

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF MULTIDISCIPLINARY: APPLIED BUSINESS AND EDUCATION RESEARCH

2021, Vol. 2, No. 12, 1298 – 1305

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.02.12.01>

Research Article

Phenomenological Synthesis of Cultural Understanding Among Senior High School Research Classes

Marlon F. Adlit*

Department of Education, Schools Division Office – City of San Pedro, San Pedro Relocaton Center National High School Landayan Annex, City of San Pedro, Laguna, Philippines

Article history:

Submission December 2021

Revised December 2021

Accepted December 2021

*Corresponding author:

E-mail:

marlon.adlit@deped.gov.ph

ABSTRACT

The development of student's skills in the conduct of research, both qualitative and quantitative, is envisioned in the K to12 curriculum. This study uses qualitative research to show students' perceptions and understanding of a particular issue. Similarly, it describes apparent cultures postulated within the students' chosen themes. Finally, it determines the development of cultural knowledge in the context of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception among Grade 11 students at a Senior High School near Laguna Lake in the City of San Pedro, Laguna, Philippines, during the school year 2016-2017. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and triangulation was used to obtain students' cultural understanding and share their experiences undertaking diverse qualitative research using purposive sampling. The data was analyzed using phenomenological analysis. Students' perceptions and streams of consciousness include street children, child labor fishermen, and school violence. Cultural understanding encompasses (a) the economic and psychological implications of family, (2) camaraderie, pakikisama and pakikiisa, and (3) education as a survival strategy. Senior High School students' research experiences connect underpinnings of cultural understanding.

Keywords: *K to 12, Qualitative research, Phenomenology, Senior high school, Cultural understanding.*

Introduction

The Senior High School was made mandatory across the country in 2016. The current curriculum relies heavily on the research culture to advance understanding and skill in the selected subject of specialty. Applied Research 1 and 2 were included in distinct tracks and

strands of applied topics. It focuses on developing critical thinking and problem-solving abilities through qualitative and quantitative research, as specified in the curriculum guide. Qualitative research mostly entails inquiries into community social concerns.

How to cite:

Adlit, M. F. (2021). Phenomenological Synthesis of Cultural Understanding Among Senior High School Research Classes. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. 2 (12), 1298 – 1305. doi: 10.11594/ijmaber.02.12.01

Qualitative research is an iterative process in which the scientific community improves its understanding of the issue under consideration by developing new meaningful distinctions. The goal of qualitative research is to be multi-method, with an interpretative, naturalistic approach to the topic matter. This means qualitative researchers look at occurrences in their natural settings with the goal of understanding or interpreting them in terms of the meaning individuals give them (Aspers & Corte, 2019).

Furthermore, phenomenology is concerned with people's subjective experiences of diverse events or circumstances. It is concerned with how things "feel" to those who are experiencing them. It analyzes the individual's unique experience of the condition or experience, rather than describing it (Cropley, 2021).

Specifically, the content topic of the course, as well as the learning competencies, include the ability to gather, analyze, and provide meaning to data, as per the curriculum guide for Practical Research 1 or Qualitative research. Furthermore, students are required to conclude, report, and share their research findings.

Likewise, people's cultural consciousness is a type of subjective consciousness. People with good cultural consciousness may perceive the cultural environment and other things based on the qualities of this cultural environment. People, on the other hand, will not consciously alter concepts and will continue to comprehend things in different cultural contexts in their familiar cultural environment (Huanjun, 2021).

As exploratory research, the students are required to perform research processes and are also believed to come up with an output where they would be able to share new knowledge with the topic they studied about the experiences of various sectors in the society.

Brief Background

The study takes place in an integrated secondary public high school where the students are junior high school and senior high school. The population of senior high school students in the national implementation of senior high school is one hundred eighty-eight (188) with five (5) teachers teaching the core, specialized,

and applied subjects where qualitative research is part.

Students from various specializations took qualitative research as a subject, including Humanities and Social Science in the Academic Track and Industrial Arts, Home Economics, and Information and Communication in the TVL Track.

The purpose of this paper is to synthesize the cultural understanding of Senior High School students under Humanities and Social Science on the conduct of the following research: (a) Socio-cultural, Environmental and Political Analysis of Fishermen's life near Laguna Lake, (b) Perception, Participation and Behavior of Street Children towards Road Map 2020, (c) Impact of School Violence, and (d) Child Labor: A Phenomenological Study.

Specifically, it answers the following questions.

1. What are the perception and streams of consciousness of students in conducting their selected topic using qualitative research?
2. What are the evident cultures surmised among the selected topics conducted by the students?
3. What cultural understanding is presented by the students in the various qualitative research conducted?

Literature Review

Merleau-Ponty's philosophy was the foundation of this study. Even though it is categorized as an existentialist phenomenology that examines human realities, the researcher concentrated on embodiment philosophy or phenomenology of perception. It will, however, focus on fundamental concepts such as perception, consciousness, and cultural understanding, as well as their interplay, in the conduct of four various qualitative studies.

The Institute of Art and Ideas articulated Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological philosophy, emphasized the attention to the lived body in the search for self and consciousness (The Institute of Art and Ideas, 2020). Phenomenology was defined by Merleau-Ponty as the study of essences. He pondered the definition of the essence as well as awareness because of this. He also advocated for the

manifestation of essence into existence. The philosophical position of basic interaction with the world is, nevertheless, the ultimate objective. He also asserted that "to return to the things themselves is to reconnect to that universe which predates knowledge," and that "to have awareness is to revive our sensitivity to the world." Regardless, the ultimate objective is the philosophical standpoint of basic interaction with the environment. The rediscovery, re-awakening, and returning are important in Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962).

"To return to the things themselves is to reconnect to cosmos which preceded knowing," he added, and "to have consciousness is to renew our sensitivity to the world." Phenomenology is defined as the study of phenomena as they appear in our lives, the way we perceive and comprehend phenomena, and the significance that phenomena have in our lives" (Smith, n.d). Phenomenology is the scientific study of events, including their nature and importance. The focus is on the way things appear to us through experience or in our consciousness (Finlay, 2009). The central focus of phenomenology is on people's meaning-making as the most fundamental aspect of the human experience. It is necessary because its results are based on phenomenology, which is the study of phenomena through the eyes of people who have witnessed them.

The focus of a phenomenological study is in uncovering and interpreting the inner essence of the participants' cognitive processing or the interaction of perception and consciousness in the cultural understanding of the research process the students' experience. Thus, as the final product of a phenomenological inquiry, the authors will present a description that presents the essence of the phenomenon – cultural understanding.

Description, reduction, essences, and intentionality are phenomenological properties, and the goal of phenomenology is to describe phenomena. The reduction is a procedure that requires suspending or bracketing events to return to the 'things themselves.' Similarly, the essence is the significant perception of a person's experience that defines it. Finally, since

people are constantly aware of something, intentionality relates to consciousness. This suggests that intentionality is the complete meaning of the object or concept, which is always more than what is shown in a single point of view.

In addition, he held the belief that "one's own body is in the world just as the heart is in the organism." The individual, the perceptible world, and the social world are all represented in this narrative. As a result, it was described as communion and co-existence of the body with the physical world, with the addition of the world of awareness and things.

Simple sensory units are qualitatively and quantitatively independent of one another in perception. Because touch is independent of what is observed, these sensory units record the various experiences differently. Perception is a collection of stories that incorporate several units of experience; as a result, a perceptual experience is understood in conjunction with its emotional properties.

Consciousness manifested as a perceptual phenomenon having both appearance and reality, both as a perceptual phenomenon. It is clear, and its truth is contained within the realm of things and reason. Perception, in which the meaning of an item is known, allows for consciousness. The human body serves as a vehicle for perception, allowing the body to become conscious.

Culture, according to the University of Minnesota's Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA), is the common patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive frameworks, and affective understanding that are taught during a socialization process. These common patterns can be used to identify members of one cultural group while simultaneously distinguishing them from members of another (Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, n.d).

There are two perspectives on culture. First, UNESCO defines it as an organized sector of activity concerned with the many expressions – past and present – of human intellectual and creative creativity, and which includes persons, organizations, and institutions responsible for their transmission and renewal. The arts

and cultural expressions, as well as these persons and institutions, make up the "culture sector," a clearly defined policy sphere primarily concerned with legacy and creativity. Second, in its anthropological meaning, referring to the many values, norms, knowledge, skills, individual and collective beliefs that govern individual and collective behavior. Culture is considered in this sense of values and norms as a pool of intangible renewable resources from which people take inspiration and reflect the significance they give to their life and progress. (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2014).

It tends to affect individual and global settings as a social construct. Culture is made up of people's behavior, values, and attitudes, and it may be engaged, embraced, and lived by them.

The researcher also understands that one's culture should embrace the seminal work of Enriquez and his *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, which emphasized Filipino identity, consciousness, awareness, and engagement, as well as language and culture. It examines individual experiences, but it places a higher focus on group experiences (Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000).

Furthermore, "Learning to be," which is defined as "the all-round development of the individual – mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, personal responsibility, and spiritual values. independent, critical thinking. (able to) form their judgment," is linked to the study of culture and cultural understanding. The very concept that supports cultural awareness and its importance to today's students (Delors, 1996).

Methods

The qualitative study was conducted among senior high school students on the TVL track and Academic - HUMSS students during the second semester of the School Year 2016-2017. Initially, students offered numerous study titles that are culturally oriented and that have been experienced if not seen by students living in Brgy. Landayan, where the school is located, and surrounding barangays such as Pacita Complex and Brgy. San Roque. As a result, each group identified fisherman, street children, school violence, and child labor as important study issues.

The purposive sampling procedure was employed to choose only those who are very expert in the research topic. The goal, estimated duration, and usefulness of the study were all explained to the participants. A total of eight students were included in the study to elucidate the experiences and understanding of the conduct of each study. A semi-structured interview was set among the eight students to determine their perception, consciousness, and cultural understanding. Likewise, focus group discussions were utilized to triangulate the participants' ideas during the interview.

The data was analyzed using phenomenological analysis. The horizontalization of data is carried out by the researcher. The next step is to organize the themes into meaning units. The quotation was used to create the textual description, which was followed by the structural description. The essence of the phenomena was determined after textual and structural analysis. (Pathak, 2017).

Discussion

In the light of the phenomenology of perception, the researcher identified the prevailing cultures among the constructs present in the research classes. Participants were asked to enumerate elements of culture that are present and evident. Likewise, they were also asked about the process of understanding culture in their study and synthesized the prevailing frame of mind among the student-participants. The discussion followed the two interconnected conceptual frameworks.

Figure 1 illuminates the idea which was originally conceived by Merleau-Ponty which started from a perception from the world of the object or the physical world which becomes the subject of consciousness. This means that the physical world shaped human consciousness in the philosophical perspective since meaning and essence could significantly differ from one and the other. Cultural understanding is the final phase of reduction and essence has been formulated. It also upholds Enriquez's *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, as it reveals the individual experience and how it becomes a collective experience in congruence with culture. Hence, cultural understanding is the reduction and essence of perceptual experiences.

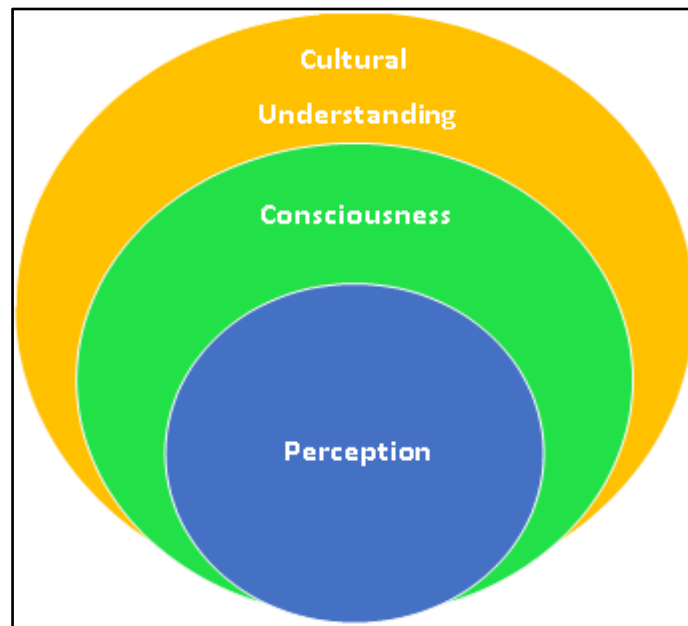


Figure 1. *The Conceptual Development of Cultural Understanding on Phenomenology of Perception from Merleau-Ponty*

Figure 2 expanded the idea of Merleau-Ponty; however, prior perception and consciousness were clarified with the research

experience that modified the prevailing stream of consciousness among students.

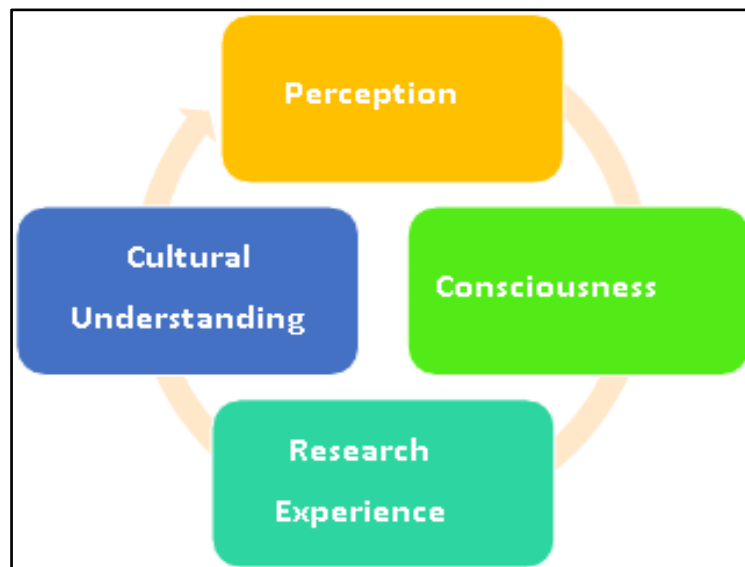


Figure 2. *The Conceptual Framework*

General perception and stream of consciousness among the culturally evident students are as follow.

Table 1. *General perception and stream of consciousness among the students*

Street Children	Child Labor	Fishermen	School Violence
Children were exposed to gambling, they beg for food and money and give it to family members or give the money to their mother, and they use solvent or rugby.	Their family experienced financial problems. They sell Sampaguita (girls) and candy and a cigar (boys) are also known as takatak.	<i>Lack of education resulted in poverty.</i> They are fishing on Laguna Lake to earn money. They earn at least Php 100-300 to sustain their everyday needs.	School violence usually starts with name-calling, which leads sometimes to a fistfight.
Education is not significant; they have <i>limited ability even in reading and writing.</i>	Kara-ning, tanching, and kadray were some of the gambling they play.	This is a family occupation; they endure this job because they were able to inherit suro (considerably large boat)	Some victims hesitate to open the incident to their families to avoid further conflict.
Cursing is an ordinary expression and fist-fighting is a common scenario.	They sleep anywhere.	They spent four to five hours fishing in the lake. <i>Typhoon</i> is important to them.	Students who are older and bigger are aggressive.

Looking at the accounts of the student in Table 1, there were some common perceptions and consciousness on the four research topics; the central idea on the answers presented is the fishermen, a street child, and labor due to poverty engaged in a different endeavor to support their family.

Further, a fisherman spent four to five hours bringing home at least Php 100, so that his family would be fed and nourished for that day. In school violence, a child hid an incident from his/her family to avoid further conflict.

Gambling was observable among street children and child labor. They also have nomenclature on different games such as kara-ning, tanching, and kadray. Fistfight was

evident among the street children. Likewise, on school violence, name-calling effect fight, and the bigger and older students were more aggressive. Education was an issue among fishermen and street children, on the former because of lack of education, they opted to continue and pursue fishing as they can perform this job, while among the street children the inability to read and write is linked to the lack of formal education.

The students were asked about their cultural understanding based on the present and evident culture on the topics that they have studied. Their cultural understanding was synthesized as seen in Table 2.

Table 2. *Students' Synthesized Cultural Understanding*

Evident Culture	Cultural Understanding
Family	It has proved that family is still the most important individuals in the life of each subject of study. This affirms the idea that "family ties" exist in the present time though they experience poverty and difficulty in life. The family served to be the inspiration for the street children, the child labor, and the fisherman to earn money, and even hinders the bullied students to open it up to avoid further encounters. It has economic and psychological implications among the subjects of study.

Gambling	More than betting, it is a way of camaraderie among child labor and street children. It is how they show their brotherhood or pakikisama and pakikiisa with their colleagues. When they do things together, they feel like one.
Education	Up to the present time, the belief that education is the passport to a better life prevails. However, among the street children, child labor, and fishermen, the culture of miseducation continues, and they failed to have the basic and functional literacy that would help them become critical and gain abilities that would help them obtain a decent and fulfilling livelihood. Likewise, their idea of education is tantamount to survival. Learning to read and count is enough to survive in this life.

Conclusion

Common perception and consciousness transcending on the four research topics are translated into central ideas such as fishermen, street child, child labor, and school violence. Almost all of them agreed that family is there as a support to their endeavor. Among fishermen, they spent more hours working to feed and nourish their families. Gambling was observable among street children and child labor. They also have nomenclature on different games and fistfights were also common. Child labor, street children, and fishermen lack formal education.

Family, gambling, and education were surmised among the selected topics conducted by the students. In terms of family, there is a tie that also served as inspiration.

Gambling is a form of camaraderie. Education serves as a passport to a better life, but many are still miseducated.

Cultural understanding of senior high school students includes (1) family which upholds family ties and the economic and psychological implication to its members, (2) gambling, though viewed negative but is understood as a form of camaraderie, pakikisama, and pakikiisa, and finally (3) education is culturally understood by this group of people as an approach to survival.

Recommendation

The following recommendations are made by the researcher considering the conclusions reached:

1. Ruminating on perception and consciousness transcending on the four research

topics revealing the plight of the street children, child labor, and fishermen, the local government unit must strengthen its program for livelihood, child welfare, and other relevant programs that will provide social and economic security.

2. Local legislation must be passed to address the needs of child labor and street children, particularly in terms of health, education, family support, and well-being.
3. Future study is recommended particularly on constructs about present family values, changes in socialization patterns of children and youth, small-scale livelihood and people's economic activities, and the perceived significance of basic education among students.

References

- Aspers, P & Corte U. (2019). What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research? *Qualitative Sociology* 42:139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). The University of Minnesota. <https://carla.umn.edu/culture/definitions.html>. Accessed December 01, 2021
- Cropley, A. J. (2021). *Qualitative research methods: A practice-oriented introduction for students of psychology and education*. (open-access - doi: 10.13140/RG.2.1.3095.6888/1)
- Delors, J. (1996). *Learning the Treasure Within*. Report of the International Commission for Education for the Twenty-first Century. Paris, UNESCO Publishing
- Finlay, L. (2009). Debating phenomenological research. *Phenomenology & Practice*, 3(1), 6- 25.
- Huanjun, X. (2021). On the Cultivation of Students' Cultural Awareness in Senior High School English Teaching. *Journal of Frontiers in Educational Research* (2021) 1: 88-93. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.23977/ifer.2021.010117>

- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception*, Trans., Colin Smith, London, and New York: Routledge.
- Pathak V. (2017). Phenomenological Research: A Study of Lived Experiences International Journal of Advance Research and Innovative Ideas in Education. Pp. 1719-1722 Vol-3 Issue-1 2017 IJARIE-ISSN(O)-2395-4396 3960.
- Pe-Pua, R & Marcelino E. (2000). Sikolohiyang pilipino (Filipino psychology): A legacy of Virgilio G. Enriquez. *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*. 3:49-71
- Smith, David Woodruff. Phenomenology. Stanford encyclopedia of philosophy. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/phenomenology/>. Accessed December 01, 2021
- The Institute of Art and Ideas. <https://iai.tv/articles/merleau-ponty-and-the-embodied-self-consciousness-aid-1582&aid=2020> Accessed December 01, 2021.
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). 2014. *Unesco Culture For Development Indicators Methodology Manual*. Pp.10. ISBN 978-92-3-001227-4