

Influence of ASEAN Costume Design as Perceived by The Young and Middle Age Designers in Dipolog City

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Abstract — This is a descriptive study on the influences of the ASEAN costume designs as perceived by the young and middle age designers in Dipolog City. A purposive sampling method was used to select the respondents. The participants were 18 – 44 years old for the young designers and 45 – 65 years old for the middle age designers, with a sample size of 30. The statistical treatments used were frequency, percentage, weighted mean, and F test. Most of the respondents were members of the LGBTQ community and nearly all of the young designers were high school graduates and studying on their bachelor's degree while middle age designers were college graduates. The results showed that both young and middle age designers were influenced by the ASEAN designs in terms of fashion and culture nevertheless, they still keep the Filipino – way of making costume designs and preserving the culture and history of the country.

Keywords — *Costume design, young designers, middle age designers, fashion, and culture*

I. Introduction

Costume designing is one way of expressing and communicating one's country to the world. The intricate woven designs represent the story of the locals and tell this story through costumes in plays, shows, and festivals while considering the fashion of the time. There have been several pieces of research related to the clothing of Filipinos highlighting the classic “Maria Clara” outfit of long gowns and thin fabrics. But only a few studies show the bold colors, detailed beadworks, and shining sequences with headdresses and other accessories, which are put together in the traditional costumes of the natives.

The history of the Philippines tells that, the country is colonized by the neighboring Asian and Western countries for hundreds of years. With this, it is perceived that the ASEAN costume designers and the western designers have influenced Filipino designers in various ways. Also, since the Philippines is part of the ASEAN countries, several designers adopt and embrace the distinctive styles and patterns of other ASEAN costumes. Despite this, there are still unique Filipino designs in the patterns, materials, and cut that signify the Filipino identity.

In the present time, the year 2017, various costumes of ASEAN countries were presented at the World Costume Festival held in Vigan City. This is to promote the 50th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in the country thus, displaying almost ten of the member-

states different cultural costumes. At the festival, many designs from the neighboring regions, show similarities in the materials used yet there are also distinguishing features. This is where the concept of the study was generated. This study aims to determine the significant influences of these ASEAN costume designs as perceived by the young and middle age local designers in Dipolog City. With this, the designers and the so-called “fashionistas” will know the different styles and fashion the Philippines has been adapting. Furthermore, this will also give motivation to those aspiring young designers to embrace other countries’ ways of showing their culture while preserving their identity.

Literature Review

The work of Daniel Roche on *The Culture of Clothing* (1996) states that clothes are reflections of social history, expression of culture, and reflection of the time. He established the relationship between clothes and customs within the framework of socio-cultural history. He highlighted the importance of clothes as a function of language and culture. Similarly, this study also looked into the culture, history, and the expression of people through costume designs.

The Philippines being a colonized country has undergone historical evolution of costumes. In the Pre-Spanish period, the costumes of the Filipinos were influenced by the Indonesian, Malay, Chinese, and Indian races. This can be seen through the costume of women in the regions of Mindanao called “patadiong”. The coming of the Spaniards changed the clothing to “salawal”, wearing of “salacot”, “patadiong” is still worn by the natives and the European skirts of the mestizas. In the middle and latter parts of the Spanish regime, laces and silks were added to the Filipino costumes. Then, the Americans came where the costly and delicate clothes were changed to simple clothes, and the revolutionizing of the “terno” which suits to the local’s needs of comfort, novelty, and practicability. After which, the Japanese occupation of the country evolved the clothing to the use of more native materials. The use of “sinamay” and “pina” were popular among the upper class while the use of “abaca” and cotton was used by the provincial people. The significant clothes at this time were the “balintawak” for women and “barong tagalong” for men. The period of Liberation came when the younger women show off their shoulders and their backs which are still popular today. And finally, during the period of the Republic which underwent fashion changes in costume jewelry, textiles, fashion, beauty aids, and the latest trends were exchanged among other nations (Ekern, 1960, Proquest, 2012). This evolution of clothing show how the costume designers of today are influenced by Philippine history and colonization.

In similar literature during the global era, costume designs are crafted with materials that suggest “ethnic”. The panuelo or the alampay was made of raw silk or pina fabric which was traditionally used to make the Philippine national costumes of the terno and the barong tagalong (Legasto, 2008). The use of ethnic materials and incorporation of these into the national costumes are observed in today’s costume designs.

Another study by Stephanie Coe (2014), entitled “Clothing and the Colonial Culture of Appearances in Nineteenth-Century Spanish Philippines (1820-1896)”, states that fashion evolved from that era. And that despite the integration of European elements and accessories, Filipino clothing retained its oriental character. Also, the racial, the economic, and the cultural intersected the material form of clothing.

The gap between this research to the previous literature is that the focus is on costume designs. The majority of the literature and studies are on the traditional terno but only a few are for the ethnic or cultural designs. Also, two parameters are studied on the influences of the ASEAN costume designs as perceived by the young and middle age designers and these are fashion and culture. The intervening variables are also considered which are gender, age, and educational attainment.

II. Methodology

This study utilized descriptive survey research to assess the different influences of the ASEAN costume designs as perceived by the young and middle age designers in Dipolog City. There were a total of 30 respondents who were chosen purposively of which 15 are young designers from 18 to 44 years old and 15 middle age designers from 45 to 65 years old. The age range for young and middle-aged is classified based on their experience in designing. The main tool in this study was a researcher-made questionnaire using a Likert scale allowing the respondents to indicate “always or extremely influential” to “never or not influential”. The statements are incorporated from the published research works, books, and other pieces of literature related to this study. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire went through checking by the experts who are professors in history and designers which are not subjected to the study. The treatments used to answer the problems are percentage distribution, weighted mean, and F-test.

III. Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of gender and educational attainment. In the profile of gender, it can be observed that the majority of the respondents were members of the LGBTQ group, followed by male young designers, and an equal number of male and female middle age designers. In terms of educational attainment, it can be observed that the majority of the young designers were high school graduates while the middle age designers were college graduates. These profiles imply that the field of costume design in the locality is dominated by the LGBTQ, particularly the gays. Also, the educational attainment of the young designers was mostly high school graduates since they are still working on their bachelor’s degree while the middle age designers completed their college degrees. Still, this implies that the local designers are educated and are well exposed to international cultural designs.

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Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Gender	Young Designers		Middle Age Designers	
	F	%	F	%
Male	5	33.33	3	20
Female	1	6.67	3	20
LGBTQ	9	60	9	60
	15	100	15	100
Educational Attainment				
Secondary Graduate	12	80	4	26.67
College Graduate	3	20	11	73.33
	15	100	15	100

Table 2. Influences of ASEAN Costume Designs as Perceived by the Young and Middle Age Designers in Dipolog City in terms of Culture

CULTURE	YOUNG DESIGNER		MIDDLE DESIGNER	
	AWM	Int	AWM	Int
1. Uses fabric in costume design generally originating from the Philippines.	5.0	Always	5.0	Always
2. Uses fabric originated from the Philippines but, with a mixture of ASEAN fabrics.	4.87	Always	4.60	Always
3. Utilizes traditional designs and patterns to preserve the local culture and ethnicity.	5.0	Always	5.0	Always
4. Creates styles/figures that preserve the strong history of the country.	5.0	Always	4.67	Always
5. Observes the Filipino way of beading and other details of costume designing.	4.93	Always	4.73	Always
6. Observes the conventional way of beading and other details in creating costumes while utilizing the influence of ASEAN countries.	4.80	Always	4.60	Always
7. Utilizes the modern and contemporary way of beading and putting other details of costume designs from the ASEAN countries.	4.73	Always	4.67	Always
8. Creates costume design in colorful and ornate appearance showing the unique Filipino culture.	5.0	Always	4.80	Always
9. Designs garments that can help people understand the unique history and ethnicities of the country.	4.87	Always	4.80	Always
10. Designs garments that promote greater cross-cultural collaboration.	4.73	Always	4.73	Always
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	4.893	Always	4.76	Always

Legend

Scale	Continuum	Descriptive Equivalent
5	4.21-5.00	Always / Extremely Influential
4	3.41-4.20	Often / Very Influential
3	2.61-3.40	Sometimes / Somewhat Influential
2	1.81-2.60	Seldom / Slightly Influential
1	1.00-1.80	Never / Not Influential

Table 2 presents the influences of ASEAN costume design as perceived by the Young and Middle Age Designers in Dipolog City in terms of culture. The highest weighted mean were on using fabric generally originating from the Philippines and utilizing traditional designs and patterns to preserve the local culture and ethnicity as well as creating styles/figures that preserve the strong history of the country both got a mean of 5.0. The other statements with a high mean were on creating costume designs in colorful and ornate appearances showing the unique Filipino culture has a mean of 5.0 for young designers and 4.80 for middle age designers. The item on

designing garments that can help people understand the unique history and ethnicities of the country got a mean of 4.80 for middle age designers. The average weighted mean for the influences of ASEAN costume design in terms of culture for young designers is 4.894 while for middle age designers is 4.76, both with a verbal interpretation of always or extremely influential.

This data imply that though the costume designers adapt the ASEAN culture in designing costumes, still they design costumes that would keep and preserve the distinctiveness of the Filipino design. The beads used, fabrics, and patterns may have an oriental influence but they manage to maintain the traditional costume designs of the locality. The so-called “indigenous” designs of the people in Mindanao are maintained in their designs preserving the elaborate patterns using bold colors in atypical silhouettes with massive headdresses and embroideries original from the local tribes. Thus, young and middle age designers have limited ASEAN influence in their costume designs. As affirmed by Yu et al. (2001), oriental ethnic dresses show influences from other Asian countries like China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, and Vietnam. These countries are well-known sources of oriental culture in the fashion world. The influences of the ethnic dress were very much noticeable with the material used like the pattern, feature of fabric, and color. Despite this, the indigenous group of Mindanao maintained its uniqueness in clothing. As cited by Co (2019) that due to the fragmented nature of the Philippine Islands, the tribes in Mindanao as well as the Muslim groups were not subdued by colonizers. The tribes of Mindanao were disconnected from the developments that occurred among the majority of the Philippine population.

Table 3. Influences of ASEAN Costumes as Perceived by the Young and Middle Age Designers in Dipolog City in terms of Fashion

FASHION	YOUNG DESIGNER		MIDDLE AGE DESIGNER	
	AWM	Int	AWM	Int
1. Adopts the modern fashion style of other countries.	4.73	Always	5.0	Always
2. Maintains Filipino fashion.	4.73	Always	4.73	Always
3. Keeps the comfortable “dressing down fashion” of the Philippines.	4.93	Always	4.87	Always
4. Adopts modern ASEAN fashion to ethnicity dresses.	4.80	Always	4.73	Always
5. Embraces the traditional fashion designs and styles of the Philippines.	4.87	Always	4.87	Always
6. Accepts the influences of ASEAN countries yet, still observes the local fashion designs.	4.67	Always	4.93	Always
7. Engages in the style of ASEAN countries.	4.80	Always	4.80	Always
8. Adopts the modern techniques and interpretations of ASEAN countries.	4.87	Always	4.73	Always
9. Utilizes available local resources that fit the modern ASEAN styles.	4.73	Always	4.80	Always
10. Creates ethnic dresses that are fashionable in patterns, fabric, color, and saleable in the current time.	5.0	Always	5.0	Always
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	4.813	Always	4.846	Always

Legend

Scale	Continuum	Descriptive Equivalent
5	4.21-5.00	Always / Extremely Influential
4	3.41-4.20	Often / Very Influential
3	2.61-3.40	Sometimes / Somewhat Influential
2	1.81-2.60	Seldom / Slightly Influential
1	1.00-1.80	Never / Not Influential

Table 3 presents the influences of ASEAN costumes as perceived by the young and middle age designers in Dipolog city in terms of fashion. The highest weighted mean is for creating ethnic dresses that are fashionable in patterns, fabric, color, and saleable in the current time with a weighted mean of 5.0 for both young and middle age designers. Also, the young designers make sure that their designs are comfortable and keep the “dressing down” fashion of the Philippines (AWM 4.93) while embracing the country’s traditional fashion designs and styles (AWM 4.87). On the part of the middle age designers, they always adapt the modern fashion style of other countries (AWM 5.0) and accept the influences of ASEAN countries while still observing the local fashion design (AWM 4.93). The average weighted mean for the young designers is 4.813 and

4.836 for the middle age designers with the descriptive equivalent of Always or Extremely Influential.

The findings above imply that both young and middle age designers utilize Filipino and ASEAN countries' design in fashion. The fashion of the local costume designers is generally oriental as influenced by the environment, climate, and interracial interactions. However, though local designers are influenced by foreign styles, they still embrace the unique traditional designs that mark the identity and tell the story of the locals. Moreover, the designs though somehow show the current trends but the uniqueness of the patterns the silhouettes, and the beadworks preserve the original symbols of the indigenous groups. As posited in the study of Bulilan et al. (2017), modern techniques and interpretations are used by the Filipino designers while promoting cultural identity but promoting solely the Filipino cultural identity would be a difficult task since they also have to consider consumers' demand in designing clothes. As revealed also in the study of Co (2019) that Philippine fashion integrated the urbanized and cultural styles while considering the tropical climate of the Philippines using the local materials. In a more localized perspective, the study of Villanueva and Jomud (2013) said that modifications in the Subanen garments are caused either by adaptation to the modern-day clothing and style, cost of cloth and decorative materials, consent of tribal leaders, or lack of consultation by the local government agencies. The modifications observed in the tribal groups are also evident in the creations of the designers.

Table 4. Significant Difference between the Influences of the ASEAN Designs as Perceived by the Young and Middle Age Designers in Dipolog City

VARIABLE COMPARED	MEAN	SD	A	Df	Tv	Computed F-test	Interpretation	Action
Young Designers	4.85	0.368	$\alpha = 0.05$	1	4.35	1.36	No Significant Difference	H_0 was accepted
Middle Age Designers	4.80	0.363		20				

The table above shows a computed F-test of 1.36 which accepts the null hypothesis that there was no significant difference between the influences of the ASEAN designers as perceived by the young and middle age designers in Dipolog City. This implies that both are influenced similarly but the influence is limited. As revealed in tables 2 and 3, though the designers adapt to the ASEAN culture and fashion, they are still able to retain the traditional designs of the locals. The young and middle age designers apply the current trends in their design but they maintain the unique identity of the people showcasing the indigenous materials of the locals. This result is similar to the work of Hwang (2013) that designers are impacted by their cultural values and their

background. Also, a similar study by Inosa (2017) states that millennial designers adapt to the international trends and tastes using the advances in technology to make the Philippine terno relevant. The designers chose to modify the bodices, skirts, and trains but they retain what to them is an essential terno element: the butterfly sleeves. The same goes for the respondents of the study that though their designs were internationally influenced in terms of styles but they retain the identity of the indigenous Filipinos - their bold beadings with meaningful symbols and patterns.

IV. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the young and middle age designers are adapting to the ASEAN costume designs. There is an oriental identity in the designs but the distinguishing identities of the indigenous Filipinos are still evident. The fashion style may be evolving or modernizing but, the traditional fashion, culture, and the use of ethnic materials are maintained thus, preserving the local culture and identity of the indigenous group.

Some of the Costume Designs made by the local designer Randy T. Olarte



This is created by Randy T. Olarte, one of the researchers of this study who won 3rd place during the World Costume Festival in Vigan City. This costume represents the native way of living in the Zamboanga Peninsula. The horn represents the el-toro festival as a tribute to carabao's vital role in farming. The smoking pipe accentuated with native cloth is part of Filipino tradition. In a tropical country, the hat is very important in farming, made of native materials and metallic beads. The metallic brass beads use as belts showcase the social status of Filipinos. The designer chose the color red to make it attractive and as a sign of blood for the defense of the tribe's ancestral domain. This costume is a reflection of how rich and colorful the festivals are in the Philippines and as part of Filipino traditions.



This is a Subanen inspired costume that represents the way of living in the Zamboanga Peninsula. The pearl under the birds as part of the costume represents the Kamgbegu Festival in Zamboanga del Sur. In a tropical country, the scarf is very important, especially in farming. The scarf is made of satin material and embellished with beads and native cloth to give more details to the costume. The artificial brass beads are used as a belt of the costume. The cut suit is also made of sequenced cloth and accentuated with metallic beads. The designer chose the color black to make it more attractive and symbolize the night as the time of worship of the Subanen tribe.

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