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ECHOES

of EXPRESSION

A Creative Folio

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A Home Made of Kindness

Dina and Lim were barely adults when they chose each other, and although their love was young, it soon carried the weight of nine children. They lived in a cramped room inside Dina's mother's house, with all eleven of them sharing a single crowded space. Lim worked long hours as a tricycle driver, earning just enough for rice and, on better days, a can of sardines. Sometimes, dinner was nothing more than rice sprinkled with salt. Still, the couple held tightly to one dream: that their children would finish school and never inherit the hardship they endured.

One rainy afternoon, that fragile stability collapsed. Dina's mother - exhausted by the noise, the chaos, and the strain of so many dependents - finally lost patience.

"You all need to leave. Tonight," she said, her voice sharp with frustration.

Dina froze, clutching her two-month-old baby. "Ma... we have nowhere to go." But the answer did not change. The decision was final.

The rain was pouring when they stepped outside with their few belongings. The children shivered beneath worn clothes, and Dina tried to shield the infant from the cold. Lim walked quietly beside her, unable to hide the despair tightening in his chest.

After hours of wandering through flooded streets, Lim remembered a friend who worked at a small car repair shop. With nothing left to lose, he knocked on the shop door.

"Can we stay for just one night?" he asked, his voice almost breaking.

The friend looked at the baby in Dina's arms and stepped aside. "You can sleep here - but only for tonight."

By morning, the friend apologized. "I'm sorry, Lim. Customers will arrive soon. You have to go." Once again, they were on the streets.

For hours they searched for any place - an awning, a shed, a covered corner where the children could rest. Eventually, they found an unused day-care center, empty for the school break. The caretaker, moved by the sight of nine exhausted children, allowed them to stay temporarily. For three weeks, they lived in silent fear, counting the days until the caretaker would ask them to leave.

When that day came, Dina felt her knees weaken. She went from house to house, asking friends and acquaintances for help—anything that could keep her children safe. But no assistance came. “We wish we could help,” people said. Yet no one could take in a family of eleven.

Desperate, Dina went to her daughter’s school and approached her teacher, Teacher Sha. Her voice shook as she spoke. “Ma’am... do you have any work I can do? Cleaning, washing clothes, sweeping - anything. I just want my children to stay in school.” Her eyes brimmed with tears, fear, shame, and fragile hope all tangled together.

Teacher Sha listened quietly. After a moment, she said, “You can help with laundry and some house cleaning.” For Dina, who had spent weeks hearing only rejection, this small offer felt like a miracle. She cried - not from sorrow this time, but from gratitude.

A week later, while doing laundry at Teacher Sha’s home, Dina finally shared the full truth:

“Ma’am... in a few days, we will have no place to stay again.” Her voice broke. “I don’t know where to bring my children.”

Teacher Sha paused, imagining the family walking the streets again with their bags, the children tired and frightened. Then she made a decision.

“You can build a small house on my unused, family-owned lot near the village,” she said. “It’s nothing fancy, but it’s safe. You can stay there for now.”

Dina stared at her, stunned. “Ma’am... did I hear you right?”

“Yes,” Teacher Sha replied gently. “You and your family need a place to rest.”

Dina fell to her knees, sobbing. When Lim heard the news, he cried quietly as well. They could not understand why someone with no obligation to help them would offer such a life-changing kindness.

The couple built a small home on the lot - four posts, thin walls, and a patched roof. It was simple, fragile even, but it was theirs. For the first time in months, they slept without fear. Their children laughed again. At night, Dina and Lim prayed, thanking God for the woman who restored their dignity.

Their story stands as a testament to the strength of a family’s love, the depth of a parent’s sacrifice, and the extraordinary power of kindness. It is a reminder that in the darkest corners of hardship, hope can still be found - and sometimes, it comes from ordinary people who choose to do an extraordinary act of compassion.



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**Teaching, Touching Lives, Finding Purpose:
My 18-year journey as an Educator**

It began in 2008. I had just given birth to my one and only princess, my daughter. She was only a month old, but I had to be present in school for the first day of classes. I was just employed as a permanent public-school teacher month prior. In my mind, I felt that I had no right to a maternity leave. I stormed through rainy days to attend to the needs of my Kindergarten pupils. It rained almost every day in the first months, giving me a sign that it will not be a walk in the clouds, being a primary teacher for I have finished a course that is not aligned with what I'm doing. I should be a secondary Math teacher, and yet I am dealing with younger kids every day; Wide-eyed, all ears, uncontrollable tantrums scattered and minds that are just beginning to grasp the realities of life as pupils. Some of them do not even know how to count, too amazed to see how the letters of the alphabet look like.

I was met with different challenges. Some parents were supportive, but others weren't exactly interested in dealing with matters such as their kids' academic standing. It was a shock right away, not knowing where to start. The development and strategies I learned during seminars and through articles read seemed to be too rigid and were not applicable. I felt like giving up due to various reasons, pressure, fatigue, and the realization of being an outcast in the field I once dreamed of.

I had to study again, not in a university or college but in the same classroom where I teach. I used my interest in psychology to deal with the difficulty of the pupils, some of them in dire need of attention and love. In the first school year of being a Kinder teacher, I learned that it is not easy, but I can do something. No matter how small it is, to help mold young minds. I saw how they developed, not only in their growth but also their progress in every aspect. It's like magic, but not in the blink of an eye. It takes time. It requires action not from a magician but from an educator with a motherly love.

Printed teaching materials should be colorful and unusually big. My way of communicating with them should be a little bit animated. The energy from the morning session should not falter until the end of the afternoon session. Time should always be a reminder to all of them of the need to go to school the following day so as not to miss interesting lessons and fun activities, games and prizes in which all came from my pocket, which is, although not that full, is more than willing to share a candy or two to all of them.

My profession became a mission. I felt proud seeing each class graduate. They all deserve a beaming round of applause. Deep in my heart, a burst of emotion always surged; a combination of happiness, pride, and loneliness. Another batch will leave me. Will they still remember me next year? Will they go back to my classroom to hold my hand, and bid their farewell before going home? Will they carry the torch of eagerness to learn after building foundations on reading, writing and character values under my care?

From teaching Kindergarten, I was offered to transfer to a higher-grade level. Grade 1 was not that different from my first assignment, but it presented itself as a greater challenge. I integrated the mentality of “Babasa para makapasa”, and “Sama-samang matuto para sa pagbabago.” The mission of teaching young learners as of now is not only a profession, but a huge part of my identity as a person. Guiding these kids although not my own, feels honorable, as I can serve them in my own way. No matter what the consequences are. Being in the same school for these eighteen years, working with almost the same faces as my co-teachers would call it is a blessing. Giving back to my alma mater, Patimbao Elementary School fills my heart with great joy.

Looking back at the years I spent, I have no regrets. Its lasting impact on how I live my life will continue, and I remain in this field, willing to help develop young minds in the years to come. The continuation of my journey is something I truly look forward to, and I am truly excited of what the future holds for me in this institution.



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Fostering Equality: Promoting Gender Sensitivity in Educational

The school environment plays a pivotal role in shaping students' attitudes, values, and behaviors. As a microcosm of society, schools are not just institutions for academic learning but also arenas where social norms regarding gender are established and reinforced. Gender sensitivity in schools is a cornerstone of creating equitable and inclusive educational environments that promote respect and understanding among all students, regardless of their gender identity. It entails recognizing and addressing the varied experiences and challenges that different genders face within the educational context.

Gender sensitivity refers to the awareness and responsiveness to the different needs and experiences of individuals based on their gender. In a school context, it encompasses recognizing the disparities that exist between genders and addressing these imbalances to create equitable educational opportunities. It is essential for fostering a positive atmosphere where every student can thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

It also involves curriculum design and pedagogy that reflect the diverse contributions of all genders. By integrating materials that highlight achievements and perspectives of various genders in history, literature, and science, schools can challenge stereotypes and broaden students' understanding of gender roles. A gender-sensitive approach contributes to creating safe and supportive school environments. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination based on gender can have detrimental effects on mental health and academic performance.

Schools that implement gender-sensitive policies and practices foster a culture of respect and understanding, reducing incidents of violence and harassment and allowing students to thrive. And as when students feel respected and included, they are more likely to engage fully in the learning process. Gender-sensitive classrooms accommodate diverse learning styles and perspectives, making education more relevant and relatable for all students. This inclusivity can lead to improved academic performance and higher retention rates, as students feel valued for who they are.

Creating an inclusive environment demands that schools actively address bullying and harassment based on gender. Implementing programs that educate students about the importance of respect and empathy can significantly reduce instances of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Professional development programs focusing on gender sensitivity should be mandatory for teachers and staff. Training sessions can enhance educators' understanding of gender issues, equip them with strategies to promote inclusivity, and develop their skills in addressing incidents of gender-based bullying and discrimination effectively. Training teachers and staff to recognize and respond to these issues is crucial in establishing a safe space for all students, where they feel valued and supported in their identities.

Significantly, schools should create support networks for students who may feel marginalized due to their gender identity. This can include peer support groups, counseling services, and partnerships with community organizations that specialize in gender-related issues. It should ensure that students of all genders have equal access to resources and opportunities, encouraging participation in diverse activities that may traditionally be gender-segregated and promoting female leadership roles and supporting non-binary or gender diverse students in taking on active roles within the school community can empower students and challenge conventional gender norms.



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The Power of Small Gestures

The saying “the best perfume comes in small bottles” holds a profound truth when applied to human relationships. Often, it’s the smallest gestures, the quietest words, and the simplest acts of kindness that leave a lasting impact on our lives.

Just like a potent perfume, a person’s true character and beauty are revealed in the smallest, most unassuming moments. A gentle touch, a listening ear, and a warm smile can speak volumes about a person’s heart, much like the subtle scent of a fine perfume.

In a world that often values grand gestures and loud declarations, it’s easy to overlook the quiet beauty of everyday interactions. But it’s in these small, seemingly insignificant moments that we find the true essence of a person. A small bottle of perfume may not be as showy as a large one, but its fragrance can fill a room. Similarly, a person with a small, kind heart can have a profound impact on those around them.

Small gestures also have the ability to break down barriers and build connections between people. A simple “hello” or “thank you” can diffuse tension and create a sense of community. A small act of kindness, like holding the door for someone or offering a seat, can make a person feel seen and valued. These tiny actions may not seem like much, but they speak volumes about our character and our willingness to connect with others.

The best relationships are often the ones that don’t make headlines or seek external validation. They’re the ones that quietly weave themselves into the fabric of our lives, touching our hearts and souls in ways we never thought possible. Like a precious perfume, these relationships may come in small packages, but their value and impact are immeasurable.

In the end, it’s not the grand gestures or the big declarations that matter, but the small, everyday acts of love, kindness, and compassion that make life truly beautiful.



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The Evil Side of Deforestation

The natural beauty of nature that captivate and mesmerize the bold eyes of an individual in this world is something that we need to love, preserve and treasure. Allah swt gives us the opportunity to feel, experience, enjoy or even use His creations as far as human survival is concern. Indeed, the nature is one of the greatest creations and gifts of Allah swt for the entire humanity. People are able to survive in this world because of the overflowing blessings coming from the natural resources and people must put deep love and care for it. However, we cannot deny the fact that people are the number one destroyer and the cause of every devastations in our natural resources. In fact, one of those devastations that they usually observe and practice nowadays is deforestation. Obviously, our forests and mountains are getting sick and more problematic in which some people who unselfishly love and care natures feel enormous upset and condemn this kind of activities that continually existing in every communities around the world particularly here in the Philippines.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Deforestation defines as the clearing, destroying, or otherwise removal of trees through deliberate, natural, or accidental means. This implies that deforestation occurs a variety of reasons and has a variety of devastating consequences within the community. The rampant and vast cutting and removal of tress not just in mountains but also in lowlands lead to several destructions and natural calamities like soil erosion and coastal flooding that directly affect the healthy way of living of individuals within the community. In fact, trees help the land to retain water and topsoil in which provides the rich nutrients to sustain additional forest life. Without forest, soil erodes and wash away that may lead to several floods especially in the coastal areas.

Perhaps, according to several studies, the loss of habitat is one of the most dangerous and unsettling effects of deforestation. The loss of animal and plant species due to their loss of habitat may affect the 70% population of land animals and plant species live in the forest and probably, thousands of them will suffer or even died. In addition to this, the lack of trees allows a greater amount of greenhouse gases to be released into the atmosphere. Healthy forests absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, acting as valuable carbon sinks. Deforested areas lose that ability and release more carbon that leads to a more dangerous climate imbalance and change that can directly affect the whole world.

It is pretty obvious that people love to live in a more comfortable and healthier environment but the question is, how can they achieve and have it if they continually destroying their environment particularly the forests that give life to the entire humanity. Simply, the negative actions of the people like deforestation manifesting negative consequences not just to the people but also to the other species living in the forest. Yet, it is not too late for us to put a solution to it.

Let us start educating people about the importance of forest and its contributions in our daily lives. People must understand the purpose of it and its significance to us. Aside from that is the effective and strict implementation of the existing laws that bans and prohibits the illegal cutting of trees should be observe and effectively implemented to all. The persons commit this kind of illegal activities must be punish according to the law.

Moreover, replanting trees must be observed and practice by the people in order to avoid or even stop deforestations. Through this we can simply help to preserve our forest and the species living in it or even save our lives in this world. Let us unite, cooperate and help one another in protecting our natural resources such as the forest to have better and healthier progress within our society without compromising our environment. Let us keep in our heart the value of everything that we can see in this world. The hope for better is within us and be part of those who aim for hope.



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Kailan ka pa hahakbang Pasulong?

kabataan Kailan ka pa matututo, kailan ka pa magninilay.

Isang tinig na umaalingawngaw sa diwa ng sambayanay.

Sa apat na pamilya ng kaalaman, araw-araw sumisibol ang pagsasanay.

Paulit-ulit nang inihahain ang aral, ngunit bingi ang isip ng tatanggapay.

Sugatan sa damdamin ang gurong nagmamahal sa pagtuturo.

Kahit anong sipag, ang aral ay tila ulap na naglalaho

Sa isip ng nagtuturo, tanong ay paulit-ulit,

Saan ako nagkulang? Ginawa ko na ang lahat.



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The Pedestrian's Perspective *(Learning to See at Walking Speed)*

There is a speed at which cities reveal themselves, and it is the speed of walking.

From behind a windshield, the world becomes scenery smooth, distant, reduced to navigational challenges. But on foot, you enter the texture of a place. You feel the uneven ground, smell the drainage, notice the grandmother resting in the shade of a tree.

I walked every street in downtown Naval during my research. Not once, but many times, morning and afternoon, weekday and weekend. Each walk taught me something new. The sidewalk that seemed adequate at 10 AM became dangerous at 7 PM when the vendors arrived. The path that was dry in February became flooded in July.

Walking forced humility. I am an engineer, trained to see the world in measurements and standards. But the residents of these streets had knowledge I could not quantify. They knew which sections flooded first, which vendors could be reasoned with, which dogs would chase you if you passed at the wrong hour.

One afternoon, I walked with a woman who was blind. She navigated using sounds and textures I had never noticed the echo that indicated a narrow passage, the change in ground surface that warned of an obstacle. She was not disabled by her blindness; she was disabled by infrastructure designed for sight.

Children taught me to see play in unexpected places. A ledge was a balance beam. A wide section of sidewalk was a badminton court. Their joy exposed how rarely we design public spaces with pleasure in mind. We build for function, forgetting that people are not just traveling somewhere they are living along the way.

The engineers who designed these sidewalks probably never walked them. They worked from plans and specifications, translating reality into abstraction. But abstraction does not stub your toe. Abstraction does not feel the fear of walking too close to traffic because the path is blocked.

I began to believe that no infrastructure should be approved by anyone who has not experienced it on foot. Policymakers should walk the routes they fund. Planners should spend days navigating their own designs. Only then would we build cities that serve human bodies, not just vehicles.

Walking is not just transportation. It is a way of knowing. And what I came to know, step by step, was that we can do better. We must do better.

The sidewalk is waiting for us to walk it.



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The Invisible Infrastructure

(On Seeing What We Walk Past)

We are blind to the ground beneath our feet. This is not metaphor, it is observation. How many times have you walked a familiar route without once noticing the path itself?

I became aware of this peculiar blindness when I started photographing sidewalks. Friends thought I had lost my mind. Why document something so ordinary? But that was precisely the point. The ordinary is invisible, and the invisible is neglected.

There is a hierarchy of attention in city planning. Roads command budgets and headlines. Bridges are celebrated as engineering triumphs. But sidewalks? They exist in the margins of consciousness, noticed only when they fail when a pothole twists an ankle, when flooding forces us into traffic.

In Naval, I met a man who had been walking the same route to work for twenty years. He could not tell me when the sidewalk had last been repaired. It had simply always been there, part of the background of his life. Yet he remembered exactly when the road had been widened, when the new traffic light was installed.

This invisibility has consequences. What we do not see, we do not fund. What we do not fund, we do not maintain. The sidewalk crumbles in slow motion while we look elsewhere, wondering why fewer people walk, why streets feel less alive.

I began taking photographs not as evidence but as an act of attention. Each image said: this matter. This crack, this missing tile, this tree root buckling the concrete, these are not minor inconveniences. They are barriers to the elderly, the disabled, the mother with a stroller.

Making the invisible visible is the first step toward change. When you document a problem, you transform it from background noise into something that demands response. A photograph of a broken sidewalk becomes a question: Is this acceptable?

Technology helped me see. The app I developed forced systematic observation, every segment measured, every obstacle recorded. But the real shift was internal. Once you train your eyes to notice, you cannot untrain them. The world becomes a different place.

Now I understand that cities are built twice: once in concrete and steel, once in attention and care. We construct the infrastructure we value. If we truly believed that walking matters, that every person deserves safe passage, our sidewalks would tell a different story.

The ground beneath our feet is waiting to be seen.



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Walking the Urban Edge

(Reflections on the Spaces Between)

There is a strip of concrete between the road and the wall where humanity unfolds. I never noticed it until I started counting cracks.

We call them sidewalks, but they are so much more. They are the stages where children learn to ride bicycles, where lovers walk hand in hand, where the elderly shuffle toward morning markets. In the Philippines, they become extensions of living rooms, neighbors pulling out plastic chairs to share stories as the afternoon heat settles.

When I began documenting sidewalks in Naval, Biliran, I thought I was conducting research. Instead, I found myself collecting human stories. A mother navigating around parked motorcycles with a sleeping infant strapped to her chest. A blind man tapping his way past vendors who had claimed the path as their own. A group of teenagers laughing, oblivious to the broken tiles beneath their feet.

The width of a sidewalk says something about a community's values. Narrow paths whisper that pedestrians are afterthoughts, that cars matter more than people. Wide, shaded walkways declare that everyone deserves dignity, the grandmother with her cane, the worker heading home at dusk, the child running toward an ice cream cart.

I learned to see inequity in concrete. Some neighborhoods have smooth, well-lit paths. Others have none at all just the shoulder of the road, shared with vehicles and fear. The absence of a sidewalk is not mere oversight. It is a statement about whose safety matters.

There is something democratic about a good sidewalk. Rich and poor walk the same ground. It is one of the few truly public spaces in urban life, belonging to everyone and no one. When we let sidewalks crumble, when we allow them to be swallowed by commerce or neglect, we surrender something essential about our shared humanity.

At night, the character of a path changes entirely. What felt safe at noon becomes threatening in shadow. The absence of light is the presence of vulnerability. I began to understand that infrastructure is not just about engineering it is about whether a woman feels safe walking home.



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Now I cannot walk anywhere without noticing. Every uneven tile, every tree offering shade, every obstruction forcing people onto the road. This awareness is both burden and gift. I see the city differently, through the eyes of those for whom walking is not choice but necessity.

Perhaps that is the point. To truly understand a place, you must walk it. Not from behind a windshield, but with your feet on the ground, feeling the texture of the community beneath you. The sidewalk knows what we have forgotten that we are all just travelers, making our way home.



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Ang Panig Na Pinakinggan
(The Chosen Side)

Sa bawat hidwaan, may isang panig na pinipiling pakinggan. Ito ang panig na nagiging batayan ng hatol, desisyon, at pakikitungo ng mga tao. Subalit mas masakit isipin na sa maraming pagkakataon, ang pinipiling pakinggan ay hindi ang katotohanan, kundi ang mali at kasinungalingan. Ang “Ang Panig na Pinakinggan” ay hindi palaging nangangahulugang ito ang tama; madalas, ito ang panig na mas malakas ang impluwensiya, mas maagang nagsalita, o mas kayang manipulahin ang emosyon ng nakikinig.

Naranasan ko mismo ang ganitong sitwasyon sa isang ugnayang inakala kong matibay. May isang pangyayaring nagdulot ng hindi pagkakaunawaan sa pagitan ko at ng isang kaibigan. Isang simpleng isyu lamang sana ang pinagmulan, ngunit dahil sa maling kwento at pinalaking detalye ng ibang tao, nagbago ang tingin ng marami sa akin. Ang masakit, pinili ng aking kaibigan na pakinggan ang mga salitang iyon—mga salitang puno ng hinala at kasinungalingan—imbis na direktang tanungin ako. Hindi niya hinanap ang aking paliwanag; hindi niya binigyan ng pagkakataon ang aking panig. Sa isang iglap, ako ang naging mali sa isang kuwentong hindi ko naman isinulat.

Sa ganitong karanasan, malinaw kong nakita kung paano gumagana ang “napiling pakikinig.” Kapag ang isang kasinungalingan ay naipahayag nang may kumpiyansa at sinamahan ng emosyon, nagiging mas kapani-paniwala ito kaysa sa tahimik na katotohanan. Mas madaling paniwalaan ang kwentong may drama kaysa sa paliwanag na simple at payak. Dahil dito, ang panig na pinakinggan ay nagiging panig ng kasinungalingan, at ang katotohanan ay naiiwang walang tinig.

Bakit nga ba may mga ganitong senaryo sa buhay kung saan pinipiling makinig ang tao sa mali? Una, dahil sa emosyon. Kapag nasaktan, nagalit, o nadismaya ang isang tao, mas nagiging bukas siya sa panig na sumusuporta sa kanyang nararamdaman, kahit ito’y hindi totoo. Ang kasinungalingan na umaayon sa emosyon ay mas madaling tanggapin kaysa sa katotohanang masakit o kumontra sa damdamin. Ikalawa, may malaking papel ang impluwensiya ng kapaligiran. Kapag marami ang nagsasabi ng iisang maling kwento, nagmumukha itong totoo. Sa ganitong paraan, ang kasinungalingan ay nagiging “katotohanan” sa mata ng nakararami.

Ikatlo, may mga taong umiiwas sa katotohanan dahil ito’y nangangailangan ng pananagutan. Ang pakikinig sa totoong panig ay nangangahulugang kailangan mong aminin na nagkamali ka ng paghuhusga. Para sa ilan, mas madali ang manatili sa maling paniniwala kaysa harapin ang sariling pagkukulang. Kaya pinipili nilang pakinggan ang panig na magpapagaan sa kanilang konsensya, kahit mali.

Sa aking karanasan, matagal bago ko natanggap ang katotohanang hindi lahat ng tao ay handang makinig sa tama. May mga taong mas pinipiling paniwalaan ang kasinungalingan dahil mas komportable ito. Sa halip na ipaglaban ang aking sarili sa mga saradong isipan, natutunan kong pahalagahan ang katahimikan at integridad. Hindi ko kailangang ipagsigawan ang aking panig sa mga ayaw naman talagang makinig. Ang mahalaga ay alam ko ang totoo at hindi ko hinayaang baguhin ng maling paratang ang aking pagkatao.

Gayunpaman, ang karanasang ito ay nagbigay rin sa akin ng mahalagang aral. Itinuro nito sa akin ang kahalagahan ng pagiging mapanuri sa pakikinig. Bilang isang indibidwal, may pananagutan akong huwag basta-basta maniwala sa isang panig lamang. Natutunan kong ang tunay na pakikinig ay hindi pumipili ng madaling paniwalaan, kundi naghahanap ng katotohanan – kahit ito’y hindi kaaya-aya.

Ang “Ang Panig na Pinakinggan” ay salamin ng ating mga desisyon sa buhay. Ipinapakita nito kung paano tayo naaapektuhan ng emosyon, impluwensiya, at takot. Kapag pinili nating makinig sa mali at kasinungalingan, hindi lamang natin sinasaktan ang iba; sinisira rin natin ang sarili nating kakayahang umunawa at magpasiya nang tama. Ngunit kapag pinili nating maging bukas sa katotohanan, kahit mahirap, nagkakaroon tayo ng pagkakataong maging mas makatao at makatarungan.

Sa huli, hindi natin kontrolado kung alin ang panig na pipiliing pakinggan ng iba. Ngunit kontrolado natin kung alin ang panig na pipiliin nating paniwalaan at ipagtanggol. Sa mundong puno ng ingay at maling kwento, ang pagpili sa katotohanan ay isang tahimik ngunit makapangyarihang paninindigan. Sapagkat sa bawat pagkakataong pinipili nating huwag makinig sa kasinungalingan, nagbibigay tayo ng puwang sa paghilom, pag-unawa, at tunay na katarungan.



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SANA'Y DI NA KITA KINAIBIGAN

(If Only I Had Never Called You a Friend)

May mga pagkakaibigang dumarating na parang liwanag—banayad sa simula, nakaaaliw, at nagbibigay-init sa pusong pagod na sa mundo. Sa unang yugto, sapat na ang presensya upang mapawi ang pangamba at bigyang-kulay ang mga araw na dati'y tahimik. Ngunit may ilan ding pagkakaibigang, sa paglipas ng panahon, ay unti-unting nagiging anino: tahimik ngunit mabigat, pamilyar ngunit masakit, at sa huli'y nag-iiwan ng lamig sa dibdib. Sa ganitong pagkakataon ko lubos na nauunawaan ang bigat ng mga salitang, "Sana'y di na kita naging kaibigan."

Nagsimula ang lahat sa payak na ngiti at magagaan na usapan. Wala noon ang alinlangan; puro tiwala at pananabik lamang ang nangingibabaw. Ikaw ang naging sandalan sa mga panahong kulang ang lakas ng loob ko, sa mga araw na tila napakabigat ng mundo. Ako naman ang handang makinig sa bawat kuwento mo—mga pangarap, takot, at lihim na hindi mo maibahagi sa iba. Sa mga sandaling iyon, nabuo ang paniniwalang ang pagkakaibigan ay isang ligtas na kanlungan, isang lugar na maaari kang maging totoo nang walang takot na masaktan.

Sa mga araw na puno ng alinlangan at pangamba, nariyan ang mga pangakong walang iwanan. Mga salitang tila sapat upang paniwalaan na anuman ang mangyari, may taong mananatili. Ngunit habang tumatagal, unti-unting nagbabago ang himig ng ating ugnayan. Ang dating malasakit ay napalitan ng pagdududa; ang tiwala ay naging tanong na walang malinaw na sagot. Ang mga salitang dating nagbibigay-lakas ay naging tahimik, at ang presensyang dati'y nakaaaliw ay naging pabigat.

Masakit aminang hindi lahat ng pagkakaibigan ay dapat ipaglaban hanggang dulo. May mga pagkakataong ang pananatili ay hindi na anyo ng katapatan kundi paglimot sa sarili. Sa bawat salitang hindi mo tinupad, sa bawat lihim na itinago, at sa bawat pagkakataong pinili mong manahimik habang ako'y nalulunod sa pag-unawa, unti-unting nabawasan ang liwanag na minsang inialay mo. Doon ko napagtanto na ang kaibigan, sa halip na magpalakas, ay maaari ring magpahina at mag-iwan ng sugat na hindi agad naghihilom.

Hindi madali ang magpaalam sa isang ugnayang minsang naging tahanan. May mga alaala ng tawanan, ng luha, at ng mga gabing sabay na umasa sa mas magandang bukas. Ang bawat alaala ay parang piraso ng nakaraan na mahirap bitawan. Ngunit mas mahirap ang

manatili sa isang pagkakaibigang unti-unting inuubos ka – kung saan ang respeto ay palaging isinasantabi, ang damdamin ay minamaliit, at ang paghingi ng paumanhin ay laging huli kung dumating man. Sa puntong iyon, ang paglayo, bagama’t masakit, ay naging anyo ng pagligtas sa sarili.

Sa proseso ng pagbitaw, natutunan kong ang tunay na pagkakaibigan ay hindi sinusukat sa tagal ng pinagsamahan kundi sa lalim ng paggalang at katapatan. Hindi ito dapat maging dahilan ng pagdududa sa sariling halaga. Ang kaibigan ay hindi dapat pinagmumulan ng takot o pangamba, kundi lakas at kapanatagan. Kung ang isang tao ay patuloy na binabawasan ang iyong liwanag at pinaparamdam na ikaw ay kulang, marahil hindi siya kailanman naging kaibigang karapat-dapat sa iyong tiwala.

Kaya kung minsan ay napapabigkas ako ng, “Sana’y di na kita naging kaibigan,” hindi ito dahil nais kong burahin ang nakaraan o ipagkaila ang mga sandaling minsang nagpasaya sa akin. Ito’y pagkilalang may mga aral na natutuhan sa sakit – na ang pagmamahal, maging sa anyo ng pagkakaibigan, ay may hangganan kapag nawawala ang respeto at pagpapahalaga. At sa pagharap ko sa bukas, dala ko ang paninindigang piliin ang mga ugnayang nagbibigay-lakas, hindi sugat; mga taong marunong mag-ingat sa tiwalang iniaabot, at hindi sasayangin ang pusong minsang nagbukas.



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ANG PANIG NA DI' PINAKINGGAN
(The Unheard Side)

May mga pagkakataon sa buhay na ang katahimikan ay hindi bunga ng kawalan ng sasabihin, kundi ng kawalan ng makikinig. Sa likod ng bawat maling akala, tsismis, at hatol na minadali, may panig na nananatiling nakatago – ang panig na di' pinakinggan. Sa ganitong mga sandali, ang sakit ay hindi lamang nagmumula sa pangyayari, kundi sa katotohanang ipinagkait ang pagkakataong magpaliwanag, magtuwid, at maunawaan.

Naranasan ko mismo ang ganitong sitwasyon sa loob ng isang pagkakaibigan na akala ko'y matibay. Isang araw, napansin kong tila nagbago ang ihip ng hangin – biglang naging malamig ang mga pagbati, maiikli ang sagot, at may distansiyang hindi ko maipaliwanag. Kalaunan, nalaman kong may mga salitang ipinakalat tungkol sa akin – mga salitang binigyan ng kulay at kahulugan na hindi ko kailanman binigkas o inisip. Sa halip na kausapin ako, pinili ng kaibigan kong maniwala sa narinig. Hindi niya tinanong ang aking panig; hindi niya hinanap ang katotohanan. Sa isang iglap, ang tiwala ay napalitan ng pagdududa, at ang samahan ay naging tanong na walang sagot.

Masakit ang pakiramdam ng hindi pinakikinggan. Parang tinanggalan ka ng tinig sa sarili mong kuwento. May mga paliwanag kang nais ibigay, ngunit tila huli na ang lahat dahil may desisyon nang nabuo sa isipan ng iba. Sa ganitong karanasan, natutuhan ko na ang pakikinig ay hindi lamang pisikal na pagdinig ng salita; ito'y aktibong pagbubukas ng isip at puso. Kapag ito'y nawala, kahit gaano pa katotoo ang iyong panig, mananatili itong tahimik at walang saysay sa mata ng iba.

Bakit nga ba may mga ganitong senaryo sa buhay? Una, madalas na nangingibabaw ang emosyon kaysa rason. Kapag galit, selos, o takot ang namayani, nagiging madali ang maniwala sa unang bersyon ng kuwento – lalo na kung ito'y sumasang-ayon sa nararamdaman. Ikalawa, may likas na kahinaan ang tao sa impluwensiya ng opinyon ng iba. Sa panahon ng mabilis na komunikasyon, ang tsismis ay mas mabilis pang kumalat kaysa katotohanan. Ang isang maling pahayag, kapag paulit-ulit na narinig, ay nagmumukhang totoo kahit wala namang sapat na batayan.

Ikatlo, may takot ang ilan sa direktang pag-uusap. Ang pakikipagharap ay nangangailangan ng tapang – tapang na harapin ang posibilidad na nagkamali ang sariling paniniwala. Mas madali para sa iba ang umiwas, manahimik, at hayaan na lamang ang haka-

haka ang magsilbing sagot. Sa ganitong paraan, napuputol ang ugnayan at lumalalim ang sugat, dahil ang katahimikan ay nagiging kasabwat ng maling akala.

Gayunman, sa kabila ng pait, may aral na hatid ang panig na di' pinakinggan. Itinuturo nito ang halaga ng malinaw at bukas na komunikasyon. Natutuhan ko na hindi sapat ang pagiging tama; mahalaga ring marunong tayong makinig at humingi ng paliwanag. Ang pakikinig ay hindi kahinaan, kundi lakas—isang pagpiling unahin ang katotohanan kaysa sa sariling damdamin.

Natutuhan ko ring piliin ang kapanatagan. May mga pagkakataong kahit anong paliwanag ang ibigay, mananatiling sarado ang tainga ng iba. Sa ganitong sandali, mahalagang alalahanin na ang sariling integridad ay hindi nasusukat sa paniniwala ng ibang tao. Ang mahalaga ay alam mo ang katotohanan at handa kang panindigan ito nang may dignidad.

Sa huli, ang “Ang Panig na Di’ Pinakinggan” ay hindi lamang kuwento ng sakit, kundi paalala ng pananagutan. Pananagutang makinig bago humusga, umunawa bago maniwala, at magmahal nang may paggalang sa katotohanan. Kung bawat isa ay maglalaan ng oras upang pakinggan ang kabilang panig, marahil ay mas kaunti ang masisirang ugnayan at mas marami ang mabubuong pag-unawa.

Ang buhay ay binubuo ng sari-saring kuwento, at bawat isa ay may dalawang panig—minsan higit pa. Huwag nating hayaang may manatiling tahimik dahil lamang sa pinili nating huwag makinig. Sapagkat sa pakikinig nagsisimula ang paghilom, at sa pag-unawa nagtatapos ang hidwaan. Ang panig na di' pinakinggan ay panig din ng katotohanan—at karapat-dapat itong marinig.



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Why Licensed Professional Teachers Deserve the Title “Tr.”

Titles influence how we view and value different professions. In daily life, they show competence, responsibility, and accountability. When we hear Dr., Atty., or Engr., we think of years of training, licensure, and ethical standards. Teachers, who help shape every other profession, deserve the same recognition.

That is why using “Tr.” simply stands for Teacher should be seriously considered as a title before the name of Licensed Professional Teachers (LPTs).

It is important to note that “Tr.” is only for LPTs. This title is used by people with formal qualifications. An LPT has finished the required education, passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers, and is committed to following the Code of Ethics set by the Professional Regulation Commission. The title is earned, not just given.

Some people might say that the LPT designation is enough. LPT is an important credential, but it is a title used after the name, mostly in official documents, records, and signatures. In daily school life, like in classrooms, meetings, or introductions, these titles are rarely used or noticed.

A title before the name works differently. When someone is called “Tr. Santos” or “Tr. Dela Cruz,” it is clear right away that they are a professional teacher. This title brings the idea of licensure into daily school life, where respect and authority are built through everyday interactions. In this way, “Tr.” turns the LPT credential into something people see and use every day.

Allowing only LPTs to use “Tr.” helps protect the profession’s integrity. It sets licensed teachers apart from those in informal or unregulated roles. Not everyone who teaches is a professional teacher, just as not everyone who gives legal advice is an attorney. The title “Tr.” shows regulation, accountability, and responsibility.

Titles are not just symbols. In schools and universities, they help set professional boundaries and build respect. The way teachers are addressed shapes how students see the profession. Using “Tr.” shows that teaching is serious, skilled work, guided by standards, ethics, and public trust.

Using a professional title for licensed teachers sends a strong message about how much society values education. Teachers help build the nation by shaping minds, values, and future leaders. Still, teaching has often been undervalued, even though it is vital for national growth. Giving licensed teachers a clear, visible title helps fix this and puts teaching on the same level as other licensed professions.

In the end, the difference is simple but important. LPT shows legal qualification, while “Tr.” shows that qualification in daily life. They do not compete with each other; they work together.

“Tr.” stands for Teacher, but it means a teacher who is licensed, professional, and accountable.

For this reason, if someone is an LPT, the title “Tr.” is not only appropriate but also deserved.



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The Road Less Travelled: Choosing the Accounting Education Field

Robert Frost's metaphor of "the road less travelled" aptly describes the path of Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) who choose to pursue a career in accounting education. In a profession widely associated with corporate success, financial prestige, and upward mobility, the academe stands quietly on the margins, essential, influential, yet often overlooked. While many CPAs pursue careers in public practice, industry, government, and consultancy, only a small proportion choose to enter the classroom. This reality is not coincidental; it is shaped by economic, institutional, and cultural forces that consistently draw professionals away from teaching. Yet, for those who take this path, accounting education offers a depth of purpose and impact that few other career tracks can rival.

Accounting education today faces a significant challenge. In recent years, there has been a decline in accountancy enrollment and CPA examination participation, both globally and in the Philippines. Data from professional organizations show that the number of CPA licensure examinees declined by approximately 30–35% between 2019 and 2023, reflecting a narrowing pipeline of future professionals (Association of Certified Public Accountants in Public Practice [ACPAPP], 2025).

At the same time, higher education institutions report increasing difficulty in recruiting and retaining qualified accounting faculty. Despite steady demand for accounting graduates, estimates suggest that only about 5.45% of CPAs pursue full-time teaching careers. At the same time, the majority are absorbed by commerce and industry, public practice, and government service (Cammayo & Gonzales, 2024).

This imbalance reveals a paradox: while the accounting profession depends heavily on education for its continuity and credibility, the academe remains one of its least chosen destinations.

One of the most influential factors discouraging CPAs from entering the academe is compensation disparity. Studies and institutional surveys consistently show that CPAs working in private industry, particularly in multinational corporations, shared services, and outsourcing firms, earn significantly more than their counterparts in academic institutions. In some cases, industry salaries are three to four times higher than entry-level faculty

compensation, even for new CPAs (Lived Experiences and Career Trends of CPAs Avoiding Academia, 2022).

For many professionals, especially those supporting families or repaying educational expenses, these financial realities heavily influence career decisions. While teaching offers long-term stability, its delayed financial rewards often make it a less attractive option during the early and mid-career stages of a CPA's professional life.

Beyond salary concerns, the qualification requirements for teaching present another significant barrier. Accounting educators are often required to hold graduate degrees, professional teaching credentials, and research outputs to qualify for tenure and promotion. In contrast, most accounting roles in industry and public practice prioritize professional licensure, technical competence, and experience, allowing CPAs to advance without additional academic credentials.

This structural contrast discourages many capable practitioners from transitioning into teaching. Research further indicates that less than half of accounting faculty members in higher education hold active CPA licenses, underscoring the difficulty of attracting practitioners into academia and highlighting the gap between professional practice and classroom instruction (Jordan & Clark, as reported in The CPA Journal, 2017).

Contrary to common perceptions, accounting education involves a demanding workload. Faculty members balance teaching, curriculum development, assessment design, research, accreditation requirements, community extension, and institutional service. However, unlike corporate environments where outputs are immediately visible and measurable, the impact of teaching is long-term and intangible.

This lack of visibility contributes to the perception that teaching is a secondary or fallback career, rather than a core professional pathway. As a result, CPAs who enter academia often do so not for prestige, but out of conviction.

Despite these challenges, a committed group of CPAs deliberately chooses the academic path. For them, teaching is not a compromise but a calling. They recognize that every competent accountant, auditor, and financial leader is first formed in a classroom. Accounting educators do not merely teach standards and techniques; they shape professional judgment, ethical reasoning, and public accountability.

Through teaching, CPAs extend their influence far beyond a single organization. One educator may shape hundreds of future professionals over a lifetime, creating a multiplier effect unmatched by most individual practice roles. In an era marked by automation, artificial intelligence, and increasingly complex financial systems, students need mentors who can integrate technical expertise with wisdom, ethics, and critical thinking—qualities best modeled by experienced practitioners in the academe.

The persistent underrepresentation of CPAs in education challenges the profession to rethink how success is defined. Financial reward and corporate rank, while important, are incomplete measures of professional contribution. Without educators, the profession risks weakening its foundation.

Addressing this issue requires systemic action: competitive compensation, flexible academic pathways for practitioners, stronger industry-academe collaboration, and greater recognition of teaching excellence. Elevating accounting education as a leadership role rather than a secondary option is essential to the profession's long-term sustainability.

The field of accounting education remains the road less travelled not because it lacks value, but because it demands sacrifice, vision, and purpose. While many CPAs build careers in firms and corporations, accounting educators build the profession itself. Every CPA who chooses to teach safeguards competence, upholds ethics, and preserves public trust. Though this road may offer fewer immediate rewards, it leads to the most enduring legacy. And in the life of a profession, that difference matters most.



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**Ship to Shore: The Unspoken Struggles
of Seafarers in Retirement**

Seafaring has become one of the most in-demand professions today. It offers not only a good income but also the chance to travel the world and meet people from different cultures while navigating across vast oceans. Life at sea is exciting and fulfilling for many people. But when it's time to retire, many seafarers have emotional and social problems that are often not talked about. It can be hard for them to go from living on a ship to living on land. They have to adjust from an active maritime career to a quieter home life, feel unproductive, or reconnect with family after years of being apart. Some retirees are even afraid that their partners will leave them or that they will lose their sense of purpose because they can't support their families like they used to. To help retired seafarers rebuild their sense of self, find balance, and enjoy life after the sea, it's essential to understand these problems.

Retirement marks the conclusion of the organized and regimented existence of seafaring life, characterized by clearly defined tasks, schedules, and routines. For many seafarers, leaving this structured environment makes them feel they've lost their way. At first, the freedom that comes with retirement may seem nice and well-deserved, but over time, it can leave them feeling restless or without a sense of purpose. Some retirees make this change without much trouble, especially those who saved and invested wisely while working. Some retirees, on the other hand, feel anxious and unsure, especially if they don't have much savings or don't know how to manage them well. This financial instability often makes it harder to deal with the emotional stress of adjusting to a new way of life, and being alone and isolated only makes things worse. When they are not on a ship, many seafarers feel lonely and isolated, which can lead to stress, anxiety, or even depression. This is because they don't have the daily routines, working together, and making friends that come with living on a ship. One of the hardest things for seafarers is to find a new routine and purpose at the start of their retirement.

Many retired seafarers feel less motivated, mainly because they think they aren't doing anything useful. Seafarers made a significant difference to their families' financial stability by sending money home while on long voyages. Retirement abruptly terminates this contribution, potentially leading to feelings of inadequacy. Many seafarers feel they've lost their identity as "breadwinners" when they can't provide for their families as they used to. This can lower their self-esteem and even lead to depression. Additionally, their specialized skills from years at sea may not be as relevant in a land-based setting, which can further a sense of irrelevance and social isolation.

Reintegrating into family life after years at sea is one of the most challenging aspects of retirement for seafarers. While they were away, their families, especially their spouses and children, learned to live independently and built routines that no longer depended on their presence. When the sea farers return home, it can be hard for them to fit into a family that has already gotten used to life without them. Spouses may have a hard time getting used to having their husbands around all the time, and kids may feel shy or distant because they only spend a short time together on shore leave. This emotional gap often leads to stress, tension, and misunderstandings at home. Many seafarers also feel guilty for missing essential milestones like birthdays, graduations, or anniversaries. After years of being used to independence and discipline aboard a ship, adjusting to family life where emotions, communication, and patience are constantly needed can feel overwhelming. It takes time, understanding, and open communication for families to reconnect and rebuild the bond that distance once tested.

Another challenge many retired seafarers face is being left behind by their partners or feeling out of place in their own relationships. After years away from home, some worry that their spouses have become too independent and may no longer need them as they once did. This fear often grows stronger with age, as health issues and physical changes begin to affect their confidence. Many recalls how, during their time at sea, they felt valued and appreciated, and were looked up to as providers. But in retirement, without the same sense of purpose, some begin to overthink and feel neglected or unimportant. This emotional insecurity can quickly lead couples to get angry, pull away from each other, or fail to understand each other. If left unaddressed, it can make the marriage more distant and tenser. As seafarers and their partners adjust to this new chapter of life together, they need to rebuild trust, communication, and emotional closeness.

Retirement is a significant change for seafarers, and it requires them to adjust their emotional, social, and mental health. From learning to live without the structure of ship life to dealing with feelings of unproductiveness, family problems, and fears of being left behind, each step of this transition tests their resilience. Strong support systems are essential to help seafarers navigate this new chapter without difficulty. Having access to counseling, healthcare, and sound financial planning can help them feel better about many aspects of their lives. Family, friends, and the community can also help them find new purpose through hobbies, small businesses, or volunteer work. By giving them opportunities to stay active and connected, we can ensure that retired seafarers adjust to life on shore with confidence, dignity, and a renewed sense of belonging.



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THE SOCIAL SIDEWALK

(Where Community Happens)

Sidewalks are not just for walking. They are where we become neighbors.

In the late afternoon heat of Naval, life spills out of houses and onto the path. Plastic chairs appear. Someone produces a pot of coffee. Children race between the adults' conversations. For an hour or two, the sidewalk transforms from infrastructure into living room.

I did not account for this in my assessment framework. There was no checkbox for "facilitates community gathering," no indicator measuring "strength of social bonds formed." And yet, watching these spontaneous gatherings, I knew I was witnessing something important, something that better sidewalks could nurture or destroy.

A sidewalk too narrow for chairs discourages lingering. A path without shade becomes unbearable in summer. Harsh lighting creates a stage where everyone feels observed. The design decisions we make shape the social possibilities of a space, even when we do not intend to.

The elderly depends on sidewalks differently than the young. For them, the morning walk is exercise, routine, connection to a world they no longer drive through. I met a man who had walked the same route every day for thirty years, past the church, around the market, home by noon. The sidewalk was his health plan, his social calendar, his measure of the day.

Children use sidewalks for play, which adults sometimes find inconvenient. But a neighborhood where children cannot play outdoors is a neighborhood losing something essential. The sound of laughter, the flash of running feet, these are signs of a healthy community, not obstacles to efficient pedestrian flow.

Shade trees do more than lower temperatures. They create stopping points, places where it is natural to pause, to rest, to encounter whoever else has paused. In my assessments, seventy-eight percent of sidewalks had no shade at all. We had engineered the invitation to linger out of our public spaces.

I came to believe that sidewalks should be designed for staying, not just moving. Benches, trees, adequate width, these are not amenities. They are the infrastructure of social life.

We walk to get somewhere. But sometimes, the somewhere worth getting to is right here, the neighbor we wave to, the vendor who knows our name, the child who asks us to watch her cartwheel.

The sidewalk holds us all.



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Sandalinayan Sirig sa Minilalansay Lena

Bantogen walking forward on the vast seashore, day and night looking for a place called Minilalansay Lena where he heard from the nori bird named Diwata ko Rendingan about the tale of a beautiful princess Sandalinayan Sirig. She was hidden in the island of Molopolo Legawan, tightly well-guarded, surrounded by howling winds, and encircled by a blazing blast of fire. No one is allowed to enter this island except her family in Minilalansay Lena. The Ayonan Mindamedag sworn that any datu who will enter this fortified isle, well-guarded by a blazing fire will be the husband of the fair princess.

The prince went through directly to this island. He caught a splendid sight of three walls surrounding the place and doors made of strong steel as he now climbed the stairs up to the waiting area of the lamin trying to spot the princess who lived away from her real home. A maidservant had spotted the royal presence of the prince, informing the royal princess about the arrival of this handsome prince.

The princess was now having doubts and feeling disturbed, hence her wise servant Kilaman invited the visitor to come in and betel quid was served, however the princess warned the prince to go back to where he come from for visiting the island is prohibited so that people would not know where she lives as sworn by his king. The princess suggested him to proceed down to Lalansayan a Lena to take his rest, willing to give him gifts and rare heirlooms to persuade him to leave, only considering him as brother, so as not to break the rules commanded by traditions. The princess futher added that if he would not take his leave, she will go down instead down to Lalansayan a Lena.

Immediately the prince asked permission to leave so now the princess commanded the palace maidservants to guard the lamin as she would be asleep for the mean time. In contrary, the prince did not go but instead, asked help from the Diwata ko Bembaran to adduct the princess all the way to Malinday Bembaran. Princess Lawanen, together with her look-alike Ikada, saw the enchantment of an object passing by in the air where Prince Bantogen alarmed her dear sister not to be frightened for the princess of Lalansayan a Lena whom he believed to be an asset and add to the fame of Bembaran so take care of her as he took his leave.

Meanwhile, the princess Salindayan Sirig has awoken from a deep sleep and her tears falling down. Ikada comforted her when Aya Paganay Ba'i, Walain sa Masamar, and Walain sa Poregen approached the splendid bed acknowledging her as high-ranking princess from pure ancestry. Ayonan Pangadapen formally addressed her about their plans to ask her hand for marriage where the ten boats were filled with rare treasures to be offered as dowry in Milalansay a Lena through Bantogen. Soon, the princess hesitantly agreed under certain conditions.



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The Art of Measurement

(What Numbers Can and Cannot Tell Us)

I spent months reducing sidewalks to numbers. Then I learned what the numbers could not contain.

Measurement is seductive. It promises objectivity, clear data, comparable metrics, defensible decisions. When I developed my assessment framework with seventeen indicators and weighted scores, I believed I was building a scientific tool. I was, and I was not.

Some things translate easily into numbers. Width: 1.2 meters or not. Slope: percentage grade. Lighting: present or absent. These measurements are clean, unambiguous. They can be gathered by anyone, compared across locations, tracked over time.

But how do you measure whether a sidewalk feels safe? How do you quantify the dignity of a smooth path for a wheelchair user? How do you capture the joy of a child running toward the park? The most important dimensions of pedestrian experience resist reduction to data points.

I chose seventeen indicators, but there could have been twenty or twelve or seven. Each choice reflected priorities, what I believed mattered, what stakeholders emphasized, what could reasonably be assessed. The framework was not discovered; it was constructed.

Weighting was even more explicitly a matter of judgment. When I assigned forty percent importance to the highest category and ten percent to the lowest, I was making value claims disguised as mathematics. There is no formula that objectively determines how much width matters relative to lighting.

This is not a flaw, it is an honest recognition that measurement is always interpretation. The danger comes when we forget this, when we treat our numbers as truth rather than as useful approximation.

What the numbers gave me was a language. When I said a sidewalk scored 2.3 out of 4, everyone could understand that it needed improvement. The specificity

enabled conversation, not about feelings, but about facts that could be verified and prioritized.

But I learned to pair every number with a story. Behind the 21% width compliance rate was Maria in her wheelchair. Behind the 93% inadequate signage was the accident waiting to happen. Data informed advocacy; it did not replace it.

The art of measurement lies in knowing its limits. Numbers are tools, not truths. They help us see patterns, make comparisons, track progress. They cannot tell us what to value or why we should care. For that, we need something measurement cannot provide.

We need each other.



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Inside the Accounting Classroom: The Students Behind the Numbers

This piece is an excerpt from the author's unpublished book on accounting education and student formation, forthcoming.

In accounting education, we often speak in numbers, grades, passing rates, retention percentages, and board examination results. Rarely do we pause to talk about the people behind those numbers. Yet every accounting classroom is not merely a site of instruction; it is a place where character, resilience, and identity are quietly formed.

To the untrained eye, accounting students may appear alike: serious, reserved, and disciplined. But years of teaching reveal a more complex truth. Each seat in the classroom holds a different story, stories shaped by economic pressure, family sacrifice, unrealized dreams, and silent perseverance. The accounting classroom, far from being mechanical, is deeply human.

There are students driven by vision, Dreamers who endure long nights of study because accounting represents hope and transformation. Some arrived reluctantly, guided by practicality rather than passion, only to discover later that meaning can emerge through persistence. There are working students and breadwinners who balance lectures with labor, learning not only accounting principles but also endurance, discipline, and humility.

Others stand out for consistency and excellence, admired for their composure but often burdened by an unspoken fear of failure. Some struggle openly, repeating subjects and questioning their ability, yet demonstrating courage by refusing to give up. Late Bloomers challenge our fixation on early success, reminding us that understanding develops at different speeds and that slow growth is not inferior.

Then there are students whose battles are invisible. Silent Fighters arrive prepared, meet expectations, and rarely complain, all while carrying emotional or family responsibilities few ever see. Overachievers juggle leadership, service, and academics with impressive energy, sometimes at the cost of their own well-being. Explorers push boundaries, asking difficult questions and seeking meaning beyond the syllabus, reminding us that accounting is not just technical compliance but a tool that shapes organizations and communities.

These “types” are not labels meant to confine. They are mirrors reflecting the many ways students survive, adapt, and grow. Most learners move between these identities

throughout their academic lives. What matters is not where a student begins, but how they respond to difficulty, feedback, and failure.

Accounting education, at its core, is formation. It shapes judgment, ethics, discipline, and resilience. When we reduce students to grades alone, we miss the deeper work happening quietly after failed quizzes, during late-night reviews, in moments of self-doubt, and in the decision to try again.

As educators and institutions, we must look beyond metrics. Rigor and standards matter, but so do empathy, mentorship, and understanding of diverse learning journeys. Excellence in accounting is not only about precision and performance; it is also about developing professionals who can endure pressure, act ethically, and remain human in a demanding field.

For students reading this, know that you are not behind because your path is different. Growth is rarely linear, and strength is often forged in struggle, whether you recognize yourself as a Dreamer, a Fighter, a Struggler, or an Explorer, or all of them at once, your journey is valid.

The accounting profession does not need identical graduates. It needs resilient thinkers, ethical decision-makers, and professionals shaped by experience as much as instruction. And those lessons, learned quietly in the classroom and beyond, are what truly prepare students for the world they will soon enter.



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Redefining Accounting Education in the Philippines: Why Educational Philosophy Matters

Discussions on accounting education in the Philippines often revolve around curriculum revisions, passing rates in the Certified Public Accountant (CPA) licensure examination, and the perceived difficulty of accounting programs. Yet one fundamental issue remains unaddressed mainly: the educational philosophy that governs how accounting is taught. Without a clear and intentional philosophy, reforms become superficial, and classrooms continue to produce graduates who may pass exams but struggle in practice or worse, lack professional judgment and ethical grounding.

Accounting is not a subject that can be mastered solely through memorization. It is a discipline that demands conceptual understanding, technical precision, professional judgment, and integrity. Unfortunately, much of accounting instruction remains trapped in lecture-heavy, exam-driven approaches that prioritize coverage over competence.

At its core, accounting education must be anchored in pragmatism, the philosophy that learning occurs through application and experience. Accounting standards, frameworks, and rules only gain meaning when students apply them to actual business situations. However, many classrooms still treat accounting as a purely theoretical subject, detached from the realities of Philippine businesses, public-sector accounting, and professional practice.

Students memorize standards without understanding their purpose, complete problem sets without context, and graduate without ever preparing a full set of financial statements based on real transactions. This disconnect partly explains why many graduates struggle during internships or in their first year of employment, despite years of formal education.

If we are serious about reform, accounting education must shift toward problem-based learning, case analysis, and simulations drawn from local and regional contexts. Accounting is learned by doing, not by passive listening.

Yet practice alone is not enough. One persistent weakness observed among accounting students, especially those who repeatedly fail the CPA licensure examination, is a reliance on mechanical learning. Students know the steps but not the logic behind them. This is where constructivism becomes essential.

Accounting concepts are interconnected. Assets, liabilities, equity, income, and expenses form a system, not isolated topics. Students must be guided to understand why transactions are recorded in a certain way, not merely how. When students grasp the logic behind debits and credits or the rationale of Philippine Financial Reporting Standards, they develop the analytical thinking required in both the board examination and professional practice.

Without conceptual understanding, students remain vulnerable, easily confused by unfamiliar problems, and unable to exercise judgment in the face of real-world complexity.

While innovation in teaching is essential, reform should not come at the expense of rigor. Essentialism, which emphasizes mastery of core knowledge and disciplined learning, remains non-negotiable in accounting education.

The CPA licensure examination exists for a reason: to ensure a minimum level of professional competence. Weak foundations in basic accounting, auditing, and financial management inevitably lead to high failure rates, not because the exam is unfair, but because the preparation is inadequate. Lowering standards or avoiding difficult material does not help students; it merely postpones failure.

Drills, frequent assessments, and high expectations are not signs of outdated teaching. They are safeguards against professional incompetence. There can be no meaningful judgment or creativity in accounting without technical mastery.

Another persistent weakness in Philippine accounting education is the gap between school and practice. Many graduates pass the CPA exam yet feel unprepared for actual work. This highlights the importance of experiential learning.

Internships, practicums, service-learning, and exposure to accounting systems should not be treated as mere compliance requirements. They are essential to the formation of professional judgment. Students must experience deadlines, documentation issues, ethical pressures, and the consequences of errors within a guided learning environment.

Accounting education must prepare students not only to answer multiple-choice questions but to function as professionals accountable to employers, clients, regulators, and the public.

Perhaps the most alarming gap in accounting education is the marginal treatment of ethics. In a country that has suffered from financial scandals, misuse of public funds, and weak institutional accountability, this omission is costly.

Humanism reminds us that accountants are not mere technicians. They are stewards of trust. Ethical formation must be integrated across courses, not confined to a single ethics subject. Integrity, accountability, and professional responsibility should be reinforced daily through case discussions, mentoring, and institutional culture.

Producing technically skilled but ethically weak accountants is not educational success; it is a societal risk.

The way forward is not the adoption of a single philosophy, but a deliberate integration: pragmatism for relevance, constructivism for understanding, essentialism for rigor, experiential learning for readiness, and humanism for character formation.

If accounting education in the Philippines is to improve both in CPA licensure outcomes and professional credibility, we must stop treating teaching philosophy as an abstract concern. How we teach determines what kind of accountants we produce.

In the end, accounting education must aim higher than passing rates. It must form competent, thinking, and ethical professionals worthy of the public trust placed in the CPA title.



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Restructuring the LET: Why Teacher Licensure Must Reflect Real Teaching

Every serious education reform begins with one fundamental question: Who do we allow to teach? In the Philippines, the answer lies in the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET). It is the state's assurance that teachers entering the classroom possess the knowledge, skills, and professional judgment required of the profession. Yet while classrooms have changed dramatically over the years, the structure of the LET has mainly remained the same. That disconnect is now impossible to ignore.

The current LET framework is uneven. Elementary teachers are examined in only two areas, General Education and Professional Education, while secondary teachers are examined in three, with the addition of a Major or Specialization. More troubling is that Professional Education, the very heart of teaching competence, is treated as a single, overloaded subject. This structure fails to distinguish between understanding educational theory and applying it in real classrooms.

A serious reform is needed, and it begins with restructuring the LET itself.

The Proposed LET Subjects

The solution is clear and practical. The LET should consist of three subject areas for both elementary and secondary teachers, with Professional Education divided into two distinct examinations:

For Elementary Teachers

1. Professional Education 1 – Theoretical Foundations
2. Professional Education 2 – Practical and Applied Areas
3. General Education

For Secondary Teachers

1. Professional Education 1 – Theoretical Foundations
2. Professional Education 2 – Practical and Applied Areas
3. Major / Specialization

This structure recognizes teaching for what it truly is: both an academic discipline and a professional practice.

Why the Current Model No Longer Works?

Under the existing LET, educational philosophy, psychology, curriculum theory, teaching methods, classroom management, and assessment are compressed into a single Professional Education test. The result is predictable: superficial coverage, limited depth, and weak measurement of actual teaching readiness.

Separating theory from practice allows licensure to do what it is supposed to do: determine whether a teacher understands why education works and can make it work in the classroom.

Aligning Licensure with Teacher Preparation

Teacher education institutions already make this distinction. Students take foundational courses in philosophy, psychology, and sociology of education, followed by applied courses in methods, assessment, technology, and teaching internships. Yet the LET ignores this structure, creating a mismatch between preparation and licensure.

A restructured LET restores alignment. It tells future teachers exactly what competencies matter, and it tells institutions how to prepare them more effectively.

Addressing Structural Imbalances in How Teachers Are Assessed

Equalizing the number of LET subject areas for elementary and secondary teachers is not cosmetic; it is corrective. Elementary teaching demands mastery of pedagogy, classroom management, assessment, and child development across multiple learning areas. Treating elementary licensure as less complex sends the wrong message about the profession.

Three subject areas for both levels affirm that all teachers are professionals, regardless of the grade level they teach.

What Each Professional Education Component Measures

Professional Education 1 – Theoretical Foundations should assess:

- Educational philosophies and Filipino educational perspectives
- Learning theories, motivation, and human development
- Sociocultural and historical foundations of education
- Education laws, ethics, and professional standards
- Curriculum theory, K-12 reforms, and global trends

Professional Education 2 – Practical and Applied Areas should assess:

- Teaching strategies and instructional planning
- Classroom management and learner discipline
- Assessment of learning and test construction
- Educational technology and digital teaching tools
- Inclusive education and special needs
- Practice-based cases, classroom simulations, and action research

Why This Reform Matters

This proposal does not make the LET more difficult; it makes it more honest. It ensures that passing the exam signals real preparedness, not just test-taking ability. It strengthens the credibility of the LET and protects learners by ensuring teachers are truly classroom-ready.

The Professional Regulation Commission and the Board for Professional Teachers must treat LET restructuring as an urgent professional reform, not a peripheral issue. Licensure exams define the standards of a profession. If we want higher standards in teaching, we must reflect them in the LET.

The future of Philippine education will be shaped by the teachers we license today. Reforming the LET is not optional; it is necessary.



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Love and Sacrifice: Her Timeless Legacy

'Twas a Sunday noon, our minds at ease,
Sharing hot meals, baraku aroma curling the air.
Children roaming, screaming, laughing free.
No luxuries to flaunt, just memories spoken aloud.

Sitting on the porch, coffee in our hands.
Stories rise as white strands are gently plucked.
Wrinkles may show, but her beauty shines through.
Etched in faith, each bearing quiet strength.

She raised me, now she's raising mine.
That foundation built on love, sacrifice, and wisdom.
With a melting heart, I gaze upward, awash in gratitude.
Sigh... I pray my daughter feels this, one day as a mother.
Thank you...mom!



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One CapSU, Rise CapSU: Caring for Our Campus, Caring for Our Future

Every morning, as I walk through the CapSU campus, I am reminded that climate change is not an abstract concept discussed only in conferences or textbooks. It is present in the heat we feel, the trees that struggle to survive, and the spaces that either absorb or emit carbon without us noticing.

As the Focal Person of the Climate Change Management Office, much of my work focuses on assessing the campus carbon footprint and estimating our carbon sequestration capacity. These assessments are not merely numbers on paper, they tell the story of how our daily activities contribute to climate change, and how our natural and built environments can also be part of the solution.

Our findings are both sobering and hopeful. Energy use, transportation, and waste generation contribute significantly to campus emissions. At the same time, our trees, green spaces, and soil serve as quiet allies, capturing carbon and helping regulate our local climate. This balance between emissions and sequestration shows us one clear truth: what we do as a campus matters.

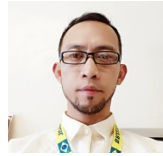
The banner “One CapSU, Rise CapSU” takes on deeper meaning when seen through the lens of climate science. Rising does not only mean academic excellence or institutional growth—it means rising to responsibility. When students choose sustainable practices, when offices reduce energy consumption, and when the campus invests in green spaces, these actions directly influence our carbon footprint and strengthen our capacity to sequester carbon.

Research becomes powerful when it leads to action. Carbon footprint assessments guide policy. Sequestration estimates justify tree-growing and conservation programs. Together, they help transform CapSU into a campus that does not only educate about climate change, but actively responds to it.

Our environment is not separate from our mission, it is central to it. The air we breathe, the shade we seek, and the resilience we build today will define the future we leave to the next generation.

CapSU can rise as a model of climate-conscious leadership, where science informs action, and where unity drives sustainability.

One CapSU. Rise CapSU. Green, Clean, United.



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CHEERS SA USA!

Cheers sa usa nga naghatag ug time,
Bisan walay balos, still stood in line.
Nga nangayo ug pasaylo, with voice so true,
Ug gipasaylo usab, with a promise to renew.

Cheers sa usa nga gibiyaan sa dalan,
Yet carried the pain, but moved on tanan.
Nga gihandom gihapon ang sweet memories,
Even when silence replaced old melodies.

Cheers sa usa nga nagtuo gihapon,
Though trials came, faith was never gone.
Nga mipadayon sa damgo, bisan walay kauban,
Still chasing dreams, bisan walay kasaligan.

Cheers sa usa nga milahutay sa kasakit,
Who fought through struggles, though body felt weak.
Nga nagpadayon sa kinabuhi nga lisod,
Spirit stayed strong, hope never eroded.

Cheers to you, sa imong kusog ug gugma,
You are the light in darkest drama.
Ikaw ang pahiyom sa kasakit nga gibati,
Ikaw ang kahayag sa akong kinabuhi.



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Sustainable Tourism Marketing: Balancing Visitor Attraction with Environmental Resilience in Coastal Destinations

Coastal areas have long been magnets for travelers seeking sun, sea, sand, and a variety of beach sports. This region is a principal breeding ground in many places. Countless scenic beaches and exciting cultures serve as the background for tourists who provide vital economic support. But rising sea levels brought on by climate change and the greater likelihood of flooding are threats these paradises, as it were, must address. Marketers continue to market the world's oceans as everyday yet ever-crowded resources.

As a resident of a small seaside town, I have seen this conflict between tourism and the fragility of nature. Each year, the tourist industry hits its peak as hordes of visitor's flock to our beaches, basking in the sun, dining at local restaurants, and taking part in water sports. Romantic images of surging waves and lively festivals fill both digital and traditional marketing campaigns, drawing visitors from all directions. But behind all these attractions lies the reality of aging infrastructure, with flood defenses ill-equipped to withstand the big storms driven by rising tides.

The task of tourism marketers and local authorities, therefore, lies in two distinct directions: on the one hand, attracting tourists; on the other, protecting this destination from environmental risks that could disrupt the industry. Sustainable tourism marketing has moved beyond simply promoting various attractions; it now aims to teach tourists about the need to preserve coastal ecosystems and to keep infrastructure that can withstand flooding in place. Many marketing campaigns today also communicate messages to visitors about responsible travel, urging them to protect natural defenses such as mangroves and dunes that help limit flood damage.

Moreover, investment in flood-resistant infrastructure is gradually reshaping the tourism industry landscape. Boardwalks raised above flood levels, improved drainage systems, and early warning alarms ensure security without sacrificing visitor satisfaction. Marketing stories incorporate these innovations into a larger narrative, extending the destination's commitment to sustainability and thereby building confidence among environmentally aware travelers.

Sustainable tourism practices are emerging alongside infrastructure improvements to reduce environmental footprints and enhance resistance. Coastal communities are promoting activities such as guided mangrove tours, coral reef conservation programs, wildlife protection initiatives, and so forth. These make an effort to take visitors deep into landscapes

and seascapes others have explored only from their luxury yachts, teaching them how life actually operates in such an environment, until, eventually, simplicity itself becomes mystically beautiful.

Local businesses are also adopting resource-efficient green operations. This might involve reducing water and energy use, cutting down on plastic waste as much as possible, or sourcing products locally to stimulate economic growth in the region. Hotels and resorts use renewable energy sources, such as solar panels. They incorporate rainwater collection systems. Through promotional activities, they make guests understand that by saving energy, water, or reducing waste at their level, they will be helping sick dolphins and turtles with sores on their flippers.

In addition, community participation plays a key role in sustainable tourism. By involving locals at various levels of planning and decision-making, destinations can confirm that, through tourism development, not only cultural heritage benefits but also local demands are met. Training programs for guides, hoteliers, and merchants focus on environmental conservation and disaster preparedness. By this means, we are nurturing a sustainable tourism workforce capable of bravely responding to flood risks, and that will not easily collapse under pressure.

There is one final point that I should like to make. Apart from the risk to infrastructure from flooding, this shift also makes the destination stand out in a competitive tourism market: hotels promoting eco-friendly operations and tour operators offering diverse educational nature tours can create genuine connections with tourists who value responsible travel. It is this that both diminishes influences on flood risks and reduces concrete outside the purview of its built environment.

In the end, controlling flood risks and addressing infrastructure challenges require an integrated approach. This should blend sophisticated tourism marketing with the concept of sustainable development. By implementing this, coastal communities can safeguard their natural resources, cultivate their economies, and provide unforgettable experiences. Tourism marketing becomes a tool not only for economic growth but also for resilience, advocacy, and stewardship ensuring that future visitors can continue to enjoy these fragile coastal areas.

Sustainable tourism, we have seen, should integrate flood risk management with high-quality, robust infrastructure development in fragile coastal zones. These measures both support local communities and protect ecological areas away from urban centers, benefiting future generations on which humanity's existence depends and ensuring that destinations remain vibrant with life. Under this comprehensive approach to integrating technology into urban-rural living, coastal areas will not only meet the challenges of climate change head-on but also become living laboratories demonstrating sustainable, resilient tourism.



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Entrepreneurial Innovation and Marketing Strategies: Building Sustainable Tourism Resilience in Biliran Province

Biliran Province, an unfamiliar name among the Philippines' islands but which can be known for its pristine waterfalls, untouched forests, and rich culture. Growing up so close to the island, I've only ever experienced how its natural and man-made treasures attract people in search of authenticity and unspoiled nature. But the enormous stress from tourism, along with planet-wide environmental destabilization, makes it clear that Biliran needs to reinforce its resilience through right-thinking and responsible tourism as it prepares for a better future.

Tourism has brought both profits and encounters to our community. On the other hand, it's a source of livelihood for locals, from homestays and handicrafts to guided eco-tours, preserving traditions and offering us an opportunity to tell our stories to the world. Balances of course, can cut both ways, as unregulated visitation to fragile ecosystems and cultural sites has proven. I remember colorful festivals spoiled by too many people and sunsets ruined by careless hiking. Their experiences emphasized the importance of a balanced development in ensuring Biliran's local distinctiveness.

Being proactive about tourism is prompting travelers to participate rather than observe. Local guides now also focus on the introduction of "leave no trace" practices and encourage visitors to get inspiration from wildlife habitats or cultural facilities. Residents learn life skills at workshops focusing on sustainable hospitality and taking care of the environment. These are the themes that sell tourism, drawing travelers to something not only eco-friendly but meaningful and engaged in conservation.

The basic strategy for Biliran's building resilience to climate change is to integrate wildlife and livelihood alternatives into community-based grassroots initiatives. In some of the barangays, people plant mangrove seedlings, which serve as effective natural buffers to the coast from storms and inundation. Such projects do more than just safeguard shorelines; they support the fisheries upon which many families rely. I've participated in those tree-planting efforts where young and old converged, a show of intergenerational shared dedication.

Local women's cooperatives are also stepping in, providing handmade souvenirs crafted from sustainable materials, including abaca fiber and recycled glass. By combining the development of these traditional skills with the promotion of tourism, local culture experiences economic and cultural affirmation. And training sessions on sustainable farming from no-till techniques to bio-intensive gardening methods are helping reduce agricultural runoff, keeping Biliran's fresh water supplies and coral reefs safe for divers and snorkelers.

In my discussions with local leaders, I have observed a common determination to combine culture and nature in infrastructure. For instance, community centers revisit vernacular architecture, combining modern materials and the traditional design. Paths and bridges are made of sustainable materials that match the surrounding environment so as not to disturb it.

Another interesting community initiative is organizing themselves into a local tourism council that includes government partners like the Department of Tourism and Department of Environment & Natural Resources (DENR), private businesses, and resident homeowners. This body coordinates events and implements environmental and heritage policies with a policy of openness to discussion.

Some of the government partners are the Philippine Tourism Authority and Economic Authority (PTEA) and the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA), who will help fund practices where stakeholders can extract benefits in terms of eco-friendly infrastructure projects beside livelihood for the community as well as other programs.

Biliran's path illustrates the people-centered, destination-marketing approach to resilience, making tourism work for sustainability. Responsible tourists, empowered communities, and environment-friendly infrastructure; a virtuous cycle of preserved environment and sustainable economy that is the envy of those who stay home to take in its beauty.



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The Cost of Growth: Environmental and Social Challenges of Condominium Booms in Philippine Tourist Areas

The Philippines, well-known for beautiful beaches, a colorful culture, and friendly locals, has always been popular among tourists across the world. But in many of its key tourist areas (which are its most popular destinations), a major development trend has begun to appear in the last few years, the sudden explosion of condo and high-rise projects. Today, giant buildings loom over once-pristine coastlines and evoke a range of emotions among locals, environmentalists, and visitors. This raises a crucial question: why are we allowing or approving this glut of condominiums in these high tourism areas?

The sudden proliferation of tourist destinations in the country has generated waves of entrepreneurship, especially in real estate and the hospitality industry. They are also tapping the boom to undertake hotel, condominium, restaurant and entertainment complex projects that further fuel the local economy through business service and job creation. This brings not only investment, but also drives local economies and forges new markets for traders and service providers.

But entrepreneurship here is not just about profit; it is also about community business and social conscience. Most local participants realize that sustainable development is the key to their future success. The capacity to reconcile economic and environmental imperatives also places demands on entrepreneurs and communities to develop green infrastructure, eco-friendly products, and sustainable tourism services.

Business owners, government agencies and community organizations are banding together to make sure that growth isn't had at the price of cultural heritage or ecological balance. Through such partnerships, development becomes inclusive, it generates economic gain while preserving what would otherwise be depleted natural assets that attracted tourists in the first instance in a way that is also supportive of local livelihoods.

In areas like Boracay, Cebu, and Palawan, developers are wasting no time cashing in on the tourism boom by building condos and restaurants and bars not just to have local buyers but also investors abroad looking for vacation homes or rental income. These projects offer significant economic returns, job creation, increased tax revenues, and a boost to local suppliers and services. Because the country depends so much on tourism as one of its largest

sources of foreign exchange, the government has tended to see these projects as essential locomotives for growth and modernization.

However, the rapid pace of coastal urbanization has given rise to several concerns. Greater land value can also displace indigenous communities and destroy existing ways of life. Environmentalists warn that such large-scale construction endangers fragile ecosystems, including coral reefs, mangroves, and wetlands that protect shorelines from erosion and flooding. Overdevelopment risks crumbling what fragile infrastructure maintains, increasing pollution, and eroding the natural beauty that brings tourists to visit in the first place.

In Boracay, the proliferation of new resorts and condominiums led to widespread environmental destruction. Once renowned for its white sand beaches, this island of ours closed down and had to undergo rehabilitation work in 2018 as a result of uncontrolled development and pollution a painful reminder that there's always something negative that comes with unchecked growth. In Cebu, within the province's barangays (villages) that dot the coast, community concerns over displacement and environmental damage have led to calls for more inclusive planning and transparent approval processes. On Palawan, what residents and activists have been trying to convey is that in the face of burgeoning tourism investments, threatened ecosystems are worth defending.

So why does the government keep approving these condominiums, restaurants, bars, tourist attractions, and other projects with obvious risk? One key factor is the pressing requirement for recovery and development of the economy. World events like the COVID-19 pandemic have derailed tourism-dependent economies like the Philippines, but they are eager to quickly recover. Condos, restaurants, bars, and visitor attractions all would amount to physical investments that pledge new employment, places to stay for tourists or foreign residents, and a flurry of recovered commerce. This also means that cities are under scrutiny to loosen zoning and building codes, which serves the interests of investors and leads to increased construction.

Nevertheless, official policies do recognize the need for balance. Environmental impact assessments for such projects (on the part of the DENR and local government units, with permits being required before a major development could go ahead) were mandatory. The steps to boost sustainable tourism include shore setbacks and height limits on building, as well as improving infrastructure. Yet overlapping jurisdictions, limited resources and competing economic interests contribute to uneven enforcement and compliance.

Parallel to this, the official policy also adheres to such approach although it recognizes the necessity of balance. These days for major developments to get off the ground, environmental impact assessments are supposed to be done and permits obtained, in entities like DENR or LGUs. Measures for enhanced sustainability, including setbacks from the shoreline and building height restrictions, as well as infrastructure improvements are also considered among those that would support sustainable tourism. But enforcement and adherence are patchy dulled by multiple jurisdictions, scarce resources, and competing economic interests.

Communities are increasingly vocal too. A strong local movement has arisen for providing a voice in the shaping of their environment and fate, both ecologically and culturally. In Cebu, it serves as an ever-present reminder of the efforts that local organizations and government units should do together to ensure that future developments are reflective of people's needs and also of how important protecting the environment is. A few local governments have led the way in framing development planning to consider ecology and include social equity. The problem remains balancing competing stakeholder needs so that burgeoning tourism does not come at the cost of a healthy environment or the health and well-being of locals.

Finally, the emergence of tourism developments in Philippine tourist destinations reveals a complex contradiction between the pressure for economic growth and the need to conserve both natural and resources. Although the government's endorsement is premised upon the potential for growth and recovery, it has to be balanced with strong regulatory backstops and consultation that actually makes a difference. For tourism to be sustainable as a major driver of the Philippine economy, there has to be strategic and inclusive development while protecting the environment. The entrepreneurial task is to advocate for business models which are themselves resilient and have investments reflecting sustainability, placing tourism as a source of economic recovery and safeguarding of environment. It is a strategic way for the industry to grow while communities maintain control of their cultural and natural resources.



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Combating Fear with Destiny

Thoughts from a full-blooded, sometimes amateur writer, and yes, a frustrated journalist.

It has always been my dream, since I was a child, to be part of the delegation team representing Laguna Province at the National Schools Press Conference. This year, it became my second time bringing a National qualifier from our publication after becoming a Paper Adviser in 2014. Even after all these years, the excitement never fades. When journalism season comes, it feels like the days jerk forward, rushing us to the contests, the workshops, the nerves, the adrenaline, the prestige of it all. I know my fellow SPAs feel the same way. As the cliché goes, "Journalism is life."

Looking back at my own history in journalism, I see now that fear has always been there, quietly waiting, testing my resolve. I remember clearly my first big break: I became part of the Region IV-A Editorial Writers for a week, but then it was taken away, abruptly, painfully, through a call from our supervisor. Fear knocked hard that day, whispering doubts, asking if I was really meant for this. Yet, something inside me said, this is your path, don't stop now. Destiny, it seems, was already nudging me forward, even through disappointment.

Yes, I was the first Miss Colombia Version 1.1, Campus Journalism Edition, back in RSPC 2002 in Lipa City, Batangas. But even that small recognition didn't erase the sting of setbacks. I was announced second place according to our Division officials. The good news was immediately shared with my principal and former SPA, and for a moment, I felt the rush of hope. I almost packed my things to fly to General Santos City for my first National conference. But life had other plans.

The next days were painted black and blue. Black, because on the very first day of my NSPC experience, my beloved grandmother passed away. Blue, because it was my last year of high school, and I doubted whether I could ever fulfill this long-held dream. My emotions were all over the place, grief, disappointment, fear, longing, but I didn't let it stop me. I learned early on that fighting for your dreams is not about avoiding fear, it's about stepping forward in spite of it. Fighting, that is the spirit.

Years went by, and I found myself guiding student-journalists, nurturing the very dreams I once held so tightly. I have been a School Paper Adviser for five years now, and yet,

every contest brings the same nervous energy, the same jaw-clenching tension, and the same thrill I felt as a student. From cluster-based contests to the national stage, the adrenaline doubles when the awarding finale comes, the moment where effort meets destiny, and dreams are validated.

Through these years, I realized something profound. I may not have become an NSPC winner myself, but I found something greater. Being a mentor, a coach, a guide to young writers and broadcasters fills my heart in ways I never imagined. I am living the dream, not as the student on stage, but as the person who gets to witness dreams unfold through others. The smiles, the excitement, the gratitude of students who achieve what I once hoped for, it is a joy beyond measure.

Happiness, I've learned, multiplies when shared. I've passed on my passion not only to my students but also to my own children. The sparkle in their eyes when they discover the power of words or the thrill of storytelling reminds me of my younger self, wide-eyed and hopeful. Who knows, maybe one day my son will be part of the CALABARZON team, representing our province at the NSPC, and we'll share that dream together, as teacher and child, as mother and mentor.

Looking back, I see fear everywhere in my story, whispering doubts, presenting challenges, threatening to hold me back. But fear is not my enemy. Fear is the signal, the reminder, the test. And destiny quietly guides us, opens doors, aligns paths. Combating fear with destiny is not about removing fear, it is about trusting that each setback, each heartbreak, each challenge is leading you to the place you are meant to be.

I think about my high school days, the grief over my grandmother, the missed opportunities, the endless "what ifs." And yet, here I am, mentoring students, shaping their journeys, and seeing firsthand the power of perseverance. Every struggle I faced prepared me to guide others. Every moment of doubt became a lesson. Every small victory became a reason to keep believing. Destiny works that way, it may not give you what you want right away, but it always has a plan bigger than you can imagine.

Journalism is more than writing articles or reporting stories. It is courage. It is empathy. It is resilience. Every student who sits before me learns not only how to craft an essay or conduct an interview but also how to face fear, to take risks, to trust their own voice. Combating fear with destiny is a lesson I live daily, not just for me, but for the students who will one day take the stage, hold the microphone, or hold a pen with confidence.

Now, as a mentor, I know that my mission is not simply personal success anymore. It is to inspire, to guide, to witness dreams come true. And in that, I have found joy deeper than any award. I am not just surviving the challenges of campus journalism, I am thriving in the legacy I help build.

In the end, my story is one of faith, perseverance, and love for the craft. Fear is never

permanent, and destiny has a way of showing up, often disguised as setbacks, heartbreaks, or missed chances. But it always leads us where we are meant to be. Every contest, every student, every lesson reminds me that fear is temporary, dreams are persistent, and destiny is patient.

As I continue this journey, alongside my students, my children, and the young writers who will follow, I am reminded that combating fear with destiny is more than just a phrase. It is a way of life, a testament to resilience, and a celebration of dreams that refuse to fade. Fear may visit. Doubts may linger. But destiny, quiet, patient, unwavering, will always guide us to the beauty of our journey.

And so, I move forward, grateful for every challenge, every victory, every student, and every word written. Combating fear with destiny is not just my mantra, it is my life. And I am proud to live it every day.



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**Empowering Educators, Enriching Education:
Faculty Immersion in BSHM**

Educators in hospitality education use strategic faculty immersion to gain firsthand knowledge of how the industry operates, as many aspects are not fully represented in books or classrooms. Hospitality Management (BSHM) programs offer educators a unique opportunity to gain firsthand experience in hotel and restaurant operations, creating a bridge between the classroom and the ever-changing realities of the hospitality industry. Faculty involvement in the day-to-day operations of hotels and restaurants enhances their teaching effectiveness. It creates opportunities to develop new curricula, strengthen partnerships with industry, and ensure quality, relevant education in this field. The educator's recent immersion in training multiple hospitality departments in the operation of a large hotel provides clear evidence of how firsthand involvement in hotel operations enhances teaching effectiveness.

Becoming educated and informed about how the various hotel departments operate is one of the key benefits of immersing educators in the industry. Seeing the inner workings of multiple hotel departments (i.e., Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage, Reservations, Guest Services) enables educators to better understand performance against operational standards in an industry where expectations are high and continually rising. In a recent immersion experience, one of our faculty members witnessed how guests were greeted, assisted, and farewelled, including the use of structured communication protocols and follow-up systems via Guest Experience Officers (GEO). This type of teacher observation gives educators greater ability to teach students how to perform service tasks by providing them with access to the processes and reasons behind each task, as outlined in each standard operating procedure. This level of understanding is fundamental in an academic program that seeks to prepare students for careers in service-oriented professions, where consistency and exactness are necessary for success.

Another significant advantage of faculty immersion is its enrichment of curriculum development. The hospitality industry is continually growing and changing: Today's hospitality industry is influenced by technological advancements, changes in customer preferences, and increased use of technology (the overall growth and use of technology in the hospitality industry). Faculty immersion experiences allow educators to witness the evolution as it occurs. For example, a faculty member who recently completed an immersion program witnessed how a newly implemented property management system more efficiently manages the reservation process, check-ins, and communication between departments. This experience helped her to recognize the importance of technology-oriented competencies in academic

programs to ensure that students remain competitive in the hospitality industry, where digital literacy is a must.

The insights gathered from this experience allow institutions to revise their curricula to align with industry standards and globally recommended practices. Through this immersive experience, educators are also given the chance to see firsthand the challenges involved in running the daily operations of hospitality employees. Observing tasks across departments enables the educator to understand each employee's workload, how departments interact, and how the hospitality business can maintain high levels of guest satisfaction despite numerous challenges and unexpected situations. One of the faculty members who participated in the immersion experience worked within both departments' operations and reservation departments and experienced firsthand how important Empathy, Attention, and Care are when responding to a guest inquiry. All of the above experiences demonstrate the importance of teaching not just the technical skills required in hospitality, but also how to develop soft skills, including communication, Emotional Intelligence, and service-related decision-making. Therefore, all insights from this experience should be taken into account when developing lesson plans to produce students who are adaptable, service-minded, and able to meet guest expectations.

The immersion experience for Faculty provides an opportunity to develop institutional relationships by connecting directly with industry partners, including hotels, resorts, and culinary institutions. Faculty members who establish these formal relationships are more likely to create sustained, mutually beneficial partnerships. These opportunities often result in more internship placement options, the establishment of joint training programs, guest lecturer sessions at a higher level, and joint research opportunities. The recent immersion experience is a clear example of how establishing formal partnerships through Memorandums of Agreement (MOA) provides avenues for ongoing academic-industry collaboration. Industry partners will also be more inclined to support student-focused programs and hire graduates prepared to meet the needs of the hospitality industry when they can see the faculty members' commitment to continually grow professionally.

Moreover, immersion experiences foster the development of the Faculty's professional identity and credibility. Hospitality students are more inclined to trust and become involved with Faculty who have industry experience. Faculty members can build more substantial student confidence and motivation by referring to the operating systems they use, the actual guest service scenarios they have encountered, and the techniques they have learned directly from industry practitioners. One of the faculty participants reported that the experience allowed her to develop a renewed alignment with her profession through observing best practices used by experienced supervisors and trainers.

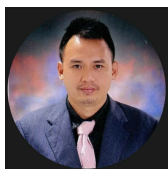
Not only did an increased level of confidence develop during the Educational professional's time in immersion, but it also provided them with real-world examples and information they can use in the classroom through discussions, lab activities, and simulated hotel environments. The contributions made through Faculty Immersion also help increase research productivity at an Institutional Level. During the Faculty Immersion process, Faculty

have access to the company's operational data, service innovations, and case studies based on real events, which could serve as the basis for Applied Research Projects. During the Faculty Immersion experience, the faculty member may explore several areas of Research, including Service Quality Enhancement, Technology Integration in Hotel Operations, Sustainable Practices, Indicators of Guest Satisfaction, and Employee Management, among others.

The outcome of this Research will be beneficial to the institution receiving the results, as it directly supports Institutional and Program Accreditation Enhancement and Academic Publishing, thereby assisting in creating both National and International Visibility for the BSHM Program. In addition, immersion experiences support Quality Assurance in the Field of Hospitality Education. Accrediting Agencies and Regulatory Agencies have insisted that the Faculty have Current Industry Experience. An Immersion experience serves as a measurable basis for the Faculty to demonstrate alignment with Current Industry Best Practices. For example, as a result of Faculty Immersion, the Faculty Member will gain an understanding of Department Procedures, Cleaning Standards, Guest Service Procedures, and New Hotel Technologies, which will serve as tangible evidence of Continuing Education and Professional Development in their respective Field of Study. The documentary evidence generated from these Experiences will meet the requirements for Accreditation Compliance, thereby providing a clear indication of the Program's Quality Indicators.

The faculty immersion program has a significant effect on student learning outcomes. The faculty member conducting the immersion training, for instance, learned about coordinating front-office functions, the flow of work in housekeeping and guest service areas, and the different ways staff are organized to accomplish tasks. Because of this immersion, the faculty member can provide her students with more stimulating, real-world, competency-focused training that equips them with critical skills and knowledge for careers in hotels, travel-related industries, and other service professions.

Overall, faculty immersion in the BSHM program has substantial benefits for both educators and students. The experience and training from the immersion program provide the educator with practical experience and exposure to operational procedures and standards, enabling the educator to provide a relevant, applicable, and practical learning experience for students. To respond to the ever-changing environment and evolving global standards in the hospitality sector, the BSHM program must incorporate an immersion experience into its strategy for producing knowledgeable and skilled professionals.



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The Role of Non-Institutional Correction in the Criminology Profession

The Professional Regulation Commission Board of Criminology has highlighted the basic competencies that Registered Criminologists must demonstrate in correctional administration. These competencies include, but are not limited to, the ability to understand, organize, and apply the processes of the Probation System from petition, investigation, grant, and denial or disqualification, to supervision, monitoring, violation of conditions, modification of conditions, suspension, revocation, trial, early discharge, and release of the probationer. This also encompasses a clear understanding of the roles of the probation officer, probation aides, and the victim or complainant in the probation process.

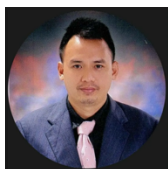
Similarly, Registered Criminologists are expected to understand, internalize, and apply the processes of the Parole System, including petition, review, and evaluation by the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology and Bureau of Corrections, investigation, grant by the Board of Pardons and Parole, denial or disqualification, supervision and monitoring, violations of conditions, changes in conditions, suspension, revocation, arrest of the parolee, early discharge, and eventual release. This competency also includes an appreciation of the roles of the parole officer and the victim or complainant in the parole process.

In addition, criminologists must understand, use, and evaluate various forms of clemency, such as Executive Clemency, including absolute and conditional pardons, commutations of sentence, and reprieves, as well as other relevant remedies granted by the courts. Other forms of clemency, such as the decriminalization of certain criminal acts, the repeal of penal or criminal laws, and amnesty, are likewise included. These competencies require familiarity with the processes and procedures governing grants, denials or disqualifications, supervision and monitoring, violations of conditions, changes in conditions, suspension, revocation, arrest of the grantee, early discharge, and release. Furthermore, Registered Criminologists must be able to apply relevant legal provisions on preventive imprisonment and allowances for good conduct, including the processes for granting time allowances, the requirements for granting such allowances, and the cancellation or revocation of such grants, as well as related provisions on the total or partial extinction of criminal liability.

These competencies are needed in shaping future leaders in law enforcement and corrections, as clearly stipulated in Republic Act No. 11131, otherwise known as the Philippine Criminology Act of 2018. The law recognizes that among the many career opportunities available to Registered Criminologists are positions as jail or correctional officers, as well as parole and probation officers who practice correctional administration through a community-based approach to rehabilitation. Given this mandate, criminology schools in the Philippines closely monitor the course outcomes of Non-Institutional Correction to ensure that students are adequately prepared for these professional roles. This area of correction emphasizes rehabilitation as an alternative to imprisonment.

The offering of non-institutional corrections in the criminology curriculum enables students to develop a broader, more humane perspective on the rehabilitation of criminal offenders. Understanding the key functions of non-institutional correction in the administration of justice is imperative. Through this course, criminology students come to realize that imprisonment is not the sole means of holding offenders accountable. Non-institutional correction offers several significant advantages. First, the family members of the offender are spared further hardship, as family structures remain intact and offenders can continue providing support. Second, community-based rehabilitation is often more effective because offenders are not further exposed to hardened criminals, recidivists, and delinquents who may reinforce a cycle of criminal behavior. Third, the high cost of imprisonment is reduced, which is especially beneficial for a cash-strapped government. This reduction minimizes the need for an extensive bureaucracy, including personnel salaries, benefits, and privileges; capital outlays; operating expenses; facility maintenance; and inmate subsistence. Lastly, community-based rehabilitation programs allow for public participation and monitoring, which can contribute to a more meaningful and sustainable process of life renewal for offenders.

In conclusion, Non-Institutional Correction as a course serves as an eye-opener for criminology students, particularly regarding their future employment opportunities as parole and probation officers. It enables them to realize that there are more effective and humane alternatives to institutional confinement. Through a community-based approach to rehabilitation, non-institutional correction promotes therapeutic modalities and restorative justice, basically contributing to a more balanced and humane criminal justice system.



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The Role of Forensic Medicine in Criminal Justice Education

Forensic Medicine is a branch of medicine concerned with the application of medical knowledge to legal purposes and the administration of justice. It entails integrating basic and clinical medical sciences, as well as paramedical practices, to clarify legal and investigative issues. In contemporary usage, forensic medicine is closely aligned with legal medicine, notably in the context of criminal investigations involving homicide, sexual offenses, physical injuries, drug-related cases, and other similar violations of law. The scope of forensic medicine is extensive. Medical practitioners engaged in medico-legal functions are expected to possess adequate knowledge of pathology, surgery, gynecology, toxicology, odontology, and other medical disciplines relevant to the matters under investigation. Fundamentally, medico-legal experts are mandated to assist judicial authorities by providing professional opinions on issues of medico-legal significance in support of the administration of justice.

In the current criminology curriculum, forensic medicine is a core professional course. This subject fulfills an indispensable function in promoting law and order and, ultimately, in the effective administration of justice. Medical practitioners are traditionally regarded as the most competent professionals to provide instruction and training in this field. However, there is a considerable shortage of medical doctors available to teach forensic medicine in criminology schools. Most medical practitioners are engaged in hospital-based practice or community health services, while only a limited number serve as medico-legal investigators. In the Philippine context, medico-legal investigations are mainly undertaken by the National Bureau of Investigation and the Philippine National Police. Due to the demanding nature of their duties, many of these practitioners are unable to participate in academic instruction. This situation potentially deprives criminology students of meaningful exposure to one of the most critical and highly sought-after areas of their professional education.

Registered Criminologists who serve as faculty members are generally not medically trained professionals; consequently, their capacity to teach forensic medicine is inherently limited. Given this reality, it is strongly recommended that

core faculty members, with adequate institutional support, undergo specialization training in forensic medicine as part of a comprehensive faculty development program. Such training, organized by recognized training institutions, is significant in equipping criminology faculty members with the technical knowledge, skills, and competence needed to deliver quality instruction in this field. This measure provides a practical way to address the limited availability of medical practitioners who can teach forensic medicine and to ensure quality in criminology and criminal justice education.

One of the various career opportunities for registered criminologists is service as police officers or criminal investigators. The forensic medicine course provides students with basic investigative competencies and professional orientation necessary for proficient practice in these roles. The level of expertise demonstrated by criminal investigators in forensic medicine is primarily determined by the quality of education and training they receive during their academic preparation. Moreover, the forensic medicine course provides criminology students with strong guidance and direction as they pursue careers in forensic investigation within the broader fields of law enforcement and public safety.



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Treasures Beneath the Nation's Roots

Before the travellers came from the seas
They were already here as old as the tree
With goddess guiding, with arts of their own
Their culture was planted the spirit had grown.

They are often overlooked, forgotten and rejected
Not knowing the gifts, they once had reflected
Discriminated against, judged, and feared
These are the burden their voices have seared.

The origin of the nation came from them
They are very promising though rarely seen
Staying in rivers, mountains, and fields so green
Living in fishing, hunting and planting trees.

Their lives flow in simple, carried by the breeze
Some are known for the shade of their skin
Some by their teeth, or the pain within
Different beauty, great diversities
This makes the country famed overseas.

Clothes with patterns, colors so bright
Symbols of cultures, pride, and might
Curly hair, pierced tongue, brave and true
Aetas, Igorot, Mangyan and Lumad too
Different groups but one in stand
United in spirit across the land.

Water from above, they will just dance
Abundant plants bring nature's chance
Whistling in hunts, herbs for medicine
Walking long miles, that's how they live.



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Indigenous people fought for their lands
The only true wealth that stayed in their hands
Their treasure, their happiness and their life
Yet stolen away through injustice and strife.

Mining destroyed the homes they knew
Their silence enforced, their numbers become few
Blinded by greed, reckless deeds they pursue
What our ancestors cherished is now deemed and doomed
But still, they hope and still pray to guard their heritage.

I once heard their laughter echoing through the trees
In the land once where the nation begins
A wealth they behold passed down from within
A strength that endures through longing and grief.

May we protect their land and name
And keep their stories with burning flame
For in their strength we clearly see
The beauty of life in simplicity.



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Perlas

Bughaw na tubig, sa buhanginan gumigilid
ginawa ng tinig pati lahat ng nasa paligid,
at sa munting sulok nga sa madilim na gilid
isang liwanag umakay saking pagmamasid!

Kulay mo nga'y hangin sa aking pangitain
dumampi sa puso't isip na parang awitin,
ako'y nagising dahil ito ang kumalabit sakín
kaya ang tanong, ano ka ngayon sa akin?

Noon ikaw sa isipan ko ay dumadalaw
Na parang binatang sa gabi nanliligaw,
bulong mo sa hangin sa tainga'y sigaw
sa aki'y isa kang perlas na nakakasilaw!

Kung sa lupang mabuti binhi ay nahasik
asahang malusog na puno ang siyang balik
Tutubong matibay at sa pag puri'y hitik
nitong mga puno na ngayo'y humahagikhik!

Sa pagtubo marahil di mo pa nga mabasa
tulad sa halamang tinatawag na kalabasa,
kaya huwag ng pansinin sinasabi ng isa
unawain nalang itong tulang binabasa!

Sa una nga'y bawat isa'y nag mamatigas
mahalaga ang sarili, sarili ang tagaligtas,
ng dumating at namagitan ang isang perlas
kami ngayo'y iisa sa mukha mo mamalas!

Ikaw nga'y aking laman at aking anak
Isang perlas na nag bigay ng galak,
Aming ramdam puso mo'y mabusilak,
Mamahalin mo kami kaysa mga pilak!



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A Poem for Someone

A birthday a year is a gift of joy
A smile, a laugh for you to enjoy
As days turn to weeks and months to years
Blessings are yours all through the years

When days are gray and life seems gloomy
Remember your loved ones as you pray
You can't hold all things in your palm all day
But you can always cherish collected memories

At 60 I wish you all moments of bliss
Just carry life's burden with grace and ease
Hold on to faith for life to live
A hundredfold of birthdays to celebrate



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Bangsamoro Athletes' Hope and Desire

To win in different sports competitions, athletes should have rigid trainings and practice in their own field of sports, the presence of standard and quality sports equipment and facilities with the guidance of sports professionals are valuable. Ever since, the lack of standard and quality sport equipment and facilities around the BARMM Region is one of the reasons why Bangsamoro athletes failed to advance or even win in the yearly competition in Palarong Pambansa in the country. In fact, there are many capable sports enthusiasts and professionals who are willing to teach, guide and train student athletes but because of the absence of the quality and standard sports equipment and facilities make them not to pursue.

Less support to both student athletes and coaches in their trainings by the proper authorities make them less also. Bangsamoro athletes and coaches are seeking for immediate attention and help. They need support for them to produce more quality athletes in the region who can manage to reach and compete in the international arena.

The goal to win reflects dedication and determination of supporting bodies to provide the necessary equipment, facilities and financial support to these people. Let's start investing quality services towards Bangsamoro people especially the youth who believed to be the hope of our fatherland. Bangsamoro athletes will win if the authorities will choose to help and support them in their fight. Let's unite and cooperate in helping and supporting the Bangsamoro athletes in raising our flag not just in the national competition but also in international stage.



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The Poem and the Man

I wrote a poem of love and life;
But I ended up a loveless life.
So I painted mountains, high and low;
But nobody viewed them the way I do.

I wrote a song of birds and trees,
With timeless words and melodies.
But friends and kins can't keep the tune,
They said they love to read a poem.

So once again I tried to write
A poem 'bout man, his joyful heart
Soon I discovered to my surprise
The world needs laughter and sheer delight.

I painted laughter in the man's eyes,
And made him humble, just and right,
And true enough, the world proclaims,
"If all men are the same, love reigns.