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Reviving the Spirit of Bayanihan: Integrating Filipino Values in Teaching Contemporary Issues Amidst Modern Challenges

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Abstract

From time to time the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* is being forgotten and neglected by the people, especially the younger generations. This study documented and assessed the integration of the spirit of "Bayanihan" in teaching contemporary issues to re–set up and reaffirm the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* to its previous radiance. Thematic analysis was used to unravel several underlying themes and codes behind the foreshadowed problems. The study also revealed the different strategies, techniques, and approaches used and suggested by the teachers as part of the integration process, such as the use of personal experiences, valuing, and art of questioning. The study also showed both teachers' and students' understanding of the essence of *"Bayanihan"* in teaching and learning. More so, the study also prevailed in the opportunities of integrating it into education. In addition, the study revealed that it can make the next generations cooperate with their fellowmen, making the society united by helping each other, contributing to the community to make a better nation. The findings revealed that the students focused on the benefits of it, and it is about the development of a person and one's relationship in the community. The researcher proposed and created lesson exemplars that can integrate the spirit of "*Bayanihan"* and address its challenges.

Introduction

As the world is constantly changing, one cannot control what is going to happen in society. Things might go different in just a split second. In this context, the Philippines has always been a target by the nature. It is prone to natural calamities and disasters like typhoons, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. However, there is something in Filipinos that these phenomena cannot take away, and that is the spirit of Bayanihan. Bayanihan is foremost among Filipino values. According to Menguin (2022), Filipinos believe that together, they can survive and thrive. He also added that fellow Filipinos will unite to help those who are in need especially on times of crises. Mixed culture (2013) stated that the concept of Bayanihan could be traced back in a country's tradition, which can be observed in rural areas. In early years,

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Filipinos were helping each other especially when moving one's house (bahay kubo). Evidently, town's people were asked especially the men to lend a hand to a family who will move into a new place. Indeed, the Bayanihan spirit shows Filipinos' concept of helping one another most especially in times of need without expecting anything in return. Historically, tracing back the Filipino roots, they started sailing together as a family. In fact, according to Britannica (1998), Barangay is the type of early Filipino settlement; it is derived from the word balangay, which is the name for the sailboats of Filipino families. Each boat carried a large family group, and the master of the boat retained power as leader, or Datu of the village established by his family. This strengthens the claims on how Bayanihan has been a vital cultural brand of the Filipino people. It is also noteworthy that from time to time, the spirit of Bayanihan was being forgotten and neglected by the people, especially the younger generations. According to the article of Pinoytimate Traditions (2017), Bayanihan is considered to be the core essence of the Filipino spirit sometimes referred to as community spirit. However, it can be assumed that these days, the said spirit is, little by little, not evident at all. As the world is changing, the values among the Filipinos also change- from being a family centered to becoming a more self-centered person. One of the findings of the author was crab mentality that could mean that Filipinos have no participation and cooperation like crabs in a pail. The idea is to get more distant in life, one ought to venture on other individuals and utilize them for one's own particular advantages. Specifically, during Typhoon Yolanda, as cited in Inquirer (2013) looting erupted in Tacloban City. People were being greedy for their own sake. Kenneth Uy, the owner of Asia Star Hotel, said the scene was chaotic and it was anarchy. The looting spread to other places, including fast-food chain branches and shopping centers. The inquirer added that even huge televisions were being looted. Another incident was during a looting over a fallen truck filled with beer in NLEX, according to the Inquirer (2016), the helpless driver watched in horror as dozens of men ran away with cases of beer from his truck. Sadly, Filipinos today were being selfish instead of helping their fellowmen. As a matter of fact, research shows that the volunteerism within the Filipinos were getting lower and lower. According to National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) as cited by Rappler (2013), the growth rate of volunteerism among households has declined from a high of 10% in 2008 to only 3.1% in 2012. For instances people from both urban and rural areas were being busy for their job and they do not have time to help other people. Some of the cases are during a rush hour commuter tend to be fighting for the access of public utility vehicles instead of cooperating in falling in line and be courteous to other commuters. Moreover, according to Jan (2019), Filipinos are being selfish, greedy, and aggressive. He emphasized the traffic condition in public highways as Filipinos drive aggressively and take for granted almost every opportunity to slip through just to get to their destination without thinking about other people or the safety of the passengers. Relatively, many of the younger generations were not aware of the spirit of Bayanihan as they do not fully understand its significance. As a matter of fact, according to Jan (2019), Filipinos have a lack of education and awareness which justifies the lack of patriotism in the community itself. For example, many Filipinos were being corrupted by the system in politics because of their selfishness like the Pork Barrel Scam of 2013, and yet Filipinos still voted for the politicians involved in the scam. On the other hand, the eighteenth congress enacted the republic act no. 11476 on June 25, 2020, or the act institutionalizing good manners and right conduct and values education in the K to 12 curriculum. Under Section 2 of the said act, the states recognize the vital role of youth in nation-building. The state also recognizes the fundamental role of all educational institutions in the inculcation of patriotism and nationalism, fostering of love of humanity, respect of human rights, appreciation of the role of modern-day and national heroes in the historical development of the country, teaching the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthening ethical and spiritual values, developing moral character and personal discipline, encouraging critical and creative thinking, broadening scientific and technological knowledge, and promoting vocational efficiency. In relation to the enacted law, patriotism and nationalism should be inculcated among the youth together with encouragement for their involvement in public and civic affairs. It is very timely and ideal to integrate the spirit of bayanihan in teaching contemporary issues as it was mandated by the state. True to this, this study will be a big contribution in realizing the holistic goal of the law.

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Certainly, there is gap between the Filipinos and the spirit of Bayanihan. One example according to some teachers is that only few students participated in the "brigada eskwela." This program seeks help from the community and the students to clean and reorganize the school. The teachers also added that only the officers of the parents and teachers' association together with the Local Government Unit (LGU) provided help for the program. One identified factor contributing to this unfortunate event was Globalization. According to Day (2016), the youth tend to be blinded about the process of globalization. With the fast interchanging of cultures, the youth have different ideologies coming and it affects how they understand and view their own culture like the awareness to the spirit of Bayanihan. With the data given, the spirit of Bayanihan must be rebuilt. In fact, the DepEd should also give importance on how nationalism be engraved to Filipino youth. Just like the spirit of Bayanihan, the main purpose is to be united in different times and phenomena. The spirit of Bayanihan must be re-set up and reaffirmed to its previous radiance. With that the general problem of this study was: How may the values of bayanihan be integrated in teaching contemporary issues? Specifically, the study sought answer the following questions: (1) How may the informants view the word bayanihan? (2) How may the spirit of Bayanihan be integrated in teaching contemporary issues? (3) How did the teachers understand the essence of Bayanihan in teaching? (4) How did the students understand the essence of Bayanihan in their subject? (5) What are the opportunities and challenges of informants in teaching and learning the Spirit of Bayanihan in contemporary issues? (6) What lesson exemplar can be proposed that strengthened the spirit of Bayanihan in teaching contemporary issues?

Methodology

Research Design

The study used a qualitative approach in analyzing and interpreting the information gathered. According to Bhandari (2022), Qualitative approach involves collecting and analyzing non – numerical data to understand concepts, opinions, or experiences. It can be used to gather in – depth insights into a problem or generate new ideas for research. Qualitative research is commonly used in the humanities and social sciences subjects. Specifically, the study used phenomenological approach to understand and describe a specific phenomenon. The goal of phenomenological approach is to describe the meaning of experiences both in terms of what was experienced and how it was experienced. In relation to the study, the researcher used the said approach to acquire knowledge and information about the integration of the Spirit of Bayanihan in teaching Contemporary Issues. As the subject is under the social sciences or social studies umbrella under the K to 12 basic education curricula. Meanwhile, according to Teherani et. al. (2015), in qualitative research, the researcher is the main data collection instrument. The researcher examined and collected the data personally during the interview process together with the informants of the study.

The researcher used the in – depth interviews in conducting the study and finding the answer to the foreshadowed problem of the study. In fact, Mack et. al. (2005) stated that in – depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, mainly when sensitive topics are being explored. The research used the interview approach in analyzing and assessing the process of integrating the Spirit of Bayanihan in teaching Contemporary Issues. The researcher conducted the interviews and data gathering in line

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with the qualitative approach using the informant interview guide. The interview guides are formed based on the foreshadowed problem.

Participants

The researcher used a purposeful sampling method. According to Cresswell and Plano Clark as cited by Palinkas et. al. (2015), purposeful sampling involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are exceptionally knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest. The gathered data through the interview was conducted until the nature of the research was saturated. The study informants were chosen based on the following criteria: grade eleven (11) students and grade ten (10) contemporary issues teachers from selected public schools. The grade eleven (11) students were divided equally to each selected public national high school. With six (6) public national high schools selected within district five (5) of the Division of Bulacan, twenty-five (25) grade eleven (11) students were selected for the study. Meanwhile, all grade ten (10) contemporary issues teachers from the six (6) selected national high schools of the same district were selected. Each school as per the guidelines of Department of Education has two (2) or more grade ten (10) teachers, with the total of fifteen (15) teachers participated in the study. Men and women informants in the study were not equally presented. The target one hundred percent (100%) population met the specific practical criteria, accessibility, and geographical availability at a given time or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of the study. The researcher sought an approval letter from the Superintendent of the Department of Education Division of Bulacan to obtain data regarding the study.

Instruments

The researcher used a locally constructed Informant Interview Guide. The chosen instruments were used in the collection of data and conducting of the study. The research interview guide has undergone validation, refinement, and revision by competent experts and authorities from the education sector based on related literatures and reviews. With the necessary keen consultation with the adviser. According to Macfarlan (2020), key informant interviews are qualitative, in – depth interviews of 15 to 35 people selected for their first – hand knowledge about the topic of interest. The interviews were loosely structured, relying on the list of issues that were discussed. Informant interviews resemble a conversation among acquaintances, allowing a free flow of ideas and information. Interviewers frame questions spontaneously, probe for information, and take notes, which were elaborated. The advantage of using interview guide was that the information gathered comes from people who have relevant knowledge and insight. According to UCLA Center for Health Policy Research (2001), the purpose of informant interviews is to collect information from a wide range of people – including community leaders, professionals, or residents – who have firsthand knowledge about the community. The professional teachers with their particular expertise, understanding, and experiences provided insight into the nature of the problems. The students who received the teachings provided insights about their experiences and knowledges about the study.

The researcher used an interview guide in facilitating the in – depth Informant Interviews in gathering the data needed for the study. According to Bird (2016), an interview guide is simply a list of the high – level topics that you plan on covering in the interview with high – level questions that you want to be answered under each topic.

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Bird added that the researchers usually limit the guide to one page so that it is easy to refer to and to make sure that the researchers are not getting too low level. In the study, the key informant interview for the teachers were focused on their insights about the Spirit of Bayanihan and their opportunities and challenges in integrating the Spirit of Bayanihan in teaching Contemporary Issues. Meanwhile, the interview for the students were focused on their insights about the Spirit of Bayanihan and their opportunities and challenges in learning the Spirit of Bayanihan in their subject Contemporary Issues. The research proposed lesson exemplars that can be used in teaching Contemporary Issues with integration of the Spirit of Bayanihan within the lessons.

The interview guide was formed based on the specific questions of the foreshadowed problem of the study. Questions that were asked in the interviews were primarily open – ended to allow for personal responses. The researcher used audio and video in recording the interviews and transcribed the interviews for coding purposes.

Procedure

Before the researcher conducted the study, the research proposal and formulated interview guide undergone scrutinization and clearance from the Bulacan State University Ethics Review Committee, meanwhile, a letter of request to the Division Superintendent of the Department of Education Division of Bulacan was sent. The instruments used for the study were also validated by the research department of the school's division of Bulacan. Upon approval of the letter, the researcher arranged a schedule for the observation and vis-à-vis interview with the informants. The researcher personally conducted the said data gathering procedures with confidentiality. Each school was scheduled based on the availability of the informants both teachers and students. Furthermore, the researcher also followed the health protocols of the different schools regarding health issues as the government is still in the transition from pandemic period.

The collecting and gathering of factual data were performed through the interview and observation process. The data that were gathered from individual interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using Microsoft office application. The data were analyzed and summarized correctly and properly. The entire data analysis undergone a thematic analysis process. As stated in the study of Allen (2017), researchers conducting thematic analysis look for recognizable reoccurring topics, ideas, or patterns (themes) occurring within the data that provide insight into the situation. Often a researcher may choose to conduct a thematic analysis when investigating a phenomenon for which little prior understanding exists. Flexible by nature, a thematic analysis may be used to uncover issues, problems, similarities, and differences as applied to the situation. Allen (2017) added that thematic analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the overall experience of an event. Furthermore, Caulfield (2019) stated that thematic analysis is an excellent approach to research when you're trying to find out something about people's views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values from a set of qualitative data, for example, interview transcripts.

Results and Discussion

The need to integrate the spirit of "Bayanihan" is evident in the study. As the DepEd curriculum guide in social studies stated, the mission of social studies is to make sure that the students will understand the duties as a Filipino citizen, who

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will participate in society, who will understand the history and its significance in the community. This was supported by various literatures presented in the previous chapters of this qualitative research. The study focused on the perspectives of the informants about the "Bayanihan," together with the opportunities and challenges of integrating it in teaching Contemporary Issues subject. Using qualitative approach, the study also examined the views of students and teachers about the meaning of "Bayanihan." Moreover, using interview method, the researcher also analyzed the strategies used and suggested by the teachers for integration of the spirit of "Bayanihan". Lastly, the study used the gathered data in developing the lesson exemplars as the output of the study.

In addition, the researcher came up with the study's codes, categories, and themes. Thematic analysis was used to decode and extract the data from the statements of the informants in the interview process. The researcher coded the data to form categories and later reduced the data in themes to explain the findings of the study using tabular, graphical, and verbal form to establish factual evidence.

After analyzing the data, the themes were formed, and the foreshadowed questions were answered based on the perceptions, insights, and experiences of the teachers and students:

The Informants' view of Bayanihan

The word "Bayanihan" was described and defined based on the responses and statements of the informants in the recorded personal interviews conducted by the researcher. The teachers categorized the meaning of "Bayanihan" in terms of cooperation, volunteerism, teamwork, alliance, and culture. In addition, the teachers have a deep understanding regarding the spirit of "Bayanihan" compared to the students. The perceptions of the informants on the word "Bayanihan" were systematically described and revealed in the thematic analysis. The various themes underlying in this question were:

(a) Act of Heroism – In the study, "Bayanihan" was described as an act of heroism. It was deeply rooted in the Filipino culture of teamwork, willingness to help, and eventually ended with a strong tie of friendship. The teachers claimed that it is not only about helping each other, but as Filipinos, considering out culture, it is also about how one can include himself as a part of the society. The insights and statements given by the teachers were covered by the underlying theme.

(b) Cooperation resulting to Synergy – This theme discussed the need for cooperation, participation, and unity of the entire community or society. The results of the study revealed that most of the student-informants have lower and narrower view on the definition of "Bayanihan".

(c) Bayanihan Delineated – The gathered data revealed that there is a gap between the students and their perception on the essence of "Bayanihan." This theme discussed the gap between the answers of teachers and students based on the foreshadowed problem.

Strategies, Techniques, and Approaches of the Informants

Aside from defining the word "Bayanihan," the researcher analyzed the strategies, approaches, and techniques shared by the teachers in answering the question. The insights given by the teachers were presented and stated in the thematic analysis. The theme underlying in this question is:

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(a) Integration of strategies, techniques, and approaches – In the study, the teachers shared the strategies they used, and those they think are good in integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan." For example, using personal experiences, valuing, and the art of questioning in teaching contemporary issues. Another is providing group activity or group work to promote cooperation and the spirit of "Bayanihan."

The Essence of the Spirit of Bayanihan

The essence of integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" must be understood as the main objective of the study. The researcher personally conducted the interview to gather data about the essence of integrating it in teaching. The opinions and statements of the teachers were presented and analyzed in the thematic analysis. The theme underlying this question is:

(a) Preserving the Spirit of Bayanihan – This theme focuses on how the teachers understand the essence of "Bayanihan" in teaching. It was stated here the importance of integrating it on daily lessons. It was revealed that one of the essences of it is about reviving the spirit of "Bayanihan" and preserving it as one of the Philippines' cultures.

In the study, the students shared their insights and perceptions about the essence of "Bayanihan." More importantly, the answers given by the students are essential in the claim of the study. The answer for this foreshadowed question was revealed in the thematic analysis. The theme underlying in this question is:

(a) Formation of values – The gathered data revealed that the essence of integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" is important in the development of the whole characteristics of the students.

The Opportunities and Challenges of Integrating the Spirit of Bayanihan

The experiences of teachers and students were specifically described and revealed in the thematic analysis. Various themes underlying in this question are:

(a) Unification through the Spirit of Bayanihan – From the definition of the act or instances of joining two or more things into one, the researcher came up with the theme, unification. This theme discussed the opportunities of "Bayanihan" in the teachers' perspective.

(b) Solidifying the progression of the Spirit of Bayanihan – This theme presented the perspectives of the students about the opportunities of integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan." In the study, the student informants focused on the benefits of it, and as a result, the answers given by the students were about the development of a person and one's relationship in the community.

(c) Hindrances in the integration of Bayanihan – The findings revealed that the teachers experienced challenges in terms of attitude, attention, personality, awareness, and understanding of the students regarding in integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" in teaching contemporary issues.

The Lesson Exemplar

Based on the interview conducted, the researcher developed lesson exemplars that follow the strategies, approaches, and techniques shared by the teachers. Moreover, the lesson exemplars were also created to address the challenges in integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" in teaching Contemporary Issues subject.

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Conclusion

As the world is constantly changing, and the kind of students changes over time, and the teachers must address and adapt to the changes made by the rising of social media. As the researcher dived deep in the study, the researcher found out that there is a gap between the students and the spirit of *"Bayanihan."* The related literatures showed the different statements and scenarios to justify the claim of the researcher. In fact, according to the teachers, when asked if they see the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* in the students, the answers were, it was seen seldom and sometimes not. For instance, as stated by teacher informant 6, (Sad to say, the students were not knowledgeable about *"Bayanihan"*, but if it us, if we inculcate it in our school and parents, they will understand more the importance of *"Bayanihan"*). This means that there is a lack of integration of *"Bayanihan"* in the students, in fact, based on the findings of the researcher about the definition of *"Bayanihan"* in the perspective of the informants, there is a gap, it was clearly seen based on the understanding of the students. The students gave narrow answers compared to the definition given by the teachers meaning there was a lack of understanding on the students' side. The findings are crucial as it revealed the essence of *"Bayanihan"* not only for an individual but also for the betterment of the society, as the students will be the next leaders and members of the society. And as the next generation to handle society, the students will be the bearer of the culture and will continue to pass the spirit of *"Bayanihan"*. Certainly, according to the teachers, it must be started with students, through integrating the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* in teaching contemporary issues. Therefore, it must be integrated, and it must be well – planned and well – prepared through lesson planning and strategizing the learning development of the students. The examples of strategies that are useful for integration are experiential learning, group work and of course, student - centered learning approach. In turn of this, study also unraveled that integrating the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* will give opportunity not only to the students but the whole society in terms of unity, patriotism, inspiration, camaraderie, nationalism, and solution to the problems will be faced by the community. In addition, it can also be an opportunity for cooperation, communication, and development of the students within the society. The findings are also important in determining the challenges, as the teachers face problems in terms of the attitude and personality of the students, while other do not give their attention to the lesson, awareness and understanding also plays a big factor in integrating the values needed. The rise of social media also plays a vital role in the development of the students, and the teachers should address it in the lessons and use it as a tool for integration. With all, the researcher made and developed lesson exemplars that address the challenges in integration of the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* through the strategies suggested and given and also from the related theories, literatures and studies presented in the study.

Recommendations

1. **Academe**
   Based on the statements of the informants from the interview, the officials should make programs and activities that will include the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* and expose the students in terms of community engagement. It is important for the students to experience the concept of *"Bayanihan"* as stated in the study about learning by doing and experiential learning. As they experience it, they can be more knowledgeable as they have firsthand experience about the spirit of *"Bayanihan."*

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2. **Social Studies Educators**
   In accordance with the findings of the study, social studies teachers should integrate the spirit of "Bayanihan" in teaching contemporary issues. Consequently, the researcher suggested the lesson exemplars which were presented in the previous chapter. Also, the teachers should innovate strategies that will enhance the integration of the spirit of *"Bayanihan."* More research should also be done to improve the quality of education and remove the gap between the students and their learning development.
3. **Academic Researchers**
   This research could be a big help for future researchers with social studies and *"Bayanihan"* as the subjects. Since this research determined the integration of the spirit of *"Bayanihan"* at the same time, new research could be created which can further increase and support the findings of this study. On the other hand, they could focus on another perspective or change the subject to other values to be integrated.

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