

Issue Editor's Introduction

This issue of the Philippine Social Sciences Review features a study explaining the determinants of happiness across states, two papers from the 3rd Asia Engage regional conference, and a book review of Patrick Campos' *The End of National Cinema: Filipino Film at the Turn of the Century*.

The 3rd Asia Engage Regional Conference held in Manila on November 21-23, 2016 was organized in collaboration with the University of the Philippines, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, the Commission on Higher Education, Philippines, and the ASEAN University Network and brought practitioners and scholars to share their best practices in higher education.

In "An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Happiness of Nations" UP Political Science alumnus Ryan Nicolas reexamines the relationship between freedom and happiness and argues that freedom matters only for cultures which deem individual liberties important. Nicolas estimates models linking happiness and individual freedoms while accounting for variables such as economic development, unemployment, life expectancy, corruption perceptions (as a proxy for trust), democracy, and inequality. Among interesting findings point to economic development as the single most significant determinant of happiness among nations. Although some may disagree with his choice of operational constructs for otherwise problematic variables such as happiness and trust, his findings have a number of interesting and controversial implications. For example, regimes that do not ascribe to Western liberal democratic principles but wish to be responsive to their citizens may begin with policies that provide better healthcare and improve the quality of life. Governments should make it a point to cut unemployment levels at minimum and ensure people's access to self-empowering opportunities. For Nicolas, citizens are generally pragmatic and can tolerate leaders who extract rents at their expense every now and then, as long as the leaders provide for people's needs and do not allow people to remain poor and hungry.

In "Academic Field Instruction as Development Communication Praxis," UP Los Banos' Winifredo Dagli and Mildred Moscoso

contemplate on the value of development communication not just as a platform for student-community engagement but as an opportunity to breathe life to the values espoused in the classroom. Employing autoethnographic reflections, Dagli and Moscoso critique a number of assumptions about development communication courses, particularly regarding communities, learning and participation. The article suggests that current development communication programs not only constrict field instruction to wallow into stereotypical community structures but reduce the pursuit of core values into lip service. In classroom materials used in field instruction, for example, the word “participatory” has become a buzzword even though the design and implementation of learning strategies and activities rarely require input from students or communities. Community organizing is not even part of the BS Development Communication curriculum. Moreover, students who have had firsthand experience with weak leadership, aging members, dwindling resources, and other realities besetting many people’s organizations, are beginning to question mainstream community typologies. Field instruction, Dagli and Moscoso reminds, should be able to raise the concept of development communication out of the cognitive level and allow students to experience it themselves.

In “A Teacher Education Institution (TEI) Initiative for Collaborative Materials Development in Mathematics through Community Engagement,” Early Sol Gadong Donne Jone P. Sodusta, Lourdes C. Zamora, Ma. Joji B. Tan, and Celia F. Parcon share their experience developing contextualized learning modules in mathematics using the Community as Learning Laboratory Model. Conducted as a capstone project, four graduate students were sent to a seven-day immersion in an island community where they participated in fishing activities, household undertakings, and searching for marine resources. The engagement allowed the researchers to spend considerable time with the children and know about their schooling, domestic, and learning concerns. They also engaged the children in games and play. Although the project has been constrained by limited funds, the researchers realized the importance of community participation in the development of teaching and learning materials. Gadong and colleagues note, for instance, that learners exhibit deeper appreciation for the cultural elements of their community when they participate in familiar activities and are involved in the learning process. The project also demonstrate that collaborative initiatives can serve as a fundamental groundwork in the fulfillment of public universities’ core mandate of instruction, research and extension. The researchers hope to see other communities replicate the effort and start developing their own authentic contextualized learning and teaching resources soon.

Oscar Serquina Jr.'s review of Patrick Campos' (2015) "The End of National Cinema: Filipino Film at the Turn of the Century" caps the issue.

The Philippine Social Sciences Review publishes original papers from various fields in the social sciences and philosophy and encourages contributions from young academics and budding social scientists from different institutions. In addition to original research papers, the journal also publishes book reviews and articles on thematic issues.

- Rogelio Alicor L. Pano, PhD
Editor