Intercultural Communication: It's Influence to Cultural Solidarity as Perceived by the Tri-Students of Mindanao State University

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Abstract:
Mindanao State University is one of the competent universities in Mindanao and is also known for it caters students coming from the three major tribes: Meranaos (Muslims), Christians and Lumads, which provoked the researcher to look into the influence of intercultural communication on their Academic performance, Intrapersonal (Self-Realization), and Interpersonal (Social Experiences) aspects. This study used the descriptive-correlation method of research in identifying the perceived influence of intercultural communication on their academic performance, intrapersonal (self-realization) and interpersonal (social experiences) aspects as well as the significant relationship of the respondents' perceptions with their profile.The researcher made use of a self-constructed questionnaire distributed to 340 respondents who were living from the dormitories. It revealed that they were actually scared of having enrolled in MSU especially the Christians because of the negative impressions about Marawi City, which was then changed. In fact, for them it is a worthy venue not only for educational purposes and developing themselves academically but also socially and emotionally. They learned to deal with other people of different personalities and cultures.Thus, teachers and administrators should not only focus on the academic performance of their students but even in how they relate to the social milieu around them.

Introduction

One important aspect of achieving peace in a certain society is communication. It is through communication that persons understand each other and it is with the use of the language that communication exists. Language is said to be important too. It is used by man to establish good relationship with others. With the use of either verbal or non-verbal language, communication exists. It is also said to be asignificant component of an institution, citing an example the Mindanao State University, where students coming from the different tribes such as Meranaos, Christians and Lumads converge. It is very much evident that people from different cultures encode and decode messages differently, increasing the chances of misunderstanding. Even in two people who think they can speak each other's language, the chance of error is high, where the usages and the contextual inferences may be completely different between cultures. So, even though one speaker may have learned the vocabulary of the other's language, selecting the most appropriate words, with the correct intonation, spoken with appropriate eye contact while standing a proper distance from the other are all critical even before one considers the propriety of the topic discussed. This is also the same in situations that most of the students have in this university. It is not that they do not know any of the other language, of the Meranaos, for instance, but it is more of they do not know the proper intonation or utterance of words that can cause a conflict between them. In fact, a conflict existed two years ago between two students of different tribes of the College of Education. One is a Muslim and the other is a Christian. The conflict was a misunderstanding about a message that was misinterpreted by the Christian student.

According to Bovee (2003), if time is not a factor and encounters like meetings are not approached with good will and patience, then ineffective communication is more likely to happen. If the parties are under pressure (whether generated by external circumstances or internal needs), emotion may color the exchange of ideas and escalate into a full-blown conflict. Prejudice is a shortcut decision making tool.With this, Bovee expanded to define intercultural communication in its basic form as an academic field of study and research that seeks to understand how people of different countries or culture behave, communicate and process the world around them. The principles of intercultural communication guide the process of exchanging meaningful and ambiguous information across cultural boundaries, in a way that preserves cultural respect and minimizes antagonism. In relation to this, culture is defined as a shared system of values, beliefs, and attitudes expectation and norms of behavior. It is coherent in people whether resident wholly or partly with the state terrorist or existing without residence or in any particular territory.

In addition, Villamin (1989) added that communication is a symbolic process used to create a shared meaning. It is symbolic for it uses words, actions and objects that stand for or represent meaning. And it is processed because it is dynamic. Communication is an on-going or ever changing process, which is a sequence of interrelated steps. It is through this process that a shared meaning does exist not in words but it is in people that meaning arises.

In relation to communication, culture is defined as a set of interpretations about beliefs, values, norms that affect that behavior of a relatively large group of people. It is to be learned, for we are not born with culture. It is through socialization that man learns a culture. Culture is a set of shared interpretations because like communication, the meaning

is in the individual and not in the words. Aside from that, it also usually affects the behavior of others, for we are the one acting and performing a certain act.

This is true in a university system, which consists of students of different cultures. It is in this context that the researcher decided to look into the contribution of intercultural communication to peace building process among students

Framework of the study
This study determined the influences of intercultural communication among tri-students of Mindanao State University, Main campus for the 2nd semester of School Year 2008-2009, in terms of Academic performance, Intrapersonal (Self-Realization) and Interpersonal (Social Experience) aspects.This study is premised on the notion that the independent variables are the profile that consists of the tribe, language used at home, gender, age, course, and the academic status of the respondents. The dependent variable is the level of influence of intercultural communication as perceived by the respondents in terms of their academic performance, intrapersonal (self-realization) and interpersonal (social experiences) aspects.The findings gathered guided the researcher to frame the recommendation of the study.

Objectives of the study
The objectives of the current study are the following: a) toexamine the profile of the respondents (suchas tribe, language used at home, gender, age, course andacademic status). b) To determine the influence of intercultural communication as perceived by the respondents on their academic performance;intrapersonal (self-realization); andinterpersonal (social experiences) aspects? c) To find out the relationship between the profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the influences of intercultural communication on their academic performance, intrapersonal (self-realization), and interpersonal (social experiences)

Review of Related Literature and Studies
On a sociological level, culture has been used to describe the models operandi of the group of people, such as implied by organization culture. This concept of culture implies not only the shared models operandi. A company can be said, for example, to have a highly competitive culture, thus implying that competitiveness is value within that company as a whole. Hence, it can be argued that competitiveness is a shared value by people working in the company. It also implies that company as a whole will behave in the way it is conducting its business (Sireh, 1990).

Saspa (2004) pointed that verbal interaction consists of two components: listening and then responding to it. One needs an adequate control over linguistic and paralinguistic signals in addition to prior knowledge of their social correlates for understanding what others say. The opportunities to communicate in the language are advantageous for learning process. Listening and speaking therefore become a part of conversation. Language speakers gradually acquire the skill of transmitting the main information and in the same token establish, maintain, reinforce, promote or denote social relationships with interlocutors.

In fact (Adler, 1982; Saspa, 2004) stated the essence of social competence. It is a reliable indication of social, emotional, and psychological adjustment in later life. Those children

who have developed social competence have a positive self-regard, self-confidence, curiosity, spontaneity, humor, warmth, reliability, sense of right and wrong and many others.The definition implies the existence of a larger "culture" (meta culture) of the different cultures that make up one's society's culture. Using this concept, it is implied that one can distinguish between the culture of the society which one forms part of and the culture of another society at large, of which one does not form part. This concept is manifested in the usage of the word "culture."

While communication as elaborated by many authors is defined as exchange of facts, ideas, opinions, or emotions by persons, it is an intercourse by words, symbols, or message. In an organization, communication is the way in which the numbers of the organization share meaning and understanding. It is information transferred and understood by receiver (Kats and Khan, 1978; Adler, 1997), while according to Farace and Monge (1977) as cited by Alcantara (1988) communication is an art of developing and attaining understanding between people; a process of exchanging information and feelings between two or more people. Furthermore, Certo (1980) said it is concisely a process of sharing information with other individuals regardless of the meaning it is sharing that either leads to mutual understanding and confidence of good human relations. Communication is the interpersonal process of sending a gesture. From a management perspective, communication is the process of exchanging information in a way that achieves mutual understanding between two or more people about work-related issues. By communication; we mean that the individuals involved have established a reasonable understanding of one another's feelings or ideas. If we define communication this way, it suggests a psychological process of sharing information to achieve a common understanding ourselves and others.

In a similar vein, (Koontz and O'Donnell 1972; Gonzales, 2002) view it as the transfer of information from one person to other, whether or not it elicits confidence. In addition, according to Hippo (1984), it is the art of inducing of inducing others to interpret an idea in the manner intended by the speaker or writer. In contradiction, (Kats and Khan, 1978; Adler, 1997) said that there is no such thing as perfect communication. And so there are certain obstacles or barriers to good communication. In every step in communicating with someone, a barrier threatens to abort the process. Barriers are not however, bad as they are seen. At times, they can work to one's advantage. Like, if a conversation reaches a point where it is no longer leading you anywhere, then you can stop. Either there is no more additional information to gain or there maybe overloading. The mind simply refuses to take on some more. Hence the barriers (under loading of information) serve as your defense mechanism, protecting you from an activity that is no longer worthwhile. (Monge et al, 1984).

Moreover, Vegafria (2003) points out that a handful of activities were designed to provoke communication between the teacher and the student. These activities were divided into seven categories: reaching a consensus discussion, relaying instruction, communication games, problem solving, talking about oneself, stimulation and role- play.Allwood (1985) asserted that intercultural communication, the communication between people of different cultural backgrounds, has always been and will probably remain an important precondition of human coexistence on earth. Since the world is resided by different people with different cultures and apparently, since communication is an inevitable phenomenon, occurrence of intercultural communication is always possible. He defined it as the sharing

of information on different levels if awareness and control between people with different cultural backgrounds, where different cultural backgrounds include both national cultural differences and differences which are connected with participation in the different activities that exist within a national unit. Furthermore, Qing (2007) defined it as a communication of group members that is influenced by different cultural perceptions, symbol systems, both verbal and non-verbal. It takes place when individuals influenced by different cultural communities negotiate shared meanings in interaction (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

What counts as intercultural communication depends in part on what one considers a culture, and the definition of culture itself is quite contestable. Some authorities limit the term "intercultural communication" to refer only to communication among individuals from different nationalities (Gudykunst, 2003). Other authorities, in contrast, expand the notion of intercultural communication to encompass inter-ethnic, inter-religious, and even inter-regional communication as well as communication among individuals of different sexual orientations (Martin and Nakayama, 2007 in Samovar and Porter, 2004). In this sense, all interactions can be arranged along some continuum of "interculturalness" (Gudykunst, ural2003). Interactions are most highly intercultural when individuals' group identities are most salient in determining the values, prejudices, language, nonverbal behaviors, and relational styles upon which those individual draw. To the degree the interactants are drawing more on personal or idiosyncratic values, personality traits, and experiences, the interaction can be characterized as more interpersonal than intercultural (Samovar and Porter, 2004).

Chen and Stratosta (1996) discussed intercultural communication competence as the way people are able to effectively understand and communicate in diverse situations (Samonte and Pastor, 2011). In Stier (2006), intercultural competence is further divided into competent-competencies predominantly have a one-dimensional or static character and refer to the knowing that-aspects of the 'other' and 'home' culture. They include knowledge of history, language, nonverbal behavior, world-views, do's and don't's, values, norms, habits, customs, taboos, symbols, behavioral patterns, traditions, sex roles, etc. Typically, much of such cultural 'knowledge' stems from 'reductions' or stereotypes and are attributed positive or negative value and emotional color.

Moreover, there are three identified processes that make up the intercultural communication namely affective process, cognitive process, and behavioral process. The affective process focuses on emotions and/or things that can influence changes in emotions. The cognitive process is concerned with how one conceptualizes their own and others' culture while the behavioral process focuses on interactions with diverse individuals (Stier, 2006).These processes overlap considerably with the aforementioned domains of intercultural maturity, then, creative sub domains. The intercultural maturity aspect of the cognitive domain is known as the "cognitive knowing" sub domain while the intercultural communication component is known as the "cognitive knowledge" sub domain. In the intrapersonal domain, the intercultural maturity component is known as "intrapersonal identity" and the intercultural communication aspect is known as "intrapersonal affect". The intercultural maturity and intercultural communication sub domains for the interpersonal domain are "interpersonal social responsibility" and "interpersonal social interaction", respectively (Stier, 2006).

Related Studies

According to a study conducted by Bovee (2000) even when people think they can speak each other's language, the chance of error is high. Usage and contextual inferences may be completely different between cultures. So even though one speaker may have learned the vocabulary of the language, selecting the most appropriate words with correct intonation, spoken with appropriate eye contact while standing s proper distance from the other are all critical even before one considers the propriety of the topics to be discussed.

According to some studies conducted on intercultural competence, it is essential that people research the cultures and communication convention of those whom they propose to meet. This will minimize the risk of making very elementary mistakes. It is also prudent to set a clear agenda so that everyone understands the nature and purpose of interaction. Thus, if it is not possible to learn the other's language, it is expedient to show some respect by learning a few words, in all important exchanges, or a translator can convey the message (http://www.intercultural communicatio.html).

Meanwhile, according to Takashi (1998) as cited by Saspa (2004) gender is said to be another critical factor in communication specifically in language usage as found in many research. Sex related differences in men's and women's speech is different. Women's language has been identified as being more polite, indirect and softer than men language. He added that the earliest reference to existence between male and female language appears to be in an early collection of essay. It was noted on his study that the pronunciation of male is different from female.

But the study conducted by Maccuby and Jackilyn (1974) as cited by Saspa (2004) concluded that males and females do not differ significantly in terms of suggestibility, self-esteem, achievement motivation, role playing, analytical skills, and responses to auditory and usual stimulation. Psychological testing produced only few arenas in which males and females consistently differed. Males seem to be more aggressive than females and perform better on visual-spatial and in mathematics. In contrast, females seem to be better in verbal activities.

However, De Torres (2000) observed that generally parents prefer Filipino over English as the language of instruction in the lower grades. She also opined that there is more use of English than Filipino in both Urban and Rural areas and less of the mixed code. In the same study, it reported that in interpersonal communication, majority indicated that there are few Tagalog fine language speakers and that the dominant language is still Cebuano. The particular research was focused in Mindanao specifically in Cagayan de Oro City which concluded that English and Filipino are the people's second languages beyond their natural language which could be other than Cebuano itself.

Methodology

This study adopted the descriptive-correlation method of research. This method is used in describing the nature of a situation and establishing a prediction on the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. In this study, the independent variables are the tribe, language spoken at home, gender, age, course and the academic status of respondents, while the dependent variables are the perceived influences of intercultural communication among the tri-people (students) of Mindanao State University, Marawi City, on their academic status, intrapersonal (self-realization),and interpersonal (social experiences) aspects. The researcher looked into the profile of the respondents and the

influences of intercultural communication and determined whether there is a significant relationship between and among the variables. The respondents of the study were the selected students of the Mindanao State University-Main campus in Marawi City with different religions and tribes such as the Muslim, Christian, and Lumads. The researcher used probability sampling in the selection of the respondents. There were 340 respondents from Mindanao State University Main who were officially enrolled during the Second Semester of Academic Year 2009-2010. Thus, these respondents are taken from the various dormitories of the MSU-Main from where students of various cultures reside.

The study utilized a researcher-structured questionnaire to gather the data needed for the data that would elicit the findings and form implications. There are two parts of the questionnaire: the first   consisted of the questions about the personal profile of the respondents such as their tribe, language spoken at home, age, course, and their academic status. The second part of the questionnaire focused on the identification of the influences of intercultural communication to cultural solidarity among the tri-students of the Mindanao State University, Main campus. To ensure content validity and reliability of the instrument, the research instrument was validated using Cronbach's Alpha with an alpha coefficient of $(r=.95)$. The research questions were analyzed, using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard variance, and Pearson product moment correlation.

Results and Discussion
Research Question 1: What is the profile of the respondents (suchas tribe, language used at home, gender, age, course and academic status)?

Of the three groups of students in the Mindanao State University, one   is between 18-20 years old; a female; a Christian; from the College of Engineering; a paying student; have stayed in MSU from 3 to 4 years; lived in dormitories; a member of a University-based student organization and speaks the common Visayan dialect at home along with Tagalog, Meranao and English.

Research Question 2: What is perceived influence of intercultural communication on the respondents' academic performance; intrapersonal (self-realization); and interpersonal (social experiences) aspects?

Table 1. Mean Ratings of the Respondents' Perception on the Influence of Intercultural Communication on their Academic Performance

Statements	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description	Rank
1. Not attending my classes regularly which results from receiving poor grades because most of my classmates are?	2.26	1.3345	Fairly Experienced	6
2. Taking my studies for granted because of focusing on how could I deal well with my classmates?	2.09	1.2504	Fairly Experienced	11.5
3.Not doing my assignment because I don't know how to do it and I cannot ask any my classmates for they are a Meranao, Christian or	2.06	1.2872	Fairly Experienced	15

93

Lumad?				
4. Having difficulty understanding the diction of my classmates which gives me difficulty talking or participating with them during class activity?	2.07	1.1514	Fairly Experienced	13.5
5. Not interacting with my classmates during group discussion because of difficulty talking and understanding them?	2.11	1.1483	Fairly Experienced	9.5
6. Asking questions using the English language for me to express my questions clearly?	2.61	1.0870	Often Experienced	4
7. Developing more positive attitudes in communicating to my teacher or peers?	3.02	1.1312	Often Experienced	1
8. Using simple wording clearly for me to be understood?	2.96	1.0882	Often Experienced	2
9. Being creative in finding ways to be understood by my peers as well as my teachers?	2.71	1.1866	Often Experienced	3
10. Being not able to interact during group activities (Meranaos, Christians, Lumads) cannot understand me?	2.03	1.1581	Fairly Experienced	17
11. Interpreting the actions of my teachers on certain discussion for me to understand his/her lesson?	2.36	1.050	Fairly Experienced	5
12. Translating the language of my classmates to my mother tongue to be able to interact with the group discussion.	2.21	1.1531	Fairly Experienced	7
13. Making my assignment alone because I do not want to be with anyone for I cannot and they cannot understand me?	2.09	1.1951	Fairly Experienced	11.5
14. Being betrayed by a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) classmate because of having excellent performances academically?	2.05	1.1986	Fairly Experienced	16
15. Being shuttered inside the classroom by a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) teacher because I am a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) during recitation?	2.11	1.2463	Fairly Experienced	9.5
16. Receiving a grade below the expected result of the performance that I have shown because I am a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad)? pls encircle your answer?	2.07	1.2162	Fairly Experienced	13.5
17. Not taking my subject seriously because my teacher during discriminates a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) students?	2.02	1.2490	Fairly Experienced	18
18. Being embarrassed in a class by a teacher during recitation because of my (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) accent	2.13	1.2648	Fairly Experienced	8
19. Being disciplined by my teacher because of misinterpreting the way I speak?	1.99	1.1811	Fairly Experienced	20

20. Being scolded by my (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) teacher because I am a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) which makes me feel lazy attending class?	2.01	1.1836	Fairly Experienced	19
AVERAGE	2.25	1.1908	Fairly Experienced	

It means that the respondents fairly experienced the influences on their academic experiences though they often develop a more positive attitude in communicating with peers and teachers. Thus, according to students interviewed, studying here in MSU is very challenging for they meet students coming from different cultures. They may have difficulty dealing with them sometimes but to them as long as one knows how to face them, there would be no conflict.

Table 2. Mean Ratings of the Respondents' Perceptions on the Influences of Intercultural Communication on the Aspect of Interpersonal (Social Experiences)

Statements	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description	Rank
1. Expressing my ideas using a specific word/expression to be understood by my classmates?	2.91	1.1447	Often experienced	2
2. Being careful in giving an opinion on a certain issue for it might offend the culture of a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) within that group?	2.90	1.1917	Often experienced	3
3. Not expressing what I believe because I am a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) and might be misinterpreted by others who have different cultural from mine?	2.44	1.1618	Fairly experienced	7
4. Creating a friendly approach to encourage and be close to students or friend that I will meet regardless of his/her cultures background?	2.96	1.1474	Often experienced	1
5. Overcoming my stage fright in facing a crowd where mostly are (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) for me to express well that I feel?	2.76	1.0927	Often experienced	5
6. Being patient in establishing a good rapport with a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) classmate though he has a different personality?	2.86	1.1295	Often experienced	4
7. Becoming more culturally sensitive by reading a lot about different cultures like (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) for me to have many friend?	2.65	1.1458	Often experienced	6
8. Being harmed by a (Meranao, Christian,Lumad) classmate because of having not understood my gestures?	2.04	1.1844	Fairly experienced	12
9. Having not to go out for a certain period of weeks because a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad)	1.98	1.2058	Fairly experience	14

95

classmate threatened me?			d	
10 .Being "masunurin" to a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) friend for me to be safe in this university campus?	2.11	1.2049	Fairly experience d	9
11. Being driven away from my room in a cottage or dormitory because I was the only (Meranao, Christian, Lumad)in that room?	1.93	1.1642	Fairly experience d	16
12. Being ridiculed by a group of student when they realized that I am a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad)	1.85	1.1767	Fairly experience d	19
13. Being forced to join a certain organization/fraternity in the campus for me to be safe company of friends?	1.84	1.1625	Fairly experience d	20
14. Transferring from one cottage/dormitory to another to look for mates who have the same culture with me?	1.89	1.1610	Fairly experience d	17
15. Having not taken my meal because my allowance was borrowed by a (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) friend that I cannot easily ask him to pay my money because I needed his company?	2.01	1.1948	Fairly experience d	13
16. Feeling alone in the cottage for I am the only (Meranao, Christain, Lumad) resident?	1.96	1.1667	Fairly experience d	15
17. Eating "pater" with a Meranao friend though I do not like it but I have to do it for the Meranao friends to like me?	1.87	1.1458	Fairly experience d	18
18. Cleaning alone our room just to "please "my roommates?	2.10	1.2345	Fairly experience d	10
19. Controlling the word to utter for them not to get hurt and will like me?	2.38	1.2072	Fairly experience d	8
20. Cannot wear the attire/dress that I want to wear to please others?	2.05	1.2013	Fairly experience d	11
AVERAGE	**2.27**	**1.1724**	**Fairly experienc ed**	

Table 2 shows the mean ratings of the respondents' perceptions on the influences of intercultural communication on their social experiences with an average mean of 2.27 with a standard deviation of 1.11724 interpreted as **fairly experienced**. The data implies that the respondents often create a friendly approach to encourage students and be close to them or to friends they meet regardless of their cultural backgrounds. This is generally perceived as fairly experienced by them. According to the students interviewed, they often experienced this during their first two years in MSU. They need to adjust as well as deal with the other students if they want to belong. Although many of them have stayed in

campus for almost 3 to 4 years, it seemed that they still continue to adjust so they learn the culture of others, especially of the Meranaos.

Table 3. Mean Ratings of the Respondents' Perceptions on the Influences of Intercultural Communication on the Aspect of Intrapersonal (Self-Realization)

Statements	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description	Rank
1. Going to the commercial center alone?	2.91	1.1447	Often experienced	2
2. Studying hardly to be noticed by other friends and have friends?	2.03	1.1299	fairly experienced	11
3. Being committed in enhancing my study to compete academically with other students who are (Meranao, Christian, Lumad)?	2.40	1.1644	fairly experienced	6
4. Being strong at all times because I am alone and it is only myself whom I can lean on?	2.70	1.1544	Often experienced	2
5. Crying at times because of feeling lonely here?	1.94	0.8636	Fairly experienced	13
6. Trying not to care whatever the (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) will say about me for me to have a peaceful life here?	2.34	1.1106	Fairly experienced	7
7. Showing the real me that may be contradictory/opposite to that of my (Meranao, Christian, Lumad) dormmate?	2.43	1.1514	Fairly experienced	4.5
8. Wear the attire that I do not like but I have to be accepted by others?	1.90	1.1165	Fairly experienced	15
9. Thinking of suicide because of the embarrassment done by my classmates?	1.52	0.9850	Never experienced	20
10. Eat the food that I do not like just to be accepted by others?	1.70	1.0794	Never experienced	18
11. Having not enjoyed my first day in the college because of being nervous with my new peers?	2.16	1.1950	Fairly experienced	10
12. Not saying what is in my mind for I might be embarrassed?	2.43	1.0687	Fairly experienced	4.5
13. Feeling homesick because of missing my family?	2.44	1.1204	Fairly experienced	3
14. Blaming my family for sending me in this university?	1.83	1.1026	Fairly experienced	17
15. Expressing anger for I can no longer control my emotion?	2.17	1.1220	Fairly experienced	9
16. Hating myself for I cannot say what I want to say inside the classroom during discussion?	1.96	1.1423	Fairly experienced	12
17. Throwing the things of my roommate secretly in revenge of what he did to me?	1.69	1.0870	Never experienced	19

18. Talking to an imaginary friend to ease the hurt given by my roommate?	1.86	1.1790	Fairly experienced	16
19. Not sympathizing with anybody who is in pain because of what I experienced with my classmates?	1.91	1.1852	Never experienced	14
20. Not telling how I feel when my classmate did not return my personal things or belongings on the agreed date?	2.33	1.1834	Often experienced	8
AVERAGE	**2.13**	**1.1671**	**Fairly Experienced**	

Table 3 reveals the average mean of the respondents' perceptions on the influences of intercultural communication on their self-realization. It showed that the general average is 2.13 with a standard deviation of 1.1671 described qualitatively as fairly experienced. This means that the respondents experienced some difficulties in their adjustment during their first two years in the university. To ease their loneliness, they resorted to going to the commercial center alone. Accordingly, they tried meeting friends in their colleges but giving their full trust to a Meranao, Christian or Lumad was initially a difficult thing to do.

Research Question 3: What is the relationship between the profile of the respondents and their perceptions of the influences of intercultural communication on their academic performance, intrapersonal (self-realization), and interpersonal (social experiences)?

Table 4. Relationship between the Respondents' Profile and their Perceptions on the Influences of Intercultural Communication

Influences of Intercultural Communication PROFILE	R	Analysis of r	T-test of significance	Interpretation
Age	0.14	Very low correlation	2.60	**Significant**
Gender	0.20	Very low correlation	3.75	**Significant**
Tribe	0.06	Very low correlation	1.11	Not Significant
Degree sought	0.03	Very low correlation	0.55	Not Significant
Academic status	0.06	Very low correlation	1.11	Not Significant
Length of stay in MSU	0.09	Very low correlation	1.60	Not Significant
Type of accommodation	0.11	Very low correlation	2.03	**Significant**
Membership in University Organization	0.09	Very low correlation	1.60	Not Significant

Language spoken	0.17	Very low correlation	3.17	**Significant**

This reveals that the age, gender, type of accommodation and the respondents' language used at home affect their academic, intrapersonal, and interpersonal aspects. This is probably because the older and more mature the students are, they can easily adjust to the demands of the environment/ society that they will be dealing with. Likewise, the data reveals that it is easier for the male population to adjust and deal with intercultural communication difficulties than the females. This is probably due to the fact that the Meranao society is generally a patriarchal one. In the family, the men rules with iron hands though the women are still highly regarded and respected. Cultural practices must be understood and respected by the tri-students in order to live together in harmony and in peace.

Conclusion

It is then concluded that the respondents who stayed long in MSU have probably adjusted to the culture of the Meranaos or majority of the people in MSU have. At first, they were actually scared of enrolling in MSU especially the Christians because of the negative thoughts they heard about MSU. But it was changed when they had stayed for a long time. Accordingly, many students are convinced that MSU is a good venue not only for developing themselves academically but also socially and emotionally. They learned how to deal with other people coming from different cultures and how to adjust with people with different personalities. It is also evident that studying in MSU gave them the opportunity to know themselves more deeply. They became strong and more mature emotionally in the process of dealing with different individuals and groups of students in their classes, in the dormitories, in canteens and eateries and in all venues for socialization. Academically, majority of the students perform well in their classes though some fairly experience discrimination. The Meranao students as respondents say and feel that some of their Christian teachers do not like them. Most students fairly experience socializing with other people coming from other cultures. The move to improve relationships through a mutual understanding of each other's culture will always depend on each one's cooperation and the support of elders, teachers and every one as a whole.

Recommendations

Thus, it is then recommended thatteachers should not only look into the performances of their students but even as to how they relate to the people in their environment. They should assist and be of help to their students especially the freshmen who need to adjust socially in a multicultural and diverse background. Teachers need to be role models for them in how to deal with students of different cultures, that is, in how to respect and be tactful about peculiar cultural practices. On the other hand,students must endeavor to know and understand themselves better, especially those of other religious affiliation, tribe, political and economic stand. Through this, they would be in a position to deepen their respect for each other's differences. This can be a prelude to peace building moves and cultural solidarity as a people. After all, they should accept and recognize each other as Filipinos under one country.

The community people as a component of society must realize that in order to live harmoniously and peacefully with each other, acceptance of differences in individuals and among groups can only be achieved from each one. This can be attained through mutual

respect and constant vigilance in avoiding negative feedback and conflict. They should bear in mind that no one should dominate the others; rather, each one should look at him as equal as the rest, possessing the same rights and privileges as the others. Finally, Future Researchers should conduct more in-depth studies on the possible means to attain cultural solidarity not only among students but among different tribal Filipinos.

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