

Preserving Heritage in Diaspora: A Study of Kapampangan Identity in Winnipeg

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ABSTRACT. The preservation of ethnic identity in a host society requires the ability of an individual to manage a balance between the need to adapt and the desire to remain connected to one's roots. Thus, this article investigates how the *Kapampangans*, one of the major ethnic groups in the Philippines, imagine and preserve their culture and ethnic identities in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Five (5) *Kapampangan* participants were identified through the snowball technique. It was found that the Canadian government supports individuals in preserving their culture and identity through programs, activities, and communities. *Kapampangans* utilize their native language, provide *Kapampangan* cuisine, and revive the *Kapampangan* spirit through festivities and gatherings to maintain their ethnic identity. These individuals acknowledged that maintaining one's identity in a foreign country like Canada depends upon how strongly one wishes to uphold his culture and tradition. This study offers valuable insights for

Filipinos, *Kapampangans*, scholars, and other countries with an increasing number of such ethnic immigrants. This may also impart knowledge for migration studies and other related courses.

1.0. Introduction

Filipinos have a long history of immigration. Due to the extreme poverty and injustices they experience in their own country, they are driven to take risks to find employment overseas that will eventually support their family's needs. They consider this a way to give their family the good life they envision (San Juan, 2001). It is assumed that Filipino migration remains a considerable part of the Philippines's social and economic reality today. Related studies tracing the history of the Filipino Diaspora cited that former President Ferdinand E. Marcos was the prime mover of Filipino Overseas Employment and institutionalizing labor migration, which resulted in the development of government agencies that dealt with the concerns of Filipino Migrant Workers (Iwayama, 2021; San Juan, 2001). According to recent data from the Philippines Statistics Authority on Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW), there were 1.83 million Filipinos abroad. This record covered the period of April to September 2021 (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023). In 2012, there were 10.5 million OFWs (Refalda-Mercaida, 2017), and nearly half of the Filipinos overseas opted for permanent migration (Aguila, 2015).

Aside from Saudi Arabia, which is the top destination for OFWs, Canada is also one of the

destination countries for individuals because of the economic opportunities it offers (CanadaVisa, 2023). Interestingly, Filipinos were identified as third in the immigration category in Canada, with the most significant increase between 2016 and 2021 (Rodriguez, 2022). Assumingly, *Kapampangans* also took the risk of settling in this country with permanent migration in mind. Settling permanently in a chosen country may imply the gradual erasure or loss of ethnic cultures and traditions that can affect the national identity of an individual or to whichever ethnic groups they belong. Preserving cultural identity in a host society like Canada requires balancing the need to adapt and the desire to remain connected to one's roots (Sharapan, 2016). Focusing on Filipinos overseas, some individuals ensure to preserve their 'Filipino identity' and connect to their roots through their religious practices (Iwayama, 2021; Dupre, 2008); some recreate practices that are distinctive to the Philippines, which enhances the preservation of their social and cultural ties (Pacoma, 2020). Others maintain their identity through food (Tugano, 2021) and language-based communication (Tigno, 2008), while others establish small communities to achieve a sense of belonging (Parreás, 2001).

Some published articles attempted to explain and identify various ways Filipinos use to preserve their identity despite the host society's cultural influence. Realizing that most, if not all, of these local studies

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were about Filipino identities, it is high time to investigate the ethnic groups of the Philippines, like the *Kapampangans*, in preserving their identities in a foreign country.

This ethnic group has historically called the province of Pampanga their home. It used to occupy a broad expanse of land that stretched from Tondo to the remainder of Central Luzon. However, vast portions of the territory were removed to become the provinces of Bulacan, Bataan, Nueva Ecija, Aurora, and Tarlac (Alchetron, 2023). As a result, *Kapampangans* today inhabit a region that extends beyond the political boundaries of the small province of Pampanga. There are also large-scale migrations of *Kapampangans* to Mindoro, Palawan, and Mindanao. In Davao City and General Santos City, they have established powerful Aguman organizations. Agumans in the United States and Canada are working to revive the Kapampangan language and culture, raising money for humanitarian and cultural initiatives (Kapampangan People, 2023).

This paper's primary goal is to investigate how the *Kapampangans* imagine and continue to preserve their ethnic identities despite living in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, for anywhere from five to 20 years. The identified primary goal was divided into four subproblems: 1. Who are these *Kapampangans* in Winnipeg, Canada?; 2. How do these *Kapampangans* imagine being *Kapampangans*, Filipinos, and Canadians?; 3. What are their government-supported programs and activities that strengthen or create their multicultural identities? and 4. What are their initiatives that strengthen or create their Kapampangan identities? This study offers valuable insights for Filipinos, scholars, and other countries with increasing immigrants.

2.0. Framework of the Study

Canada contains indigenous populations, a substantial nationalist minority, and various ethnic groups that have emerged due to immigration (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010). That said, the federal government adopted the Multiculturalism Policy in 1971, which regarded Canada as a role model for a contemporary multicultural society aiming to end ethnic oppression (Demeterio III, 2009). That said, this study will be based on the multiculturalism theory of Will Kymlicka (2010), a Canadian political philosopher. According to this theory, ethnic groups have shared cultural symbols that are recognized as authentic traditions and should be upheld by their members to preserve their identity. This study also builds on the Imagined Community theory of Benedict Anderson, an Anglo-Irish political scientist and historian, since it considers how the Kapampangans see and imagine themselves as Kapampangans, Filipinos, and Canadians living in Canada. This theory emphasizes

that even in the smallest nation, citizens will never meet or know most of their fellow citizens, yet they all carry an image of their connection in their thoughts (Demeterio III, 2009; Anderson, 2006).

3.0. Methodology

Research design. This study employed a qualitative research approach that systematically described the information obtained from the *Kapampangans* on how they preserved their culture and ethnic identity.

Population and locale of the study. The participants in this present study were *Kapampangans* residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, for five to 20 years. The snowball sampling technique, often called chain/network sampling, was used to identify the participants since the researcher knew a limited number of participants for the study. This technique begins with one or more participants and continues based on referrals from participating individuals. This procedure is repeated until the saturation point or desired sample is reached (Nikolopoulou, 2023).

Data Gathering Tool. The interview guide questions were developed based on the four identified subproblems of this study, which were articulated in the introduction section. Prior to conducting the interview, experts reviewed the developed questions. Since the participants live in Winnipeg and the researchers are in the Philippines, the interview was conducted using online platforms such as Facebook Messenger and Zoom. The clips were utilized to record verbatim statements, which were later used to generate recurring ideas and served as the primary data source for the study.

Data Gathering Procedures. Following the first interview, the remaining participants were identified through the first participant's referral. Since the Philippines and Canada differ in time zones, it is undoubtedly difficult to arrange an interview with them; however, the researchers considered the participant's availability. It is assured that ethical practices were observed before conducting the study. Before the interview on Zoom and Facebook Messenger, the participants were asked if they voluntarily participated in the present study and were briefed about the study's background, purpose, and procedure. The researchers informed the participants that if they were uncomfortable with the questions, they could choose not to answer and drop the interview at any time. To protect the interests of the participants, the researcher will not refer to them by their real names; instead, they will be addressed as P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5.

Treatment of the Data. The gathered data were analyzed thematically. This method systematically breaks down and arranges rich data from qualitative

research by highlighting individual observations and quotations with suitable codes to aid in finding significant themes (Rosala, 2022). Additionally, this enables the researcher to derive new insights from the data gathered throughout the study (Iwayama, 2021). The processes of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were observed to generate the themes for discussion. The interview notes and transcripts were reread and reviewed to extract recurring ideas and eventually generate themes that were used to discuss the different ways that *Kapampangans* used to preserve their ethnic culture and identity.

4.0. Results and Discussion

This section presents and explains the research findings from key informant interviews. The question “How do the *Kapampangans* imagine and preserve their ethnic identity in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada?” will be addressed and separated into three sections. The first section discusses Filipino, Kapampangan, and Canadian identities in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, drawing on Anderson’s Imagined Community. It is believed that even when *Kapampangans* were away from their homes, they still managed to build a community where they eventually felt like they belonged with other *Kapampangans*. The second portion concerns the Canadian government and its assistance in strengthening or building their ethnic identity. It was found that some specific programs and activities support the *Kapampangans* and Filipinos in general. The concepts of Will Kymlicka about multiculturalism are expanded upon in this section. Lastly, the final part focuses on the *Kapampangans*’ initiatives, such as communication, cuisine, and leisure activities, to preserve their identity despite the need for Canadian governmental support.

The Filipino, Kapampangan, and Canadian identity in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

Knowing the background of the participants gave the researchers a glimpse of who these *Kapampangans* are in Winnipeg. It showed that the selected participants were originally from different municipalities in Pampanga: 1. Sta. Rita, 2. Guagua, and 3. Angeles. However, it does not mean all *Kapampangans* residing in Winnipeg specifically came from these areas. According to the participants, some also originate from other towns of Pampanga

like Macabebe, Apalit, and Sto. Tomas. To clearly see the participant’s profile, Table 1 summarizes the data as follows:

The data shows that these *Kapampangans* were once farmers, market vendors, technical support, assistant engineers, and teachers. Some were fortunate enough to maintain their line of work, like P2, P3, P4, and P5. However, in the case of P1, she was given a chance to widen her horizons and work in home care. Given these opportunities, these individuals decided to stay and permanently live in Winnipeg despite the challenges. These *Kapampangans* took a chance and lived the Filipino-Canadian dream, probably to escape the poverty and injustices they experienced in the Philippines (San Juan, 2001). The participants had different reasons for staying in Winnipeg; most mentioned that their sacrifices were for their children (Poserio & Avila, 2023). They wanted to give them the quality of life and the finest education they deserve to have a brighter future, which they could not have if they had stayed in the Philippines.

After spending considerable time in Winnipeg and observing the significant differences between this place and the country of their origin, they would choose to stay permanently rather than go back home to the Philippines. Since they have developed and established their way of life in their host country, they cannot leave and begin again. They have invested in establishing their lives in a foreign country (Agbayani et al., 2023), which, in return, can give them the life they envisioned (San Juan, 2001). This supports Parreñas’s (2001) claim that individuals fear returning to their country of origin because of the idea of returning to the situation they hoped to escape. Furthermore, return migration may not be the best option for everyone because the home country may trigger negative memories (Pacoma, 2020; San Juan, 2001).

Considering their extended stay in Winnipeg and thinking about their identity, the participants firmly stated that their identity is still Kapampangan and nothing has changed except where they live. Perhaps this demonstrates how difficult it is to forget and abandon where you came from. Even though they are Canadian citizens, they retain their Kapampangan identity and did not abandon their country of origin. Perhaps this is also related to the practice of Filipino regionalism. According to Demeterio III (2009), even before a Filipino thinks of himself as a Filipino, he

Table 1
Profile of the Participants

Participant	Place of Origin in Pampanga	Years settled in Canada	Occupation while in Pampanga	Current Occupation in Canada
P1	San Basilio, Sta. Rita	16 years	Farmer; Market Vendor	Home Care
P2	Betis, Guagua	7 years	Technical Support Assistant	Cyber Security
P3	Pulung Masle, Guagua	18 years	Engineer	Consultant Engineer
P4	Angeles City	13 years	Teacher	Teacher
P5	San Nicholas, Guagua	10 years	Teacher	Daycare Teacher

first considers himself an individual from the region of his origin. It can often be observed in large cities where Filipinos from different regions meet.

Based on the theory of imagined community, the identity of an individual remains in his heart and mind, as well as in his personality. Because they still consider themselves *Kapampangans*, when they met in an unfamiliar place like Winnipeg, they were immediately connected to their fellow *Kapampangans* and eventually formed a connection, resulting in the development of small Kapampangan communities that serve as a link in preserving their tradition and culture. These communities, as Parreñas (2001) said, reinforce the similarities in individuals' lives.

The Canadian Government, its programs, and activities related to culture and identity

Canada contains indigenous populations, a substantial nationalist minority, and various ethnic groups that have emerged due to immigration (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010). The federal government adopted the Multiculturalism Policy in 1971, which regarded Canada as a role model for a contemporary multicultural society aiming to end ethnic oppression (Demeterio III, 2009). They support every race concerning their nation, culture, and tradition. Today, one of the distinguishing characteristics of Canadian society is its diversified community. The government encourages Canadians to take pride in their language, religion, and heritage and maintain their customs and traditions so long as they do not violate Canadian laws (Association for New Canadians, 2023). It is high time to investigate if this policy serves the citizens who immigrated to Canada like those of the *Kapampangans*.

One of the supported organizations of the Canadian Government is the Philippine Canadian Centre of Manitoba (PCCM). This organization has worked to educate, preserve, and keep the culture alive since the 1990's. It started as an impromptu committee for the Philippine Association of Manitoba, became a duly registered corporation with charitable status, and managed to fundraise to open the PCCM facility in 2004 (Folklorama, 2023). Now, it provides a venue where Filipinos can organize their events in line with culture and identity preservation. Filipinos lead the so-called Filipino Community, and the PCCM is their pillar. This Filipino group oversees programs or initiatives to preserve and promote Filipino culture and tradition.

We have Folklorama here. Every August, we celebrate different cultures from different countries. We gather to showcase our own culture, even our own food. (Participant 3, Personal, Communication, July 12, 2023)

Aside from this, the community claimed to have established the use of technology through a social media account named Filipino Forum and 204 Marketplace. These accounts provide assistance and direction to new immigrants in their community.

There is the Filipino Forum and 204 Marketplace. This is where the newbies in Winnipeg post. When you start here, of course, you do not have any tools yet. So, what they will do is post it there, and whoever has it will give it to them. When we started here, our things were completed because of what others gave us. After that, when we were making money, of course we are the ones helping now (Participant 3, Personal, Communication, July 12, 2023)

With the help of these online platforms, the individuals were allowed to be themselves and connect with their fellow *Kapampangans*. This became a space where they could sense belongingness, document their diasporic journey, and share their experiences (Pacoma, 2020). This also contributes to a long Filipino tradition of giving and volunteering, which stems from the bayanihan spirit of collective action for the benefit of all members of the community (Silva, 2006). In addition, these online groups not only facilitate interactions and establish social environments but also recognize cultural identities (Giger, 2010). The Filipino Journal Winnipeg is also a platform on Facebook to present its accomplishments and the effectiveness of community projects. This journal allows people to learn about how individuals celebrate their culture during Filipino Heritage Month, which takes place in June. This event is important for recognizing the solid Filipino community and its priceless national contributions by appreciating Filipino culture, understanding, and encouraging inclusion. In this event, Filipinos can celebrate the diversity and depth of their Filipino heritage while also working to make their host society more welcoming and inclusive through various festivities, activities, and involvement (Parashar, 2023).

Another initiative from the government is the naming of streets related to the Philippines. This may help individuals remember what they have left in their country and bring back memories of living with their families. It is like building a new home with Filipinos in a foreign country.

Some streets in Winnipeg were named after the Philippines to remind us of our culture (Manila, Dr. Jose Rizal). At some point, when you see these signs, you will be reminded that you are a Filipino, a Kapampangan. (Participant 3, Personal, Communication, July 12, 2023)

As most people often say, it is hard to let go of things we are familiar with. So, we can assume that these programs mentioned above and activities initiated by the Canadian Government were of great help in preserving and maintaining the culture and ethnic identity of *Kapampangans* in Winnipeg. With these, they can still feel the value of being Kapampangan and/or Filipino.

The Kapampangan initiatives in Strengthening and Creating their Identities in Winnipeg, MB, Canada

Maintaining one’s culture and identity in a foreign country is essential for all individuals. This idea inspires people to practice preserving whatever they are accustomed to in their place of origin to feel like a home away from home.

Preservation of culture and identity through communication. The *Kapampangans* in Winnipeg use their native language when communicating with their family at home and with their fellow *Kapampangans*. According to Tigno (2008), the use of Tagalog (or any of the eight official languages of the Philippines, as well as other spoken languages) to communicate concepts and ideas is an expression of Filipino identity. In the case of the participants, they express their ethnic identity every time they use the Kapampangan language.

I speak Kapampangan. When I speak, I still have a high pitch. Knowing the Kapampangan, it is like they are always angry. Sometimes when I say something to the one I care for, he just answers, “I’m only saying,” because he thinks I’m angry (Participant 1, personal communication, July 7, 2023).

[They] encourage individuals to use their mother tongue at home (Participant 3, Personal, Communication, July 12, 2023).

We still use the Kapampangan language. Even when you go outside, you can hear some *Kapampangans* using the language because the Kapampangan community here is really big; it is just that you have not seen/met all of them. (Participant 3, Personal, Communication, July 12, 2023).

Paying attention to the statements, even the manner of speaking has carried over to Winnipeg. They still have this loud speaking voice, which is sometimes misunderstood as if they are angry at

someone or fighting over something. When gathered, *Kapampangans* seem to appreciate hearing the sounds of their voices and language. They cherish it like a kid cherishes his mother, referring to it as *amanung sisuan* (“suckled word”). They would talk like long-lost friends when they came across someone speaking Kapampangan in a busy area and try to find some social ties to prove they were related (Tantingco, 2015). However, not everyone keeps up with the use of the language in another country.

To tell you honestly, my Kapampangan speaking has slowly shrunk. My wife is Tagalog; she is not Kapampangan. But observing outside, they speak Kapampangan. Many people here still speak Kapampangan (Participant 2, personal communication, July 9, 2023).

If some people are driven to keep their language, others, like P2, can no longer use it mainly because it is not what they grew up with; thus, they progressively lose it. When asked about the status of the Kapampangan language outside their home, he confirmed that individuals still use the Kapampangan language in their area. It was just a coincidence that, in P2’s case, he was not used to using it when communicating. Looking back at the participants’ perspectives, we can see how crucial language is to sustain an ethnic group’s culture and identity. In addition, as part of the Multiculturalism Policy of Canada, students were encouraged to use their mother tongue to preserve their language. One participant said,

When we started here, my son’s teachers said that we should use our native language at home to preserve it. Of course, they hear English outside, so we should really only use Kapampangan inside the house. We followed what they said, so until now, the Kapampangan language is still alive here (Participant 5, personal communication, July 4, 2023, & July 17, 2023).

The recorded responses revealed two distinct types of experiences with noticeable consequences. If the native language is no longer used, it will gradually be forgotten and eventually die without anyone knowing. When this happens, even the culture can be buried and wholly forgotten, resulting in losing the identity that should have been preserved. This supports the statement of Rita Mae Brown that “language is the roadmap of culture.” On the other hand, if used continuously, it will be strengthened, developed, preserved, and eventually passed onto future

generations. Preserving the indigenous language is one of the aspirations of language advocates in the Philippines. Interestingly, some individuals also do this in a foreign country like Canada.

Preservation of culture and identity through cuisine. While other regions are noted for their specific cuisines, Kapampangan people offer delicious dishes ranging from colonial to folk to exotic foods. This can be attributed to the influences of the Spaniards' way of cooking, the abundant crops on their land, and the crises they encountered during colonization (Tantingco, 2015).

Kapampangan food is also one way of preserving our culture. You will see that some restaurants offer Kapampangan foods like *biringhe*, *sisig*, *buro*, *gotong kapampangan*, and street food. Surprisingly, many people eat at these restaurants. It really feels like you are in Pampanga because you can hear them while you eat. It really feels like Kapampangan (Participant 2, personal communication, July 9, 2023).

"I still cook dishes that we are used to: *Adobo*, *Sinigang*, *Nilaga*, *Kaldereta*, *Menudo*, *Bistig Kapampangan*, *Pakbet*, *Paksiw* (Participant 5, personal communication, July 4, 2023, & July 17, 2023).

It is not surprising that *Kapampangans* are meticulous in their cooking. Based on the participants, a significant number of *Kapampangans* residing in Winnipeg continue to preserve their culture and identity through their way of cooking. There are restaurants in their plaza or park that serve Kapampangan cuisine. They also cook Kapampangan dishes at home without hesitation because they are confident that the ingredients required to prepare Kapampangan meals are also available in markets or grocery stores. Food in the privacy of your home may have the power to confirm the familiar, reinforce belonging, and strengthen ties to a distant place or past when "home" is far away and daily life is full of accommodating people who do not understand your language, appreciate your culture, or support your values (D'Sylva & Beagan, 2011).

During the interview, P1 even displayed all the dishes and groceries her son had purchased at the supermarket. Her delight in the fact that they have always loved and yearned for Kapampangan food is evident here. Even her son, who has exceptional taste, buys hopia, sweet potatoes, bananas (señoritas), and sing-a-ling whenever he purchases goods. She even said that nothing appears to have altered their way of

life due to these foods. When given some thought, a particular taste can help someone uncover their roots and bring back the memories associated with the food. It is supported by D'Sylva and Beagan's (2011) findings that eating became part of remembering the past and acknowledging individuals' heritage. When food is highly valued for its cultural significance, the skills required to prepare it may become more valuable resources. In addition, food can also be a marker of group belonging.

Assumingly, separating a person's personality from their relationship to food is impossible. If it is true that "a way to a man's heart is through his stomach" when it comes to a romantic relationship, then perhaps it is also true that "a way to preserve culture and identity is through one's cuisine" when it comes to those living overseas.

Preservation of culture and identity through leisure activities. The *Kapampangans* have this attitude of valuing their achievements, even their simplest accomplishments. They realize that getting together with their close friends or loved ones is the best way to celebrate milestones and relieve exhaustion. The Cabalens in Winnipeg do the same and frequently plan modest events where they can unwind from their duties.

When we go together as *Kapampangans*, the experiences you had when you were in the Philippines and when we were still together cannot be removed. Then, when you meet here, the stories that still connect us cannot be forgotten. And that is one thing that preserves the Kapampangan culture and identity. We make it a point to pass it (the stories) on to the children so they know our history (Participant 4, personal communication, July 17, 2023).

Their reunion also serves as a time machine for the memories they shared from Pampanga until they began their new life in Winnipeg. All the difficult times that gave them the stability to get where they are in life now and the numerous challenges they faced on their journey to Canada will never be forgotten. Their pleasant experiences in Pampanga with their families gave them the drive to strive and achieve their goals. Naturally, they will continue to tell tales about the foolish things they did when they were younger.

We usually transmit to our children the values that our parents gave us. Like the kissing of hands, the po and opo. Even our habit of calling "bapa" or "dara" even if you are not blood-related (Participant 4, personal communication, July 17, 2023).

This enjoyment likely inspired them to plan yearly events like their annual picnic in August and their celebration of Christmas through a party with a Kapampangan theme to preserve and share their amusing and incredibly uplifting stories from which they can draw strength. The young generations must learn about these hardships that the elders overcame so they may realize the importance of their success right now. These intergenerational stories transmit the eagerness of the individuals to preserve their own culture and identity because they eventually realize the value of their origin.

Through these gatherings, the young individuals learn about the various traditions that the senior members of their group practice. The way they address their elders is the most basic but essential tradition they still practice today. Because *Kapampangans* are known for being friendly and approachable (Tantingco, 2015), it is noticeable that even if they have no familial connection, they will still call older men and women “bapa” and “dara” out of respect. It is common in Pampanga; therefore, those who reside in Winnipeg still use it, although it is customary to refer to acquaintances by their first names.

Other celebrations with a religious connection are being reintroduced due to these small Kapampangan communities. Pampanga was one of the first provinces the Spanish conquerors founded in 1571; thus, it is not surprising that they significantly influenced the *Kapampangans*, particularly concerning their Catholic faith. Religion is regarded as a fundamental and dominant social institution with a significant impact on people because it is the foundation for their value systems (Iwayama, 2021). Commemorating their patron saint’s festivals may be one of the ethnic group’s customs.

I am the organizer this year, so what I did was, except for our annual celebration of the festivals of San Tiago Apostol and Apung Dita, I also organized the sagala (Flores de Mayo) this year. It was the first time we did this, and you can really see that they enjoyed it. Isn’t there something like that there, too? Even if it is not just Kapampangan, it still contributes a lot to the preservation of Kapampangan culture and tradition here because you feel like you are still in Pampanga even though you are so far away (Participant 5, personal, communication, July 4, 2023, July 17, 2023).

The house of the *Kapampangans* here has statues of patron saints. They celebrate the fiesta of these saints (Participant 4, personal communication, July 17, 2023).

Kapampangans in Winnipeg have continued to observe the celebration of fiestas, and they do so every year. The only thing that is proven in P5’s response is that the former *Kapampangans* who lived there took some action to preserve their ethnic identity. Today, the organization’s current leaders are taking additional steps to maintain Kapampangan culture and tradition. This initiative has been seen as a substantial endeavor to restore what has been lost, uphold the present, and further strengthen the interests for the future to make a Cabalen feel like a Kapampangan once again in Winnipeg, a foreign place to all of them.

5.0. Conclusion

It is acknowledged by the participants that maintaining one’s identity in a foreign country like Canada depends on how strongly one wishes to uphold one’s culture and tradition. Canada’s multiculturalism policy has been successful because it values the unique identities of immigrants and leads to a peaceful and inclusive society. Numerous races in the area receive strong support to uphold their cultures and traditions. In the case of Filipinos, a sizable population ensures that their identity is preserved; this group is referred to as the Filipino Community. However, because the Philippines is also considered a multicultural country, people might form minor ethnic groups based on their ethnic origin, such as the *Kapampangans*.

The Winnipeg Kapampangan, a notable Kapampangan group, was created due to the efforts of individuals who advocated for preserving their identity in a foreign country. These people’s efforts allowed them to keep and stabilize their identities, which may be seen in various ways. It has been demonstrated that one way to preserve culture is through one’s language, proving that language and culture are inseparably connected. The investigation also found that *Kapampangans’* culinary technique mirrors their Kapampangan way of life. We may also observe the religiosity of the Filipinos, particularly the *Kapampangans*, which may have resulted from the Spanish conquistadors’ long-term colonization of Pampanga. Because of this, it has been shown that even when people move to another country, they still celebrate festivals with their patron saints and continue to have faith in them and trust the protection they provide.

The Kapampangan ways of preserving their culture and ethnic identity through the community they established significantly impacted their lives in Winnipeg. As Tiamzon (2013) argued, the ethnic community of Filipino immigrants has a big impact on their lives. The formation of these communities with individuals from the same racial or cultural background results from a desire to create family-like relationships in times of family dispersion or

isolation. Language, religion, and various cultural practices (San Juan, 2001) that individuals use are deeply rooted in their society or cultural group, which can contribute to preserving an individual's identity.

In the end, despite the various cultures that individuals may encounter overseas, some people try to uphold their traditional culture and still prefer to identify with their ethnic group. Individuals act this way because they long for their home country, and as they say, "An individual only searches for something when he can no longer see or feel it." Our races are becoming more widely recognized overseas thanks to the efforts of some OFWs who preserved their identity. We must remember that traditional culture will disappear if not preserved.

5.0. Limitations of the Findings

The study notes a few shortcomings that can be investigated further. Researchers interested in diaspora may explore more of the different communities involved in preserving and maintaining an individual's culture and ethnic identity. In this sense, they may find more programs, activities, or even advocacies that can help strengthen the culture and ethnic identity of Filipinos. This may serve as a benchmark for those individuals who desire to develop a small community for their ethnic group. Looking at our fellow citizens in other countries does not end with a glimpse of Canada; this is just the beginning. Still, it is essential to consider how other ethnic groups live overseas and maintain their culture to strengthen their identity.

6.0. Practical Value of the Paper

This study offers valuable insights for local advocates of Kapampangan culture to strengthen their advocacies in preserving their identities as *Kapampangans* and to enlighten the youngsters of today's generation on how their culture is significant to their lives. Also, this study can help Filipino scholars with an interest in diaspora. This may also contribute to helping other countries with an increasing number of immigrants get a glimpse of how other individuals cope with the culture of their host country and, at the same time, preserve their own identity.

7.0. Directions for Future Research

To determine whether there are any differences in the initiatives of the *Kapampangans* in preserving their culture and identity, future researchers can also think about conducting more interviews in different provinces and cities of Canada to compare their programs and activities.

8.0. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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