

Building International Youth Coalition through Youth Exchange Program Volunteering Between China and the Philippines

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Abstract: This study expands one understanding of coalitions between countries and how they might help resolve some issues and conflicts. The youth exchange programs and youth volunteering can be an avenue to uncover the possibility of establishing an International Youth Coalition between China and the Philippines by examining their similarities and differences. The mission of the International Youth Coalition is to promote collaboration among the youths across the globe by providing them opportunities as well as enriching their experiences through cultural diversity.

This helps bridge a gap between China and the Philippines, particularly among its youth. Youths are unique as this study promotes the youths internationally to strengthen links and collaboration. Thus, the study aims to know whether the youth in the Philippines and China using the variables of the youth exchange program and volunteering could build an International Youth Coalition despite the tension between the two countries. In support of the above thesis the following questions need to be elucidated: (1) What are the salient features of Youth Exchange Programs and Volunteering between China and the Philippines? (2) What are the similarities and differences between China and Philippines Youth Exchange Programs and Volunteering? (3) How does the Youth Exchange Program and Volunteering to influence the possibility of an International Youth Coalition between China and the Philippines?

Keywords: Philippines, China, youth, volunteering, leadership, culture, unity

I. INTRODUCTION

Youths participate in a wide range of opportunities in different ways, like socializing, environmental involvement, and even politics. Youths are an important part of society because they are the ones who are most likely to pursue opportunities for themselves or even social advancement. In addition, youths in every country engage themselves in a broader context by building collaborations and coalitions to enhance youth development further. They are the most likely to engage in politics, Rose and Munro (2003) explain that youth political participation is a subset of civil engagement and movement in which youth can express their political engagement in various ways, whether formal or informal, within the population as a whole (Rose and Munro, 2003). This includes formal participation in voting and youth exchange programs and informal involvement in the form of political demonstrations and volunteer work.

Youth Exchange Programs are agreements between two countries to exchange youths or adults to provide opportunities. Typically, when we think of exchange programs, we think of student exchange programs. However, student exchange programs are limited to universities. In contrast, youth exchange programs involve governments of both countries exchanging their youth, which can be students, faculty, or employees, as long as they are still in the age bracket or considered youths.

Volunteering is another way for young people to get involved in politics. According to John Wilson (2000:2015), volunteering is any activity in which time is freely given to benefit another individual, group, or organization. This concept does not exclude volunteers from receiving compensation for their services. It is unclear whether these benefits will include monetary compensation. Additionally, volunteering contributes significantly and positively to the improvement of people's lives and the strengthening of communities and civil society.

These two variables, Youth Exchange Programs, and Youth Volunteering are the keys to uncovering the possibility of establishing an International Youth Coalition between China and the Philippines by examining their similarities and differences. The International Youth Coalition identifies its mission as promoting and collaborating with teenagers from all over the world to advance global possibilities and youth development.

International coalitions have been a hot topic of discussion, particularly in the field of international relations. This set resolves frequent concerns, such as gaps between countries and issues such as generalities about environmental, economic, and human protection. The common variable is comprised of agreements, the sequence of events around a coalition, and the state and non-state players that support international cooperation. There are also coalitions such as the United Nations and ASEAN.

This study expands our understanding of coalitions between countries and how they might help address issues and conflicts while offering possible opportunities for the younger generation. This helps bridge a gap between China and the Philippines, particularly among its youth. This study aims to know whether the Youth in the Philippines and Youth in

China by comparing their variables which are Youth Exchange Program and Volunteering could build an International Youth Coalition despite the tension between the two countries. In line with this, the study was able to find the answers to the following questions: (1) What are the salient features of Youth Exchange Programs and Volunteering between China and the Philippines? (2) What are the similarities and differences between China and Philippines Youth Exchange Programs and Volunteering? (3) How does the Youth Exchange Program and Volunteering to influence the possibility of an International Youth Coalition between China and the Philippines?

II. METHODOLOGY

This research used Comparative Case Study since the study covered two selected countries China and the Philippines. According to Goodrick (2014), a case study is an in-depth examination, often undertaken over time, of a single case – such as a policy, program, intervention site, implementation process, or participant. Comparative case studies cover two or more cases in a way that produces more generalizable knowledge about causal questions – how and why particular programs or policies work or fail to work. In addition, this study used Johns Stuart Mill, Joint Method of Similarities and Differences which will support the comparative case study.

If two or more instances in which the phenomenon occurs have only one circumstance in common, while two or more instances in which it does not occur have nothing in common save the absence of that circumstance: the circumstance in which alone the two sets of instances differ, is the effect, or cause, or a necessary part of the cause, of the phenomenon.

— John Stuart Mill, a System of Logic, Vol. 1. 1843. p. 284.

Also called simply the "joint method," this principle simply represents the application of the methods of agreement and difference.

Symbolically, the Joint method of agreement and difference can be represented as:

A B C occurs together with x y z

A D E occurs together with x v w also B C occur with y z

Therefore, A is the cause, or the effect, or a part of the cause of x.

Churchill, R. P. (1990).

The methods of agreement and difference can be used jointly- Find something in common amongst all cases where the effect appears - Find matches for all these cases except that they lack the effect and the commonality.

2.1 Data Collection

The data gathered in the study came from both primary and secondary sources. The primary source includes those people involved in the semi-structured interview process

coming from different states and regions and the two subjected high officials coming from the two distinct Youth Government Body of China and the Philippines which were the: All-China Youth Federation (ACYF) and National Youth Commission (NYC) which was web-base. The study also gained some secondary data coming from the Chinese consulate, the Program head for China and Philippines official exchanges. The sensitivity of place led the study to take some necessary steps and detailed procedures in data gathering. First, are the target respondents, and a possible contact person in China. A depth interview follows with the consent of the respondents. Then, a focus group discussion is initiated using the social media platforms such as WeChat, QQ, and Facebook.

2.2 Sampling

From the Philippines

The following persons were the targeted key informants in the study who has been part of the Philippines Youth Leaders Visit to China. Three (3) participants from Luzon: the program officer of International Program and volunteering, the Provincial Government of Lirionite and volunteer in Sirib Ilokano Kabataan Association Inc., and a student from Polytechnic University of the Philippines who took an internship at National Youth Commission. There were two (2) participants as well in the Visayas: the director at the University Community Development Office, and a student from the University of Cebu. Also, one (1) key informant from Mindanao, the regional convener of SOCCSKSARGEN on the 11th National Youth Parliament, and the chief head of the Mindanao 2030 sustainable youth development program.

2.3 From China

Three (3) key informants from Beijing, the executive vice president of the International University of Beijing and an affiliate in the ALL-China Youth Federation, a student from Beijing University, and the Youth Development Coordinator of China Youth League. One (1) from ZhengZhou: a senior student from Henan Agricultural University, who has been in the Philippines. Two (2) from Shanghai: a student from the University of Shanghai, an organizer of the Philippine Youth Leader Visit to China, and a student from Shanghai Jiatong University, a youth media manager. Another key informant from the Chinese consulate was the program officer for the official exchange visit of China and the Philippines in the PRC embassy.

2.4 Instrumentation

This study used semi-structured interviews and focus group chat discussion which was web-based. This kind of interview collects detailed information in a style that is very convenient and can be conversational. FGD method is advisable in generating a group idea for investigation or action in a new field (Freitas H., Oliveira M., Jenkins M., and Popjoy O. 1998).

Other instruments for recordings like cameras and phones were also used with the permission and consent of the participants. However, because of the strict rules and regulations of the university and long-processed paper works, one option was to gather data via web base interviews where respondents from the far region and countries were interviewed via WeChat or QQ and Messenger.

III. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

Different youths have different answers on the topic of International Youth Coalition through Youth Exchange Program and Volunteering. By the means of all the answers given by the respondents and the result of the focus group chat discussion, we try to analyze the data that we have gathered. We try to describe and enumerate the features of Youth Exchange Programs and Volunteering between China and the Philippines, compare and find the similarities and differences between Youth Exchange programs and Volunteering in China and the Philippines, and how do Youth Exchange programs and Volunteering can influence an International Youth Coalition.

3.1 Opportunities, Cultural Diversity, And Youth Development

Youth Exchange Program in China accentuates a wide degree of available resources and a wide range of opportunities for the youths by collaborating with other agencies in giving opportunities to the younger generation across the globe. In the Philippines, the Youth Exchange Programs showcase the country's rich culture and natural heritage. The program is directed toward the common goal of youth development and innovations in response to the global challenge of time. This also opens a possibility of friendship between the two conflicting countries.

Interdependency can be seen from this kind of feature which is also a variable of liberalism theory, where the governments of both countries are not just the key actors in promoting youth programs. This also empowers youth agencies coming from China and the Philippines such as the All-China Youth Federation¹ (ACYF) and National Youth Commission² (NYC). Youth Exchange Programs, on the other hand, promote liberalism which features a mutual benefit for both countries and even utilizes international cooperation. According to Shiraev & Zubok (2014), Interdependence has three main components. States interact in various ways, through economic, financial, and cultural means: security tends to not be the primary goal in state-to-state interactions: and military forces are not typically used (p. 86). This can barely see in the theme of the Philippine Youth Leaders Visit (PYLV) to China³ and the promotion of economic and cultural

exchanges wherein they promote more friendship, inter-agencies partnership, and state interactions with no military force that has been imposed. The military regulation for instance in China created security and a peaceful community contrary to the undesirable rumors about China. The inculturation of the young people through the youth exchange programs becomes an avenue of correcting biases leading to a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural differences.

For instance, the All-China Youth Federation and the Philippine Youth Leaders Visit (PYLV) to China in 2017 were student organizations, business groups, employment agencies, and child protection groups. A program was initiated to encourage the active participation of the attendees. The programs include a cooking challenge and calligraphy writing to foster familiarity and friendship between the participating countries. This is the goal of liberalism geared towards a peaceful and harmonious relationship between countries (Shiraev & Zubok, 2014, p. 88).

The rich culture was then featured by the Philippines in the youth exchange programs. This cultural diversity of the country is one of the important aspects of globalization which according to Robertson (1990), promotes cultural appreciation. According to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs exchange programs of the United States of America, as they quoted:

“Leaving the familiar behind and plunging into the unknown shows a commitment to understanding other people and cultures: and a commitment to learning about the world in a way that books, school assignments, and a professional career can never reveal.”

Interview results that Youth Exchange Program creates youth opportunities and development fostering a better and peaceful relationship with other countries. Youth development then is also considered one of the salient features of the Youth Exchange Program. This can be seen in their answers on self, social, and motivational enhancement.

The youth agencies such as the All-China Youth Federation and the National Youth Commission both promote opportunities and promotes culture appreciation. The programs earned government support and were geared towards youth development and innovations which are the key features of the youth coalition.

Liberalism is a softer approach in the international arena and it utilizes the margin, especially for youth exchange programs between China and the Philippines. China aims for peace and so with the Philippines and the best way to deal with it is to share and exchange knowledge on how both countries can achieve this goal. Thus, a youth exchange program can be instrumental in promoting youth development and cultural-political principles.

politics, environment, and social welfare of China but to as well meet their fellow youths' counterparts. The program was hosted by different movement organizations under the All-China Youth Federation.

¹ All-China Youth Federation also offers a wide range of news for youths all over China. See-through <http://www.acyf.org.cn>

² National Youth Commission offers a wide range of opportunities for the youths on their wall. See-through: <http://nyc.gov.ph/>

³ ACYF accommodates 50 youths and 5 officials for an official visit to China. Wherein youth from the Philippines were able to explore the diverse culture,

For volunteering, both countries have a different status. In the Philippines, volunteering is understood not only as helping and giving assistance to others. Rather it is also a way and opportunity for character building. Although China has a weak response to volunteering nevertheless, they offer programs and opportunities for young people such as health, education, and employment. Volunteering in the Philippines specifically focuses on leadership capabilities while volunteering in China promotes assistance.

In summary, both programs, the youth exchange programs, and volunteering play a pivotal role in giving equal opportunities for the youths which can be an avenue for building an international youth coalition in both countries. Through cultural diversity and globalization, the youth exchange program steps up its game in moving forward toward a common ideology grounded on collaboration and leadership promotion.

3.2 Youth Exchange Program Is One Step Closer

China and the Philippines were different countries with different ideologies and perspectives. Although both countries offer youth exchange programs and volunteering nevertheless, they differ in terms of politics and youth political participation.

The Philippine Youth Leader's Visits to China for example showcases a series of events as well as a visit to historical places. A seminar on environmental awareness was first initiated for Filipino youth visitors. The purpose of the event is to instill environmental literacy among the youths. An opportunity to visit the Chinese historical and sacred places like the National Museum, Great Wall of China, and Shaolin temple were also enjoyed. In addition, the Filipino youths were also given a chance to visit business companies like Tencent, start-up companies that offer economic and employment opportunities. Included in the visit were some schools and universities in China.

The Philippines also shared common international programs and one distinct program is the leading exchange program. From the last program ASEAN- China exchange visit, the Philippines accommodates youths from China and brought them to some historical places like Bataan. They also visited Binondo, a Chinese business community in Manila. In addition, a clean-up drive was set up for the Chinese youth in the Boy's Center in Muntinlupa.

Both youth exchange program between China and the Philippines provides an enriching learning experience that facilitates a possible youth coalition. Although China does not offer an opportunity for a leadership youth exchange program, however, their inculturation to the Filipino youth leaders can be a stepping stone for the possible creation of such a program.

Table 1: Shows the similarities between the Philippines and China's youth exchange programs and volunteering programs

Country	Program	Status
Philippines	Youth Exchange Program Volunteering	Present High (restricts only domestically)
China	Youth Exchange Program Volunteering	Present Low (stagnant)

The table shows that youth exchange programs and volunteering is evident in both countries. Volunteering is directed domestically, however, the Filipino youth has high regard for it while it does not work so much in China.

Table 2: Shows the list of international programs offered by both countries for youth exchange programs.

Country	International Programs	Distinction
Philippines	Environmental Protection Employment Competition Cultural Leadership Youth Protection	
China	Youth and child protection Business programs Culture and diversity programs Employment programs Competitions Environmental protection	Leadership

The following salient factors were also highlighted during the interview. Both countries share commonalities in the offered youth programs. The Philippines for instance, offer promotion of culture, environmental literacy, youth protection, employment, student programs, and leadership capabilities. China, on the other hand, offers child protection, employment, cultural and environmental programs. Both countries share a common vision and mission for youth exchange programs except that the leadership youth exchange program in China is not well attended. This analysis was highlighted using John Stuart Mill's method of agreement and differences.

Youth participation and collaboration with other countries like the Philippines and China through youth exchange programs may help foster friendship to address conflicting issues. During a visit of the Philippine youths to the Chinese embassy, an exchange token of gratitude was given by each country. The Philippines handed to them a statue of a *carabao* and in return, the Chinese community handed also to the Filipino youths a *panda*. Both tokens symbolized the country's national treasure.

3.3 Filling Up the Gaps And Sharing Solutions For Youth Issues

In response to the question: How do youth exchange programs and volunteering influence the international youth coalition. Interview results that youth exchange programs fill

up the gap by strengthening the collaboration and partnership of both countries in solving youth issues and conflicts.

For example, one of the highlights of Philippine youth leaders' visit to China is the visit to the Museum of Anti-Drug Scientific Education. Here China demonstrated a possible solution to address the global issue of prohibited drugs, an issue not very far from the Philippines. The issue had been discussed and shared by the young people and a realization was reached that life has to be preserved and protected and the war on drugs is not a deterrent to crime. This realization motivated the youths of the Philippines and China to strengthen the youth exchange programs to redirect their mindset to valuable things that enhance their humanity and capabilities. For instance, China is sharing valuable insights for business opportunities like innovative start-up technology.

Youth leadership according to Scheer (1997) is essential for people and society as well. According to Boyd, Herring, & Briers (1992), those leadership skills allow the person to make responsible decisions, create better communication, and network with others. This was supported by Seevers, Dormody & Clason (1995) that leadership skills help improve the function of the person in a real-life situation. Through youth exchange programs an international youth between China and the Philippines may be created to further enhance youth development and career opportunities shared by both countries.

The Philippine youth visit to China motivates the Filipino youths to create a series of events and projects in the country. The Philippine youth leaders' visit to South Cotabato together with the National Youth Commission initiated a caravan and information drive on human rights, drug awareness, employment opportunities, and educational scholarship. In the same manner, the Chinese visit to the Philippines becomes a learning experience for a possible youth program on leadership.

The Philippines and China with their main youth agencies signed a Memorandum of Understanding between 2005 and 2017. The MOU in the year 2005 was geared towards progress and promotion of economic youth development and environmental protection. While the MOU in the year 2017 was geared towards exchanges of opportunities specifically on employment and scholarship in education. Thus, both countries shared common international programs such as environmental protection, economic, cultural, youth protection, and education, and through those offered programs have created their shared values for youth coalition.

Recently, the Philippines Innovative Start-Up Act provides Filipino youths with sustainable projects and the opportunity to participate in any international programs and invitations. In addition, China offered an educational scholarship to Filipino students to study in any of the universities in China. Thus, the MOU OF 2017 between

China and the Philippines strengthens the existing bond between the two countries.

All of these reflect the goal of a coalition between China and the Philippines to fully build International Youth Coalition. According to one of the key informants, this should be preserved and strengthened and not be politicized. The All-China Youth Federation and the National Youth Coalition were tasked with moderating the different youth sectors by linking their organizations through their counterpart like Diinsider, Sowing Legacy, universities, and companies.

Youth Exchange Program is one type of formal political participation while Volunteering is one type of informal political participation. Formal participation opens up its capability in engaging with different agencies and actors including the state. Although China and the Philippines differ in terms of political ideologies, however, each government allows formal political participation among its youths. This creates a wider and broader political space among agencies and the state itself. Also, formal participation allows both countries to partner because they share this kind of commonality when it comes to cross-cultural exchange under the youth exchange program.

Volunteering, on the other hand, falls under the informal type of political participation which affects the actual execution of the program. Volunteering in China was not given attention as compared to the youth exchange program. One reason is that China has strong civil welfare and they even trust their citizens to team up with the government. Also, the state trusted the other social welfare organization to manage and affix the shortcomings of their government. So even with a narrow space, the flow of political participation in China is still organized and visible. However, volunteering is high in the Philippines because of the uprising issues not just in civil welfare but as well for the social welfare of the citizens.

IV. CONCLUSION

In summary, one can conclude that an international youth coalition through youth exchange programs and volunteering between China and the Philippines may be facilitated. The study shows that youth exchange programs were capable of building an international youth coalition between China and the Philippines. Through semi-structured interviews and focus group chat discussions, the researcher was able to answer the following research questions. One of which are the salient features of Youth Exchange Programs that it features not just enough resources but also an array of opportunities given by the different agencies. It also accentuates not only the importance of participation but as well as the cultural diversity that each country by neglecting biases and being open and giving each other's respect that is indeed needed. Both agreed that the common feature of youth exchange programs is youth development. There were then fewer reactions and answers for volunteering which they define volunteering features generally in enhancing one's

leadership potential and giving assistance to those who needed health care, education, and employment opportunities. This also shows that volunteering in the Philippines was restricted domestically but already in the phase of building a national youth volunteering coalition. While there is a weak response to China's volunteering program it is only restricted to those who were willing to participate.

The study also shows the similarities and differences of the programs while considering the possibilities of an international youth coalition. International programs in youth exchange programs show similarities in terms of environmental protection, student programs, employment, culture, youth protection, and economic programs. With help of John Stuart Mill's Method of Agreement and Differences, it leads to the conclusion that the youth exchange program was capable of building an international youth coalition. Evidence showed that China attracts young leaders in the Philippines where Chinese youths can learn from them in building their leadership skills which then benefits each country.

The Youth Exchange program then influences the international youth coalition through exchanging networks and connections, enhancing the skills of every youth, and sharing the knowledge and solution to fix and solve youth issues. Leadership then influences both youths of China and the Philippines on the belief that this is an innate potential common for young people. Volunteering then influences the international youth coalition by challenging to establish a strong foundation that could make it flow for both countries and to fully understand volunteering better.

In the end, the question of possibility was answered. Youth exchange programs can build an international youth coalition between China and the Philippines and there was already an improvement by signing Memorandum of Understanding between China and the Philippines for the young generation. There were youth programs that have been planned and created such as cultural exchange, promotion of human rights, employment, and scholarships to enhance the youth capabilities in both countries.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

There are a lot of recommendations intended for this study. First, there should be a further discussion on the topic of the international youth coalition. A follow-up study may be conducted after the issuance of the Memorandum of

Understanding (MOU). Second, a possible study on youth information dissemination. According to Ward (1995), information dissemination is useful to provide up-to-date information for the youths to cater to their innate potentials and capabilities. Third, a study on the influence of politics in youth programs such as youth exchange programs. Lastly, an evaluation of career opportunities may be conducted after the youth exchange program.

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