

Imperatives of Foresight and Futures Thinking in Public Policy

LIZAN E. PERANTE-CALINA
Development Academy of the Philippines

Abstract. This essay stresses the importance of futures thinking as a 21st-century skill to craft better public sector policies and decisions. Using the interpretive-historical approach, the article traces initiatives in futures thinking, which is an emerging trend of human intervention in changing mindsets. This essay's contribution is that it indigenizes futures thinking (FT) learning by making use of an old Filipino word, "*hiraya*," to introduce the phrase "*hiraya* foresight" as an indigenous, non-western approach to studying, analyzing, and using futures thinking. This new indigenous approach requires that FT learning be reinforced by three companion skills, namely, *hiraya* foresight, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership.

Keywords: futures thinking, *hiraya* foresight, anticipatory governance, knowledge co-creation, phronetic leadership

Despite the disruption created by the COVID-19 pandemic, futures thinking (FT) has become an emerging 21st-century skill in 2020. In addition to earlier promoted competencies of the 21st century (communication, critical thinking, and collaboration), the imperative for the use of foresight and FT has become more pressing than ever.

Futures thinking as a tool in identifying predetermined and critical uncertainties in a systematic way has become a new trend that is being adopted by many practitioners all over the world. Usually associated with foresight and policymaking, it is one of the approaches that the Philippine government can employ in pushing for evidence-based policies toward an anticipatory governance mindset.

Futures thinking is a competence or skill helpful to public policymaking and to the policymakers themselves. It contributes towards a better public policy-making process, which can be better realized if accompanied by three other 21st-century skills, such as *hiraya* foresight, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership. Futures thinking, thus enriched and enhanced, becomes a reliable and holistic approach to carving out desirable futures. This article describes the nature, as well as the extent, of these imperatives as necessary inputs in FT. Towards the end of the paper, measures are offered to make FT a method to be practiced and an ingrained mindset and behavior among public administrators and policymakers.

The article is divided into three sections. First, a brief historical perspective is presented on how people have harnessed their FT from the past up to contemporary times. The next section is the substantive part of the paper, which is on the imperatives of FT in the Philippines for public policy, where each of the three companion skills of

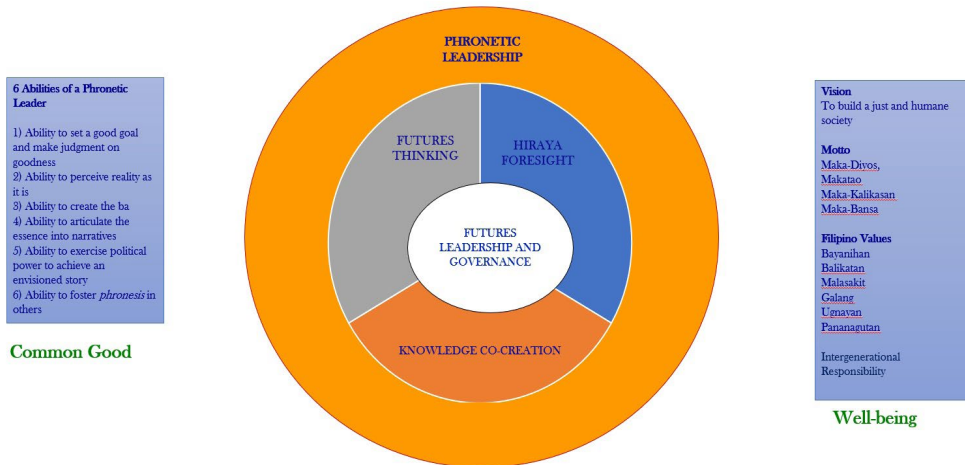
FT is described and evaluated. The paper ends with recommendations on how to make full use of the opportunities provided by FT in the arena of public administration and governance.

Methodology and Theoretical Framework

The article relies on the interpretive-historical approach to social science inquiry (Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “The philosophy of social science”). The approach first traces the actions, efforts, and intentions of those who charted and contributed to the growth and development of the futures field. The historical trend shows that everything intends to achieve certain ends and goals. In time, individual efforts converge into an ongoing action and process, which, for lack of a better term, may be called a “futures movement.” This movement can be the next wave in the field of public management in the 21st century in making sense of the world, as well as shaping the future toward carving out a livable planet.

As part of the futures movement, the article interprets or makes sense of this next step to emphasize that FT, as an imperative skill for 21st-century humans, can be strengthened further by also learning three other imperative companion skills like *hiraya* foresight, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership. These skills build strong relationships and the sum of each individual force strengthens FT competence, especially among public policymakers (Figure 1).

Figure 1
Futures Leadership and Governance Framework



The futures leadership and governance framework (FLGF) talks about the importance of four areas in public policy to carving out desirable futures. Futures thinking also advances an anticipatory governance mindset while, *hiraya* foresight is a tool that can facilitate the aspirations of Filipinos. Knowledge co-creation is combining tacit and explicit knowledge to produce new knowledge. Knowledge co-creation begets social innovations. But the overall mechanism is phronetic leadership. At the end of the day, leadership matters. A phronetic leader uses six abilities, one of

which is the ability to make judgments based on the common good. The six abilities, though, are not enough. Policies must be contextualized based on the vision, motto, and values of a country as envisioned by the leader.

History of Foresight and Futures Thinking

It must be borne in mind that foresight and futures thinking (FFT) is a human ability as old as the time when *Homo sapiens* stepped out of their abode millennia ago in search for food. It is an ability that humans innately have to navigate their way through times of violence, turbulence, chaos, uncertainty, ambiguity, danger, and risk.

In *baranganic* times in the Philippines, we have the *babaylans* (priestesses) who divined the future to heal the sick. In the Spanish colonial period, futurists also rose in a repressive political environment. The revolt leaders from 1600s to 1800s were what I call “futurists-in-action” or “action futurists.” They took the path of action to achieve the envisioned future. They led movements that proclaim a bright future for their followers by banding together a community outside of the Spanish policy of *bajo las campanas*. Leaders asked their followers to leave the Spanish *pueblo* and go instead into deep forests, if not on mountainsides and mountaintops, where they could live without having to pay taxes and do forced labor.

Jose Rizal, the country’s foremost national hero, similarly decried Spanish colonial rule. Rizal augured what would happen to the Philippines a hundred years after. In his 1889-1890 article, *Las Filipinas Dentro de Cien Años* (The Philippines a Century Hence), Rizal pondered on the question of whether the country would remain a Spanish colony or be ruled by another foreign country. Among the countries Rizal mentioned, he correctly predicted the United States.

But Rizal was not just thinking of the future of the Philippines in the political sphere; he also was a socioeconomic futurist-in-action. In 1892, he formed the association, *La Liga Filipina*, which outlined a futures program for Filipinos. One was his Borneo Project, where the displaced farmers in Calamba, Laguna, and other areas, would settle to cultivate new agricultural lands. Unfortunately, the Spanish governor-general at that time disapproved of his project. If his project had been realized, he could have been also an action futurist. While many unknown futurists lived before Rizal, the latter was regarded as the first Filipino futurist for drafting and pooling resources to be able to outline his futures programs and projects for his countrymen. Andres Bonifacio could also be considered a futures thinker when he founded the Katipunan, a revolutionary society. The future envisioned was to revolt and drive the Spaniards out to liberate the country.

Towards the end of the 19th century, studies about the future may have been triggered by writings of Arnold Toynbee (who popularized the term “industrial revolution”) and H.G. Wells. Then, there were Alvin Toffler in 1970, with his book titled *Future Shock*, and Daniel Bell, who coined the phrase “post-industrial” society (Milojevic, 2002). Since then, the world has witnessed waves of FT and action, with the environmental sustainability movement in the 1980s, followed by initiatives in disaster risk and reduction, then climate change, and, most recently, the COVID-19 pandemic.

Futures thinking is not new in the Philippines, but it has never been picked up by many stakeholders, including the government. It was initially introduced by some scholars in the 1970s, 1990s, and early 2000s, but with no written documents to refer to.

The private sector proved to be a trailblazer in promoting FT by incorporating it into their corporate strategies. The Philippine public sector took time to realize the importance of FT in public policy and planning. Finally, as COVID-19 raged, the public sector joined the bandwagon through the establishment of the Philippine Futures Thinking Society (PhilFutures) on 19 June 2020. The Senate of the Philippines has its own Committee on Sustainable Development Goals, Futures Thinking, and Innovation. In the academia, the Graduate School of Public and Development Management of the Development Academy of the Philippines (DAP-GSPDM or the DAP Graduate School) created a Futures Studies Platform that offers a certificate course on futures thinking, the first in the country, which can be credited as part of a master's degree in public management. The PhilFutures, the Senate, and the GSPDM banded together to democratize FT in the Philippines. This was followed by the establishment of the Governance Futures Lab of University of the Philippines-National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP-NCPAG), state universities and colleges (SUCs), some national government agencies (NGAs), and local government units (LGUs).

It is significant to note that the founding of PhilFutures was intended to fall on the birthday of the first Filipino futurist Jose Rizal. Rizal wove a futures plan amid political repression and persecution. The PhilFutures took a similar futures path during uncertainty and risk to thousands of lives due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

PhilFutures devotes itself to the promotion of FT particularly in public policymaking. It looks at the policy-making process as one area that needs to be supported and enriched by the application of various FFT tools. The mission of PhilFutures is to be the country's leading professional futures organization to advance and democratize futures thinking through impact foresight education, research, training, and advocacy. The PhilFutures envisions a futures-thinking mindset cultivated and ingrained among Filipinos.

Under my watch as the head of the DAP-GSPDM, the Futures Studies Platform was established under the Knowledge Innovation (KI) HubLab before the COVID-19 pandemic. This move paved the way for democratizing FT in the Philippines and strengthening public policy tools that can be used by public management students. Given my background in public administration, I took the lead in creating an academic team to present the first foresight framework before the Senate Committee on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Innovations, and Futures Thinking. The chair of the said committee, Senator Pia Cayetano, welcomed the proposal and expressed her support for the "Strategic Foresight Framework for the Philippines" and for the enactment of legislation that would advance and institutionalize futures thinking initiatives, such as research and capacity building endeavors, to usher in sustainable development throughout the country and to anticipate emergencies and crises in the near future (Senate of the Philippines, 2020).

Public Administration scholar Oliva Domingo likewise advocated for the establishment of a body that ensures that futures thinking initiatives will be sustained and will convert foresight into action. Domingo also asserted that the challenges

faced during the COVID-19 pandemic are lessons that need to be harnessed for the future. Such actions should be rooted in our beliefs, traditions, experiences, virtues, and values (Senate of the Philippines, 2020).

The moment the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country and other areas around the world, I saw the imperatives of applying FT in policy foresight responses in the country. While there were a number of problems encountered, many of us also discovered many opportunities to improve the systems and processes and to identify emerging issues and challenges.

With all the efforts to introduce and embed FT in public management courses and public policy and planning, the academic leadership of the DAP Graduate School found it most appropriate to democratize FT in the country by collaborating with various stakeholders and experts. The initiative secured government support through the general appropriations act (GAA). As a result, a number of programs, projects, and activities were realized. The Senate Committee on SDGs, Innovation and Futures Thinking conducted committee hearings with the following as topics: “Futures Thinking: Getting Ready for Tomorrow,” “Futures Thinking for a More Responsive Education Sector in COVID-19, Philippines,” and the presentation of the *Hiraya* Foresight Framework. Another remarkable initiative is the first Certificate Course on Futures Thinking and Foresight, which is now on its sixth run. This program is offered to SUCs and civil servants by DAP Graduate School, which will lead to the development of a master’s degree program.

The democratization of FT in the Philippines through research, education, training, and advocacy, marks a significant step in the promotion of FT in public service. Uncertainty faces all of us every day, which is why strategic foresight in the public sector is more needed. FT will allow policymakers and public servants to identify the risks and opportunities in each future undertaking, and to effectively anticipate, adapt to new advancements, changes, and challenges.

Foresight and Futures Thinking

Various definitions on FFT exist, courtesy of different organizations with their own preferred concepts, theories, and frameworks. In the literature, foresight is related to prediction, forecasting, strategic intelligence, horizon scanning, futures, futures thinking, and even with futurism, futurology, and futuristics. There is still a very fluid and amorphous understanding of what FFT is, although the time is near when fluidity would condense into something shared by futures thinkers around the world.

Foresight and hindsight are member categories under the umbrella concept of insight. Thus, foresight is one’s insights about what might happen in the future. The backbone of foresight is hindsight, which is understanding the past processes and constraints of change (Kuosa, 2014). However, foresight, on its own, is defined in slightly different ways.

The European Commission’s *A Practical Guide to Regional Foresight* (FOREN) defines foresight as a “systematic, participatory, future-intelligence-gathering and medium-to-longterm vision-building process aimed at present-day decisions and mobilizing joint actions” (Kuosa, 2014, p. 33). According to Chen and Chiang (2010, p. 3), foresight studies are mainly related to science and technology foresight and policy foresight. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) defines foresight as

a process of anticipation and is a “part of strategic thinking designed to open up an expanded range of perceptions of the strategic options available” (UNDP, 2014, as cited in Kuosa, 2014, p. 32).

What are the advantages of harnessing foresight? Foresight seeks a deeper understanding of change and emerges with a range of alternatives, not just a best estimate. Foresight shows a whole spectrum of future alternatives, providing a holistic range of interesting events. It then asks “what if” regarding each alternative, assessing systematically the probability of each alternative’s actualization. A good foresight that is grounded and out-of-the-box generates new ideas (Kuosaa, 2014).

Foresight brings together key agents of change and various sources of knowledge to develop strategic visions and anticipatory intelligence. The participatory element in foresight is evidenced through its long-term orientation, the examination of a wide range of factors, the drawing on widely distributed knowledge, and the institutionalization and creation of networks.

Foresight can dramatically increase one’s preparedness for the inevitable surprises, and significantly reduce the likelihood of being blindsided by events and dilemmas that would otherwise never be considered. Foresight can also alert decisionmakers to major opportunities—especially at the first signs that combinations of events are coming together to open a window for action (Kuosaa, 2014).

The Strategic Foresight unit of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, n.d.) listed the value of foresight in policymaking:

1. Better anticipation: to identify and prepare new opportunities and challenges that could emerge in the future;
2. Policy innovation: to spur new thinking about the best policies to address these opportunities and challenges; and
3. Future-proofing: to stress-test existing or proposed strategies against a range of future scenarios. (OECD-Strategic Foresight, n.d., “What is strategic foresight?”)

Foresight and FT are conceptualized as more or less identical. The moment one is engaged in foresight, one cannot but set one’s sights on the future, or what may be happening in the next moments, hours, days, or years. It is inherent for foresight to plan. With foresight, multiple possibilities for the future are open. It is not only a forecast of the future but also a choice among many possibilities and an attempt to shape and even create the future (Chen & Chiang, 2010).

According to Asian Development Bank (2020), FFT helps policymakers in mapping the future, anticipating emerging issues and disruptions, timing the future using three-horizons framework, including all the stakeholders, using different scenarios, and moving from imagined futures to creating desired futures.

Imperatives for FFT to work

How can FFT better provide policymakers with the knowledge needed to make right decisions? How can governments be equipped with FT capabilities? ADB (2020) asks: How do we prove that foresight adds value?

Coming from the Philippines, a developing country that is beset by social, political, and economic troubles, I have observed that my country faces challenges

in public policy. It is then appropriate to employ FFT in public policy and planning towards sound decision making that is always looking at the implications of each action.

FFT is ethical and critical thinking. It is ethical thinking because it directs to what is right, just, and fair for everyone. It is critical thinking as it looks at the process of analyzing the current environment to produce evidence-based results. Futurists speak out, advocate, and are not afraid to reason and explain, as they engage in FT of a policy in which the beneficiaries are the citizens, the people, and the country.

Public Sector Values and Public Policy Making

The Philippine bureaucracy is plagued by malpractices among bureaucrats, officials and employees of government departments, bureaus, and agencies. This includes cronyism, nepotism, corruption, graft, abuse of authority, red tape, fixing, bribery, extortion, receiving gifts from patrons and clients—all of them a reflection of self-interest, a preference for personal over public values.

The 1987 Philippine Constitution's Article XI, Section 1, states that "public office is a public trust, and that public officers must perform their functions and serve the people with responsibility, integrity, loyalty, efficiency, patriotism, and justice." Republic Act 6713 enumerated eight norms of conduct as ethical guidelines for those working in the public sector.

Every year, every administration has its own sad string of cases against erring public officers. It indicates the extent of malpractices, including corruption and bureaucratic red tape that erode institutions. The Civil Service Commission (CSC), along with other academic institutes, like the UP-NCPAG, has done its best in educating and training the public officials from the national to the local governments. Countless trainings have been dispensed by the CSC, the UP-NCPAG, the DAP, and the Department of the Interior and Local Government (DILG), and other agencies, with the aim of inculcating public sector values among government employees. The participants are taught about accountability, ethics, and honesty. Nonetheless, there has been no substantial improvement in bureaucratic behavior.

Given the extent of this venality in our mindset, what can the CSC, UP-NCPAG, the DILG and the DAP do? The answer is to continue education and training, and to apply 21st-century skills, such as FFT, to increase appreciation and application of the public sector values for an improved public policymaking. In the case of DAP-GSPDM, this imperative is realized via the cultivation of three companion skills while undergoing FFT training and education. These are: *hiraya* foresight, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership.

Companion 21st Century Skills

Hiraya Foresight

New approaches to governance are needed which can help institutions express the three As: anticipatory, agile, and adaptive governance, summed up as anticipatory governance (AG). It denotes collaborative and participatory processes and systems for exploring, envisioning, direction setting, developing strategy, and experimentation for a region (Ramos, 2019). Anticipatory governance allows the local authorities to harness the collective intelligence and wisdom of collaborating organizations and

citizens to deal with strategic risks and to leverage emerging opportunities for meeting development goals.

To do this, a number of new capabilities are required. First is the ability to identify the landscape of change (foresight) and use this in organizationally useful ways. Second, systemic thinking and inter-organizational cooperation are needed for ecosystems to be mobilized to address wicked and complex interdependencies in the development challenges. Lastly, there should be a cultural and institutional shift that supports experimentation to drive learning (Ramos, 2019).

Guston (2013) defines AG as “a broad-based capacity extended through society that can act on a variety of inputs to manage emerging knowledge-based technologies while such management is still possible” (p. 218). It motivates activities designed to build subsidiary capacities in foresight, engagement, and integration. Fuller (2009, as cited in Guston, 2013) defines AG as “a strategy to facilitate the acceptance of new technosciences by inviting people to voice their hopes and concerns in focus groups, science cafes, and computer-based interactive spaces before the innovations are actually implemented” (p. 218).

What value does AG bring to FFT? Literature said that AG is participation (learners are invited to voice their hopes), collaboration, systemic thinking, mobilization of complex interdependencies, and integration. It also enhances exploration and experimentation (because technoscience is accepted by the learners). Learning and practicing AG doubles one’s FFT competence.

Knowledge Co-Creation

The rise of the internet and digital platforms has increased interaction within and among countries. COVID-19 pushed it further through use of Zoom conferences, where people continue to co-create knowledge. Knowledge co-creation is the “synergetic process of combining content and process from disciplinary traditions to synthesize new ways of knowing” (IGI Global, “What is knowledge co-creation?”). It also refers to “knowledge coordination in digital forms of organizing and more specifically on (orchestrating) knowledge co-creation process on the digital work platforms” (Blomqvist et al., 2017, p. 1).

Within the so-called communities of practice, such as public administration associations and societies, there is an exchange of information that leads to knowledge co-creation and knowledge sharing. These can be achieved through pooling of resources, consortia, networking, and other forms of collaboration (Bathelt et al., 2002).

According to OECD (2019), different types of knowledge providers should not compete for the attention of policymakers. They should share their knowledge with one another instead. The result is faster spread of ideas and information. The outcome is a more informed decision and policy making.

The question asked in the previous section is similarly posed for knowledge co-creation as a skill: what value does knowledge co-creation add to FFT? As the literature informs us, learning the skill of knowledge co-creation implies combination, synthesis, coordination, organization, engagement, interaction, pooling of resources, consortia, networking, and other forms of collaboration. Learning and practicing knowledge co-creation competence doubles one’s FFT competence.

Phronetic Leadership

Leadership is the overall key variable in the realization of FFT. The role of the leader of any institution, be it in the academe, think tank, and public and private sectors, is likened to that of an orchestra conductor who coordinates all voices and instruments. Without the conductor, each one in the orchestra will not be in step with each other. The leader remains indispensable in organizing, motivating, and sustaining the goals of FFT.

The leader that orchestrates each member of the team or the organization, must have the six characteristics or abilities of a phronetic leader (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 2011):

1. making judgments on goodness,
2. grasping the essence,
3. creating the *ba*,
4. articulating the essence,
5. using political power, and
6. fostering phronesis in others.

Phronetic leaders practice moral discernment about what's good, then act on it. Leaders set their sights higher than the agency's goals, for they believe that their actions should have a moral purpose. Their judgments are guided by their own values and ethics. Without a foundation of values, chief executives would have a hard time deciding what is good or bad. Executives, who believe that the purpose of a business (i.e., making profits) is to serve people and enhance society's well-being, decide on what is good for society.

Before making judgment calls, wise leaders quickly sense what lies behind a situation, project a vision of the future, and decide on the action needed to realize that vision. Practical wisdom enables them to see the essence and intuitively fathom the nature and meaning of people, things, and events.

Phronetic leaders constantly create opportunities for senior executives and employees to learn from one another. The *ba* (place, space, or field) refers to the context in which relationships are forged and interactions occur. Those participating in the *ba* share information, build relationships, and create new meanings. An informal *ba* may take place at a bar or a pub, where strangers talk casually about their concerns or problems, sometimes triggering insights or solutions. In a more formal or organizational setting, the *ba* permits participants with a shared sense of purpose to interact closely.

Moreover, phronetic leaders must communicate in a way that everyone can understand. To capture the essence of a situation, they must use stories, metaphors, and other figurative language. This allows individuals grounded in different contexts and with different experiences to grasp things intuitively.

It is not enough to identify and communicate the essence of a situation; phronetic leaders must bring people together and spur them to act, combining, and synthesizing everyone's knowledge and efforts towards a single-minded pursuit of goals. To mobilize people, executives use the means suited to the situation. Shrewdness and stubbornness are often necessary to create something new and good.

Having understood the viewpoints and emotions of others, gleaned through everyday verbal and nonverbal communication, wise leaders carefully consider timing.

Wise leaders foster practical wisdom in others. Practical wisdom is not a preserve of the company's chief executive or top management team. This wisdom must be distributed throughout the organization, and employees at all levels can be trained to use it. Fostering distributed leadership is therefore one of the wise leader's biggest responsibilities.

What does phronetic leadership add to FFT competence? Learning phronetic leadership skills enable policymakers to correct their judgment of situations, vision of the future, communication power, political influence, and their social modelling role.

The Futures Leadership and Governance Framework

The *hiraya* foresight framework, as earlier illustrated in the FLGF diagram, uses indigenous concepts that embed the future or looking at the future in their meanings, connotations, and significances. *Hiraya*, an old Filipino word that means "the fruit of one's hopes, dreams, and aspiration," is the most appropriate concept.

Hiraya is usually attached to another word to become the phrase: "*hiraya manawari*", which is wishing good to someone who is close to the well-wisher, a friend, or a relative. The two words together get transformed to wish someone: "May you reach your dreams!" or "May the wishes of your heart be granted!" Conversely, the phrase may also be used to console a person, hoping that a misfortune or difficulty comes to pass. *Hiraya manawari* is a reminder for each member of the community that one has to be patient during difficult times. Futures thinkers also adopt this orientation. The *hiraya* foresight adds specific context, cultural particularities, local color, and the futures thinker's ways of thinking.

The concept embeds in it a vision of the future, which is looked at in terms of dreams, wishes, and aspirations. The vision may be individual (e.g., a teacher) or collective (e.g., prosperity of the community). It takes on the potential of a dream to become a reality, or the potential of a wish or aspiration to bear fruit. *Hiraya* sees the future not as a static object, but a dynamic change agent, which makes things better and improves the existing state of things.

Hiraya is concern, care, and love. Concern is expressed because the well-wisher considers the other as his/her own neighbor or relative, and whatever problems one has also become the other's problems. *Hiraya* is also communication. Greeting someone with *hiraya manawari* sends a friendly message.

Hiraya is also cooperation and collaboration. The *hiraya* wish to someone also activates the reciprocal obligation among two persons or among the members of a community. The *hiraya* instills future collaboration and cooperation in collective undertakings. Even without being asked to, the one who wished *hiraya manawari* returned the favor by returning the wish to a friend and participating voluntarily in future collaborative endeavors in the community.

Hiraya is persistence, perseverance, patience, courage, fortitude, and resilience. *Hiraya manawari* demonstrates the power of the community members to continue their tasks despite hardships inflicted by calamities. It shows their perseverance to continue amid the difficult times. It also shows their patience, their willingness to work hard, and to endure even until the calamity passes through. *Hiraya* is also

optimism, positive thinking, preparedness, and alertness. The hiraya wish is a natural expression of hope and optimism.

Hiraya is anticipatory and agile leadership/governance. With everybody anticipating, prepared, and alert for a future event, the leadership translates itself into anticipatory and agile governance. Instead of just waiting for the unexpected, uncontrollable event, the leadership has already anticipated it before its scheduled occurrence. At its occurrence—at the height of a typhoon, for example—the leadership is agile and flexible.

Hiraya implies wisdom and ethics in action. Because the future can be looked at in a positive light, the community has a source of inspiration to do things wisely and appropriately. The future can make the community to look for ways of doing things that are good for everybody.

Hiraya implies that the future can be studied, analyzed, researched, and planned. With confidence in the future, and with the members of the community prepared and alert, and ready to collaborate and to cooperate, then everyone can study, do research, analyze, and plan. Hiraya guides and teaches what and how to educate futures thinkers, and how to promote and advocate for futures thinking to change the old mindset for a new mindset that is future-oriented.

The hiraya foresight component cannot act alone. It interacts with other components so that by contributing individual sums, the whole is achieved. The hiraya foresight is an integral and indispensable component of the overall framework.

The hiraya foresight framework is not fixed and may be altered later as new ideas come and may imply the need for changes. For now, it suffices that a non-western approach exists. This approach will be continuously refined as the Filipino way of studying and using the futures for Filipinos and for the Philippines.

Conclusion

Engaging in FFT through research, education, training, and advocacy to prepare for the future is an imperative. FFT is a 21st-century skill for individuals and organizations to develop. Education and training on FFT enable FFT specialists to develop multiple plausible futures, to design and facilitate foresight interventions, processes, and utilize indigenous approaches.

The coming decades are becoming more chaotic and turbulent. But through FFT skills, people and nations can make an orderly, safe, secure, and sustainable world. More and more skills are demanded for everyone to be prepared for a future that is ever-changing. To be prepared, governance, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership also have to be cultivated, learned, and inculcated as part of a permanent mindset.

Recommendation

Given the pace of changes and the intensity of challenges, FFT, as a skill, must be cultivated along with other skills, such as anticipatory governance, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership. As a program, it needs to start with small steps with activities like internal meetings and seminars. Knowledge co-creation provides an avenue for stakeholders to articulate their interests, hopes, and aspirations for better days to come for the country.

Once management has decided on an FFT program, it must eventually be institutionalized as one big program with linkages and support from partners. After this is done, it must now concern itself with existing gaps. In the Philippines, the gaps to be addressed include the need to change existing attitudes or mindsets, collective action, leadership, restoring trust, avoiding state capture by self-interested groups, and instilling public sector values.

But despite the rush to cultivate FFT skills, we need to reckon with the caveat that it is not a panacea or cure-all. It has limits too like any human creation or intervention. FFT is western in its assumptions. Hence, its methods and operations are derived from the same positivist philosophy of science. The Philippine FFT must be conscious of this and must situate itself in the environmental variables specific to the country and society. In this case, indigenous concepts and practices may be tapped. Among Filipinos, the *bayanihan* (cooperation) concept of helping one another in times of need and crises is one, as well as the *hiraya* concept we have been incorporated in our governance reform framework (Brillantes & Perante-Calina, 2018). Among Indonesians, Thais, and Singaporeans, there may also be one or two indigenous concepts that encapsulate well FFT, *hiraya* foresight, knowledge co-creation, and phronetic leadership. This is one area for future research.

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Lizan E. Perante-Calina is Dean at the Graduate School of Public and Development Management, Development Academy of the Philippines, and President of the Philippine Society for Public Administration, and Philippine Futures Thinking Society. She can be reached at lizanpcalina@gmail.com.

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