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## **Integrating the Spirit of Bayanihan in Teaching Contemporary Issues**

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### **ABSTRACT**

As the world is constantly changing, one cannot control what is going to happen in the society. Things might go different in just a split second. Philippines has always been a target by the nature, it is prone to natural calamities and disasters like typhoon, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. However, there is something in Filipinos that these phenomena cannot take away, and that is the spirit of “*Bayanihan*”. Meanwhile, from time to time the spirit of “*Bayanihan*” is being forgotten and neglected by the people, especially the younger generations. The purpose of this study was to document and assess the integration of the spirit of “*Bayanihan*” in teaching contemporary issues, to develop lesson exemplars as recommendation, and to re – set up and reaffirm the spirit of “*Bayanihan*” to its previous radiance. Through the utilization of the locally constructed Informant Interview Guide with the process of interviewing, information and data were gathered simultaneously. Thematic analysis was also used and maximized to unravel several underlying themes and codes behind the foreshadowed problems. The researcher found that there was a lack of integration between the teachers and the students, the informants’ perceptions about “*Bayanihan*” revealed that it is too low and too shallow and will fall into the concept of synergy. However, the teachers’ put the spirit of “*Bayanihan*” in the concept of heroism. The study also revealed the different strategies, techniques, and approaches used and suggested by the teachers as part of the integration process, such as the use of personal experiences, valuing, and art of questioning. The study also showed the understanding of both teachers and students about the essence of “*Bayanihan*” in teaching and learning. The data showed that the teachers understand the importance of integrating it, because of its spirit. The teachers justified it as the reason to revive and to preserve it as one of the Philippine’s cultures, while the students understand the essence of learning “*Bayanihan*” for the formation of one’s whole characteristics. It is evident that the integration of the spirit of “*Bayanihan*” must be done in teaching contemporary issues. More so, the study also prevailed the opportunities of integrating it in teaching, based on the gathered data, the teachers saw it as an opportunity for unification. In addition, the study revealed that it

can make the next generations cooperate with their fellowmen, making the society united by helping each other, contributing to the community to make a better nation. Furthermore, the students saw it as an opportunity for progression. The findings revealed that the students focused on the benefits of it, and it is about the development of a person and one's relationship in the community. More so, the findings also revealed that the teachers experienced hindrances in terms of attitude, attention, personality, awareness, and understanding of the students regarding of the spirit of "*Bayanihan*". As regard to this, the researcher proposed lesson exemplars that can be used in integrating the spirit of "*Bayanihan*" in teaching contemporary issues. Based on the conducted interview, the researcher developed lesson exemplars that follows the strategies, approaches, and techniques shared by the teachers. Most importantly, the lesson exemplars were also created to address the challenges in integrating the spirit of "*Bayanihan*" in teaching contemporary issues.

**KEYWORDS** – *Bayanihan, Contemporary Issues, Integration, Heroism, Techniques, Strategies, Opportunities, Unification, Progression, Hindrances, Lesson Exemplars, Revive, Preserve*

**INTRODUCTION (Font: Times New Roman, Bold, Size 10. Roman Numeral/Letter for Header is optional)**

As the world is constantly changing, one cannot control what is going to happen in the society. Things might go different in just a split second. In this context, the Philippines has always been a target by the nature. It is prone to natural calamities and disasters like typhoon, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions. However, there is something in Filipinos that these phenomena cannot take away, and that is the spirit of Bayanihan. Bayanihan is foremost among Filipino values. According to Menguin (2022), Filipinos believe that together, they can survive and thrive. He also added that fellow Filipinos will unite to help those who are in need especially on times of crises. Mixed culture (2013), stated that the concept of Bayanihan could be traced back in a country's tradition, which can be observed in rural areas. In early years, Filipinos were helping each other especially when moving one's house (*bahay kubo*). Evidently, town's people were asked especially the men to lend a hand to a family who will move into a new place. Indeed, the Bayanihan spirit shows Filipinos' concept of helping one another most especially in times of need without expecting anything in return. Historically, tracing back the Filipino roots, they started sailing together as a family. In fact, according to Encyclopedia Britannica (2015), *Barangay* is the type of early Filipino settlement; it is derived from the word *balangay*, which is the name for the sailboats of Filipino families. Each boat carried a large family

group, and the master of the boat retained power as leader, or Datu of the village established by his family. This strengthens the claims on how Bayanihan has been a vital cultural brand of the Filipino people. It is also noteworthy that from time to time, the spirit of Bayanihan was being forgotten and neglected by the people especially the younger generations. According to the article of Pinoytimate Traditions (2017), Bayanihan is considered to be the core essence of the Filipino spirit sometimes referred to as community spirit. However, it can be assumed that in these days, the said spirit is, little by little, not evident at all. As the world is changing, the values among the Filipinos also change- from being a family centered to becoming a more self-centered person. One of the findings of the author was crab mentality that could mean that Filipinos have no participation and cooperation like crabs in a pail. The idea is to get more distant in life, one ought to venture on other individuals and utilize them for one's own particular advantages. Specifically, during the Typhoon Yolanda, as cited in Inquirer (2013) looting erupted in Tacloban City. People were being greedy for their own sake. Kenneth Uy, the owner of Asia Star Hotel, said the scene was chaotic and it was anarchy. The looting spread to other places, including fast-food chain branches and shopping centers. The inquirer added that even huge televisions were being looted. Another incident was during a looting over a fallen truck filled with beer in NLEX, according to the inquirer (2016), the helpless driver watched in horror as dozens of men ran away with cases of beer from his truck. Sadly, Filipinos today were being selfish instead of helping their fellowmen. As a matter of fact, research shows that the volunteerism within the Filipinos were getting lower and lower. According to National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) as cited by Rappler (2013), the growth rate of volunteerism among households has declined from a high of 10% in 2008 to only 3.1% in 2012. For instances people from both urban and rural areas were being busy for their job and they do not have time to help other people. Some of the cases are during a rush hour commuter tend to be fighting for the access of public utility vehicles instead of cooperating in falling in line and be courteous to other commuters. Moreover, according to Jan (2019), Filipinos are being selfish, greedy and aggressive. He emphasized the traffic condition in public highways as Filipinos drive aggressively and take for granted almost every opportunity to slip through just to get to their destination without thinking about other people or the safety of the passengers. Relatively, many of the younger generations were not aware of the spirit of Bayanihan as they do not fully understand the its significance. As a matter of fact, according to Jan (2019), Filipinos have a lack of education and awareness which justifies the lack of patriotism in the community itself. For example, many Filipinos were being corrupted by the system in politics because of their selfishness like the Pork Barrel Scam of 2013, and yet Filipinos still voted for the politicians involved in the scam. On the other hand, the eighteenth congress enacted the republic act no. 11476 on June 25, 2020 or the act institutionalizing good manners and right conduct and values education in the K to 12 curriculum. Under Section 2 of the said act, the states recognize the

vital role of the youth in nation-building. The state also recognizes the fundamental role of all educational institutions in the inculcation of patriotism and nationalism, fostering of love of humanity, respect of human rights, appreciation of the role of modern-day and national heroes in the historical development of the country, teaching the rights and duties of citizenship, strengthening ethical and spiritual values, developing moral character and personal discipline, encouraging critical and creative thinking, broadening scientific and technological knowledge, and promoting vocational efficiency. In relation to the enacted law, patriotism and nationalism should be inculcated among the youth together with encouragement for their involvement in public and civic affairs. It is very timely and ideally to integrate the spirit of bayanihan in teaching contemporary issues as it was mandated by the state. True to this, this study will be a big contribution in realizing the holistic goal of the law.

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

## **METHODOLOGY**

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

The researcher used the in-depth interviews in conducting the study and finding the answer to the foreshadowed problem of the study. In fact, Guest et. al. (2005) stated that in-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, mainly when sensitive topics are being explored. The research used the interview approach in analyzing and assessing the process of integrating the Spirit of Bayanihan in teaching Contemporary Issues. The researcher conducted the interviews and data gathering in line with the qualitative approach using the informant interview guide. The interview guides are formed based on the foreshadowed problem. The collecting and gathering of factual data were performed through the interview and observation process. The data that were gathered from individual interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded using Microsoft office application. The data were analyzed and summarized correctly and properly. The entire data analysis undergone a thematic analysis process. As stated in the study of Allen (2017), researchers conducting thematic analysis look for recognizable reoccurring topics, ideas, or patterns (themes) occurring within the data that provide insight into the situation. Often, a researcher may choose to conduct a thematic analysis when investigating a phenomenon for which little prior understanding exists. Flexible by nature, a thematic analysis may be used to uncover issues, problems, similarities, and differences as applied to the situation. Allen (2017) added that thematic analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of the overall experience of an event. Furthermore, Caulfield (2019) stated that thematic analysis is an excellent approach to

research when you're trying to find out something about people's views, opinions, knowledge, experiences, or values from a set of qualitative data, for example, interview transcripts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The need to integrate the spirit of “Bayanihan” is evident in the study. As the DepEd curriculum guide in social studies stated, the mission of social studies is to make sure that the students will understand the duties as a Filipino citizen, who will participate in society, who will understand the history and its significance in the community. This was supported by various literatures presented in the previous chapters of this qualitative research. The study focused on the perspectives of the informants about the “Bayanihan”, together with the opportunities and challenges of integrating it in teaching Contemporary Issues subject. Using qualitative approach, the study also examined the views of students and teachers about the meaning of “Bayanihan”. Moreover, using interview method, the researcher also analyzed the strategies used and suggested by the teachers for integration of the spirit of “Bayanihan”. Lastly, the study used the gathered data in developing the lesson exemplars as the output of the study.

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

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

### 1. How may the informants view the word Bayanihan?

The word “Bayanihan” was described and defined based on the responses and statements of the informants in the recorded personal interviews conducted by the researcher. The meaning of “Bayanihan” was categorized by the teachers in terms of cooperation, volunteerism, teamwork, alliance, and culture. In addition, the teachers have a deep understanding regarding on the spirit of “Bayanihan” compared to the students.

The perceptions of the informants on the word “Bayanihan” were systematically described and revealed in the thematic analysis. The various themes underlying in this question were:

1. Act of Heroism – In the study, “Bayanihan” was described as an act of heroism. It was deeply rooted in the Filipino culture of teamwork, willingness to help, and eventually ended with a strong tie of friendship. The teachers claimed that it is not only about helping each other, but as Filipinos, considering our culture, it is also about how one can include himself as a part of the society. The insights and statements given by the teachers were covered by the underlying theme.
2. Cooperation resulting to Synergy – This theme discussed the need for cooperation, participation, and unity of the entire community or society. The results of the study revealed that most of the student-informants have lower and narrower view on the definition of “Bayanihan”.
3. Bayanihan Delineated – The gathered data revealed that there is a gap between the students and their perception on the essence of “Bayanihan”. This theme discussed the gap between the answers of teachers and students based on the foreshadowed problem.

2. How may the spirit of Bayanihan be integrated in teaching contemporary issues?

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

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

3. How did the teachers understand the essence of Bayanihan in teaching?

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

1. Preserving the Spirit of Bayanihan – This theme mainly focuses on how the teachers understand the essence of “Bayanihan” in teaching. It was stated here the importance of integrating it on daily lessons. In chapter 4, it was revealed that one of the essences of it is about reviving the spirit of “Bayanihan” and preserving it as one of the Philippines’ cultures.

4. How did the students understand the essence of Bayanihan in their subject?

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

1. Formation of values – The gathered data revealed that the essence of integrating the spirit of “Bayanihan” is important in the development of the whole characteristics of the students.

5. What are the opportunities and challenges of the informants in teaching and learning the spirit of Bayanihan in contemporary issues?

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

1. Unification through the Spirit of Bayanihan – From the definition of the act or instances of joining two or more things into one, the researcher came up with the theme,

unification. This theme discussed the opportunities of “Bayanihan” in the teachers’ perspective.

2. Solidifying the progression of the Spirit of Bayanihan – This theme presented the perspectives of the students about the opportunities of integrating the spirit of “Bayanihan”. In the study, the student informants focused on the benefits of it, and as a result, the answer given by the students were about the development of a person and one’s relationship in the community.
3. Hindrances in the integration of Bayanihan – The findings revealed that the teachers experienced challenges in terms of attitude, attention, personality, awareness, and understanding of the students regarding in integrating the spirit of “Bayanihan” in teaching contemporary issues.

6. What lesson exemplar can be proposed that strengthened the spirit of Bayanihan in teaching contemporary issues?

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

## **CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

As the world is constantly changing, and the kind of students changes over time, the teachers must address and adapt to these changes made by the rising of social media. As the researcher dived deep in the study, it was found out that there is a gap between the students and the spirit of “Bayanihan”. The related literatures showed the different statements and scenarios to justify the claim of the researcher. In fact, according to the teachers, when asked if they view the spirit of “Bayanihan” in the students, they claimed that it was seen seldom and sometimes not. Another thing, as stated by teacher informant 6, (Sad to say, the students were not knowledgeable about “Bayanihan”, but if it us, if we inculcate it in our school and parents, maybe they will understand more the importance of “Bayanihan”). This means that there is a lack of integration of “Bayanihan” in the students, in fact, based on the findings of the researcher about the definition of “Bayanihan” in the perspective of the informants, there is a gap, it was clearly seen based on the understanding of the students. The students gave narrow

answers compared to the definition given by the teachers meaning there was a lack of understanding on the students' side. The findings are crucial as it revealed the essence of "Bayanihan" not only for an individual but also for the betterment of the society, as the students will be the next leaders and members of the society. And as the next generation to handle the society, the students will be the bearer of the culture and will continue to pass the spirit of "Bayanihan". Certainly, according to the teachers, it must be started with students, through integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" in teaching contemporary issues. Therefore, it must be integrated and it must be well – planned and well – prepared through lesson planning and strategizing the learning development of the students. The examples of strategies that are useful for the integration are experiential learning, group work and of course, student - centered learning approach. In turn of this, study also unraveled that integrating the spirit of "Bayanihan" will give opportunity not only to the students but the whole society in terms of unity, patriotism, inspiration, camaraderie, nationalism and solution to the problems will be faced by the community. In addition, it can also be an opportunity for cooperation, communication and development of the students within the society. The findings are also important in determining the challenges, as the teachers face problems in terms of the attitude and personality of the students, while other don't give their attention to the lesson, awareness and understanding also plays a big factor in integrating the values needed. The rise of social media also plays a vital role in the development of the students, and the teachers should address it in the lessons and use it as a tool for the integration. With all, the researcher made and developed lesson exemplars that address the challenges in integration of the spirit of "Bayanihan" through the strategies suggested and given and also from the related theories, literatures and studies presented in the study.

## 1. Academe

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

## 2. Social Studies Educators

In accordance to the findings of the study, social studies teachers should integrate the spirit of “Bayanihan” in teaching contemporary issues, consequently, the researcher suggested the lesson exemplars which was presented in the previous chapter. Also, the teachers should innovate strategies that will enhance the integration of the spirit of “Bayanihan”. More researches should also be done to improve the quality of education and remove the gap between the students and their learning development.

### 3. Policy Makers

This study could also be a reference for the policy makers as the concern of the study is not only the school but on how the students can be a productive member of the society as they learn the spirit of “Bayanihan”. The policy makers should make programs that will engage the schools in the community and vice – versa. In fact, one of the findings of the study is about collaboration, meaning, the schools together with the policy makers and officials should collaborate with each other for the betterment of the students as they become the next leaders of the society.

### 4. General Public

The informants stated the essences and opportunities of “Bayanihan” for the students and for the community. With the help of school officials and local governments, the public should also be educated regarding the importance of the spirit of “Bayanihan”. In the society, it is also a product of collaboration and cooperation as based on the study. The schools should make awareness campaigns that include the students as part of the lessons, so the students and the community can be more knowledgeable about the different issues in the environment.

### 5. Academic Researchers

This research could be a big help for future researchers with social studies and “Bayanihan” as the subjects. Since this research determined the integration of the spirit of “Bayanihan” at the same time, new researches could be created which can further increase and support the findings of this study. On the other hand, they could focus on another perspective or change the subject to other values to be integrated.

## 6. Health Sector

This research also found out that some students suffered oppression and personal problems. With this, the health sector together with the right government agencies can create an intervention program or policies to help the students in need.

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