

Peace Practitioners' Research Conference 2013

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[PERSPECTIVES OF THE SUBANEN TRIBE ON THE NW BANGSAMORO POLITICAL ENTITY]

ABSTRACT

The signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro gives impetus among the Moros to participate in the peace process with the hope that sustainable peace and development shall reign in the troubled part of the country. However, the process is still delicate and needs the support of all other peoples of Mindanao.

This study was conducted among the Subanen, one of the indigenous peoples (IPs) of Mindanao, with the main objective of determining their level of knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship and to what extent this level of knowledge influences their perspectives on the New Bangsamoro Political Entity (NBPE).

Quantitative and qualitative techniques of collecting and analysing data were employed. Data gathering techniques included surveys using questionnaires, key informant interviews and focus group discussions.

It was found that out of the 324 respondents: 116 (35.80 percent) have high educational attainment and 208 (64.20 percent) have low educational attainment; 135 (41.67 percent) are in the young category and 189 (58.33 percent) are classified in the old category; and 146 respondents (45.06 percent) have high knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship compared to 178 (54.94 percent) have low knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship. Educational attainment and age profile are not statistically related to knowledge on Moro-IP kinship. Majority of the respondents have low support on the NBPE. Level of knowledge and support are statistically related. Subanen as a tribe has no concrete alternative solutions to the Mindanao Problem but they hope for its peaceful resolution.

The failure of the Subanen as a tribe to recall their historical lineage with their brother Moros implies the weakening of their very long time partnership. This would probably cause the separation of the two tribes that were inseparable since the dawn of history. As the Moros are asserting on their right to self-determination, the Subanen are contented with the status quo and enjoy their association with the mainstream society.

Key words: *Subanen tribe, indigenous peoples, kinship, Bangsamoro, Philippines, peace*

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GLOSSARY

ARMM – Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao

FAB – Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro

GPH – Government of the Philippines

IPs – Indigenous Peoples, known as Lumads

IPRA – Indigenous Peoples Rights Act

MILF – Moro Islamic Liberation Front

MNLF – Moro National Liberation Force

NBPE – New Bangsamoro Political Entity

NCIP – National Commission on Indigenous Peoples

RSD – Right to Self-Determination

INTRODUCTION

Considering their history, the Moros as a nation struggled to regain their lost rights for freedom and self-determination illegally seized from them. Their long and wary struggle becomes more complicated as the Philippine Government is in dilemma of finding the most acceptable solution to all parties involved. However, for Jubair,¹ Lingga² and Mastura³ the problem is essentially about giving the Moros their right to self-determination (RSD) as enunciated in the international law.

Anchored on their RSD, the Moros through the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) patiently exerted all their efforts to regain the right to determine the course of their own lives and the right to develop. After a long period of struggle, the Moros welcome with joy and hope the new development of their quest when the Philippine Government (GPH) and the Moro Liberation Front (MILF) signed the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (the Agreement) in Malacañan Palace on October 15, 2012.

The Moros are optimistic that this Agreement shall end their long sufferings, though they are aware that their quest for freedom does not end at the signing of the Agreement. Gargantuan tasks lay ahead not only to justify their pursuits, but to ensure that in the future generations, every member of the new political entity to be established shall be assured of a peaceful and developed place to live in.

In the MILF Press Release on October 7, 2012, Chairman Murad admitted that the forging of the Framework Agreement does not mean the end of the struggle for it ushers in a new and more challenging stage. According to him, “the peace ahead that the negotiation has made possible requires collective effort to build on the gains of the negotiation and to nurture them until finally justice and development reign in our homeland.”⁴ The Moros did not deny the fruits of their initial success to the un-Islamized indigenous peoples (IPs) and considered them as part of the endeavour. In the same Press Release, the Chairman states that:

“The MILF Central Committee, nonetheless, shares this fruit of the struggle with the Bangsamoro people and the indigenous communities of Mindanao and joins them in celebrating this milestone victory of peace and justice over war and continuous conflict.”⁵

The reason why they have to share their fortune with the IPs is because they have the same feeling of being deprived of their rights in their own land, and most of all, both claim to have common ancestry. According to Bandara et al, these people traced their roots from brothers Mamalu and Tabunaway, who practiced the same tradition of self-rule, culture and economic activities. They are the original inhabitants of the region who shared common history until the coming of Islam on the 15th century.⁶

The coming of Islam has changed the lives of the people of the region. Those who adopted Islam, now known as the Islamized indigenous peoples or Moros, were fortunate to have a culture

¹ Jubair, 11

² Lingga

³ Mastura, 170

⁴ Ebrahim

⁵ Ebrahim

⁶ Bandara, et. al

enriched by Islam and a wider community, while those who did not adopt Islam, now known alternatively as the un-Islamized indigenous peoples, Lumad or IPs, managed to hold on to their traditional ways of life. Consequently, two different cultures have developed that caused them to live separately. These peoples whose civilization had developed at the present day Malabang, Lanao del Sur, have parted ways. However, despite their differences, they continued to acknowledge their shared historical lineage and to respect their peace pacts.⁷ Since the dawn of history, the IPs and the Moros have been inseparable in Mindanao. They marched shoulder-to-shoulder as time went amid plenty and disaster.⁸

The IPs are composed of 18 main tribes scattered in different parts of Mindanao. One of these tribes is the Subanen, found mostly in Zamboanga Peninsula. They claimed to have kin-relationship with the Moros of the region and they acknowledged the sovereignty of the Moro traditional leader in Sibugay, the present day Zamboanga Peninsula.

The relationship between the Subanen and the Moros of Sibugay can be traced before and during colonization periods when the Moros played a “big brother” role to the Subanen under the leadership of Datu Dacula. In return the Subanen showed their gratitude by sharing their harvest to their brother Moros. This relationship continued until the time that they were marginalized by the influx of the migrants from Luzon and Visayas.

Notwithstanding their common experiences and kinship, the Moros did not do away with the possibility that the IPs may oppose the peace process. Jubair listed these people as the third possible group to oppose the peace process on different reasons. He made the premise that IPs may oppose the talks on the basis of misperception, misinformation, false assumption, and misconstrued personal feelings as opposed to external facts or evidence. They are either unaware of the difficult issues involved in the talks, or because other vested interest groups or outside forces misinform or misguide them to be suspicious of the real intent of the Moros⁹. Kamlian alleged the IPs suspected that the Moros and the settlers are the causes of the problem in Mindanao that drove them away to the mountains.¹⁰ Coincidentally, the IPs had expressed their desire for self-governance according to their customary laws within their ancestral domain.¹¹

Their suspicions and their desire to be recognized as a separate and distinct people from their Moro brothers perhaps created a cleavage in their partnership and may counterweigh the clout of their kinship, which before withstood the test of time and adversity.

To successfully move forward with the Agreement it is important to know how the IPs view the issue in order to determine their level of sympathy and support.

⁷ Saway

⁸ Jubair, 103

⁹ Jubair, 101

¹⁰ Kamlian, 82

¹¹ Rodil, 30

Conceptual Framework

This study assumes that the level of knowledge of the Subanen on the Moro-IP kinship affects their sympathy and support to the New Bangsamoro Political Entity.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

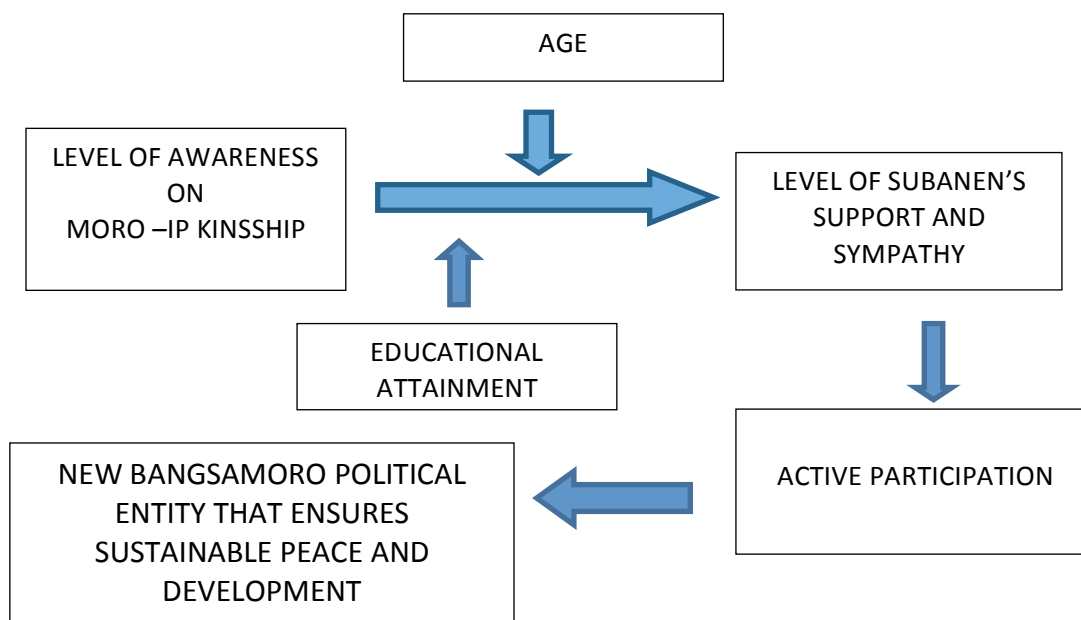


Figure 1 assumes that Subanen who are more knowledgeable on their historical relationship with the Moros tend to be sympathetic and supportive to the Bangsamoro quest for self-determination compared to those who have lesser knowledge.

However, intervening variables, such as level of education and age, may influence the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The reasons provided by Jubair¹² on the possibility that the IPs may oppose the peace process could be influenced by the level of education. That is, educated Subanen who are knowledgeable of their historical relationship with the Moros are well-informed of the hard issues involved on the negotiation, therefore cannot be easily be persuaded by outside forces with vested interest. In addition, education plays a very important role in the transmission of culture from one generation to another.¹³ Thus, it could be assumed that Subanen with high levels of educational attainment tend to have high knowledge of the Moro-IP kinship, and are therefore more sympathetic and supportive to the Moro quest for self-determination compared to those who are less educated.

¹² Jubair, 27

¹³ Chandra and Sharma

In addition, age may also influence the level of knowledge of the Subanen on their historical relations with the Moros, considering that older Subanen have first-hand information of their tradition and most likely had experiences living with the Moros. First-hand experience leads to direct knowledge of the other people and enhances understating. On the other hand, younger Subanen are influenced by the mainstream society that is not sympathetic to the Moro quest for self-determination.

Although, the Subanen are not within the ambit of the Bangsamoro to be established, their sympathy and support are equally important because they can actively participate or at least they are not one of the hindrances to the peace process. The realization of the Bangsamoro hopefully would ensure peace and development.

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to determine the level of knowledge of the Subanen on the Moro-IP kinship, and to what extent this knowledge influences their perspectives on the New Bangsamoro Political Entity (NBPE). Educational attainment and age profile are considered as intervening variables.

Specifically, this study endeavoured to attain the following information:

1. To determine the educational attainment and age profile of the Subanen;
2. To determine the level of knowledge of the Subanen on the Moro-IP kinship;
3. To determine if there is a relationship between educational attainment and or age of the Subanen on the level of knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship;
4. To determine the level of sympathy and support of the Subanen on the NBPE;
5. To determine to what extent Subanen awareness on the Moro-IP relationship influences sympathy and support on the NBPE;
6. To determine Subanen alternative solutions to the Mindanao Problem

Significance of the Study

To the Subanen and the Moros, the results of this study may serve as an assessment on the status of their kinship and hopefully they may work for its preservation and development.

To the government, the findings of this study may serve as a feedback on how the Subanen view the problem in Mindanao with the hope that it shall review its policies and programs appropriate to this people.

To the GPH-MILF Negotiating Panels, this study may serve as reference in their talks, especially on the issue on the expansion of the NBPE.

To the academic sector, this study may contribute to the body of knowledge on the Moros and other IPs of Mindanao for reference in the possibility of re-directing their policies and programs that would help create a healthful environment of the region leading to a sustainable development.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study was conducted among the Subanen aged 18 years and above in selected municipalities of the Provinces of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay. For convenience and safety considerations, only municipalities with identified guides and or enumerators were included.

Only 324 questionnaires were retrieved because many of the target respondents did not cooperate with the enumerators despite the efforts made in explaining the purpose of the study. However, all sectors of the Subanen communities were represented in the survey.

Quantitative analysis of the data is limited to the use of simple descriptive statistical tools and chi-square test.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Indigenous Peoples

In 1994 the United Nations (UN) General Assembly declared the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples with the goal of strengthening international cooperation to solve the problems faced by indigenous people (IPs) in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.¹⁴ This declaration indicates the rights of the indigenous peoples of the world are to be part of both national and international governance and politics.

In the Philippines, IPs account for about 18 percent of the national population and are referred to by other names such as "ethnic minorities," "cultural minorities," "tribal Filipinos," and "indigenous cultural minorities."¹⁵ The rights of IPs to their ancestral lands and to preserve and develop their cultures are protected by the Philippine Constitution.

Section 5 of Article 12 states:

The State subject to the provisions of this Constitution and national development policies and programs, shall protect the rights of the indigenous cultural communities to their ancestral lands to ensure their economic, social and cultural well-being.

The Congress may provide for the applicability of customary laws governing property rights or relations in determining the ownership and extent of ancestral domain.

Section 17, Article 14 provides that:

The State shall recognize, protect the rights of the indigenous peoples cultural communities to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions and institutions. It shall consider these rights in the formulation of national plans and policies.

A piece of legislation that more specifically addresses the political demands of the IPs is the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA), or Republic Act 8371, legislated in 1997.¹⁶ Section 38, Chapter 5, of the Act provides the creation of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) which is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programs to promote and protect the rights and well-being of the indigenous peoples with due regard to their beliefs, customs, traditions and institutions.¹⁷

Six years after the legislation of the IPRA, the Subanen expressed their discontent with the law, alleging that it never help uplift their plight but instead sowed disunity among them.¹⁸

¹⁴ Casambre, 105

¹⁵ Casambre, 106

¹⁶ Casambre, 115

¹⁷ Sec 38, Chapter 5, Republic Act 8371

¹⁸ Sagbigal

The Moro Quest for Self-Determination

An article published by the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues stated that “Indigenous peoples often have much in common with other neglected segments of societies, i.e. lack of political representation and participation, economic marginalization and poverty, lack of access to social services and discrimination.”¹⁹ These situations are actually the offshoots of losing the freedom of these people to determine their future from the hands of the colonizers.

As original peoples of Mindanao, the Moros felt that they are being alienated from the mainstream society as a result of the animosity engendered by the division created by the Spaniards between what used to be Malay brothers, and is aggravated by their economic marginalization during the American Regime and the Philippine Republic.²⁰ The Moros are misunderstood and were often maligned, viewed in the past as hostile, pirates and uncivilized; and in the present as bandits, rebels and terrorists.²¹ Having a long and bitter experience with the changing regimes in Manila since the annexation of Mindanao and Sulu, the Moros had come to conclude that the only solution to their problem is total independence.²²

However, after decades of negotiations, the Moros reduced their assertion for independence to a sub-state. Their assertion of self-determination is in accordance with Article 3 of the UN Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which states that “Indigenous peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.”²³

On October 7, 2012, a Joint Communique was signed by the GPH and the MILF Negotiating Panels claiming an unprecedented milestone achievement by forging the “Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro.” According to their statement the Framework Agreement serves as the overarching architecture for the Mindanao peace process and provides the foundation of a just and lasting peace in Mindanao.²⁴ A New Bangsamoro Political Entity to be called “Bangsamoro” shall be established to replace the present Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao (ARMM).

Moro-IP Kinship

Proof of Moro-IP kinship is mostly oral tradition handed down through generations. According to Moro tradition, the origin of the peoples of Mindanao started to form a civilization at Tbok, now a barangay (village) of Malabang, Lanao del Sur. It is said that Uranggay was the first leader of the said civilization.

¹⁹ Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices. Factsheet, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

²⁰ Mehol K. Sadain

²¹ Reuben Canoy, i

²² Jubair, 1997,162

²³ Draft United Nations Declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. 1994

²⁴ GPH and MILF Joint Communique

A Moro version of the story claims that in the 15th century, Sharif Muhammad Kabunsuan, a Muslim missionary from Johor, came to the area. He married Angintabu, great granddaughter of Makaapen, son of Uranggay. Angintabu, along with other members of her kingdom, were converted to Islam, except her brother Mamalu with his followers who refused Islam. Their differences in belief made them decide to part ways. However, it is important to note that before they parted, Angintabu and Mamalu made a covenant to recognize, respect, cooperate, and protect each other.

The IP version of the story is the brothers Mamalu and Tabunaway.²⁵ According to this version the two brothers parted ways when Tabunaway embraced Islam while Mamalu remained faithful to his traditional way of life and system of self-rule. With this major turn in their lives, the brothers made a similar pact to the one between Angintabu and Mamalu. The treaty was to recognize, respect, cooperate, and protect each other was publicly sworn to by both parties through a ritual and mutually agreed that the treaty must be observed by the leaders including the coming generations to come.

Another version traces the origin from the four brothers who departed ways when Tabunaway embraced Islam. The progenies of Tabunaway and his men formed part of the Maguindanaon tribe, while of the Miliridirid group who went upstream of Pulangi are the present-day Teduray. Dumalandan and his followers who settled around Lake Lanao became the Maranao who later on embraced Islam and those who moved farther became the Manobo and other tribes. Gumabon-gabon and his men who roamed the present day Zamboanga Peninsula became the Subanen.²⁶

Provision of Support

The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues observes that IPs share common problems related to the protection of their rights. They strive for recognition of their identities, their ways of life and their right to traditional lands, territories and natural resources."²⁷ Most likely, people who share common problems would tend to support each other. The kinds of support provided are related more to characteristics of the relationship than to characteristics of the network members themselves.²⁸

Multilevel analysis found social goal progress to be higher on days when individuals' satisfaction regarding interactions with society was above their average level. The strength of this association varied significantly across participants and was stronger among those with family-intensive conversations. Daily contact satisfaction also explained more variation in goal progress than a standard measure of relationship quality.²⁹

²⁵ Bandara

²⁶ Unpublished proceedings of the Subanen Tribe Consultation on Tribal Justice and Governance held on December 18-20, 2004 at Ipil, Zamboanga Sibugay participated by 18 delegates from the different places of Zamboanga Peninsula

²⁷ Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous Voices. Factsheet, Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

²⁸ Barry Wellman and Scot Wortley

²⁹ Shannon T. Mejía and Karen Hooker

Ideally, a family provides members with warm and intimate relationships, helping them feel satisfied and secured. It is expected for relatives to understand members of his family, to care for them, and to be there for them when they need him.³⁰

Educational Attainment and Age Profile

Education is a comprehensive concept which comprises the knowledge individuals obtain from daily experiences. It is classified into formal and informal. Formal education includes education provided through an educational institution according to a certain pattern, while informal education has no specific time and place at which is provided. Informal education never comes to an end and it teaches the individuals more than he can ever learn through his formal education.³¹

Like other institutions, education has both manifest and latent functions. The most basic manifest function of education is the transmission of knowledge and the most latent function is the transmission of the dominant culture.³²

Eighteen years old are expected to have completed high school and are allowed to participate in the political affairs of the state. The 1987 Philippine Constitution guarantees right of suffrage to every Filipino and sets the minimum age limit at 18 years old.³³ Article 202 of Rule XXVII of the Rules and Regulations Implementing the Local Government Code of 1991 stipulates that any Filipino residing in the barangay for at least six months and aged 15 to 21 years old is qualified to be a member of the Kabataang Barangay,³⁴ and as such he/she is qualified to vote.³⁵

³⁰ Richard T. Schaefer, 327

³¹ Chandra, S and Sharma R, 6-7

³² Schaefer, 375

³³ Art V, Sec 1, Philippine Constitution

³⁴ Art 202, Sec b. Rule XXVII, IRR, Local Government Code of 1991, 169

³⁵ Art 202, Sec d., Rule XXVII, IRR, Local Government Code of 1991, 170

METHODOLOGY

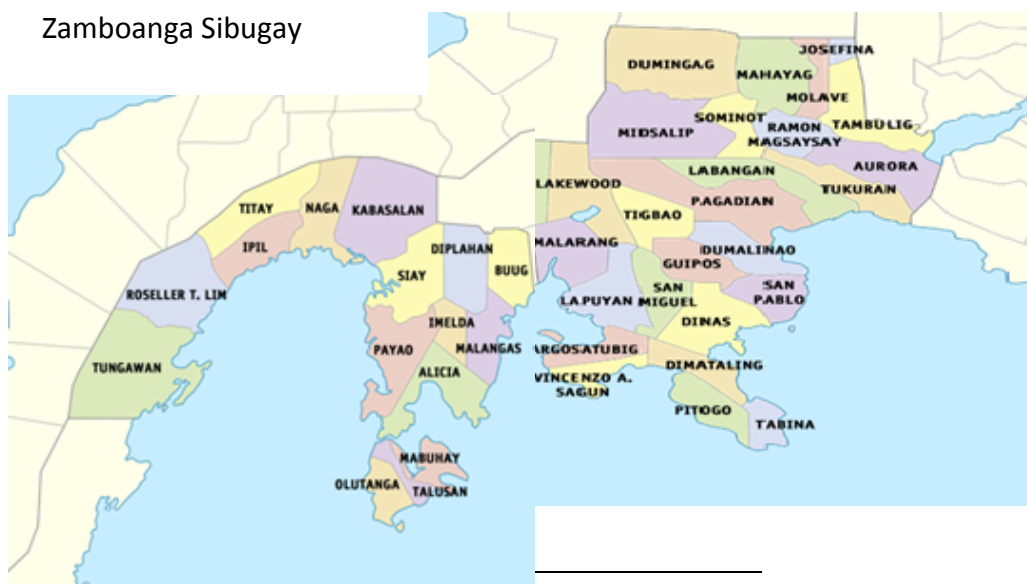
Research Design

This study is descriptive in nature and endeavoured to determine the level of knowledge of the Subanen about their kinship with the Moros and their level of sympathy and support for the New Bangsamoro Political Entity (NBPE). It also endeavoured to determine the influence of educational attainment and age profile on the level of knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, and the influence of this knowledge on the level of sympathy and support on the NBPE. At the same time, the study sought to explore the statuses of the House of Datu Dacula as an institution and the Subanen as an indigenous people.

Locale of the Study

Zamboanga del Sur is located at longitude 122° 30''' and latitude 7° 15''' north and is bordered on the north by the Province of Zamboanga del Norte, on the south by the Moro Gulf, on the southwest by Zamboanga Sibugay, and on the east and northeast by Lanao del Norte, Misamis Occidental, and Panguil Bay. It has a total land area of about 473,491 hectares or 4,734.91 square miles. The province is composed of 26 municipalities and one city, with Pagadian as its capital City.³⁶

Figure 2. Maps of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay



³⁶ Socio-Economic Profile of Zamboanga del Sur

Zamboanga del Sur

Zamboanga Sibugay was created from the Province of Zamboanga del Sur through Republic Act 8973 in 2001. It is geographically located at 7°48'N 122°40'E and is bordered in the north by the Province of Zamboanga del Norte, on the southwest by Zamboanga City, on the south by Sibuguey Bay, and on the east by the Province of Zamboanga del Sur. It has an approximate total land area of about 3,228.3 square kilometres or 1,246.4479 square miles. The province is subdivided into 16 municipalities with the Municipality of Ipil its capital.³⁷

The original settlers of the two provinces were the Subanen, followed by the Maguindanaon from the Cotabato region, and then some Moros from the South. From the 1950s to early 1970s there was an influx of migrants from the Visayas region due to economic opportunities in the provinces. Today, the two provinces have a multi-cultural society, dominated by the migrants and their descendants while most of the original settlers are marginalized. As of the 2010 census, Zamboanga del Sur has a population of about 959,685³⁸ and Zamboanga Sibugay has about 584,685.³⁹ The Subanen combined with other Moro groups comprised only about 16 percent of the total population.

Respondents

Respondents of the study were all Subanen aged 18 years and above. They were identified with the help of the people in the community. Twenty key informants were identified through the help of villagers. Professional members of the focus group discussion were taken from the Municipality of Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, while the “timuay” group were from Barangay Simbol, Kabasalan, and Zamboanga Sibugay. Subanen students of Mindanao State University in Buug coming from different municipalities of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay were organized to form focus group discussion with a bigger number. A group of four farmers in Barangay Buyugan, Kumalarang, and Zamboanga del Sur was organized to form another focus group discussion.

Data Collection

Quantitative and qualitative techniques of collecting and analysing data were employed. The quantitative technique generated data through survey using both closed and open-ended questionnaire. Some students and acquaintances were recruited to help collect data. Only 324 respondents from 23 municipalities of Zamboanga del Sur and Zamboanga Sibugay answered the questionnaires.

The qualitative technique gathered data through interviews of 20 key informants and four focus group discussions (FGD) among “timuays”, professionals, students and laymen.

After collecting and tabulating the data, a conference with eight Subanen - composed of “timuays,” professionals and students - was held. The data was presented at the conference determine

³⁷ Socio-Economic Profile of Zamboanga Sibugay

³⁸ Zamboanga del Sur PPO Profile

³⁹ Zamboanga Sibugay PPO Profile

the validity and reliability of said data. After clarifying some queries, the participants give some additional information to enrich the study.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were tabulated and analysed using simple descriptive statistical tools such as frequency counts, percentage, and mean. In testing the relations of variables, a chi-square (X^2) test was used. The data are explained in-depth through the information generated from the interviews of key informants and FGDs conducted.

Data on educational attainment of the respondents are categorized into high and low. Those who graduated in high school, or earned baccalaureate degrees or postgraduate degrees, are classified as having high education. Those who have no formal education or those who did not complete high school are classified as having low education. Data on age are categorized into young and old, with 18 to 31 years old considered young and 32 years old and above are considered as old.

Analysis of the level of knowledge on Moro-IP kinship and the level of support are dealt with by respondent and by question. By respondents, the level of knowledge are categorized into very high, high, low, and very low. Number of positive answers from the 11 questions asked are deducted by the negative answers with six possible differences, 11, 9, 7, 5, 3, and 1. For the positive dominated answers, the differences of 11, 9, and 7 are interpreted as very high and 5, 3, and 1 are interpreted as high. For the negative dominated answers, differences of 1, 3, and 5 are interpreted as low, while differences of 7, 9, and 11 are interpreted as very low.

The 11 questions asked to gauge the level of knowledge are focused on the sphere of influence of the Datu Dacula over the Subanen; knowledge on their historical lineage; reaction to the perception that Subanen were formerly a Moro protectorate; their impression on the term "Moro;" and their awareness on Moro activities.

Another 11 questions were asked to measure the sympathy and support of Subanen for the New Bangsamoro Political Entity, focused on their empathy toward the Moros for their achievement in their quest for self-determination; preparedness to support the New Bangsamoro Political Entity; their actions in support of the NBPE; reaction to the new definition of Moro; and their expectations on the possible outcomes of the NBPE.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

1. Educational Attainment and Age Profile of the Respondents

Educational Attainment

The educational attainment of the respondents was categorized into high and low. Respondents who have graduated high school are considered as having high education, while those who did not complete high school are considered as having low educational attainment.

Figures 3a and 3b. Educational Attainment of the Respondents

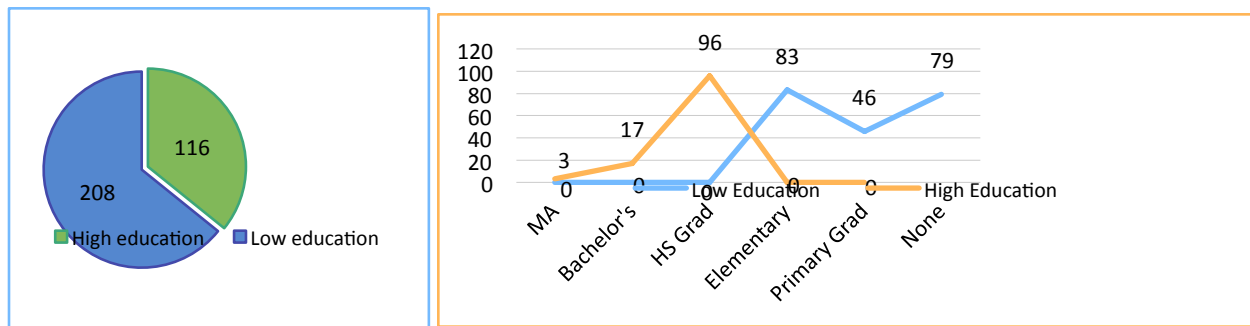


Figure 3a shows that out of the 324 respondents, only 116 (35.80 percent) have high educational attainment and 208 (63.58 percent) have low educational attainment. Figure 3b shows that out of the 116 respondents with high educational attainment, three (2.59 percent) have master's degrees, 17 (14.66 percent) earned baccalaureate degrees, and 96 (82.76 percent) were high school graduates. Of the 208 respondents considered as having low educational attainment, 83 (39.90 percent) completed elementary school level of education, 46 (22.12 percent) completed primary school level, and 79 (37.98 percent) have not gone to school at all.

Age Profile of the Respondents

Age of respondents are categorized into young and old. Respondents aged 18 to 31 years old are considered as young, while 32 years old and above are considered as old. These categories are further subdivided into four age brackets.

Figures 4a and 4b. Age Profile of the Respondents

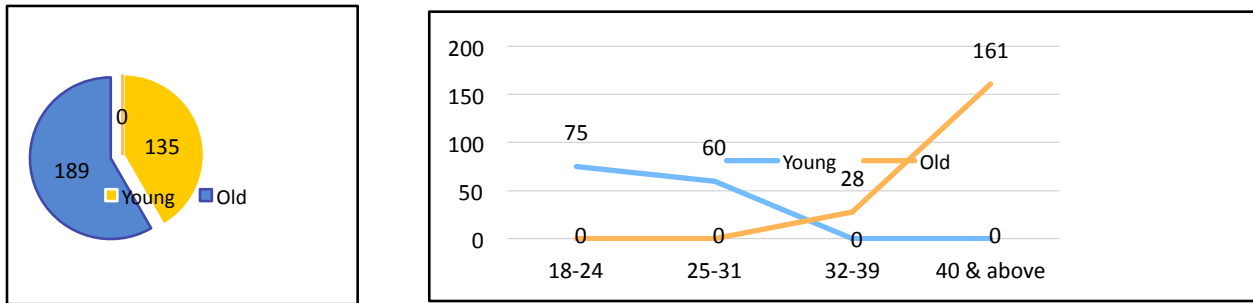


Figure 4a shows that 135 (41.67 percent) were in the young category and 189 (58.33 percent) were classified in the old category. Figure 4b shows that out of the 135 young respondents, 75 (55.56 percent) were in the 18-24 age bracket and 60 (44.44 percent) were in the 25-31 age bracket. Out of the 189 old respondents, 28 (14.81 percent) were in the 32-39 age bracket and 161 (85.19 percent) were in the 40 and above age bracket.

2. Level of Knowledge on the Moro-IP Kinship

In the analysis by respondent, the level of knowledge is categorized into high level and low level. High level is further classified into very high level and high level, while the low level is classified into low level and very low level.

Figures 5a and 5b. Level of Knowledge on Moro-IP Kinship

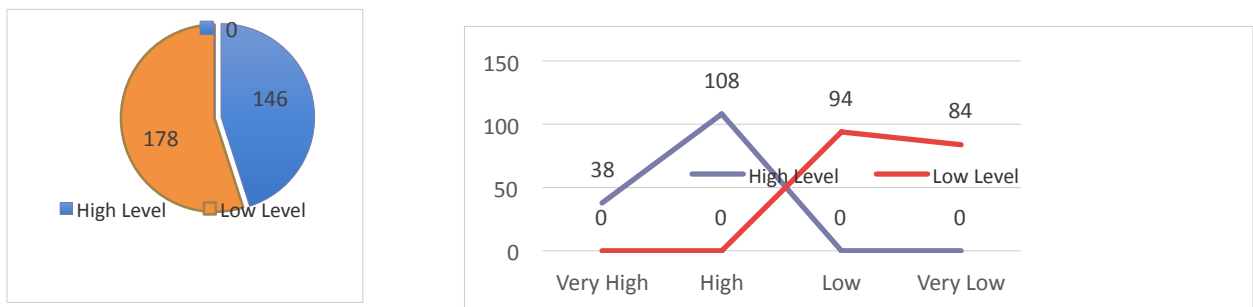


Figure 5a shows that out of the 324 respondents, 146 (45.06 percent) have high knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, and 178 (54.94 percent) have low knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship. Figure 5b shows that out of the 146 respondents having high knowledge, 38 (26.03 percent) were classified as very high knowledge

and 108 (73.97 percent) were classified as high knowledge. On the other hand, out of the 178 respondents having low knowledge, 84 (47.19 percent) are classified as very low and 94 (52.81 percent) are classified as low.

The data are analysed by questions asked, focused on the sphere of influence of the Datu Dacula over the Subanen; knowledge on their historical lineage; reaction on the perception that Subanen were Moro protectorate; their impression on the term “Moro;” and their awareness on Moro activities.

Table 1. Level of Knowledge on Moro-IP Kinship

QUESTIONS	Responses		Difference	WM	Category
	Yes	No			
1. Do you know Datu Dacula?	159	165	6	0.18	Low
2. Is it true that there are Timuay enthroned by the Datu Dacula?	154	170	16	0.05	Low
3. Is it true that there are conflicts between and among Subanen brought to the House of Datu Dacula for resolution?	132	192	60	0.19	Low
4. Do you recognize the authority of Datu Dacula in the Sibugay Region?	77	247	170	0.52	Very Low
5. Have you heard the Mamalu-Tabunaway story and do you believe in it?	73	251	178	0.55	Very Low
6. Do you believe that the Subanen and the Moros have some common traditions?	234	90	144	0.44	High
7. Do you believe that the Moros have kin relationship with the Subanen?	215	109	106	0.33	High
8. Do you believe that the Maguindanaon of Sibugay protected the Subanen during the Japanese occupation?	75	249	174	0.54	Very Low
9. When you hear a word Moro what comes first in your mind?	148	176	28	0.07	Low
10. Have you heard of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro?	167	157	10	0.03	High
11. Are you aware that the IPs are represented in the MILF-GPH Negotiation?	61	263	202	0.62	Very Low
TOTAL	1495	2069	574		Low
WM			52.18	0.16	

The weighted mean scores (WM) of the difference of the “Yes” responses and the “No” responses are determined and interpreted using a two-point scale scheme:

WEIGHTED MEAN	CATEGORY	
	For the “Yes” Dominated Responses	For the “No” Dominated Responses
0.01 to 0.50	High	Low
0.51 to 1.00	Very High	Very Low

Influence of Datu Dacula among the Subanen

The House of the Datu Dacula was established before the coming of the Spaniards as an Autonomous Region of the Maguindanao Sultanate. It encompassed the present day Zamboanga Peninsula and is ruled by the Datu Dacula. The Maguindanaon Moros and the Subanen supported the institution especially during the height of its power. The Subanen believed that the authority of their traditional leaders, who they call “timuay,” emanates from this institution.

The institution ceased to exist upon the establishment of the Philippine Republic, but the Moros and the Subanen continued to recognize its influence over them. In the course of time, the institution weakened due to the firm and continuous assertion of the Philippine Government of its sovereignty, and the failure of the institution to strengthen itself. Furthermore, the absence of strong leader for a considerable period of time had caused internal conflict which divided the followers. Observers foresee the demise of this waning institution when it fails to produce a strong leader to unite its divided followers.

Moreover, the support of the Subanen weakens due to the establishment of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in accordance with Republic Act 8371. According to some informants the NCIP delineates the Subanen from the Moros. For them the creation of the NCIP gave them equal footing with their brother Moros, thus, they ceased to look up to them as their “big brothers.” They assumed that they will have better future with the NCIP.

Nevertheless, despite the weakening of the institution, some Subanen still recognized its authority. On this regard, the data gathered show that 159 (49.07 percent) respondents claimed they knew the Datu Dacula; 77 (23.77 percent) still recognized his influence over them; 154 (47.53 percent) were aware that some “timuay” took their mandate from him; and 132 (40.74 percent) knew that the Datu Dacula resolved conflicts among and between Subanen.

It was observed that the influence of the House of the Datu Dacula is limited to certain places. Key informants in far municipalities claimed that the neither Datu Dacula, nor his elders and any of his men, had ever visited their place. They never received a single decree, policy or order from the House of the Datu Dacula to affect his influence over them. They alleged that their place is outside the sphere of influence of the Datu Dacula.

Subanen-Moro Kinship

According to an oral tradition, the first civilization in Mindanao was in the present day Malabang, Lanao del Sur, which is believed to be composed of people from the same family. The coming of Sharif Muhammad Kabunsuan from Johor in the 15th century had caused the separation of the people creating two groups they call now the IPs and the Moros, though despite their separation they continued to support each other.

The IP account is the Mamalu-Tabunaway story. Tabunaway, brother of Mamalu was converted to Islam. Mamalu was not converted and went away with the promise that he will continue to support and protect his brother. Mamalu and his followers wandered the forest of the present day Zamboanga Peninsula and in the course of time their group became the Subanen tribe. On the other hand, the progenies of Tabunaway form part of the Maguindanaon tribe. In the past, this tradition was valued by the two tribes, but as explained by the informants, the older Subanen and Maguindanaon failed to hand down this story to the younger generations, who do not have also the enthusiasm to know. This assumption was proven true by the data gathered, where only 77 respondents (23.76 percent) knew the story of Mamalu and Tabunaway.

However, despite the fading away of this oral tradition among young generations, there are still 215 respondents or about 66.36 percent who claimed to have kin relationship with the Moros, which could be attributed to their continues association that started at the height of the rule of the Datu Dacula of the Autonomous Sibugay Region (present day Zamboanga Peninsula). During those times, the strength of their association prospered until the influx of the migrants from Luzon and Visayas, who introduced new development that caused the rupture in the Moro-IP relationship.

The data, however, show that many of the respondents still believed that the Maguindanaon and the Subanen have common traditions and practices, and that they shared common lineage.

Reaction on the Perception that Subanen were Moro Protectorate

The support afforded by the Subanen to the Maguindanaon was a gesture of fulfilment of the promise made by Mamalu to Tabunaway. However, this was misinterpreted by the Maguindanaon as a form of submission to their might. The Maguindanaon claimed that the Subanen are their protectorate, especially during the colonial periods. This was disputed by some members of the FGD, asserting that they had never been a protectorate of the Maguindanaon, but that they were partners.

The data, however, show that 75 respondents (23.15 percent) who believed that the Subanen were protected by the Maguindanaon during the Japanese occupation. Although many denied this kind of association between the Moros and the Subanen, the fact that there are still some who believe in it supports the possibility that it really existed.

Impression of the Term “Moro”

The data show that 148 respondents (45.68 percent) view the Moros as bad people. Some key informants explained that what they mean bad is the term “Moro” but not the people, though few insisted that they mean the people because of their bad experiences with them.

The term “Moro” was used by the Spaniards referring to the Muslims in the Philippines who did not surrender to their might. They attached negative connotations to the term in order to win the sympathy and support of the Indios in fighting against them. Labelling the Moros as bad people was perpetuated during the American Period and it was continued by the Filipinos. Consequently, the term “Moro” has some stigma attached to it, and the Muslims of the South hated to be addressed as such. However, there was a shift of perception on the term among the Muslims of Mindanao when the MNLF and the MILF used it as their identity. The twist on the perception on the term Moro was not understood by many Filipinos until now.

The Spanish campaign to depict the Muslims of this country as malicious people was so effective that 114 years after they left, the impression still persists in the minds of the Filipinos in general despite the efforts of the Moro advocates in enlightening people that this prejudicial labelling was part of the Spanish propaganda against these people. Moro advocates assert that these people should be acclaimed heroes because they were the first people to fight against colonizers.

Awareness of Moro Activities

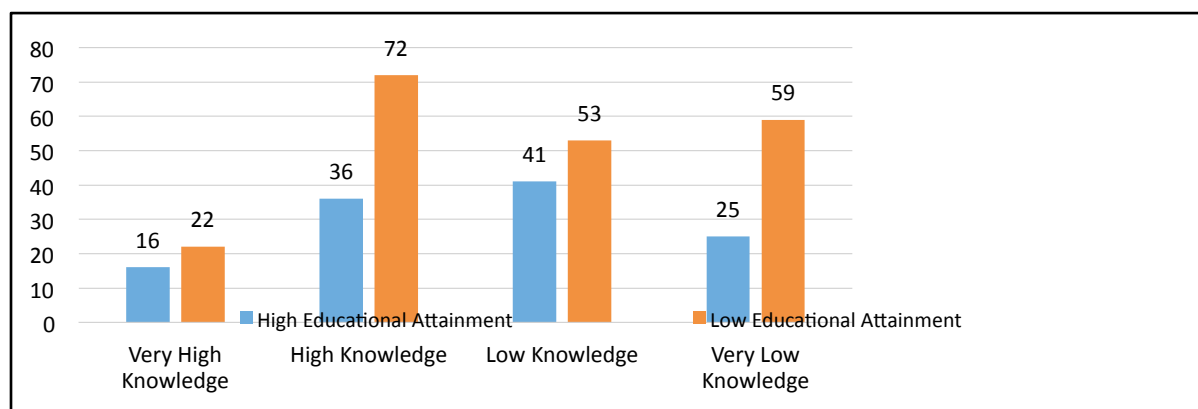
Only 167 respondents (51.54 percent) knew the signing of the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro. Much less, they did not understand the Framework Agreement and its essence. Key informants explained that there are many Subanen who do not own television set and those who did own one did not pay attention to the issue, considering that they did not have the background information of what the Moros are fighting for. Another reason why they paid less attention on the issue is because they felt that they are not part of the issue.

When key informants were informed that IPs are represented in the GPH-MILF negotiations through Datu Antonio Kinoc, their response was that “He is a Teduray and he is not a Subanen.” This implies that on this issue, Subanen gave less weight on their membership as IPs but they gave more essence to their tribe.

Answers of the eleven questions have a total weighted mean of 0.16. Based on the two-point scale scheme in Table 1, this was interpreted as the respondents having a low level of knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship.

3. Relation of Educational Attainment and Age with Level of Knowledge on Moro-IP Kinship

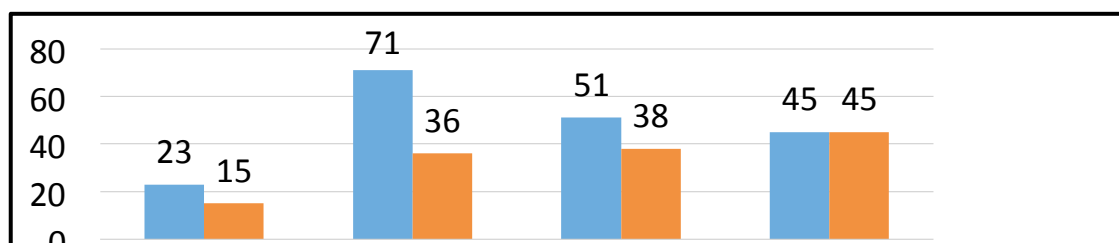
Figure 6. Educational Attainment and Level of Knowledge on Moro-IP Kinship



The data show that out of the 118 respondents identified as having high education, 16 (13.56 percent) have very high knowledge on Moro-IP kinship, 36 (30.51 percent) have high knowledge, and 41 (34.74 percent) have low knowledge, and 25 (21.19 percent) have very low knowledge on the relationships. On the other hand, out of the 206 respondents identified as having low education, 22 (10.68 percent) have very high knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, 72 (34.95 percent) have high knowledge, 53 (25.73 percent) have low knowledge, and 59 (28.64 percent) have very low knowledge on the relationships.

The value of the computed chi-square is 4.686, which is lesser than 7.82, the value of the tabulated chi-square at 0.05 level of significance with df equals to 3. This means that level of educational attainment is not statistically related to knowledge on Moro-IP kinship.

Figure 7. Age Profile and Level of Knowledge on Moro-IP Kinship



The data in Figure 7 show that out of the 190 respondents considered as old, 23 (12.11 percent) have very high knowledge on Moro-IP kinship, 71 (37.37 percent) have high knowledge, 51 (26.84 percent) have low knowledge, and 45 (23.69 percent) have very low knowledge on the relationship. On the other hand, out of the 134 respondents considered as young, 15 (11.19 percent) have high knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, 36 (26.87 percent) have high knowledge, 38 (28.36 percent) have low knowledge, and 45 (33.58 percent) have very low knowledge on the relationship.

The value of the computed chi-square is 5.517, which is lesser than 7.82, the value of the tabulated chi-square at 0.05 level of significance with df equals to 3. This means that age profile is not statistically related to knowledge on Moro-IP kinship.

4. Level of Sympathy and Support for the New Bangsamoro Political Entity

Eleven questions were asked to measure the sympathy and support of Subanen on the New Bangsamoro Political Entity (NBPE). It is focused on their empathy towards the Moros for their achievement in their quest for self-determination; preparedness to the NBPE; their actions in support of the NBPE; reaction to the new definition of Moro; and their expectations.

Figures 8a and 8b. Level of Sympathy and Support

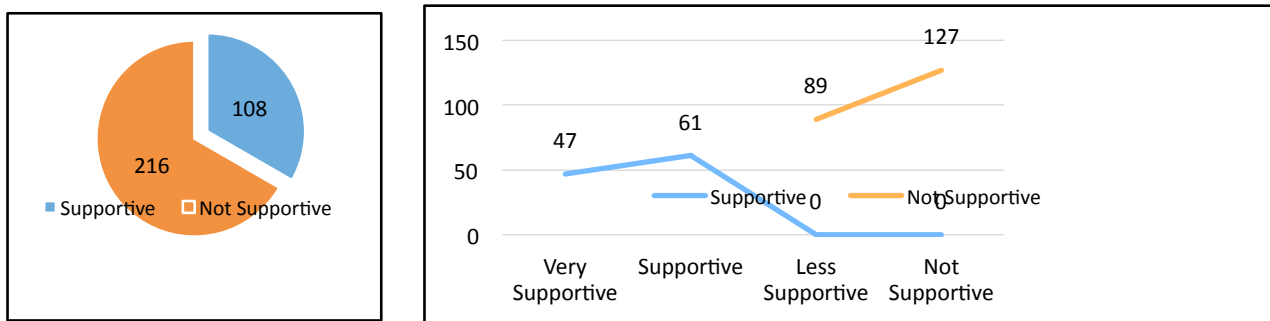


Figure 8a shows that 108 (33 percent) respondents are supportive to the establishment of the New Bangsamoro Political Entity, and 216 (64 percent) are not supportive.

Figure 8b shows that out of the 108 respondents considered as supportive, 47 (43.52 percent) are very supportive and 61 (56.48 percent) are supportive. On the other hand, out of the 216

respondents considered as not supportive, 89 (41.20 percent) are less supportive and 127 (58.80 percent) are not supportive.

Table 2. Level of Sympathy and Support for the NBPE

QUESTIONS	Responses		Difference	WM	Category
	Yes	No			
1. Are you happy for the Moros that their quest for self-determination is almost to be attained?	216	104	112	0.35	Supportive
2. Is the establishment of the NBPE ideal for self-determination?	138	182	44	0.14	Less Supportive
3. Are you in favour that the Ancestral Domain claimed by the IPs be part of the NBPE?	81	239	158	0.49	Less Supportive
4. Do you want that Zamboanga Peninsula be a part of the NBPE?	81	239	158	0.49	Less Supportive
5. Do you think your interests as a tribe are covered in the NBPE?	74	246	172	0.54	Not Supportive
6. Do you want to be part of the NBPE	74	246	172	0.54	Not Supportive
7. If there is a referendum to effect the establishment of the NBPE, are you going to support it?	156	164	8	0.03	Less Supportive
8. Do you give time to attend advocacies related to establishment of the NBPE?	124	196	72	0.23	Less Supportive
9. Are you willing to disseminate information about NBPE within your capacity?	150	170	20	0.06	Less Supportive
10. Do you want the Subanen be identified as Moros?	71	249	178	0.56	Not Supportive
11. Are you optimistic that sustainable peace and development are attained if the NBPE is implemented?	146	174	28	0.09	Less Supportive
TOTAL	1211	2209	998		Less Supportive
Weighted Mean			90.72	0.28	

Impression of Moro Achievements

Two hundred sixteen (66.67 percent) respondents are happy of what the Moros have achieved in relation to their quest for self-determination. Those who did not express their feeling of sympathy do not necessarily mean that they do not like their brother Moros, but as explained by some members of the FGD, these people are hesitant because they really do not understand the real issue. It is this obliviousness to the real issue that obscured the minds of many of the respondents to consider the establishment of the New Bangsamoro Political Entity as an ideal for self-determination. Many of them disapproved the manner of winning the right of the Moros to self-determination.

Inclusion to the New Bangsamoro Political Entity

Only 81 respondents (25 percent) desire to be part of the NBPE and wish that their ancestral domain and or Zamboanga Peninsula also be a part. Relevant information gathered from key informants and members of the FGD provided justifications why many of the Subanen were not interested or hesitant to be part of the NBPE.

The Subanen do not have sufficient background information of what the Moros are fighting for. Their unfamiliarity of the subject concerned creates difficulty among them to understand the real issues involved in the peace talks, which contributed to false assumption and misconstrued personal feelings. For instance, the Subanen are generally Christian and practically they are already part of the mainstream society; they fear that as Christians they do not have a place in the new government because of their presumption that the new government shall be governed by Islam. This assumption is based partly on their feelings of mistrust of the Moros brought about by their unpleasant experiences with these people. They do not have sufficient understanding about the proposed Bangsamoro governance, much more on Islamic political system.

The Subanen in general are content with the status quo. They believed that their interests as a tribe are already covered in Republic Act 8371, enacted on October 29, 1997, which established the NCIP. The NCIP guarantees them the right to freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development and recognizes their freedom for self-governance and self-determination. For this reason, the Subanen do not want to be part of the NBPE including their ancestral domain, which is in Zamboanga Peninsula.

On the other hand, the few who wish to be part of the NBPE alleged that 16 years after the enactment of Republic Act 8371, there is no concrete development that gives assurance to uplift the Subanen from their plight. This observation led them to think that the NBPE is another light of hope for all indigenous peoples of Mindanao.

Preparedness to Support the NBPE

Although majority of the respondents are not interested to be part of the NBPE, there are still some who wish to support it. One hundred fifty-six (48.15 percent) expressed their support to the NBPE if a referendum is to be held to effect its establishment; 124 respondents (38.27 percent) registered their intention to attend meetings related to the establishment of the NBPE; and 150 (46.30 percent) are willing to disseminate information about the NBPE in their own capacity.

Unwillingness to be part of the NBPE could be the main reason why many are not supportive to the new government. However, there are key informants who expressed their willingness to support provided Zamboanga Peninsula shall not be part of the NBPE. Some are hesitant to support because of the uncertainty of the real direction of the new government, further clouded by distrust due to misinformation and obliviousness on the main issue, while others are not interested in what is going on around them. Most of those who are indifferent of the issue are those who are bothered most of the time of what his family can eat in the next meal.

During the conduct of the survey, there was a small organization of Subanen in Zamboanga Sibugay that is very supportive of the NBPE. At that time the members were preparing a manifesto of support which according to them, shall be submitted to the Office of the President of the Republic.

Reaction to the New Definition of Moro

Question number 10 was designed to generate an understanding on how amenable the Subanen are on the new definition of Moro to include all IPs of Mindanao, including their spouses and children. The data show that only 71 respondents (21.91 percent) are agreeable the change to all IPs being called Moros. The main reason why many resent the idea to be called Moros is the negative connotation attached to the term by the nemeses of the Moros that cannot easily be deleted from their minds.

Expectations

The data show that 146 respondents (45.06 percent) are optimistic on the attainment of peace and development in Mindanao after the establishment of the NBPE. Reasons for being pessimistic by many respondents include the feeling of distrust on the part of the Subanen toward the Moros. It was mentioned earlier that, the Subanen are practically assimilated to the mainstream society. In the process of interaction with the migrants, the Subanen are influenced by those who are indifferent to the Moros due to misinformation and false assumption. Consequently, there was a shift of viewpoint among the Subanen about the Moros which caused them to slowly distance themselves from the Moros.

Some informants alleged that the failure of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) to meet the basic needs of the Moros that would improve their living conditions could be a contributory factor to their pessimistic view about the attainment of peace and development once the NBPE is established. It could be recalled that one of the objectives of the establishment of the ARMM was to improve the well-being of the Moros (Sec. 7, Article III, Republic Act 6734). However, after 21 years of existence, the region is still very poor, having the highest poverty incidence among families nationwide in 2012 (MindaNews/26 April).

Answers of the 11 questions asked have a total weighted mean of 0.28 with an adjectival equivalent of less supportive. This means that the Subanen have less support on the establishment of the NBPE.

5. Relation of Knowledge of Moro-IP Kinship and Level of Support on the NBPE

Figure 9. Level of Knowledge of Moro-IP Kinship and Level of Support

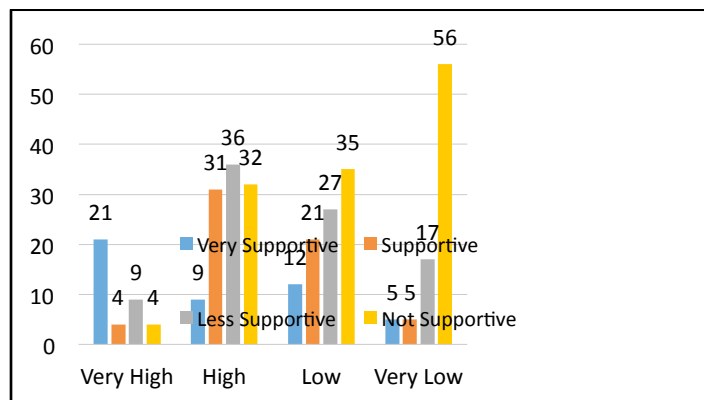


Figure 9 shows that out of the 38 respondents who have very high knowledge on Moro-IP kinship, 21 (55.26 percent) are very supportive, four (10.53 percent) are supportive, nine (23.68 percent) are less supportive, and four (10.53 percent) are not supportive. Out of the 108 respondents who have high knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, nine (8.33 percent) are very supportive, 31 (28.70 percent) are supportive, 36 (33.33 percent) are less supportive, and 32 (29.63 percent) are not supportive.

On the other hand, out of the 95 respondents who have low knowledge on Moro-IP kinship, 12 (12.63 percent) are very supportive, 21 (22.11 percent) are supportive, 27 (28.42 percent) are less supportive, and 35 (36.84 percent) are not supportive, while out of the 83 respondents who have very low knowledge on Moro-IP kinship, five (6.03 percent) are very supportive, five (6.03 percent) are supportive, 17 (20.48 percent) are less supportive, and 56 (67.47 percent) are not supportive.

The value of the computed chi-square is 96.197, which is greater than 16.92, the tabulated value of the 0.05 level of significance with df equals to 9. This means that level of knowledge on kinship is statistically related to sympathy and support.

6. Subanen Alternative Solutions to the Moro Problem

The Subanen did not give concrete alternative solution to the problem in Mindanao, but they wish for its peaceful resolution. The respondents denounce the use of force to attain one's desire. For them peace is attainable by complete submission to the authority, and in return, the government looks at their welfare and grants their RSD as minority group. They are referring to the establishment of NCIP that guarantees their right to self-determination.

7. Some Observations

During the conduct of the study, two important observations were noted. First, the House of the Datu Dacula, as an institution, is losing influence. Possible reason is the absence of a strong leader that would unite the divided followers and would strengthen the institution. Second, the Subanen tribe seems to have abandoned some of their beliefs and converted to Christianity. Many of the young generations cannot understand and communicate with their own dialect.

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions and Implications

Educational attainment and age are not related statistically with the level of knowledge on historical lineage. This implies that one does not need to be educated in formal schooling or to be old in order to trace his or her historical ancestry. The Moro and IP historical lineage is nowhere to be found in any pages of the Philippine history or any literature. The Subanen did not make a written record of their history as a tribe, rather they pass it orally from one generation to another. Their knowledge on their historical lineage depends to a large extent on how their older generation pass their traditions to the younger generations.

The level of knowledge of the Subanen on their kinship with the Moros is low. Their low knowledge is most likely the effect of the failure of the Datu Dacula to strengthen his institution and the failure of the older Subanen and the Maguindanaon to transmit their historical lineage to the younger generations. Another explanation to the low level of knowledge on Moro-IP kinship is the influx of the peoples from Luzon and Visayas who influenced the lives of the Subanen. Peoples from Luzon and Visayas migrated to Mindanao as part of the migration program of the government that started in the 1950s. These so-called migrants or settlers are the descendants of the Indios who were conscripted by the colonizers to fight against the Moros. The Indios were influenced by western culture and their descendants presently form the mainstream society. The low level of knowledge is further compounded by the Subanen's lack of awareness to the Moro quest for self-determination, and the establishment of the NCIP in 1997 that guarantees IPs their right to freedom for self-governance and self-determination. Consequently, the inseparable Subanen (IPs) and Maguindanaon (Moros) who have, since the dawn of history, marched shoulder-to-shoulder as time went amid plenty and disaster⁴⁰ seem to be losing their understanding of their shared history.

The Subanen are less supportive to the establishment of the New Bangsamoro Political Entity (NBPE), though many expressed their gladness of the achievement of the Moros in relation to their quest for self-determination. Factors that contributory to not being supportive of the NBPE include lack of knowledge of the real issues, mistrust on the Moros due to misinformation, and their contentment with the status quo. Consequently, the Subanen are pessimistic that peace and development could be attained once the NBPE is established. In addition, they are not yet ready to accept the new definition of the term "Moro" to include them, their spouses and their children, as reflected in the Framework Agreement on the Bangsamoro (FAB).⁴¹

Statistically, the level of knowledge on Moro-IP kinship is related to the Subanen support on the establishment of the NBPE. That is, since the Subanen have low level of knowledge on the Moro-IP kinship, they are less supportive to the establishment of the NBPE. The failure of the Subanen as a tribe to recall their historical lineage with their brother Moros implies the weakening of their very long time partnership. This would probably cause the separation of the two tribes that were inseparable since the

⁴⁰ Jubair, 103

⁴¹ FAB, 2

dawn of history. As the Moros are asserting on their right to self-determination, the Subanen are contented with the status quo and enjoy their association with the mainstream society.

Recommendations

From the results of the study the following are recommended:

1. It is suggested to create a written record of the historical lineage of the Moros and the IPs for the purpose of strengthening and preserving their relationship. In that way cultural solidarity among them shall be strengthened.
2. It is an appeal to the Philippine Government to remain steadfast in its commitment to resolve the centuries old problem in Mindanao.
3. It is recommended not to include the current concerns of the Subanen and other IPs in the establishment of the NBPE, so as not to complicate the on-going negotiations with the provisions not to close the possibility of inclusion of these people and their places in an appropriate time. The Agreement on territorial scope should, however, include a provision that after a certain time (e.g. 25 years) after the establishment of the NBPE, Zamboanga Peninsula and other places dominated by Moros and IPs outside the NBPE shall be subjected for further negotiations for possible inclusion to the NBPE. This is in line with suggestion of Lingga who said, "To lump together the concerns and grievances of the indigenous people, the Christians of Mindanao and the Bangsamoro would only complicate matters and make solutions to the problems more elusive."⁴²
4. This study observes that over time, the Subanen tribe have lessened their observance of the characteristics of an indigenous people, such as maintaining their retaining their spoken dialect or traditional religion. To this effect, it is recommended to conduct a study on the status of the Subanen as an indigenous people.
5. To the educational sector, it is recommended to include in their curricula in all levels the colourful history of the Moros and IPs.

⁴² Lingga, 20

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