



Introduction

This 2010 issue of *Alipato, a Journal of Basic Education* features eight articles on research studies that will both inform and inspire, and even challenge the readers, especially those in basic education.

The first two articles provide deep insights about the important role of teachers and environmentalists in promoting environmental care.

In her paper, "Childhood Experiences of Filipino Environmentalists: A Guide for Developing Environmental Sensitivity," April Lou P. Recuenco points out that environmental education is an essential component in the youth's total enlightenment and that educating them early on environmental matters will ensure that they can be good stewards of nature. Thus, her study investigated the lives of a number of renowned Filipino environmentalists to determine what childhood experiences significantly helped develop their sensitivity towards the environment, and which among these experiences influenced their choice of environment-oriented careers. Respondents for this study were 47 Filipino environmentalists purposely selected across three different sectors: government organizations (GOs), non-government organizations (NGOs), and the academe. The data were gathered through survey, case study with interview, and focus group discussions (FGD). The survey questionnaire and interview guide, which are both researcher-made and expert-validated, served as primary instruments. The results of the study showed that Filipino environmentalists generally consider their childhood experiences as the developmental foundation for their environmental sensitivity. Majority of them identified multiple sources of influence such as life experience in a natural environment, education, people, membership in organizations, negative experiences, and media. They also mentioned that later formative experiences beyond their childhood years were significant. To ensure that environmental education will achieve its ultimate goal of educating the youth, the respondents stressed the value of personal and professional development of teachers along the discipline.

Based on an ethnographic study, Maria Mercedes E. Arzadon's paper, "Teacher-Intellectuals and their Counter-Discourses on Environmental Care," explored the construction and inculcation of environmental care discourses appropriated by a group of teachers who led a community in reviving a dying river and installing a sustainable waste management program. The teachers, along with the community, generated counter-discourses to the dominant techno-managerial environmental discourse. The counter-discourses presented environmentalism as spiritual and communitarian in nature. In this context, the teacher participants took on the role of exemplar, value formator, community organizer/mobilize, and non-formal/informal educator. The study recommends that teachers must take the role of intellectuals who are able to develop critical mode of thinking and take part in promoting reflective and transformative action.

The third article, "Kasaysayang Bayan at Tradisyonal na Kasaysayan: Epekto sa Nasyonalismo at Pambansang Identidad ng mga Mag-aaral," was written by a Social Studies teacher, Czarina B. Agcaoili, who made an experimental study on two approaches in teaching Philippine history - "tradisyonal na kasaysayan" and "kasaysayang bayan" – and their effects on the nationalism

and national identity of 62 students in grade 5. The respondents were divided into control class that was taught in "tradisyonal na kasaysayan" and experimental group with "kasaysayang bayan" as teaching approach. Historians and history teachers were also interviewed about the two approaches. Both qualitative and quantitative data obtained showed significant differences between the two approaches with regards to concepts, periodisation, and emphasis on events. There was a slight difference on the thoughts and attitudes of the student respondents, with "kasaysayang bayan" showing more positive effects on the students' nationalism and national identity.

The next two articles focus on two qualitative studies on guidance and counseling.

Catherine O. Espero and Mary Grace D. Espinosa observed that many elementary school students report about bullying of fellow classmates while teachers also report conflicts among students during their classes. Thus, their paper "Concepts and Experiences of Bullying in the Elementary Level" aimed to find out the views of elementary students regarding bullying, the incidence of bullying, and the common forms of bullying experienced by the students in the school. All grade 3 to 6 students were asked to rate 50 statements on bullying, and a Thurstone-type scale was developed to identify possible bullies and victims. It was found out that the respondents were generally aware that bullying happens in school. They believed that bullying consists of fighting someone who has not done anything wrong to the bully, and that bullies are usually the older boys in school who have favorite victims while the victims are usually the meek, unassertive and unpopular students. The grades 4-6 students showed a more confident agreement to the statements about bullying, while the grade 3 students gave tentative and varied responses may be because they have not been exposed to many cases of bullying. Based on the Thurstone-type scale, most of the respondents were found to be too sensitive on the issue of bullying and have a tendency to feel being bullied often. No one came up as a possible bully or insensitive to the issue of bullying. However, it was also found out that only a handful from the cases reported to the Guidance Office can be considered as bullying, while the truly bullying cases involved both physical and verbal aggression and relational/social bullying.

"Applicability of the 'Constructed Model of Counseling Filipinos Briefly' to High School Students" is a study which Maria Carmina R. Letargo conducted to determine how applicable Tanega's model of counseling Filipinos briefly to selected sophomore students with academic problems. Her research instruments included a pretest questionnaire given prior to the initial counseling session, and a posttest and follow up questionnaire used after six counseling sessions. The results of the study revealed that the counseling sessions were able to help the respondent students cope with their academic problems to some extent, as manifested in the improvement on their grades. The author recommended that further studies using this model be made as it could be an alternative strategy to the western approaches inasmuch as it was developed with the Filipino traditions and values in mind.

The last three articles present in-depth discussions on different topics.

In "Values/Moral Education: Current Conceptions and Practices in Philippines Schools", Michael Arthur G. Muega offers some fresh insights about values education in the country. His study aimed to find out the Philippine schoolteachers' conceptions of Values/Moral Education in terms of its perceived purpose and content. He found that although most of the teacher respondents claimed to have a conception of Values/Moral Education as a case of critical thinking about evaluative issues, others think that it is basically a case of values transmission/ inculcation. Mr. Muega argues in this paper that Values/Moral Education in the Philippines should be construed as a case of critical thinking about evaluative issues. He adds that this conception entails a shift from mere values transmission/inculcation, intended or unintended, to the argumentative method of instruction and learning.

Michael Angelo E. dela Cerna's "Umiiral na Rehistro ng Filipino sa Pahayagan: Gabay sa Pagbuo ng mga Tuntunin sa Pagbaybay ng mga Hiram na Salita" is an attempt to help in the efforts being made by language teachers and language planners towards standardization of Filipino language, specifically on its orthography. As such, the author studied the written registers of six Filipino tabloids with wide publication to find out (a) the prevailing styles of spelling borrowed words, and (b) the consistency of the written styles. The study found out that the tabloids borrow English words widely and consistently spell them in original form, especially in sports and show business. In news articles and editorials, the spelling patterns of Filipino words borrowed in English and Spanish are not consistent. Reduplications patterns and use of suffixes in borrowing words were also established. Based on the results of the study, the author suggested some guidelines on how to spell borrowed words.

Finally, Maricris B. Acido's "High School Students' Reasoning Skills and their Study Habits and Attitude Towards Learning" is a study of high school students' reasoning skills and their study habits and attitude towards learning using mixed-method design. The reasoning skills of the respondent students' were gauged, through content analysis of their arguments on a specific issue, by three raters using researcher-made and expert-validated reasoning skills template. Expert-validated questionnaires were used for data on students' study habits and attitude towards learning. Interviews were also done on philosophy and education experts to gather more insights. The data results present baseline data on students' reasoning skills, and show correlation of better reasoning skills with good study habits and positive attitude towards learning.

It is again hoped that through these articles, ALIPATO can continue to encourage and motivate more teacher-writers to share and disseminate their research findings on basic education.