

## Philosophy of Traditional Learning System in Sulu Archipelago: Beyond Lifelong Learning

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### Abstract

*Traditionally, Sulu Archipelago on study covered Provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi islands in the Philippines. In 13<sup>th</sup> century, Islam arrived to these scattered Hindu influenced communities that founded advanced society, culture and learning system persisting until today despite of contemporary formal education. Hence, philosophy behind this traditional learning system was investigated. The provinces were traveled to interview criterion selected individuals and groups on why people are still practicing their old brand of learning system. It revealed that learning is beyond worldly life. "Learning from birth to death" or "crave to the grave" was short. Three stages of learning such as pre-worldly life, lifelong and after life were revealed. The lifelong journey is interwoven into the purpose of creation which is the ending point of their learning philosophy. Being detached from the absolute purpose of learning the world becomes chaotic and such is a manifestation of the material world.*

**Keywords:** traditional learning system, lifelong learning, traditional education, Sulu archipelago, culture, philosophy, history

### 1. Introduction

Before the arrival of the present system of education to the Philippines brought by the Spaniards and later by the Americans many of the islands in the Philippines were already having its own leaning system. It may not be as scientific or systematic as it is in the modern times but the elements of writing system were obviously present to convey information and transfer of knowledge. The Laguna copper plate (Wiki Pilipinas, June 2010) discovered by archeologists in Laguna is so far the latest archeological relic found indicating that the ancient inhabitants of the pre-Philippines had already a system of writing as early as 900 C.E. System of writing is one indication of an advance civilization. Hence, the views of foreign writers in the past claiming that people of the pre-Philippines was still uncivilized when they "discovered" was a hoax and a systematic tactic to put themselves on top of history.

In Sulu archipelago there was already its own system of learning and can be regarded as a system of education of the local natives ever recorded. The system of learning was brought about by Muslim missionaries and mystics (Majul, 1978) who reached Sulu and Mindanao areas wave after wave even before 1405 A.D. Before the arrival of the waves of Muslim missionaries Sulu Archipelago was under the influenced of Hindus. It is probably why "rituals are heavily influenced by non-Islamic traditions, making them unique to the Tausug" (DLIFLC, July 2013). In this study, this date is used to establish periods in Sulu archipelago history being the most accepted reference in the writing of Sulu history. It bears concrete evidence of dating being inscribed in the tombstone of Tuan Maqbalu the oldest landmark of Islamization in Jolo Island. The last wave of missionaries who brought system of education to Sulu was Sayyed Abubakar. He was credited to have established the two most important events in Sulu history. One is the first madrasa school in Buansa and the second is the Sultanate of Sulu whom he was the first Sultan whose crown name was Sultan Sharif'ul Hashim in 1405.

Madrasa is a kind of a formal school system with semblance to the present education system in the country. What is interesting to note however, the system of learning in Sulu archipelago can be generally described as having two-pronged approach. One is the formal Madrasa instruction while the other is informal but following a pattern or norm in the system of learning. Until the arrival of the Muslim modern scholars in the early part of 1950s Madrasa of the contemporary type has not been much accepted by local inhabitants until lately.

Hence, the system of instruction practiced in Sulu archipelago was more of the second informal one. The Muslim Filipinos in Sulu Archipelago especially their elders have been used to this kind of learning processes. In terms of effectiveness, obvious results have been observed in changing the life of the people exposed to this kind of informal learning. It is in this situation where this study explored viz-a-viz the present concept of lifelong learning as propagated by UNESCO.

This research attempted to investigate the philosophy of Traditional Learning System (TLS) in Sulu Archipelago in reference to the concept of lifelong learning. Specifically, the study attempted to find out the following: the reasons of the respondents for continuous adherence to the traditional learning; examined the major contents that were identified; the application of its process in the actual life of the learners; and the similarities and relatedness of traditional learning to the concept of lifelong learning.

This research study posted very significant contributions to the many important sectors of the Philippine society as a whole. It is a subject that needs more understanding to the differing cultural practices of the people in Sulu Archipelago from the rest of the Filipinos. Because it remains a close book to many writers, researchers and educators at this advanced age the research opened a new dimension of subject matter. It is a fact that this subject has not been fully explored, not been understood and appreciated by educators specially the authorities responsible in Philippine education. Thus, this study was conducted to bring out the significance of the subject and invite others to pursue the field being important to many social ills like the Mindanao problem and the promotion of understanding to eliminate biases and discriminations. Education authorities like the Commission on Higher Education and the Department of Education likewise could take the study as a reference for consideration in drafting educational contents and policies.

Traditional learning system of Muslims in Sulu Archipelago is a broad phase of teaching-learning processes. It is as broad as the modern concept of education itself. Hence, it necessitated the definition of focus in order to trim down the areas of concern. Included in the study were the reasons presented by the respondents why they were still into the traditional learning despite of the present trend of education system. What were there in the concepts of traditional learning system that are found in lifelong learning?

The conduct of this research was guided by the concept of Lifelong Learning. Lifelong learning is conceptualized as “the continuation of conscious learning throughout the lifespan” (OECD, 1996, in Field, 2006). Lifelong learning recognizes learning of individuals throughout a lifetime as it also recognizes formal, non-formal and informal setting. It cuts across schools and post-school distinctions to suggest a learning process which spans the whole of one’s life” It “includes people of all ages learning in a variety of contexts—in educational institutions, at work, at home and through leisure activities” The LLQC presented the concept of lifelong learning in a diagram below.

## **2. Research Methods**

The study employed a qualitative approach using descriptive survey research. The designed was used considering the nature of the subject matter. The subject of the research requires in-depth investigation for in-depth narratives in the presentation of data in order to fully describe the details of its nature so that desired understanding could be achieved. It is through narratives that the important information on the subject of research could be presented, thus, a qualitative approach was appropriately necessary.

The decision to use qualitative approach in this research was likewise highly influenced by the kind of respondents of the study. They were traditionalists in the literal sense being the lovers of their traditions. As traditionalists the respondents were non-readers as well as non-writers of English alphabets. Their own system of writing was Arabic used in local vernacular whether Yakan, Sama, or Tausug. It therefore suggested the most appropriate instruments for data gathering of qualitative study which will be discussed in the succeeding paragraphs.

Sulu Archipelago historically is defined as “the 400 or so islands of the Sulu Archipelago, bounded on the west by the Sulu Sea and on the east and south by the Celebes Sea, lie between 4°30’ and 6°50’ N and 119°10’ and 122°25’ E” (Encyclopedia of World Cultures, 1996 ). It mainly includes the present provinces of Tawi-Tawi, Sulu, Basilan, Zamboanga Peninsula, Island of Palawan and North Borneo and the seas engulfing and connecting these islands. As far as the locale of the study is concerned the researcher limited only its study to the three main islands comprising the Sulu Archipelago.

It was so because the majority of the populations that still practice the traditional education are confined presently to these areas and the islands and islet communities therein. Hence, only the Provinces of Basilan, Sulu and Taw-Tawi were the locale of this study. The respondents were a total of thirty two individuals regardless of age who were exposed at least one year to the segments of traditional learning system whether practicing it or not. Five of them were individuals who engaged in teaching the traditional learning system and the third respondents of twenty seven were learned folks or religious leaders who practiced the teachings of traditional learning system like “guru” or religious person.

The instrument used in gathering the data was in-depth interview using guide questions formulated through the principle of referential deduction. That is, the questions covered and elicited information about the variables specified in the research problem. The variables in the research problems were given specifics and concretizations by defining the operational definition of key variables and other terms for easy identification of data. In this sense, all the details of information that were needed to answer questions in the statement of the problem were satisfactorily covered. All of these processes were in referenced to the variables deduced from the problem statements.

In-depth Interview as a research instrument of this study was in the form of an informal open ended guide no holds-bar questions for respondents who cannot or hardly read and write English alphabet. DLIFLC (2013) claimed “as many as 56% of people in some parts of Sulu have never been to school.” Interview guide questions were constructed in three main parts. The first part comprised questions on the reasons of the respondents for continuously studying in the traditional learning system, the second part were on major contents of traditional learning system and the third part was on the application of the process in the actual life of the learners. In the selection of respondents for this study, two types of non-probability sampling technique were utilized. They were the Snow-ball or chain sampling while the other was the criterion-reference sampling technique.

After the first respondent was identified, he was asked to identify another individual who qualify as respondents in accordance with the criteria specified in the table for criterion-reference sampling. After then, each successive participant respondent was named by the preceding individual respondents that comprised the chain. Respondent referral was used as basis for choosing the possible samples. The simple table below is a criterion table that determined the attributes of an individual who qualified as respondents to this research. He must have been able to satisfy the criteria set below to become respondent. The gathering of data for this research was really difficult. It was due to the problem in identifying individuals who will satisfy the criteria indicated in the criterion reference. However, with the use of snow-ball or chain sampling as another method of identifying the respondents difficulties were overcome.

The researcher started the gathering of data by identifying groups of individuals who were engaging in spiritual studies. There were circle of spiritual studies known to the researcher in almost all of the three provinces included in the locale of the study such as Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi. From them information was gathered on who were those to qualify as respondents. The researcher had to travel to the three provinces to gather the data. The researcher also used some of his contacts in these three provinces to arrange an appointment with the qualified respondents in order to save time during the data gathering. To increase the reliability of the research, the researcher recorded all the proceedings of interview. Parts of it were presented in the manuscript as a proof of data gathering. The data were interpreted using pre-categorization and emerging categorization processes. It is in the principle of attribution that each group of words attributed to a particular matter, thing or phenomenon yield a particular message or groups of messages. The process of categorization provided meanings to the data collected in the study. The research was guided by the concept of Theory of Lifelong Learning propagated by the UNESCO and other exponents.

### **3. Results and Discussions**

#### **3.1. Reasons of the Respondents for Continuously Adhering to the Traditional Learning**

Taking note of the common responses of the respondents as grouped according to research objectives it could be seen that all of them pertain to religiosity, salvation, path to the divine, divine command, and paradise or the life hereafter. It could be said that to the people in Sulu Archipelago who are still engaging in traditional learning system they have a different perspective in acquiring knowledge. Basically, it is learning with emphasis in salvation and therefore religious in nature.

Sulu Archipelago was ripened by time setting a strong foothold of religiosity. As Sathier (2016) described “Islam was later reinvigorated in Sulu by Sufi missionaries, who came from Arabia or Iraq via Malaya and Sumatra.” When it was reinvigorated it means religiosity had been in Sulu Archipelago even before the arrival of the Sufi missionaries. Sathier further described that “the date of earliest Islamic penetration is uncertain, but initial contact possibly began in late Sung times, when Arab merchants opened direct trading links with southern China by way of the Sulu Archipelago.”

When the respondents were asked in the most cordial way during in-depth interview on why did those reasons come to be of religious tone, they then explained the basic reason where the above emanated. They also reasoned that until presently they are still stocked in the practice of the traditional learning system in some point at par with the formal education introduced by the west more than five hundred years ago because of the same cause. Their responses revealed deep and unappreciable points if the life and culture of the Muslims in Sulu Archipelago are not understood. Their answers were strange because respondents pointed out that the beginning of learning does not exist only in worldly life. That means it is not only from birth to death, but something like from life in the womb to the life inside the graveyard. Learning exists even at pre-worldly life. To them, an individual has not yet existed in the face of the earth but learning has already started to take place. This belief is supported by the description of Sathier (2016) stating “On the fifteenth day of the month of Sha’aban, one of the *ruh*’s of the dead is sent back to earth: here the deceased is honored with prayers and on the following day graves are cleared.” He was mentioning of the *ruh* which means soul. Accordingly it is only the physical body that dies while the *ruh* does not. Hence, it still has the capability to communicate to the living.

The venue of the first learning of the fetus was in the womb of the mother. Specifically, it took place at certain stages of fetus development which began from a clot of blood turned into mash, flesh and cartilage. Respondents revealed that learning passes during the growth of the fetus in the womb. Accordingly, the soul passes three visits to the body while in the womb and the third and final visit makes the *ruh* stay and leave only at an appointed time of his return that is death to worldly life. The first learning occurred in the third and last stage of fetus stay in the womb before he is born. It was also claimed to have been the permanency of the stay of the “divine energy” or the soul in the body which is the fetus per se. They claim at an appointed time, the baby is born. Moments before he is sent out to the world a covenant involving the child’s *ruh* took place that was said to be primary learning of the *ruh*. As to the contents of learning it is only between the soul and his teacher, and this remains to be a divine secret that is not divulged but searched due to its priceless worth. Upon arrival to the material world the changed in the dimension of reality where the child is brought forth had took place causing all the primary learning to be gone. Respondents said it is the challenge in worldly life to find out the reality of covenant before one returns to the next life which is his original abode.

Considering the revealed data from the respondents stated above there is found a notable disparity between the traditional learning system in Sulu Archipelago and the concept of lifelong learning. To understand such disparity there is a need to consider first the concept of formal, non-formal and informal education. According to LLCQI (2016) the distinction between formal and non-formal learning environments is about where learning takes place. “Formal learning occurs within institutions established primarily to deliver education and training, often leading to recognized outcomes and qualifications. Non-formal learning has intended for education and training outcomes, however, the setting is outside of dedicated learning institutions, most often in places where learning is not the primary business.” Informal learning is distinguishable by intent. It can occur almost anywhere, but as a by-product of other activities. “It is often unplanned and without explicit emphasis on learning, yet may still lead to the acquisition of valuable skills, knowledge and attitudes.” Lifelong learning is present in all these types of education and it is “the continuation of conscious learning throughout the lifespan” (OECD, 2006).

Because learning takes place while in the conscious level for lifelong learning the traditional learning consider learning before the conscious level. The pre-conscious level is in the womb but the receiver of the knowledge is the *ruh* while the body is in the womb of the mother. It could be noted also from the revealed data above that in earthly life after birth took place the body complete with his soul is obliged to know the knowledge introduced to the soul before birth. But the conscious learning takes place during the lifespan in the worldly life in the material world. Learning of divine knowledge while in the womb is repeatedly learned in the earthly life by the conscious mind.

Therefore, learning in traditional learning system in regard to this subject is of two levels such as in the unconscious level of the mind but in the conscious level of the *ruh* and in the conscious level of the mind but in the unconscious level of the *ruh*. The learning refers to learning in the pre-worldly life and in the worldly life respectively.

### 3.2. Major Contents of Traditional Learning System

Practically everything in the face of the earth hidden and manifest is content of traditional learning system as claimed by the respondents because it is in reality life by itself. Informally, the Traditional Learning System has contents which may be learned at any time within the lifespan of a person. This is not organized as in formal education and one's exposure depends on the interest of the learners what knowledge interests them. Among the major areas but not limited to, as sought by the learners are in the table below.

Basically at the school age of a child but not limiting the adult the first content being studied is the reading of Arabic alphabet. It is a non-formal part of traditional learning. This must not however be misconstrued with madrasa similar to non-formal education described by AIJC (2011) as "traditional or weekend madrasa. Instruction is basically religious. It is considered as non-formal education due to its characteristics: (a) classes are held on Saturdays and Sundays only or days agreed upon by the teacher and the students/pupils; (b) it does not have a formal curriculum; (c) it is non-graded and may have multi-age grouping; and (d) it only requires its teachers to be graduates of madrasa or to be an *imam* (Muslim religious leader)." This type of madrasa is doom in failure. Muhamat, R., Guleng, M.P, and Hj Aini, Z. (2015) concluded that "madrasa graduate of secondary curriculum (Thanawi) could not proficiently use the Arabic language, much less understand it and that their training in these Islamic schools hardly benefitted them in practical ways." The learning of reading of the Arabic alphabet referred to in this discussion is that one described by Quiling, M.S., (2006) which is "*Pangadji ha lihal* is home-based *Qur'an* and values education, while in the more formal village-level is *madrasa*, instruction is very similar to religious catechetical school." It is done through reading of the Islamic holy book, the *Qur'an*. Sarifah Samporna on ALIVE program said "it is important for our Muslim children to learn the language of the Holy *Qur'an* and the beliefs and values system of our religion," (Mukherjee, V. D., 2007).

At some point in time they then learn the knowledge of purification. It is a highly philosophical knowledge pertaining to the cleansing of the body, the soul, the heart and the mind of the person. According to the respondents such knowledge is embodied with various techniques backed up with proofs and evidences for one to determine his success in the purification process. The learner shall be able to distinguish whether purification has happened or not. It is to their belief that every effort towards adoration of the Lord and salvation of the self could not gain acceptance if one performing such is not purified. It is for this reason that purification to the belief of the learners is the most basic and the most important content to learn. The knowledge of purification in its impact on the learners according to the respondents will dramatically and tremendously change the personality, behavior and attitude of a practitioner. The example provided by the respondents in their explanations cited one who do murderous acts but completely managed changed in his life to become most pious, refined, patient, and a lover of creation.

It is in here when the respondents insisted that the purpose of seeking knowledge is not to be most high in the affairs of the world but to realize the purpose for which life was created. The world will be chaotic if this basic knowledge is not learned being the very foundation of existence. For them the very foundation of the knowledge that will impact change on the person and then to the community and the whole society in general begins from purification of oneself. It is the basic consideration of the Traditional Learning System. Once a person has knowledge and has given importance to his purpose of being a creation then it is where he is complete and controlled. It is a control in doing undesirable activities in the face of the earth that is realized. According to respondents the scientists possess wasted efforts if their knowledge of science is used toward destruction of humanity. They cited the condition of the world today when technology has been so advanced yet keep on advancing more till life is becoming more endangered, and human existence is in constant threat and without assurance. Having unpurified mind conflict reign on everybody and there is no peace of mind. To the respondents all of these are attributed to the un-cleaned and unpurified mind, body and soul of the person.

The third content the respondents presented the "*tinggong sambahayang*." It is meant how to perform ritual prayers. It is the basic requirement to a Muslim to learn how to perform ritual prayer being one of the pillars of Islam. Another content is the "*pangadji sarah*" or the knowledge of the divine law.

To the respondents it is learning the knowledge that comes forth from God that is consistent with nature. It is supposed to be the law that governs all kinds of human acts in the face of the earth. The law governs practically everything in this world. In this law however they emphatically said that it is connected to the divine. The life is governed by the law that has multifarious effects in the life hereafter. Hereafter life is actually the most concerned and important matter to the learners of Traditional Learning System.

The knowledge of “*usuluddin*” or the history of religion is more appropriately described as the history of creation. The respondents claimed that “*usuluddin*” presented the idea of how everything came to an order. They presented the knowledge to have begun from the discourses of nothingness or emptiness to the realm of the smallest particle of an atom. In this philosophy, in between them are the spiritual and the material worlds where everything exist in both hidden and manifest. They likewise insisted that blindness in the knowledge connecting both worlds render an individual ignorant about the reality of life. For this reason *Ahadith* says “seek knowledge from cradle to the grave” because “even if all the leaves of the trees shall be turned into a paper and the ocean shall be turned into an ink, they cannot contain the knowledge of the Creator.”

The knowledge of “*tawhid*” according to respondents is all about craving for the understanding of the oneness of the Creator. The “Oneness” explained by them came in several forms and conditions. For example they famously claimed in this philosophy that everything is both detached and connected at the same time to the existence of God. That everything is connected as one be it in the heavens and in the earth. That God is omnipresent in everything and therefore nothing escapes God.

One of the most challenging and almost unacceptable claims of the respondents is the concept of the presence of God in the human existence. That is “knowledge of the hidden-ness of God in human being.” Learning the hidden-ness of God in the person is considered “*shirk*” or polytheism by many Muslim scholars. The concept of “*Shirk*” is belief in something out of ignorance to putting partner or any association with God. Respondents claimed that this knowledge is similar to a strand of a hair divided seven times and one of those parts is as thin as one to get *shirk* and face destruction.

The other major knowledge the learners sought to study is the “*janjimo ha lawom pa kaw sin sahaya isuk-isuk sin kalima*” or the “covenant while you are within the light in the nucleus of *Kalima*.” The respondents have the belief that there was a teaching-learning condition taking place while a baby was still in the light within the womb of his mother. They claimed this to have happened a moment before the mother gives birth. The teaching-learning situation happened between the soul and his Lord. While this knowledge is sought in the earthly life the respondents maintained that learning started there. And the soul and the body are one to have learned.

Finally, the last major component of learning presented by the respondents is the “*pagkausog*” or “invulnerability and invincibility.” They have the belief that man can learn the many secrets of becoming invincible and invulnerable. The purpose of this art of knowledge is to be free from any form of harm be it the fierce of biting animals, strength of a bullet, destruction of black magic, heat of fire, destructions from storms, and many others.

### **3.3. Application of the Process in the Actual life of the Learners**

A narrative description of the processes how traditional learning system is applied among the adherents is presented. During the discussion with the respondents, they explained the way how the traditional learning system applies in the actuality. It was found out that the process of exposure to learning system was in the most natural way. The learning goes with the actual life of a child until he grows old. While doing everyday life activities the learning goes with it and going to a *guro* to learn a certain type of knowledge is dependent on the wishes of the learner. There is no structure but the emphasis is on the practice. Once the knowledge is transmitted to an individual it depends on him whether he will practice such knowledge or not.

There is neither age requirement nor any age limit in learning the contents of traditional learning. At times knowledge comes forth and transferred to another person out of accidents. There is no specified venue of teaching-learning activities. Except for the child who will begin to learn how to read Arabic letters, no time and venue is required and not restricted as in formal education. After the *tammam* or completion of reading lessons, the child has the option to stop and wait for his adolescence then proceed again to the learning of another kind or branch of knowledge. Semblance of traditional learning in Sulu archipelago has traces to “African, Asian and Arabic cultures that have all emphasized vertical articulation, or the need for people to learn continuously from childhood to adulthood, as individuals and societies change.” (Anonuevo, C.M., 2006)

There is neither structured level nor hierarchy, neither confirmation of degree nor issuance of certificates, because learning in traditional learning system is life itself. The teaching-learning process however does not end in conscious life. It is continued until the unconscious life that is when the person is already dead. His death is not death per se but believed by the traditional learners as transfer of abode. They believe that even if the soul has separated from the body still the body could hear, see, and feel the worldly inflictions on him, The only absent is the will to move and speak. By this they said the last teaching is when a man is lead to his grave and the last teachings and advises are read to him immediately after burial called the “*turkin*.”

Regarding the subject matters that pertain to any branches of discipline such as the study of science, technology, environment, social economics and more of modern formal education they have considered it as the support to the life of mankind. It is not the real purpose of the creation of men. It must be something else which is divine. Those branches of knowledge are created to make men search for it in order to make their life better in this world. In the finality, the purpose of learning in their traditional learning is to find the real purpose of the creation of humanity.

#### 4. Conclusion: Concept of Lifelong Learning and Traditional Learning System

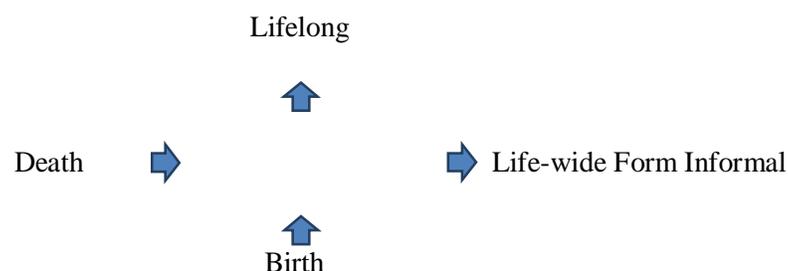
“Lifelong learning may be broadly defined as learning that is pursued throughout life: learning that is flexible, diverse and available at different times and in different places. Lifelong learning crosses sectors, promoting learning beyond traditional schooling and throughout adult life.” (LLQCI,)

Based on the data above discussed, there is not much difference between the concept of lifelong learning and the traditional learning system in Sulu Archipelago. Both recognize formal, non-formal and informal learning. What they only differ is in some extension recognized by the Traditional Learning System beyond the context of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning gives emphasis to the learning from birth to death. Learning takes place in a conscious level of man which he acquires at the time he is born up to the time he dies. In other words, the learning happens only during his life span in the earth. The traditional learning system on its part gives considerations to the life before birth and that is from the mother’s conception of a child inside her womb. But the learner in this stage is the *ruh* as presented by respondents. This area is more of a spiritual sphere of explanation of learning. The next or the second level of learning is the life in this world that begins from birth and ends in death.

On this part it has similarities to some attributes of progressive education such as “community is an extension of the classroom; knowledge is constructed through play, direct experience, and social interaction; intelligence is recognized as varied, includes the arts, and is measured in real-life problem-solving.” (NAIS, 2012). This part is the concern of lifelong learning. The third level of traditional learning system is the learning that occurs after death shortly after a man is buried to the ground and it is called “*turkin*.” The dead body is believed by the traditional learners to have the capacity to hear, see, and feel through the power of his soul that does not actually die. Therefore, to them he has still the capacity to learn. In “*turkin*” the body represented by the soul is reminded or taught about some divine secrets and the condition of his new life in the grave. What is significant in traditional learning is the emphasis on linking or connecting life in this material world and the life after death from this world. This concept teaches that life before birth, life after birth and life after death are joined and connected. And so they postulates that unless the link of the manifest world and the hidden which is the life hereafter is taught, believed and connected to its original purpose of creation men will always succumb into temptations and the evil of the material world because one’s animal nature will always rule him. Hence, peace can never be achieved by mankind.

#### 5. Tables and Figures

##### 5.1. Dimension of Lifelong Learning



## 5.2. Criterion Reference

Criterion Reference	
Engage in teaching activities in TLS	Regardless of age, gender, educational attainment, and civil status
At least one year of exposure in TLS	
Residents of Sulu Archipelago	
Belong to the four tribes living in Sulu, Basilan and Tawi-Tawi	

## 5.3. Reasons of the Respondents for Continuously Adhering to the Traditional Learning

The respondents when asked regarding their reasons for continuously studying traditional learning their common answers resulted to the descriptions in the table below:

Common Reasons for continuously adhering to the traditional learning system	
Reasons in Tausug Language	Translations to English
<i>Balik sin Quran</i>	Memorize the Qur'an
<i>Tungbas</i>	Reward for learning
<i>Maksud pa ilmoh sumannang in dan pa sulgah</i>	Intent to learn the knowledge to ease the road to paradise
<i>Buntol sin pangarap pa tuhan</i>	Seek straight path to the realm of Creator
<i>Hadith sin rasul nagdaak umingat sin ilmo daing ha panagnaan sambil pa kahinapusan sin kabuhi</i>	A narrative of the prophet advised to learn knowledge from beginning to end (The beginning referred to here is the beginning of conception while in the womb)
<i>In Ilm dan pa sulga subay lawagon daing ha panagnaan sambil pa hinapusan</i>	Knowledge is the road to paradise that must be searched from the beginning up to the end of life
<i>Wajib in manuntot ilmo daing ha panagnaan sambil pa hinapusan</i>	An obligation to learn knowledge from beginning to end
<i>Pahala hi tungbas sin tuhan</i>	Rewards to be granted by God
<i>Usalun hipag paluhay sin labayan pa sulgah</i>	Use it as knowledge to ease the way to paradise
<i>Dan pa sulga in ilmo</i>	The way to paradise is knowledge
<i>In katan maksud sin pagguro diy pasalan sin ahirat</i>	All the intent of learning here is because of the life hereafter
<i>In maksud tood sin pagpangadji supaya dih malawah ha pagtuhan. Pasal in manusiyah maingat magtuhan in adlaw ahirat niya kasanyangan</i>	The purpose of learning (in traditional learning system) is to maintain knowledge about God, So that it will not get lost. Because one who knows the knowledge about Him will have peace in his life hereafter.

## 5.4. Major Contents of Traditional Learning System

Major Contents of Traditional Learning System	
InTausug Language	Translations to English
<i>Umingat mamassa sulat arabic</i>	Learning to read Arabic Alphabet
<i>Kasutihan Jahir iban batin Munamuna tood ingaton</i>	Purification of the manifest and the hidden must be the first to learn
<i>Tinggong sambahayang</i>	Practice of ritual prayer
<i>Pangadji Sarah</i>	Knowledge of divine law
<i>Usuluddin</i>	History of religion as the history of creation
<i>Tawhid</i>	Knowledge on the Oneness of God
<i>Ingatun in kabatin sin tuhan doon kaymo</i>	Knowledge of the hiddenness of God in human being
<i>Janji mo ha lawom pa kaw sin sahaya isuk-isuk sin kalima</i>	Covenant while you are within the light in the nucleus of Kalima.
<i>Pagkausog</i>	Invulnerability and invincibility

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