

Cooperative Projects in the Training of Social Scientists Through the Philippine Social Science Council¹

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Problems of cooperation in the Philippines

The Philippines, a country of 48 million, with a tertiary level student body of approximately one million studying in over 700 tertiary institutions (colleges and universities) faces a problem in the training of its young social scientists.

An assumption made by students of Philippine development studies is that the social sciences play a pivotal role in development (both social and economic and in general the quality of life measured by social indicators) since they provide the necessary data base for policy formulation, programming, and implementation.

The social sciences thus supply the scientific and intellectual infrastructure for the drafting of policy through legislation and for setting down of short-term, medium-term, and long-term targets for the society and the economy. Without this important data base, policy formulation and programming will

be based on a flimsy empirical foundation and the targeted results of development difficult to monitor.

Equally important, in addition to providing data for planning, is the presentation of alternatives for policy choice and strategies for implementation. We have found from painful experience that we cannot import models of development blindly from more developed countries; the social situation in many cases and the prevailing conditions in our country are so different from those wherein these models have been successful that we adopt them at tremendous risk of setting back our progress. Moreover, even technology cannot be imported; we have to choose appropriate technology and even more important adapt technology to our level of scientific and technical competence to achieve the results we want. What works for one country will not necessarily work for our country.

To be able to discover what will work for the Philippines will demand painstaking data gathering and analysis and search for the factors of success that might work in the Philippine condition. Hence, while the data gathering techniques and methodologies of the social sciences have cross-cultural and cross-national validity, their particular combinations and uses are country-specific and must be localized. Indeed,

based on past experience, country-specific data might even suggest new methodologies and new techniques of data gathering and analysis which will enrich metascience in the social disciplines.

For this reason, we have to indigenize the social sciences in the Philippine milieu not only through the training of independent-minded social scientists who have mastered the research skills and techniques of the West but likewise through the liberated and creative use of nontraditional methods of inquiry and discovery procedures. In this thrust towards indigenization, the use of the local language is often a vital tool for research since its use sensitizes us to nuances of meaning and perception which suggest hitherto unexplored lines of inquiry.

Unfortunately, while the needs of social science for development are quite evident, the supply of trained and competent manpower in the Philippines to meet these needs is quite limited.

We have close to 25,000 (SY 1972-1973) tertiary-level faculty in the country but of these only 25% have attained advanced degrees (master's and doctoral), the rest having completed only the first degree (four years beyond secondary education) with some advanced studies towards the master's degree.

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Moreover, the competencies of the faculty differ according to fields of specialization. In the social sciences, especially the "hard" social sciences which call for meticulous empirical data collection and analytic tools of quantification, the number of trained people at the advanced (doctoral) level is quite small.

An on-going directory project of social scientists by the Philippine Social Science Council shows that the number of trained specialists is especially small in such areas as sociology, psychology, demography, statistics, geography and anthropology. More specialists are available in fields such as economics, linguistics, public administration, history, but then most of the country's economists are in private business or government service, relatively few in academia. And while there are quite a number of trained historians in the country, they devote most of their energies at present to administrative functions and teaching and little to research.

Another characteristic of the social science situation in the Philippines is the concentration of most of the country's trained social scientists in the Manila area, in government institutions such as the National Economic Development Authority, the Development Academy of the Philippines, and the Ministry of Human Settlements (and its affiliated institutions), and in the better Manila universities (private and public). Except for a few centers of excellence in specific fields, the training level of social scientists outside of Manila is comparatively low.

The necessary critical mass to provide local advanced training in the social sciences even in Metro Manila oftentimes does not exist, except in a few institutions, since the precious few senior social scientists of the country are scattered in various institutions without benefit of close interaction with their peers for carrying on

advanced training and research.

Often, there is a cognitive dissonance within the social scientist in terms of his loyalty to his profession and his loyalty to his institution, which results in dispersed efforts.

This lack of interaction and relative isolation makes it difficult for funding organizations (both national and international) to choose which from among many conflicting groups and even organizations to fund for needed social research, because of competition among these agencies, which are often inadequately staffed to carry out major research projects and training programs as a result of the dispersal of manpower (and consequent dispersal of energies).

Sending our scholars abroad, usually to the West but more recently to Asia (especially Japan), does not provide a good solution, since this alternative militates against indigenization and since our present social system allows latitude to our citizens to change countries, resulting in an exodus of our scientific manpower. A friend from the Russian Embassy in Manila bluntly stated once, "You are training experts not for yourselves but for capitalist countries and in the process wasting your resources." The drain on our social scientists has not been as serious as the drain on our natural science and especially medical manpower, but it has been a severe constraint on our development. If all the Ph.D.'s we have trained abroad returned, there would be no shortage of senior social scientists in our key universities as there is now.

The Philippine Social Science Council, one attempt to meet the problem of cooperation

In focusing on the Philippine Social Science Council, I would like to stress that the agency itself is incidental to my considerations. I use it merely as a case study. More important is the iso-

lation of factors which are responsible for a modicum of success, for it is these factors which are important in helping us develop a model of cooperation in the social sciences among certain developing countries of the Third World.

The Philippine Social Science Council started as a dream of a group of social scientists in the Philippines, each one an experienced administrator and leader in his own field; it started with an anthropologist (a non local), a demographer, a statistician, a historian, an economist, a geographer, and a lawyer.

The ingredients that are important to focus on as factors contributing to success are the following so far as the "founding fathers" are concerned: (1) people with experience as researchers (2) leaders in their own fields (3) scholars experienced in administration.

By accident, having the lawyer on the initial team helped, for it was the lawyer who obtained the necessary papers for legal incorporation as a legal entity and who went through the often bureaucratic motions demanded by the Securities and Exchange Commission in 1968.

The Philippine Social Science Council was to be a council or grouping not of people but of existing scholarly societies which were legally incorporated in their own right. No autonomy was threatened; it was a federation (in this case, Council, based on the model of the Social Science Research Council of the United States of America) of autonomous scholarly societies which to qualify for membership were to be legal entities in their own right and more important, had to be entities which were "going concerns." This quality of being active was made manifest by regular meetings (annual and periodic meetings of their executive boards) and most important of all, their scholarly publications.

Unwritten but evident throughout was the assumption that those who de-

liberated at the different boards of the Philippine Social Science Council were there as representatives of their disciplines and not of their institutions. While institutional loyalties die hard and while there is a natural self-selection process whereby the most active and the most interested eventually end up as leaders in their own scholarly groups (often from the same institution), what was important was that scholars were on the different committees and councils of the Philippine Social Science Council as representatives of scholarly societies and not of their universities. Their loyalties, at least legally speaking, were elsewhere.

It was the scholarly societies, through their governing bodies, which appointed the members to the governing council (equivalent to membership in the corporation) and it was in turn these governing bodies which elected the members of the executive board, which was the group that met monthly and carried on the business of the council. The governing council determined policy; it was the executive board, usually composed of seasoned administrators in their own right, which oversaw the day-to-day functions of the secretariat under an executive director.

The next most important ingredient was a source of funding, in other words, for developing countries, a patron or a sponsor, since no scholarly society is financially self-sufficient or ever will have enough dues from its members to keep a full-time secretariat going. In fact, considering the relatively poor financial rewards given to most academicians in developing societies, one must count members of such scholarly societies as belonging to the less affluent sector of society.

In economies and societies which are highly centralized and planned and where resources come directly from the State, the expenses for such secretariats become a matter of annual budgeting

and appropriation from the State. However, in societies such as the Philippines, where until now a strict separation between private and public sector has been maintained and where the State has its own priorities, research and scholarly disciplines not being one of them, resources had to be obtained from outside agencies, in this case, from foreign foundations such as the Asia Foundation and the Ford Foundation, as well as local grant-making organizations in the Philippines. It was a symbiosis of a viable group of people with clear intentions and abilities to carry out their projects and an act of faith on the part of the funding agencies which spelled success by providing funds for the secretariat and financial resources for the activities and programs of the council.

The rest is a modest success story by international standards. The secretariat functioned, capable people were selected to man the secretariat, based on their previous experience in research and in working with large research projects. What kept interest in the council going was its ability to fund research (national surveys), make small grants for smaller research projects (usually in their final stages of completion, as projects of individuals or as requirements for degrees) through the discretionary research awards, more substantial grants to senior scholars through the Philippine History project (which allowed for release time to work on the projects) and through research integration projects (which consisted of state-of-the-art reports on specific disciplines based on extensive bibliographical studies), and through training programs. Training programs were of two types: non-degree training programs (carried on over several long vacation periods, our summer) geared specifically to the non-metropolitan areas, to build expertise in the provinces or rural areas; degree programs intended to help students complete the final stages

of their dissertation work and the write-up and presentation of this research through masteral theses and doctoral dissertations. The graduates of the summer institutes became the nuclei, for a network of social science centers located in various regions of the country where students who had completed their training programs could be tapped to help carry on research at the local and regional levels; initially, these national surveys were directed from Manila. For individual scholarly societies, help was provided through provision of grants (from the National Science Development Board) as subsidies for publications and journals; subsidies for the annual conventions of the scholarly groups; and finally, research dissemination services through the establishment of a Central Subscription Service which distributed the journals and publications of scholarly societies and in turn became the clearing house for contact with other scholarly publications abroad. The latter has not only become financially self-sufficient in its operations besides providing significant service; it has likewise been able to generate funds to add to the coffers of the council.

After the founding of the council and the implementation of its start-up programs and plans, the next most significant development took place in 1977 when provision was made for the continuing funding of the secretariat through an endowment from the Ford Foundation and from the Philippine Government through the National Economic Development Authority.

The grant from the Philippine government was significant in that it symbolized a conceptual breakthrough — it was the first time that the Philippine government made a substantial grant for an endowment to a private entity (which expressly sought to maintain its independence and autonomy

and not to become a spokesman for government); it was also the first time that a grant was made for the social sciences, a formal public recognition from the State of the importance of expertise in the social sciences for enlightened policy making and decision.

The secretariat was housed in rented premises since its inception, until this year, when through the overseas cooperative program of the Government of Japan, a permanent secretariat will be established on public land for public purposes but under private management. Surely, for us in the Philippines, this is a structural innovation.

Thus, the main ingredients for the growth in cooperation in the social sciences in our country have been: *people, programs, and pecunia* (or funds). People must conceptualize and execute and implement; other people will ally themselves to an activity or a cause or a project only if the programs are exciting enough to command their interest and devotion, and only when provision for necessary financial wherewithal to execute these programs is made.

A minor item contributing to success is PSSC's acceptance that the laborer is worthy of his hire and that research must be funded and the researcher compensated for his work. Provision is made for meetings to be held at times convenient to our social scientists who are already overburdened with manifold duties mostly from their academic work; hence, most meetings are held at lunch in centrally located areas (traffic is a major problem in Manila) and adequate provision made for transportation (a major consideration as a result of oil prices and because of the congested metropolitan area where transportation is a major consideration in the execution of any project).

Thus the PSSC is a going concern, a grouping of eleven scholarly

societies all represented on the governing council and the executive board, with a permanent secretariat providing services for research dissemination (through its publication of an information bulletin and through its central subscription service), program administration (through various programs including training programs for young social scientists at a national level and through supervision of local and national research projects), liaison with other social science bodies throughout the country and throughout the world, and day-to-day administration. It has become the central clearing house for social science research information and dissemination in the country, for making contacts with other social scientists especially from outside Manila and with social scientists throughout the world as well as the liaison office for all other social science bodies.

In the future, with provision now possible for a building of its own, PSSC's dream is to go into the offering of advanced level social science courses which can lead towards the doctorate on a cooperative basis, with consortium arrangements whereby senior social scientists from the country and within Metro Manila will be able to offer courses in PSSC premises, for recognition and acceptance by all the major graduate schools in the country. In this way the limited pool of senior social scientists with ongoing research will make their talents available to all sectors, independently of institutional affiliations; their services will thus have a multiplier effect for the country. The PSSC does not intend to be a degree-giving institution, merely a physical and social locus for scientists to have an audience and to constitute a forum which in turn will directly fill the lacunae in the graduate training programs of individual institutions in Manila and outside of Manila.

Conclusions

The Philippine Social Science Council puts priority on the training of young social scientists for research.

It fulfills its purpose through summer-long training program in social science methodology and through its program of sponsored research on national and international problems. Among these problems are topics having to do with various aspects and dimensions of the Pacific region including the topics treated by the VIth Pacific Seminar: problems of development, education, culture, and the struggle for peace, security, disarmament and social progress.

Supported by the Philippine Government through encouragement and through ad hoc subsidies for its projects, it nevertheless functions as an autonomous private body free to carry on its activities without necessarily having to adhere to the ideology and prescriptions of the New Republic.

Through cooperative projects within the country, in its network of social science research units located in public and private institutions throughout the thirteen regions of the country, and through its cooperative projects outside of the country, through its linkages with the Asian Social Science Research Council (ASSREC) and the International Federation of Social Science Organizations (IFSSO) and through national bodies such as the Japanese Social Science Research Association, the Japanese Center for International Exchange, and International Development Research Centre (IDRC, Canada), it carries on research in the country.

More recently, this cooperation at the national level is carried on through joint research projects between senior and junior social scientists as well as cooperative research between Manila-based and province-based researchers in various regions of the country.

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Alfred W. McCoy of the University of New South Wales, Australia, is currently engaged in post-doctoral research in Iloilo, Negros and Manila. He is preparing a book on the social history of the western Visayas from 1760 to 1955. Dr. McCoy earned his Ph.D. from Yale University with a dissertation on modern Iloilo history and is the senior author of *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia* (1972). He has edited a book on Philippine regional history, slated to come off the press soon.

Araceli M. Villamin recently completed the requirements for a Ph. D. in Linguistics from the Ateneo de Manila University-Philippine Normal College consortium. Her thesis was entitled "An Instructional Package in Reading for Pre-Service and In-Service Education of Teachers." She is concurrently the Director for reading center and the Chairman of reading specialization in English and Filipino of the Graduate School of the Philippine Normal College.

G. Sidney Silliman of Chaffey College, Alta Loma, California, U.S.A., will be in the field for one year under the Fulbright Program to do a phenomenological study of Filipino conceptions of justice. He will do detailed case studies of dispute processing in a municipality in southern Cebu. A political scientist who has done work on agrarian relations and land reform in the Philippines, Dr. Silliman will be based at the Cebuano Studies Center during his stay in the country.

The Board of Directors of the Psychological Association of the Philippines (PAP) recently elected its officers for 1981-1983. Elected were: Ma. Lourdes Arellano-Carandang, President; Ma. Carmen Alcuaz-Reyes, Vice-President; Rita Huang-Mataragnon, Secretary; Lina Jurilla, Treasurer, and Ma. Leonora Vasquez-de Jesus, PRO.

The other Board members are Jaime Bulatao, SJ, Alfredo Lagmay, Ma. Lourdes K. Ledesma, Noemi Catalan and Natividad Dayan.

The major objective of the activities for 1982 is the professionalization of the practice of psychology in the Philippines. Thus the PAP is currently working for the licensing of practising psychologists, the accreditation of psychology departments, and the accreditation of testing firms and agencies. Scientific meetings are also convened regularly by the clinical, industrial, and social committees of the PAP.

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Cooperative Projects

Its particular focus of research interest in the next few years will be the dimensions of the problem of poverty in the Philippines, economic and political relations in the ASEAN sub-region, and the effectiveness of national programs such as Land Reform.

It is thus one model of *cooperation* the features of which might find applications in similar social situations in other Third World countries.

The PSSC Library is inviting organizations having social science publications to exchange their materials with our *PSSC Social Science Information*.

Proposals for exchange should be addressed to the Librarian, Philippine Social Science Council, Inc., House no. 7 Purok Heneral Aguinaldo, U.P. Diliman, Q.C.

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From Research Priorities to Research Realities

The Search for Identity and Commitment

Besides the formal training in substance and in methodology, prospective educational researchers in the Third World have to be "socialized" into the actual world of development education. Exposure to real life problems could be a more significant source of research insights than dozens of articles, monographs, and books. But more important is the need for an identity, a conviction and a feel for our own problems through some first-hand rather than vicarious familiarity. Graduate schools can provide research techniques, conceptual frameworks, data analysis — in short, the scientific base for research capacity but it takes more than academia to inspire concern.

In this era of development, the grass always looks greener on the other side and the push to move over is ever present. While "economics" explains much of our brain drain whether domestic or international, economics does not account for the "sought-after" who stay. As one Southeast Asian social scientist mused: "The only reason I can enjoy a trip abroad is because I know that after two weeks I will be home where I belong."

In the final analysis, R and D capacity in the LDC's requires of its citizens a commitment to one's country despite its minor and sometimes major imperfections, little inconveniences and many frustrations; an excitement about the development process; and a willingness to pay the price of participation in this process in exchange for the elusive fruits of development. Experience has shown that although leading Third World luminaries in R and D espouse scientific objectivity, research rigor, and academic freedom, they are seldom ever neutral as personalities in their home countries.