

Knitting Voices: Sama Dilaut's Journey On Social Exclusion

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ABSTRACT

The life of the Sama Dilaut is rooted in the sea and the ecological niches of the sea. Jumala, F. (2011) defined their migratory cycles from fishing to the performance of rituals that were embedded in the process of enculturation. Travel is constant in their everyday life.

Social exclusion as an economic parameter as it is a significant traditional sociological and political views. The persistence of social exclusion as an economic parameter can be understood in the notion of poverty or unemployment traps and illiteracy which resulted from situations where the individual are confronted with constrained choices.

Phenomenological case study attached on the importance of a multiple perspective constructed from the experiences of the participants, characteristics of the human responses as the results of their own knowledge, experiences and orientation particularly on the cultural determinants as a factor that hindered social inclusion to the conventional society. A snow ball in getting the participants was employed as to figure out who are really to be interviewed based on the need of the study.

The Sama Dilaut is an oppressed tribe as written in several literatures and this also has been proven from the life experiences that respondents divulged. Accordingly, they are being discriminated by other tribes, particularly the Tausugs. The Sama Dilaut developed inferiority towards the Tausugs because as the tribe is peace loving and does not like quarrel or chaos they are being looked down by others in their society. They used to live on land however, their safety is being comprised by other Muslim tribes and because of this they were force to seek the sea. The sea environment basically shaped their attitude and culture as a whole.

The lack of education or its inaccessibility does create negative impacts not only on the individual but to the group collectively. Worldwide, illiteracy becomes a parameter of being socially excluded and illiteracy does not only hinder the individual's competitiveness in the economic sphere but becomes a source of negative social labeling.

Keywords: Phenomenological study, Sama Dilaut, Parameter of Social Exclusion, Poverty, Culture, and Education.

INTRODUCTION

All societies will always stigmatize some conditions and some behaviors because doing so provides for group solidarity by delineating "outsiders" from "insiders".

Gerhard Falk

Social exclusion is a process of which certain groups are disadvantageous because they are discriminated against in the basis of ethnicity, race, religion, gender etc. Discrimination occurs in public institution such as legal system, education and health services. This parameter as the basis where traditional and sociological views are surveyed and analyzed.

Access to education among Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines has been defined in the Philippine Constitution in Article XIV which mandates the State to recognize, respect, and protect the rights of IPs to preserve and develop their cultures, traditions, and institutions; The Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act of 1997 that guarantees the rights of IPs to ancestral domain, self-governance and empowerment, social justice and human rights, education and cultural integrity; the United Nations Declaration of the rights of Indigenous

Peoples of 2007 which provides the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to education; and finally, the National Indigenous Peoples Education Policy Framework of the Department of Education.

Mandated by the 1987 Constitution, IPRA provides for the creation of a Consultative Body of tribal leaders or elders whose tasks are to provide inputs on policies for adoption by the National Commission of Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) which is in charge of overseeing national policies pertinent to the plight of the Philippine ethnic groups as well as to enact laws relative to the welfare of the same.

Despite these, after almost two decades since the enactment into the IPRA, it is salient that many of our IPs today have remained marginalized by economic parameters and socially excluded due to lack of education that could have made them competitive in the labor market, which in turn, could have propelled their condition into the state of being socially included. These are manifested in many incidents such as mendicancy and the increasing number of street children in Zamboanga City where many came from the Sama Dilaut communities.

In this light, in the Philippines, internal migration happens when movements of ethnolinguistic groups, specifically of the Sulu archipelago changes the population density of one place to the other making it problematic. The Sama Dilaut of Sulu, internally migrated in Zamboanga for a better life (Concepcion, 2013) The researchers' interest in this study stemmed from their being acquainted with the Sama Dilaut and their being aware of the state being socially excluded particularly in the socio-political arena, which perhaps could be attributed to poverty and lack of educational skills that could somehow serve as parameter to social inclusion.

This interest also stemmed from researchers' disposition as being members of the academe where the plight of indigenous people has always been one of the core interests in the social sciences today. Further, the topic "social exclusion" which came into use in the 1990's has been an area that has been investigated and widened in social science researches today and that education has been one of the dimensions used in sociological as well as anthropological researches.

It is hoped that in doing this study, that the present plight of Sama Dilaut may be understood in the light of their worldview, that is the emic and not from the outsiders' view where negative labeling has always been attached to their identity. Further, this study is hoped to be contributory to the plethora of studies done on indigenous peoples worldwide.

Theoretically, the Sama Dilaut are nomadic sea-based people who thrive and obtain their resources for existence from the bounty of the sea, and define their worldview from the socio-cultural attitudes, practices and belief systems they are entwined into. The need for formal education may have been felt by some but not the majority of Sama Dilaut sector. The causes of this cultural retention are largely based on conjecture and educated guesses but have not been properly documented and validated. Thus, an ethnographic investigation of a specific group of Sama Dilaut in Sinunuc-Maasin and Taluksangay is timely and necessary. The theory, process and relationships among the variables are presented in the Conceptual Paradigm below.

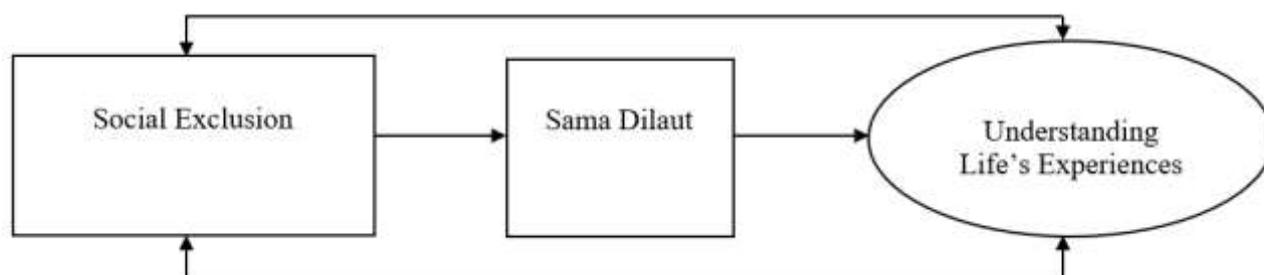


Figure 1- Theoretical Framework

The paradigm illustrates that the Sama Dilaut of Taluksangay and Sinunuc-Maasin basically have notion of social exclusion through their life's experiences which is a cause and effect cycle. Modern society, however, did not embrace them and make them part of our mainstream society. It was evident in some literatures and researches that formal education is required in order to keep pace with the changing world. Gaining formal education shall perhaps trim down the perception of being socially excluded.

The study aims to document the experiences of the Sama Dilaut's feelings and voices on their social exclusion to the mainstream of society. Specifically;

1. To be able to gather their insights and experiences on social exclusion as Sama Dilaut and Sama Dilaut community endure; and
2. To be able to analyze their experiences on social exclusion as Sama Dilaut from knitting their own feelings.

This study posits that deeply rooted socio-cultural attitudes, practices and beliefs shall persevere among the Sama Dilaut amidst the call and need for formal education. These immaterial cultural traits shall continuously constrain their social inclusion to the mainstream of Philippine society.

The study looked at the factors that determines the social exclusion of the Sama Dilaut to the mainstream of the Philippine society and in this way their experiences and problems be posited in order to set standards on how to undertake further studies

METHODS

The study used Qualitative- phenomenological case study attached on the importance of a multiple perspective constructed from the experiences of the participants of the study. It shall focus on the interpretative characteristics of the human responses as the results of their own knowledge, experiences and orientation particularly on the cultural determinants as a factor that hindered social inclusion to the conventional society.

The research site of this paper is the Sinunuc-Maasin Village and Taluksangay in Zamboanga City. Participants are Adults and middle age members of the Ayuda Community in Maasin and residents of Taluksangay Zamboanga City.

An interview schedule was employed as a prime tool for data gathering in the 6 month participant-observation period. Guide questions were prepared in order to test the hypothesis presented above. Key informant method as well as Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was also employed. Camera and video cam was the instrument for documentation.

The questions was worded in Bahasa Sug and translated into Bahasa Sinama (the language spoken by the Sama Dilaut) which facilitate communication and understanding among the researchers and the subjects themselves.

Related data was derived from previous studies on the subject and other information coming from schools and government agencies if available. The use of maps and photography and other visual aids about the area will be considered as valuable sources of data.

RESULTS

The Sama Dilaut, as perceived by the respondents, is an oppressed tribe. Accordingly, they are being discriminated by other tribes, particularly the Tausugs. They are often referred to as *Palao* or *Lumaan* (God forsaken). The Sama Dilaut developed inferiority towards the Tausugs because as the tribe is peace loving and does not like quarrel or chaos they are being looked down by others in their society. They used to live on land however, their safety is being comprised by other Muslim tribes and because of this they were force to seek the sea. Fortunately, they found out that the sea afforded them great avenues of escape in case of incursion by other Muslim tribes. The sea environment basically shaped their attitude. They learned to exploit the sea to their fullest advantage.

Their main source of income is in fishing and raising seaweeds. Pearl gathering is another occupation. They also gather other sea products (shells, sea cucumbers, turtle eggs, etc.) to sell at the market. Their livelihood is totally dependent on the resources of the sea- fishes, seaweeds, shells and so forth, either for food or to sell/barter for other necessities such as clothing, materials for boat construction, *Matobes*, and fishing equipment.

The table below shows the reasons of the Sama Dilaut on their social exclusion to the mainstream of society. These were taken from the interviews made and through their participation of the Focus Group Discussion conducted. The responses made in multi responses. The reasons are not limited to one from respondents.

Table I Reasons of Social Exclusion

Statements	No of responses	Rank
Communication Gap	32	3
Unsuitable Cloths/ Appearance	40	2
Poverty	46	1
Unfavorable Odor	13	5
Low self esteem	25	4

As reflected above through the data gathered the Sama Dilaut's social exclusion is rooted in the relationship of the individual within the society where they live in and the important institutions whose functions are to establish and ensure social structure that will be symbiotic to the members and that the feeling of exclusion is not significantly felt because exclusion of any group of the society to its majority is viewed to be a failure of the State as parent patria.

The table above shows further that poverty is a reason for exclusion and it is understood and experienced as both cause and effect, systemic yet personal. For the Sama Dilaut, poverty is the cause of intense human suffering through non acceptance of the other members of the society. It is seen as causing mental and emotional disturbances among them but as it is personal, they have accepted it and excluded themselves to society and have live only among themselves so that they will not be the 'others'. Although, it is viewed as the

root of many social problems including overpopulation, terrorism, killings, prostitution, and drug use but to the Sama Dilaut their preference of exclusion is for existence and preservation.

Table II shows the experiences of the Sama Dilaut that prompted them more to exclude themselves to the society.

Table II Experiences and Problems of the Sama Dilaut in the Society

Experiences	Problems	Responses
Looked down by other people because they do not dress well and appropriate	They are not accepted the way they are.	23
They cannot speak the other languages like Pilipino, English and others that why they are not entertained and given attention	Their Education is not enough. They cannot sustain their education due to unfavorable means of earning.	31
They sell fish and other sea shells so when they go out and meet people they are being avoided because of their smell and appearance. They do not wear slippers too.	They do not have any other way of earning but selling sea goods. They afford to buy other materials like slippers, shoes, dress and others because their earnings are small.	28
They are being bullied and quarreled because they do not fight back. Most of their children experienced the same.	They do not know how to defend themselves because they do not like to have enemies. Their children are also very weak and small	31
They do not know how to write and read that is why they can easily be fooled by others	They do not have time to attend to formal education because their time is with taking care of their children and the household chores	18

Education is admittedly a potent force in enhancing progress among the Sama Dilaut communities. It is known that more than seven decades of American education was a breakthrough in the impenetrable cultural life of the people in the Philippines particularly the communities in southern Mindanao, who cling to their accepted beliefs, customs and traditions that in a way have hindered their acceptance of the educational system forwarded to them. This have excluded them from coping with the rapid changes of their own society and in a way pushed them from advancing their lives.

Cultural Education of the Sama Dilaut is based on their custom and traditions, and religious teachings which is the very source of their approaches to life. They are very compassionate when it comes to preserving their culture, and hesitation to any outside influences. Their identities are basically acquired from their forefathers and are kept from one generation to the other. That is why their way of looking at things are the same although their children are more aware now of the changes and adaptation to new society through education and maintain themselves as part of their socio-cultural responsibility.

Evidently, education is the basis for the all-round development of man; it is the means of developing his personality and outlook. Moreover, it is the process that helps make one's life purposeful and fruitful to facing life daily. Constructive conditions to safeguard the welfare of a person are also inherent in this process of educating a person. Similarly peace is gained through this and is free from dispute, conflict and war can make a society and its people actively and dynamic move forward. New benefits are expected in a state of peace. It is the pathway to progress without any fear and confusion. Therefore, one can say that education and peace are linked to one-another. They supplement each other as both contribute to the development and welfare of each.

Through the experiences and problems stated in the previous table, it can be seen that Education is vital in acquiring the capacity to respect and live together peacefully and harmoniously as needed by each and every member of society. It helps prevent insecurity and conflicts from gaining acceptance and sustainable development of relationship within the society without regards to ethnolinguistic groups they belong. By learning and accepting each other to live together, knowledge, values, skills and attitudes can be acquired to foster better dialogues, cooperation and peace for better co-existence.

A response of a Sama Dilaut states that education is what they really aim for as it is what is needed to be part of the society. People tend to look up at others that can converse and do things with the standard set by the community, on participants said:

Uu, Sympre, Ahon! kalagihan tuod in pag iskul, kalagihan ta tuod yan para ahun karayawan tah, Bang wayruon pag iskul tah minsan magbasah iban magsulat mayngat kita Ahun kahatihan ta di kita marupang si dugaing tau.

(Of course, we need it. Education is important and very much needed for our welfare, it is needed to have a better future. If we are not educated, just knowing how to read and write should be learned because you will have peace of mind and we cannot be fooled by other people).

The response above was further agreed upon by another participant which have perceived that education really plays an important contribution to their life as Sama Dilaut in order not to be socially excluded and put down. The participant said that to be respected and can belong to the greater majority, one should educate himself and earn the respect of people. Having knowledge on things around you will make life better and for people to accept you as on of them. He said;

"Awn, mayta siya in biya madihil magganap katu pikilan iban makasawa katu pikilan ha unu unu bangsayat, amun di kita malungkup sin kaibanan, biya kanila nakakadji. Amun laung ta , yatu na

ganapan in akkal ta, bang yan ta akkal bukun laung ta yan ikakangi pasalan akkal dihilan kaw akkal sugpatan kaw dugaing dugaing pangadji dugaing dugaing bahasa, amun makahati rakaw dugaing bahasa biya ra sin mga bahasa anglais bahasa sin mga milikan bahasa sin mga arab biyaan."

(It has, why? Because it can give knowledge and it can enlighten our mind for anything, that others cannot overcome us, like them they have wage. It is like, our knowledge can expand, if we say knowledge it would not be wrong because it will give you knowledge to think, be connected to other field of knowledge, different language, you can understand other languages. Like English a language of the American and language of the Arab, that's how it is.)

The responses below believe that education is important so people will respect you and will not disregard you as burden to society. The participants really felt that in the society they are now, they are really looked down and excluded in so many opportunities that they believe will change their lives. The participants are hopeful that they be able to be part of the society without judging them from their looks and ways. They said;

Oo sympre biya siya tawag yan bang taga pangiskul magdihil in tao respect kaymo, although in kaivanan tao minsan kaw uway pangiskul magdihil siya respect pero bang ahun kaw pangiskul mas magdihil sila respect kaymu mas confident kaw makipaghalubilo pa tao bang ahun kaw education

(Of course it is like if you're educated, people will respect you. Although others can still give respect even though you are not educated, but if you are educated people would really respect you and you can be confident to join other people if you are educated).

Table above shows also that happiness experienced through education is important not only for the family but more also to one's self. One (1) out of 40 said so. The importance of education is not all about anything it is about attaining happiness in life and sharing it with others.

Oo mahalga pasalan yan in makarihil katu kaligayahan someday bang kita makatalus mapaiskul ta in anak ta , awn na kita bay kagastuhan ta in maas ta, atleast in piyaghirapan sin maas ta awn tandah. Makawa mo katan kabayaan mo makabi kaw bay iban sasakatan mo.

Yes it important because in can give us happiness someday if we finish ours study you can educate your children, you can support your parents, atleast the effort of the parents have its symbol. You can get everything you wanted and you can bought house and cars.

On the experiences of the participants on social exclusion within the community, many of the participants have voiced out with pain memories. this is what one of our participants said:

Anika, ckiya on na toongan ah ngandagang pastil ma look cgiya timpu kame magbissala, tandah ko landuh sillih na ngistori pasalan iya, ngistori mka ngandagang magbeyah. Lik na tagku bilahi ya pahap kaulluman cgiya, labi-labi na mmah na pissih daing, masul hmba niyah ta pissih na. Katoonan mka ta kissah na mmah na ma umul 73 yrs. (pitumpuh katallu) pahali-hali ko ngusaha makami, makah ma banan kakampungan patagan ma kame, landuh hap mmah ko, hmba ya bilahi ngandah du tag na.

(Anika, not her real name, is a vendor selling pastil in their community. When I talked to her, I noticed she is so eager to tell me her story even if she is selling at the same time.

She told me that she really wanted to elevate the lives of her family especially her father because she see him everyday very tired from fishing and sometimes no fish are caught.....she knows and feels that her father, at 73, should have been resting and enjoying life and not suffering with what their lives are. She said, " my father earns a living for us—not only his immediate family but also sharing it with relatives staying with us. My father is a good person, he does not like to see others suffer...it is better that he will suffer as long as his family will not.")

She continued her story with heavy breathing and voiced out painful picture of her experiences when she was still a girl:

Mmah ko lai tangbus eh na elementary, hmba bey na ngabut high school pasalan hmba niyah sin pangbut. Lik mmah ko makami, hunitkaulluman bang hah bey kaiskul, cgiya manusiyah deyoh pangandah cgiya mka hmba hap kaulluman, Lik mmah ko landuh piddih kaulluman ma kame mga Sama, dalowa pangandah cgiya makami kamemon.. Pangandah cgiya ma kame ah limmih, ma kme, hmba du sab kme mehelo maglamud mka cgiya makah hmba piddih ni Sandalan eh kame.

(My father finished Elementary in a formal school but he was not able to proceed to high school due to lack of financial assistance. My father told us, his children, that life is difficult without education...people will look down on you and you will not have a good life....he also said that life is cruel especially with the sama because people tend to generalized us.....they see us as dirty and no breeding plus uneducated. These are also the things we have in mind that is why we do not mingle with those that are not like us just to avoid being hurt more.)

She ended her story with full of hope yet clouded with so much hurt in her voice, she said:

Bilahi ako magbagey makaasiddi minsan ckiya sama, iya katalanohan ko, kinahambalan kame basa hmba tau nulat maka massa, bilahi dusab aku maghalla maka sikiya bangsa sama, takale ku nga bisaya hap ni Uddoh Halla., a niyah pangiskul na maka mag-addat. Bey timpu anak-anak gih aku, kansang takate ku ungguh ko ngongkah maka aku makatuli. Timpu heya-heya na aku ungguh ko yana ya maghinang malumah boh iya mmahko maka danakan Lalla yana a ngusaha.

("I like to have friends with other people not only with the sama but I am afraid they will reject me because I am - no read no write" She continued with a smile, " I also like to marry a non sama because I heard that the Bisaya are better husbands – they are educated and respectful." She ended with a tinge of hope in her voice.)

Another young lady has also attracted us during participant observation in the community. She always smile yet you can see in her the agony and burden of life. When we approached her, she immediately smiled to us and greeted us with high tone voice. She began her story:

Si Suraya a nongpot budyang, ngiskulan madrasa. Ma panghati na, bey iya anak-anak, banan karandahan sabey ma lumah cidja makah anak hulla na., mahilala sigiya...Yana lik na amu bey kame mag-interbyu. Mamung ya. Bang a mag madrasa, ta hinang danda Hap, ngipat anak na and meyah hilling hulla na.

“When I was a little girl, I used to hear my mother sing me a song to be able to sleep.” Suraya started her story. “and when I was growing I see my mother doing everything in the house while my father and brothers go out to find a living.”

Suraya is a teenager, who is attending a madrasa class. From her childhood she learned that a woman’s responsibility is at home and with her family, she should know how to take care of the children and please her husband that was what she said when we had our interview. She added further that, going to madrasa makes you become a better person/woman and that is what she intended to be.....to be a good woman, a caring mother and an obedient wife.)

After telling us few words, she started to lower her voice and as if ashamed of what she is going to say yet she is determined to change her life from what her father perceived her to be;

Heka na ta pa mung na pasalan sigiya, Landuh hap pangandah na ma mmah na, bang ma iya mmah na iya ni anda eh sigiya na danda hmba nyah kapuspusan na. Pangaanal sigiya bangsa Sama a deyh, hmba, miskin mka hmba nyah iskul na.

“My father said that I need to be pleasing to people so that I can choose to have a good husband and have better life.....so that the other people will not look at me as a mere sama who does not know how to be good and acceptable to people around me.”

With full of optimism, she told us that she plans and aspire for a lot of good things to happen in her life despite how people look at her and her family;

Bang ma iya, sigiya mamissiya hmba hungun ma Sama, hangkan na hmba sigiya magkaenagon hap kaulluman maka makusiyah hap. Bang kon bilahi ni pagaddatan, subey paandaan nu na mussiya tapagaddatan kow, lanuh, hmba hmba mandi makah kasla missala. Bang kame mandaan hap addat tabiat kami, na a hap du sab pangandah manusiya tag kami eh na ngatis bissara na, cin iya makabuyan kasusahan ma cgiya. Hunit meygah hinang hap, kasehan bilahi na cidya ngamuh cin Hangkan na hmba hap makah deyh pangandah cgiya ma bangsa kami Sama.

(She said a lot of things about her family and as noticed she really is to please her family especially her father for she believes that her father should be the one to decide for her and her future. She does not like that others see her as a woman unworthy to be with others because they are Sama but she also said that people really look at them as very low and unclean because they are poor and uneducated.

To her they are excluded by the society because most of their people (Sama) do not strive to upgrade their lives and be a good person....”if you want that others will respect and treat you well, you need to let them see that you are worth their respect by doing what is proper and pleasing to others....do not let them see the bad side; like using dirty clothes, spitting anywhere, does not take a bath, or even talk harshly with them..... if we do the proper way and the correct attitude, these I think will let them see that we are not just a mere Sama but we are also people they need to respect and treat well.”

She ended her story by telling us that, money is really a problem in their lives....it is not easy to look for a decent work because they are not learned and she admitted too that some of their people are lazy and so dependent on easy money, and that is what she thinks that put them down and being driven away from the mainstream of society.

Another story comes from an old man, Muktar, who volunteer to us his experiences as a Sama and how he felt excluded from the society he grew from. He opened his story by telling us;

“Lai ako heyu heka majalom pamikil ko makah pangdahdah ma atey ko, pasalan talabayan ko kameron kasigpitaw, beteh kame Lalla hmba ta pabeyah ma ciga ah kesog maka baharri...Ako Sama, tallow tabeyah ma lengog maka ni padeyoh-deyh eh cgiya.”

“I grew up with a lot of questions and sentiments in my heart because I experience all the hardship that I believe a man can take because I am not included in a group that is strong and brave.....I am a sama, afraid of being in trouble and be bullied by others.”)

He continued by telling us his childhood life and how he felt socially excluded;

“Sampu kadalwa kami magtalianak, ako iya katallu na magdanakan maka iya dohoh anak Lalla. Lai tandah ko teingah maghinang mattoa ko meygah kaulluman., maka niyah kinakan ni taguh ma teybal. Mga mattoa ko iya dambali ma ngaa, iyan na tahambam kinakan. Lai ako ngusaha bey ako siyam tahun., a ngandagang selopen ma tabuh., masuk mowa duwaan makah makasin., Binsanah meygah kaul. Luman kapih niya tukakan., makah katabang ma mattoa.

(He continued his story by telling us his childhood days; “we are 12 children in the family and I am the 3rd to the eldest but the 1st son. I have seen how my parents worked really hard to put food in our table...my parents are the last to eat whatever food was left. I started earning when I was 9 years old, I sell plastic bags in the market and sometimes I carry the plastic bags of the costumers so that I can get some payment....life was tough but it’s the only way to add some food to the table and help my parents.”)

After several minutes, he paused, then he started by reminiscing the past with so much pain in his voice but he really wanted to share to us his experiences. He continued by saying;

Bang ya a nga mung pasalan amu Lai talabey na, Landuh pididi bang nipakate anni Lai talabey na. Bey ta suley ko du ni padeyoh-deyoh eh seheh ko ngandagang, selopen pasalan ako ya dikih-dikih.

(“I was put down by the other boys, also selling plastic bags, because I am small for my age...they say that I am abnormal and that I will not grow anymore because I carry heavy loads of the customers but I did not mind because my aim is to earn money and buy food for us. I never went to school, I do not even know how to write my name or read because my priority is to earn and let my family eat. There were times too that I beg for some crushed fish in the market and mind you there were times I was give a lot that my mother can dried it and becomes our main dish for days.....It really pleased me because I was able to provide.”)

He continued with heavy heart;

Lik sigiya hmba ako nrmal makah hmba na paheya pasalan mowa amu ballot., hmba ko nipakate sigiya kapin ako maka usaha., maka niyah pamilli kinakan. Halam bey ako ka iskul., hmb minsan ako tau a nulat on ko. Maka massa., yana mapikilan ko ngusaha maka kami makakan ah niyah waktu a ngamuh ako daing ma tabu., ni patohoh eh umgoh ko makak makaahot ni kakah dangguuy ngillon.

(People look at me as “sama, dirty, odorous and lowly person-no read no write.” He continued with hard breathing and said; “I cannot blame them because it’s the truth but if they also know and understand why, instead of putting me down they should praise and pity me because I need to take care of my family in my young age. I did not like it but I need to do it if we need to survive and live well.”)

“I wanted to learn, how I wish I was given the chance to study and learn for me to have a good job and life....but that was not what my destiny gave me and I cannot do anything to fight it because I do not know how. I have seen some boys at my age, bring their bags and wearing good clothes but me, I was preparing to sell plastic bags and carrying heavy things for a living.....I have been doing it until my memory can recall. After selling, I wanted to buy toys because other boys my age plays with toys but with me I just stare at them enjoying seeing them playing, they do not let me join because I am dirty, odorous and cannot converse properly with them. I am griping the coins in my small hands to buy food instead even though my heart really long to buy a toy or a candyI never tasted a candy, I cannot afford to buy it...although I remember, 1 of my customer gave me a bag of goodies during their Christmas and that was one of the happiest days of my life...I tasted candies but of course I kept also some for my siblings.....I grew up with this experience.”)

We were already laughing of some jokes he made and suddenly he voiced out:

Musiyah ngandah ako Sama., limmili., borohan makak a deyoh mausiyah hmba tau massa, ngahambow napas nay a toggoh ngistori. Hmba cgiya tapagsusunan pasulan banal., Soh bang tahati sigiya angey kami the tutu., min ni padeyoh-deyoh sidja kami. Libbi hap bang cgiya maaseh tag kami pasalan kalagihan ko naming minsan bey kabahan ko. Hmba du kelohan ko hinang ko, soh kalagihan ko makah ullum kami.

(“Once I liked a girl in our place, I know she liked me too but her parents does not like me because I am a sama....she is from another ethnolinguistic group which does not accept us as equals....they see us as a very low person. I admired her from a distance for a very long time but we were not really given the chance to know each other.....she married the man her parents chose for her...I was really heartbroken and it took me a long time to marry and have a family. I have wished before that I should have belonged to their group so that I can have her to be a wife it’s all a wish a nice wish.”)

He ended by saying “other groups really look at us (Sama) very low people and they do not like us to be a part of their lives.....that is not really fair but that is the reality. We cannot blame them but we wish that they give us the chance to also prove out worth in the same playing field..... Sama are also people worth of all the things they have if we were just give the same chance as they have.....life is really hard because we do not belong in the groups that knows how to fight and exert their rights!

DISCUSSION

Through the conduct of the study, it was determined that the Samal tribe is divided into two major branches traceable to their recent geographical origin. The western Samals predominate in the islands and coastal regions to the west of Jolo. The eastern Samals trace their ancestry to the east of Jolo. The eastern Sama was regarded as pirates and slaves. They posed a serious threat in the area of present-day Malaysia and Western Indonesia. Samal settlement is characterized as small compact communities of 100-500 residents often organized as wards within villages and towns. Small houses generally consist of one or more small, rectangular rooms and an attached kitchen located on a single level, and rose above the ground on wooden pilings. In a Sama community, a couple is normally recognized as married if they have established residence and a sexual relationship with one another.

It is proven from the data of the study that Sama society, up to this point of time, was made up of three social classes: royal, commoner and slave. Royalty claimed direct kinship with the sultan of Jolo, Jolo formerly having been the seat of Islamic power for the Sulu Sea and the east coast of born Borneo. All patrilineal descendants of the Sultan will automatically receive the title of *datu* ‘prince’ or *dayang* ‘princess’. Non royal classes possess supernatural abilities to royalty. It was a rather common belief that royal offspring were born through the top of their royal mother’s head; and in current folktales, the sultan and his offspring are still

portrayed as having supernatural abilities. These are taken from the respondents' views and stories through interviews of the heads or Panglima.

It has also been observed that Indigenous Peoples like the Sama tend to benefit less in poverty reduction which also has been theorized by Tomei, M. (2005) in his writing. Although in some countries like the Philippines where poverty decline has been observed and reported in papers news and speeches of government officials through the years but still the island provinces of Mindanao where the respondents are situated and most of the Indigenous Peoples of the are found this poverty reduction is not felt and seen because a considerable proportion of the poor and extremely poor are very much evident.

The concept of poverty shall best appreciated in the context of capability deprivation, the idea of poverty is mentioned to be the inadequacy of income and not without merit since in reality, income is well defined as an enormous influence on the kind of lives that people live which Sen (2000) agreed but he also argues that poor living is not only determined by "depleted wallets" rather, by the freedom to live in a minimally decent lives. This is the very situation that the respondents of the study are in to which the feeling of social exclusion is manifestly told. Being excluded from social relations can lead to other deprivations further limiting our living opportunities.

Expanded and classified further by Silver (1995) social exclusion includes those who are excluded from the following: those who lack livelihood; secure and permanent employment; earnings, property, credit or land; housing; minimal or prevailing consumption levels; education, skills and cultural capital; the welfare state; citizenship and legal equality; democratic participation; public goods; the nation or the dominant race; family and sociability; humanity, respect, fulfillment and understanding. This classification of exclusion is manifested clearly by the experiences and problems that the Sama encountered in their community and the places that they go for they are looked down by people around them. Silver has contained the Sama Dilaut's situation and verified further that they are really socially excluded.

Accordingly, one of the arguments in social inclusion particularly that of Ofac, Stark & Sabic (2006), they argued that inclusive education must be attainable and provided for, that is education that shall involve everyone including children, young people and adults at different levels and ethnicity and to develop fully their full potentials. While they recognize that long term unemployment becomes a determinant for social exclusion and that discrimination is a mechanism for social exclusion, one way to combat this and promote social inclusion is through inclusive education.

In Mindanao, particularly in areas predominantly populated by the Indigenous Peoples (IPs), education, was not a priority. As examined through the data of the study, education is found to be wanting rather than served. It remains an exclusive social institution, unable to make a acceptable impact to the cultural and socio-economic life of the respondents. Due to poor service system of education to the IPs and the adult members of their society, the Sama Dilaut is not able to participate actively in their own society for development. They need a comprehensive realistic and relevant education anchored on their culture so that they are able to participate actively and wholeheartedly to lessen the feeling of social exclusion and be a contributor to peace and development in the society.

The Education process introduced can gear towards moral recovery may take cultural issues, are best solution to their exclusion for they will be able to be demand self-accountability to their lives and their family. We have to look into educating our people, especially our young, on issues enabling them to better discern what is wrong from right and live their lives the way they wanted it inconformity to the societal acceptability.

Through channeling the educational system into having programs that rebuild the community and strengthen bonds between communities, people can look to their future for a better tomorrow and in a way can stimulate and revitalize their own life and outlook.

In advancing a sustainable and appropriate educational system that will cater to the needs of the IPs incorporating cultural acceptability can hasten learning and positive worldview that will lessen their feeling of exclusion to the mainstream of Philippine society. Other livelihood training is a significant factor and in the long run be a permanent solution out the cycle of poverty and ignorance oppressing the Sama Dilaut Community.

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