Dayaw Philosophy of Ilokano Student Leaders in a State University, Philippines

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Abstract – *Dayaw in the ordinary life of the Ilokano defines society. In the realm of the Ilokano standard of living, dayaw connotes a more profound sense of belongingness; it relates to inclusivity. Using qualitative research method, this study utilized the grounded theory method to gather data from the student leaders of mandated organizations and the presidents of accredited organizations or interest groups who were enrolled in the University of Northern Philippines in Vigan City, Ilocos Sur, Republic of the Philippines. The student leaders' belief on dayaw is perceived as a customary gesture of respect, giving what is due, giving recognition, honor, and respect for diversity, especially to culture and traditions. Dayaw reflects a way of life, and a standard of living. It is an expression of the inner core of a person's life as he or she values others' dignity and humanity. The student leaders' experiences of dayaw seek to explain mutual and social relationships that bind the leader, and the subordinate to achieve both their role in their respective organizations and in society. A human person experiences dayaw when he/she encompasses a broader scope of understanding his/her real essence as part of a community. The realization of dayaw is obtained by the participants' ability to stand as good leaders working for their integral development. The idea of transparency, honesty, harmony with nature and others, and justice arose from their realization of dayaw. Life is centered not just on the fulfillment of oneself but also on society and people's pleasure.*

Keywords: *dayaw, way of life, Ilokano*

1. Introduction

In the Ilokano way of life, social and moral standards are guided by the social community. The individual commits to a binding agreement to achieve high morale and, undoubtedly, a dependable organization. An individual submits himself/herself and respects the standards set by a society that looks at culture's observance as a social contract. Every individual who is part of the social group adheres to a behavioral quality as a manifestation of belongingness.

Dayaw, a familiar and colloquial Ilokano term, operates within the ambit of shared ideals, an indication of oneness with the common goal of having well-disciplined and well-established mutual relationships. *Dayaw* has been defined in many ways depending on the situation or circumstance where it applies. It may imply honesty, purity, righteousness, integrity, probity, and uprightness. These characterizations or metaphors may connote a submission of oneself to the social standards as defined by the community.

The community imposes rigid requirements to the members of the society to submit a portion of their cherished personality to forge a social contract, a binding ethical and moral value for attaining the highest and ultimate good of the society. *Dayaw* is taught in a social group or discussed in a four-walled room, and made known through interpersonal communication and formed relationships. It is shared from one generation to the next, embedded in the core of one's being, thereby becoming a part of the human system.

The Ilokano culture is a model or exemplar community because of its concept of *dayaw*. *Dayaw* is a force that requires responsibility and accountability. To understand the concept of *dayaw*, one should be an Ilokano or live like the Ilokano. It means that one should be aware and practice the Ilokanos' life, customs, and traditions to picture or decipher the *dayaw* principle. Logically, it is not only a concept that makes the Ilokano move towards the attainment of

responsibility as a member of the society but a practice that makes one fulfill his/her being an Ilokano. It arises from a person's dignity when he/she starts dealing with others, touching lives, and sharing one's life with others. *Dayaw* is not just giving respect to others by saying "po," "opo," and performing the "mano po" of the Tagalog or that of the "honesty community" in Batanes but likewise a symbol of extraordinary relationship which is akin to a "pinakbet" that describes convergence and divergence of flesh and blood in establishing one stable ideal as a foundation of good culture.

Dayaw is both a means and an end. It commences and culminates with inter-relational communal flourishing. It is remarkably noted that Ilokano culture is nurtured and cultivated by close family ties, a close-knit family phenomenon. It starts to thrive from the family experiences where the concepts, thoughts, and knowledge intertwine with expectations.

Ilokano life is determined by the way the individual survives through the fate of time. It is always in a phase of transformative development towards the attainment of an ultimate end. *Dayaw*, then, is anchored ontologically and epistemologically in the understanding of one's self.

Dayaw is a concept known to and shared by both the Ilokano young and the old. In the case of the Ilokano youth, particularly the campus organization officers, *dayaw* is something they are called upon to realize and internalize. Student leaders deserve the label "cream of the crop" because they are exemplars to their fellow students. Given this premise, the adage sets in: "To whom much is given, much is expected."

Sometime ago, a paradigm shift toward empowerment, shared, and participative leadership in campus governance took centrality. It is unfortunate that this promising development has been marred on the very grounds of the academic environment where it is supposed to thrive positively. Time and again, some student leaders are noted to be disoriented, dishonest, and disrespectful. Several of them were observed to manifest extreme "ego-logy" and display arrogance through practices of political maneuvering and bickering. These observations only boil down to one thing: their search for meaning and human flourishing, whether personally or collectively, is undeniably stymied.

This is the living challenge that haunts student leaders. As campus figures, student organization officers are expected to resonate with worth-emulating demonstrations of genuine leadership. More than this, they are always presumed to display a sense of commitment and excellence with objectively accepted social and ethical standards – such as *dayaw* - that are constitutive of befitting character and conduct. For these and several other observations or expectations, it is not, therefore, inconsequential that the concept of *dayaw* among student leaders be revisited and reinvestigated. The results of this endeavor will lead to a better understanding of student leaders' way of life. Educators can use results to better deal with the student leaders and their genuine leadership practices towards their subordinates.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

This research aimed to understand the *Dayaw* philosophy of Ilokano student leaders, particularly the governors of mandated organizations and the presidents of accredited groups during the school year 2017-2018. The study specifically determined the student leaders' respective concepts of *dayaw*, their experiences of *dayaw*, and how they realize the philosophy of *dayaw*.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study utilized the grounded theory method as theorized by Glaser and Strauss (1999). Conceptual thinking and theory building sum up the interrelated approaches of grounded theory. Qualitative research explores the potential antecedents and factors about which little has been known (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Guba and Lincoln (1983) further discuss this as a naturalistic paradigm. They assume that reality, which is manifold and inter-related, links the researcher with the subject.

Qualitative research is based on three paradigms: the positivist, interpretivist, and critical paradigms (Punch, 1998). Kuhn (1970) uses paradigms to understand inquiry in the context of a framework. He sees paradigms as a set of values and techniques that members of a scientific community share and act as a guide or map by dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations acceptable to

them (Kuhn, 1970). Besides, Neuman (1991) defines paradigm as a framework that explains how the world is perceived, how vital questions are answered, or how puzzles are solved, the research techniques to be used, and examples of what scientific research looks like.

Finally, the research aimed at conceptual thinking and theory building that is based on the interpretive approach. At the core are participants'
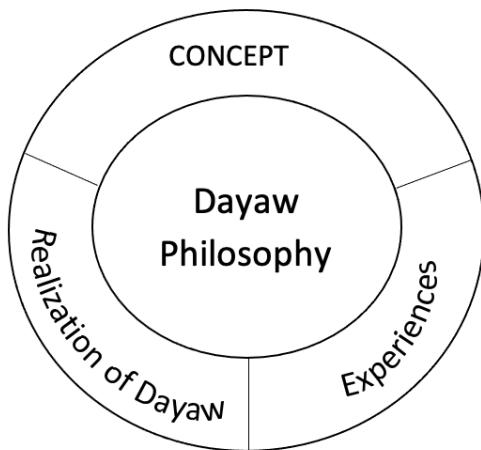

Figure 1. Research Paradigm

awareness of the world and how the social world was seen from the participants' standpoint (Edwards & Skinners, 2009). Denzin and Lincoln (2003) further elucidate that an interpretive approach depends upon both the participants' view and the researchers' view of reality, so that the researchers can find significance in action or understand what a particular action means, requiring them to interpret in a specific way what the actions are 'doing'.

The grounded theory includes microanalysis, systematic comparison, coding, theoretical sampling, and theorizing (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Bonnet (2015) mentions that microanalysis scrutinizes data line by line so that researchers can discover and expose new thoughts and relationships, out of which they thoroughly develop categories about their properties and dimensions.

Also, systematic comparisons stimulate thinking about properties and dimensions. In this undertaking, the researchers are interested to know

how often this concept emerges and what it looks like (i.e., properties) under varying conditions. (Bonnet, 2015).

This study likewise considered open coding as part of the analytic process in theory development.

Open coding is a process through which concepts are identified and where their properties and dimensions are discovered in data. Another is axial coding, which is the process of relating categories to their subcategories; axial means that coding occurs around the axis of a category, linking categories at the level of properties and dimensions (Bonnet, 2015).

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This qualitative research undertaking utilized the grounded theory method to gather data from the student leaders enrolled in the university. Student leaders were selected as participants of the study for several reasons; they are highly-knowledgeable and more exposed to dealing with their subordinates [organization members], which may give them a better understanding and concept of *dayaw*. The researchers looked into the respondents' proper distribution so that males and females were equally represented.

The researchers employed the qualitative research method as it looks into a human or social problem or phenomenon. It builds a complex, holistic picture; it analyses words, reports details of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.

The grounded theory approach is an appropriate way to study human behavior along the lane of a sensitive topic; it works even if it is in a different cultural context (Wolcott, 1980). Thus, employing the "grounded theory," the research tried to explore the student leaders' dayaw concept, which, when refined, eventually represented their philosophy. To improve the construct and answer the research questions, the research needed to get data for analysis. The process continued until new data had stopped emerging, or data saturation had been obtained (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

2.2. Subjects of the Study

The data sources were the governors of the mandated organizations (17 or 100%) and the presidents of accredited organizations (31 or 100%) for the school year 2017-2018.

2.3. Data Gathering Tools

The data-gathering instrument used in the study's quantitative part was the researchers' generated questions that concern the organizational profile. The qualitative part made use of an in-depth interview with the respondents during their most convenient time. The researchers generated answers that best describe their situations along the specified topic. Protocols in an interview process were observed during the time wherein ethical considerations were established.

2.4. Data Gathering Procedure

After the questionnaires were constructed and validated by knowledgeable persons, the researchers distributed them to the respondents through the Director of Student Development Programs. After, the researchers encoded the responses and initially open-coded the same. After a thorough review of the responses, the researchers subjected them to initial categorizations.

Open Coding. This refers to the "process of fracturing the data" (Strauss and Corbin, 1998 as mentioned by Bonnet, 2015), which involves openly coding one's thoughts or assumptions, including others about phenomena. These codes are used and considered for analysis and exposition, a gateway to discoveries and learning. In this study, open coding carefully examined all responses using line-by-line or word-by-word analysis. Responses that were coded are written on the right side of the transcripts. Code notes and memos were prepared to characterize the questions asked of the data and the relationships between concepts and categories as they appeared from the data.

Axial Coding. The main objective of this process is to make connections between each of the identified categories and sub-categories. In this undertaking, axial coding was dealt with by continually moving between logical sequences, such as premise to the premise with careful analysis in an attempt to "build a dense texture of relationships around the axis" of categories which were spawned from the gathered data analyzed through open coding (Bonnet, 2015).

Diagramming and Memo Writing per Category. The researchers used diagrams and memo writing comprehensively because these are critical processes of analysis to build logical presentations to arrive at particular valid syllogisms and gain analytical distance from materials and force the analysts to move from working with premises to conclusions.

Theoretical Sampling. According to Glaser (1978), as mentioned by Bonnet (2015), theoretical sampling is a process of collecting data to generate theory. Here, the analysts jointly collect, code, and analyze their data and decide what data to collect next and where to find them to develop the theory as it emerges. Theoretical sampling in this undertaking comprises the unending examination of occurrences to the central theme as data analysis continuously evolves.

Theoretical Sorting. As quoted from Bonnet (2015), Glaser explained that the theoretical sorting of memos in a grounded theory method is the key to formulating the theory for presentation to others in words or writing.

The researchers stored all responses of the respondents in soft and hard copies under their custody for safekeeping. Open coding, axial coding, and processes were kept. Diagrams, memos, and tables were labeled correctly and filed for purposes of confidentiality, proper protection, and security. This process is called an "audit trail" (Bonnet 2015 quoted from Lincoln and Guba 1985), an essential and significant component in the research study's established credibility and dependability.

2.5. Data Analysis

The quantitative data analysis was limited to descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages in presenting the distribution of the informants' responses with the instruments used. The data gathered were put to a constant integration with the qualitative results to enrich the informants' validity of responses. The results of the data analysis, together with the extent of literature from the participants' responses on the dayaw philosophy of Ilocano student leaders in the

University of Northern Philippines, served as a stepping stone towards attaining the research objectives.

2.6. Ethical Considerations

This research raised sensitive ethical issues about the participants that needed to be specifically addressed. Consent was secured from each of the participants; participation was then voluntary. The researchers provided them with orientation on the objectives, and the benefits they could get from the undertaking. All information gathered were treated with utmost confidentiality. Participants were also ensured of their safety from social, behavioral, and psychological harm that may result from the conduct of the study. No compensation or any form of monetary incentive was given. There was likewise no conflict of interest in the research's conduct because the researchers were only interested in exploring the concepts of the participants about *dayaw*.

3. Results and Discussions

3.1. Student Leaders' Concepts of Dayaw

These concepts were categorized into six main themes: *Respect, Honor, Social Relationships, Way of Life, Character, and Prestige.*

3.1.1. Respect

The student leaders dependably admitted the centrality of respect as part of the understanding of *dayaw*. In its broader sense, respect pertains to giving what is due to any other individual as a way to establish a wide range of harmony, self-respect, and understanding of culture and traditions. However, to accord respect is not just a simple way of sharing customary gestures but should be earned by a person through treating others properly, saying *po, opo, kuya* or *ate*, or a gesture of *pagmamano* to the elders. From this standpoint, a gesture of respect is an innate capacity. When triggered, it will automatically come out from within one's personhood. The participants believed that respect is a powerful tool to institute *dayaw*. This concept agrees with de Lubac's (1954) writings, which states that every person should

follow ahimsa's Buddhism concept. Every person is enjoined to give proper respect for all living things. Further, Ozmon and Craver (1990) mention that Confucius saw the point of building moral character, which is essential, than merely teaching skills or imparting information. They added that learning moral values is still much crucial than obtaining factual and scientific knowledge.

3.1.2. Honor

Asked about their understanding of *dayaw*, the participants shared that student leaders should merit the ideas, concepts, or thoughts of every individual member in an organization. For instance, in every meeting, a leader should acknowledge every member to take part in decision-making. Further, honor is a significant experience during a *parangal* or recognition. That is when student leaders are commended for their exemplary contributions to achieving the university's goals. It is then believed that *dayaw* is honor *per se*. This concept, as expressed by the respondents, without doubt, transpires with the idea of Confucius, who quips that the ultimate source of values is no less than the human being. He regards the human being as the foundation of goodness. Also, he dramatically believes that a human being's perfection and happiness are achieved in social life. A person with a strong moral character who sees an opportunity for personal gain thinks first if the act would be morally right (*Yi*) to do so. And such a person is ready to sacrifice his/her own life for someone in danger (The Analects XIV, 13).

3.1.3. Social Relationships

This category accentuates the harmonious relationships between and among leaders and subordinates in an organization. Giving others the chance to share ideas implies boosting their confidence. Highlighting worth or dignity is an essential aspect of *dayaw*. Thus, *dayaw* is entrenched in individuals' social and mutual relationships in an organization and society at large. This concept is reflected in the writings of Mabini when he expressed, as quoted by Buenaflor (2011*): ibigin mo ang iyong kapwa tao paris ng pag-ibig mo sa iyong sarili, pagka't biniguian siya*

ng Diyos at gayon din naman ikaw ng katungkulang tulungan ka at huwag gawin sa iyo ang 'di niya ibig na gawin mo sa kaniya; nguni-t kung ang iyong kapwa ay nagkukulang dito sa kamahalmahalang katungkulan at nagtatangka ng masama sa iyong buhay at kalayaan at pag--aari, ay dapat mong ibuwal at lipulin siya pagkat ang mananaig ngayo'y ang kauna-unahang utos ng Dios na mag-ingat at ini-ingatan kita. He further added: *sa bagay na ito'y idinulot ko sa iyo ang tunay na sampong utos ng Dios, upang matarok mo na ang bait, ang iyong sariling kaloob an ang nakaisaisang matibay na wagas na patungtungan nang pagaalaga sa iyong ugali, at gayon din naman ang kasipagan ang siya lamang lalong matibay na haligui nang pagpapalak sa iyong katauan. Dahil dito'y mapakilala mo na ang tunay na kapurihan, ang wagas na kamahalan ay di nakita sa dugo; kundi sa ugali ng tao na linalang sa hinga nang bait at sa himas nang malinis na gawa.*

3.1.4. Way of Life

Based on the participants' accounts, the concept of *dayaw* has been centered along "*panagkakadua*" during "*rigat ken nam-ay*". This gives reference to support-systems, unity, and extent of oneness in the building of a humane society. Respect for hierarchy, norms, and the law and being "*makatao*" underscore *dayaw*. This belief of the participants conforms with Confucius's wisdom, as mentioned by Koller and Koller (1998) when he wished his followers to uphold the virtue of *Hsiao*, or filial piety, the virtue of reverence and respect for the family. Confucius believed that a person should respect family members because they are the reason for one's existence. Therefore, the centrality of the philosophy is focused on the way of life and the law of the living.

3.1.5. Character

Dayaw is embedded in the life of the student leaders, within which moral values are fundamental. This category focuses on the organization's moral standard that strengthens the bonds between and among the members. Character is deeply manifested through the right attitude. The participants' idea reflects the concept of Lao-Tzu, who shares that for the human person to obtain happiness and establish a character, he or she should follow the ways of nature. In this regard, to obtain a good society, the leader should lead the people towards a life of humility, respect, simplicity, self-denial, and patience - all wrapped within the parlance of character and personality.

3.1.6. Prestige

The participants believed that *dayaw* is a part of the student leaders' life as they lead the organization toward achieving goals and objectives. Naturally, prestige follows. Prestige is a social status wherein one looks up to the other's commendable accomplishments and fulfillment. *Dayaw* is a state through which an individual achieves best from a complex of initiatives. Deepening the experiences of the participants and their ideals, the concept of Socrates is well thought out. Socrates argues that the soul, the conscious personality of a human being, has the capacity for intelligence and character. The activity of the soul is to know and to direct behavior in day-to-day living. Further, St. Thomas mentioned that the human person also inclines to respect, and treat other persons with dignity.

3.2. Categorizing the Concept of *Dayaw* Indicators

The researchers used *categorizing* to look into the repeated patterns of ideas or thoughts that represent what the student leaders said or what people know in response to the question, problem, or situations they encountered themselves, along with the central theme. The categories are also called phenomena. In the study of Bonnet (2015), she mentions that when analyzed deeper, it can be further classified as conditions, properties, dimensions, and consequences. Corbin (1998) explained these classifications as:

3.2.1. Conditions

These refer to the structure, set of circumstances, or particular state or situation of a person or thing. In this study, the researchers looked into the present state of the concept *dayaw*.

3.2.2. Properties

These are the essential or distinctive attributes of something owned or characteristics of a category. In this study, the researchers looked into the features or the elements associated with *dayaw*.

3.2.3. Dimensions

These refer to the magnitude measured in a particular direction, scope, or extent, or range along with general properties of a category that vary. In this research, the researchers delved deep into the degree or the magnitude of the concept of *dayaw*.

3.2.4. Consequences

These comprise the effects of an earlier occurrence, indicated by a statement of importance or significance. These can be singular or in varied duration; they can be visible to self but not to others or vice versa; immediate or cumulative; reversible or not; foreseen or unforeseen. In this study, the researchers looked into the significance of the concept *dayaw* in the student leaders' lives, in their organizations, or society.

3.3. Grounded Concept of *Dayaw*

Dayaw, as understood by the governors and presidents of the organizations, is a customary gesture of giving respect, giving what is due, giving recognition, honor, and respect for diversity, especially to culture and traditions. It is a natural state of a person he/she shares with and to others, as he/she moves from and toward his/her goal. Every human person's goal is his/her perfection within a community, the happy realization of his/her social and relational life. *Dayaw* is likewise a way of life and a standard of living; it is an expression of the inner core of a person's life as he/she values the dignity and humanity of other persons. It emphasizes the character that initiates him/her to perform an action following a moral standard.

The conditions of *dayaw* emphasize prestige, social status, moral values, character, valuing of social relationships, worth, purpose, and showing humility and good deeds to create good impressions.

The dimensions of *dayaw* expand to customary beliefs, traditions, mutual understanding, responsibility, justice, peace, *pagka-makatao*, and *pannakikadua*. Life is an opportunity to appreciate others' gifts of presence and realize co-existence as a principle of constantly retransforming persons of virtue.

The consequential aspects of *dayaw* include enhancing social and harmonious relationships, community service, quality service, upholding unity and trust, oneness, solidarity, societal support, fulfillment, self-actualization, harmony, and group cohesiveness.

From this standpoint, the *dayaw* philosophy that speaks of human relations and its responsibility towards other people, and the value of others is akin to the remarkable ideas of Frankl and Buenaflor. For Victor Frankl (1959), he believes that striving to find meaning in one's life is the primary motivating force in a human person. He adds that a human being can live and even die for the sake of his/her ideals and values. Further, for Buenaflor (2011), the human person's orientation towards the true and the good binds him/her towards affirming the spiritual freedom and dignity of the other person; and thereby making him/her responsible for the welfare and dignity of the other person.

3.4. Experiences of *Dayaw* as Student Leaders

Interestingly, the ideas and thoughts of the participants on *dayaw* arose from their experiences. Their accounts were related to inter-relational communal flourishing, wherein *dayaw* is anchored ontologically and epistemologically to understand the core of oneself. More responses were significantly linked to community social contract, moral values, customary gestures, beliefs, and traditions that make up the *dayaw* principle in the life of the student leaders. It speaks of the mutual and social relationships that bind the leader and the subordinate to achieve their role in an organization and society. This implies a more meaningful relationship that leads them to realize their human social role in cultivating culture, beliefs, principles, and traditions. It helps student leaders recognize the value of morality, probity,

and righteousness; it also helps them achieve their highest goal. Thus, every individual has to support one another, respect private boundaries but employ understanding. A human person experiences *dayaw* when he/she encompasses a more extensive scope of understanding from the essence of his/her existence.

Notwithstanding their similarities, however, student leaders of mandated and accredited organizations have different emphases on their views of the concept of *dayaw*. For instance, most of the mandated organizations' governors viewed *dayaw* in the context of awards received or *parangal*. Its genuine prestige rests on the giving of quality service to one's constituents. It is not surprising for the governors to understand *dayaw* in this perspective because of the nature of the mandated organization as an umbrella organization of the college, which accord rewards for accomplishments based on quality services rendered by both student leaders and members of the organization.

Whereas presidents of accredited organizations or interest groups viewed *dayaw* as expressed in different forms. In other words, *dayaw* is associated with diversity. The nature of accredited organizations bespeaks of their very character, i.e., they are interest groups that cater to students' diversified talents, interests, and inclinations.

3.5. How to Realize *Dayaw* as Student Leaders

Dayaw comes in many forms and in many ways. It also manifests itself when two or more individuals interact and socially cultivate development and welfare. When the participants were asked how they could achieve *dayaw*, they expressed their ideas or thoughts on a collective ground. Responses were directly coded.

The centrality of the responses figured on their experiences as student leaders. *Dayaw* depicts itself in mutual social relationships that are anchored on respect, equal opportunities, equal treatment, the practice of fairness, humility, and showing of good deeds — thus, indicative of good character. *Dayaw* is evidenced by the participants' ability to stand as good leaders and be part of every member of the organization's holistic development. Their understanding of *dayaw* is deeply rooted in the value of moral standards, hence on the intertwining of must and ought, the real and the

ideal core of human living. The idea of transparency, honesty, harmony with nature and others, and justice arose from their realization and experiences of *dayaw*. Henceforth, an individual's life is centered on the fulfillment of oneself and the pleasure of serving the organization and society. *Dayaw* is not just an expression of a socially-binding communal concept of respect but equally an innate capacity to express the real identity of the Ilokano student leaders as molded by rich environmental and cultural heritage.

3.6. Results vis-à-vis Existing Literature

Comparing the results of this research study with related literature, the concept of *dayaw* is associated with the philosophical understanding of human interactions and ideal human relations of different philosophers, and thinkers who thought of an ideal social community wherein individuals manifest their desire for a perfect society. They highlight the human persons who become of their *being becoming*. According to Immanuel Kant, as Buenaflor (2011) mentioned, the several formulations of the categorical imperatives are to treat humanity, whether in one's person or any other, every case as an end, never as a means only. Buenaflor added that in Kant's concept, every individual must be counted as being of equal value. Hence, no one should be discriminated against, irrespective of his gender, race, creed, and social or financial status. Everyone must be treated equally as all others, be it in the legal or moral realm of life. Since every being is a rational creature, each has an inherent value and dignity, which is not determined by one's profession, upbringing, or financial capability. Kant further added an argument wherein he considers a human person as an autonomous self-regulating will that is capable of making moral decisions by and for himself or herself. In this regard, persons have worth and dignity insofar as they are ends in themselves and can make their own moral decisions. As quoted by Buenaflor (2011), Lavelle claimed that an action that is considered most free and therefore most perfect is that there is no longer an option. If, for instance, the human person realizes that one is confronted with the supreme good if, in the deepest recesses of his or her being, he or she can recognize that after a thorough investigation of the facts and a profound meditation on the possibility or the

consequences of the action that has to be undertaken, doing a particular action will be the greatest alternative because it will lead one towards the supreme good. In this way, the said person will not anymore hesitate to act on it. Therefore, in doing an action motivated by interior necessity, the human person becomes all freer if he or she does not anymore choose because he or she already knows the best action to undertake.

Florentino Timbreza (1982), in his Pilosopiyang Pilipino, systematically extracted the cultural worldview of the Filipinos. He said that the basis of the people's worldview is their life experiences. In turn, their life experiences constitute their philosophy.

The Ilocanos: An Ethnography of Family and Community Life in the Ilocos Region by Felipe Landa Jocano (1982) pointed out how the Ilocano institution and traits function to achieve community goals. Speaking of traits, much emphasis is placed by the Ilocano on *dayaw*. *Dayaw* is the Ilocano term for "honor". In another work of the same author (Jocano, 2000), he enumerated the three elements encompassing the Filipino value system or pamantayan: halaga, asal, and diwa. First, in the *pamantayan's* evaluative aspect, *halaga* is what Filipinos find most worthy. It is given to observe traits that make the virtuous person *uliran*. Interestingly enough, *halaga* has not one, but three dimensions: one's self-worth (*pagkatao*), one's dignified relationships with others (*pakikipagkapwa-tao*), and one's compassion (*pagkamakatao*). These three are closely tied together since one's self-worth is interdependent with showing kindness and his/her dignified relationships with others. Second, the evaluative aspect is manifested in the expressive element of a person's behavior or *asal*. *Asal* has three standards: *kapwa* (relational), *damdamin* (emotional), and *dangal* (moral). As a moral standard, *dangal*, which means social honor or reputation, refers to one's character, identity, pride, and commitment to revered ideals. This includes knowing what is morally right, feeling what is morally acceptable, and acting in an ethically desirable way. *Dangal* is manifested in values such as respect and deference or *paggalang*, reciprocity or *utang na loob*, *pagkabahala*, or concern and responsibility.

In his work *The Filipino Mind* (1994), Mercado reemphasized that the Filipino philosophy or the people's *diwa* is not what it should be. In his *Elements of Filipino Philosophy* (1974), Mercado further postulated that harmony is the essence of Filipino philosophy. The Filipino's worldview is stressed fully on individualism; it does not promote dualism. Instead, it champions recognition and respect for harmony. Harmony is translated *kaangayan/kabagayan/kabagay* respectively in Cebuano, Visayan, Tagalog and Ilocano – the three largest Philippine languages. The word connotes concord, suitability, equality.

In her *Kapwa: The Self in the Other* (Worldviews and Lifestyles of Filipino Culture-Bearers), Katrin De Guia (2005) posited that the people's worldview connects them. It is the fount of their self-esteem and moral certainty. De Guia likewise used subjectivity (the "life texts" of her subjects) as a resource or helpful framework rather than a liability. Concepts like *pakikipagkapwa*, *pakiramdam*, *kagandahang-loob* are given life within this framework.

Aro ken Sirmata: Language, Culture, Education, and the Pursuit of Diversity (2015) edited by Aurelio Solver Agcaoili and Elizabeth A. Calinawagan contained essays that articulate and reiterate the need to frame discourse and knowledge production with these lenses in mind and always conscientious of the need to look at lifeworlds with tenderness, care, and concern. Accordingly, language reflects people's culture and identity, ideas and ideals, values and virtues, lives, and lifestyles – their philosophy.

With the understanding of *dayaw*, the participants focused on the shared respect of each and every individual in the organization and society. The respondents' grounded theory on *dayaw* shows concerns for the diversity of culture, respect in the general sense, appropriate treatment of every individual, and the honor attached to the individual's personhood. This is likened to the idea that *dayaw* is an expression of life or a way of life. It shows the communal and relational effort to unite every individual in the quest for human perfection and happiness. What is notably true to the above-mentioned thoughts is the realization of being *to be with others*, *for others*, and *in others*.

Similarly, the philosophy of *dayaw* speaks of being *becoming* in commune with other members

of society. *Dayaw* talks about the human, social, and relational aspects of a person and looks into the very core of human conditions as molded by character, and personality and anchored on culture and heritage. *Dayaw* is something that every individual possesses in his life and by further realization of one's life; an infinite quest for humanity, solidarity, uprightness, oneness, and probity.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Dayaw is realized by the participants' ability to stand as good leaders and take part in every member of the organization's holistic development. Their *dayaw* understanding is deeply rooted in the value of moral standards, thus, on the intertwining of must and ought, the real and the ideal core of human living. The idea of transparency, honesty, harmony with nature and others, and justice arose from their realization of *dayaw*. Thus, the life of an individual is centered on the fulfillment of oneself and the pleasure of the society and the people. *Dayaw* is not merely an expression of a socially-binding communal concept of respect but equally an innate capacity to express the real identity of the Ilokano student leaders as molded by their rich environmental and cultural heritage.

The student leaders may consider enhancing their understanding of *dayaw* through significant activities such as community gathering and immersion, social gatherings and group dynamics, and extension activities that may touch the core of student leaders' personality and character. Their being *is becoming* as they step into the milestone of their organizations. The relational and social aspects of their service may be given focus. Another recommendation is to have the concept of *dayaw* intertwined with the concept of *nakem*.

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