
The Chanchannag and the Preservation and Promotion of Kalinga Lifeways

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Abstract:

Chants are universal expressions of the complexity of the artistic life of a people. That chanter, almost always, plays a role in keeping the community together. In some instances, the chanter is also a healer. In the case of the Kalinga, the chanter chants because their heart is full, their spirit rejoicing. If the chanting is filled with grief, that chant could be purging, offering relief and healing however transient the healing is. Among the Kalingas, the chanchannag is a vital part of Kalinga's cultural and spiritual heritage. An ethnographic account of the chanchannag not only makes us enter into the "chanted world" of the Kalingas but invites us to reside in that world. While the chant was robust in the past, today it is hardly performed, the chanting hardly done unless it is part of a bigger cultural performance. That spontaneity has been lost, and gradually, if the chanting tradition is not recorded, this could be lost forever. Following a variety of ethnographic approaches, this presentation maps the decline of this chants and proposes ways to have them preserved for the future generations of Kalingas.

Keywords: Modernization and Urbanization, Changing Societal Values

Introduction

Most societies have their own distinct rituals and practices which make them unique. As way of life of the people are best expressed in many ways. These beliefs and practices that were handed down from generation to generation are better remembered if written and recorded.

When it comes to traditions, the people of Kalinga have deep respect for their roots that it even affects their political system and core values to these days. Perhaps one of the most remarkable up to these is their traditional way of honoring the dead.

To pay tribute to the deceased Chanchannag is practiced. Chanchannag is a mourning chant that is usually performed in honor of a deceased person. It is characterized by the narration of the life of that person. It is usually accorded to those who belong to the upper socio-economic class and those who have grandchildren. Over time, it has been modified, thus having varieties. It is usually a way of expressing grief and comfort.

Kalinga people continue to actively preserve their culture despite changes taking place in society. according to researchers a culture that is not used spontaneously disappears. Chanchannag is one of the Kalinga cultures that is in danger of disappearing. We need to preserve it because it is something that strengthens our identity as Kalinga.

It is through literature, specifically oral and written folklore, that people express the inner quality and strength of their culture. It may be expressed in the form of songs, legends, myths, riddles, and dances. These aspects of culture are handed down from generation to generation by word of mouth.

Conceptual Framework

The Chanchannag chant is a vital part of the Kalinga cultural heritage. It is a complex oral tradition with historical and sociocultural significance. The Kalinga identity is a multifaceted construct rooted in history, traditions, and community bonds. It is the collective identity of the Kalinga people, encompassing their values, beliefs, and practices.

External and internal factors have contributed to the decline of the Chanchannag chant. External factors may include modernization, globalization, and cultural diffusion. Internal factors may encompass changes in societal values and generational shifts.

The study aims to address the decline factors and promote a renewed sense of cultural pride and identity among the Kalinga people by documenting the chant's history and significance and developing strategies to preserve and revive it.

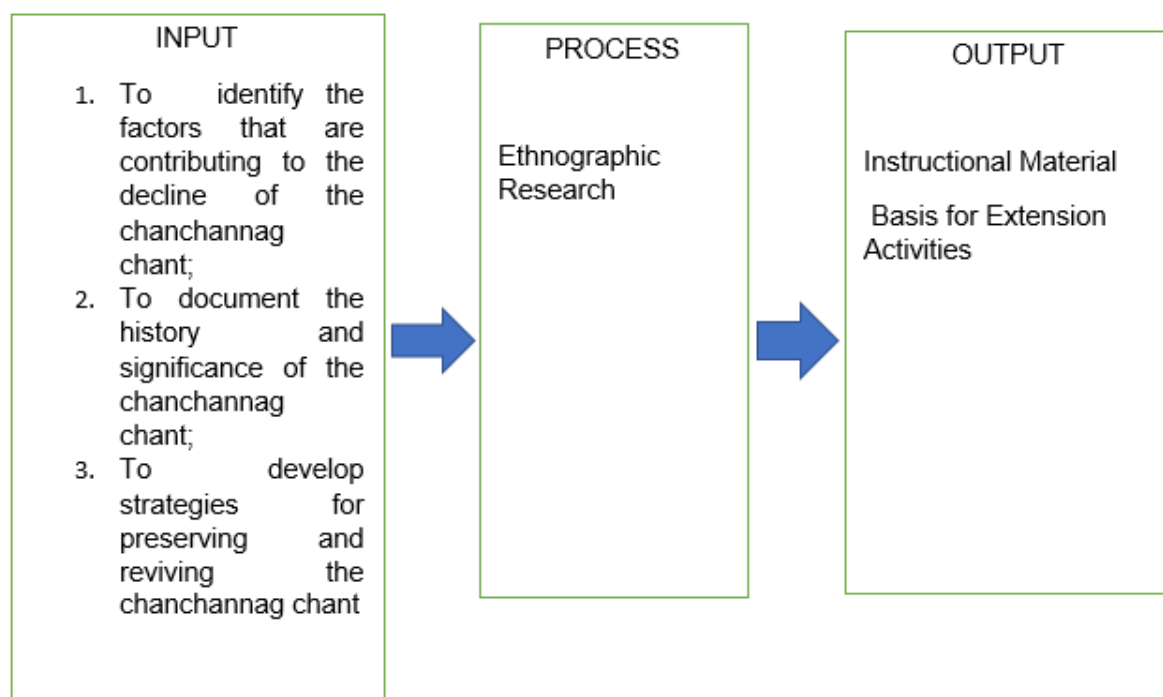
The conceptual framework of the study outlines the key elements and relationships that underpin the study. The Chanchannag chant is a cultural artifact that embodies the essence of Kalinga identity. The Kalinga identity is a multifaceted construct rooted in history, traditions, and community bonds. External factors may include modernization, globalization, and cultural diffusion. Internal factors may encompass changes in societal values and generational shifts.

Documentation involves the systematic collection of historical data and oral narratives related to the Chanchannag chant. Preservation strategies encompass efforts to safeguard the Chanchannag chant, such as archiving recordings and transcripts. Revival strategies involve initiatives to reintroduce the chant to younger generations, ensuring its continuity.

The relationships between these elements are as follows:

The decline factors (both external and internal) influence the current state of the Chanchannag chant within the Kalinga community. Documentation of the chant's history and significance (Objective b) is essential to understanding its role in shaping the Kalinga identity. Preservation and revival strategies (Objective c) are informed by the documentation, aimed at ensuring the chant's continued relevance and transmission. The outcomes of the study are to promote a renewed sense of cultural pride and identity among the Kalinga people by producing an instructional material. Contribute to the revitalization of the Chanchannag chant as an integral part of Kalinga cultural identity.

This conceptual framework establishes the interplay between the Chanchannag chant, the Kalinga identity, decline factors, documentation, and preservation/revival strategies. It forms the foundation for the research study, guiding the exploration of factors contributing to the chant's decline and the development of strategies to preserve and revive this significant cultural heritage.



Statement of the Objectives

The main objective of this research is to safeguard and promote the Chanchannag chant as a vibrant and enduring cultural heritage. Specifically, it sought to investigate the following:

- a. To identify the factors that are contributing to the decline of the Chanchannag chant;
- b. To document the history and significance of the Chanchannag chant;
- c. To develop strategies for preserving and reviving the Chanchannag chant

Significance of the Study

The study the Chanchannag Chant and the Kalinga Identity is significant for several reasons:

Cultural Preservation: The traditional chant of Kalinga is an important part of their cultural heritage and the practice of it is at risk of being lost due to modernization and changes taking place in the community. Studying the factors that are contributing to the decline of the chanchannag chant can shed light on the cultural significance of chanchannag and its preservation.

Identity expression: Kalinga chant like the chanchannag plays a vital role in the identity of being an Ikalanga. This depicts our unique way of mourning and honoring our dead relatives.

Tourism and Commercialization : Kalinga is known for its rich and diverse cultural heritage including traditional music that is both unique and captivating to tourists. Kalinga chant has become increasingly popular among tourists. This can provide a good impact to the tourism and commercialization on the cultural integrity and authenticity of the practice.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focuses mainly on the Chanchannag chant sang by the Ykalingas specifically the two municipalities of upper Kalinga.

Review Of Related Literature

This portion of the research presents some studies and literature which are found to be relevant to the present study.

While in process of collecting and reviewing the related literature, the researcher came across some studies which she found to be relevant to the current research.

Oral traditions are in danger due to the accelerated urbanization and modernization, just like other types of intangible cultural heritage. Traditional speech expression may be significantly changed or replaced by contemporary mass media. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/oral-traditions-and-expressions-00053>

In order to examine the Yakan people's perspective on how their cultural heritage is treasured, passed down, and maintained despite the difficulties they encounter, Pacio (2023) did a study on their oral tradition. In the light of his findings, he identified several challenges to the preservation of Yakan oral tradition, which include language shift, modernization, and a lack of institutional support.

The researcher in this study also recommended that initiatives to maintain and revive Yakan oral tradition should prioritize encouraging intergenerational transmission, supporting language revitalization initiatives, and fostering institutional recognition and support for oral tradition.

The study also emphasized the need for oral tradition to be sustained in order to save the Philippines' intangible cultural legacy both inside and outside the country, as well as the significance of oral tradition for community continuity and the development of unity and peace.

The aforementioned study shares some similarities with the current study, notably with regard to their shared desire to protect oral tradition for use by future generations, but they also have notable differences. The current study is concerned with the chant for the sick and deceased elders, the circumstances that led to their demise, the history and significance of the chanchannag chant, and the methods for preserving and reviving it.

A study on Higaonon Oral Literature: A Cultural Heritage was done in 2016 by Saranza. He stated in this study that Higaonons use art as a form of expression for their emotions and views. In their songs, prayers, verbal sparring, and folklore, which represented the values and issues of their community, they expressed these emotions and experiences.

The Kaamulan Festival is the only way that the informants mention for the preservation and transfer of Higaonon oral literature, according to his research. This festival is a celebration that can be held at any time of the year to honor a successful harvest, a milestone achievement, a nuptial, a baptism, or a family reunion.

The study that was conducted also suggested that their tales be written down and preserved so that future generations wouldn't forget them. The older generation was afraid that as other cultures arose and threatened to contaminate their oral heritage, their children and their children's children might no longer value their culture and might lose their identity.

This study's findings on fear are fairly consistent with recent research. According to the most recent studies, it is very likely that the oral tradition and the Kalinga identity as a whole would disappear if nothing is done to pass it on to the next generation.

In the study of Turin, et al. (2012), for societies in which traditions are conveyed more through speech than through writing, oral literature has long been the mode of communication for spreading ideas, knowledge, and history.

In their findings, oral literatures which chant included are in decline because of cultural focus on literacy, combined with the disappearance of minority languages.

There is still no consensus on how collections of oral literature should be ethically handled, archived, and curated for future use, according to the analysis of the data amassed by the researchers.

Based on their findings, the researchers also suggested that oral literature audio and video recordings be archived online as a method of cultural preservation that has been warmly embraced by indigenous people all over the world.

According to Dulay's (2015) research on The Ifugao Hudhud: Its People's Knowledge of It, only Hudhud was known by the respondents among the other chants. A possible explanation for this is that not all Ifugao people can sponsor the Alim and Baltung, which are regarded as ritual chants and are performed as part of a ceremony in the performances of a prestige rite that can only be done by the Kadangyans (rich people), as most of the other chants are not chanted in Ifugao. Dulawan [1] claims that the Alim chant is exceedingly challenging to follow due to its unusual verbalization and challenging chanting style. On the other side, Ap-apnga and Liwliwa are rarely shouted during significant events.

She made the following recommendations based on her findings: (I) publications, advertisements, the availability of more resources, and the strengthening of other cultural traditions, particularly the Hudhud. (II) During wakes, bogwa, or exhumations as well as during rice terrace harvest, actual hudhud performances should be strongly pushed. The intentional inclusion of Hudhud and other ethnic music in the curriculum. It should be taught as a distinct subject where students can learn about all facets of Ifugao culture.

(III) More trainings, seminars, participation in cultural festivals, and competitions (chanting, essay, poster making, and others) on Hudhud should be held by the Provincial and Municipal Government of Ifugao, the Department of Education, Ifugao State University, and other organizations in the Province of Ifugao. The Hudhud should be carefully translated into English and recorded. Additionally, this serves to promote the Ifugao people's world historic sites.

(IV) More research on Hudhud should be done, including studies on its value for cultural advancement and the efficiency of government initiatives to promote it.

Definition Of Terms

The following terms are defined to give the readers a clearer understanding of the study in accordance with how they will be used in the study.

Chanchannag This term refers to the chant sang by the Ykalingas when an old man or woman is sick or deceased. This is also called Dandannag in other tribes of Kalinga.

Kalingas This term is used to describe the inhabitants residing in the northern part of the Cordillera region.

Instructional Materials: These encompass all resources created and designed for student and teacher use to facilitate learning, helping students acquire knowledge, skills, or ideas and develop intellectual processes.

Oral traditions These encompass the beliefs, viewpoints, and practices that are transmitted from one generation to another through spoken communication or word of mouth.

Tradition This term denotes the beliefs, viewpoints, and practices observed by the Kalingas.

Methodology

This section presents the research design, locale of the study, respondents of the study, the instrumentation, data gathering procedure that was employed in this study.

Research Design

The research employed an ethnographic qualitative research approach to conduct the study.

Locale of the Study

This study was conducted in the two municipalities of Upper Kalinga.

Respondents of the Study

The study involved the participation of elders and representatives from various sub-tribes of Kalinga, who possess in-depth knowledge of their respective oral traditions.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilized an interview guide to collect the necessary data for the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

In this study, data collection involved participant observations and interviews, conducted with prior consent obtained from tribal elders and leaders.

Data Analysis

The researcher employed documentary analysis to examine the respondents' responses. Additionally, transcription and translation from the native dialect to English were carried out as part of the process.

Results And Discussion

This chapter presents the various insights gathered from interviews with elders within Kalinga.

Through their perspectives and experiences, several key factors influencing the decline of the chant were explained:

Modernization and Urbanization

Elders pointed out that the rapid pace of modernization and urbanization has led to a shift in lifestyle and cultural preferences among younger generations. Traditional practices like the Chanchannag chant may be perceived as outdated or less relevant in contemporary society, contributing to its decline.

The elders' observations align with Pacio's (2023) study on the Yakan people's oral tradition. Both highlight the impact of modernization and changing cultural preferences on traditional practices. Elders noted that rapid modernization and urbanization have shifted lifestyles and cultural preferences among younger generations, causing traditional practices like the Chanchannag chant to seem outdated and less relevant. Similarly, Pacio identified modernization, along with language shifts and insufficient institutional support, as significant challenges to preserving Yakan oral traditions. Both sources underscore how contemporary societal changes contribute to the decline of traditional cultural practices.

Changing Societal Values

The changing values and priorities within Kalinga society were also identified as contributing factors. With increasing exposure to external influences and alternative forms of entertainment, there has been a gradual destruction of interest and engagement in traditional cultural practices, including the Chanchannag chant.

Inter-generational Knowledge Transfer

Elders highlighted challenges in effectively transmitting knowledge and skills related to the Chanchannag chant to younger generations. As oral traditions give way to modern forms of communication, there is a risk of essential cultural practices being lost or diluted over time.

The elders' observations about the challenges of passing down the Chanchannag chant to younger generations resonate with broader research on preserving oral traditions among indigenous communities. According to Turin et al. (2012), there's a worrying decline in oral literatures, including chants, mainly due to a cultural shift towards literacy and the fading of minority languages. This aligns closely with the elders' concerns, suggesting a common vulnerability of oral traditions in the face of modernization. Dulay's (2015) study further illustrates this issue by highlighting the limited awareness of traditional chants among the youth, indicating a struggle in transferring cultural knowledge. The suggestion to archive oral literature digitally suggest with the need for innovative preservation methods for the Chanchannag chant. Collectively, these studies emphasize the pressing need for actions like archiving efforts, educational initiatives, and community backing to ensure the longevity of cherished cultural practices such as the Chanchannag chant for future generations.

Lack of Formal Preservation Efforts:

Another contributing factor identified was the absence of formalized efforts to preserve and promote the Chanchannag chant. Without adequate documentation, educational initiatives, or institutional support, there is a risk of cultural heritage being overlooked or forgotten.

The absence of formalized efforts to document, educate about, and support the Chanchannag chant poses a significant risk to its preservation. This aligns with the concerns raised in recent studies, indicating a broader trend of neglect towards oral traditions like the Chanchannag chant. Turin et al. (2012) highlights the decline of oral literatures, including chants, due to a cultural emphasis on literacy and the dwindling of minority languages. This lack of attention to oral traditions exacerbates the risk of cultural heritage being overlooked or forgotten.

Furthermore, the absence of a consensus on how to ethically handle and archive collections of oral literature compounds the issue. The suggestion to archive oral literature digitally, as proposed by researchers, underscores the need for innovative preservation methods to ensure the longevity of cultural practices such as the Chanchannag chant.

Their narratives and insights offer a deeper understanding of the following elements related to the history and importance of the chant:

Historical Origins:

The elders recounted the beginnings of the Chanchannag chant, tracing its roots back to ancient traditions and cultural practices within the Kalinga community. Their stories provided a detailed narrative of how the chant evolved over time, reflecting changes in societal dynamics, religious beliefs, and cultural interactions. The historical origins of the chant reveal its deep cultural significance and the community's adaptability to changing circumstances. It showcases how the chant has served as a link to the past, embodying the essence of Kalinga heritage through its evolution.

The Chanchannag, a deeply rooted tradition among the Kalinga people, is an essential part of their cultural and spiritual heritage. Tied closely to the ritual of Fakungon, this ancient practice emphasizes the significance of honoring the deceased through song and narrative:

Fakungon: The Vigil for the Dead

When an elder passes away, their community observes the Fakungon, a three-day and three-night vigil for the deceased. The burial takes place on the third day. During these three successive nights, elderly men and women dedicate themselves to singing the Chanchannag.

The Chanchannag: A Eulogy in Song

The Chanchannag is a chanting and narration that celebrates the life of the departed. It can take the form of poetic songs or Ullalim tunes that recount the deceased's past life. These eulogical expressions serve as a tribute to the dead.

Singing as an Ancient Custom

Singing at the bedside or gravesite of the deceased is an enduring tradition among the Ifugao people. Through these songs, they express their grief over the loss of a loved one. This practice demonstrates the Ifugao's sentimentality and their strong belief in God.

The Purpose of the Chanchannag

When an elder, especially those who have reached the milestone of having great-grandchildren, passes away due to old age or illness, the deceased must be accompanied by the Chanchannag during the wake period. The purpose of this song is for the people or relatives to extol the virtues and good deeds of the deceased elder.

Values Embodied in the Chanchannag

Family solidarity, honor, and concern are the values that are reinforced through the singing of the Chanchannag. This song is typically performed by a group of at least six to seven men and women, creating a harmonious blend of voices.

The Chanchannag serves as a poignant expression of the people's reverence for their elders and their commitment to preserving the memory of those who have shaped their community. Through this ritual song, the Ifugao people find solace in celebrating the lives of their departed loved ones and reaffirming the bonds that hold their society together.

Cultural Significance:

Discussions with elders emphasized the profound cultural importance of the Chanchannag chant within the Kalinga community. It was depicted as more than just a musical performance; it held sacred significance, symbolizing communal unity and invoking ancestral connections. The portrayal of the chant as a culturally significant practice highlights its role in preserving and perpetuating Kalinga identity. It underscores how the chant serves as a vehicle for cultural expression, strengthening social bonds and fostering a sense of belonging among community members.

Evolution and Adaptation:

The research documented the evolution of the Chanchannag chant over generations, showcasing its resilience in the face of changing circumstances and external influences. Elders provided insights into how the chant has been adapted and reinterpreted over time, reflecting shifts in cultural norms and artistic expressions. The evolution of the chant illustrates the community's ability to adapt to changing contexts while maintaining cultural continuity. It demonstrates how the chant has remained relevant by embracing innovation while preserving its core essence.

Transmission and Preservation:

Through oral traditions, training models, and community rituals, knowledge of the chant is passed down from one generation to the next, ensuring its continuity and vitality. The transmission and preservation of the chant highlight the community's commitment to safeguarding its cultural heritage. It showcases the importance of intergenerational exchange and collaboration in maintaining cultural continuity.

The elders' accounts of the historical origins of the Chanchannag chant align with broader research on oral literature within indigenous communities, particularly the Higaonon people studied by Saranza (2016). The narratives provided by the elders offer a rich understanding of how the Chanchannag chant evolved over time, reflecting changes in societal dynamics, religious beliefs, and cultural interactions within the Kalinga community. Similarly, Saranza's study highlights how the Higaonons use various forms of art, including songs, prayers, verbal sparring, and folklore, to express their emotions and views, which represent the values and issues of their community.

Both studies underscore the deep cultural significance of these oral traditions, showcasing how they serve as links to the past and embody the essence of community heritage through their evolution. The Chanchannag chant, much like the oral literature of the Higaonon people, is portrayed as an essential part of cultural and spiritual heritage, emphasizing the importance of honoring the deceased through song and narrative.

Furthermore, both traditions reflect enduring customs tied to the mourning process. Singing at the bedside or gravesite of the deceased, as practiced by the Ifugao people, echoes the sentiments expressed through the Chanchannag chant, demonstrating a shared reverence for elders and a commitment to preserving their memory.

The findings into the Chanchannag chant's historical origin and contemporary challenges shows vital insights essential for formulating preservation strategies. Here's a breakdown of key considerations:

Historical Context and Evolution

By exploring into the chant's historical line, we gain a profound understanding of its cultural significance and adaptive nature across generations. This historical background provides a crucial foundation for crafting preservation approaches that honor tradition while embracing contemporary realities.

Challenges and Threats

The study reveals pressing challenges confronting the chant's preservation, including a lack of formalized preservation efforts and gaps in inter-generational knowledge transfer. These findings highlight the urgency for targeted interventions to document, educate, and garner institutional support for safeguarding this cultural treasure.

Community Engagement and Empowerment

Active community involvement emerges as central to the chant's preservation. Strategies aimed at empowering community members, particularly elders, serve as custodians of oral traditions and advocates for their conservation. Initiatives promoting oral history projects, workshops, and intergenerational knowledge exchange foster a sense of cultural pride and ownership.

Integration of Modern Tools and Technologies

Embracing modern tools and technologies, such as digital archiving and online platforms, presents promising avenues for enhancing the accessibility and visibility of the chant. Digital preservation efforts, along with online outreach initiatives, broaden the chant's reach and ensure its transmission to future generations.

Collaboration and Partnership

The preservation attempt demands collaborative efforts spanning governmental, academic, and cultural spheres. Building healthy partnerships facilitates resource sharing, knowledge exchange, and coordinated action toward shared preservation objectives.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has effectively addressed the three research objectives aimed at understanding the decline of the Chanchannag chant, documenting its history and significance, and developing strategies for its preservation and revival.

1. Key factors contributing to the decline of the chant were identified, including modernization, changing societal values, and challenges in inter-generational knowledge transfer. These findings underscore the urgent need for targeted interventions to safeguard this cultural heritage.
2. The exploration into the historical origins and cultural significance of the Chanchannag chant provided valuable insights into its evolution over time. The chant emerged as a deeply rooted tradition, symbolizing communal unity, ancestral connections, and cultural expression within the Kalinga community.
3. Strategies for preserving and reviving the Chanchannag chant were proposed. These strategies encompass community engagement, integration of modern tools and technologies, and collaboration across various sectors. By empowering community members, embracing digital preservation methods, and fostering partnerships, the aim is to ensure the continuity and vitality of this cherished cultural practice for future generations.

Recommendation

Recommendations based on the study's findings and conclusions for preserving and reviving the Chanchannag chant:

1. Community-Led Initiatives: Encourage active involvement and leadership from community members, especially the elders, in efforts to preserve and transmit the Chanchannag chant. Establish local committees or cultural groups dedicated to documenting, teaching, and performing the chant.
2. Documentation and Archiving: Create comprehensive records of the Chanchannag chant, including audio recordings, videos, and written transcripts. Develop digital archives that are easily accessible to researchers, community members, and the public to ensure long-term preservation.

3. Inter-generational Knowledge Transfer: Organize programs and workshops aimed at facilitating the transfer of chant-related knowledge and skills between generations. Foster dialogue and mentorship opportunities to ensure the continuity of oral traditions.
4. Cultural Education and Awareness: Integrate the Chanchannag chant into educational curricula at local schools, community centers, and cultural events. Raise awareness about the chant's significance and cultural relevance among younger generations through outreach programs and festivals.
5. Institutional Support and Funding: Advocate for institutional recognition and financial support for the preservation of indigenous oral traditions like the Chanchannag chant. Seek funding from governmental agencies, cultural organizations, and grant-making foundations to sustain preservation efforts.
6. Digital Preservation and Outreach: Utilize digital technologies and online platforms to enhance the accessibility and visibility of the Chanchannag chant. Develop interactive websites, multimedia exhibits, and social media campaigns to engage a wider audience and facilitate cultural exchange.
7. Collaborative Partnerships: Foster partnerships with academic institutions, cultural organizations, and indigenous communities to pool resources and expertise. Facilitate knowledge sharing, capacity-building, and joint research projects to strengthen preservation initiatives.

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