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**Research and
Extension for
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Office (REDO)**

**The Situation of the Research, Extension
and Professional Staff in UP Diliman and their
Organized Efforts to Enhance their Welfare**

Leticia S. Tojos

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ni Nenita "Nanette" Miranda Tampico**

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**COOPERATIVE ORGANIZING:
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Josefina M. Rolle

**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK
AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES
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CSWCD Development Journal

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FOREWORD

The articles in this issue of the CSWCD Development Journal mirror the major programs and activities of the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO). As the outreach unit of the College, REDO provides research, training, and extension services to community leaders, social development practitioners and members of the academe. REDO also functions as the publication arm of the CSWCD and conducts advocacy activities as part of its commitment to people's development.

The Situation of the Research, Extension, and Professional Staff (REPS) in UP Diliman and their Organized Efforts to Enhance their Welfare by Dr. Leticia S. Tojos is the result of the Diliman-wide study conducted by the writer. This advocacy research looked into the situation and role of the University's research and extension employees, more specifically in carrying out their official functions. Through records review, the study traced the processes, policies, agreements and decisions made regarding the status of the REPS and the efforts done for their welfare. Interviews with the REPS, their supervisors and heads of colleges/units provided the data on the perception of the status and role of the REPS as well as recommendations to address their concerns.

Lisa Marie J. Clemente's ***Herstory: Ang Buhay at Pakikibaka ni Nenita "Nanette" Miranda Tampico*** traces the life and struggles of a woman in her multiple role as a daughter, wife, worker and union organizer. The article shows the active involvement and role of an empowered woman in advocating for the welfare of the future generation.

The article on ***Cooperative Organizing: Empowering Administrative Workers*** by Leah B. Angeles and Samuel L. Genita Jr presents two (2) case studies of unit-based cooperatives: the UP College of Business Administration Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. and the UP School of Economics Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperatives, Inc. These two college-based cooperatives have sustained their progress and helped to augment the financial needs of its members. The case studies looked into the history, operation and management as well as the good practices that contributed to its progress.

Prof. Teresita V. Barrameda's article on *Women Taking Center Stage: Organizing Women Through Community Theater* tells of the use of theater in advocacy efforts to address women's issues and organizing work. Women from a barangay in Aurora province organized themselves into a theater group and employed the stage as an empowering venue to express and analyze personal as well as social issues.

The article on *Important Issues in the Public Sector: Challenges to Unionism* by Prof. Thelma B. Magcuro identifies the major problems commonly felt by public sector workers such as low wages, inadequate benefits, lack of job security, poor working conditions, graft and corruption, among others. She also discusses the government's Rationalization Program and its effects on the public sector workers. She sees the strengthening of unions as vital in pushing for the rights of the public sector workers.

The special feature on *Writing for a Refereed Journal* by Josefina M. Rolle hopes to guide academicians in particular, in producing a publishable material in a refereed publication. The article discusses the publication process, and provide some helpful tips in writing for a refereed journal.

While this issue contains outputs of REDO's official functions, the writers hope to effectively impart to the readers their personal advocacy for an empowering, gender sensitive, participatory and pro-people society.

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The Situation of the Research, Extension, and Professional Staff (REPS) in UP Diliman and their Organized Efforts to Enhance their Welfare

Leticia S. Tojos

Introduction

The University of the Philippines (UP) is the premiere academic institution in the country. Many of its natural and social scientists have been recognized in their own specific fields locally and abroad, not only in instruction but also in research and extension. Thus, the present administration called for the strengthening of these endeavors.

In her investiture speech entitled "*The University of the Philippines: A National University in the 21st Century*", President Emerlinda R. Roman observed that the institution of higher education has continued to work *toward social transformation, toward recapturing a sense of national purpose, toward modernization*. She recognized though that greater effort needs to be exerted to be at par with other universities in the region and in the world.

As Chancellor then and as President now, Dr. Roman has encouraged faculty and staff to develop more noteworthy researches. This call was primarily made to advance and promote the contributions of the University in the generation of scholarly knowledge and technologies for the academe and the country and in the promotion of these through extension efforts. *The strengthening of UP's position as the leading research and development university in the country and eventually in the region can be done because its mission is not only to transmit knowledge but to discover new knowledge, art, and technology* (Roman, 2005).

The Research, Extension, and Professional Staff (REPS), more particularly, the research and extension personnel play an important role in the realization of the research and extension agenda of the different units and the university as a whole. It is therefore important to look into the situation of the University's research and extension employees as they carry out their functions.

The REPS, especially the research and extension sector, has continuously expressed a significant number of problems since the creation of their positions on January 20, 1967. Most significant among them are the non-alignment of their actual duties and responsibilities with their functions and the differences of perceptions of these duties, responsibilities and positions by the REPS themselves, their superiors and subordinates. Accordingly, parameters in the involvement of the members of the research and extension staff were set in relation to the work of the faculty since the research and extension functions are also their domain. Like the administrative staff, they are expected to do only staff work, providing support to individual faculty or to particular programs and projects of faculty or the unit to which they belong.

Being an academic institution, the members of the faculty believe that leadership or "**faculty governance**" in these endeavors is their purview and the acknowledgement of the work should be given **only** to them even if the actual function of the research/ extension staff is the same or has gone beyond that of the former. This is the "accepted practice" in the academic units. The REPS contended that these issues have not been formally addressed up to the present.

After a series of dialogues with then Chancellor and now President Roman, she commissioned a research in 2003 to examine the situation of the REPS, particularly, that of the research and extension personnel. The results of this study would hopefully translate into policies and programs that would distinctly define the roles and functions of the UP Diliman REPS. This would then be a big step on the part of the University towards maximizing their potentials and providing them with suitable positions and incentives.

Background of the Study

From historical accounts, the positions of the Research, Extension, and Professional Staff (REPS) formerly called Academic Non-Teaching Staff (ANTS) were created as part of the effort of the UP Administration to upgrade the items of the administrative personnel. They were then categorized as belonging to the academic sector. Thus, similar to the faculty, their appointment papers did not pass through the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), and they were not covered by the employment policies of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

On October 22, 1982, during the time of then President Edgardo Angara, the Board of Regents (BOR) changed the sector's classification to REPS. Because of this decision, the Department of Budget and Management (DBM) and the Civil Service Commission (CSC) categorized them as administrative staff because there were no parallel positions to categorize them in the government system. As a result, these employees are now covered by the DBM and CSC policies.

On July 14, 1992, the Supreme Court (SC) passed a decision, the G.R. No. 9689, disqualifying the membership of the academic sector, the REPS, and the faculty to the All UP Workers Union (AUPWU). This ruling was made in answer to a major concern raised during the certification election of the Union in the University.

The differing classifications by the DBM and the CSC, on the one hand, and the SC on the other hand, brought confusion to the academic units' perception about the REPS' role in the University. Many of them were assigned to a wide range of tasks, from entirely administrative to both administrative and academic functions. Their main tasks, research and extension, became peripheral jobs for many of them. Moreover, they have been marginalized in welfare benefits and privileges because there was no budget specifically allotted for the REPS. They had to get the amount from the share of the administrative staff, and this kind of arrangement has continued to the present.

But, like most of the faculty members, a significant number of the REPS have distinguished themselves as recognized experts in their fields, not only within the University but also in the country. They have pursued advanced degrees, and would like to further pursue their career in the University as

research and extension staff. However, this can only be done if the main issue on their role and status will be addressed. With the openness of the present administration, it is hoped that steps will be taken to establish the role and accordingly define the functions of the REPS in the academe.

The Research Problem

This study focused on the following problems:

- A. What are the official REPS positions in UP Diliman and what actual duties and functions are assigned to them?
- B. What are the perceptions of the REPS on their duties and positions? What are the perceptions of the supervisors and subordinates on the REPS?
- C. What are the perceptions of the home institutions on the REPS positions and duties?

Objectives of the Study

This study identified and evaluated the actual functions of the research and extension staff in UP Diliman. It also elicited from the REPS, administrators, and supervisors their perceptions about the positions and functions of the REPS in their units. The study had the following objectives:

- A. To determine the actual duties and responsibilities of research and extension staff;
- B. To elicit problem areas/difficulties that they experienced from their office set up;
- C. To survey the perceptions of Unit heads and supervisors about the functions of the research and extension staff in their units;
- D. To elicit the research and extension personnel's perceptions about their jobs and positions in relation to career development in their units; and
- E. To come up with recommendations to address the issues concerning the duties and responsibilities of, as well as the proper positions and incentives for the research and extension employees.

Methodologies of the Study

Conceptual Framework

According to Gareth Morgan as mentioned in the work of Stephen Littlejohn, an organization can be viewed from various perspectives. In its definition alone, he introduced a number of metaphors to describe the concept.

... a machine which is a product by parts functioning together;
... an organism that is born, grows, functions, and adapts to changes in the environments, and eventually dies;
... brains that process information, having the capacity to develop plans; and
... cultures that create meaning, have values and norms, and are perpetuated by shared stories and rituals
(Littlejohn, 1992:316).

One significant dimension that he brought out is that an organization can also be seen as a *political system in which power is distributed, influence is exerted, and decisions are made* (Ibid). Explaining further what he meant, he went on to say that these structures are

... psychic prisons because in many ways they shape and limit the lives of their members ...they are also flux and transformation because they adjust, change and grow on the basis of information, feedback, and logical force ...instruments of domination with competing interest, some of which dominate others (Littlejohn, 1992: 316-317).

What Morgan has elaborated on presents a dichotomy of views in looking at an organization.

The structural –functionalists believe that the organization has a definite structure which is hierarchical and a system of coordination, communication, and decision making that emanates from an authority. Moreover, a set of rules, policies and procedures guides its operations. Its members belong to an organic unit and each of them has definite roles and functions to perform. Being a closed system, practice and relationships within the organization are governed by existing norms. Changes in structure and/or relationships maybe acceptable but only to the extent that it will not disturb what has already been in place. This is so because stability and sustainability are the foremost considerations of these entities.

Those whose perspective is developmental, on the other hand, believe in the transformative nature of organizations. They view these entities as venues where they grow while achieving their goals and objectives. They take cognizance of the ever changing situation or environment and open their minds to current needs to enable them to be relevant in meeting their purpose/s. Authority and responsibility are shared, thus the system of coordination, communication and decision making is participatory. The members feel their accountability to the organization because they see themselves as members of a team actively contributing to the achievement of its goals and objectives and owning up to the responsibilities assigned to them.

The REPS believe that they are an important component of the University system, having the capability to contribute to its vision, mission and goals. They have identified and are growing with the organization. Thus, they believe that problem areas which have a significant bearing on their functioning need to be addressed. It is for this reason that, as a group, they have taken every opportunity to bring their concerns to the proper authority.

The University has been reputed to be a progressive and development oriented organization. It is thus important for the University to face and address the long standing problems that the REPS have raised over time. In the words of President Roman, she has acknowledged the effect, saying ...

A community that feels unfairly deprived or neglected or ill treated cannot possibly be a vital and progressive one. We will exert every effort not just to nurture but to upgrade the welfare of the faculty, staff, and students and safeguard their rights (Roman, 2005).

The Respondents

Out of the 232 targeted respondents, a total of 168 participated in the study. They are permanently and temporarily employed and came from the 21 natural science and social science degree granting and 26 non - degree granting units, the main library and 7 of its extensions and the 12 Administration offices. The selection of the units and the respondents was purposive. Only the REPS whose actual duties and responsibilities were not clearly defined in their units were included in the study. Thus, the professional employees whose functions are specified were excluded.

On the other hand, the deans/heads of units and supervisors of the REPS who participated in the research were requested to answer separate questionnaires to also determine their perceptions about the functions of this sector in their units. Eighteen of the 31 dean/heads of units and 57 of the 106 supervisors answered the instruments given them.

Methods of Inquiry Used

A number of methodologies were used to get the needed data about the perceptions regarding the functions of the research and extension people in their assigned units. A review of the documents like the minutes of the Board of Regents' (BOR) meetings, position papers, documentation of meetings and dialogues with University officials, among others, was done. Furthermore, interviews with key informants and other REPS were also conducted.

These foregoing methodologies enabled the research team to come up with a demographic profile of the REPS (age, highest education attained, rank and position, number of years in present position, salary, other sources of income, number of years working in UP, benefits received from UP, family income). The team was able to get additional information including the

history and situation of this sector, the government and University rules and policies covering their appointment as a sector, some problems and concerns that they face as well as their recommendations to improve their situation.

A set of instruments was also developed and administered to the research and extension employees, the deans/heads of units, and supervisors. From the REPS, the data generated included:

1. their position in the organizational structure;
2. actual tasks and functions of the research and extension staff;
3. perceptions of research and extension staff about their jobs as these relate to career development opportunities; and
4. their recommendations for improving their work conditions.

The deans/heads of units and supervisors provided information about their perceptions on the role and regard for the research and extension employees and as these related to their career service opportunities as well as the issues that they experienced in the course of performing their job. Moreover, their recommendations for improving the REPS work conditions were also elicited.

Definition of Key Concepts

1. REPS- University employees performing academic functions such as research, extension and professional services (Supreme Court Decision GR # 96819)
2. Academic functions – these are the basic functions of research, extension, and professional services that are performed by the research, extension and professional staff and are directly associated with the mission, vision, and goals of the university.
3. Administrative functions – these are the functions performed by administrative employees, clerks and other support staff that help in the operations of the units and offices.
4. Duties and responsibilities – tasks performed by virtue of one's position

Results of the Study

Documents Review: Background of the REPS Problems

Background information about the REPS sector is hereby presented for better understanding of their positions, duties and responsibilities, the present regard of themselves and of them by other sectors of the University, and their situation including the problems that they are experiencing in the course of their work.

The Goals and Functions of the University of the Philippines

The University of the Philippines is considered the premier state university of the country. As an academic institution, its main purposes, as stated in Chapter 1, Article 2 of "The 1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines" (1984), are as follows:

- A. Provide advanced education in the Humanities, Philosophy, the Sciences and the Arts;
- B. Give professional and technical training;
- C. Encourage and undertake research;
- D. Contribute to the growth, dissemination and application of knowledge

In order to pursue its goals with resolve, both the University and its academic staff and students, exercise their right and responsibility to academic freedom. For the former, it means "freedom from intervention and control in the conduct of its affairs as a University." On the other hand, the latter is free "to conduct academic and scholarly inquiry and to discuss and publicize the results of such inquiry" undeterred by "prior restraint or subsequent punishment" (Chapter 1, Art.3, p.1). As indicated, each of the goals is in support of each other and is as important as the other.

Article 6 of the same chapter however defines its functions to wit: "the University has the responsibility to ensure high academic standards in its primary functions of instruction and research. Extension and other activities must be supportive of these functions" (1984: 2).

The University is an academic institution whose operations are mainly supported by the country's taxpayers. Thus, as stated in Article 4, it has a social responsibility to relate its activities to the needs and aspirations of

the Filipino people (1984: 2). As such, it is covered by legislation that applies to government institutions, like the Salary Standardization Law (SSL). Its employees, except for the faculty and the REPS, are governed by the rules set by the CSC. Personnel matters that affect budget allocation, as in the case of item modification, classification or augmentation, have to be approved by the DBM that releases the funds allocated by Congress for the operations of the university.

Though the BOR is, by law, the policy making body of the University System, and has the final word in the approval of appointments, benefits, and contracts, its decisions consider public policy. Thus, provisions specific to the University are covered by agreements between the President of the University and the head of the government office. Such were the cases in the Romulo-Subido agreement in 1963 and the Abueva-Sto. Tomas agreement in 1992.

The Diliman Campus as a Constituent University

The Diliman Campus is considered the flagship campus of the University of the Philippines. As such, its goals and objectives are the same as those of the entire university system. How its primary and support functions are to be performed are expressed in its organization and in the positions created for the human resource that executes the various jobs found to be necessary to achieve the principal purposes of the campus as part of the university system.

In terms of structure, the Diliman campus performs these primary and complementary functions through its degree granting and non-degree granting units. It currently has 27 academic degree granting units that are headed by deans (based on the graduation list approved by the University Council on its 81st meeting held on April 23, 2003 and confirmed by the BOR during its 1171st meeting) and 44 academic non-degree granting units (www.up.edu.ph, no date when last updated, and the 1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines, p.44) headed by directors, most of which are attached to degree granting units.

These academic units may have their own research and extension offices or be non-degree granting units providing research and extension functions to their attached degree granting units. The institutes and

offices offer research and training services in their specialized fields, not only to the members/sectors within the academic community but also to various government and non-government agencies outside of the academe. The research institutes, in particular, conduct studies that contribute to the advancement of the country's science and technology, as well as give inputs for the formulation of appropriate policies and legislation. Some of these research institutes have been given the distinction of being national centers of excellence.

Essential to the conduct of research and extension are the research, extension and professional staff of the various units. However, through the years, their role in the performance of these functions in the University has been perceived differently by the various sectors of the academic community. The same could be said of the government agencies which are tasked with determining the qualification standards, the classification into various ranks, the definition of the duties and responsibilities, as well as the corresponding salaries to be received by those who sit in the various positions.

The Classification of the Research, Extension And Professional Staff and the Nature of its Functions

The nature of the function of REPS, whether academic or administrative and their subsequent classification, had been the subject of the meetings of the BOR, particularly when discussed in connection with matters of promotion, compensation, union membership, availing of development funds, and representation in the BOR vis-à-vis the faculty.

Based on the limited document review made by the study's research assistant from the period September to December 2003, it was revealed that the current nature of the function of the Research, Extension and Professional Staff and their classification, is defined in the following documents: the Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Regents as published in the University of the Philippines Gazette, The 1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines, The Index of Occupational Services, Position, Titles and Salary Grades published by the Compensation and Classification Bureau of the Department of Budget and Management (July, 1997), and the Class Specification Manual. A review of previous codes and past meetings of the BOR also revealed the history of the creation of REPS as a sector in the university.

- A. The UP Revised Code of 1961 made reference to only two sectors of personnel in the University. Chapter 4 of the Code dated October 1946 and approved by the Board of Regents on January 9, 1961 stipulated the composition of the academic staff (Section 1, Article 1) to be limited to the members of the teaching staff: Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Instructor, Assistant Instructor, Professorial Lecturer and Lecturer. (p.53)

Reference to the other staff was made in Chapters 6, Art. II (Entitled Administrative Employees, Clerks and Other Help) and Chapter 19. These chapters provided for the conditions of employment of the administrative staff that referred only to administrative officers, clerks and other employees appointed by the BOR upon the recommendation of the President (Chapter 19).

- B. In 1963, in a letter (dated Sept 5, 1963) of then UP President Carlos Romulo to then Acting Civil Service Commissioner Abelardo Subido, he explained the composition and distinction of the staff employed by the University with the purpose of clarifying who were subject to CSC rules. The letter defined academic personnel to be "the body of persons to whom are entrusted the governance and instruction of a University or college, the president or principal, and the leading teaching staff of a University or college or faculty of a school."

Non-academic personnel, on the other hand, were specified to be the unskilled laborers, workers or short term project staff, the appointment of which the CSC delegates authority to the President of the University.

The letter also stipulated that the university shall make appointments of academic personnel and that the CSC "shall only be given copies for purposes of notation and records." On the other hand, "clerks, administrative officers, etc., shall be governed by the civil service laws and rules concerning the competitive service."

These were the subject of an agreement between then President Romulo and Commissioner Subido which also specified

that UP is not covered by the WAPCO . It was also ruled that the personnel whose basic appointments were academic but who were assigned to perform administrative work with compensation or honorarium shall be classified on the basis of their primary appointments or functions.

There was, however, no stipulation that the academic staff included those performing research and extension functions and providing professional services.

- C. It was only on January 20, 1967, during the 754th Meeting (Minutes, p.13) of the Board of Regents (under the Matters Recommended by the President for Approval, particularly on Administration, #4) that there was a clear inclusion of staff performing research and extension work and providing professional services as part of those doing academic work. The Board approved the definition of the "academic staff" of the university thus: "*referring to and constituted by the Teaching Staff and the Non-Teaching Staff to be further classified as follows:*

1. *Teaching Staff –*

- (a1) *Regular members of the faculty*
- (b) *Non-regular members of the faculty*

2. *Non-teaching Staff*

- (a) *Research personnel – researchers, research aides, research assistants, research associates*
- (b) *Professional extension workers*
- (c) *Professional librarians*
- (d) *Guidance Counselors*
- (e) *Technical specialists – training specialists, information specialists, labor education officers, training officers"*

- D. On October 22, 1982, during the 954th meeting of the BOR, the Board approved the change in nomenclature of this sector from Academic Non-teaching Staff (ANTS) to Research, Extension and Professional Staff (REPS) (pp. 24-25).

E. Under the 1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines, in Book II Title II, Chapter II, entitled, "Research, Extension and Professional Staff", Article 116 defines the composition of this sector to include the following:

1. *Research personnel – (research aides,) research assistant(s), research associate(s), researcher, research fellows (s), etc.)*
2. *Professional extension worker(s)*
3. *(Professional) Librarian(s)*
4. *Guidance Counselor(s)*
5. *Technical Specialist(s) – legal education officer, training specialist(s), information specialist(s), labor education officer(s) training officer(s) and*
6. *Such other positions as may be created by the Board of Regents. (p.44)*

The nature of the functions of the REPS was also defined under Art. 117 to be, "*Research personnel shall be involved in the basic academic function of research; extension and professional services staff shall perform complementary functions ...*"

In the same source, extension services was further defined to be

"the conduct of short term non-degree courses, refresher or review classes, seminars, conferences, special training or continuing education and similar programs."

Later, in April 2002, the Office of Extension Coordination expanded the definition, thus:

"Extension is the provision of services by an academic unit, faculty, staff and students individually or as a group to the people and other organizations. (Its scope) includes services utilizing expertise and talent related to one's discipline outside instruction and research such as:

non-degree training seminars, workshops, conferences review classes; advisory/ technical/ information services, exhibits and performances, consultancy, networking, advocacy and voluntary/ community work.”.

- F. However, in April, 1986, during the 987th meeting of the Board of Regents, under the leadership of then UP President Edgardo Angara, the Board approved his recommendation for the Board to adopt the recommendation of the Presidential Committee on Promotion and Wages, to wit:

“Reclassify research, extension and professional staff (REPS) to either faculty or staff and adopt a two-category classification of University personnel, namely faculty and staff.”

The BOR further defined the basis for the classification, i.e.,

B-5.8. The Committee suggests that personnel in this category be reclassified either as faculty if they are required to teach or as staff if they are required only to do research and/or extension work without any teaching responsibilities.

It further defined the basis for the evaluation of the REPS to depend upon the category to which the individual staff had been classified.

B-5.9 Evaluation of these personnel should be made on the basis of guidelines and criteria set forth in the category (faculty or staff) to which they belong.

The Board also set the timetable for the implementation of the reclassification to be achieved by January 1, 1987.

- G. On July 2 1992, then President Abueva recommended to then Civil Service Commissioner Patricia Sto. Tomas, the approval of a set of qualification standards that the University would use for its recruitment of personnel. Specific requirements in the hiring of Research, Extension and Professional Staff were defined. This did not include Civil Service Eligibility even at the lowest entry level for the University Extension and University Research Service Groups, fixed at salary grade 12. (Note: This placed REPS in the same status as the faculty who were not required civil service eligibility as a requisite to employment.)

This reiterated the provision on the appointment of REPS, as contained in the 1984 Revised Code of UP, (Art. 491, p. 156) and the Subido-Romulo agreement in 1963.

*Art 491. QUALIFICATIONS. – No person without at least a baccalaureate degree may be appointed to the Research, Extension and Professional Staff. **Civil Service Eligibility shall not be required for appointment except in the case of librarians.** (Underscored).*

The exemption from civil service eligibility is the same as that of the faculty as stated in the same Code:

Art (158) 409. EXEMPTION FROM CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATION. – Members of the faculty shall be exempt (as such) from any civil service examination(s) or regulation(s) as requisite to appointment.

This agreement also specified the entry level of the REPS to be at Salary Grade 12 while that of instructor was Salary Grade 14.

- H. In July 1993, the Board of Regents, during its 1067th meeting, drew up the guidelines on the shifting of REPS to faculty status.

Based on the minutes of the meeting, it appeared that the shifting of REPS to faculty status was a means to provide deserving REPS an avenue for upward mobility beyond the ceiling set by the Salary Standardization Law which was Salary Grade 24. The ceiling was enforced even if the REPS attained educational and other qualifications comparable to, if not more than those with faculty status.

It was cited in the minutes that though both faculty and REPS start at the lowest level with a bachelor's degree, a faculty applicant is expected to teach in the field of his specialization in the BS/BA degree, *"this need not be the case for the REPS, whose undergraduate degree could be in another field."* It was at entry level where the difference in faculty and REPS status begins. According to the minutes, the Salary Standardization Law provides that the faculty starts at Grade 14 while the REPS begins at Grade 12.

The conversion table approved was as follows:

REPS	Grade	Grade	Rank
Univ Res I (MA plus PhD units)	16	16-18	Inst. 4 - Asst Prof I
Univ Res II (PhD Candidate)	18	18-19	Asst Prof 1-3
Univ Res III (PhD)	20	20-21	Asst. Prof 4-7
Univ Res IV (PhD)	22	22-23	Assoc Prof 1-3
Univ Res V (PhD)	24	24-25	Assoc Prof 4-5

It was also part of the decision that the REPS need not be limited to the positions specified in the conversion table if the REPS had other merits that qualified for a higher faculty position. Specifically, it states that

"In highly meritorious cases, the prospective faculty may be recommended to a position higher than what is specified in the conversion table..."

However, REPS on permanent status lose tenure upon appointment to the faculty. Their status reverts back to temporary and tenure will be granted only after two years as Assistant Professor and one year if shifted to Associate Professor. All

those who shifted will henceforth be subject to all the University rules governing faculty.

Subsequent addenda to these guidelines were discussed during the 1090th meeting of the BOR in 1995 and the 1097th meeting in 1996 concerning the promotion of faculty and REPS.

- H. More recent documents reviewed revealed that at the level of government agencies in charge of the classification and standardization of government positions, the academic nature of the academic non-teaching staff has become more defined.

The Index of Occupational Services, Position, Titles and Salary Grades, published by the Compensation and Classification Bureau of the Department of Budget and Management in July, 1997 indicates this.

For instance, research, extension and professional staff positions in the University have the following equivalent classification -

- 1) university research service group,
- 2) university extension service group,
- 3) librarians,
- 4) science education specialists,
- 5) law reform service group
- 6) law education service group,
- 7) development management group
- 8) guidance service group
- 9) museum research group

They are classified in the Index together with the teaching staff under the Education, Library, Museum and Archival Service.

The Class Specification Manual, on the other hand, further specifies the official designations under each category that define the distinct levels of responsibility as well as the ladder of promotion within the category. These are:

University Research Associate I and II
University Researcher I to V

University Extension Associate I and II
University Extension Specialists I to V
Science Education Associates I & II
Science Education Specialists I – V
Law Reform Associates I and II
Law Reform Specialist I-V
Law Education Specialist I -V
Development Management Officer I - V
Museum Researcher I -V
College Librarian I – V
Guidance Services Associate I & II
Guidance Services Specialist I –V.

The defined functions of each service group recognizing their academic nature are as follows:

The University Extension Service Group focuses on the design and conduct of training and extension courses/programs as well as the preparation and dissemination of training and extension materials. It includes those who plan, direct and do this and related work.

The University Research Service Group is mainly responsible for the preparation and evaluation of research proposals and instruments including the collection, compilation, analysis and interpretation of results. It includes those who plan, direct and do these and other closely related work.

The Law Reform Group conducts legal studies and researches concerned with law reform and development of proposals for legislation for administrative rule making for the improvement of the legal system. Includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Law Education Group has as its main functions the design, planning and conduct of the various programs, seminars... as well as the establishment of linkages with other institutions for the teaching of elementary knowledge in law and the dissemination of studies, articles... It includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Science Education Specialists are mainly involved in curriculum development and conceptualization of development projects in science and the evaluation of curriculum program materials. The group's work also includes the preparation and conduct of training programs or short term courses on science and math teaching. It includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Museum Research Group is responsible for collecting, identifying, classifying, accession and cataloguing of botanical, zoological, anthropological or paleontological specimens. The group's work also includes conducting researches on such specialized fields of work and the monitoring, preserving and proper displaying of collections. It includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Library Group does cataloguing and classifying books and indexing of periodicals according to generally accepted systems, advises students and faculty on materials available for subjects under research; conducting physical inventory of library stocks and records. It includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Guidance Services Group is mainly responsible for counseling students with unsatisfactory progress in school work and in finding workable solutions to their jobs; taking charge of the testing program of the college/institute and conducting studies on student needs inventory, study habits and attitude inventory, etc. It includes those who plan, direct and do this and closely related work.

The Development Management Group prepares initial drafts of policy studies and assists in formulating development plans and programs. The staff under this group monitors development projects and appraises recent issues and developments that have controversial policy repercussions. It also compiles information on specific projects assigned. It conducts studies and recommends policies and other measures on management, availability and programming of

manpower resources. This group renders technical assistance on policy/program formulation and organization management to specific office/agencies.

Administrative support functions are performed by those in the lowest ladder of some of the service groups **but are defined to be directly related to the work of the service group.** This is clearly reflected in the duties of the University Extension Associate I to wit: "*Renders technical and administrative support services in the conduct/implementation of training and extension courses/programs as well as in the production of training and extension course offerings and projects.*" However, its equivalent in the research service group, the University Research Associate I, has the following duties, to wit: "*Renders assistance in the collection, compilation and processing of data as well as in the conduct of routine laboratory experiments.*" No administrative staff functions are specified to be performed by the URA even at this level.

At the same time, it allows those in the top of the ladder to act as leaders as well as consultants.

For instance, as program/project leaders, the University Extension Specialist V "*directs and supervises the formulation, design and implementation of training and extension programs as well as the preparation and dissemination of appropriate training and extension materials.*" As consultants, they "*provide technical assistance to agencies, LGUs and NGOs on the subject field thru formal and informal lectures and actual demonstrations.*"

On the other hand, the University Researchers V can act as leaders of research projects as provided for in the duties, to wit: "*Supervises and directs the conduct and design of research programs/projects and activities in his subject field as well as in organization and management studies for specific agencies.*" They can also act as consultants, to wit: "*Conducts organization and*

management studies for specific national government agencies and corporations and formulates recommendations to improve organizational structures, methods and procedures and management operations."

Though the above documents clearly define that REPS perform academic functions, there is an acknowledgment by officials at the University level that there are REPS who perform administrative functions and those who perform academic functions. This is manifested in the 1150th BOR meeting when the Board drew up guidelines on the Sagad Monetary Award for Faculty, REPS and administrative staff.

"REPS (academic) who can no longer be promoted due to various reasons may receive a monetary award from P6, 000 to P8, 000 depending on their performance and based on the Guidelines for Merit Promotions 2000.

All REPS (performing administrative functions) and administrative staff who are already "sagad" and were not included in the latest merit promotion may be granted this award based on their last two performance ratings as follows..."

The Salary Grade of REPS

Based on the Index of Occupational Services, Position, Titles and Salary Grades, the categories have different entry levels. The entry level of the Development Management Group starts at Grade 11 and Librarian's start at Grade level 13 while the other groups start at Salary Grade 12 which, according to the Index, is the same salary grade level of instructors. However, based on the qualification standards of the University of the Philippines (1992), the Salary Grade of instructors, the entry level for faculty, is Salary Grade 14.

Those in the categories of specialists and researchers start at Salary Grade 16 which can move up to the ceiling of their category at Salary Grade 24.

Those in the associate positions can go beyond Salary Grade 14 and move on to specialist positions as long as they satisfy the additional qualifications required.

The Appointment of REPS

Based on the 1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines, the REPS should at least have a baccalaureate degree and need not have civil service eligibility to be appointed except in the case of librarians (Art. 491, p. 156). The procedures on the appointment of REPS are those that apply to the academic staff.

Appointment may be any of the following: (Art. 492, p.156)

- A. A regular appointment to a regular item position for an initial period of one year, renewable for a similar period. Permanent status, it was stipulated, could be extended after a minimum of three years of satisfactory service, "provided that service on substitute status shall not be included as part of the three year service."
- B. Appointment funded out of lump sum allotments in the University budget shall be for periods not exceeding one year per appointment issued. Those with this appointment may be issued a permanent appointment.
- C. Contractual appointment is given to those appointed to projects undertaken from time to time but for a period not exceeding one year.
- D. Affiliate appointment is extended to members of the faculty with a corresponding honorarium. In the same manner, REPS may be extended appointment as an affiliate member of the faculty.

As a result of this, the REPS became an invisible sector in the University. Depending on who decided and what was decided upon, they were sometimes here or there but in most cases, they were neither here nor there. The varying standards in recruitment and different practices in assigning roles and functions to them also led to confusion because many of the practices were not in consonance with certain policies.

The Human Resource Development Office (HRDO), Diliman is also in a bind because the employees are not aware of pertinent documents like the BOR decisions and policies agreed upon by Management related to REPS.

More often than not, their decisions are guided by practice rather than policy. Since the final reckoning in assessing their performance is based on standard job functions, a significant number of REPS were disenfranchised in benefits and privileges.

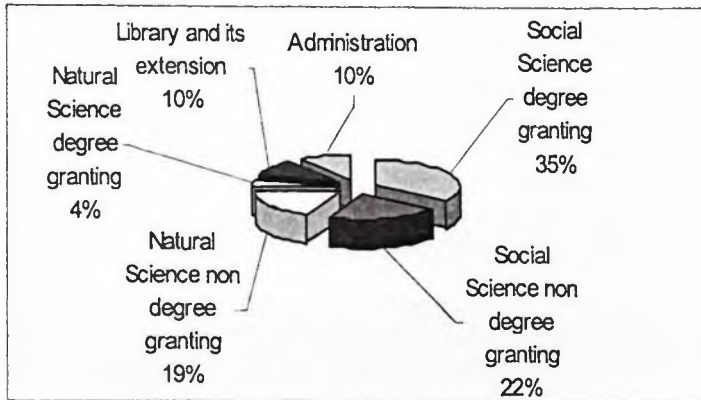
The University of the Philippines has always been known to fight for the rights of Filipinos who are marginalized and abused. It seems though that, with the practice of faculty governance, there is a dissonance between its reputation and the preferential treatment that the Administration gives to a dominant/ privileged group. It has somehow marginalized and discriminated the other sectors in benefits and privileges.

Survey Results

A. Profile of the Research and Extension Staff in UP Diliman

Most of those who participated in the study came from the social sciences degree granting units (58) and the social sciences non-degree granting units (37). Thirty-two respondents (32) were from the natural sciences non-degree granting units while seven (7) were connected with the natural sciences degree-granting units. Seventeen were assigned in the main library and its seven (7) extension units and the same number worked in the administration units of the Diliman campus.

Distribution of R/E Respondents by Unit Type



The data on sex of the respondents showed that the ratio between male and female staff is 1:4, meaning that for every male, there were 4 females interviewed. It could also be seen that 59% of the total number of respondents belonged to the 20-30 and 31-40 age categories.

In terms of their civil status, the data revealed that the number of married and single respondents is equal. There are three (3) widows and one (1) who is separated.

With regard to their educational attainment, four percent (4%) of the respondents have Master of Arts units while 21% are masteral degree holders. Sixty four percent (64%) claimed to have been conferred a bachelor's degree. While five percent (5%) had already completed their Ph.Ds, two percent (2%) still have to finish their requirements. Of those who pursued a Law degree, 11 graduated from the bachelor's level and four (4) from the masteral level. However, three (3) respondents indicated that they have not completed college.

The data on the official designation of the respondents showed that 41 of them are from the University Extension Service Group while 123 are from the University Research Service Group. Four respondents did not indicate their designation. Majority (54%) of those who participated are URAs I and II. This is reflective of the composition of the REPS' population where URAs comprise the majority of this sector.

Twenty-one (21) respondents, comprising 51% of the extension service group are in the specialist positions. There are 31 respondents, representing 25% of the research service group, who are in the researcher positions. When combined, those sitting in the higher level items compose 30% of the total number of respondents.

The associate position levels have salaries ranging from grades 12 and 14 respectively, while the specialist and researcher position levels have a wider range, from salary grades 16 to 22. There were no respondents from the ranks of University Extension Specialist V and University Researcher V since they were

included in the survey as supervisors. These two positions have a salary grade of 24, the highest in the REPS category.

With regard to the current employment status of respondents, the data reflected that 80% of the respondents are sitting on permanent items while only 18% have temporary status. Three did not indicate as to what category they belong.

The percentage of those with permanent status is an improvement from previous years, based on the statistics obtained from the studies made in 1998 (Pimentel) and 1999 (OVCAA and OCR), where only a little more than 40% of the REPS at the time the studies were conducted had a permanent status.

B. Current View about the REPS Position

From the review of documents, it can be seen that when the ANTS sector was created, the nature of the position was clearly indicated in the title "academic" itself. There was congruence in the position titles and the job descriptions.

It seemed that the regard for REPS as being administrative staff started in 1986 with the approval by the BOR of the reclassification of this sector either to faculty or staff. Only the faculty belonged to the academic sector while all others became part of the administrative personnel. When the decision was implemented in the latter part of the 80's, the application of CSC rules to the REPS like the eligibility, permanency clause, and the 8-hour reporting for duty requirement was enforced by UP HRDO. Later, in an agreement reached between then President Jose Abueva and former Commissioner Patricia Sto. Tomas on the specific requirements in the hiring of REPS, the eligibility requirement was excluded but the other prerequisites were upheld.

There is also a common notion that REPS should only perform staff functions like support to faculty and the units in general. But in the job description of specific position level per REPS classification, the line function of those sitting in higher level items is clearly indicated. This can be seen in the Class Speci-

fication Manual that specifies the areas and levels of responsibility that correspond to each grade level in a particular category. Thus, R/E staff belonging to Grades 12 and 14 provides support while the higher level ones are expected to perform leadership and management functions in varying degrees. This is quite unlike the current practice of assigning even higher level R/E staff to perform support functions only because they are not faculty.

It should also be mentioned that the reclassification of REPS supposedly opened a window of opportunity for them to become faculty. It implied that academic units should prioritize qualified REPS in filling up their vacant faculty positions but the survey data on the REPS showed that most were not considered for vacant faculty posts. The REPS themselves did not think of this as an option open to them because of the absence of support or mechanism within the organization to make this possible. The stringent requirements, too, for REPS to become faculty, including the provision that the individual has to go back to a temporary status might have discouraged them from pursuing this option.

From the various documents presented, it can be gleaned that there were agreements reached which were spearheaded by the past UP executives that brought about the differing regard for faculty and REPS. The upgrading of the starting salary level for faculty from Grades 12 to 14 and the retention to level 12 of that for the REPS may be one indication. Another manifestation may be the wide disparity in the ceiling level for these positions. Even if they have similar qualification requirements, the ceiling for faculty is Salary Grade 30 or 32, while it is Salary Grade 24 for REPS. The stringent requirements for REPS to be reclassified from their item to a faculty position including the giving up of one's permanency status bespeak of how the REPS are regarded by the UP Administration in relation to the faculty.

Historically, we could say that initially the faculty together with the REPS were regarded as belonging to the academic sector. This position was upheld by the Supreme Court in

their 1992 decision. However, the UP executives and the BOR came up with a number of decisions which when implemented gave the UP constituents the impression that this sector has a lower status than the faculty. These may have been the bases for considering the REPS as second class citizens of the University.

C. Duties and Responsibilities of the R/E Staff

1. The Nature of Work

In this study, the duties and responsibilities of the R/E staff were seen in the context of the standards set by the HRDO. From the 41 extension staff and 127 research personnel, 98 indicated that they are performing extension functions. On the other hand, 114 responded that they are involved in research activities. Of those who are undertaking extension work, on the average, 31% have line functions while of those doing research, 19.57% on the average carry out primary responsibilities. The rest of the respondents are occupied with staff functions.

Almost half of the supervisors also indicated that R/E staff designs training curricula, prepares project proposals, supervises staff, acts as resource persons and/or facilitator, among others. There were also those who provide assistance to faculty and the unit as a whole.

2. Time Spent in the Performance of their Work

The time spent for research and extension activities varied to a large extent. Among 83 respondents for instance, 45 spent 30% or less of their time in extension activities while 18 consumed from 81-100% of their time. There were four (4) though, who indicated that more than a hundred percent of their time was used up in their work.

The research staff had a similar pattern. Of the 86 who answered, 31 replied that they were using 30% of their time in their work while 16 said that their involvement took up from

81-100% of the duration. Again, five (5) indicated that they spent more than 100% of their time implementing research projects.

3. Unrelated Duties of R/E Staff

Apart from what they were expected to do, 121 respondents acknowledged doing other tasks unrelated to their expected jobs. Most of them have dual, triple, or multiple functions. These were administrative support, technical services, publication work, library services and support to teaching. These data could be substantiated by the responses of the administrators and the supervisors.

Among 15 out of the 18 heads of units interviewed, they said they were aware of the HRDO qualification standards and job descriptions of the R/E staff but only a third of them followed the stipulations. The R/E staff was thus assigned to other areas of work. The supervisors also enumerated similar tasks which were identified by the R/E staff. The matrix below shows a comparison of the reasons cited by deans/heads of units & supervisors, in the order of frequency of mention.

Reasons for R/E Staff Doing Unrelated Functions	
Deans/Heads of Units	Supervisors
Response to the need of the college; REPS functions were in answer to a situation	Exigency of service; need of office
Bulk of work is administrative; unit does not have a lot of research	Nature of office; nature of research and extension activities
Lack of qualified personnel	Unit's lack of understanding of job title and bureaucratic process
Library and administrative office are understaffed	
HRDO standards served as basis in setting own duties	

As the data indicated, the R/E staff does not have any definite place in the organizational structure. This might be so because except for the 6% of the respondents who

are not clear about the basis for their assignments, the R/E staff said that their current responsibilities were based on:

- a) their job description (34%),
- b) office/center plans (23%),
- c) familiarity with the nature of work (26%), and
- d) relationship with their supervisor (8%).

The responses of the research and extension personnel are a confirmation that majority of them have been performing tasks which are not included in their scope of responsibilities. This suggests that in the research and extension offices where the respondents belong, they are not as vibrant and as valued as they should be.

In an academic institution, the research and extension offices are important. They open avenues for discoursing and theorizing. Researchers give updates about current situation and practices, identifying certain gaps or needs and surfacing recommendations from the viewpoints of both the subjects and those conducting the studies. In extension work, on the other hand, the staff touches base with practitioners and groups in need through trainings, community services, and consultancies.

Such opportunities establish a symbiotic relationship between trainers/facilitators and subjects who thereby, grow from their interactions. The dynamism of learning comes from the sharing of theoretical inputs vis-à-vis the peoples' experiences, while maintaining the "local color" of a group or community. The outputs of these endeavors are documented and/or published; and, they are made available to faculty, students, REPS, and practitioners as teaching and training materials.

It is for this reason that the 1984 Revised Code of UP elaborated in Article 2, that the academic staff is free *to conduct academic and scholarly inquiry and to discuss and publicize the results of such inquiry* (p. 1). Article

6 of the same document elucidated that the *university has the responsibility to ensure high academic standards in its primary functions of instruction and research. Extension and other activities must be supportive to these functions (p.2)*. Article 4 mentions that since the institution's operations are funded by taxpayers' money, *it has the social responsibility to relate its activities to the needs and aspirations of the Filipino people (p.2)*.

D. Location in the Organizational Structure

Although there were a number of supervisors and R/E staff who could not clearly identify the location of the R/E staff in the organization, majority of them gave similar answers. Their replies were mostly reflective of the different arrangements that they are in: they are in divisions, departments, offices under the administrative officer, under the department chair, under a faculty, and in the laboratories. There were also those who answered that they are in the Dean's or Director's office, in the Research, Extension, Publication Offices, the Library Section or Office, and in all departments. There were also those who occupy dual positions and therefore could not identify where they belonged. As a result, the REPS could not cite any significant contribution to the unit. Hence, their value could not be recognized.

The data also gave a picture of the R/E situation in selected units of the Diliman Campus. The wide range and varying levels of staff involvement may indicate that policies and procedures covering the employment and the nature of work of the R/E staff differ from one unit to another. With the current arrangement, it can be deduced that the effort in research and extension of many of them have not been maximized. Duties and responsibilities are not done in accordance with the standard job description. Consequently, this may have affected the staff's productivity. With no space or opportunity open to them, initiatives to endeavor into pioneering activities were stifled. Definitely, in these cases, promotion was hard to come by and this was in fact attested to by one of the research staff.

The above mentioned information particularly indicates the invisibility of as well as the low regard for the research and extension employees in the University's operations.

E. Problem Areas that REPS Experience in their Work

The results of the study showed the problems that beset the performance of the REPS. Many of the concerns which were surfaced by the R/E staff were very similar to those aired in various occasions by the REPS for a number of years now. The interrelatedness of the difficulties encountered is quite noticeable. It could be gleaned that some of the difficulties mentioned were similarly prioritized among supervisors, particularly in providing staff support. The matrix below provides a comparison of responses in the order of frequency of mention.

Problems of R/E Staff	
Supervisors	R/E Staff
Non alignment of their duties and responsibilities with their position;	Work arrangements like overloaded because of multiple tasks, and the 8-5 working time;
REPS attitude that affected their work;	Non clarity of role and functions
REPS lack of skills in research;	REPS services as research staff were not fully utilized;
Difficulty in assessing the work of the REPS;	Lack of staff to perform administrative and library services
Fund constraints and inadequate technical facilities	Low regard for REPS, no decision making powers, limited opportunities for development
Lack of incentives and rewards for meritorious performance	Lack of management skills of administrators and supervisors including no clear research agenda in the unit
Office and administrative arrangements	Lack of funds for the advancement of the REPS
Personal constraint like economic	Lack of cooperation between faculty and non academic staff and unhealthy, demoralizing environment
	Compensation not rational
	Negative attitude of REPS including inferiority complex for not doing research
	Unclear basis for assigning to lower entry level despite available item and qualifications that meet the standard
	REPS lack of skills
	Lack/absence of formal orientation about work

When comparing the answers of the supervisors and the REPS, the following were noted:

1. In both cases, the acknowledged priority problems had to do with the lack of congruence in the expected role and the duties and responsibilities of the REPS.
2. While the supervisors considered lack of skills and the attitude of the REPS as priority problems, it was the non alignment of functions to the concomitant problems that the REPS consider as their main difficulty.
3. Other concerns that were not previously raised by the REPS were issues related to management and the problems affecting the relationship of the faculty with the non teaching staff.
4. Manifestations of the low regard for REPS were mentioned but only by two (2) respondents. One cited it outright as an issue while the other made reference to their marginalization in decision making.

The research and extension personnel have a significant role to play in the University. But with the continuing practice, many of them have not been given the opportunity to play a significant role in their fields of endeavor, as their answers implied.

Like the faculty, their undertakings enliven the spirit of discourse and strengthen the motivation to discover, question and critique. They can very well contribute to knowledge generation and dissemination to meet the challenge of President Roman.

F. Perceptions of Unit Heads and Supervisors about the Functions of the R/E Staff

The data revealed that there are similarities and differences in the notions of the heads of units and the supervisors about the role of the R/E staff in their units. Most of them though are in agreement that the REPS perform duties and responsibilities that are academic in function but they differed in terms of their regard for these positions.

The following matrix presents the views of 15 deans/heads of units and 38 supervisors regarding the function of the REPS:

Perceptions about the Functions of R/E Staff	
Deans/Heads of Units	Supervisors
Do research, publication, training, and extension work	Provide support to academic work
Assist faculty in the conduct of research	Assist in administrative endeavors
Undertake research, publication, extension, administrative, and library work	Provide library services;
Assist in library duties	Give assistance to the college/office
Assist in academic activities assigned by the dean	Provide technical assistance
	Conceptualize and implement R/E program

Almost all of the administrators said that their R/E personnel perform the functions expected of them but at varying levels. There were those who said that in addition to or as their main function, the members of the staff do other tasks for the office. This is so, because of the unclear functions of R/E staff or due to the exigency of service.

The supervisors, on the other hand, noted the variety of responsibilities being performed by the R/E staff as well as their different levels of functioning. They also indicated that the work is mainly assistive in nature, providing support to the offices/units. There were, however, a number of respondents who recognized that some of the R/E staff had been assigned leadership and management roles.

In differentiating the role of the REPS with that of the faculty, there was a pattern in the answers of the administrators and supervisors who responded. These varying perceptions were:

1. Almost half of the respondents indicated that the role of the faculty is similar to that of the REPS because the latter also teach but not on a full time basis. They also conceptualize, implement, monitor, and evaluate research and extension programs and projects. They supervise staff; act as resource person and/or facilitator in trainings.
2. Quite a number of the heads of units and supervisors also mentioned that the faculty teaches and provides leadership to projects while the R/E staff does not.
3. R/E staff provides support to research and extension activities and to the faculty.

In the delineation of the REPS role with that of the administrative staff, a similar pattern of varying views could be found.

1. Many of those who answered opined that the REPS become involved in research and extension projects. They have more specialized qualifications and skills. The administrative staff does clerical and accounting jobs.
2. There were those who said that the administrative work that the REPS perform is in the areas of supervision of staff and management of research and extension related activities.
3. To a few respondents, their functions are similar because both sectors are involved in administrative work.

It could be observed that quite a number of respondents especially the administrators were not clear about the distinctive role of the REPS vis-a-vis the faculty and the administrative staff. These have far reaching implications to the R/E staff in relation to their assignments, their status and location in the office, as well as, the welfare benefits that are supposed to be given to them.

On a positive note, though, many of the respondents were aware that the situation of the REPS in their respective units has to be improved. In fact, they identified changes that could be instituted to make greater use of the staff's potentials and maximize their capacities.

These are:

1. instituting corrective measures to widen the opportunities of the staff and improve their welfare;
2. more involvement in and more time for research and extension work;
3. more items be made available; and
4. standardization of REPS functions and alignment of their duties with R/E functions.

From the responses of the administrators and supervisors, it could be gleaned that most of them are aware of the capabilities of the REPS. There were indications for realizing that the institution of corrective measures will redound to the benefit of the unit. They are thus supportive of the changes which they suggested.

G. *REPS Perception about their Jobs in Relation to their Career Development in their Units*

The results of the study indicated that the R/E staff had difficulty classifying themselves into academic or administrative staff. The 54% who perceived that they are mainly doing academic work defined this in terms of their functions of research, extension, teaching, publication, library services, and consultancy. On the other hand, 24% had the notion that they undertake administrative responsibilities while 21% viewed their role to be both academic and administrative.

Most of the respondents (87%) replied that their role is quite clear to the unit heads, their supervisors, and the administrative staff. However, the other responses would also reveal that the role of the REPS is not clear to a significant number of respondents. On the other hand, 47% indicated that they performed duties outside of their job descriptions and 71% of cases showed that the nature of their assigned tasks was mainly administrative. The unclear role of the REPS was also listed among the problems identified and recommendations to this concern were given by the three (3) sets of respondents, respectively.

Furthermore, the answers of the respondents also revealed that the units to which they belong provided the R/E staff with a number of career development opportunities.

Career Development Opportunities			
Career Development Opportunities	Deans/Heads of Units	Supervisors	R/E Staff
Pursue further studies	14	45	102
Avail of scholarships, grants, fellowships	10	22	4
Act as resource person in trainings, both national and international	16	24	57
Publish researches in journals	9	21	51
Offer of a teaching post	8	17	
Lead projects	8	22	50
Present papers in national & international fora	12	35	85
Attend trainings/seminars	5	17	4
Head sections or offices	2		22
Travel abroad in relation to programs/projects			4

From their responses, it could be seen that the most commonly mentioned benefit was the pursuit of further studies. It could be seen that many REPS had availed of this privilege as indicated by the number of those who already have degrees in higher education, while the others are also undertaking their studies. Less than a third of them identified other venues like being resource persons and paper presentors locally and abroad.

Although there were quite a number of opportunities available, it did not mean that these opportunities were within the reach of R/E staff. It could also be noted that while both administrators and supervisors identified the offer of a teaching post as an opening for promotion, none of the R/E staff mentioned being offered a teaching post as a career development opportunity.

There were a number of constraints which both the supervisors and the R/E staff identified in the utilization of these benefits. As the matrix below shows, there seemed to be a similar trend in their views as to the reasons why REPS find

it hard to benefit from the present benefit package offered by the university.

Constraints		
Constraints	Supervisors	R/E Staff
The non alignment of their duties and responsibilities	27	55
The current structure of positions and pay under the salary standardization	14	55
Lack of funds for research and extension activities	24	53
Current provision in the policies, i. e. on promotion	13	35
Work overload	10	39
Not a priority of the unit	5	35
Not included in the plans of the unit	5	27
Lack of acceptance by other sectors in the unit	4	17

Staff development opportunities, according to 61% of the respondents were offered by their units to the R/E staff. From the total number of respondents, 68% indicated that they attended trainings for the past three years. The mean number of trainings attended was 2.41 with a range of 1-15 trainings. Seventy per cent of the trainings were sponsored by a unit of the university while 30% by agencies outside of UP. The mean indicates that the respondents attended less than one training a year while the range indicates that the opportunities were not evenly spread among the staff.

There were also R/E personnel who pointed out that the trainings were not so helpful in their growth. This lack of impact might be attributable to the absence of a clear development strategy for them. The respondents perceived that there were limited opportunities for capacity building locally and abroad that are suited to their specific line of work.

The data on their length of stay in the University and the number of years in their current post would reveal that more than half of the REPS have been with the institution for more than 10 years and 80% have been in their current post, 10 years or less. Majority of them are in the prime of their life. They are therefore an important

resource that the University has that possess the potential of making a significant contribution to the realization of its vision, mission, and goals (VMG) if their services are utilized optimally. Their commitment to stay in the university is quite evident.

H. Recommendations to Address the REPS Situation

A review of the data would reveal that the administrators, the supervisors and the REPS were able to appreciate the seriousness of the REPS situation. Their recommendations were all encompassing of the problems given.

Recommendations to Improve the Situation of REPS		
Deans/Heads of Unit	Supervisors	R/E Staff
Upgrading of status and enhancing of the regard for REPS	Expand welfare benefits and privileges for REPS and make them at par with faculty	Clearly identify the role and job definition of REPS
Provision of more benefits for REPS and encourage them to avail of career service opportunities	Push for administrative Intervention like standardization of functions for REPS	Develop and upgrade REPS' skills & include R/E agenda and program in the unit
Changing administrative practices to maximize the utilization of their services	Clarify role of REPS; Upgrade their status; recognize their contributions	Increase the salary of the REPS, provide greater incentives and career development opportunities.
Follow up recommendations raised during the "Search for Chancellor" forum.	Increase number of REPS positions and hire qualified REPS	Uplift REPS status by recognizing their contributions
	REPS should organize and network	Carry out administrative interventions i. e. release from CSC requirements, more independence in undertaking researches and extension activities in their own fields; and review qualification requirements vis a vis leveling of positions, among others.
	Fund source and generate	
	Upgrade the skills of REPS doing administrative work to enable them to meet requirements of their work	
	Administration must reduce red tape and change attitude about REPS	
	Improve laboratory facilities and equipment	

The recommendations especially of the administrators and supervisors reflect their awareness of the REPS capabilities and potentials. The proposed solutions though, have both policy and program implications not just for REPS in Diliman but for the whole UP system and not just for the REPS as a sector; but, also for the other sectors, faculty and administrative staff as well.

Moving Forward to Meet the Challenges of the Times

The results of the research were enlightening to the REPS. The records that were reviewed especially the history, including how their present position came about and what the various policies, agreements, and BOR decisions were, *vis-à-vis* practiced; opened avenues for greater advocacy efforts for the recognition of the REPS role in the University.

There are two REPS organizations in UP Diliman - the All UP Academic Employees Union (AUPAEU) and the Research, Extension, and Professional Staff Association (REPSA). It is noteworthy to mention that in 2002, then Chancellor and now President Roman, facilitated their venue for working together when she formed an Ad Hoc Committee of REPS, composed of representatives coming from these two groups.

With constant meetings and other unit activities between these groups, those involved came to realize that their organizations have complementary and not divergent goals and objectives. Their pursuit has been focused on the concretization of certain recommendations that came out in the REPS study.

After presenting the research findings to the REPS on January 26, 2005, the Ad Hoc Committee continued involving more members and expanding its structure and responsibilities. Primarily, their aim is to bring about the constituents' recognition of their academic function and the setting up of a structure and mechanism for REPS participation in the decision making processes of the University.

The sector, through its Ad Hoc Committee, has taken effort to network with the other constituent Universities to share experiences about their issues and concerns and consolidate their group. Efforts were made to inform the members about developments in their sector and involve them in the activities related to their welfare. Some of the noteworthy areas of concern that brought them together on a regular basis included:

- a. the conceptualization of a system/structure that will include the REPS in the decision making processes of the University;
- b. a separate development fund for the REPS rather than drawing from that of the Administrative staff; and
- c. a separate manual of policies for the sector.

To facilitate the dissemination of information and decision making among them, the REPS divided themselves into clusters based on their professional groupings. At least three (3) members from each cluster either volunteered or were assigned to be focal persons. Moreover, the expertise of some of their members were utilized in ensuring their access to information through the use of the internet. Matters for discussion, clarification, information, and decision are continuously posted in the created e – group mail as soon as possible to enable the members to participate in discussions and be informed.

As a result, the present Administration has taken corrective measures in some of their areas of concern. This may indicate the UP Administration's realization that if the welfare of employees is considered and protected, the effort will translate to increased productivity and therefore, forge a stronger institution. Moreover, there may now be recognition that the REPS, given the opportunity, can make a major contribution in achieving the goals and objectives of the University of the Philippines.

Some initiatives worthy of mention are:

- a. Setting up an Ad Hoc Committee, composed of the sector's representatives that would meet with then Chancellor Roman to look into the issues of the REPS;
- b. Disseminating the results of the REPS study to the Executive Committee of Deans in October, 2004;
- c. Funding of the result dissemination of the REPS study to the sector in January, 2005;
- d. Changing of the system of monitoring the reporting to work of REPS from filling out a daily time record (DTR) using a Bundy clock, similar to the practice of the Administrative staff to a certificate of service (COS) similar to that of the faculty since February, 2005. This is in recognition of the academic nature of their work; and
- e. Continuing effort of the Office of the Chancellor to dialogue with the REPS with regard to governance as well as welfare benefits.

The University of the Philippines, like an "organism", came into being because of a purpose. It has expanded its reach to the whole of the Philippines. Like the "brain", UP has often been the center of such discourse. As part of the government system, it has often helped out in the planning and operationalization of many of its programs.

Having developed a culture of its own that guides its operations, the University has likewise influenced various educational institutions. It has upheld academic freedom, democracy, and pluralism of ideas. Knowledge generation has also been its course. And because of its belief that education is transformative, dissent and critical thinking on issues and concerns that impact on the nation have always been encouraged.

In all of these, the role of research and extension has become more and more significant. These components help systematize experiences of the people that provide them significant inputs in theory building. Foremost, they put life to teaching. In an academic institution, these components go hand in hand with one another.

In the context of its over-all mission, the U.P. continues to be relevant with programs that address the needs of the people. Within a globalized set-up, it also realizes the need to be competitive to be at par with other institutions. Thus, it has taken steps to keep in stride. In its pursuit, the Administration has repeatedly called upon its faculty to exert more effort in pioneering noteworthy research undertakings. As an encouragement, resources have been set aside to reward those who rise up to the challenge.

But more than this, the Administration needs to come up with research and extension agenda that will contribute to national development. In line with the aforementioned recommendation, it needs to encourage the development of innovative institutional research and extension programs that will impact on the lives of Filipinos. This can only be done by strengthening its research, extension, and publication units and maximizing the services of its research and extension personnel. This is the call of the times.

According to Irving Wladawsky-Berger, IBM's vice president for technical strategy,

... But what is new is how much more important knowledge is today. But the tools that are crucial to improving productivity become more and more complex with each new generation and therefore they require more and more knowledge and training to get the most of them (Friedman, Dec., 2005-Feb., 2006:11).

Research and development have also been emphasized in this globalized set-up because *in the future, we will speak less and less about 'developed, developing and underdeveloped countries,' more and more about 'smart, smarter and smartest countries'* (Friedman, Dec., 2005-Feb., 2006:11). In Europe, Dominique Strauss-Kahn, a member of the Parliament in France came to realize that *we should invest more in education and research at the European level* (Strauss-Kahn, Dec., 2005-Feb., 2006: 20).

Acknowledging the importance of its human resource, Prime Minister Tony Blair of Great Britain said:

Countries and organizations which succeed will be those which make the most of all the talent and potential of their people (Blair, Dec., 2005- Feb., 2006: 22) and constituents.

These are some guideposts that the UP Administration can consider in appreciating the issues and concerns of the REPS. A positive response will definitely redound to the benefit of the sector and the University, to a large extent.

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ABSTRACT

Herstory: The Life and Struggle of Nenita "Nanette" Miranda Tampico

This paper traces the life of Nenita "Nanette" Miranda Tampico, daughter, wife, worker and union organizer.

Born in Muñoz, Nueva Ecija in 1964, Nanette, is the 2nd child of Arsenio and Pacita Tampico, both from the working class. At the early age of 17, with only a high school diploma, she worked as a saleslady at the Masagana Telemart. Later, she became a factory worker in an assembly-line industry, the Filipinas Microcircuit Inc. which eventually became the Far East Assembly Corporation.

At work, Nanette, who was earlier exposed to unjust labor practices suffered by her parents, also became a victim of exploitation. And, on account of her gender, she even had worse experiences that helped her become a woman of resolve.

As a saleslady at Masagana Telemart, Nanette suffered being harassed and became witness to the sexual exploitation of her co-workers by their Chinese employer. After 5 years of work, she was denied separation pay. She also endured the hazards of working in the assembly-line industry. She was denied security of tenure, seniority rights and suffered harassment of different sorts.

Nanette later found herself organizing her fellow workers to fight the injustice. At the factory, she joined the Far East Assembly Employees Union-Association of Democratic Labor Organization (FEAEU-ADLO) and became the head of the FEAEU-ADLO Women's Desk. She was instrumental for the recruitment of thousands of women members of the Union. Their collective action resulted to yearly salary increases, additional overtime pay and security of tenure. Nanette, together with other union officers and members, led a strike demanding for the reinstatement of workers, mostly union officers and members, who were dismissed from work.

Soon, Nanette took the road less traveled... that of being a "full time organizer". She now devotes her life in organizing women workers and other exploited women, while being a wife and mother to JM. At present, she is the Vice President of Gabriela Women's Party and the Executive Director of Gabriela Silang Displaced Workers' Center.

HERSTORY: Ang Buhay at Pakikibaka ni Nenita “Nanette” Miranda Tampico

Lisa Marie J. Clemente

*M*alimit nating naririnig o nababasa ang buhay ng mga lalaking bayani sa mga pahina ng kasaysayan ng ating bayan, samantalang mangilan-ngilan lamang ang mga kababaihang naitatampok dito. Habang mainam na napag-aaralan ang mga talang ito, nararapat ring bigyan ng kaukulang pansin ang kontribusyon ng mga kababaihang hindi nagpatali sa dikta ng lipunan, lumabas sa apat na sulok ng tahanan, at nakipaglaban para sa kalayaan at karapatang panlipunan. Hindi na lamang dapat maimbudo ang kuwento ng kababaihan sa konsepto ng mga komersyalisadong fairytale tulad ng Cinderella at Snow White na nagpapaigting lamang ng pagiging pasibo at domestikado ng babae dahil ang lantay na katotohan ay magkasingbigat ang ambag ng mga kababaihan at kalalakihan sa kilusang pagbabago. Ayon kay Dr. Judy M. Taguiwalo:

Ang karaniwang perspektibang ginagamit ay hindi isinasaalang-alang ang kasarian bilang mahalagang konsiderasyon sa pag-aaral ng kasaysayan. (Taguiwalo, 2002:75)

Gayundin, kapansin-pansin na ang “opisyal na kasaysayan” ay hindi lamang isinulat ng kalalakihan kundi isinulat rin ng namamayaning uri sa lipunan. Bukod sa pagkakahati-hati sa kasarian, mahalaga ring tingnan ang kakambal nitong pagkakahati-hati ng uri sa lipunan, kung saan nasa ilalim ng tatsulok¹ ang uring anakpawis. Sa mga pahina ng kasaysayan, tila nakakaligtaang iguhit ang mga kwento ng pakikibaka ng uring anakpawis lalo na ang kwento ng mga progresibo at militanteng kababaihang anakpawis.

Sa ngayon, may pagsisikhay na magsagawa ng alternatibong kasaysayan na magtatampok ng mahahalagang kontribusyon ng uring anakpawis kabilang ang mga kababaihan. May pagtuon din sa pang araw-araw na kaganapan, pakikibaka sa loob at labas ng tahanan, at mga pagpupunyagi sa kolektibong pagkilos ng mga kababaihang anakpawis tulad ng pag-uunyon, paglahok sa pulitika ng masa at iba pang magkasinghalagang mga gawain sa panlipunang pagbabago. Ang ganitong alternatibong paglikha ng kasaysayan ay binibigyan ng matimyas na pagpapahalaga ni Sr. Mary John Mananzan at Jeanne Frances Illo:

Ito'y para sa babaeng Pilipino upang pasiglahin ang kanyang sariling paglilimi tungkol sa kanyang papel sa lipunan at paglikha ng kasaysayan. Ito'y isang pangako na ang pagsusulat ng kasaysayan sa hinaharap ay hindi na magbubulagbulagan sa mga ginawa ng kababaihan (Arriola, 1989:3).

In so doing, we have taken an epistemological stance that women can be "knowers", that their beliefs and ways of knowing can be "legitimized knowledge"...(Harding 1987: 3 halaw mula kay Illo in *Feminist Research Experiences: A Case Book* 1997:13).

Isa sa mga popular na kaparaanan ng pagsusulat ng kasaysayan ng uring anakpawis na may pangkasariang perspektiba ay ang kwentong buhay. Ayon kay Prof. Clemen Aquino:

Sa kontekstong peministang perspektiba, may pagpapahalagang maiaambag ang lapit ng kuwentong buhay tungo sa pagbibigay ng kaukulang puwang sa mga kababaihan at iba pang marhinalisadong sektor ng lipunan (Aquino 2002:84).

Naging magkalapit at magkapanalig ang lapit ng kasaysayang pasalita sa larangan ng kasaysayan at ng kwentong buhay sa sosyolohiya sa pagbibigay tinig sa mga ordinaryong mamamayan sa lipunan: mga kababaihan, mga matatandang nasa tuluyan, mga taong may pisikal na karamdaman at mga pangkaraniwang komunidad na

naglunsgad ng kanilang sariling pagsusulat at gawaing paglilimbag (Thompson 1988; Bomat 1994 halaw mula kay Aquino:88).

Makasaysayan din ang pagturing sa kuwentong-buhay dahil taglay nito ang dalawang uri ng espasyong pinagkukunan ng realidad: ang personal at ang pulitikal. Kung ang panitikan ng isang bansa ay maituturing na kasaysayan ng bansa, ang kuwentong-buhay naman ng isang tao ay maituturing na pakikibahagi niya sa pagsusulat ng kasaysayan ng kaniyang bayan o bansa.

Ang kuwentong-buhay ng uring anakpawis ay mahihibo bilang napakayamang balon ng karanasan at pakikibakang hindi naisusulat, o sadyang hindi isinulat ng nakapangyayaring ideolohiya ng mga namamayaning uri at kasarian sa lipunan. Mahalagang suriin ang mga kuwentong-buhay ng naisantabing mga uri at kasarian sa lipunan sapagkat taglay nito ang mga talang-personal at talang-pangkasaysayan na mapagkukunan natin ng alternatibo at progresibong pananaw sa pagkilos at pag-unawa sa buhay at lipunan sa pangkabuuan.

At dahil kwentong-buhay ito ng uring anakpawis, nararapat lamang na isalaysay ang kwentong ito gamit ang kanilang sariling salita nang sa gayon ay maangkin nila ito nang buong buo. Hindi rin maiiwasang bigyang-diin ang paglalahad ng mga mahahalagang yugto ng kasaysayan lalo na ang pang-ekonomiyang kalagayan ng bansa dahil dito umiinog ang kwentong-buhay ng uring anakpawis. Hindi nga ba't ang kalagayang panlipunan ang siyang dahilan kung bakit hanggang ngayon ay patuloy ang kanilang pakikibaka?

Sa ganitong linya nakasandig ang papel na ito. Ang kuwentong-buhay ni Nenita "Nanette" Miranda Tampico ay ibabahagi at susuriin ayon sa pormulasyon ng "biography as herstory"... kung paanong ang isang babae mula sa uring anakpawis ay iniakda ng kanyang lipunan, at patuloy na lumalahok sa pag-aakda at pagpapalaya ng lipunan. Si Nanette ang kasalukuyang Deputy Secretary General ng General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA), Bise Presidente ng Gabriela Women's Party (GWP) at Executive Director ng Gabriela Silang Displaced Workers' Center. Siya ay naging 3rd nominee ng GWP noong pambansang halalan ng 2004.

DALAWANG AMA, DALAWANG MACAPAGAL

Dalawa ang kinagisnang ama ni Nanette. Ang kaniyang amang si Mang Arsenio at ang "ama" ng Pilipinas noon na si Pangulong Diosdado Macapagal. Mula sa dalawang lalaking pigurang ito, makikita natin kung paano sinusuri ni Nanette ang kaniyang buhay lalo pa't ang kasalukuyang pangulong si Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo ay anak ng nakagisnan niyang pangulo. Ang dalawang "ama", at ang dalawang Macapagal ang mga pigura sa buhay at kasaysayan na nagpapaigting ng paninindigan ni Nanette.

Walang ipinag-iba noong ako'y ipanganak at saka ang kasalukuyan. Bukod sa parehong rehimeng Macapagal ang nasa estado noon at ngayon, parehong batbat ng hirap at represyon ang dinanas at kasalukuyang dinaranas ng mga mamamayan. Nakakatawang isipin na pareho rin ang akusasyon ng taong bayan sa mag-amang Macapagal – ang pandaraya sa halalan gamit ang mga pondo mula sa gobyerno... Like father, like daughter.

Noong Marso 21, 1964, sa bayan ng Muñoz, Nueva Ecija, ipinanganak si Nenita Miranda na sa kalauna'y nakagawian nang tawaging Nanette. Ipinanganak si Nanette sa mag-asawang Mang Arsenio at Aling Pacita na parehong manggagawa na nagmula sa uring magsasaka.

Maagang naulila sa ama si Mang Arsenio at nagkaroon naman ng pangalawang asawa ang kaniyang ina na hindi niya natutunang ituring na pangalawang ama. Sa kanyang pagrerebelde, hindi siya nakapagtapos ng high school at lumuwas na sa Maynila para hanapin ang kanyang sariling kapalaran. Nagtrabaho siya bilang family driver sa pamilya ng kanyang tiyuhin sa Maynila.

Nakilala ni Mang Arsenio si Aling Pacita sa isang tindahan ng mga sapatos sa Muñoz, Nueva Ecija kung saan nagtrabaho ang huli bilang kahera. Noong bata pa si Nanette, nagkaroon ng matinding away ang kaniyang mga magulang. Sa away na iyon, nalaman ni Nanette na dahil sa pustahan ng barkada kung kaya niligawan ni Mang Arsenio ang kaniyang ina. Diumano, isang case ng beer ang kapalit kung sakaling mapapasagot ni Mang Arsenio si Aling Pacita sa loob ng isang linggo. Nauwi ang pustahan sa kasalan, tulad ng istiryotipikal na pelikulang aksiyon.

Nanirahan ang pamilya ni Nanette sa Nueva Ecija, subalit ang kaniyang ama ay nagtrabaho sa Maynila bilang manggagawa sa talyer. Hindi naging dalisay ang pagsasama ng kaniyang mga magulang sapagkat ang kaniyang ama ay walang umpat na nambabae. Nagkaroon ng mga "kapatid sa labas" si Nanette. Hindi naman pinili ni Aling Pacita na iwan ang ama ni Nanette sapagkat katulad ng marami, naniniwala si Aling Pacita na "ang pinagbuklod ng Diyos ay di maaring paghiwalayin ng tao" kahit pa nga dumaranas siya ng pisikal at emosyonal na pananakit mula sa asawa. Saksi si Nanette sa mga domestikong karahasang ng kaniyang ama sa kaniyang ina. Subalit dahil sa sobrang takot sa ama, hindi nagawang awatin o pagsabihan ni Nanette si Mang Arsenio sa tuwing sasaktan nito si Aling Pacita.

Naikintal rin sa murang isipan at kamalayan ni Nanette ang kahirapan ng buhay sa labas ng tahanan. Noong dekada '60, damang-dama ng pamilya niya ang epekto ng pagbulusok ng piso laban sa dolyar (Php3.90 = \$1) at ang kaakibat nitong pagtaas sa presyo ng mga pangunahing bilihin habang hindi naman sumabay ang pagtaas ng sahod ng mga manggagawa (Guerrero, 1996: 61). Ayon sa pananaliksik ng IBON Foundation Inc., ang daily cost of living noong huling bahagi ng dekada '60 ay Php 9.43 habang nakapako sa kalahati nito ang minimum na sahod.

Mababa sa minimum wage ang pasuweldo ng may-ari ng talyer sa ama ni Nanette. Hindi rin regular ang pagpadala ng ama ng suportang pinansyal sa kanila. Umasa na lamang sina Nanette sa tulong ng mga kamag-anak ng ama para punuan ang pang-araw-araw na pangangailangan. Kasabay nito'y nagpursige ang kanyang ina na itaguyod sila upang hindi lang umasa sa tulong ng iba. Hindi nawawala sa alaala ni Nanette ang mga panahong bumibili na lang ang kanyang ina ng isang maliit na lata ng kondensada para ulamin nilang magkakapatid. Minsan ang hapunan naman nila ay kanin lamang na hinaluan ng mantika. Sa ganitong kalagayan, may mga oras din na itinutulog na lang ng pamilya ni Nanette ang sikmurang kumakalam.

Ginalis ako noon dahil sa kondensada... sobrang sugar sa katawan. Kinalbo ako noon.

Ang pamilya ni Nanette ay isa lamang sa ilang milyong pamilyang sagad sa buto ang paghihikahos sa buhay. At sa gitna ng kawalan, ang gobyernong interes ng iilan 'ang kinilingan ay sadyang hindi naasahan. Maaalalang nakilala ang administrasyon ng dating Pangulong Diosdado Macapagal sa mga polisiyang liberalisasyon ng ekonomiya ng bansa kung saan unang

namayagpag ang "free enterprise" na nagresulta sa "full decontrol" or "deregulation":

The first executive act performed by Macapagal when he assumed the puppet presidency in 1962 was to proclaim immediate and full decontrol. Local US firms were enabled to remit huge profits even without having to conceal them any more through overpricing of goods and services bought from their mother and sister companies in the US or elsewhere abroad (Guerrero 1996:47)

Sa gayon, nawalan ng anumang limitasyon ang pagpasok ng mga dayuhang produkto at ang pagpatayo ng kanilang mga kumpanya sa bansa; mga kumpanyang nagtakda ng mababang sahod sa mga manggagawa at mataas na presyo ng mga produkto. Bagay na nagawa nila dahil wala nang pakialam o kontrol ang gobyerno sa pagtakda ng presyo ng kanilang mga produkto kahit na hindi na kaya ng bulsa ng mga mamamayan (Guerrero 1996:61).

Ang pang-ekonomiyang kalagayan noon ay pinatindi ng napakalaking budget deficit na mas lalo pang pinalala ng "stabilization loans" ng Administrasyong Macapagal sa mga bangko ng Estados Unidos para diumano'y makabangon ang bansa (Guerrero 1996:61). Subalit patunay ang buhay ng pamilya ni Nanet na walang kaginhawahang idinulot ang pagkatali ng ating bansa sa utang sa mga dayuhan.

Mahirap ang buhay noon. Ang mga kapatid kong maliliit, bibihira makatikim ng gatas. Madalas kape.

Sa Sta Rita, Cabiao, Nueva Ecija, walang kamuwang-muwang ang pamilya ni Nanette sa nagaganap na mga kilos-protesta sa Kamaynilaan laban sa Administrasyong Macapagal. Ang krisis na kinaharap ng mga mamamayan ay nagbigay daan para sa pag-oorganisa at pagbuklod-buklod ng mga uring api – ang mga manggagawa, magsasaka at panggitnang saray ng lipunan, na pumaloob sa Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism (Eiler 2002: 71). Bagamat hindi pa kasangkot noon sa mga kilusang makabayan ang sinuman sa pamilya ni Nanette, ramdam na ramdam nina Nanette ang hirap ng buhay na siya ring dinaranas ng mahigit sa kalahati ng populasyon sa bansa sa ilalim ng maka-dayuhang pamumuno ni Macapagal.

SALOOB NG APAT NA SULOK NG TALYER

Sampung taon si Nanette nang magdesisyon ang kanyang ina na lumuwas na rin sila sa Maynila. Layunin ng kaniyang ina na makahanap ng mapapasukang trabaho, makasama ang kanyang ama, at mapigilan ang mga kalokohan ni Mang Arsenio.

Para hindi magbuhay binata ang ama ko, lumuwas na lang kami at kasama niyang nanirahan sa talyer. Natanggap naman sa talyer ang nanay ko bilang mananahi ng mga gamit sa sasakyan.

Pyudal ang relasyon ng mga manggagawa sa talyer at ng may-ari nito. Palibhasa'y puro kamag-anak ng may-ari ang mga nagtatrabaho rito, murang pasahod at hindi maayos na tirahan sa talyer ang inilaan sa mga manggagawa. Sa kabila nito, hindi naman nagawang magreklamo ng mga manggagawa kahit pa sampung piso na ang minimum wage noon at sila'y tumatanggap lamang ng halos kalahati ng naturang halaga.

Pasalamat daw kami at nabigyan pa raw ng trabaho si tatay at may tirahan pa. Di ko maalala ang eksaktong sahod ng tatay ko kasi tinatago nga niya sa nanay ko. Basta alam ko mababa lang at parang kalahati lang ng minimum wage. Binibigyan lang niya ng dalawang piso ang nanay ko para sa pamalengke sa isang linggo. Nakakaraos na rin... Ang nanay ko naman sobrang baba ng bayad sa kanya. 50 centimos lang.

Bagama't magkaiba ang trabaho ng mga magulang ni Nanette sa talyer, parehong mahigit sa walong oras ang kanilang ginugugol sa trabaho. Subalit mapapansing napakababa ng sahod ng kanyang ina kumpara sa kinikita ng kanyang ama. Ito'y sapagkat sa pyudal na kultura, ang trabaho lamang ng lalaki ang may halaga. Kung kasama man ang babae sa nagtatrabaho, na madalas ding nangyayari, itinuturing na lamang ito na pandagdag sa kita ng lalaki kaya naman mas mababang halaga ang katumbas nito. Ito ang tinatawag na agwat ng sahod ng babae at lalaki sa isang dibisyong sekswal sa paggawa:

Differentials in wages continue to reflect the sexual division of labor and the different worth attached to the work of women and men. These differences have in fact increased: in 1960 women earned Php 0.60 for every peso earned by men; and from 1978 through 1986, this was roughly Php 0.54. (Eviota 1993: 89 halaw mula kay Cortes 1982)

Sa gitna ng mababang sahod, mabilis namang sumikip ang maliit na kuwarto sa talyer na tinitirhan ng pamilya ni Nanette. Nagsupling ng limang sunod-sunod sina Mang Arsenio at Aling Pacita. Ang ganitong sitwasyon ay madalas na mamamasdan sa patuloy na lokal na migrasyon ng mga mamamayan mula sa probinsiya patungong Maynila. Kadalasan, ang mga pamilyang ito ang dumaragdag sa paparaming bilang ng mga maralitang lungsod.

Yung bubong ng kuwarto namin, parang gripo ang tulo tuwing umuulan. Nag-iisa rin ang maliit na c.r. na ginagamit ng halos 60 na katao sa isang araw. Dalawampu kasi ang mga manggagawa pero kasama nila ang mga pamilya nila kaya umabot ng ganun karami.

Katulad ng iba pang maralitang taga-lungsod, damang-dama ng pamilya ni Nanette ang pang-ekonomiyang krisis sa gitna ng sunod-sunod na pagtaas ng pangunahing bilihin habang wala namang kahit katiting na dagdag sa sahod. Sa katunayan, ang kawalan ng matinong kabuhayan at nutrisyon ang ilan sa naging dahilan kung bakit lumaking sakitin at mahina ang puso ng panganay na kapatid ni Nanette na si Josephine. At simula noon, si Nanette na ang humawak ng responsibilidad para alagaan ang kanyang maliliit na kapatid.

Maging sa paghanap ng makakain ng buong pamilya, naging katuwang si Nanette ng kanyang ama't ina. Sa katunayan, sa murang gulang ni Nanette, siya na ang pumipila sa tindahan ng mga murang bigas na pinalaganap noon ni Pangulong Ferdinand Marcos na pumalit kay Diosdado Macapagal.

Ang bigas na binibili namin mura nga pero may halo namang mais. Iba talaga ang lasa pero pinagtitiyagaan na lang.

Minsan naman, bibili kami ng bilasang isda, mura din kasi yun.yung iba may mga uod na, huhugasan lamang namin ni nanay ang mga isda para matanggal ang mga uod. Sabi ni nanay, huwag na huwag raw ako magkwento sa mga kapatid ko kasi di na sila kakain pag nalaman nila.

Kapag gusto rin namin makatikim ng softdrinks, nagbibigay naman si tatay ng pera para ibili ng mga mamera.yun lang ang kaya namin – mamerang kendi, softdrinks etc.

Buong akala ng pamilya ni Nanette ay magkakaroon ng pagbabago sa buhay at ekonomiya dahil sa bagong presidente. Ngunit labis silang nadismaya dahil mas malala pa pala si Marcos kaysa sa sinundan nito. Sa mga datos sa ibaba, makikita kung bakit hindi makaagapay ang mga maralitang pamilya sa mga gastusin sa buhay:

In 1974, a day's supply of food cost Php 18.16 for a family of six in Manila. (Eviota 1993: 90 halaw mula sa 1974 Report of the Food and Nutrition Research Council)

When expenses for clothing, rent and other basic necessities were added, the cost of living amounted to Php 37.19 a day. (Eviota 1993: 90 halaw mula kay Dimasupil)

Yet minimum wage were Php 10.00 a day. (Eviota, 1993: 90)

Bukod sa pang-araw-araw na pangangailangan, nasakripisyo rin ang pag-aaral nilang magkakapatid dahil kahit inilipat ang ama ni Nanette sa Pasay at na-promote na maging foreman, hindi naman tumaas ang sahod nito. Dagdag sa araw-araw na gastusin ang pamasaha at baon ng magkakapatid. Bunsod nito, naglalakad na lamang ang magkakapatid kahit na may kalayuan ang kanilang tinitirhang talyer sa mga pampublikong eskwelahang kanilang pinapasukan. At dahil halos sabay-sabay na nag-aaral ng elementarya at hayskul, may mga panahon kailangang tumigil ni Nanette para mapagbigyan ang iba pang mga kapatid. Bagama't naantala, nakatapos rin si Nanette ng elementarya sa Tomas Morato Elementary School at ng hayskul sa Quezon City High School.

SA LABAS NG TALYER

Sa pag-usad ng panahon, unti-unti na ring nabuksan ang mga mata ni Nanette sa realidad ng pulitika sa lipunan. Kabi-kabila ang mga kilos-protestang sinagot ng matinding pasismo ng Administrasyong Marcos. Ang init ng pakikibakang naglilibay sa mga lansangan ay naramdaman din maging sa loob ng bawat tahananang Pilipino. Sa labas ng talyer, nakita ni Nanette ang mga nakahandusay na mga bangkay na may takip ng dyaryo. Tuwing nagtatanong si Nanette kung bakit sila pinatay, ang sagot ng kanyang ina ay "sila ang mga kumontra kay Macoy". Sa loob ng talyer, ang ama ni Nanette, sampu ng kanyang mga kasamahan ay nais sanang lumahok sa mga kilos-protesta dahil na rin sa tumitinding kalagayang pang-ekonomiya at represiyon

sa mga kapwa nila manggagawa. Subalit pinigilan sila ng ina ni Nanette dahil alam nito ang susuunging panganib na nababalitaan ukol sa mararahas na dispersal.

Sa gitna ng lantarang pandarahas, ipinanganak ang Movement for Democratic Philippines bilang isang malaking alyansa ng pinagsamang iba't ibang organisasyon ng mga batayang sektor sa lipunan:

Noong Enero 25, 1970, nagdemonstrasyon ang 50,000 na estudyante at manggagawa sa harapan ng unang sesyon ng kongreso at talumpati ni Marcos sa kalagayan ng bansa. Marahas na binuwag ng pulis at militar ang demonstrasyon. Sa pagkasukol ng mamamayan, nabuo ang First Quarter Storm at sunod sunod na ang mga protesta. Ang sumunod na pangyayari ay lingguhang demonstrasyon na mula 50,000, dumami nang dumami hanggang umabot sa 100,000 ang kapal ng tao sa mga pagkilos (EILER 2002: 72).

Taong 1972, sa pamamagitan ng Proklamasyon 1081, nagdeklara si Marcos ng Batas Militar dahil hindi na masupil ng rehimen ang lumalakas at yumayabong na kilusang masa.

Inilabas din ang Pres. Decree No. 143 na lalong nagpahirap sa baryang buhay ng mga manggagawa. Ilan sa nilalaman nito ay ang sumusunod:

1. ang Linggo ay ginawang regular na araw ng paggawa
2. isang araw lang ang pahinga sa isang linggo
3. 25% na bayad sa overtime
4. 6 weeks na maternity leave benefit lamang (EILER 2002: 75)

Ang mga nabanggit ay direktang pang-iinsulto sa mga manggagawang naipanalo na ang karapatan sa 40 oras ng pagtatrabaho sa loob ng isang linggo, 50% overtime pay at labing-apat (14) na linggo na maternity leave benefits. Kung kaya minarapat ng mga manggagawa na magsagawa ng welga, dahil ito rin mismo ang kanilang ginamit noon upang maipanalo ang mga benepisyo at karapatan sa paggawa.

Mula 1975 hanggang 1976, may naitalang 73,000 manggagawa na lumahok sa mahigit 200 na welga. Noong Mayo 1, 1976, tampok ang welga ng 25,000 manggagawa sa GELMART Industries, LA PERLA Tobacco Industrial corporation, SOLID mills, TRIUMPH (kung saan naging isang trade union organizer si Nanet ng dekada nobenta), MANILAPAPER mills at REALTON Corporation. Sa mga sumunod pang taon, lalong dumami ang mga manggagawang nagwelga sa iba't ibang pabrika at pagawaan hanggang sa taong 1978, may naitalang 135,000 manggagawa na lumahok sa 175 na welga hindi lang sa kamaynilaan kundi pati na rin sa Bataan, Laguna, Ifugao at Nueva Vizcaya. (EILER 2002: 78-79)

Dahil sa madagundong na lakas ng iba't ibang unyon ng mga manggagawa, noong 1980 sa araw mismo ng paggawa - Mayo 1², naitatag ang Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU). Dinaluhan ito ng 30,000 na mga manggagawa sa Araneta Coliseum (EILER 81). Sa pagtitipong ito, isinalaysay ng mga lider-manggagawa ang anim na kahilingan:

1. makatarungang pagtaas ng minimum na sahod
2. pagbalik ng karapatang magwelga
3. pag-alis ng preventive suspension
4. pagbabalik ng kalayaang sibil
5. karapatang mag-union sa institusyon at government agencies
6. pagsasabansa ng mga industriyang kontrolado ng dayuhang monopolyo kapitalista (EILER 2002: 81)

Sa lahat na mga pabrika, malls, pagawaan at maging sa mga opisina, nakilala ang KMU bilang tunay, palaban at makabayang Unyon na kumatawan sa interes ng mga manggagawa. Maging sa papasukang mall ni Nanette, ang Masagana Telemart, pinag-usapan din ang pagtatayo ng Unyon dahil sa hindi makatarungang sahod at kalagayan sa paggawa.

Nakapagtapos ang ate ko ng Commerce pero iginapang talaga siya ng mga magulang ko. Nagtrabaho din siya habang nag-aaral. Noong ako na, nakita ko na di talaga kakayanin ng mga magulang ko kaya nag-decide ako na maghanap ng trabaho para makaipon.

Noong 1981, nagpasiya si Nanette na iwanan ang apat na sulok ng tirahang kuwarto ng talyer sa Pasay upang maghanap ng mapapasukang trabaho. Nais ni Nanette na makatungtong man lang sa Kolehiyo at mapagtapos ang sarili ng kahit bokasyunal o dalawang-taong teknikal na kurso man lang.

MAKE-UP AT TAKONG: ANG SALESLADY SA MASAGANA TELEMART

Sa murang edad na 17, nagtrabaho si Nanette sa Masagana Telemart bilang saleslady. Ang Masagana Telemart ay pag-mamay-ari ni David Chu, isang negosyanteng Filipino-Tsino. Mahirap ang proseso ng pagpasok sa Masagana.

Dapat high school graduate, kailangang may katamtamang height, preferably single and with pleasing personality ang aplikante. Kailangan kong matutong mag-make-up, mag-lipstick at sanayin ang sarili sa correct/smart posture para sa paghahanda sa job interview.

Natanggap si Nanette bilang saleslady dahil pumasa siya sa lahat ng rekisitos na hiningi ng management. Noong una, nanibago si Nanette sa mga inilalagay na kolorete sa kanyang mukha, maiksing unipormeng asul at two inches na takong na sapatos. Subalit sa kalaunan, nasanay na rin siya. Sa Textile Department siya na-assign, at doon, kailangang maalam siya sa lahat ng tela at iba pang gamit sa pananahi na itinitinda. Kagaya ng isang eksperto sa pananahi, namemorya ni Nanette kung ano ang magagandang kulay at klase ng tela at sinulid para sa iba't ibang pananahi. Pagkatapos ng anim na buwan, naging regular na empleyada si Nanette sang-ayon sa batas sa paggawa noon.

Mahirap ang trabaho kasi naka-aircon at maiksi ang damit mo kaya lalamigin ka. Nakatayo ka lagi kaya di talaga maiwasan magkakaroon ka ng varicose veins kasi nakakapagod yung suot naming heels. Bawal din ang nakasimangot. Palaging nakangiti kahit pa bastos na ang ilang customers.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ang shifting namin at mayroon lamang three-hour break na ibinibigay para sa pahinga at pagkain pero biruin mo naman sa isang araw, mahigit sa walong oras kaming nasa Masagana.

At ang kapalit ng lahat ng sakripsiyong ito – Php 175 per week. Ito ang sahod ko kapag complete ang attendance. Pinagtatyagaan ko na lang kaysa wala, e kailangan ko pang mag-ipon. Ang hirap pa naman ng buhay noon.

Karaniwang Aktuwal na Gastos sa Isang Araw noong 1985

Bigas, 2 kilo	Php 14.00
Ulam	30.00
Iba pa	12.00
Pasahe	7.10
Upa sa bahay	6.74
Tubig	1.00
Ilaw	1.57
TOTAL	Php 72.41

Sanggunian: Center for Women's Resources

Alas nuwebe ng umaga nagbubukas ang Masagana Telemart pero kailangang alas otso pa lang ay nandoon na si Nanette at iba pa nitong kasamahang salesladies. Dumaraan pa kasi silang lahat sa kakaiba at mahabang proseso ng inspeksiyon. Mistulang "burlesk queens" kapag itinaas na nila ang one-piece na unipormeng asul. Inilista ng guwardya sa logbook ang suot na panty, bra, medyas at stockings, iba pang dalang gamit at baunan ng pagkain. Pag-uwi sa gabi, uulitin ang prosesong ito at kailangang mag-match ang mga nakatalang dalang gamit at ang kulay at size ng mga suot na panty, bra, medyas at stockings. Sa prosesong ito, maraming pagkakataon na nakakaranas ng panghihipo o ibang porma ng pambabastos ang mga manggagawang kababaihan mula sa mga lalaking guwardiya. Subalit, gusto man nina Nanette at ng mga kasamahan niya na magsampa ng reklamo laban sa mga mapang-abusong guwardiyang lalaki, natakot sila na baka sila pa ang mawalan ng trabaho. Higit pa kasi ang ginagawa ng may-aring si David Chu sa mga salesladies na kaniyang natitipuhan. Hindi raw ito pumapayag na hindi makipagtalik sa kanya ang babaeng saleslady na nagugustuhan niya. Kapag pumalag, tinatangal kaagad sa trabaho. May mga salesladies na pumapayag na rin maging kabit ng may-aring si Chu kapalit ang promosyon sa trabaho. Sa katunayan, isa sa mga naging matalik na kaibigan ni Nanette ay ibinahay at naging kabit ni Chu.

Dahil sa hindi makatarungan at hindi maka-babaeng kalagayan sa paggawa sa Masagana, pinag-uusapan na rin sa loob ng telemart ang pag-uunyon. Dala na rin ito ng malawakang pagtatayo noon ng mga unyon sa iba't ibang pabrika at tindahan. Subalit dahil sa hindi pa hinog ang kamalayan ng mga manggagawa at dala ng takot na mawalan ng trabaho, hindi rin

nagtagumpay na maitayo ang unyon. Samantalang si Nanette naman ay abala sa pag-iipon para sa diplomang inaasam-asam.

Sa labas ng Masagana, hindi mapatid ang mga kilos-protesta ng mga sukol na sa panunungkulan ni Marcos at gusto na siyang patalsikin. Nang binaril si Senador Ninoy Aquino sa Manila International Airport noong 1983, lalong nagiiyab ang dati nang nag-aapoy na pakikibaka ng mga mamamayan. Maging ang damdamin ni Nanette ay naantig. Sa pakikiramay ng buong sambayanan, si Nanette ay isa sa milyun-milyong bumisita sa burol ng yumaong senador na mas kilala niya bilang mukha ng oposisyon. Mula noon, sinubaybayan na ni Nanette ang mga pangyayari sa bansa. Para kay Nanette, ang pagpaslang sa Senador at ang mga bangkay na nakita niya sa daan ay mga patunay na patindi nang patindi ang represyong pulitikal sa bansa. Wari ni Nanette, hindi inalintana ng diktador na si Marcos ang libu-libong nagpoprotesta laban sa kanya kaya lalong natakot si Nanette sa maaaring mangyari noong panahong iyon.

Nang sapat na ang ipon ni Nanette para sa kanyang pag-aaral, ipinaalam ni Nanette sa may-ari ng Masagana na siya'y may intensiyong mag-aral ng Kolehiyo. Ninais sana niyang maipagpatuloy ang pagtatrabaho sa Masagana habang nag-aaral pero hindi pumayag si Chu. Dahil dito, napilitang mag-resign si Nanette at tuluyan nang iwanan ang Masagana Telemart. Sa limang taon niyang pagtatrabaho sa nasabing telemart, wala man lang siyang nakuhang anumang benepisyo tulad ng separation pay.

Hindi man lang sinuklian ni David Chu ang complete attendance ko sa loob ng limang taong pagtatrabaho.

Muli, naghanap ng mapapasukang trabaho si Nanette upang madagdagan ang kaniyang ipon. Naging ambulant vendor siya ng electric shaver sa Maynila. Dahil malakas ang PR (public relations) at may talento sa pagkumbinsi sa mga tao, mahigit sampu ang kanyang naibibenta sa isang araw. Minsan ay umaabot pa ito sa 20 kaya naman naipon nya kaagad ang perang pangdagdag sa kanyang pag-aaral.

Noong 1986, nag-enrol si Nanette sa Lyceum of the Philippines, sa kursong Junior Secretarial. Subalit hindi rin niya natapos ang semestre sapagkat sa loob ng Lyceum, ang mga kapwa niya estudyante, kasama ang kanyang mga guro, ay sumama na sa mga kilos- protesta sa labas ng paaralan. Parang bulkang sasabog, ang mga mamamayan sa lahat ng sulok ng bansa

ay sumisigaw na ng "Sobra na! Tama na! Palitan Na!" maliban kay Nanette na sobrang nalungkot dahil nasayang lamang ang ipon at pinaghirapang pangmatrikula.

Sa mga lansangan ng Kamaynilaan, dumanak ang dugo dahil sa bayolenteng dispersal at pagpaslang sa mga lider-aktibista. Ngunit sa halip na panghinaan ng loob, lalong tumatag at humilab ang sugat ng taong bayan. Taong 1986, tuluyan na ngang napatalsik si Marcos ng nagkakaisang mamamayan at nailagay sa puwesto si Pangulong Corazon Aquino, ang biyuda ng yumaong Senador na si Ninoy, sa makasaysayang EDSA 1. Pansamantalang nagkaroon ng bagong pag-asa ang mamamayan subalit matutunghayan sa mga sumunod na pangyayari sa bansa ang pagkawasak ng bagong pag-asa at pangarap ng mga lumahok sa EDSA 1.

Sa panahon ring ito, tinugunan ng mga makabayang kilusan ang pagsusuri sa feminisasyon ng paggawa. Kasabay ng tumitinding krisis pang-ekonomiya na dulot ng kapitalismo sa Pilipinas at sa buong mundo ay ang tumitinding pang-aapi sa kababaihang lalo pang dumagsa bilang miyembro ng puwersa ng paggawa ng mga kapitalista sa bansa. Samakatuwid, dalawa o doble ang represyong nararanasan ng kababaihan dahil sa magkakambal na sistema ng kapitalismo at patriarkiya. Pangunahing nabuo bilang organisasyon ng masang kababaihan ang GABRIELA:

Noong Oktubre 28, 1983, idinaos ang martsa't rali na dinaluhan ng 9,000 kababaihan upang tutulan ang mga paglabag sa karapatang pantao at ang mga pang-aabusong militar. Buong tapang na idiniklara ng mga kababaihang militante ang araw na ito bilang Araw ng Protesta ng mga Kababaihan. Sa sumunod na taon, binuo ng mga kababaihang kalahok sa kilos protesta ang GABRIELA (General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action) bilang pambansang koalisyon ng kababaihang lumalaban sa diktadurang Marcos. (Center for Women's Resources 2002: 63)

Matutunghayan natin sa buhay ni Nanette ang naging papel ng GABRIELA sa paghubog ng kanyang kamulatan.

MATAAT MIKROSKOPYO: FILIPINAS MICROCIRCUIT INC. / FAR EAST ASSEMBLY CORPORATION

Sa pagdating ng makabagong teknolohiya sa mga bansang First World, sabay din nitong nalusaw ang malalaking industriya ng garments sa mga bansang Third World. Pinalitan ng mga makinang de-kuryente ang ilang milyong kamay na gumagawa ng mga damit. Sa Pilipinas, libu-libong kababaihan ang nawalan ng trabaho. Sa panahong ito, tumaas ang demand para sa makabagong teknolohiya sa pandaigdigang merkado kung kaya't lumaki nang lumaki ang industriya ng electronics sa mga export-oriented na bansa tulad ng Pilipinas (Eviota 2002):

The establishment of the electronics industry in the Philippines was part of a world-wide movement by electronics companies in the West to cut down on labour costs. For the industry, the world is one global assembly line where, by means of job fragmentation, labour-surplus economies perform the labour intensive operations in production. (Eviota 2002: 119)

Karamihan sa mga manggagawa sa mga assembly line ng industriya ng electronics ay mga kababaihan kaya't nakahanap kaagad si Nanette ng mapapasukang trabaho. Sa katunayan, mas gusto ng mga pabrika at pagawaan na babae ang iempleyo dahil diumano sa paniniwala na "mas mahaba ang pasensiya" at "mas masunurin" ang babae kaysa lalaki:

Women are recruited because, it is argued, they are best suited to the work: the work is extremely painstaking, demands patience and needs much dexterity. It consists of slicing silicon wafers which are two to four inches in diameter into 500 separate chips of 25 sq mm and bonding these chips with as many as 50 gold wires, the size of a strand of human hair, to circuit boards. (Eviota 1993: 93)

Workers use a high-powered microscope and must work at top speed because individual quotas run as high as 800 chips per worker per day (Eviota 1993: 94).

Ang mga qualifications na hinihingi nila ay dapat 18-25 years old, hayskul, gradweyt at ang pinakamahalaga sa lahat ay yung pleasing personality.

Sabi ng kaibigan ko pag nag-apply ako, magpa-charming ako. Dapat mukha raw akong mabait at magaling sumunod.

Taong 1988 nang magsimula siyang magtrabaho bilang assembly line worker sa Filipinas Microcircuit Incorporated (FMCI) na pagmamay-ari ng mga Martel, kamag-anak ng dating Unang Ginang Imelda Marcos. Mahirap, delikado at kumplikado ang trabaho sa industriya ng electronics. Sa departamento at linya ni Nanette na tinawag na high pot/tin pot line, ang ginagawa niya ay final testing ng piyesa kung saan ilulubog sa mala-tubig at mainit na kemikal na lead ang mga gahiblang wires para masuri ang kalidad nito. Mabilis namang natutunan ni Nanette ang gawaing ito kaya nalalagpasan pa niya ang quota na 100 wires kada oras. Ayon kay Nanette, huwag raw maliitin ang mga gold wires na ito dahil ito ang nagpapakatko ng mga computers.

Minsan dinapuan ako ng antok, muntik nang malubog ang aking daliri sa kumukulong kemikal na lead kaya kailangang sobrang ingat at palaging alerto sa paggawa nito. Nakakaawa ang mga panggabi kasi maraming oras, aantukin ka talaga.

Bagamat may maskarang ginagamit, hindi pa rin ligtas sina Nanette sa masangang na amoy ng kemikal na lead na nalalanghap nila nang mahigit sa walong oras sa isang araw. Ang ibang kasamahan naman niya sa linya ay nagkaroon ng pulmonary diseases dahil sa paglanghap ng lead pero sila pa ang gumagastos sa pagpapagamot sa kanilang mga sakit.

Nang tanungin si Nanette kung ano ang pinakamahirap na trabaho sa pabrika ng electronics na pinasukan, ang sagot niya ay ang pagtuhog ng gahiblang wire sa isa pang circuit na gamit ang microscope.

Sabi ng mga kasamahan ko na nakapwesto sa pagtutuhog, nakakahilo at masakit sa mata ang tumingin sa microscope sa loob ng 12 oras.

Sa kwento ni Nanette, nang mapag-alaman ng gobyernong Aquino na ang FMCI ay bahagi ng mga ari-arian ng pamilyang Marcos at ang perang pinuhunan dito ay mula sa pera ng gobyerno, nanganib ito na ma-sequester. Upang maiwasan ito, nagtayo ang management ng bagong kumpanya, FAR EAST ASSEMBLY CORP. (FEAC), at inilipat ang factory sa ilalim ng ibang pangalan bilang may-ari.

Dahil dito, maraming manggagawa ang nawalan ng trabaho pero may mangilan-ngilan na mahuhusay ang performance, kabilang na si Nanette, na nakuhang muli sa FEAC. Subalit hindi lubusang natuwa ang mga manggagawang naipagpatuloy ang kanilang trabaho dahil ipinagpilitan ng management na iba ang FMCI sa FEAC kaya winalang bahala nito ang ilang taon nilang paninilbihan sa FMCI. Ipinagkait sa mga manggagawa ang kanilang seniority rights at security of tenure.

Walang pinagkaiba ang trabaho ni Nanette sa FEAC. Naka-assign pa rin siya sa linyang high pot/tin pot line ngunit mas mahaba ang oras ng paggawa dito dahil sa tumataas na demand ng mga piyesa ng computer sa world market. Sa halip na walong oras na pagtatrabaho, madalas umaabot ito ng 12 oras hindi pa kasama ang overtime. May mga oras din na sa panggaging shift (10 p.m – 6 a.m.) siya napupunta.

Bukod sa mga sitwasyong ito, pyudal at patriarkal rin ang kultura sa FEAC. Bagama't 80% ng 4,800 na manggagawa ay kababaihan, ang mga nasa mataataas na posisyon tulad ng supervisory at pamunuan ng linya ay napupunta sa mga lalaki.

Gusto ng management mga lalaki at mukhang lalaki ang supervisors at line leaders para madali daw mapasunod ang mga babae.

Ang mga line leaders naman ay mga lesbiana dahil sa mga *masculine qualities* ng mga ito. Kadalasan, dahil na rin sa kapangyarihang hawak ng mga supervisors o mga bisor, sinasamantala nila ang mga natitipuhang manggagawang babae ("lay down or lay off"). Kapag pumalag ang babae, maaring manganib ang kanyang trabaho. Hindi rin kaila na dalawa hanggang sa tallo ang syotang manggagawang babae ng mga bisor at line leaders kahit pa may mga asawa ang ilan dito.

Dala ng kahirapan sa buhay, may mga kasamahan rin ako na walang choice kundi mag pa puta sa mga bisor at line leaders para ma-promote lang at tumaas naman ang sahod kahit kaunti.

Kung meron namang okasyon tulad noong b-day ng isang kasamahan ko, lumapit ang bisor sa kanya at bigla na lang siyang hinalikan, hindi lang halik na beso beso, malapot na halik, habang naghahalakhakan at nagbibiruan. Sa una, magugulat ang hinalikan pero masasanay na rin yun. Ganoon talaga sa loob.

Madalas ding mag-"green jokes" ang mga bisor para magising ang mga manggagawa sa nakakaantok na gawain.

Mga kabastusan talaga at siyempre pa anti-women ang mga jokes pero noon nakikitawa na lang 'ako para magsurvive. Tuwing breaktime, nagkalat ang mga playboy at bastos na magazine para magising raw ang diwa namin at lalo pa kaming sipagin sabi ng mga bisor.

Pyudal at patriyarkal hindi lamang ang kultura sa pagawaan kundi pati ang kultura sa loob ng tahanan ni Nanette. Hindi maiwawaglit sa kanyang isipan ang alaala ng kanyang ina na tinanggap na lamang ang pananakit ng kanyang ama bilang guhit ng kapalaran.

Sa pagbuo ni Nanette ng sariling relasyon at pamilya, matutunghayan ang matinding impluwensiya ng kanyang nakagisnang kultura. Nang nagkaroon si Nanette ng unang kasintahan, martir niyang tinanggap ang lahat ng pananakit, pambubugbog at pagtatangka sa kanyang buhay ng kasintahang napakaseloso.

Madalas ang Unyon magpulong noon kasi marami nga kaming isyu. Kapag hindi ako nakakapuntang Cavite para magkita kami, grabe ang galit niya. Ang pinaka sukduhan sa mga ginawa niya ay noong sinunog niya ang kuwarto niya habang nag-aaway kami sa loob. Buti na lang nakalabas ako kundi, patay na ako ngayon.

May banta pa siya "kung di kita mapapakinabangan, di ka papakinabangan ng iba!"

Sa kabila ng pananakit ng kasintahan, hindi pa rin nakipagkalas si Nanette sa relasyon nila. Tumimo sa kanyang isip ang mga sinabi ng ama.

Sabi kasi ng tatay ko noon, ang babae raw na matino, kung sino ang unang kasintahan yun, ang nakakatuluyan. Hindi palipat-lipat ng syota.

Subalit may hangganan rin ang lahat ng kanyang paghihirap at pagtitiiis. Nang malaman niyang nambabae ang kasintahan, hindi na siya nagdalawang isip na iwanan ito. Bumalik sa kanyang alaala ang mga sinapit ng ina sa ama dahil sa masamang bisyo nito. Sumumpa siya sa sarili niya na hindi siya magagaya sa ina.

TAKONG NANAGING KAMAO

Sa ilalim ng bandila ng KMU, naitayo ang Far East Assembly Employees Union-Association of Democratic Labor Organization (FEAEU-ADLO). Bagamat mga lalaki ang naging unang miyembro at naging aktibo dito, di maikakaila na ang suporta ng kalakhan ng populasyon na binubuo ng kababaihang manggagawa ang siyang nagpapanalo ng mga hinaing nila para sa karampatang sahod at benepisyo sa loob ng pabrika. Bilang tagapagsulong ng progresibong unyonismo, kailangang kilalanin ang papel ng mga kababaihan sa pakikibaka ng mga manggagawa. Bunga nito, naging isang rekisito sa Kilusang Mayo Uno-Trade Union organizing na magtayo ng Women's Desk.

Sa pagpili ng hihirangang pinuno ng Women's Desk, hindi na nahirapan ang mga organizers ng Unyon. Si Nanette ang napili ng karamihang babae o lalaking manggagawa man. Sa linya nila, nakilala si Nanette bilang tagapagtanggol ng mga kasamahang manggagawa. Kapag may mga reklamo o kaya'y lumiban, si Nanette ang pinapasulat sa FEAC Management para ipahayag ang reklamo o maipaliwanag ang pagliban ng manggagawa. Dahil sa mayamang karanasan sa pagtrabaho sa iba't ibang tindahan at pabrika, madali din niyang nasuri ang hindi maka-manggagawang iskema sa loob ng pabrika at ang panggigipit sa kanila ng FEAC Management.

Sa buong buhay ni Nanette, hindi pa siya tumanggi sa responsibilidad. Katulad ng pagtanggap niya sa responsibilidad na alagaan ang mga kapatid niya, hindi tinanggihan ni Nanette ang pagkapili sa kanya bilang lider ng Women's Desk. Sa umpisa, nag-aral muna siya at kumuha ng Batayang Kurso ng Militante, Progresibo at Makabayang Unyonismo at Batayang Kurso ng Kalagayan at Pakikibaka ng mga Kababaihan.

Naging mabunga naman ang kanyang pagiging pangulo ng Women's Desk. Libu-libong kababaihang manggagawa ang na-recruit niyang mag-miyembro sa FEAEU-ADLO. Subalit animo'y dumaan sa butas ng karayom si Nanette para lamang ma-isama ang mga kababaihan sa Unyon. Ayon kay Nanette, mahirap ang naging karanasan niya sa pag-oorganisa ng mga kababaihang manggagawa dahil tali sila sa papel ng reproduksiyon sa loob ng bahay.

Kadalasan, wala na silang oras sa mga pulong pagkatapos ng trabaho dahil kailangan na nilang umuwi para gumampan ng mga gawaing bahay. Pinupuntahan na lang namin sa bahay at doon kami magpapaliwanag habang naghuhugas ng pinggan, nagluluto at naglalaba.

Mainam pa na tulungan mo na sila sa mga gawaing bahay para matapos nang maaga at makapag-usap pa nang masinsinan kahit kaunting oras na lamang ang natitira.

Sa mga panahon ng pagsasaya o gimikan tulad ng outing at disco, kailangan makisalamuha rin sina Nanette sa mga manggagawa para mapalapit sa kanila. Kapag nabigyan ng pagkakataon, doon nila isisingit ang kanilang pakay na ilatag ang pagmimiyembro sa Unyon.

Noranian ako hindi ako Vilmanian pero kailangang sumama ako sa kanila sa studio sa araw ng mga fans ni Vilma. Siyempre nakipagsigawan na rin ako ng "I love you Vilma". Ok lang yun kasi pagkatapos, mag-uusap naman kami tungkol sa pag-uunyon.

Tulad nga ng nabanggit kanina, nagbunga ang pag-oorganisa ng 4000 bagong miyembro ng mga manggagawa na karamihan ay mga kababaihan. Dahil sa konsolidado at sama-samang pagkilos ng FEAEU-ADLO, marami silang naipanalong laban:

1. taunang pagtaas ng sahod ng mga manggagawa
2. overtime pay (mula sa fixed na Php 50.00 kahit ilang oras ang over time, nakamit nila ang nakasaad sa labor code na 125% dagdag sa o.t. at 175% na dagdag sa nightshifts)
3. naigiit din nila na di na kasama ang buntis sa mga ia-assign sa night shift
4. sineguro din nila na pagkatapos ng 6 mos, kailangang ma-regular ang mga manggagawa

Lumahok din sila sa mga malakihang pagkilos tulad ng paggunita sa anibersaryo ng EDSA at mobilisasyon para tuligsain ang mga patakaran ng IMF na ipinapatupad ng dating Presidente Aquino. Isinigaw din nila ang Php 30.00 dagdag na sahod na nabiyayaan naman ng Php 25.00 mula sa Kongreso. Sa welgang bayan noong 1990, kalahok sila sa laban para sa panibagong pagtataas ng presyo ng langis. Kabahagi ang mga opisyal at

miyembro ng FEAEU-ADLO sa 330,000 na manggagagawa na nagmartsa sa araw na iyon.

Patuloy ding iginiit ng FEAEU-ADLO ang ipinagkait sa kanilang seniority rights at security of tenure nang lumipat ito ng pabrika. Sa isyung ito, ipinagpilitan pa rin ng Management na ang FMC ay ibang kumpanya sa FEAC. Dahil sa hindi pagkakasundo ng Management ng FEAC at ng FEAEU-ADLO, nanawagan ang huli ng sabay sabay na noise barrage tuwing break time hanggang sa humantong ito sa welga. Naging markado ang partisipasyon ni Nanette sa mga pagkilos na ito.

Bunga ng mahusay na pamumuno at organisadong pagkilos, napilitan ang Management na pumirma sa isang Memorandum of Agreement kung saan kinilala nila ang katotohanan na ang FMCI at FEAC ay iisa. Isang malaking tagumpay ang pagkilala ng Management ng seniority rights at security of tenure ng mga manggagawa sa naunang pabrika.

Subalit nagulantang sila sa mga sumunod na hakbang ng Management. Nagdeklara itong papa-lugi ang kumpanya at nagbantang magsasara. Ayon sa masusing pag-imbetiga ng FEAEU-ADLO, gamit ang ibang pangalan, nagtayo ito ng panibagong pabrika sa Magallanes para muling kumuha ng mura at hindi-organisadong lakas paggawa. Mabilis namang umaksyon ang FEAEU-ADLO at nagwelga hindi lamang sa FEAC kundi sa First Magnetic Circuit Corporation (FMCC), ang bagong bihis na pabrika.

Ang mga manggagawa na hindi miyembro ng FEAEU-ADLO ang kinuhang muli sa FMCC samantalang ang mga miyembro at opisyal na ay sinuhulan ng malalaking halaga ng separation pay. Dahil sa panggigipit, napilitan ang ilang manggagawa na i-surrender na ang kanilang mga ids at kunin na lamang ang separation pay. Samantalang nanindigan naman ang ilang manggagawa, opisyal at mga miyembro ng FEAEU-ADLO, kabilang si Nanette, na noo'y Bise Presidente ng Unyon, na aktibong lumahok sa itinayong welga. Sa FEAC, nagtayo sila ng picket line ng humigit kumulang 80 manggagawa habang sa FMCC, 100-150 unyonista ang nagwelga sa mismong gate nito. Karamihan sa mga sumama sa welga ay mga kababaihan at lesbyana.

Sa loob ng isang Linggo, umulan man o umaraw, hindi iniwan ni Nanette at ng kanyang mga kasamahan sa FEAEU-ADLO ang picket line. Hinarang

nila ang mga pumapasok na bus lulan ang mga manggagawa ng FMCC at maging ang mga trucks na naghahalid ng mga materyales. Itinumba rin nila ang isang poste ng Meralco para iharang sa gate. Walang takot nilang hinarap ang mga security agents na marahas silang pinapalayas.

Pinagbantaan din ang buhay ko. Ipapadukot raw ako kasi ako nga ang namuno ng welga. Nakakatakot din pero tuloy pa rin ang welga. Hindi ako naglalakad mag-isa. May mga kasama ako lagi.

Sa kabila ng pwersahang pagpapalayas sa kanila na nagdulot ng mga pasa at sugat sa kanilang katawan at sa kabila ng pagbabanta sa buhay ni Nanette, hindi sila nagpatinag at ipinagpatuloy pa rin ang welga. Dahil dito, nagpatawag ang Management ng mahigit 200 na mga security agents para sila ay i-disperse at tuluyan na ngang nabuwag ang kanilang picket line. Kinasuhan din ng FMCC sina Nanet at mga opisyal ng FEAEU-ADLO ng paninira ng gamit at pagkalugi.

Ipinagpatuloy nila ang welga sa pabrika ng FEAC kahit nabawasan na ang kanilang hanay. Sa picket line, patuloy nilang idinaos ang mga pag-aaral tungkol sa kalagayan ng mga manggagawa at ng lipunan. Sama-sama nilang tiniis ang gutom at pagod sa loob ng dalawang buwan. Subalit sa pangalawang pagkakataon, binuwag muli ang kanilang picket line. Laking gulat din nila nang mabalitaan na nasunog ang FEAC. Ayon sa pananaliksik nina Nanette, sadyang sinunog ang FEAC upang maka-claim ng insurance ang may-ari.

Wala mang nakuhang hustisya mula sa bagong bihis na FEAC, hindi matatawaran ang naging bunga ng kanilang tuloy-tuloy na pagkilos. Nagbigay-daan ito sa pag-papanday ng kanilang pampulitikang kamalayan na nagluwal ng 27 manggagawa na nag-full time organizer. Kabilang na dito si Nanette na naglaan ng buhay para organisahin ang iba pang manggagawa sa iba't ibang pabrika sa bansa.

BUHAY "FULL TIME"

Sa pagpasok sa panibagong yugto ng kanyang buhay, ang pagiging isang "full-time trade union organizer", malaki ang nabago kay Nanette. Kung noon, may sweldo siyang tinatanggap, ngayon, allowance na lamang para sa kanyang pagkain at pamasahe.

Kahit hindi siya financially rewarding, masaya ako sa naging buhay ko kasi masaya ako sa ginagawa ko.

Hindi kami napapagod kahahanap ng mga manggagawang oorganisahin sa pabrika.

Sa bawat pabrikang pinupuntahan namin, kapag nakapagtayo kami ng Unyon at nakapag-organisa ng maraming manggagawa, para na rin kaming sumweldo ng malaki. Hindi nga lang pera (tawa).

Si Nanette, kasama ang ilan pang mga kababaihang manggagawa sa Kilusang Manggagawang Kababaihan – GABRIELA ay naglaan ng kanilang buhay at panahon sa pag-oorganisa ng mga manggagawang kababaihan sa Shoemart, CDO, Mode International, LAWS Textile, Tri-Star, Filmosa, Century Canning Inc. at Triumph.

Kapag wala pa silang Unyon, tutulungan namin sa pagtatayo ng Unyon na may women's committee. Pag meron na, tutulong kami sa pagkonsolida ng women's committee kasi madalas ang Unyon nila ay Unyon ng mga lalaki. Kapag Unyon ng Management, susubukang kausapin pero kadalasan malabo, hindi nila kami tatanggapin lalo na't alam nila na galing kaming KMU o Gabriela.

Binuo din nila ang Koalisyon Laban sa Kontraktualisasyon (KLK) dahil sa dumadaming bilang ng mga kontraktual sa mga pabrika at malls. Nagkaroon sila ng malawakang petition signing laban sa paglaganap ng kontraktualisasyon. Ipinanganak din ang "Strengthening the Security of Tenure Act" sa tulong ng Gabriela Women's Party bilang critique sa Department Order 18-02 ng Department of Labor and Employment:

Sa pamamagitan ng DO 18-02, ang sistemang kontraktualisasyon at sub-kontraktualisasyon ay isang pangkaraniwan, regular, laganap at ligal na kaayusan sa paggawa. Layunin ng gobyemong Arroyo na ikutan o pawalang bisa ang karapatan ng mga manggagawa sa seguridad sa paggawa. (*Koalisyon laban sa Kontraktualisasyon 2002*)

Sa halip na regular na manggagawa ang kanilang kukunin, contractual o temporaryong mga manggagawa na walang anumang benepisyo, mababa ang sahod at walang kaseguruhan sa trabaho.

Sumunod sa kanilang inorganisa ay ang mga "homeworkers" o "subcontractual workers" sa mga komunidad. Sa mga tinanggal namang manggagawa sa pabrika o natapos na ang kanilang kontrata, itinayo nina Nanette ang Gabriela Silang Displaced Workers' Center para magbigay ng serbisyong legal at mga alternatibong mapagkakakitaan sa panahong wala pang makitang mapapasukang trabaho ang mga kababaihan. Patuloy din ang mga diskusyon tungkol sa pagsusuri sa ekonomiya ng bansa, mga patakaran ng globalisasyon at ang patutunguhan nilang mga manggagawa sa ganitong kalagayan.

Sa kalaunan, hindi na lamang pag-oorganisa ng mga kontraktuwal o homeworkers ang naging papel ni Nanette kundi maging sa ibang isyung pangkababaihan tulad ng domestic violence, sex trafficking, prostitution atbp. Lumalahok rin siya sa mga kampanya laban dito. Sa mga biktima ng domestic violence, ibinabahagi rin ni Nanette ang sariling karanasan sa dating kasintahan at kung paano siya umalpas sa sitwasyong ito.

Tuloy-tuloy rin ang pagdalo ni Nanette sa mga kampanya tulad ng March 8 Women March at iba pang selebrasyon, pagsasabatas ng Sexual Harassment Act of 1995, pagsulong sa apat na buwang maternity leave, at maging ang mga isyu ng iba pang batayang sektor ng lipunan tulad ng kampanya para sa tunay na reporma sa lupa ng mga magsasaka, mataas na subsidyo sa batayang serbisyong panlipunan, trabaho at pabahay ng mga maralitang taga lungsod, at pagkumenda sa mga pagpatay sa mga aktibista at iba pang paglabag sa karapatang pantao. Naging aktibo din si Nanette sampu ng kanyang mga kasamahan sa pagpapalayas sa mga Base Militar ng US dito sa ating bansa. Sa ngayon, kalahok din si Nanette sa kampanyang ibasura ang Visiting Forces Agreement at bigyan ng hustisiya ang panggagahasa ng anim na Amerikanong sundalo sa isang babae noong nakaraang Nobyembre 2005.

May mga International na mga pagpupulong, kumperensiya at martsa na rin siyang nadaluhan tulad ng mga sumusunod:

1. Women Worker's Unite, (pagbabahagi ng karanasan sa pag-uunyon ng mga kababaihang manggawa) sa Australia
2. Kumperensiya tungkol sa isyu ng mga comfort women at kumperensiya tungkol sa mga kababaihang manggawa sa Japan

3. International mobilization opposing the Beijing Conference of Women in 1995 sa Tsina
4. The Church and Asian Women Workers on the Impact of Industrial Restructuring of IMF WB Policy sa Thailand
5. International Women's Day March Against Poverty sa Europa

BAYAN AT PAMILYA

Sa isang mamahaling restoran sa Timog, nag-strike ang mga manggagawa dahil sa di makatarungang sahod. Humingi ang mga manggagawa ng tulong mula sa KMU at GABRIELA. Ipinadala si Nanette ng GABRIELA para tumulong sa pag-oorganisa sa mga manggagawa. Dito niya nakilala si Danilo Tampico, isa sa mga nag-strike na manggagawa. Nagpahayag ng pagkagusto si Danilo kay Nanette subalit hindi niya ito pinansin. Sa halip na panghinaan ng loob si Danilo, patuloy pa rin siyang linigawan nito.

Siguro humanga siya sa akin dahil nga matapang ako. Hindi niya akalain isang babae ang tutulong sa strike nila. Walang tigil... talagang napakasugid na manliligaw kaya nahulog na rin ang loob ko at sinagot ko na.

Pagkatapos ng dalawang taong pagiging magkasintahan, nagpasiya si Nanette at Danilo na magpakasal. Naging masaya naman ang kanilang pagsasama Ayon kay Nanette, dahil sa trauma sa nangyari sa ina at sa kanyang naging unang pag-ibig, siya ay naging sobrang matapang na asawa.

Minsan, pinipigilan ko ang sarili pag nag-aaway kami kasi nananakit ako. Para kasing ayaw kong maunahan ako ng asawa ko kahit hindi naman siya nananakit. Siguro nga may trauma pa ako kaya kailangan kong magpa-counsel.

Hindi rin siya nagpapatali sa gawaing bahay at pinaghahatian nilang mag-asawa ang lahat ng gawain maging ang pag-aalaga sa kanilang kaisa-isang anak na si JM. Nauunawaan ng kanyang asawa ang bokasyon ni Nanette kaya siya ngayon ang nagtatrabaho para sa kanila.

Noon pa man sinabi ko na sa kanya, pag mag-asawa na tayo, huwag mo akong pipigilan sa gusto kong gawin. Nakilala mo ako bilang ganito, ganito

mo ako mahalín. Huwag mo akong papipiliin kung pamilya ba o trabaho kasi masasaktan ka lang, pipiliin ko ang trabaho ko.

Sa tulong ng mga kapatid, nakapundar na rin si Nanette ng sariling tirahan sa Mandaluyong kasama ang kanyang pamilya, magulang at dalawang kapatid. Hinati nila sa ilang kwarto ang bahay at ngayon nga'y magkakasama sila doon.

Ang paghahating ito ay hindi nangangahulugang dibisyon. Simbolikal itong maituturing na paghuhugpong ng saloobin ng sarili, pamilya at bayan, katulad ng pag-iisa ni Nanette at ng kilusang kinabibilangan. Napagtanto ni Nanette sa proseso ng kaniyang politisasyon na ang babae at ang bayan ay iisa. Sa talumpati ni Nanette bilang Deputy Secretary General ng GABRIELA sa 9th Women's International Solidarity Affair in the Philippines noong Agosto 21, 2004, sinabi niya:

We remain undaunted. We are women, oppressed and exploited. But we are not powerless. Our power remains in our determination to fight back, in our solidarity and in our commitment to our children and the future generations of women after us, that they shall not endure what we, and the generations before us, endured under imperialism and all its attendant evils.

Para kay Nanette, ang pagsilbi sa kapwa niya manggagawa, babae, at bayan, ay ang kanyang pangunahing misyon sa buhay. Hindi man daw siya nakapag-aral ng Kolehiyo sa isang Unibersidad, patuloy naman siyang nag-aaral sa Unibersidad ng buhay. Pinagtibay nito na hindi lamang sa apat na sulok ng silid aralan nakukuha ang dunong kundi sa pakikisalamuha sa batayang sekor ng lipunan. Sa pagtatapos ni Nanette, wika niya:

"Lahat tayo ay tinatawag para makisangkot at manawagan ng pagbabago para sa susunod na henerasyon...para sa JM ko at sa lahat ng mga bunso sa buong bayan, sa buong mundo."

Talaan:

- ¹ Istruktura ng lipunang Pilipino - ang iilang nakaririwasa ay nasa itaas ng tatsulok habang ang nakararaming uring anakpawis ay nasa huling bahagdan ng tatsulok
- ² Noong huling bahagi ng 1880s sa unang araw ng Mayo sa Chicago, USA, naipanalò ng mga manggagawa ang 8 oras na paggawa mula sa 10 – 16 oras sa pamamagitan ng pangkalahatang welga.

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COOPERATIVE ORGANIZING: Empowering Administrative Workers

Case Studies of Successful Coops in Academic Units of the University of the Philippines

Leah B. Angeles
Samuel L. Genita, Jr.

"You can actually do better for yourself by being cooperative and altruistic than by selfishly refusing to cooperate with others. It's not that you do as well. You actually do better."

- Helena Cronin
London School of Economics

Introduction

As an academic institution, the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) recognizes the potential of women and men alike in social transformation through participation and empowerment. Its programs are designed to develop students into effective social practitioners so that they will be able to assist the workers, peasants, indigenous people, children, women and other marginalized sectors of the society.

Consistent with the mission of the college, the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO), a non-teaching academic unit of CSWCD provides research, training, publication and extension services to various groups, such as, community leaders, social development practitioners, government employees, members of the academe, among others.

In line with this function, REDO also examines and supports initiatives for improving the welfare of the university office employees and field workers.

Given the below poverty line salary of many administrative workers and even low-level REPS employed by the University of the Philippines, organizing employees' cooperatives (coops) is one of the alternative ways to augment UP employees' incomes.

In the University of the Philippines, Diliman campus, there exist three sectors serving the studentry according to the position classification of employees namely:

Academic Teaching Sector or the Faculty	1,460
Academic Non-Teaching Sector or the Research, Extension and Professional Staff (REPS) (as of 2003)	499
Administrative Sector	1796

Source: A Study on the Functions of Research and Extension Staff and Perceptions and of REPS in UP Diliman (Tojos, 2004)

The largest and the most marginalized of all the sectors, the administrative workers, consist mainly of utility workers, drivers, clerks, mason, administrative officers, air condition technicians, student evaluation officers, among others. Their monthly salaries range from Php 6,050.00 – 18,830.00 with actual take home pay ranging from Php 200.00 to 1,000.00 per week. This could be attributed to a number of deductions from loans incurred to meet the educational expenses of their children, health care/ medical expenses, and importantly the daily subsistence needs of their families.

With this condition, the administrative staff of some of the academic units of the university organized themselves into cooperatives. The workers' cooperatives organized are businesses in which the workers are all equal owners and have democratic control of decisions. It is a closed-type or institutional based cooperative predominantly composed of employees of a particular college or unit of the university. Aside from its beneficial economic base that welds the workers together, it becomes a potential and an innovative way to serve the university constituents, as well.

To date, there are a number of existing college-based cooperatives in the university such as: (1) College of Business Administration; (2) School of Economics; (3) College of Education; (4) College of Home Economics; (5) College of Human Kinetics; (6) College of Mass Communication; (7) Col-

lege of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP); (8) College of Social Work and Community Development; and the (9) University Library.

Noteworthy to mention are the other cooperatives in the campus that benefit the university-wide constituents namely: UP Consumers' Cooperative, UP Credit Union Cooperative, and the UP Employees Housing Cooperative.

This study focuses on how cooperative organizing contributed to the empowerment of the REPS and administrative workers in two (2) unit-based cooperatives, namely: the U.P. College of Business Administration Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. (UPCBA-MPCI) and the UP School of Economics Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. (UPSEEMC). These two were chosen as they are some of the most successful cooperatives in the university because they have attained stable growth and are in the process of expansion and diversification. However, the good practices of those who are still in the infancy stage, or in the process of setting up or testing systems and procedures, organizational assessment, planning and strengthening were likewise gathered.

A Brief Background of Cooperatives in the Philippines

As part of the effort of the government to strengthen the development of cooperatives in all sectors of the economy, the 1987 Constitution mandated that "Congress shall create an agency to promote the viability of cooperatives as an instrument of social justice and economic development."¹ Subsequently, Republic Acts 6938 and 6939 were enacted by Congress on March 10, 1990 to ordain the Cooperative Code of the Philippines and create the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) respectively.

Cooperatives in the Philippines are defined as a duly registered associations of persons, with a common bond of interest, who have voluntarily joined together to achieve a lawful, common, social or economic end, making equitable contributions to the capital required and accepting a fair share of the risks and benefits of the undertaking in accordance with the universally accepted cooperatives principles.²

As provided in Article 23 of R.A. 6938, there are various types of cooperatives based on the primary functions or business activities engaged in by the cooperative. Among these are:

1. Credit cooperative – offers savings and mobilizes funds in order to grant loans for productive and providential purposes.
2. Consumers cooperative – provides or sells goods to consumer-members or non-members at reasonable prices.
3. Producers cooperative – engages in joint or collective production, whether agricultural or industrial.
4. Marketing cooperative – serves as intermediary of goods between production and end consumption.
5. Service cooperative – engages in providing its members basic services that are difficult for separate individuals to procure and/or engages in mobilizing the services or pooling the expertise of its members in order to provide services to other individuals, households, business outfits, etc.
6. Multipurpose cooperative – operates two or more types of business activities.

RA 6938 also provides that in terms of membership, cooperatives can be categorized into primary, secondary and tertiary cooperatives. In a primary cooperative, membership is on individual capacity who may come from several regions or provinces or from regional or national institutions. Secondary and tertiary cooperatives are those whose members are cooperatives and therefore juridical persons, not individuals.

In a study conducted by Jorge V. Sibal, entitled *Organizing Employee Cooperatives and Enterprises: A New Mechanism in Employee Benefits Management*³ he cited that "an employee cooperative is the most popular form of an employee enterprise." It belongs to the category of institutional cooperatives where membership is open to employees or members of the institution.

The organization of institutional cooperatives can be traced back in 1957 upon the enactment of the Philippine Non-agricultural Credit Act (RA No. 2023). Non-agricultural coops in electricity, banking, transportation and institutions (offices and factories) were first recognized.⁴

While employee or workers cooperative was cited by Sibal to be the most popular form of an employee enterprise, he likewise named other forms of employee enterprises such as the (1) employee savings and loan associations (ESLAs) or informal "*paluwagan*" which are registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas; (2) consumers' cooperatives which operate the employees' canteen or stores; (3) cooperative financing and other quasi-banking operations for the group purchases of appliances, equipment, motor vehicles, etc. (4) cooperative housing, and (5) cooperative health and medical insurance.

In a labor conference in 1992, the participants who were composed of representatives from the member affiliates of the Labor Caucus on Alternative Development (LCAD), drafted "vision" documents which the government administration may refer to see how collected wisdom of organized labor can offer solutions to the country's nagging problems such as debt, mass poverty, labor empowerment, democracy, among others. One of the guiding principles it has cited towards the realization of their crafted constitutional vision was the general empowerment of the workers, that is, "Unions must be encouraged to put up cooperatives whenever conditions are favorable. This is another venue for them to practice collective decision-making for their mutual benefit."⁵

Organizing institutional cooperatives can be very rewarding to the employees because they can enjoy the privileges of cooperatives like (1) exemptions from all taxes in national, city, provincial or barangays within 10 years after registration with the CDA or prior to attaining accumulated reserves of Php10 million; (2) the free use of available space for coops organized among government employees; and (3) the entitlement to loans, credit lines, rediscounting, etc. with the Land Bank of the Philippines, Development Bank of the Philippines, Philippine National Bank and other government and private financial institutions (Article 63, R.A. 6938).⁶

Further, according to Sibal⁷, institutional coops have higher chances of success because of the following factors:

1. Members know each other.
2. Institutional coops are usually assisted by management in many forms like check offs in salary deductions for collection of dues, savings and payment of loans, subsidized education and training, donation to capital build-up or counter part funds, free use of space, equipment and facilities, etc.
3. These coops may be assisted by NGOs, government agencies and other entities like the employees' unions.

In the University of the Philippines, a study entitled "The Perceived Benefits of UP Diliman Employees-Cooperative Members" was conducted by Silapan-Todas (2004) to gauge the capability of coop management in generating benefits for its members, thus, a major source of their satisfaction.

It came out with the following major findings:

1. Coop management must be improved in order for cooperative to succeed.
2. Membership participation in terms of amount of dividend and significance of lower prices of goods and/or interest rates on the satisfaction of members (factors for economic betterment of members) must be important input in coop's policies.
3. Activities/programs of coops should teach members the principles and values of cooperatives and in assessing their needs and problems.
4. Majority of the employee-members were satisfied with the benefits they were receiving as members of the coops and their expectations were generally satisfied.

Objectives and Methodology

This study examined the development and management of the workers' cooperatives in the College of Business Administration and School of Economics, and how it empowered its administrative staff, with the view of possible replication in other units and/or adoption of their good practices by struggling college-based cooperatives.

Specifically, this study:

1. looked into the history and management of two successful co-operatives existing in the academic units of the university namely the (1) U.P. College of Business Administration Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. (UPCBA-MPCI) and the (2) UP School of Economics Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperatives, Inc. (UPSEEMCI);
2. cross-examined their operation vis-a-vis their workloads and how the cooperatives help augment their need for livelihood and income generation;
3. determined the good practices of these two cooperatives and those that are existing in other academic units that led to the empowerment of its members towards possible replication in other units of the university.

A combination of data collection techniques was used for the case studies.

1. Review of records and materials particularly Annual Reports, Articles of Cooperation, Statements of Financial Condition, Minutes of Meetings and other pertinent documents;
2. Key Informants Interview using semi-structured questionnaires with the officers or members of the Board of Directors of the cooperatives;
3. Roundtable discussion with representatives of other college-based cooperatives.

Case Profile 1

**U.P. College of Business Administration Multi-Purpose
Cooperative, Inc.
(UPCBA-MPCI)**

In 1990, a group of faculty members of the College of Business Administration donated a considerable amount of Php 38,137.17 to serve as seed capital for any business venture

that the administrative staff would like to put up in order to augment their income. From here, it was suggested by a staff that they go into the establishment of a cooperative to formalize their endeavor.

Spearheaded by its Administrative Officer then, Teresita Gaza, and the staff of U.P. Business Research Foundation, the cooperative was formally registered to the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) on February 5, 1991 as the U.P. College of Business Administration Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. (UPCBA-MPCI). The Articles of Cooperation of the UPCBA-MPCI states that it was organized to increase their income and purchasing power, pool their resources by encouraging savings, and provide loans for provident and productive purposes, among others.

The members contributed Php50.00 each for their initial capital build up (CBU) to add to the donated fund of the faculty. The combined fund was used to purchase a photocopying machine.

During the first five years of operation, the cooperative thrived on volunteer efforts of its members in the area of setting up the business, coming up with systems and procedures, book keeping, accounting and other tasks.

To date, the cooperative has a total of 26 members. With this number of members, the basic organizational structure includes the General Assembly, the Board Members, Credit Committee, Inventory Committee and the Election Committee. The Board of Directors (BOD) is composed of five members (four females and one male) who meet monthly for their regular meeting. Owing to the flexibility of the basic organizational structure as prescribed by the Cooperative Code of the Philippines (RA 6938), a member of the BOD, Ms. Marlin Santiago, was appointed as the General Manager for Operations of the coop's business.

The success and sustainability of this cooperative was attributed to the entrepreneurial and managerial skills of the BOD chairperson cum manager of the cooperative. Prudent lending

policies or adherence to basic management policies such as credit limit, 50% repayment scheme before renewal of loan, and capability to pay based on take home pay are being implemented. On the other hand, the manager would attribute their success to the attitude of the members who comply with their obligations to pay, thus, having a very low delinquency rate for the lending services.

The General Assembly (GA) is held every year during the month of April. A 100% attendance is achieved because of the raffle prizes given to all the members present. The prizes range from television sets and other appliances to cash prizes not less than Php 1,100.00. This affair is being conducted after office hours and is graced by the presence of a number of university officials. A budget of Php 50,000.00 to Php 60,000.00 is allotted for the occasion that pervades in a festive mood. It also becomes a venue for fostering closer relationship among the workers/members.

In 2005, the coop distributed the Patronage Refund amounting to Php 327,351.82 among the members based on their capital share. Cash gifts of Php 5,000.00 per member and Christmas packs worth Php 1,500.00 were also given to the members. In addition, a death benefit of Php 20,000.00 is also provided to the family of a demised cooperative member.

The cooperative's business activities include: 1) photocopying services; 2) lending; 3) snack store; 4) school supplies; and 5) consigned books. In order to operate the business efficiently, the cooperative hired three full time staff who are paid regular wages and salaries. They are also provided with benefits such as Social Security System (SSS), Employees Compensation Commission (ECC), Philhealth and PAG-IBIG contributions.

As of 2005, the coop's current developments are: Cash in Bank of Php 558,554.61; Short Time Deposit of Php 1,003,226.67; Loan Receivables of Php 996,775.37; and Merchandise Inventory of Php 81,062.58; Total Property and Equipment of Php 2,593,021.47; and Net Surplus of Php 409,189.78.

Future plans of the coop include opening its membership to the faculty of the college as associate members. At present the cooperative has 26 members only. Initially, it started with 35 members. The diminishing number is due to the death or retirement of some workers/members who have not been replaced.

Case Profile 2
UP School of Economics Employees Multi-Purpose
Cooperative, Inc.
(UPSEEMC)

The organizing of the UP School of Economics Employees Multi-Purpose Cooperative, Inc. (UPSEEMC) started when the wave of cooperative formation was at its height in 1993. Some business-minded staff of the School of Economics made an oral and informal survey of those who were interested to join.

The UPSEEMC obtained its confirmation of registration with the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) on September 14, 1994 after several months of preparation. It was meant to add extra income for the staff. Collection of the initial contributions was easily facilitated by way of deducting it from their weekly salaries which was on cash payment then. Each member paid an initial contribution of Php 1,000.00.

The cooperative started with a photocopying business venture. Members who can share more that the initial contribution were asked to give additional shares to enable them to purchase a photocopying machine. Then, it ventured into a mini-snack store, lending business, school supplies, book binding and books consignment.

For the lending scheme, it has diversified loan packages such as: (1) petty cash loan of Php 5,000 at 4% interest payable in 5 months and renewable after four payments, (2) multi-purpose loan amounting to Php 5,000.00 to 20,000.00 at 10% interest payable in two years, renewable after 25% repayment. Other loans that may be granted include emergency, educational purposes and appliance loan.

Currently, the coop has 64 members composed of 33 regular members and 31 associate members. The regular members are administrative staff and REPS. Associate members are those who can exercise their rights and avail of all the privileges of the members but cannot vote or seek any elective position. They consist of regular members who have been delinquent in the payment of their accounts, resigned or retired from the university and friends or relatives recommended by good standing members. They also plan to open the associate membership to the faculty.

The UPSEEMC have organized the basic managerial bodies such as the General Assembly (GA), Board of Directors, Credit Committee, Audit/Inventory Committee, Election Committee, and the Education and Training Committee. In their 5-year strategic plan in 2004, the coop intended to expand their operations outside of the college so as to generate more profit. They formed the Business Committee to look into how they can expand and diversify its business operations.

The formation of the Business Committee was brought about by the declining income from the photocopying services due to the prevalent use of internet services by the students for their reading requirements. Also, there is limited opportunity for expanding their services in the School of Economics as they are not allowed to sell commodities that are being sold in the canteen operated by a private concessionaire.

To sustain the active participation and motivation of the members, activities like "Lakbay Aral" or trips to successful cooperatives in Batangas and Bulacan have been conducted instead of outing in beaches or resorts. General assemblies are held regularly. Educational inputs and testimonies of successful enterprises are the main features in the GA. Speakers from the CDA and other business institutions are invited on this occasion.

The cooperative also enjoys the support of the college. They are provided free of charge, three (3) spaces within the college for the two photocopying machines and the snack store.

Although BOD meetings are conducted during lunch breaks, they are also permitted to conduct emergency meeting during office hours.

As of 2005, the coops current developments are: Total Assets of Php 1,835,619.00; Total Share Capital of Php 660,500.00; Loan Receivables of Php 1,812,950.00; Total Deposit Liabilities of Php 170,856.45; and Total Net Surplus of Php 210,349.88.

At this point, UPSEEMC felt the need to do networking in terms of exchanging information and resources with other coops. They have generously assisted the cooperative in the College of Mass Communication in marketing film tickets. In fact, the BOD is processing the coop's affiliation with the National Confederation of Cooperatives (NATCCO). NATCCO is one of the biggest and strongest national federations of cooperatives in the country in terms of geographical reach, membership, financial capacity, and array of services. They hope to learn from other cooperatives' experiences and avail of their products and services.

Framework for Analyzing the Empowering Process of Workers' Cooperatives

As Jorge Sibal puts it, cooperatives and other labor enterprises are among the major pillars of the people empowerment movement. This movement, which is now known as the civil society movement, aspires for a strong pro-people mixed economic society where the state, private and civil society sectors are cooperatively harnessed in the development efforts of the society.⁸

Further, it was noted by Virginia Teodosio that cooperatives have offered the context for a participatory and empowering culture of direction, action and resources. She said that participation is about the dispersion of power to ordinary people, so that they may have some sort of control over their lives and their environment.⁹

As a working definition for this study, **empowerment** refers to the process by which people, organizations or groups who are powerless (a) become

aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context; (b) develop skill and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives; (c) exercise this right without infringing upon the rights of others; and (d) support the empowerment of others in the community.¹⁰

The study uses the Rowlands Framework for empowerment vis-à-vis Bill Gessner's Cooperative Empowerment Stream. (<http://www.cooperativegrocer.coop>)

Rowland framework states that, to be empowered, there must be:

<i>power from within</i>	Self-respect and self-acceptance, which extends to respect for and acceptance of others as equal.
<i>power to</i>	Creative and enabling relationships, creates new possibilities and actions without domination, the essence of the individual aspect of empowerment
<i>power over</i>	A relationship of domination and subordination
<i>power with</i>	Organized action, united by a common purpose or common understanding, involves a sense of the whole being greater than the sum of the individuals.

Source: Rowlands 1997 building on Kaber 1994 and Nelson and Wright 1996

Empowerment processes are experienced within three dimensions: personal relational and collective. In this model, *power from within* or the development of self-confidence and a sense of self, is a personal experience. The *power to* – make decisions, and the ability to negotiate and influence the course of a relationship, are relational processes. When the workers work together to achieve a common purpose (*power with*), they demonstrate collective empowerment.¹¹

As suggested by Gessner, a model for empowerment within cooperatives focuses initially and primarily on the role of members. While empowerment flows through the whole organization — board, management, staff, customers — it originates with and returns to the members.¹² The empowering process in cooperatives is founded on building and sustaining the vital connection between members and their cooperative.

To start or operate a business alone is an intimidating idea for those who are not very enterprising. But the task seems less intimidating when shared among a group working cooperatively. So when a group of people coming

together to form a cooperative, it is a self-help and an empowering action that cannot be lost sight of as the organization matures. Moreover, the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws endow the organization with legal power. The model explains this as the **power to** increase in skills, abilities including earning an income, access to markets and networks.

A sole proprietor of a business is a very secluded role. But being a member of a cooperatively owned business rewards one with the mutual support inherent in running a business with fellow-owner members. Thus, the **power over** that changes in power relations within households, communities and at a macro-level is truly exhibited on how the coop is being managed by its members. It is very remarkable, in both cases, that most of the board of directors consist of women members. The policy on inviting other sectors for associate membership only is one of the empowering acts of the members.

Community is highly valued and desired in a setting like the University of the Philippines. Cooperatives create community. Gaining the support of the university officials in this endeavor (providing space, allowing activities to be conducted on official time, giving donations or grants, etc), this is **power with** – organization of the powerless to enhance individual abilities and/or ability to challenge and change power relations.

As a synthesis, Gessner notes that, this model of cooperative empowerment features a system that can promote leadership development, a shared vision, delegation of authority, accountability, support, mentoring, sustainability, and growth. These qualities are inherent in the cooperative model and are enhanced when we develop and emphasize the empowering process.

Findings and Conclusion

The study shows that cooperative organizing can be a tool in empowering the administrative workers in the University of the Philippines. As Rene Ofreneo stated that... "empowerment is a long and tedious process. It often starts in the concientization of workers on their situation in the workplace. Further, as unions and workers get united on a common agenda and act on the basis of such agenda, the empowerment process is also deepened and broadened."¹³

History and Management

It can be gleaned from the two cases that they were in existence for more than a decade (UPCBAMPCI -16 years and UPSEEMC- 13 years). The reasons for organizing themselves were brought about by their need to explore other sources of income aside from the salary they are getting from the university which could hardly meet their needs. Members who are business minded or enterprising usually spearheaded the formation of the cooperative. Thus, the motivation to start the endeavor could be attributed to the *power within* of the organizers who set the tone to orchestrate the formation of the cooperative.

As provided in the Cooperative Code of the Philippines (RA 6938), Philippine cooperatives follow a basic organizational structure. Its basic managerial bodies should include: General Assembly, Board of Directors, Supervisory Committee (for Operations), Audit and Inventory Committee, Elections and Membership Committee, Executive Committee, other committees, hired managers and supervisors.

Given the limited number of members for both of the cases, at least the important managerial bodies are in place like the GA, BOD and some committees. As Sibal puts it, "while coop follows a basic organizational structure, managing it is not however very rigid like a straight jacket." Some degree of flexibility can be observed in the management structure. Note that in both cases, BOD members perform tasks in the operation of the coop. Volunteers come in as they progress in business. And at this point, they have achieved or reached a self-reliant stage wherein they hired staff to man the business on a full time basis with the accompanying wage and non-wage benefits.

For both cases, female members get the top positions in the board of directors, thus, females are no longer confined to secretary's or treasurer's post only. It also shows the presence of professional management since they are being able to comply with the CDA annual requirements. This could also be seen in the viability and success of both cases.

With the management structure of the cases, there is great evidence that their experience in the coops promotes leadership development, delegation of authority, accountability, support, mentoring and growth. The regular monitoring of CDA and application of cooperative values and principles are opportunities for empowerment which are to be further developed in cooperatives.

Operation vs. Workload

The cases showed that the support of the college or unit administration is crucial to the successful operations of the cooperatives. In the two case studies, the officials of the colleges are supportive of the endeavor of the workers. The support consists of permission granted to the coop to conduct some of their activities on official time as long as these do not interfere with the normal operations of the college.

In addition, paid staff are hired for the day-to-day operation of some of the businesses of the coop. Such activities include manning the store and operating the photocopying machines, among others.

In the case of UPSEEMCI, hired staffs are wives, relatives or friends of regular members. This facilitates accountability and fosters pride in ownership since they are allowed to become associate members of the cooperative.

As shown in the cases, the members gain economic benefits. These come in the form of the patronage refund, accessibility and availability of financial resources during emergency family situations, cash gifts and death benefits, among others. With these benefits, the members are motivated to explore other possible business ventures for the cooperative to increase its earnings while they fulfill their roles as good standing members in terms of the repayment schemes of their loans. Moreover, this exhibits the power to transcend their self-interest and focus on the interest of the whole organization.

Good Practices

A roundtable discussion to elicit the good practices not only of the two case cooperatives but also several other cooperatives existing in the different academic units of the university was conducted on May 10, 2006. This was done also to validate the findings of the two case studies regarding the factors that contributed to the successful operation of cooperatives in the university. The roundtable discussion surfaced the following:

Units	Good Practices
College of Business Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Entrepreneurial and managerial skill of the BOD chairperson cum Manager of the cooperative ☐ Cooperation of members in complying to their obligations to pay, thus, a very low delinquency rate ☐ Prudent lending policies or adherence to basic management policies such as credit limit, 50% repayment scheme before renewal of loan
School of Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Diversified loan packages for the differing needs of the members ☐ High sense of volunteerism among leaders, thus, having a working BOD instead of hiring additional staff ☐ Entrepreneurial drive of leaders, continuously explore for possible expansion of business activities. ☐ Educational activity (i.e. coop hopping, continuing coop education) instead of a Rest and Recreation activity for admin staff ☐ Affiliate membership open to friends and relatives of the members and are priority choices for staff needed, depending on the operation
College of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Supportive relationship between and among members and faculty of the college ☐ Commitment to continue the cooperative ☐ Volunteerism of the members
College of Home Economics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Supportive relationship between and among members and faculty of the college ☐ Members are organized and attend training seminars in their college ☐ Members are motivated to develop their entrepreneurial skills ☐ The cooperative serves as a venue in promoting products, services and skills of its members
College of Human Kinetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Regular monitoring by the CDA ☐ Cohesion of the members to continue the operation of the cooperative despite the many problems they encountered
College of Mass Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Supportive relationship of the faculty administration to the endeavor of the rank and file staff ☐ Maximizing the resources and connections (Use of theatre facilities at a discounted price) ☐ Volunteerism of the members
College of Social Sciences & Philosophy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☐ Membership is not exclusive to administrative staff but to REPS as well ☐ Diversified strategies and services (chair rentals, school supplies, bags, tupperwares, gift items, pieces of furniture, footwear, etc.) ☐ Supportive relationship among the students, college officials and members.

College of Social Work & Community Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Management of canteen operation by retired coop members. <input type="checkbox"/> The continuous effort of the members to sustain the operation of the cooperative.
University Library	<input type="checkbox"/> Supportive relationship from the University Librarian and management <input type="checkbox"/> Commitment of devoted members to pursue the cooperative <input type="checkbox"/> Volunteerism of the members

Conclusion

Looking at cooperative organizing as an empowering move for administrative workers is critical in their role as university constituents. To surpass the infancy stage of cooperative formation, from setting and testing of systems and procedures, organizational assessment, and planning to strengthening of the cooperative was not easy for successful cooperatives. To be able to reach the stage of expansion and diversification for the two cases entailed great deal of patience, understanding, service orientation and painstaking commitment to really succeed in this endeavor.

Gessner's empowerment stream can aptly be observed that the empowering process in cooperatives is founded on building and sustaining the vital connection between the members and their cooperative. The empowerment stream further clarified and enhanced roles within the cooperative, including members, board, management, and staff. Effective performance of roles are important since they contribute to empowerment and inspire success.

The success of the two cases maybe attributed to their (a) adherence to the process and principles of cooperative; (b) transparency as exhibited in the accessibility of their records; and (c) complying to the requirements of the CDA in terms of the activities to be conducted and documents to be submitted.

It can be concluded then that the cases studied have an empowering management that is primarily concerned with empowering the membership. The spirit of volunteerism among the members, the working board, and the high rate of attendance of members in general assemblies, among others are evidences of how the empowerment stream flows within the organization.

If management and staff are adequately empowered to do their jobs, roles and job descriptions are clear, responsibility is encouraged, authority is agreed upon, teamwork is present, frustrations are lessened and morale is lifted, these will all result to good service to the faculty, staff and students of the university.

With the survival and viability of the coop cases despite the number of limitations, essentially it has become an additional source of income or mechanism to respond to pressing financial needs. Thus, cooperatives is a potential tool to augment the workers' income in the university.

Recommendations

Just like any other business enterprise, a number of factors contributed to the success of cooperatives and how it can empower its members, particularly the administrative staff of the university.

The following recommendations may be of help to those who intend to replicate the cases studied;

1. The members of the cooperative should be committed and actively participate in managing the cooperative.

While empowerment flows through the whole organization — board, management, staff, customers — it originates with and returns to the members. The empowering process in cooperatives is founded on building and sustaining the vital connection between members and their cooperative. This was done through regular meetings, transparency in the financial status of the cooperatives, and clear policies including penalties for delinquent members.

Membership expansion to include faculty members and other non-administrative staff, even as associate members only, may be considered. Operation will still be managed by regular members with increased market reach.

2. In the University, the support of the college or unit officials is a crucial condition for setting up and for the successful operation of

the cooperatives. The support given may take the form of donations by the faculty and staff, provision of space, patronizing the cooperative's products and services, allowance for the conduct of some coop-related activities during office hours without prejudice to their job performance as university employees.

3. The businesses set up by the cooperatives should start out of the needs and initiatives of the members and likewise in line with the needs of their clientele, students and other employees of the university. Hence, canteens, photocopying services, school supplies, etc. have proven to be financially viable as investments.
4. The cooperatives should be creative in adapting to the various means of expanding their capital while maintaining their control over the operations and management of their cooperatives. A continuing education on cooperative management is therefore deemed important.
5. In order for the cooperative to really progress, there must be good records keeping, efficient accounting and auditing system for a transparent management. There should be a management development program and management compensation package.
6. Continuous and adequate capital build-up and savings program should be observed. Thus, membership should not only be exclusive to administrative staff. Instead, other constituents in the college may be invited even as associate members.

Prospects

With the existence of other college-based cooperatives in the university, it would be remarkable to also help these struggling cooperatives move up from their present condition and become successful as the two cases. The formation of a federation of cooperatives within the university can be an area for study. It is worthwhile to determine how such can be a potential means to empower the coops, gain the support of the university wide constituents and eventually augment the income of the workers.

Endnotes

- ¹ 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, Article 12, Section 15.
- ² "The Cooperative Code of the Philippines Republic Act 6938 of 1990 Congress of the Philippines." at <http://www.gov.ph/laws>
- ³ Jorge V. Sibal, "The Self-managed Enterprises and the Vision of a Mixed Economy," paper read at the PEDF Seminar-Workshop on Issues in Community Enterprise Management, August 16-18, 1991, Pansol, Laguna sponsored by People's Enterprise Development Council.
- ⁴ Jorge V. Sibal "A Century of the Philippine Cooperative Movement" at <http://www.uwcc.wisc.edu/info/abroad/sibal.html>
- ⁵ Rene E. Ofreneo (ed). "Labor's Vision of Development." Quezon City: Karrel, Inc. 1992.
- ⁶ See Note 2 above.
- ⁷ See Note 3 above.
- ⁸ See Note 3 above.
- ⁹ Mona Liza J. Silapan-Todas, "A Study on Perceived Benefits and Satisfaction of UP Diliman Employees – Cooperative Members" (Thesis).
- ¹⁰ E. McWhirter, (1991). *Empowerment in Counseling*. "Journal of Counseling and Development."
- ¹¹ Jo Rowlands (1997). "Questioning Empowerment : Working with Women in Honduras." Oxford [England] : Oxfam ; Atlantic Highlands, N.J. : Humanities Press International [distributor].
- ¹² Bill Gessner, "The Co-op Empowerment Stream: From Members to Community and Around Again" at <http://www.cooperativegrocer.coop>
- ¹³ See Note 5 above.

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WOMEN TAKING CENTER STAGE: Organizing Women Through Community Theater

Teresita V. Barrameda

"Together, the community and the artists devise a performance with the intention, not only of entertaining, but also of saying something about the community's life experiences, memories of the past, and hopes and fears for the future."

-Richard Fotheringham

Abstract

This article is an account of a theatre practice among community women in a rural community in Aurora. It tells of how nine women create community among themselves, make theatre a platform for advocacy and action, and take center stage by making private issues public, transforming personal narratives as performance materials for public discussion. By using theatre as the strategy for advocacy on women's issues and organizing work, the women were able to redefine politics, counting creative cultural action and women-specific processes as political and community women artists as political actors.

Introduction

Despite the strong association of Philippine drama to the nationalist movement in the late 60s, the theatre tradition in the country has been dominated by the so-called "bourgeois theatre in English," primarily staged in private schools, performed by professional theatre companies and patronized by the US-educated artists and people from middle and upper class origins (Legasto, 1994). As counterpoint to this mainstream theatre practice is the People's Theatre, which evolved out of the people's movement as an articulation of the struggles and problems of the poor and marginalized Filipino masses.

The People's Theater is often referred to or used interchangeably with street theatre and community theatre, even by practitioners and activists as well. In contrast to the bourgeois theatre, it is mass-based, issue-oriented, and dialogical. It is produced by non-professional artists as well as, activists and performed in non-conventional theatre settings that include plazas, basketball courts, streets, or in open spaces. In practice, it affirms empowering traditions and cultural forms in local communities. It raises the awareness of marginalized people towards taking action to change their situation.

A later development in People's Theatre is the integration of women's issues in its projects and agenda, eventually giving birth to a new theatre practice presently categorized as women's theatre. Though borne out of the people's movement and having commonalities with the People's Theatre movement, women's theatre has developed over time, carving its own distinct identity. In this article, I will be talking about a particular women's theatre experience as practiced by grassroots women in Baler, Aurora Province showing a distinctly Filipino and Third World women's theatre.

I chose to consider the subjective voice - a first person account, me, being a participant-observer of the entire process. For me, the subjective voice is both liberating and an alternative as it challenged the impersonal, omniscient and so-called "objective" patriarchal perspective that renders certain experiences invisible. But, in trying to give new meaning and analysis to the experience, I also considered the objective point of view. Hence, this article will not sound too personal and self-indulgent.

Consequently, I arrived at a decision to use both - my personal voice will intersperse with the objective point of view, like the "zoom-in, zoom-out" mechanism of a camera lens.

This article is divided into six (6) sections: the first section describes the context in which these women live; the second section lays down some theoretical concepts I used in making sense of this particular experience; the third, is a brief profile of the women who became instrumental in using theatre to organize other women and to advocate for change; the fourth, describes how these women make theatre and create their kind of aesthetics; the fifth, describes the process they underwent in organizing themselves as a theatre collective and as a women's group. At the end, the insights gleaned from this experience serve as its concluding points.

cal and cultural practices, enable individuals and groups to define themselves differently from the way others, including the state, defined them. With such concept of "difference" as embedded in the total range of discourses and practices in a society, people are empowered to define themselves, their own subjectivity, on terms that served as basis for everyday resistances. Consequently, people discover and invent new ways through which to describe and understand themselves, in categories that have potential to challenge, disrupt, and redirect dominant power (Foucault, 1978, 1982; Allen, 1993).

Further, Foucault claims that wherever there is power, there is resistance. To this, Webster (2000 as cited by Alsop, Fitzsimons, Lennon and Minsky, 2002) adds the concept of agency (the power to resist) and suggests that resistance alone, is insufficient to undermine or redraw power structures. It must have political direction and strategies for collective action. Here, Alsop, et.al (2002), introduced the notion of reflexive agency. They argue that this is not just an outcome of a coming together based on shared identity or commonality. It is rather, a conscious adoption of a shared grouping to campaign politically for changes to those material, structural, and discursive features which are leading to oppressive social relations.

If participation is the every day activity of knowledge exchange among community members and between local authorities and the community, then organizing and issue advocacy initiatives are, in essence, about challenging the nature of discourses and practices that underlie participation. Foucault (1982, 1988a, 1988b) notes that effective participation is grounded on the self-defined identities of acting subjects rather than on the subjectivities arising from their subjection to the administrative state power. As such, organizing and advocacy work are means to alter the relationship between the local authorities and people or to change the effects of existing relationships.

In the context of community participation, I used the abovementioned concepts, drawn from the ideas of Foucault and others to describe the work of *Teatro Aurora* in defining itself, in organizing poor rural women, and their advocacy efforts through theatre. From passive individualized women, they banded together, redefined themselves into empowered subjects capable of resisting and challenging local authorities, and society as well. These women members of *Teatro Aurora* transformed the performance stage as sites of power and resistance and as a means to find their voices, speak out their "truths," and eventually, redefine themselves and create their own identity.

The backdrop: life is getting harder every day

In the worsening economic crises of this era of globalization, the poor women are the hardest hit. Where unemployment is high, the poor women being in charge of the household food security and maintenance, have to take on additional work for the upkeep of the family. To some extent when food is scarce, the women have to experience nutritional deficiencies and deprivation. When social services like health are getting privatized and wanting, the burden of care falls upon their shoulders. When migration is the only option for survival, they opt to explore unknown geographies in search of work and opportunities, or in other cases become female-heads of households to migrant men.

Each woman has her own story to tell, as a mother, as a wife, as a household head, as a worker, and as a member of a community. Despite differences in situations, the poor women in rural communities together with their children, are altogether the most vulnerable. In this collective, the situation of members reflect the general condition of women in various communities of Baler, in the province of Aurora.

Despite the rich natural resources in the province in terms of forest and marine resources, Baler registers a worse condition of poverty: low household income; lack of employment for women; high incidence of malnutrition among children; and, lack of social services especially along health care.

The poverty situation in the area is further aggravated by the series of typhoons that batters the province throughout the year. Since Baler is typhoon-prone, majority of the poorer households rely on planting banana, cassava, and camote for food and cash income. According to the women, these crops save them from hunger when palay production is not good.

Sixty-two percent of the population in Baler is engaged in agriculture, which predominates its economy. Endowed with rich natural resources and minerals, its vast forest has become the target of many logging and mining concessions. This has greatly contributed to the rapid deforestation and degradation of its resources. Aside from agriculture, many people are engaged in cottage industries such as hat and mat weaving, wood carving, basketry, and furniture making. Commercial activities are largely into retailing and sari-sari store operations.

The average household income is registered at Php 3,500 monthly or Php 42,000 annually. In an average household size of 6 members, this is insufficient for securing food, utilities, education and health services. In the absence of gender-disaggregated data on employment and labor force participation, women's work participation is subsumed as unpaid family labor, both in agriculture and the cottage industries (Socio-Economic and Physical Profile of Aurora, n.d.).

In terms of health and well-being, conjunctivitis ranks as the leading cause of morbidity due to the polluted air attributed to dust from rough roads as the road network in Aurora is hardly developed. In addition, the incidence of flu, measles and diarrhea are high. Likewise, malnutrition primarily within ages 1-4, is recorded at 36.43% (Socio-Economic Profile of Aurora, n.d.).

With no one to turn to, some women from different communities in Baler had mobilized themselves to learn the basics of primary health care and provide services to their communities. With the knowledge and skills they learned from non-government organizations as volunteer community health workers, these women assumed the responsibility of taking health care service into their hands.

Starting as volunteer community health workers, they also learned to use theatre as a means to educate others about gender issues, and eventually transform themselves to become advocates of women's rights.

Nine characters in search of home and community

December 8, 2003 (a journal entry)

I was invited to facilitate a basic integrated theatre arts workshop for women in a far-flung area somewhere in Aurora Province. The request was immediate, the information too general, and the person at the end of the phone had no further information – just a workshop for rural women who are community health volunteers, and that I was referred to them by a reliable source. Click...end of conversation. Too scary for me, who is used to conducting training needs assessment prior to a workshop.

Today, here I am in front of nine women: some release exercises to start the day – "Lulubog and bangka, magsama-sama ang..." and some "getting-to-know" each other activities – "Humanay ayon sa..." and "...nagbalat ang ahas sa pagitan ng..." The women, as I observe, lack vigor and enthusiasm. They hardly move. Then, a formal personal introduction and expectation setting ensue. I come to know these women' and their personal stories:

Luz is a peasant woman in her early 30s, whose husband was abducted by the military and is still missing up to now. In his absence, she has to fend for the family while nursing grief, pain and desolation over his disappearance. She joins the workshop to be in the company of other women whom she relies on for emotional support.

Fem, a single parent of five children, vends farm produce to make ends meet. While in the hospital delivering her fifth child twelve years ago, her husband left to sell his farm harvests to pay for the hospital bills but he never returned since then. There were stories about him being seen in a nearby town. He even sent messages that he will be coming home but he has not returned until this day. Fem patiently waits for that promise of his return, but such promise remains unfulfilled. She is actually too shy to speak why she is here in the workshop.

Nanay Caridad, a widow in her mid-70s, was jailed for nine years for a crime she allegedly never committed. She is nervous and scared at the sight of a person in police or military uniform. She wants to be in the workshop to re-enact her life in prison, as a way of exorcising the ghost of the past and coming to terms with her life now.

Edith, a married farmer-woman who in her 25th year of marriage has discovered that her sexual desire and pleasure is not dependent on her husband but in herself as a woman. She is always eager to join training activities like this, that increases her knowledge and capabilities. It was a reproductive rights training that changed her concept about sexuality and about women.

Nanay Belinda is married for 30 years. All throughout these years, she silently suffered from verbal, as well as, emotional abuse from her

lines, texture, color, movement, rhythm, sounds, and shape. The workshop progressed to more complex activities – there were series of exercises on improvisation for them to learn about spontaneity.

Furthermore, they explored and learned the various elements of a play: character study, conflict study, message, plot, making tableaux and scenarios, etc. Collectively, they experimented on devising a play using the “beginning-middle-end” (B-M-E) process. The five-day workshop was interspersed with mini-showcases. Each learning unit is expected to explore various theater forms and to present mini-showcases: a *dula-tula* (staged poetry), a *kilos-awit* (transposed song), a dance drama, an expressionist play and an allegorical play.

The last day of the workshop was the time for the final showcase. To simulate a real performance, many community members were invited to watch the women’s performance. There, the women, took center stage and were poised to act out their characters.

The group’s performance was borne out of the initial brainstorming during the workshop. The performance explored and tackled a major concern or issue of the community, that is, environmental destruction due to the rampant illegal logging in Aurora. Using dance-drama as the organizing structure, the group was able to come up with a 30-minute performance depicting the worsening effect of illegal logging on communities if unabated.

December 12, 2003 (an excerpt from my journal)

...then, the time for the final showcase: the opening image is so powerful – dead bodies and huge logs intertwined and sprawled all over the stage. The backdrop is even more haunting and eerie - not a house in sight but water, water, everywhere. Slowly, the women rise and render a beautiful and powerful song-dance performance about the effect of illegal logging in the communities of Aurora.

After the performance, the group engaged the audience to a discussion on what to do with the issues being presented. A brief, yet lively discussion between the women performers and the audience ensued. The performance did not end here but transformed itself into a theatre group, now known in Baler as *Teatro Aurora*. For the nine women performers, *Teatro Aurora* is not simply a women’s theatre group, but their new home and community.

Making theatre, taking center stage

Like other community theatres, *Teatro Aurora* adopts *devising* as a tool in generating plays for performance. Feminist theatre groups in the UK and the US also rely heavily on devised theatre (Case, 1988; Goodman, 1993). Devising, as defined by Allison Oddey (1998), "is a process of making theatre that enables a group of performers to be physically and practically creative in the sharing and shaping of an original product." Further, Oddey (1998) elaborates the idea of devised theatre as:

"Devised theatre can start from anything. It is determined and defined by a group of people who set up an initial framework or structure to explore and experiment with ideas, images, concepts, themes or specific stimuli such as music, text, objects, painting or movement. A devised theatrical performance originates with the group while making the performance, rather than starting from a play text written by someone. A devised theatre product is work that has emerged from and been generated by a group of people working in collaboration."

In devising their performances, *Teatro Aurora* follows these creative processes:

1. Generating ideas or themes for a performance. In order to get started, the group employs various creative brainstorming games and techniques to generate ideas or themes that include the following:
 - Storytelling. Each member tells a strong emotional life experience with a beginning, middle, and end framework. While the person is telling the story, the rest acts it out, each one bringing her personal experience to the rehearsal.
 - Free-writing. It is a process of writing within a predetermined time frame, say, five minutes. Using a trigger line or sentence, each member writes a story within the designated time frame.

- *Dugtungan ng kuwento* or story chain. Gathered in a circle, each member writes a line toward making a story, using the "beginning-middle-end" framework as guide in developing the story.
2. Doing research. When the group has agreed upon an idea or theme to work on, each member is given a task to gather information about the idea or theme. The purpose of this is to "research" on what they do not know about the idea or theme. A study session is set to discuss the information gathered by each one and come up with a collective analysis of the idea or theme. Sometimes, they invite resource persons to provide inputs on the chosen topic or theme.
 3. Devising the play. Faced with a mass of gathered materials, the group organizes the materials to create the shape of the play. Through a brainstorming process, the group develops a storyline, form, structure, sequences of scenes, and characters and eventually develops a tentative draft of a script. This tentative draft is again subjected to discussion and brainstorming to develop further clarity in all aspects of the play material.

To organize ideas and flesh out the material, they use meta-cards scattered on the floor to visualize the whole. Then, they employ some collaborative writing processes to create a text. The text is collectively edited to come up with a play that is feasible or workable. At this time, the text is ready for rehearsal. What follows is the process of mounting the play. This is aided by the use of improvisation exercises and workshops.

It also took some time for the women to master this process. But as they went along, they also gained their confidence in subjecting themselves to creative and collaborative processes. This ultimately helped them overcome their initial fears of not being artistic.

In addition to devising and collective writing processes, *Teatro Aurora* also adopts the "informance" technique in their performances. An informance² weaves information, issues and discussions into a play's structure. Although it tackles burning issues, it also gives attention to the artistic quality of the performance, keeping a balance of the two elements. It presents a story

without closure and is not prescriptive. Instead, the performers conduct a debriefing after their performance to discuss the issues presented. The discussion could run for an hour or more.

This process of debriefing is done to enable both the performers and the audience to cultivate a deepened understanding or awareness of the issues at hand; and more towards identifying action points to address the issues. With *Teatro Aurora*, debriefing workshops were conducted in every advocacy performance of the group. Surprisingly, many of these debriefing workshops were well attended. This may be so because the community audiences were able to identify and relate with every issue presented as the stories were based on situations and issues in the communities.

Through *devising*, collaborative writing of text, and informance as working methods, *Teatro Aurora* has developed 17 original plays tackling issues ranging from violence against women (VAW) to globalization. In all these issues, the location and impact on women were central to their analysis. From personal issues of family violence and abuse, they learned to analyze women's issues in relation to issues of national concern. These included globalization and how it affected their lives as women; the destruction of their environment due to rampant logging; and, how the worsening poverty has driven ten of thousands Filipinos to seek work contracts in almost all parts of the globe.

But, it is also interesting to note that though the group subscribed to the conventional elements of making theatre that focused on play structure, genre, linear sequence of storyline, etc., the group ended up with a very distinct body of works. In general, the features of their plays went out of the conventional mode. These plays were non-linear and non-structured, open-ended, had fluid women characters, and were multi-vocal. The form of the plays could not be categorized into a particular genre, but was a confluence of forms and monologues. These women found metaphors in things used in daily life like discussing issues of domestic violence through a ladle and using the kitchen setting as site of violence. They also made body parts talk about reproductive health issues.

The group organized performance tours in neighboring barangays. They made presentations in non-traditional performance spaces that included a school building, a gym, plaza, street, a campaign truck, etc. Alongside these performances, the group facilitated theatre workshops in other com-

after every performance hone their capacities to facilitate the discussions of issues. In this way, their role is not simply as performers, but as advocates of change.

In essence, theatre as experienced by these community women, is about creating and mirroring social realities, where oppression in whatever form – overt or internalized, can be gazed at in full view in an aesthetic space. This space enables the audience, in this case, the community, to view it from different sides. However, the exchange of dialogues in response to the reality seen onstage provides a deepening analysis and understanding of the issues being presented and eventually toward a mutual re-visioning.

In terms of content, aesthetics, and process, *Teatro Aurora* echoes parallel features to Goodman's description of feminist theatres (1993). In her study of contemporary feminist theatre, she notes the following features:

- elements of performance: intervention in political arenas, emphasis on the personal, use of alternative performance space
- methods used: *devising* and performance art (use of alternative form of expressions – body, body language, mime), tour performance with minimal props and casts
- the working process is a product of the *devising* method where the first process is visualization of the idea through the physicality of the movement and then followed by developing the text through a collaborative scriptwriting method
- working relationship: group members take equal share of power, where responsibility for all aspects of production are equally shared among members, rejecting structure and hierarchy in terms of process and organization
- individual skills of each member is used without assigning different worth or status to those skills

- the creative/performance process: begin with an idea and construct the performance by developing improvisations from that idea, getting audience feedback to continue the development of the play, and then interaction with the audience after the performance
- the group devises their own material based on collective experience. Devising allows them to improvise, be spontaneous and creates a personal and non-hierarchical nature of collective work
- themes: women and gender issues where theater is used as a public forum for these issues
- the plays are conceived in a shared space and a shared perspective, these plays are based on improvisational exercises from the group's experiences, loosely structured into a series of visual vignettes

Likewise, Eleavitt (1980) elaborates the features of feminist theatre. According to her, its unique aspects are:

- It presents truthful images of women and negative images of women are deconstructed and are given a new meaning.
- It is a communal experience.
- It mirrors and gives resonance to women's experiences.

Of which Case (1988) further added another dimension: it is an engaged dialogue, rooted in everyday life.

On the other hand, what sets *Teatro Aurora* apart from these Western feminist theatres is that its kind of theatre manifests the type of feminist theatre echoed by Priscelina Patajo-Legasto (1994) in her article, "Women and Contemporary Philippines: Usapang Babae or Women Speaking." She noted that Philippine feminist theatre recognizes the interdependence between women's concerns and national issues as well as aspires for a continued dialogue between men and women.

Moreover, the PhD dissertation of Josephine Barrios, entitled "Mula sa mga Pakpak ng Entablado: Pagyapak at Paglipad ng Kababaihang

Mandudula" (1998), noted salient features of feminist theatre in the Philippines that include:

- tackling many issues in a particular play. For instance, a play tackles education but at the same time talks about divorce or a play on comfort women is about abortion, etc.;
- the stage as space for discourse and the plays are multi-vocal, thus, challenging unity which is an important feature of a good play in the conventional sense;
- plays are open and no closures so as to further explore the issue that need to be discussed and studied and to explore other possibilities;
- women's identity are shown as "work-in-progress" in which the characters kept on changing their identities such that a mother becomes the country or a rape victim becomes a hero;
- exploring non-conventional theatre forms and using mixture of theatre forms to discuss complex issues like the use of monologues as autobiography or epic becomes comedy and ritual, etc.;
- the plays serve as vehicle for conversation between audience as well as with other women where the private issues are transformed into public issues in the course of conversation;
- theatre as space to articulate and resist.

While Western feminist theatre concerns itself with the issue of oppressions and experiences of individual women, the feminist theatre in the Philippines, including *Teatro Aurora*, gave birth to a kind of feminist theatre with its distinct character. It is shaped by the country's colonial experience and location as a poor country in the global market economy. But even if *Teatro Aurora* has features of a feminist theatre, it does not claim to be one. Being steadfast in advocating women's issues and using theatre as platform for action toward social transformation, its members are more comfortable with the term *women's issues* rather than feminist issues or the use of *community theatre* rather than feminist theatre.

Another feature of *Teatro Aurora* as a theatre group is its attempt to use theatre as a strategy for organizing other women. Community theatre as practiced by these women, emphasizes the strengthening of existing organizations or the formation of support structures in the community. After the community debriefing, the performers do not just leave the community, instead, they have the responsibility of facilitating the implementation of the agreed upon "action points." As such, they encourage existing organizations to take up the issue previously discussed or the formation of a support structure that would pursue the continuity of the initiative. To some extent, they train local leaders to sustain the local cultural program.

In sum, *Teatro Aurora's* brand of theatre makes use of women's personal experiences and voices. Out of these women's narratives, performance pieces are developed through collective and non-hierarchical processes, then viewed and heard in non-traditional performance spaces. As they created and produced theatre by themselves, they also transformed themselves into advocates with the aim to effect change in the lives of other women and the community as a whole.

The kind of theatre that *Teatro Aurora* has developed utilizes women processes and is informed by ideas from the personal stories and perspectives of individual women. In doing so, they take into account their differences in status and condition. For women members of *Teatro Aurora*, making theatre is their contribution to effecting social change. From ordinary community women, they were transformed, not only as agents of change, but as artists as well. As Oddey (1998) declared, "women are artists and theatre makers in their own right."

Community theatre as a strategy for organizing women

April 29, 2005 (an excerpt from my journal)

As a child, the sight of water fascinates me. I would secretly slip away to wet my feet with the puddles of water from an afternoon rain. Having lived as a child in an inland locale, the sight of the sea fascinated me no end. And here I am, cradled by the huge waves in Baler and trying to seek comfort from the waves' undulating cadence, I try to remember how Teatro Aurora come into being and my role in it. As this theatre workshop by the sea is perhaps my last time with them, sadness overpowers me. Though I know,

this feeling is normal for organizers when phasing out from a community, a sort of having "weaning" pains. I will be missing these moments of riding on high waves, as well as the regular exchange of banter with these women who eventually became my friends. The sea of Baler with its big waves and my women—friends will be etched in my memory forever... Within a few meters distance, I see my women- friends from Teatro Aurora calling me to join them sing and gyrate to the tune of Ricky Martin's "Living la Vida Loca" which we adopted as our "theme song."

As I leave Baler, one of my women-friends hands me a banana plant and a few saplings of the San Julian taro variety as tokens - a symbol of friendship among a community of women.

Barely three years old, *Teatro Aurora* has performed regularly in different communities as part of their advocacy campaigns. From an initial core membership of nine women, the group has expanded to a total of fifteen members. Each member has the capacity to perform various roles, facilitate debriefing sessions and to conduct basic theatre arts workshops in other communities. At present, the women are initiating the organization of women theatre groups in their respective communities.

Although the organization is an offshoot of a basic integrated theatre arts workshop, it has expanded to become a regular organization with its own mission and programs. In the beginning, the group of women wanted only to learn and make theatre but such personal aims expanded to encompass varied issues in the community.

In organizing the theatre group, the women started with a core group of nine women performers. These women were considered the leaders who were primarily in charge of sustaining and managing the theatre group. In its initial operations, the core group functions as a support group to women performers. The core group honed themselves to be actors, writers and directors. One unique feature of the theatre group is the collective honing of their skills, so, anyone, can be assigned as director to a particular performance and an actor in another. The "rotational" process of assigning tasks to each member helped them develop varied skills in theatre work.

They maintain the group to be small in size so women have opportunity to meet each other on a regular basis. In developing their skills as theatre artists and as organizational leaders, the group starts from developing a

member's personal capacity and empowerment that is measured in terms of their ability to analyze personal situations of abuse, and in taking action to address them. Foremost is learning to make decisions and take control of one's life. For all these women, empowerment goes beyond the personal. Through regular education sessions about political issues and theatre skills, they charted their development to becoming advocates of women's rights and change in the community.

Aside from being leaders in running the theatre group, the core group members also concerned themselves in creating a support group within the core group. The purpose of establishing a support group is to create a safe place for every woman member. The support group is their translation of building a community of women. It is within this group formation that the women foster sisterhood, thus, finding mutual support based on a shared situation. It is also within the support group that a member is free to talk about her issues, her pains, passions, and dreams while being surrounded by a group of women who are willing to listen and lend support. It is within the confines of the support group that the women altogether weave their dreams and celebrate small triumphs in life. The support group then becomes a venue for the women to affirm themselves.

The group conducts regular education, particularly small group sharing sessions. A sharing session is usually done prior to or after a rehearsal. The objective of these sharing sessions is for every woman to share personal issues and stories and for them to analyze and understand how the mechanisms of power operate in their everyday lives and how their personal power can be sustained in terms of collective action. These sharing sessions also inform the themes and story materials for future performances.

To sustain and organize the theatre group, the members set guidelines to follow. The guidelines are phrased in positive statements, for instance, instead of the phrase, "Don't be late during rehearsals," it is phrased positively to, "Please come on time during rehearsals." As rationalized by the women, it serves as a constructive reminder to members as well as a means to practice affirmation and optimism.

The guidelines covered a wide range of organizational concerns like responsibilities of members, decision-making, membership, ways of resolving conflict, membership expansion and consolidation, leadership development, etc. These guidelines were drafted during the early stage of the group formation

and then, reviewed regularly for modification and adjustment. Most importantly, the guidelines ensure that everyone is responsible for maintaining safety in the group, since most of them are survivors of various forms of abuse.

Maintaining a small group negates the structured and hierarchical method of organization. Such allowed these women to practice sharing power equitably through rotation of leadership, shared responsibility and decision-making. These processes make it easy for them to run and manage a theatre group and the support group within the theatre group.

A typical meeting of the group consists of the following processes:

- Group check-in: in a circle, each one shares an event that happens to her or her feelings prior to coming to the meeting.
- Warm-ups: these are series of body stretching and vocalization exercises to prime them up for rehearsal and creating a sense of teamwork.
- Check –out: a rehearsal/meeting assessment to discuss what they have done the whole day, identify things that worked and didn't, and discuss recommendations for improvement; and assigned homework for each one. It also serves as venue for airing issues, feelings and observations regarding the content and processes of the rehearsal, and work relationship among the members.
- Homework: research tasks for each one, particular on props, roles, etc.
- Affirmation circle: the end part of the meeting that serves as closure in the form of a group massage, a pat on the shoulder, or a standing ovation for everyone.

The limited funds did not deter the group from pursuing its goals, the members are committed to continue their performances because they saw the effectiveness of theatre as a strategy for issue advocacy, at the same time, the theatre processes enable them to find their voices to

articulate personal experiences and their own ideas on issues concerning their lives. In addition, these performances transform their lives by enabling them to translate personal issues into collective community action.

Just recently, the group trained the women police force of Aurora to create a women's desk. Likewise, the group organized a theatre festival and an art camp for survivors of violence. At present they are planning to establish a healing center for abused women in a piece of land donated by a mayor in one of the municipalities. Aside from these gains, the women, through *Teatro Aurora*, has been effective in molding creative communities as well as help create critical awareness among community members on gender issue and concerns.

With the group's experience in organizing themselves as a theatre group came the understanding that community collective transformation happens alongside personal transformation. The act of using personal experiences as mirrors and materials of their performances serve as catharsis for these women, but at the same time, empowers them. Knowing that their stories resonate a similar chord among the women audience made them resolute in their position to be advocates of women's rights and community artists for change.

For these women, their theatre experience not only empowers them as agents of change but provides them home and community, as well.

Based on the experience and practice of *Teatro Aurora* in organizing community women, the following can be drawn out:

1. Theatre is a way of organizing and mobilizing women to action.

Theatre provides a venue for women to move from a situation of powerlessness to action. In order for theatre to be an effective approach, there is a need to strike a balance between content and aesthetics. Community women, as a group, can be a potent force in their own communities as leaders, artists and actors in their own development.

2. Organizing in small groups is an effective strategy in organizing community women.

A small group serves as a support system for women and provides safe space for them against an outside environment that is oppressive and patriarchal. The intimacy of a small group is an ideal environment for women to explore the social, political, emotional/psychological dimensions of personal issues and concerns and to try out strategies that work toward social change.

3. Consciousness-raising is a crucial element in empowering women.

According to Gutierrez and Lewis (1995), empowerment is a process of increasing personal, interpersonal, or political power. However, only through the process of recognizing how power relationships affect daily life and through understanding the way people can contribute to social change, that empowerment takes place (Freire, 1970 as cited by Gutierrez, et.al, 1995).

In empowering women, consciousness-raising is an important element. By helping them make the connection between their personal lives and political issues, awareness develops. As a result of heightened awareness, the women learned to examine their lives, identify commonalities of experience and its connection to other issues at the community and national levels. Moreover, an increased in awareness enabled them to an understanding on how they, as individuals and as part of a group, can effect change in the community. And most importantly, they learn the potential of organizing in improving women's condition while empowering them.

4. Organizing encompasses all aspects of women's lives.

Taking off from the assumption that "personal is political," it is important that organizing women starts from issues that personally affect their daily lives. As such practical women's needs like health services, day care support, support groups, etc., become key elements in organizing them.

Since women viewed themselves in a holistic manner, then the personal, social, cultural, spiritual, and political concerns should also be seen as an integrated whole. As these concerns need

to be looked into, theatre and the creative arts can likewise be explored as strategies in organizing women.

5. Linking with others or like-minded groups.

It is important that women link up with other like-minded groups for advocacy work and political mobilizations. Creating a network of support will strengthen advocacy work, share resources as well as support mechanism. *Teatro Aurora* has explored all the possible networks of support ranging from individuals and groups in the locality.

I would like to end this article with this concluding note: the experience of organizing *Teatro Aurora* is a story of friendship among a community of women. As a theatre group it has the markings of a feminist theatre, yet the group shuns this labeling. However, contrary to feminist theatre popularized by the West, *Teatro Aurora* shows the distinct character of Philippine feminist theatre and Third World theatre. Theatre, as practiced and experienced by grassroots women of *Teatro Aurora*, reminds us of the many possibilities of grassroots women's agency and the possibility of change.

June 13, 2006 (a journal entry)

I received an unexpected package from Aurora, its contents amused me rather than surprised me: my t-shirt and malong (things I left behind during my last travel to Aurora), a sabutan mat (perhaps a gift for me), a project proposal (to be submitted to my husband's office for funding), and a VCD of their latest performance. I watched the videotaped performance. It is a monologue about three women. The play talks about abortion, poverty and militarization. The aesthetics and content distinctly have the markings or "brand" of theatre of Teatro Aurora with its biting satire, crisp humor and local color. I am happy knowing that they can work independently without me. Outside my window, the banana plant that they gave me has fully grown. The next few months will be harvest season in Baler and without any news of typhoon in Aurora in these past few months, again, my women-friends will be busy during this season. Tomorrow will be a good harvest, I know... especially for Teatro Aurora, my body of work.

End Notes

1. The real names of the women were changed to maintain their anonymity.
2. Informance is popularized by the Women's Theatre Program of the Philippine Educational Theatre Association (PETA) in its play, "*Tumawag kay Libby Manaoag*."

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IMPORTANT ISSUES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR: Challenge to Unionism

Thelma B. Magcuro

Introduction:

In its simplest definition, public sector refers to the government and its activities. To a lay person's language, it would refer to all agencies of the government tasked to provide public services. Specifically it may refer to state-owned or state-run agencies which provide social services, manage public utilities, and/or manage or oversee commercial and productive activities. The range of activities included in the public sector is uneven across countries. However in general it has grown to encompass the following:

- defense, law and order and emergency services;
- health and social services;
- social security;
- education;
- local services such as refuse collection and road maintenance;
- public transport, including buses, railways, airlines and shipping;
- utility services like water, electricity, gas, posts, telecommunications;
- industries strategic to the economy.¹

Quality public service is the right of every citizen of the world. But there are requisites for quality public services: enough and sustained resources, modern facilities and technology, supportive policies, capable and highly motivated public sector workers and above all, honest and trustworthy leaders with a vision. Public service is a function of governance, and the state and quality of

public service is defined by the manner by which people entrusted with it execute governance.

Public service in the Philippines has always been under attack. People are so dissatisfied with it that it has become synonymous with inefficiency, ineffectiveness and ineptness. With the perception goes the notion that most government workers are lazy, inefficient and generally unproductive. While it is true that the quality of public service in the country leaves much to be desired, it is not necessarily a result of the unworthiness of the government workers. In fact, they have been doing much more than what should be expected of them. It should be understood that they are also victims of a system of governance that is so politicized and personalized.

There are numerous issues affecting the lives of the public sector workers at present not only on a personal level but in their professional lives too. Many of these issues are in one way or another, results of the government's ever changing policies and priorities. Likewise, efforts of the public sector workers to organize themselves and unite on common agenda and directions for actions are being challenged by the same issues.

This paper will attempt to present and clarify some major issues in the public sector, its context and effects on the lives of ordinary public sector workers and the challenges that lie ahead of them. It will also highlight the workers' gains in organizing their ranks and the key concerns that they have to confront with.

The Public Sector in the Philippines Today

Basic Profile

In the Philippines public sector refers to all state-owned and controlled organizations/institutions and enterprises providing basic services to the general public like health, education, housing and other social services among others. It encompasses those organizations whose services are national in scope or the National Government Agencies (NGAs), Local Government Units (LGUs), State Colleges and Universities and Government Owned and Controlled Corporations (GOCCs). Thus, when we hear the term public sector workers, we are actually referring to government employees, regardless of their status of tenure.

The Philippine Government is the biggest employer in the country, in 2002 there were 1,445, 498 public sector workers listed with the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Majority of the workers are connected with the NGAs and their attached agencies with a total figure of 959,966. This is followed by the LGUs which registered a total figure of 390,561 and the remaining 94,971 are employed in GOCCs.²

Luzon has the biggest concentration of public sector workers with 739, 077 followed by Mindanao with 693,150 and Visayas with 256,339. In terms of sex, more than half or 53% of the total workforce is composed of women and the remaining 47% are men.

Issues

Low Wages and Inadequate Benefits

"Sahod, trabaho at karapatan," (just wages, job security and full union rights) have been the battlecry of public sector workers or government employees for quite so long. Low wages and inadequate benefits are perennial problems in the public sector. Though the Salary Standardization Law (SSL), which was a result of the public sectors workers militant struggle, government employees enjoyed an improvement in their monthly base pay from as low as Php 600 to Php 2,200 in 1989 (as a result of SSL I) and from Php 2,200 to Php 4,400 in 1993 (SSL II). However, much of these have already been eaten up by the continuing inflation and the declining value of the Philippine Peso.³

In a study done by Public Services Labor Independent Confederation (PSLINK) in the Visayas, it was found out that 56% of their members belong to salary grades 1-10 which means they receive salaries which were way below the poverty threshold income of Php 16,073/month. The issue is not only in terms of low pay. Further aggravating it is the problem of distortion in the pay structure which has resulted to inequity in pay. Consider the following cases which came out of a study done by PSLINK in 2001 in collaboration with Public Services International:

- Nursing Attendants I and II who face the risk of contacting diseases, physical and emotional stress and overload of assignments are classified under salary grades 4 and 6 respectively, while a Motor Pool Supervisor is classified under salary grade 7.
- A Midwife I or a Midwife II receives a basic pay of Php 7, 606.00 – Php 8,709.00 a month whereas a Carpenter Foreman receives a base pay of Php 8,709.00
- A Medical Laboratory Technician has the same salary grade as a Carpenter Foreman when his work involves more risk since it requires the collection and examination of body fluids for clinical tests and other diagnostic purposes.
- A Draftsman III is categorized in salary grade 11 while a Social Welfare Assistant whose work ranges from counseling to mobilizing financial resources for individuals, families and groups in societal relationships is categorized under salary grade 8.

There is great disparity too in terms of social and financial benefits among public sector employees depending on what government agency one is connected with. Those who belong to GOCCs, Government Financial Institutions (GFIs) and the Legislative Offices enjoy exorbitant salaries and other perks sometimes receiving as much as a nineteenth month pay at the end of the year, while those working with other agencies scramble for small benefits like the 13th month pay.⁴

Lack of Job Security

Of the total number of public sector workers, 10.91% are untenured. The 1999 data of the Civil Service showed that 157, 847 government employees are either casual or contractual workers, most of whom are in local government units. This figure does not include yet job orders and agency-hired workers delivering public services. The table below shows a comparative data of regular and contractual government personnel by status of appointment:

Table I. Number of Government Personnel by Major Subdivision

Major Subdivision	Regular				Contractuals/Casuals			
	1996	1997	1998	1999	1996	1997	1998	1999
National Government	849,337	865,254	-	914,202	44,719	48,697	-	45,764
Local Government Units	253,190	261,620	-	295,880	100,707	105,931	-	94,681
GOCCs	90,087	77,343	-	77,569	21,620	19,799	-	17,402
TOTAL	1,192,614	1,204,217	1,260,763	1,287,651	167,046	174,427	144,805	157,847

Source: "Issues and Concerns of Public Sector Unions in the Philippines-A Preliminary Review. UP-SOLAIR, University of the Philippines, November 2004

Casual or contractual employees are usually hired for specific projects or programs and are employed for a specific period only. Once the project or program ends their employment automatically ends too. Others are co-terminus with the elected local officials, hence their appointments end with the officials' terms of office. There is also an increasing trend of taking in agency-hired workers especially for security and janitorial services. Many government offices have resorted to manning agencies because it saves them from the trouble of management and generates savings from benefits and privileges that should have been given to the workers had they been hired directly.

Poor Working Conditions

Many government employees have to endure poor working conditions like poor lighting, lack of ventilation, lack of clean water, non-functional toilets, lack of space and in some cases very dilapidated rooms. Many offices have outdated office equipment and lack modern facilities.

Of the various public sector programs of the government, education and health are among the topmost priorities. The importance given to these sectors is certainly necessary. After all, these sectors take care of the most important ingredient of national development - the human capital.⁵ Ironically, the said sectors are also considered to be the worst in terms of working conditions. Among the public sectors, they are the most exploited and abused.

... a glimpse at the situation of our public school teachers

An ordinary class in the primary and secondary levels in public schools may have 60-70 students as compared to 30-40 a decade ago. Estimates placed the classroom shortage at 51,000, desk and chair shortage at 5 million, textbook shortage at 9.88 million and shortage of teachers at 27,000⁶ This situation inside the classroom puts too much stress and tension to the teachers who have to discover ways and means of making up for the situation.

In one of the surveys done by the government called Teacher's Assistance for Optimum Well-being (TAO) they found out that the working conditions of public school teachers is indeed dismal. Of the 405, 973 teachers surveyed, 55% said that their schools had no access to electricity, 84% said they had no running water and only 38% said that they are provided with toilets. About 25% said that they taught in classrooms without ceilings, 45% mentioned they brought their own tables to schools and 43% brought their own chairs. Those who do have their own chairs and tables mentioned that these facilities are of poor conditions and may actually pose as hazards to users.⁷

Many teachers are forced to teach subjects which are not part of their specialization like a Science Teacher who has to teach English classes. Multi-grade class is also fast becoming a common practice. This means combining two different year levels in one class, like a class composed of grades 3 and 4 students. They also have to work extra hours enduring 10 work-hours a day even though the mandatory working hours is supposed to be six (6) hours only. This does not include yet the time spent in checking papers, computing grades and attending to other extra-curricular activities.

... our dwindling health workers

In a UNDP Report on Human Development Index 2003, the following data has been cited showing the ratio of health personnel in the Philippines vis-a-vis total number of Filipino population it is serving. The data shows that there is a tremendous gap between the number of health workers available and the size of the population that must be served. On the part of the health workers, this means being overworked and on the part of the people it means being underserved.

- 1 doctor for every 24,417 people
- 1 nurse for every 22,309 people
- 1 dentist for every 578,124 people
- 1 midwife for every 722,654 people
- 1 hospital for every 113,040 people

Moreover, the continuous migration of Filipino health workers to different parts of the USA and Europe to work as caregivers resulted to a bigger gap between the number of health workers available in the country and the portion of the population they must serve.

At present the backbone of the country's healthcare both in the rural and the urban areas are the barangay health workers. Without them, the community-based health clinics may not be able to operate to provide basic health care. They are practically on call for 24 hours yet they receive very low amount of allowances ranging from Php 300 to Php 2,000 a month which are given late most of the time. They lack the necessary equipment for medical services and protective gears like aprons, gloves and masks. They have to work in small rural health clinics in the communities which at times have no running water and poor supply of power. They also lack medical and office supplies. At times they have to use their personal funds just so they could dispense their duties and obligations.

The lack of transportation to ferry the health workers around the community limits their capacity to service more people and to immediately respond to emergency cases.

The advocacy efforts of organized groups have resulted to the passage of Magna Carta for both the health workers and the teachers. These are supposed to define minimum quality standards and working conditions for health workers and teachers. However, the results are yet to be felt. There is no clear monitoring to ensure the implementation of the said Magna Carta. Officials are pointing fingers at each other and many policy makers are saying that there are problems between decentralizing the functions and allocating their necessary resources.

Continuous Laying-off of Government Workers

"Lean and mean bureaucracy" has been continuously pursued by the administration, from the time of the Ramos administration, to that of Estrada

and until the present administration of Mrs. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. This means continuous laying off of government workers in the effort of streamlining the bureaucracy. When the Ramos Government ended, over 330,000 government employees were laid-off and the downward trend continues.⁸

Table 2. Growth and Decline in Government Employment

Year	No. of Government Employees	Ratio Per 100 Population	% of Employed Labor Force
1985-1990	1,518,000	2.4	7.0
1995-1999	1,300,000	1.9	5.2
2001	1,398,372	1.8	4.6
2003	1,415,000	1.7	4.6

Source: "Issues and Concerns of Public Sector Unions in the Philippines – A Preliminary Review", UP-SOLAIR, University of the Philippines, November 2004.

The table above shows the growth and decline in government employment. It shows that from 1985 until 2003, there has been a downward trend in the number of government employees. Though there has been an increase from 2003 to 2001, it was not that significant. The decreasing number of government employees has resulted to more work being distributed to a smaller number of workforce. This means doing extra tasks beyond one's job description.

Privatization Policy of the Government

Privatization of public facilities is one of the major components of the past and present administrations' development programs. As a result of this action of the government, there has been massive laying-off of government personnel resulting to more jobless Filipinos. The human cost of privatization is heavy. When the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) was privatized, 4,600 of the original 10,000 government personnel were already out of jobs due to two waves of early retirement plans initiated by its administration, even before the privatization. The rest were initially absorbed by the concessionaires but after six months found themselves out of work again for various reasons leaving only a handful who were hired on a contractual basis.⁹ Other government institutions have also followed, partially or fully, like

the National Power Corporation which has already privatized its transmission services to TransCo. The Philippine Airlines, Philippine National Bank and more are in line.

Beyond mass lay-off of affected employees, the issue of privatization is a policy that exacts heavy burden to the Filipino people. It also puts the security of the country at risk. By transferring the control of public service institutions providing basic services to the people in the hands of the private sector the government abandons the levers of national development to the business sector especially to the foreign multinationals. Access to public service then would be defined by the people's capacity to pay. With the continuing inflation and the worsening economic situation basic social services will become less accessible to the ordinary Filipino.

Privatization per se has its use if it is done within the context of developing a good balance of participation between the state, the private sector and the civil society. The capital and the technology that the business sector have could greatly help to propel development. However, the privatization that is happening in the Philippines today is an imposition of external institutions like the IMF-World Bank.

Privatization and commercialization of public services have been central components of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) foisted by the bank to indebted Third World countries. These programs have systematically redirected public spending away from services such as health and education towards servicing debt and subsidizing export businesses which are often foreign owned.¹⁰

Unstable and Mismanaged Public Sector Insurance System

The future of the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is causing much worry among government employees. Many fear that the GSIS may no longer be able to meet its obligations to its members in the years to come because of talks of mismanagement of funds, poor business decisions and graft and corruption. If this happens many members who have religiously paid their obligations from their hard-earned money will be deprived of support in their years of retirement.

Officials in the agency have vehemently denied these talks and have continuously assured the public that the GSIS is very stable. But it is also an open knowledge that GSIS officials are receiving exorbitant salaries and allowances and other benefits which are also enjoyed by their families. Some of its major investments are said to have flopped because of poor business forecasting. Time and again, the agency hugs the limelight because of questionable activities involving the use of its funds.

There were many cases of delayed releases of loans and even retirement pay in the last few years which are attributed to the agency's efforts to computerize its system.

Declining Budget for Social Services and Subsidy for Public Services

Over the years, there has been a decline in the budget allocations for basic social services and this has put much pressure on public sector workers to provide quality public services on a very tight budget. Such situation puts government workers, especially front-line workers, at risk of verbal, mental and emotional attacks by their officers who exact quality performance from them and from dissatisfied clientele who expect quality public service.

This condition leads to further deterioration of their working conditions, salaries, and benefits taking its toll on the mental, emotional and physical health of government workers.

The next table shows the amount of budget allocation the government has for every Filipino in terms of basic social services. It could be observed that the amounts are unrealistically low especially in the field of health and education.

Table 3. Real Per Capita Government Expenditure on Social Services
1998-2003 (Based on 2000 Prices)

Service	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Housing	48	61	115	22	19	19
Social Security & Employment	221	223	202	166	171	151
Health	387	364	376	331	327	392
Education	1761	1675	1608	1516	1505	1455

Source: PIDS Discussion Paper No. 2003-17

Graft and Corruption in Many Government Agencies

Graft and corruption is already a system in the bureaucracy; it is embedded in the different echelons of organizations from the topmost to the lowest rung. It poses a major problem to the government because it eats up large chunks of government funds which should be used for basic social services. Estimates say that as much as Php203.3 billion or \$4 Billion of potential revenue is lost due to graft and corruption. ¹¹

Among government agencies, the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) is perceived to be one of the most corrupt. The study done by the University of the Philippines on the projects of the DPWH stated that corruption occurred in the entire road-building process, from contract bidding up to payment for completed projects. Their analysis also showed that the corruption involved about Php 1 million per project, yet this is still too small compared to multi-million peso projects. ¹²

Such kind of system impacts greatly on the quality of infrastructures that are built. Because the work is given to private contractors, the cost of "grease money" given to different officials is factored in the total cost of the project. And, this usually results to the use of substandard materials or unfinished infrastructures.

To compensate for lack of revenues, the government has resorted to declaring more taxes, making the lives of ordinary people more miserable. This is

greatly felt by government workers because income taxes are automatically withheld.

When news of corruption in particular agencies get to the eye of the public, the whole agency is subjected to scrutiny, making every member a suspect of the crime, resulting to deterioration of morale and self-esteem.

Public Sector Unionism (in the Philippines)

An Overview

Its definition and purpose

In the context of labor relations a public sector union is an organization of government employees established for the promotion and advancement of their interests. It helps to promote harmonious relationship between the rank and file employees and the management.

It acts as a force to compel the management to faithfully observe the democratic processes relating to the merit system. It can also influence the enactment of laws which will further protect and uplift employees' welfare.

The union also serves as the government employees' negotiating agent for improved terms and conditions of work, particularly those which are not fixed by law.

Legal Basis

Government employees have an inherent right to self-organization, this is clearly stated in the constitution. The constitutional guarantee is clearly stated in three separate articles in the Philippine Constitution of 1987, these are:

Section 8, Article III (on Bill of Rights) states that:

"The right of the people, including those employed in the public and private sectors, to form unions, associations or societies for purposes not contrary to law shall not be abridged."

Section 2(5), Article IX-B (on Constitutional Commissions):

"The right to self-organization shall not be denied to government employees."

Section 3, Article XIII (on Social Justice and Human Rights):

"It shall guarantee the rights of all workers to self-organization, collective bargaining and negotiations, and peaceful concerted activities, including the right to strike in accordance with the law."

The right to join an association/union includes the right to leave and cancel his/her membership with said organization or to abstain from joining one.

In pursuance of the constitutional guarantee to the right to self-organization, then President Corazon C. Aquino, in the exercise of her legislative powers, issued on June 1, 1987 Executive Order No. 180 providing the guidelines for the exercise of the right of government employees to organize.

Scope of Membership

In a paper written by Atty. Anicia Marasigan-de Lima entitled "The Role of Public Sector Unionism in the Promotion of Transparency Accountability in the Public Sector," she clarified the scope of membership of a public sector union and the process of its formulation.

Rank and file employees are eligible to become members of public sector employees' unions. Casual or contractual employees cannot organize but may join or assist employees' unions during their period of employment.

Employees whose functions are managerial, policy-determining or primarily confidential in nature are not eligible for membership. Excluded also are employees involved in security matters of the State like the Armed Forces of the Philippines, police officers, firemen and jail guards. However, they may form their own associations and can have them registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Process in Union Formation

There are two (2) major processes involved in the formation of a union, these are: registration; and, accreditation. Registration is a joint function of the Bureau of Labor Relations (BLR) of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the CSC. Registration gives official existence to the union so as to be entitled to the rights and privileges provided under Executive Order no 180.

For an application for registration to be given due course, it must be signed by at least 10% of the employees in the organizational unit which the applicant seeks to represent.

The process of accreditation follows. Accreditation gives the registered union the right to be the sole and exclusive negotiating agent of the rank and file employees on terms and conditions of employment not fixed by law.

After the union has been accredited, it can proceed towards entering and concluding a Collective Negotiations Agreement (CNA).

Negotiations between the union and the management can encompass terms and conditions on employment not defined or fixed by law. Examples of these can be, schedules of vacation leave, work assignment of pregnant women, provisions for protection and safety, facilities for handicapped personnel, first-aid medical services and supplies, family planning service for women, physical fitness programs, social and athletic activities and facilities.

Despite the limitations in the items that can be negotiated, the parties involved are not barred from submitting proposals to higher authorities to improve the conditions of their employment.

Brief Profile of Public Sector Unions

From 1987 until 2003, a total of 1,263 public sector unions all over the country have been registered (refer to Table 4). Of the total number of unions registered, only 32.54% or 411 were accredited and only 89 or 21.65% of these accredited unions have registered CNAs.

The figures below show that the number of existing unions is small compared to the total number of government workers. Many government employees are not yet organized and there is still much to be done in terms of reaching out to other public sector workers. The figures also imply that there is a need to continuously capacitate and strengthen the existing unions so that they may be able to fully represent their members and be able to negotiate strongly with the management as attested by concluded CNAs.

Table 4. Registered/Accredited Unions and registered CNAs by Region

REGION	1987 to 2003		
	Registered Unions	Accredited Unions	Registered CNA
National Capital Region	328	158	50
Cordillera Administrative Region	44	15	0
Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao	2	0	0
Region I	56	9	2
Region II	57	16	1
Region III	71	27	0
Region IV	132	42	5
Region V	64	16	3
Region VI	73	11	3
Region VII	82	22	5
Region VIII	87	25	8
Region IX	47	4	0
Region X	53	15	0
Region XI	100	32	7
Region XII	50	16	3
Caraga	17	3	2
TOTAL	1,263	411	89

Source: "The Role of Public sector Unionism in the Promotion of Transparency and Accountability in the Public Sector", Anicia Marasigan -de Lima, 2003

The data also shows that the highest number of registered unions are in the areas of NCR, Region IV and Region XI. Since these are all "center cities", the figure could imply that organizing work for government workers are concentrated in areas proximate to the "hubs" of government, industrial and commercial activities. There is a need to move further to more interior places to reach more public sector workers.

The most number of registered unions come from the national government agencies and the local government units registering 38.80% and 35.63% respectively (Refer to Table 5).

Table 5. Registered and Accredited Unions by Sector (2003)

Sector	Registered	Accredited	W/CNAs
National Government Agencies	490	154	34
Local Government Units	450	135	25
GOCCs	155	64	20
SUCs	168	58	10
TOTAL	1263	411	89

Source: "The Role of Public sector Unionism in the Promotion of Transparency and Accountability in the Public Sector", Anicia Marasigan -de Lima, 2003

A lot still has to be done to advance public sector unionism. Continuous education, organizing and consultations must be done to advocate for the importance of having a union to represent the public sector workers so that their rights can be protected and their employment conditions be continuously improved not only for their own benefits but including that of their families.

The Attack on Public Sector Workers and their Unions

The Rationalization Program of the Philippine Government

The greatest issue being confronted by many government employees at present is the implementation of the Rationalization Program which is the major strategy of the present administration in its efforts to reengineer the bureaucracy. By virtue of Executive Order 366 the government hopes to cut back expenses and make public service more effective and efficient.

Many public sector workers however, believe otherwise, and many public sector workers' unions continue to criticize and challenge President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's Rationalization Program because its implementation will cause massive displacement of government workers and there are no clear safety nets in place to help the would be displaced workers.

Below are important points about the Rationalization Program as explained in the PSLINK's "Trade Unionists Guide to the Rationalization Program."

What is the meat of EO 366?

Executive Order 366 refers to the Rationalization Program (RP) which aims to make the government focus its efforts on vital/core functions and enhance effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of public services. Specifically, it aims to promote and establish effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and transparency in the bureaucracy. It is expected to help improve delivery and support systems and to refocus resources to priority areas.

There are four (4) reasons being cited for re-structuring: 1) some of the structures in the bureaucracy have outlived their usefulness, while some have duplicate/overlapping functions with other offices; 2) technological changes have reduced the workload of personnel; 3) core functions of the bureaucracy have shifted; and 4) there have been changes in work systems.

Coverage of the RP

The RP will cover all departments of the executive branch including all agencies and GOCCs. While it is not mandatory, the Legislature, Judiciary and State Universities and Colleges may voluntarily apply the parameters of the program if they opt to review their respective operations and organization. The military, police, teachers and health workers are excluded.

Implementation of the RP

The RP officially starts upon the effectivity of the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of EO 366 dated October 4, 2004.

To manage the preparations and initial implementation of the RP, Change Management Teams (CMT) will be created in each department by their Department Secretaries and equivalent agency heads. A CMT shall have at least one representative from the Department's accredited union. In the absence of an accredited union, the rank and file employees shall elect one through an assembly organized for that purpose. Sub-Change Manage-

ment Teams (Sub-CMTs) for different organizational level or areas of concern may be created and each Sub-CMT must have at least one (1) union or rank and file representative sitting as a member.

The CMTs are tasked to: 1) conduct a strategic review of the operations and organization of all component units of the Department; 2) identify the core functions, programs, activities, and projects of the department and its agencies; 3) identify the functions, programs, activities which can be strengthened and where more resources need to be channeled; 4) prepare a Rationalization Plan for the whole Department, including the agencies and GOCCs/GFIs attached to or under its administrative supervision, for the review and endorsement of the DBM and subsequent approval by the President; 5) conduct consultation meetings with the affected personnel and other stakeholders on the effort; 6) oversee the actual implementation of the Rationalization Plan; 7) mitigate the impact of the rationalization effort; and 8) coordinate and consolidate the process and outputs of the Sub-CMTs

Essential Components of the RP

- a. Core functions, programs, activities, services
- b. Shifts in policy directions, functions, programs, and activities
- c. Areas for downsizing/phasing out
- d. Areas for strengthening
- e. Shifts in organizational structure, staffing and resource allocation
- f. Financial projections to include savings
- g. Internal and external communication plan indicating specific methods/strategies.

Options for Affected Government Personnel

The RP offers some options for affected government personnel. These were outlined in a paper presented by Atty. Anicia Marasigan-de Lima during a dialogue held at the UP-SOLAIR on July 6, 2005.

All personnel who occupy positions declared to be non-core, overlapping, irrelevant or redundant may be affected by RP. After the strategic review has

been done by the CMT and the positions and concerned personnel that must be streamlined have been determined, the personnel will be properly notified of the actions to be taken regarding his/her employment. All personnel who will be affected can choose from two options.

Option 1 - remain in the government service and be placed in other agencies needing additional personnel. The process entails the following:

- Affected personnel shall submit to the Agency Personnel Officer three personal priority areas for reassignment

Wait for the results of the matching process, where CSC will match among others, position, qualification and skills of the affected personnel with the needs of priority agencies s/he has chosen for his/her re-assignment.

- Re-assignment by CSC to other agencies needing additional personnel within two months.
- Compensation of placed personnel to be transferred to recipient agency, except those reassigned to LGUs.

No diminution in salary and benefits except allowances for function specific activities.

Position of transferred personnel in recipient agency is co-terminus with the incumbent head.

Placed personnel has full rights to all benefits available to other government employees, including CNA incentives. In case there is a difference between the CNA benefits in the mother and in the recipient agency, the personnel may enjoy the larger benefits for one year.

- Personnel who later objects to a new assignment, deemed retired or separated shall be paid retirement, separation or unemployment benefits applicable without the appropriate incentive.
- In case the affected personnel is not reassigned to an agency after two (2) months, he/she shall be transferred to the CSC office nearest to his/her residence and remain in the CSC manpower pool until a match is found.

Compensation of the affected personnel placed in the CSC manpower pool will be transferred by the DBM from the mother agency to the CSC.

- After satisfying the requirements of the national government agencies, the CSC may explore the possibility of reassigning affected personnel to LGU administered schools and hospitals.

Option 2 – avail of voluntary retirement/separation package with the appropriate incentives itemized below:

- Retirement gratuity under RA 1616 and refund of GSIS retirement premiums, without incentive.
- Benefits under RA 660 or RA 8291, plus the following:
 1. 1/2 month of present basic salary for every year of government service for those with 20 years of government service and below.
 2. 3/4 month of basic salary for every year of government service, computed starting from 1st year, for those with 21-30 years of government service.
 3. 1 month of present basic salary for those with more than 30 years of service computed starting from first year of service.
 4. Separation Gratuity plus incentive for those with less than three years of government service plus incentive.
 5. Commutation of accumulated compensatory overtime credits for retired/separated personnel

Apart from the benefits cited above, the retired or separated personnel can also claim the following:

- Refund of PAG-IBIG contributions pursuant to RA 7742 and in accordance with existing rules and regulations of the Home Development Mortgage Fund (HDMF)
- Commutation of unused Vacation and Sick Leave Credits
- Commutation of Accumulated Compensatory Credits (subject under CSC-DBM Joint Circular No. 2, 04 Oct 2004) but not to exceed 120 hours.

***Efficiency or Deficiency?
(the effects of the RP)***

1. Displacement of public sector workers

Many groups of concerned individuals and public sector workers strongly oppose and challenge the implementation of the RP. Despite the assistance programs that will be put in place for the would be displaced government employees from the various agencies, the fact still remains that it will cause massive displacement of government workers affecting not only the government workers themselves but including their families.

The RP is so untimely. The economic situation of most government employees and the Filipino population in general is already dismal due to unabated increases in the cost of basic utilities, basic social services and basic goods and commodities. Depriving them of their only means of livelihood is tantamount to depriving them of their right to live, and this can be considered a violation of their human rights.

While it is true that there is a need to improve the quality of public services in the country, streamlining among the rank and file employees is not necessarily the answer. In fact, streamlining might be needed more at the higher echelons of the government to eradicate positions which were created unnecessarily for political appointees. Doing so would relieve the government from maintaining individuals who are being paid ludicrously big amounts of salaries and allowances while doing nothing much.

The Office of the President is guilty of this "crime". The President has the appointive power over all members of the career executive service from the rank of provincial director or department service chief up. Altogether, according to the Career Executive Service Board (CESB), the President has the power to name people to 3, 175 career executive positions in various government departments and agencies.

In addition, 2,488 positions in 60 government owned and controlled corporations are subject to presidential approval. Therefore, the President can wield some influence over the appointees of his/her appointees down the ladder of the bureaucracy or to a thousand other positions.

This practice strongly affects the quality of public service as it hinders the bureaucracy from being professionalized. When personal whims of government officials become the basis for appointing selected people to choice government positions rather than the merits and qualifications of prospective applicants to a position, attempts to form a professional corp of civil servants will always fail. As appointees are beholden to their political patrons for their posts, they view government merely as an employment agency, and a government post simply a reward, rather than a responsibility.¹³

2. Options that may not be options at all

For would be affected public sector workers there are two options to choose from; 1) to seek transfer to another agency, or 2) to retire or resign voluntarily. The first option is quite questionable if the RP will be implemented in all government agencies excluding the military, police, education and health agencies. It means that the options to seek transfer is very limited because of few open positions available plus the problem of matching skills. Therefore, there is no assurance that a prospective transferee will be accommodated in his/her target agency.

Option 2, seemingly, may be a better option because if a government worker decides to retire or resign voluntarily s/he will receive compensations and benefits that can all be converted into cash. However, with the current state of the Philippine economy, it would be very hard for a retired government worker to hold on to his/her money as it may be eaten up by the cost of daily living. If s/he decides to embark on any entrepreneurial initiative s/he may not be able to compete with other businesses because of limited capital or it may not be able to absorb the impact of an ever changing business climate in the country.

3. Assistance Programs which are short-lived

To help the would be displaced government workers several assistance programs are available:

- alternative skills or livelihood trainings thru the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Technical Education and Skills Authority (TESDA) and Technology and livelihood Resource Center (TLRC);
- credit assistance through the Cooperative Development Authority (CDA), Small Business Guarantee and Finance Corporation (SBGFC), Quedan and Rural Credit Guarantee Corporation, National Livelihood Support Fund, and Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP);
- job facilitation in the private sector, local or overseas, with the help of the Bureau of Local Employment-Department of Labor and Employment (BLE-DOLE), and Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA).
- fund management/investment services with the assistance of Land Bank, Development Bank of the Philippines and the Bureau of Treasury;
- employee counseling to be provided by personnel officers who will be trained by counseling institutions.

In the last two decades, numerous livelihood assistance programs have already been implemented by different agencies in various sectors. Some have prospered but most failed because the success of any livelihood initiative depends on several factors. Enough capital, appropriate skills, proper support programs especially in the marketing aspect, appropriate technology and a supportive environment are very important. Displaced employees may have some capital to start with but since they have lost their steady source of income the tendency would be to get their daily sustenance from the same funds eventually depleting it and the project folding up.

Credit assistance may be tapped from institutions offering such support but this would entail financial obligations from the borrowers in terms of paying for the principal and its interest. Apart from this, loan applications also involve a lot of paperwork and require additional resources in terms of time and money for follow-ups.

Job facilitation will definitely help in providing alternative work but there may be limitations in terms of age requirements as private companies set age limits. Likewise, there will be very limited job opportunities

since the private sector has also been doing its own streamlining through job contractualization, sub-contracting and labor flexibilization. These schemes have contributed largely to the country's problems of underemployment and unemployment which were pegged at 20.5% and 7.7% respectively in July of 2005 or an actual figure of 6,660,000 underemployed and 2,715,000 unemployed, according to the National Statistics Office.

Facilitating job employment overseas may not be easy as it seems. There is the big amount of placement fees to consider which will eat up a large chunk of their already limited funds. Job orders from abroad are seasonal and usually require specific skills. At present the demand is on health care and caregiving. Many Filipinos, including doctors, who want to go abroad have enrolled in caregiving courses. Many of our nurses and other medical related course graduates have gone abroad for better job opportunities. From 1999 to 2004, it is estimated that over 50,000 Filipino nurses had left the country to work in hospitals, home for the elderly and other rehabilitation facilities in the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America.

This exodus of Filipinos to other countries deprives the Philippines of skilled and competent workers specially in the areas of basic social services like health and education. In a recent study done by the Association of Hospitals in the Philippines, over 1,000 tertiary and secondary hospitals have already closed for lack of personnel. This is a big cause for alarm specially in a country like the Philippines where health services is already much challenged.

4. Brain drain in the country

With very limited job opportunities in the country, the only remaining option for those who will be separated from government service but still must/would like to work, will be going abroad. In 2002, according to POEA statistics, around 2,383 OFWs were deployed daily to other countries.

This has almost doubled today with the continuing displacement of both the public and private sector workers. Many young and highly skilled Filipino professionals are forced to accept low-end jobs in highly

alized countries. Such trend results to deskilling of the country's human resources while draining the economy of highly-skilled workers and professionals.¹⁴

This situation has tremendous effects also on the quality of family relationships. Absentee parenting has led to numerous social problems especially among the children and even among parents/partners, both for the one who went abroad and the one who was left in the country.

5. Worsen poverty

Displacement of public sector workers will definitely add up to an already ballooned number of unemployed Filipinos which was already 7.7% of the total labor force as of July 2005 (National Statistics Office). Joblessness coupled with unabated increases in the cost of utilities, basic commodities and basic social services is more than enough punishment for an ordinary Filipino who is now barely able to eat regular meals.

Recommendations

The national government should improve its public service delivery

For the past 23 years, debt servicing has been eating up a big chunk of the country's budget. From 2002-2004, the average expenditure percentage share for the debt servicing was 28.29% as compared to 19.54% for economic services and 29.64% for social services.¹⁵ At a glance, it may seem to be at par with the share for social services but it should be noted that the budget for social services will still be divided further to different sub-sectors like education, health and other social services.

This manner of allocating budget is devastating to public services. It deprives the public sector of much needed funds to maintain and sustain basic services to a growing population. It causes tremendous demoralization to public sector workers who are in the forefront of public service delivery. The quality of public service can only be as good as the state of the public sector workers. If public service must improve, then it has to start with the creation of an empowering and quality working conditions for public sector workers to be motivated and become more productive.

Policies on budget allocation should be reviewed and reconsidered. Providing a better budget for social services will give the sector an opportunity to acquire much needed modern facilities and supplies. Likewise, a better allocation for economic services will also allow better support for local business initiatives that can spur the strengthening of the domestic market and the economy.

Develop a better compensation and incentive package for public sector workers

The rate of inflation has been increasing over the last five years resulting to higher prices of basic commodities. Consequently this has pushed higher the cost of daily requirement for Filipino families which was estimated to be Php 586.99 for a family of six in July 2004.¹⁶

Meanwhile, the salary of public sector workers remains the same as pegged by the SSL. The current salary rates are inadequate to meet the minimum daily needs for a decent living. This has become a push factor for many skilled and highly educated public sector workers to leave the government service and move to the private sector or seek better job opportunities in other countries.

Strengthen relationship with public sector workers' unions by encouraging social dialogue

Good governance can be achieved better if it involves all stakeholders in the process of decision-making. It allows transparency in all processes and provides a venue for exchange of ideas, information and concerns.

Moreover, social dialogue can be an instrument in fostering a stronger relationship between public sector officials and employees. It can help facilitate a collective process of discussing and analyzing various issues and concerns geared towards developing a better and more responsive governance and consequently a more effective and efficient public service.

The Challenge to Public Sector Workers: Strengthen Public Sector Unions

The Public Sector is in bad shape and the worst is yet to come. With the full implementation of the RP, more government employees will find themselves unemployed and in a constant state of uncertainty in terms of job security. The challenge for non-unionized workers is to join and be organized because labor unions are the only mechanisms they have in fighting for their rights. The CSC can and will only do so much, and its hands will be tied up by government policies that will be imposed upon them.

But the greatest challenge lies with the leaders and members of existing public sector workers' unions. They have the biggest responsibility of informing and mobilizing other public sector workers about the issues. At the same time, they have the responsibility of negotiating and asserting for a more active role and participation in the decisions that will be entered into by the various government agencies in its efforts to reengineer the bureaucracy. Doing so would entail the following tasks:

- **A sustained education and information campaign** about public sector workers' issues especially Executive Order 366 and the RP – the information should reach the farthest government worker because no one will be spared from the effects of EO 366. Understanding the program will help facilitate a clearer understanding of its consequences to their employment and personal lives. A deeper understanding of the issues they will be confronting later will help facilitate their mobilization.
- **Aggressive organizing** to strengthen the existing unions by expanding its membership and its resource base. The number of unionized government workers is still small in relation to its total number. Much effort is needed to reach other government workers.
- **Develop a clear plan of actions** with defined objectives so that actions are geared towards the right direction and every activity serves as a "building block" towards the realization of goals.
- **Have regular assessments**, be sure to assess every work done to draw insights and highlight whatever little gains are made. This helps

develop confidence of members and officers. It also provides inspiration that helps sustain participation among members and officers.

- **Negotiate and assert** for the active participation of the union in the planning, implementation and evaluation processes of the agencies especially on matters that will affect the welfare of all the workers, regardless of whether they are union or non-union members.
- **Assert for a union officer to sit as part of the CMT or Sub-CMTs** to ensure that all issues and concerns of government workers will be seriously considered.
- **Study the structure and programs of the organization.** This will provide unions an in- depth knowledge of how the structure works and what opportunities are present that can be maximized to advance the interest of public sector workers. This will also give the union ideas as to where interventions may be needed.
- **Ensure welfare of the affected personnel** by making sure that assistance programs are indeed in place, with clear guidelines.
- **Be vigilant in examining policies that are being proposed and passed.** Make sure that they are clear in terms of defining jobs and delineating functions to avoid redundancies and duplication of functions.
- **The welfare of the government workers who will be left in the service must also be ensured.** Therefore a careful study of their situation and their needs is necessary and interventions must be in place so that impacts of future similar actions will be cushioned.
- **Push for a clear Human Resource and Career Development Program** for those remaining in the public service so that their knowledge and skills will continue to be developed, preparing them for better positions and bigger responsibilities.
- **Oppose retitling of positions** in the civil service because doing so will result to unnecessary changes and will affect the career path of civil servants.

- **Insist on a comprehensive job description of positions.** This will help avoid passing on unrelated jobs to a government worker and protect him/her from work overload.
- **Work towards quality public service** by developing strong coordination with the officers of the agency and other stakeholders.
- **Link up with other unions (local and international),** share experiences and develop areas of coordination not only in the public sector but in any other sector which can be of help. Push public sector unionism to a greater height and make it a movement. Only when public sector workers are united and one in direction can it become capable of influencing programs and policies.

End Notes:

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A Special Feature: Writing for a Refereed Journal

Josefina M. Rolle

Introduction

At the University of the Philippines, research and publication are imperative in pursuing the University's goal of "contributing to the growth, dissemination and application of knowledge" (1984 Revised Code of the University of the Philippines, Chapter 1, Art. 2). It is U.P.'s responsibility "to ensure high academic standards in its primary functions of instruction and research. Extension and other activities must be supportive of these functions" (Chapter 1, Art. 6). Hence, along with teaching, faculty members are expected to undertake researches which will generate new knowledge and updated information to support their teaching. Subsequently, publication of the research results is encouraged.

For UP faculty members, coming up with refereed publications is a vital requirement during their stay in the University. Publication in a refereed journal or book in addition to teaching and extension activities are the bases for promotion and academic recognition of UP faculty members. The minimum qualifications of faculty members with rank of Assistant Professor and higher include "undertaking research and creative works and publication in reputable refereed journals/books" (Faculty Manual Update, 2005). Furthermore, "refereed publications (journal article, book, or book chapter)" is a source of evidence in measuring the research performance of faculty members (Faculty Manual Update, 2005). The Up-or-Out and Tenure Rules require a "refereed publication with the faculty as sole or lead author" to qualify for tenure (1194th Meeting of the Board of Regents, 2005).

Very recently, the Research, Extension and Professional Staff (REPS), the academic non-teaching sector, was also required to come up with published materials as a prerequisite for professional promotion. The University's recognition of the REPS as an academic sector obliged them to follow the publication requirement mandated on faculty members. Producing published materials therefore, is a must not only for faculty but for REPS as well.

There are three major reasons for undertaking a scholarly publication as a major activity in an academic setting. First, it expands the body of knowledge of both the writer and the readers with the new findings and results of the research conducted. Second, particularly for those in the teaching profession, it expands the relationship of research to teaching by using the knowledge gained to impart new and updated information. Third, it develops critical thinking skills as the writer applies the theories, analyzes the results and draws conclusions in the conduct of research (Witt, 1995).

Yet, getting an article to be published, particularly in a scholarly journal, is tedious. The process a writer has to go through before an article is accepted requires countless time and effort. Manuscripts are required to undergo review or refereeing, and most often, the writer would be required to do major revisions or sometimes worse, the article would totally be rejected. One may also assert that writing for publication in a refereed journal requires certain skills and expertise. Hence, this is not very encouraging for many.

Nevertheless, it is equally rewarding for the writer once she/he sees her/his article in print. And like any other skill, writing for publication can be developed. Familiarity with the publication process would be the initial step in gaining confidence to try to produce a publishable material. A positive attitude to comments and criticisms from the referees as well as from other readers is also very vital to successfully come up with a scholarly publication. This is particularly important in writing for a refereed journal.

With the foregoing in mind, it is deemed proper to write about the steps/stages in the publication process and give helpful tips on "getting published." This paper will focus its discussion on "how" an article is published in a refereed journal, including some instructions on writing a publishable material, the refereeing process, rewriting/revising and presswork.

It will however be limited to printed publications and will not include the more modern way of publishing by electronic imprint where even refereed materials can be accessed thru the internet. It does not also intend to delve into the argument on giving premium to international publications vis-à-vis local publications. Hence, articles written in Filipino are covered in this process.

The information integrated in this paper are based on written materials on the topic and experiential accounts of the publication process by the Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO), the publication arm of the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD).

The Publication Process

Scholarly publications are expected in the academe. These include journals, monographs, and books which contain research data, reviews of literature, tutorials, case studies, and other types of materials that have lasting relevance. Published information may become outdated or proven inaccurate but the important thing is that the manuscript presents the "current state of art or knowledge at the time of its publication" (ASHA, 1993).

Journal articles are usually based on actual researches done. The journal becomes the venue for sharing the research conducted and its results to a wider audience. At the University of the Philippines, most colleges and units have their own journals and usually welcome materials prepared by external writers. The Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research Development (OVCRD) publishes three (3) refereed journals: the Humanities Diliman, Science Diliman, and the Social Science Diliman. Other journals in UP Diliman, to mention a few, include the *Kasarinlan* of the Third World Studies of the College of Social Sciences and Philosophy, the *Review of Women's Studies* of the University for Women's Studies, the *Philippine Review of Economics* of the School of Economics, the *Plaridel* of the College of Mass Communication and the *Philippine Journal of Labor and Industrial Relations* of the School of Labor and Industrial Relations. They accept materials from outside contributors. A completed research therefore can always find a possible publication outlet which considers the subject within its realm.

Particular guidelines are set by the publishing unit which should be consciously followed in preparing the document for publication. The guidelines may vary according to the policies of the publishing unit. Some publishing colleges/units strictly stipulate specific requirements which include the length of the article (number of words), format of the title and body of the manuscript including the margins, illustrations, tables, footnotes and bibliography.

The editor, upon receiving a material for publication initially assesses if it conforms to the set guidelines. He also "looks for the minimum level of readability and appropriateness of methods utilized" (Witt, 1995).

Substance or content and writing style are the two most important considerations of a good publication material. A scholarly manuscript should contain accurate, updated, comprehensive and relevant information as well as demonstrate logic and clear thinking. More specifically, research reports should be clear on its scientific methodology and statistical analysis, reviews of literature should be comprehensive, accurate and relevant, tutorials should be clearly and accurately presented and case studies should be unique and have significant contribution to the subject study (ASHA, 1993). For a research article, a clear discussion of the methodology is very important to show that the study was conducted in a scientific manner and meticulous analyses of findings was done (Niederhauser, et.al 2004).

Below are the qualities of a good manuscript. This is derived from Bartol and quoted by Calfee and Valencia of the American Psychological Association as the 13 flaws that commonly lead to a need to revise or to outright rejection of a material:

- adequate literature review, not too much, not too little
- appropriate citations that are relevant to the topic
- clear introductory section that facilitates presentation of issues
- clear research questions or description of the topic of investigation
- adequate sample description
- adequate description of methodology, sufficiently detailed for replication
- adequate account of measures, with known instruments
- unquestionable statistical analysis
- appropriate statistical techniques

- well crafted discussion which is more than repetition of results
- discussions and conclusions within the boundaries of findings
- good writing style
- reasonable length

An article which passed the editor's initial assessment is then forwarded for refereeing or peer review. All academic journals are required to undergo this. Peer review is defined as "the assessment by experts of the material submitted for publication and is a critical component of the publication process in all major journals as it serves to validate the quality of literature published in them." The process is particularly expected to identify defects on originality and scientific credibility as well as writing style. Important information which are lacking shall likewise be detected (Gitanjali 2001).

Referees/reviewers are usually chosen because of their expertise in the subject. Those who have published works on a similar topic, much more if their work is cited in the manuscript, are most likely to be selected. Moreover, a reviewer should possess a critical mind and the ability to communicate clearly, as well as be fair in her/his assessment. She/He should have a good academic background and is updated with the current developments in her/his particular field of interest. It is also important that she/he has the interest as well as adequate time to do the review (ASHA 1993; Gitanjali, 2001).

Referees focus their assessment on the literature review, the contribution to existing knowledge, the methodology, results, conclusions and other implications. More specifically, in reading the manuscript, the referees look for relevance, importance and interest to the readers.

One form of peer review is the "double blind" refereeing where the reviewer/referee and the writer are unknown to each other. This is expected to promote objectivity and assess the manuscript solely on its merits, as well as allow the reviewer to be open and candid on her/his comments. Sometimes the "single blind" refereeing is employed where the reviewer knows the writer or the writer knows the reviewer. This happens when the writer suggests possible referees for their articles upon the request of the editor. There are also a few cases where both the writer and the referee know the identity of each other. Gitanjali (2001) gave some additional favorable points for this last type such as "promoting accountability, encouraging civility, and generally improving the quality of the paper."

Generally, one to three reviewers/referees are chosen for each manuscript. A reviewer is usually given 4-6 weeks to do the review. If the reviewer feels he cannot finish the task during the given period, she/he is expected to inform the editor so that another reviewer can be chosen to go over the manuscript. The decision of the reviewer may be one of the following: 1) outright rejection; 2) revise and submit for reconsideration; 3) conditional acceptance or accept with major revision; and 4) outright acceptance or accept with minor revision (Calfée and Valencia, n.d.; CITE, 2004; Witt, 1995).

Very few manuscripts are published as they are initially submitted. The reviewed articles are sent back to the editor who will, in turn, discuss the result with the writers.

Outright rejection of an article most often results from flaws in the substance and/or methodology employed. Deficiencies in substance may be due to unclear research problem, inadequate theoretical foundation or insufficient tying up of information and drawing of conclusion. Methodological problems include inaccurate sampling and inappropriate statistical design and analysis. In such cases, the writer should not be totally discouraged and take the "judgment" as a learning experience. She/He may opt to rewrite the manuscript based on the comments given and submit to another publication group. Depending on the viewpoint of the editor and referees, a rejected article may still be published (Calfée and Valencia, n.d.; CITE, 2004).

Manuscripts which are advised to be "revised and resubmitted" are likewise found to have areas which need significant improvement. The referees however, may have found some positive qualities of the paper which merit a chance to be published. Writers should give serious attention to the referees' comments in revising their article. The article will again go through another round of review to assess if the revised material can be considered for publication (Calfée and Valencia, n.d.; CITE, 2004).

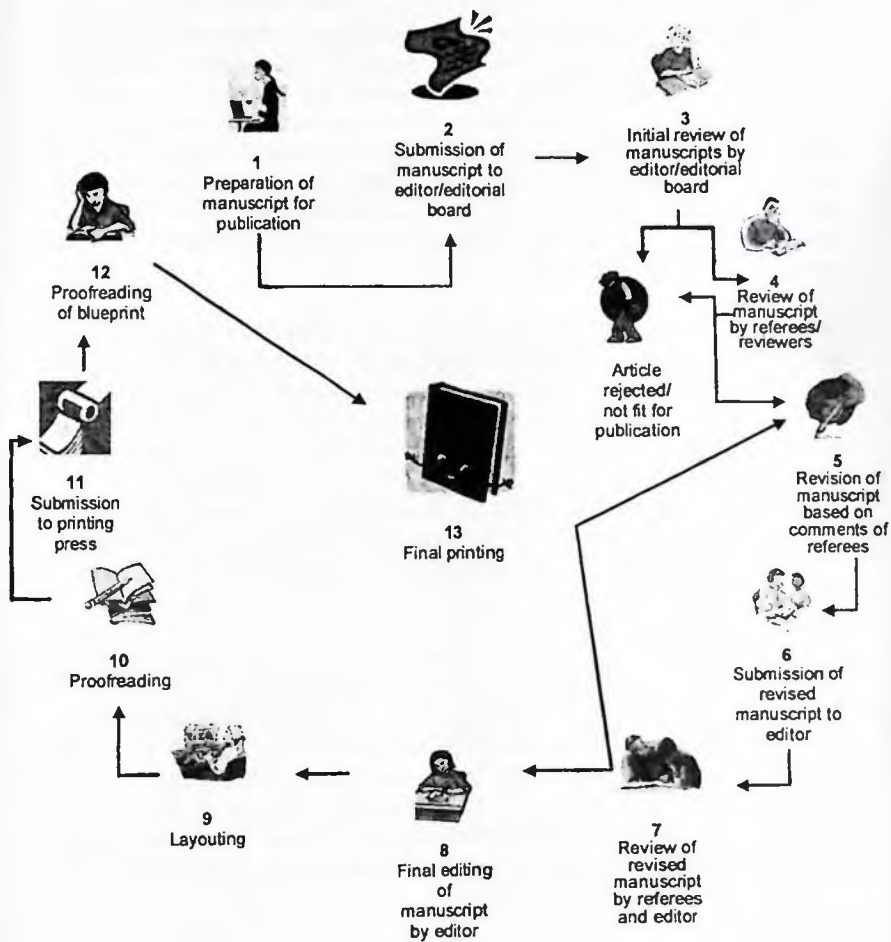
Conditional acceptance of a manuscript needing major revision means the chances of being published is more likely. However, this will still require a review in the key areas of the paper while addressing the comments of the referees conscientiously and thoroughly (Calfée and Valencia, n.d.; CITE, 2004).

Well written scholarly works merit outright acceptance or acceptance with minor revision. After dealing with some minor points, the manuscript is ready for publication (Calfee and Valencia, n.d.; CITE, 2004).

In revising the manuscript, it is very necessary that all the comments are carefully taken into consideration. Unclear points should be discussed with the editor and properly tackled. Should there be comments which the writer considers as irrational or unreasonable, these should likewise be taken up with the editor. Consultations with colleagues will also be helpful to ensure that changes made clearly respond to the points under clarification. Before submitting the revised manuscript, the writer should meticulously go over the paper and make a final check including the spelling and format.

After all the articles are revised, reviewed, edited and accepted for publication, layouting, proofreading and final printing follow. The production staff takes charge of these remaining stages which likewise need extra careful attention. With the meticulous supervision of the editor, the copy for final printing should have a neat and clear layout free from misspelled words and "text runs." Proper choice of a printing press should consider the quality of the finished product, printing cost and capacity to deliver on time. A blueprint before the final printing is necessary to ensure an almost error-free finished product.

From the foregoing discussion, the major steps in producing a refereed journal is illustrated in the following:



Journal Publication Process

The CSWCD Experience

The following is an account of the processes the CSWCD went through in producing the CSWCD Development Journal. The Journal is published annually by the REDO, the publication arm of the College. The information included in this account are taken from the publication records of the office and personal account of the author, a University Researcher and currently in charge of the publication activities of the office. Former publication officers of REDO were also interviewed and past issues of the journals were reviewed in tracing the historical composition of the editorial board and the processes followed.

The CSWCD Development Journal features articles written by faculty and staff, research results as well as student papers. The first issue was produced in 1996. It featured researches on social development which were undertaken by faculty members of the College. The next issue contained papers on social work practice, the changing concept in community development, feminist migration and impact of agricultural programs. These early issues were open to articles prepared by faculty members from the three (3) academic departments: the Department of Social Work, Department of Community Development and Department of Women and Development Studies. Later on, each department and the REDO were assigned to take turns in taking charge of each issue from setting the theme, writing and editing the materials.

At present, the editorial policies and procedures of the College are under review. Meanwhile, the College Executive Board (CEB), composed of the Dean, the College Secretary, the Department Chairs and heads of offices, serves as the editorial board of CSWCD publications. It is noted that the CSWCD holds the copyright for all publications of any department/unit or office of the College.

Articles are initially screened by the issue editor before these are forwarded to the referees for refereeing. Ideally, an article is reviewed by two (2) referees, with at least one coming from other Colleges or outside institutions. The referees are chosen primarily because of their expertise on the topic. While "double blind" refereeing is preferred, there were cases when single blind refereeing had to be employed as when the writer suggested possible referees for their articles. A

refereeing form is provided to the referees to assess the article on whether it is: 1) fit for publication; 2) needs minor revision; 3) needs major revision; or 4) not fit for publication. Each article was reviewed according to quality of research, originality, depth of insights, social relevance and style.

A sample of the refereeing form being used by the CSWCD is shown in the Appendix. This is sent to the referees/reviewers together with the original manuscript and a request letter. The accomplished form is returned to the editor and becomes the basis for accepting or rejecting the submitted manuscripts.

The referees are given two to three weeks to review the article. Afterward, the original manuscript is returned to the editor with the corresponding comments and corrections together with the accomplished refereeing form bearing the evaluation of the referees. Revisions are done by the respective writers based on the comments given. Should the referees consider the article not fit for publication, the paper is not included. It is therefore deemed practical that more papers are considered for refereeing to ensure more publishable articles. The revised materials are reviewed and edited by the editor before forwarding to REDO for layouting and press-work.

Layouting, including proofreading, takes about two weeks. Simultaneously, the printing press is chosen based on the price quoted, quality of output and capacity to deliver on the needed period. A blueprint is available in five (5) working days after the material is given to the printing press. The blueprint is again proofread for any overlooked typographical errors and "text runs". The corrected "camera ready" material is sent back to the printing press for final printing. In 10 working days, the final output is delivered.

Conclusion

While coming up with a published refereed article is not an easy task, it is undoubtedly both personally and professionally rewarding to see an article published. It is also through published materials that academicians particularly, both as writer and reader, expand their body of knowledge which is vital in the pursuit of their profession.

In conclusion, a list of DO's and DONT's in writing for a refereed journal is enumerated below. These guiding points summarize the publication process discussed in this article and are meant to aid writers in producing publishable materials. These are gathered from existing materials on coming up with a good material for publication.

DO's

1. Be confident that anyone can write and publish. Each one has fresh and unique ideas even on the most common topic. There will always be the right journal which will find one's ideas interesting and worthy of publication. Talking to an experienced author who can give advice and tips on how to publish will greatly help (Mee, n.d.).
2. Take time to produce a good manuscript. One needs to give extra time and effort to produce a publishable material. A good material should be well thought of, relevant, and comprehensive (Mee, n.d.).
3. Bear in mind the three (3) major qualities of a good technical paper: clear, concise and coherent. The sentences should be simple, understandable and direct, i.e., not wordy, ambiguous, redundant and should be of moderate length. Use tables and graphs to supplement, instead of duplicate what has been stated in the text. Idioms and unnecessary jargons should be avoided (Hanson, n.d.).
4. Critique your own work. Read and rewrite several times, if needed. Strict attention should be given to good grammar and correct spelling. Proof-read the manuscript well. Typographical errors indicate an incompetent author (Mee, n.d.).
5. Ask colleagues to read and assess your article. Be open to their comments and integrate these in revising the article before submitting for publication (Calfee and Valencia, n.d.; Ross, 2006).
6. Follow strictly the guidelines set by the editorial board. Some journals are very particular about details, which if not followed, could negatively affect the referee's assessment of the manuscript even before it is read. Abide by the prescribed format, work within the required number of pages and be prompt with deadlines (Ross, 2006).

7. Acknowledge and cite sources of data accurately (Ross, 2006). Follow the prescribed bibliographical and annotation format meticulously. Enclose directly quoted passages in quotation marks. Avoid plagiarism.
8. Be persistent in having your manuscript published. Work on the suggestions of reviewers and incorporate the revisions in the final paper.

DON'T's

1. Be offended or discouraged by the comments of the referees/ reviewers. Openness to criticisms/comments from the referees is very vital in coming up with quality publications. Do not take the comments as something meant to insult or put the writer down. Rather take these as constructive remarks which are given merely to help improve one's work. A positive attitude will help inspire and motivate the writers to revise their manuscript promptly and look forward to see it printed (Ross, 2006; Tackett, n.d.).
2. Be obliged to follow all the suggested changes by the referees. Study them well and if you find merit in your ideas, be firm with your arguments. However, acknowledging the comments and politely talking about these with the referees are imperative (Tackett, n.d.).
3. Take a "not fit for publication" assessment from the referee as the final evaluation of one's work. This does not mean that the paper is totally worthless. It is possible that the paper is not within the referee's area of interest or there are other unrelated factors which affected the referee's judgment. Take it as a learning experience. You may opt to rewrite the manuscript based on the comments given and submit to another publication group. Depending on the viewpoint of the editor and referees, a rejected article may still be published (Tackett, n.d.).
4. Submit the same manuscript to more than one journal at the same time. Also refrain from submitting an article which has already been published earlier.

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Appendix A: CSWCD Refereeing Form

Research and Extension for Development Office
College of Social Work and Community Development
University of the Philippines
Diliman, Quezon City

Review Form

Title: _____

_____ 1. The article is fit for publication. (Please explain.)

_____ 2. The article need minor revision. (Please explain.)

_____ 3. The article needs major revision. (Please explain.)

_____ 4. The article is not fit for publication. (Please explain.)

Refereed by:

(Signature of Referee)

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Leticia Salvador-Tojos, Ph. D. is a University Extension Specialist of REDO, CSWCD. As a social development practitioner, she is an active advocate for the improvement of the status and well being of those who have less in life. The article that she wrote mirrors her viewpoint about the conditions that majority of the Filipinos are in: what is happening; why is this happening; and how can we avert this from happening.



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Teresita V. Barrameda is an Assistant Professor at the Department of Women and Development Studies (DWDS), CSWCD. She is also the Coordinator of the DWDS Field Instruction Program. She is a community theater artist since the early 80's.



Josefina M. Rolle is a University Researcher of the REDO, CSWCD. As a researcher, she has undertaken numerous studies which dealt on a range of topics such as child workers, migration, overseas workers, sexual harassment, conflict management as well as program and project evaluation. She now heads the publication desk of REDO.

RESEARCH AND EXTENSION FOR DEVELOPMENT OFFICE (REDO)

The Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO) is the academic non-teaching unit of the CSWCD created in 1991 as a result of the merger between the Office of Research and Publication (ORP) and the Office of Continuing Education and Extension (OCEE) in response to the University's call to integrate and strengthen its main functions of teaching, research and extension.

REDO is committed to promote participatory, pro-poor and gender responsive development processes, programs and services. It conducts and implements research, training and extension services to community leaders, social development practitioners, and members of the academe.

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College of Social Work and Community Development

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Brief History

Initiated as the Social Welfare Section within the Department of Sociology and Social Welfare in 1950 in then College of Liberal Arts, the present College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD) became a separate Department of Social Work by 1961. It evolved into the Institute of Social Work and Community Development in 1969 through R.A. 5174 which was passed in 1967. Its reclassification as a full-fledged college was prompted by the University's move to standardize the nomenclature of academic units performing similar functions. The CSWCD offers graduate and undergraduate programs in both social work and community development, as well as graduate programs in women and development.

Vision Statement. The College of Social Work and Community Development envisions a transformed socio-economic, political, and social structure through the sustained collective participation of all sectors toward a humane, democratic, sovereign, and Filipino society where people are empowered and free to realize their own potentials.

