for individuals across diverse backgrounds. Social identity theory addresses the ways that social identities affect people's attitudes and behaviors regarding their ingroup and the outgroup. Social identities are most influential when individuals consider membership in a particular group to be central to their self-concept and they feel strong

emotional ties to the group. Affiliation with a group confers self-esteem, which helps to sustain the social identity. The social identity theory has been used to explain conformity and socialization in peer groups (e.g., Archer, 1992; Harris, 1995; Leaper, 2000) and group-based prejudice (e.g., Bigler & Liben, 2007; Nesdale, 2004).

Narrative Theory, drawing from Clandinin and Connelly (2000), explores the power of storytelling within Kalinga, unveiling how underground narratives contribute to the enduring commitment to diversity and inclusion by weaving shared experiences and values into the community's fabric.

Critical Race Theory, as articulated by Delgado and Stefancic (2017), offers a crucial perspective for analyzing the impact of race and racism on social structures and institutions within the context of Kalinga. This framework enables a nuanced understanding of historical and contemporary challenges and barriers that the community may have faced, providing insights into the ongoing dynamics of their commitment to fostering inclusivity. Together, these theoretical lenses enrich our exploration of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion, offering comprehensive insights into the complex tapestry of their social and cultural landscape.



Statement of the Problem/Objectives

To document unknown narratives and lessons from the various Kalinga communities

Explore the historical roots key events, leaders, and social movements that have manifested their perspectives on diversity and inclusion. to enrich theoretical frameworks related to cultural resilience, diversity, and inclusion by delving into the Kalinga community's practices

Significance of the Study

This study holds considerable significance both within academic discourse and in practical applications. Academically, it enriches our understanding of the Kalinga community's commitment to diversity and inclusion, offering comprehensive insights into their cultural practices. The exploration of three interpretations of "underground" contributes theoretical depth, advancing scholarship on cultural resilience and diversity. The methodological approach, incorporating qualitative methods such as in-depth interviews and participant observations, introduces innovative ways of studying cultural practices. On a practical level, the study is crucial for the preservation of Kalinga's cultural heritage, providing a documented record of their commitment to diversity. This knowledge holds potential for informing cultural conservation efforts and guiding community development initiatives. The lessons learned from the Kalinga community have broader relevance, offering inspiration for global discussions on cultural diversity and suggesting alternative perspectives on inclusive practices. Furthermore, the study's findings can be incorporated into educational curricula to foster cross-cultural awareness and respect. In essence, this research transcends academic boundaries, providing valuable insights that can positively impact cultural preservation, community development, and global conversations on diversity and inclusion.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study is specifically confined to the geographical and cultural context of the Kalinga community, situated within the Cordillera Administrative Region of the Philippines. The primary focus is on contemporary cultural practices, emphasizing Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion, with a temporal scope extending from the mid-20th century to the present. The investigation hones in on three interpretations of the term "underground" within Kalinga's commitment: challenging societal norms, sustaining commitment amid challenges, and radical practices in the face of adversity. Methodologically, the study adopts a qualitative approach, incorporating in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. However, the findings and conclusions are not intended for generalization to other cultural contexts. Limitations include the study's reliance on the English language and a contemporary focus, with minimal exploration of ancient historical practices. External influences, such as national policies or global trends, are acknowledged but not extensively explored, as the study prioritizes internal community dynamics. Through these carefully defined scopes and delimitations, the research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion within specified parameters.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kalinga, a province in the Philippines, is renowned for its vibrant cultural tapestry and harmonious coexistence of diverse ethnic groups (Department of Tourism, 2021). This literature review aims to explore Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion, focusing on narratives and lessons derived from its underground community. By delving into the experiences and stories of marginalized groups, we can gain valuable insights into Kalinga's efforts to foster a more inclusive society. Understanding Kalinga's Cultural Mosaic: Kalinga province is home to a diverse array of indigenous ethnic groups, including the Kalinga, I-Fontok, Balangao, Ilocano, Gaddang, and Maranaw Muslims (National Commission for Culture and the Arts, 2021). Each of these groups contributes unique languages, traditions, and customs that collectively form a colorful mosaic of heritage. The cultural diversity in Kalinga is a testament to the province's commitment to inclusivity, as it recognizes and celebrates the value of each community's contribution to its social fabric.

The Role of the Underground Community: Within Kalinga, the underground community represents a marginalized group that has faced challenges and discrimination. This community comprises individuals

who, due to societal biases and prejudices, have been pushed to the fringes. However, their narratives offer valuable lessons on the importance of embracing diversity and the power of inclusive practices. Lessons on Empathy and Understanding: The narratives shared by the underground community in Kalinga highlight the necessity of empathy and understanding. By listening to their stories, the broader society gains insight into the struggles faced by marginalized groups and the impact of exclusionary practices. This understanding serves as a catalyst for change, encouraging a more inclusive mindset among the people of Kalinga. Promoting Social Equity: Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion extends beyond mere tolerance; it strives to create a more equitable society. By acknowledging the historical disadvantages faced by marginalized communities and implementing programs to address these challenges, Kalinga demonstrates its dedication to social equity (Philippine Information Agency, 2021). Examples include initiatives that provide educational opportunities, economic empowerment, and social support networks for marginalized individuals. Building Bridges through Dialogue and Collaboration: In the pursuit of diversity and inclusion, Kalinga recognizes the importance of building bridges between different communities. Through dialogue and collaboration, the province encourages open conversations that foster mutual respect and understanding. By embracing diverse perspectives and working together, Kalinga aims to break down barriers and create a more cohesive society (Explore Kalinga, 2021). Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion is exemplified through its recognition and celebration of its cultural mosaic. The narratives and lessons derived from the underground community shed light on the importance of empathy, understanding, social equity, and dialogue in creating a more inclusive society. By embracing these values, Kalinga continues to shape a future where diversity is not merely tolerated but valued and celebrated.

Social identity theory, developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner, posits that individuals derive their sense of self from their membership in social groups. These groups can be based on various factors, such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or social class. According to social identity theory, individuals have a need for positive self-esteem, which they can achieve by identifying with groups that are perceived as high status and valued by society.

Social identity theory can be applied to the study of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion by examining how Kalinga individuals derive their sense of identity from their membership in the Kalinga community and how this sense of identity contributes to their commitment to upholding the values of diversity and inclusion.

Intersectionality, a framework developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw, recognizes that individuals experience multiple forms of oppression and discrimination simultaneously, and that these intersecting identities can shape their experiences in unique ways. Intersectionality challenges traditional approaches to social justice that focus on single categories of oppression, such as race or gender, by highlighting the interconnectedness of different forms of discrimination.

Intersectionality can be applied to the study of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion by examining how Kalinga individuals experience the intersections of their different identities, such as their Kalinga ethnicity, gender, social class, and sexual orientation, and how these intersections shape their understanding of diversity and inclusion.

Critical Race Theory (CRT), a framework developed by legal scholars in the 1970s and 1980s, examines the role of race and racism in shaping society and the law. CRT challenges traditional notions of racial neutrality and argues that racism is not simply a matter of individual prejudice, but rather a systemic and structural phenomenon that pervades all aspects of society.

CRT can be applied to the study of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion by examining how racism and other forms of oppression have shaped the experiences of Kalinga individuals and how these experiences have informed their understanding of the need for diversity and inclusion.

Symbolic interactionist theory, developed by George Herbert Mead, focuses on how individuals create and interpret meaning through interaction with others. According to symbolic interactionist theory, individuals use symbols, such as language, gestures, and objects, to communicate and interpret the world around them. Symbolic interactionist theory can be applied to the study of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion by examining how Kalinga individuals use symbols, such as their language, traditions, and practices, to create and communicate their values of diversity and inclusion.

Social identity theory, intersectionality, Critical Race Theory, and symbolic interactionist theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion. By applying these theories to the study of Kalinga society and culture, we can gain a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to Kalinga's commitment to upholding these values.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, a qualitative approach is employed to explore the profound commitment of the Kalinga community to diversity and inclusion. Utilizing purposeful sampling, participants are selected from various segments of the Kalinga society, including community leaders, elders, youth, and individuals from different ethnic groups within Kalinga. The data collection process involves in-depth interviews, participant observation within the community, and analysis of historical documents and cultural artifacts. Embracing the principles of grounded theory, the data analysis unfolds through an iterative process of open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to derive themes directly from the data. The constant comparative method is applied to continuously compare data within and across interviews, refining emerging themes. Ethical considerations, including informed consent and cultural sensitivity, are paramount in the research design. Methodological triangulation is employed by incorporating multiple data sources to enhance the credibility of findings. Throughout the study, community involvement is emphasized, with preliminary findings shared for feedback and validation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Three interpretations of the term underground

The first interpretation posits that the term "underground" encapsulates the ways in which the Kalinga's dedication to diversity and inclusion disrupts established norms. This encompasses their concerted efforts to foster a fairer and more equitable society, both internally within their communities and extending beyond. Drawing upon a historical lens, the Kalinga people, indigenous inhabitants of the Cordillera region in the Philippines, boast a rich tapestry of culture and traditions that have withstood the test of time. Throughout their storied history, they have consistently challenged prevailing norms across various spheres of mainstream society. This interpretation finds resonance in the work of Garmino (2007), who asserts that the Kalinga worldview on leadership inherently challenges the status quo. In their system, leadership legitimacy does not hinge on electoral processes but rather on the consensus-driven endorsement of the populace, ensuring both accountability and robust authority. Thus, the pronouncements of a leader hold weight, even when conveyed orally, without necessitating written documentation.

The second interpretation suggests that the term "underground" denotes how the Kalinga's steadfast commitment to diversity and inclusion perseveres amidst global shifts and adversities. This resilience is evident in the enduring vitality of Kalinga's traditional culture, the adaptive nature of its social institutions, and the ingenuity displayed by its people. Notably, a tourism blog by Secretph, published on October 23, 2023, highlights that despite the forces of modernization and external cultural influences, the Kalinga people have admirably preserved their customs and way of life (source: <https://secret-ph.com/the-rich-culture-and-traditions-of-kalinga-province/>). Moreover, by adhering to ritualized daily practices, Kalinga communities have adeptly preserved a sense of leisure amidst shifting political and economic landscapes, thereby demonstrating remarkable cultural resilience amidst the encroachments of urbanization. This notion of idleness serves as a subtle manifestation of the "underground," diverging from prevailing norms of modern society which prioritizes constant productivity and the efficient use of time.

The third interpretation is that the term "underground" refers to the radical ways in which diversity and inclusion are practiced by Kalingas in the face of oppression and adversity. This includes individual and group acts of resistance to discrimination and injustice. Bawer, a Kalinga culture bearer, mentioned that the colonizers of the past and the consumers whose appetites drive the machinery of global capitalism are "robotized" by behaviors and beliefs that they never stop to think and question. These unthinking "robots" never reflect on the divine truth written in the human heart and reflexively oppress those who resist assimilation. Bawer explains that the Kalingas' struggle shows that spiritual rootedness in a particular place, rather than advocacy for universal anti-capitalist values, is the animating force behind their opposition to colonization and oppression.

Documentation and analysis of lesser-known narratives within the Kalinga community that highlight their commitment to diversity and inclusion

Theme 1: Challenging the status quo

In the first interpretation of the term underground, we mentioned that the Kalingas commit to diversity and inclusion by challenging and disrupting the status quo. This includes the ways in which Kalingas are working to create a more just and equitable society, both within their own communities and beyond. The best example for this would be the Conflict Resolution Practices as embodied in the *Bodong*.

Kalinga's history has not been devoid of conflict, but what sets it apart is the people's unique approach to conflict resolution. The *Bodong*, time and again, acted as a bridge to mediate disputes and foster reconciliation. This methods of peaceful dialogue and negotiation offer invaluable insights into resolving conflicts in in this diverse society.

While some Kalingas today resort to the jurisdiction of the courts to resolve their disputes, others within the *pidlis* (peace-pact jurisdiction) still follow the procedures of arbitration and adjudication by settling their differences between themselves through the mechanism of the *bodong* (Layugan, M., 2016). The *Bodong* or peace pact is a well-codified system of customary laws that links villages and areas to one another through agreements that end tribal conflicts, establish peaceful areas for commerce and travel, and ensure justice for crimes committed. In the words of Vecaldo, Clemente and Tamangen (2015), the *bodong* is a cultural necessity that aims to address and to arrest the tribal conflict between and among villages which may hinder social and economic progress as these intervene in the healthy processes of intermarriage, trade and commerce.

The *Bodong* emerged from the customs and traditions of the Kalingas with a constitution and by-laws known as the *Pagta*. The provisions of the *Pagta* basically highlights the duties, rights and protection of members as well as the sanctions to crimes committed. The *bodong* holders serve as peace makers when dispute arises and the *binodngan* or member of the *bodong*) is duty-bound to comply with the set of rules and guidelines of the said practice. There are important steps to follow: First is the *Sipat*. It is the exchange of two objects called *allasiw* of about equal value between two men who want to establish a peace pact. Or restore a broken peace pact. Acceptance of the *allasiw* signals a truce/ceasefire and the start of negotiations to resolve the cause of the conflict. Second is the *Simsim*, a ritual that is done in the village of the initiator of the pact. Grievances are discussed and announced to the public. Third is the *Lonok* that refers to a large celebration in which the delegates of the other concerned village are invited. The issues are discussed, payment of indemnities is undertaken, and provisions of the *pagta* are drawn up (Personal Communication, 2023).

The *Bodong* contributes to the recognition of Kalingas' cultural identity, heritage and integrity serving as a testament to the richness of cultural diversity and revitalizing further the genuine culture, value-laden practices and respectable image of the entire Kalinga society.

As an alternative justice system, *bodong* showcases the fundamental desire of the Kalingas to come up with a measure of providing harmony in their society based on their customs that have been passed on

conscientiously by their ancestors.

2. Batok

Batok, the traditional tattooing practice of the Kalinga people, is deeply rooted in their history and cultural identity. Unlike contemporary tattooing, which is often pursued for aesthetic or fashion reasons, batok carries significant meaning, symbolizing rites of passage, bravery, status, and communal belonging. Batok challenges the status quo in several aspects: resistance to modernity, emphasis on community and identity, gender empowerment, cultural assertion in the face of globalization, and educational and revival movements.

In a world where modernization and homogenization often erode indigenous practices, *batok* stands as a resilient tradition. The process, done with traditional tools and methods, rejects the convenience and speed of modern tattooing technologies. This preservation of method challenges the global norm of technological advancement and efficiency. Unlike the tattoos in tattoo parlors in the city, the traditional Kalinga tattoo uses a mixture of coal and water for the ink. The mixture is tapped onto the skin using a tapping stick or *pat-ik* over the *gisi*, which is made out of a bamboo stick and a thorn from a citrus tree (Sannadan, Balocnit & Banggawan, 2022).

Batok is not just a personal adornment but a communal practice. The tattoos are typically given during significant community events and are deeply tied to the individual's role and status within the community. This communal approach contrasts sharply with the individualistic focus of modern society, emphasizing collective identity over personal expression. According to Apo Whang-od, “the traditional tattoo is not just a graphic – every design represents something, people should have tattoos not just to be in fashion, but because the design they choose means something about to them (Howard, 2016).”

Historically, batok has been a way to signify achievements and status, particularly for warriors. However, in recent times, it has also become a symbol of empowerment for Kalinga women, who often bear these tattoos as a sign of their heritage and strength. This reclaims and redefines gender roles within the community, challenging external patriarchal norms.

Global trends often push for assimilation and the adoption of dominant cultural practices. Batok, by maintaining its traditional form and significance, asserts Kalinga's cultural sovereignty. It stands as a form of cultural resistance, emphasizing the importance of maintaining unique cultural identities amidst globalization.

The revival of batok, especially through figures like Apo Whang-Od, the last mambabatok (tattoo artist), has gained international attention. This revival is not just about preserving a tradition but also educating both the Kalinga youth and the global audience about the importance of cultural heritage. It challenges the norm by prioritizing cultural education and awareness over mere commercial or aesthetic value.

“Tattoos are one of our greatest treasures; no one can take them away from us when we die. Unlike material things, no one can take them away from us when we die.”

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- Apo Whang-od

Theme 2: Sustained Resilience

In our second interpretation of the term underground, we mentioned that the Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion has been sustained as shown by the resilience of Kalinga's traditional culture, the adaptability of its social institutions, and the creativity of its people.

One of the key strengths of Kalinga's approach to diversity is its celebration of a rich cultural practices. The Kalingas have continuously preserved and promoted the unique customs, languages, and traditions of various groups. By embracing diversity at its core, Kalinga has created a tapestry of cultures that enriches the entire region.

1. Imong

The Imong is an indigenous forest management system characterized by communal stewardship of environmental resources. Through the Imong decisions have been taken in a participatory manner, including communities in the management of forest resources.

Kalinga's promise of inclusion extends beyond its people to encompass the environment.

Kalinga's Imong or forest conservation practices are grounded in the belief that the forest is a sacred space that must be protected. The *Imong* is inclusive in a number of ways:

It recognizes the interconnectedness of all living beings. The Kalinga people believe that humans are just one part of a larger ecosystem, and that we must respect all living things, including the plants and animals that inhabit the forest. The *Imong* gives voice to all members of the community. The process of making decisions about Imong management is inclusive of all members of the community, including women, elders, and youth. It promotes the sustainable use of forest resources. The Kalinga people have developed a deep understanding of the forest and its resources, and they have developed practices that allow them to use these resources in a sustainable way.

The Kalinga's Imong or forest conservation practices can be analyzed through the lens of Social Identity Theory, particularly in how it contributes to the community's shared identity and sense of belonging. The recognition of the interconnectedness of all living beings reinforces a collective social identity that extends beyond human boundaries to encompass the environment. The Imong becomes a symbol of the community's commitment to environmental stewardship, providing a shared narrative and purpose. Involving all members, including women, elders, and youth, in the decision-making process further strengthens the social identity by fostering a sense of inclusion and shared responsibility in the sustainable management of the forest. The sustainable forestry practices, passed down through cultural teachings, become integral components of the community's identity, reinforcing a positive social identity grounded in environmental consciousness.

Applying the concept of intersectionality to the Imong practices reveals the multifaceted nature of environmental stewardship within the Kalinga community. The interconnectedness of humans and nature intersects with various social identities, such as gender, age, and cultural roles. The inclusion of women, elders, and youth in decision-making recognizes the diverse perspectives and contributions each group brings to environmental conservation. The Imong practices reflect a holistic understanding of intersectionality, acknowledging that sustainable forestry requires a comprehensive approach that considers the diverse roles and experiences within the community. This intersectional perspective strengthens the community's resilience and adaptability in managing the forest while respecting the diverse identities of its members.

Symbolic Interactionist Theory emphasizes the creation of meaning through shared symbols and interactions. The Imong, as a sacred space and a symbol of environmental protection, becomes a focal point for symbolic interactions within the Kalinga community. The forest is not merely a physical resource but a symbolic representation of the community's values, beliefs, and shared identity. The Imong serves as a cultural symbol, passed down through generations, shaping the community's understanding of sustainable forestry and environmental harmony. The symbolic interactions in decision-making processes and cultural teachings contribute to the construction of a shared reality, reinforcing the importance of the forest in the community's collective consciousness. Additionally, the sustainable use of forest resources becomes a symbol of responsible environmental behavior that influences how the community interacts with and values the natural world.

The recognition of the interconnectedness of all living beings, as seen through the Imong practices, reinforces a collective social identity that extends beyond human boundaries to encompass the environment. The inclusive decision-making processes, considering the perspectives of women, elders, and youth,

showcase the community's commitment to acknowledging and valuing diverse social identities in environmental management.

Furthermore, the Imong practices symbolize more than just a practical approach to sustainable forestry; they represent a cultural symbol deeply embedded in the community's values and beliefs. Passed down through generations, the Imong becomes a focal point for symbolic interactions, shaping the community's understanding of responsible environmental behavior and fostering a collective consciousness that reveres the forest.

Through this analysis, it is evident that the Kalinga community's environmental stewardship sets a profound example for global sustainability efforts. The Imong practices showcase not only a sustainable approach to resource use but also a model for inclusive decision-making and the symbolic integration of environmental values into cultural identity. The Kalinga people, by recognizing the interdependence of humans and nature, have not only preserved their ecological heritage but have also provided a valuable lesson for the broader world in the pursuit of harmonious coexistence with the environment.

The Kalinga people practice sustainable forestry by selectively harvesting timber and non-timber forest products. They use Imongs and cultural teachings to pass down knowledge about which species can be harvested, when, and in what quantities to ensure the continued health of the forest.

2. Pattung/ Community Dance

The Kalinga Pattung, a traditional festival dance, exemplifies the Kalinga people's dedication to inclusivity through cultural practices. Performed during various celebrations and festivals, the Pattong dance serves as a platform for cultural exchange and inclusivity among different groups, enriching the region's cultural tapestry. Celebrating diversity within Kalinga society, the dance brings together individuals with unique talents and contributions to commemorate their shared culture, promoting an atmosphere of inclusivity and respect for individual differences. This dance, featuring two circular formations with men in the outer circle and women in the inner circle, reflects the community's commitment to inclusivity and gender equality. The Pattung promotes equal participation, with both men and women actively engaged, showcasing equality in cultural expression. This collaborative effort fosters a sense of unity and inclusivity, emphasizing that cultural traditions are shared and celebrated by everyone in the community.

Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity theory provides a compelling framework for analyzing the Kalinga Pattung dance, revealing how this traditional festival dance reflects the Kalinga people's dedication to inclusivity through cultural practices. The dance's distinctive feature, with men in the outer circle and women in the inner circle, signifies a deliberate structuring of social categories within the community. This dance promotes inclusivity and gender equality by allowing both genders equal and active participation, emphasizing equality in cultural expression.

While women dance in the inner circle, their prominent visibility in the performance underscores gender equality, empowering women within the community and emphasizing the vital roles played by both genders in preserving and celebrating their culture.

The circular formation of the Pattong dance symbolizes the interconnectedness of all community members, emphasizing that everyone has a place within the community, contributing to its cultural vibrancy. It sends a message that both men and women have important roles in preserving and celebrating their culture.

The Pattung, also known as the Paluk, is not just a community dance but a community celebration opens to everyone, irrespective of age, gender, social status, or wealth. There are many different variations of the pattung, and each community has its own unique style. This diversity reflects the Kalinga people's commitment to inclusivity and their respect for different cultures. The dance is a fixture at community events, including weddings, funerals, festivals, and social gatherings, serving as a unifying force that

celebrates the shared culture and heritage of the Kalinga people.

The Pattung dance involves collaboration among community members, as it requires coordination between the two circles of dancers. This collaborative effort fosters a sense of unity and inclusivity, with each dancer playing a vital role in the performance. The Pattung dance is often performed during celebrations and festivals, which may attract visitors and participants from neighboring communities. This provides an opportunity for cultural exchange and inclusivity among different groups.

The Pattung dance reflects the diversity within Kalinga society. Different individuals, each with their unique talents and contributions, come together to celebrate their shared culture. It is a dance that is open to everyone, and there are no special skills or training required to participate. This celebration of diversity through dance promotes an atmosphere of inclusivity and respect for individual differences.

The Kalinga Pattung dance, with its two circular formations involving men in the outer circle and women in the inner circle, can be analyzed through the lens of Tajfel and Turner's Social Identity Theory. According to this theory, individuals categorize themselves and others into social groups to enhance self-esteem. In the Pattung dance, these social categories are manifested in the gendered arrangement of the circles, creating distinct groups within the community. The dance becomes a mechanism for individuals to derive a positive social identity by actively participating in and contributing to the cultural expression of the community. The sense of shared identity and belonging is strengthened through the collaborative effort of both genders, emphasizing equality in cultural expression.

Applying the concept of intersectionality, the analysis of the Pattung dance extends beyond gender dynamics. Intersectionality acknowledges the interconnectedness of multiple social identities. In this dance, gender intersects with cultural roles, and the symbolic arrangement of circles represents a nuanced approach to inclusivity. The dance recognizes and celebrates the multifaceted identities within the Kalinga community, providing a platform for individuals to navigate and express their intersecting identities. By promoting equal participation irrespective of gender, the Pattong dance challenges traditional norms and becomes an inclusive space where diverse experiences are acknowledged and celebrated.

Symbolic Interactionist Theory, rooted in the idea that individuals create meaning through shared symbols and engage in social interactions based on these meanings, sheds light on the symbolic aspects of the Pattong dance. The circular formation, particularly with men and women in distinct circles, becomes a symbol of the community's social structure. The dance serves as a symbolic language through which the community communicates and reinforces shared values. The visibility of women in the inner circle symbolically challenges and reinterprets traditional gender roles, contributing to the creation of new meanings within the community. Moreover, the Pattung dance's performance during celebrations and festivals becomes a shared symbol that fosters a sense of belonging and connection among community members, symbolizing cultural exchange and inclusivity.

The Kalinga Pattung dance is a beautiful example of how a cultural tradition can embody inclusivity, gender equality, and community collaboration. It reflects the Kalinga people's commitment to preserving their cultural heritage while embracing diversity and ensuring that everyone, regardless of gender, plays an active and valued role in celebrating their shared traditions.

In essence, the Pattong is more than a dance; it is a living expression of the Kalinga community's unity and inclusivity.

Theme 3: Radical Practices of Inclusion

Our final interpretation of the term “underground” refers to the radical ways in which diversity and inclusion are practiced by Kalingas in the face oppression and adversity. This includes individual and group acts of resistance against discrimination and injustice.

One important turning point in Kalinga recent history was the struggle against the Chico River Basin Development Project, a project of the Marcos administration funded by the World Bank. On May 13, 1975, 150 *papangat* (peacemakers) from Kalinga and Bontoc forged the Bodong Federation Inc., uniting themselves against the construction of four hydroelectric dams that would inundate their villages and rice fields. For the first time, the Kalinga and Bontoc forged intertribal solidarity and declared their preparedness to resort to armed resistance to defend their ancestral domain. They sent petitions and delegations to Malacañang, but President Marcos dismissed their appeal as sentimental and urged them to make sacrifices for the sake of the nation's progress. Marcos then sent military forces to the area.

The Kalinga set up barricades to prevent the entry of construction equipment and materials. The women tore down the soldiers' tents while the men engaged the military at the dam site.

In a protest march, 300 men and women took all the construction equipment they could carry as they walked from late afternoon till early the next morning to the provincial military headquarters at the town center. In one episode, the women lay on the road to block the delivery trucks; in another, they bared their breasts to stop the soldiers.

The escalation of military operations in the area became a national and international issue, especially after Butbut tribal chief Macli-ing Dulag was killed on 24 April 1980 by soldiers of the 44th Infantry Battalion. Simultaneously they shot and set fire to the house of Pedro Dungoc, Macli-ing Dulag's neighbor and spokesperson who had also written the *pagta* for the bodong that unified the Cordillera elders against the dam. Dungoc escaped and went on to become a member of the New People's Army until his death in 1985.

The slaying of Macli-ing Dulag further united the northern peoples. On February 13 to 14, 1982, another bodong was held involving leaders of four provinces: Mountain Province, Kalinga-Apayao, Abra, and Ilocos Sur.

The popular resistance of the Kalinga and other Cordillera peoples succeeded when the World Bank withdrew from the project in the early 1980s.

On 15 July 1987, President Corazon C. Aquino signed Executive Order 220, forming what is now known as the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) with its six provinces. Prior to this, Ifugao and the provinces of Kalinga and Apayao belonged to Region II, while Abra, the City of Baguio, Benguet, and Mountain Province were under Region I.

The Kalingas' observance of diversity and inclusion is expressed in their historical struggle for the preservation of their ancestral domains, particularly in the face of oppression and adversity. This struggle against external forces exemplifies how the Kalingas practice inclusivity and diversity in their society in seven ways:

First, the formation of the Bodong Federation Inc. marked a significant turning point in Kalinga history. It brought together Kalingas and Bontoks, forging intertribal solidarity against the Chico River Basin Development Project. This unity demonstrated the Kalingas' commitment to inclusivity, transcending tribal boundaries to protect their shared ancestral domains.

Second, the Kalingas' preparedness to resort to armed resistance to defend their ancestral domain showcases their determination to protect their cultural heritage and land. This collective stand reflects the inclusivity of their struggle, with the willingness of both men and women to participate in the fight.

Third, the Kalingas sent petitions and delegations to Malacañang to voice their concerns, advocating for their rights and ancestral land. This peaceful approach to resistance underscores their commitment to inclusivity through dialogue and engagement with authorities.

Fourth, the Kalinga women played a pivotal role in the resistance movement. They engaged in actions such as tearing down soldiers' tents, blocking delivery trucks, and even baring their breasts to stop the soldiers. This demonstrates the inclusivity of gender in their struggle, with women actively participating in defiance of injustice.

Fifth, the escalation of military operations in the area drew national and international attention, further emphasizing the Kalingas' commitment to inclusivity by seeking support and solidarity on a broader scale.

Sixth, the tragic killing of Macli-ing Dulag became a unifying force among the northern peoples. The Kalingas, along with other Cordillera communities, stood together in the face of adversity, reinforcing their shared commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Lastly, the successful resistance efforts led to significant legal and political changes, including the withdrawal of the World Bank from the project and the formation of the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR). These changes reflect the Kalingas' inclusive approach to addressing broader political issues affecting their region.

The Kalingas' historical struggle against the Chico River Basin Development Project serves as a powerful illustration of their enduring commitment to diversity and inclusion. Their unity across tribal lines, participation of both men and women, engagement with national and international actors, and ultimate success in achieving their goals underscore the importance of these principles within Kalinga society. Through their actions, they have not only preserved their ancestral domains but also inspired inclusivity and diversity in their broader cultural narrative.

Enrichment of Theoretical Frameworks

The research on Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion presents several theoretical implications that can enrich existing literature and frameworks:

1. **Expansion of Social Identity Theory:** The study highlights how Kalinga's cultural practices and inclusive traditions shape social identities within their community. By examining how cultural rituals and community structures influence individual and group identities, the research can extend Social Identity theory to incorporate the role of indigenous practices in identity formation and intergroup relations.
2. **Enrichment of Intersectionality:** The research underscores the multifaceted nature of Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion, considering the intersections of gender, age, social status, and cultural heritage. It provides empirical evidence that can deepen the understanding of intersectionality by showcasing how overlapping social categories impact experiences and practices within indigenous contexts.
3. **Contribution to Symbolic Interactionism:** The research illustrates how Kalinga's rituals and communal activities are imbued with symbolic meanings that reinforce social cohesion and inclusivity. This can enhance Symbolic Interactionism by providing concrete examples of how shared symbols and collective rituals shape social interactions and community dynamics.
4. **Application of Critical Race Theory:** The study explores how Kalinga communities resist oppression and discrimination through their cultural practices and social organization. This application of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in an indigenous context can broaden the scope of CRT by integrating indigenous perspectives on resistance, justice, and cultural resilience.
5. **Grounded Theory Development:** The research generates a grounded theory on how Kalinga's commitment to diversity and inclusion operates "underground," challenging mainstream societal norms. This emergent theory can offer new insights into how marginalized communities sustain inclusive practices and resist external pressures, contributing to the broader discourse on cultural resilience and social justice.
6. **Cultural Resilience Frameworks:** The findings provide empirical support for frameworks on cultural resilience, demonstrating how Kalinga communities maintain their cultural identity and inclusive practices amidst modernization and external influences. This can inform theoretical models on resilience by incorporating indigenous strategies for cultural preservation and adaptive capacity.

7. Narrative Theory: By examining the stories and narratives within Kalinga culture, the research can enrich Narrative Theory by highlighting the role of storytelling in transmitting cultural values, fostering inclusivity, and building community solidarity. It underscores the power of narratives in shaping collective memory and identity.

Grounded Theory Development

*Grounded Theory: Matagoan di Gimpong Theory or Resilient Indigeneity through Inclusive Cultural Practices Theory*_Core Concept: Resilient Indigeneity through Inclusive Cultural Practices is the theory that the Kalinga people's commitment to diversity and inclusion is central to their ability to preserve and adapt their cultural identity amidst external pressures such as modernization, political changes, and economic challenges. This theory posits that inclusive cultural practices are the mechanisms through which the Kalinga maintain their cultural resilience.

Key Components:

1. Inclusive Leadership and Governance

- The Kalinga leadership model, which is based on community consensus rather than formal electoral processes, ensures that all voices are heard and valued. This inclusive governance fosters strong community bonds and accountability, thereby reinforcing cultural resilience.

Example: The Bodong Federation, where decisions are made through community consensus, exemplifies this inclusive leadership.

2. Ritualized Practices

- The Kalinga engage in daily rituals and cultural practices that are inclusive of all community members, regardless of age, gender, or social status. These practices not only preserve cultural traditions but also promote a sense of belonging and unity.

Examples: The practice of Imong, which involves sustainable forest management through community participation, reflects the Kalinga's inclusive approach to environmental stewardship.

3. Resistance and Adaptation

- In the face of external threats, the Kalinga people engage in acts of resistance that are both individual and collective. These acts are crucial for defending their cultural identity and promoting inclusivity.

Example: The resistance against the Chico River Basin Development Project, where both men and women participated in protests and acts of civil disobedience to protect their land and culture.

4. Interconnectedness with the Environment

- The Kalinga view their natural environment as an integral part of their cultural identity. This interconnectedness drives their sustainable practices and reinforces the community's resilience.

Example: The Imong practices, where decisions about forest management are made collectively, ensuring that the use of natural resources is sustainable and inclusive.

5. Adaptive Cultural Practices

- The Kalinga's cultural practices are dynamic and adaptable, allowing them to navigate and thrive amidst changing political and economic landscapes. This adaptability is rooted in their inclusive approach to cultural preservation.

Example: The preservation of traditional dances like Pattong, which involves all community members and serves as a platform for cultural expression and exchange

Implications

1. Practical Implications: The theory of Cultural Resilience through Inclusive Practices can inform community development programs, policies on cultural preservation, and strategies for sustainable resource management. It highlights the importance of inclusivity in fostering strong, resilient communities.

2. Theoretical Implications: This theory contributes to the understanding of how inclusive practices can drive cultural resilience. It offers a framework for analyzing the role of community-driven initiatives in preserving cultural identity and adapting to external challenges.

Data Collection Methods:

Interviews: Conducting in-depth interviews with Kalinga community members to gather insights into their inclusive practices and cultural resilience.

Observations: Participating in and observing cultural practices and rituals to understand their role in fostering inclusivity.

Document Analysis: Reviewing historical documents, community records, and previous studies to trace the evolution of Kalinga's inclusive practices and their impact on cultural resilience.

CONCLUSION

This research on Kalinga's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion: Narratives and Lessons from the Underground provides an exploration into the culture and resilience of the Kalinga community. It uncovers invaluable narratives and lessons that transcend both time and geographical boundaries by examining the underground practices that have sustained their commitment to diversity and inclusion

The first interpretation, highlighting the ways in which Kalinga's commitment challenges the status quo, underscores the community's active role in fostering a more just and equitable society. The second interpretation, emphasizing the sustained commitment amid global challenges, illuminates the adaptability and creativity embedded in Kalinga's cultural practices. Lastly, the third interpretation, focusing on radical diversity and inclusion in the face of adversity, reveals the individual and collective acts of resistance that characterize the Kalinga people's unwavering dedication.

This research journey has not only provided insights into the principles and practices at the heart of Kalinga's commitment but has also unearthed the strategies for conflict resolution, environmental sustainability, and the intergenerational transmission of wisdom. The Kalinga community's ability to thrive while preserving their unique identities, languages, and customs serves as a beacon of inspiration for our diverse global society and offers profound relevance to the academic realm.

This research, calls on us all in our roles within higher education, communities, and on the global stage to remain open to these lessons from the underground—lessons that have the potential to reshape our understanding of diversity, inclusion, and the collective strength that arises from cultural heritage.

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