

## A thematic analysis on the social conditions reflected in Bangsamoro literary pieces

### *Analisis tematik tentang kondisi sosial yang tercermin dalam karya sastra Bangsamoro*

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#### Abstract

Sociology through literature of Lewis Coser inspired this study to thematically identify social conditions of Bangsamoro people using the literary works published online. Four volumes were gathered from Bangsamoro Literary Review from 2021 to 2023. The method is qualitative and thematic analysis was used to interpret and dissect the gathered literatures. Graphics or non-text form published in the journal was not included. Two levels were employed in thematic analysis: macro level (Lewis Coser) and micro level (Carter & Carter). It was revealed in the study that among twenty themes at macro level, thirteen themes emerged namely: culture, social control, socialization, self and other, status and role, sex and roles, total institutions, urban sociology, poverty, family, religion, collective behavior, and, deviance. At micro level, optimism/pessimism, ambition, betrayal/revenge, curiosity/apathy, and, doubt/certainly depicted in the literary works studied. The lived experiences of Bangsamoro as one region shared common dilemmas encountered by most Filipinos such as poverty, family trust, dreaming big, safety, love affairs, and city-life. On the other hand, specific conditions from the narratives of writers as Bangsamoro are the marriage agreement, identity role, discrimination, strict religious beliefs, and others. Furthermore, literature unveils social conditions which can serve as sociological data to explore social structures and dynamics. This leads to a more comprehensible image of the extant culture, behavior, and local knowledge on particular groups.

**Keywords:** Bangsamoro region; literary pieces; social condition; sociological data; thematic analysis

#### Abstrak

Sosiologi melalui karya sastra Lewis Coser menginspirasi penelitian ini untuk mengidentifikasi secara tematis kondisi sosial masyarakat Bangsamoro melalui karya sastra yang dipublikasikan secara daring. Empat jilid dikumpulkan dari Bangsamoro Literary Review sejak tahun 2021 sampai tahun 2023. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dan analisis tematik untuk menafsirkan dan membedah karya sastra yang dikumpulkan. Grafik atau bentuk non-teks yang dipublikasikan di jurnal tidak disertakan. Dua tingkatan digunakan dalam analisis tematik: tingkat makro (Lewis Coser) dan tingkat mikro (Carter dan Carter). Penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa di antara dua puluh tema di tingkat makro, muncul tiga belas tema yaitu: budaya, kontrol sosial, sosialisasi, diri dan orang lain, status dan peran, jenis kelamin dan peran, total institusi, sosiologi perkotaan, kemiskinan, keluarga, agama, perilaku kolektif, dan penyimpangan. Pada tataran mikro, optimisme/pesimisme, ambisi, pengkhianatan/dendam, rasa ingin tahu/apatis, dan keraguan/kepastian tergambar dalam karya sastra yang diteliti. Pengalaman hidup Bangsamoro sebagai sebuah wilayah memiliki dilema yang sama dengan yang dihadapi oleh sebagian besar masyarakat Filipina seperti kemiskinan, kepercayaan keluarga, impian besar, keamanan, hubungan percintaan, dan kehidupan kota. Di sisi lain, syarat khusus dari penuturan para penulis Bangsamoro adalah perjanjian perkawinan, peran identitas, diskriminasi, keyakinan agama yang ketat/kuat, dan lain-lain. Lebih jauh lagi, sastra mengungkap kondisi sosial yang berguna sebagai data sosiologis untuk mengeksplorasi struktur dan dinamika sosial. Hal ini menghasilkan gambaran yang lebih mudah dipahami tentang budaya, perilaku, dan pengetahuan lokal yang ada pada kelompok tertentu.

**Kata kunci:** wilayah Bangsamoro; karya sastra; kondisi sosial; data sosiologi; analisis tematik

## Introduction

In literature, the society is reflected. People's lives and how society behaves, showing values, norms, and the culture of its time are all reflected in the literature. Its function is not only to entertain but to mirror the problems in the society which hopes to societal change (Shalini & Samundeswari 2017, Dubey 2020). It is impossible to converse about literature without the society's culture and traditions being involved. Literary writers are transporting the real-life stories from real people. It shows people what they don't see in their world which allows them to mirror what is happening in the society which evokes social actions (Shalini & Samundeswari 2017, Mitravinda 2020, Zubenko & Sytnykova 2020). It has a lasting value and artistic merit. It is technically that history is a record of the past events. In relation to literature, history is applied and artistically use it as source of stories of societal realities. Its significance to literature supports the belief of what was happened in the past and provided evidences (Dubey 2020, Kumar 2022).

In Luhmann function system, reflection theory unifies and reflects the meaning of the function system. This is to say that sociologists use literature as a source of information to study the society. This is invaluable contribution of literature to understand and recognize social-cultural context from postmodern society brought insights to contemporary people (Schirmer & Michailakis 2015, Dubey 2020, Zubenko & Sytnykova 2020). The significance of these literary outputs become good media to reflect what is happening in a specific domain which can be thematized based on the experiences. Themes in the literary production shapes the people's image being narrated which leaves an impression to the kind of society they have (Singer 2011). It is undeniably an afresh lens to contextual discourse because it allows to explore the unique experiences of people and constitute a more emic approach.

As sociology takes the objective of studying man's society and social institutions processes, it answers the relevant questions therein in the academic sphere why such society exists and works. Meanwhile, as literature plays a channel for studying the institutions and being contextualized, it simply informs the social constructions and interactions within. The connections of sociology, literature, and history come at play because they are rooted in the social reality. It clearly described literature as a social institution that uses language as medium, creates social image, and represents life (Alwaqaa 2020). Wherefore, literature is a substantial reference for finding and investigating social narratives and conditions. The substance of the meanings of text embedded in literature allows people to think and see vividly the society had gone through. It offers the freshness of past and recreate it through artistic narration and vivifies it.

Sociology of literature as approach enables people to investigate deeply the societal aspects to understand them. It is not a vacuum or autonomous that acts alone but it is based on the point of sociology. Hence, it is impossible to divorce literature from the social events (Alwaqaa 2020). Interestingly, to give light to the experiences of Bangsamoro (Muslim Filipinos) who struggles to self-determination and autonomy had gone so much historical pain and resistance, literature is a best platform to view the cosmic stories of these people across cities and provinces under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region on Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) at the same time recognize them. The people of this region is not given more attention in the discourses when talking about the Philippines due to historical perspectives. Using the literary pieces of this particular region, it opens more attention on the Muslim Mindanao. Moreover, it gives more discussions on the absence of discourses on this region. As described to what can be further look into is that Bangsamoro is a collective identity shared culture, beliefs and aspirations which build moral and social frameworks. They are composed of different ethnic tribes that is similar with one faith, Islam. However, Bangsamoro is more than a religion, it is a combination of blood and religion (Kapahi & Tañada 2018).

Dubey (2020) explained that the themes in literature changes throughout times as well as the styles. Its subjects changed as it previews multiple spheres of society. Carter & Carter (2014) create themes that are suitable to be considered in sociological analysis which was out from Coser's themes in his anthology, a collection of master pieces as sociological data. Accordingly, to the former scholar, the inclusion of the themes that are commonly used in literature into the sociological data processes when investigating literature as data inform sociologists about the themes they ignored, incorporating these

themes better help in the theories of social processes. In conform with this, this study seeks to thematize the conditions that are actual and real in the context of BARMM. In doing so, this will allow a serious turn to study focusing this region given the rich and cultural implications it have in the dynamic society of the Bangsamoro people. Furthermore, it will showcase the Southern area of the Philippines where certain experiences may deviate from the regular lens of Filipino society in general. As this study tries to ponder on the social issues of the Bangsamoro people through literary pieces, it gives complement to the missing narratives. Thus, this is an addage to contribute to the understanding of these people and how its society is dynamic.

## **Research Method**

This study adheres to the qualitative description of the data through thematic analysis. A thematic analysis is a technique that involves identification and showing patterns from the data particularly the statements from the texts being studied. Moving downward on the deepest sense of the salience and meaning of the text is its utmost objective (Lochmiller 2021). The literary pieces used as data were taken online from the Bangsamoro Literary Review (BLR), the official literary journal of BARMM, from 2021 to 2023. There were four volumes studies. Launched on year 2021, the literary journal successfully accepted literary creations from its territories: Cotabato City, Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, and Tawi-Tawi. To ensure inclusivity, English and Filipino are the primary languages used but local languages are also welcomed. Additionally, non-text form of arts published in the online journal is not included. The numbers of each volume are volume 1 (7 literary pieces), volume 2 (7 literary pieces), volume 3 (6 literary pieces), and volume 4 (9 literary pieces).

The themes in the literary pieces can be divided into two levels: macro level and micro level. The themes used by Coser (1972) is considered macro level as it was commonly used in sociological data while themes created by Carter & Carter (2014). The thematic procedure made by the researchers are categorical based on the dominant theme in the literary piece. A literary piece can have different themes with subthemes (Labra et al. 2019) and among these themes have commonality that is called universal theme. A dominant theme is a universal theme that gives recurring lessons and general moral dimension that is widely accepted. It can be narrow down to one or few, but not that much, to contend a thought.

In this respect, the researchers read and examined the written works of Bangsamoro writers and categorized it according to the themes offered by Coser (1972) and Carter & Carter (2014). Evaluation and interpretation are made possible with the presence of literary approach to support thematization of the writings. Reviewing the datasets allow the researchers to be familiar with concepts and messages that masterpieces are trying to convey (Labra et al. 2019, Lochmiller 2021). The conclusive remarks on the data analysis are objectively anchored from each theme definition and concepts. Moreover, ideas from related literatures backed up the discussions.

## **Results and Discussion**

Data presentation and discussion are divided into macro and micro levels mentioned in this study. Literary data from Bangsamoro Literary Review (BLR), the official literary journal of BARMM, from 2021 to 2023, are used in the two sub-chapters discussed. The data collection at each level is described into themes created by Coser (1972) and Carter & Carter (2014).

### **Macro level themes by Coser (1972)**

In Table 1, it presents the literary pieces that fall under the culture in general. This pertains to show more on the traditions, values, and the ways how particular people do in their lives. Six literary pieces have a dominant theme of culture. Patterson (2014) defined culture as conjugate product of two componential processes. The first component is dynamically reproduced and shared knowledge structures. Second, a culture is pragmatic component that derived structure of practical knowledge and it has own rules.

**Table 1.**  
Macro level theme: Culture

Theme	Title of literary piece
Culture	Children's festival and my dad's gifts
	A reflection
	Pamalian
	Dream carver
	Thindug
	Three poems

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Every ethnic groups has culture to show and to tell in their literary pieces. All investigated literary works have culture on it, however, the studied literatures do not all imply on a highly culture oriented piece. In Dream Carver, *"The finest curvatures of pako rabong and lawi can only be done in such, probably, ancient hardened timber. No tree in Ranaw now comes half the age of what used to be brought down from the Great Mount Gurain."*

Carving woods is one of the art piece that can be found in Lanao del Sur and a number of locals engaged in this activity for their livelihood. Mastering the craft of wood carving is not easy, it takes time to create an authentic cultural material. There is an art in crafting furniture for Meranaws. The effort and careful process are evident in the sturdy and quality output they made. Choosing the perfect timber is considered. Cultures embedded in the literary piece portray the social conditions of Bangsamoro. In the example, it can be seen the authentic concept of carving woods from a particular group how they process things and teaches it to the younger generation. Mua (2020) mentioned that the diversity of the people can be gleaned in their rich culture as evident in their differences of every ethnic such as material things, beliefs systems, and behavior patterns. Thus, the Bangsamoro culture is diverse.

Table 2 presents the social control. This theme involves the power play within the social group which is being impose to facilitate order based on the norms. Two liteary pieces are shown. Social control is the foundation of social order to hinder commitment of crime (Deflem 2017). In an ethnic group, the social order is beneficial to maintain their traditions and maintain peace within their circle. In Isandaang Hampas, translated: *"He was hurried to wear off the malong in his waist. Due to tight knot, he had hard time taking it off."*

**Table 2.**  
Macro level theme: Social control

Theme	Title of literary piece
Social control	Isandaang hampas
	Kata-o

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Men are expected to be strong for Bangsamoro. However, the story depicted how struggles for some men who are not born with the social standard to keep their identity, not only for their own protection but for the family and community they belong. Men being weak is obscene in the eyes of elders. In order to be accepted, one should defy himself from what he wants. The social control gleaned in the pieces of literature implies how a community is structured and governed by rules. To follow tradition and advised of the elders is to prefer a better life for them. Family matters most. Macapagal et al. (2018) that the principles of each ethnic group is strongly influenced by their religion wherein strict compliance and obedience in the rules in the family or the ethnic group is followed. The characters in the sampled literature are facing unequal treatment which shows a strong social control over their will.

In Table 3, it contains the notion of socialization. This pertains to the engagement and solidarity of people based on the tradition that have been practiced by the community. One literary piece is classified under this theme. Socialization is a process of interacting and communicating with others where individual can learn the norms, codes, and values shared (Šaras & Perez-Felkner 2020).

**Table 3.**  
Macro level theme: Socialization

Theme	Title of literary piece
Social control	Children's festival and my dad's gifts

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Interactions can happen not only in the group where one is in but also in another group where one wants to socialize with. As defined, socialization characterize the interaction among groups and response to social context. In Children's Festival and My Dad's Gifts, *"In those festivals, the grown-ups would always talk about kalinaw (peace) and pagkahiusa (unity), and respect and understanding. We, kids, never really listened to the speeches, no matter how short they were, because we were more excited about the games and the gifts."*

To socialize and converge people from different background is what the piece from the story tells. Social behavior is learned externally and exposure to socialization out from the group enables them to realize how differences can lead to stronger unification and deep understanding of diversity. Regardless of religion and belief, the ultimate objective in the society is to live together with tolerance. Moreover, socialization teach people to learn the moral and ethics in the society where everyone is benefited.

In some narratives of conflict, the misunderstanding occurs when one resists to comprehend the sides of the other. The negative connotation of the image of Bangsamoro can be changed or vice versa if one tries to socialize with one another and learn. Montiel et al. (2011) pointed that the social problems and tensions between the Muslim Filipinos and Christian Filipinos are rooted historically especially during the occupation of Americans where most Filipinos who are practicing Christianity were able to fill the bureaucracy. Marginalization was felt. Such stage created a far and gaps between the two groups. Hence, there is a struggle in maintaining peace.

In Table 4 brings the concept of self and other. This reflection is looking at oneself and others as someone related to others. Three literary pieces are classified to this. The concept of self and other is a basic root of social cognition. This concept is central to the basic processes of action perception and empathy, a root of social behaviors through individual concept which promotes cooperation and intergroup interaction (Catmur et al. 2016).

**Table 4.**  
Macro level theme: Self and other

Theme	Title of literary piece
Self and Other	Mohammad and his Catholic University adventures
	Ayuno
	The wedding

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

The basic unit of society is the man. Every individual has its own concept and how they perceived their social environment. He can see himself from being different from the other. In this theme, four literary works are observed to emphasize the self and other concept. In Mohammad and His Catholic University Adventures, *"I understood the fact that I was not in a Muslim-dominated area with people who had little to no prior interaction with Muslims, but does this fact still hold water in situations that required common courtesy and kindness?"*

The recurring conflict in the passage about the struggle of being Muslim in a Catholic majority nation is a sentiment for the Bangsamoro to equally land a job without putting a double standard to people who practices Islam or any religion. The feeling of the character being denied of equal treatment is a challenge and a question to his capacity and personality. In *The Wedding*, translated: *“I didn’t finish taking pictures and watching their nuptials. I cannot pretend and show torpidity to everyone.”*

The woman in the story is deeply sad because she attended the wedding of her own boyfriend. Both of them have no power to cancel nor go against the will of the family. Denying adds to the weight of feeling. The culture where the character belongs identify herself in a position of being a follower of their family rules, an obedience. In the self and other theme is finding oneself in a position of hardships in the pursuit of own convenience while being respected. A struggle of self and other in the stories provide an image of social condition among Bangsamoro as a Muslim. Self-perceptions brought reflections on oneself in a condition of engagement with other people where he may think of himself different or stereotyped (Vignoles et al. 2016).

**Table 5.**  
Macro level theme: Status and role

Theme	Title of literary piece
Status and role	Pagpaygwan
	Samer
	To where I belong and small things

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 5 presents the theme status and role. This highlights the significant value of status as basis to label people position in the society where they are in. Three literary pieces are classified under this theme. Social status has two positions: the person status and the person rank. It is also referred as a role. It is giving a position in a social system and the corresponding responsibility or behavior in that position expected (Clark 2007). The social system in an ethnic group is observably a political of the society as a structure of the group of individuals being and living together. Three passages from literary works are used. In Samer,

“Along the way home, he passed by a burial ceremony. He stopped there, and he noticed that people served food to the visitors but not to him. So he went straight home, took off his Missy clothes, and clothed himself with an American suit. Then he returned to the site where the burial ceremony was taking place. When he arrived there, to fasten the story, people served him food by placing a tray before him.”

Status is prejudged according to the cloth a person wears on. The story implies the status of a person by physical appearance. The society associates when one is wearing a dirty clothes then he is poor or nobody. Though it is not right to judge a person’s worth by just how he wears, but a society lives in a mentality of standard they think it’s appropriate. Therefore, in a region like in BARMM, looks and proper wearing matters. Vizmanos & Albert (2018) stated in their article that being poor is treated like a disease and causes stigma. Poverty status is evident but this cannot eradicate. What the government tries to do is to increase social protection among those people. A report in year 2021, some provinces under the Bangsamoro region are marked red which entails poor (Philippine Statistics Authority 2021).

**Table 6.**  
Macro level theme: Sex and roles

Theme	Title of literary piece
Sex and roles	Pagpaygwan
	Isandaang hampas

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

The next Table 6 shows the sex and roles. This focuses on the aspect of the difference of the biological make-up of people which determines the roles expected from them. Two literary pieces are classified in this theme. Sex roles denotes the social role of men and women. It is also alternatively used to denote gender role but technically have difference and the evolution of former term introduced the later (Risman & Davis 2013). In Pagpaygwan, *"It was a rare case—a gay Maguindanaon patient asking the help of my father to get back his male lover from a woman. My father usually accepts patients who have marital problems."*

The character was bold to beg his father despite his identity. What is even more daring here is asking the father's permission to get back with his lover, a man. This entails the presence of the role of the character as gay to be vocal and liberate from the social norms. Here, he stepped in his agency of power. Depicting the individuals' rights to freedom and social acceptance is showing a role of a man being gay.

The emergence of LGBTQ Community in a region where Islam is the main religion and traditions exist, discusses the truth of the society that society changes, the perspective of society evolves differently, and society is deconstructing into new social structure. Whether this is seen problematic and a crisis to social structure, the truth of the matter of uprising number of members from that community is notable. Jopson (2016) mentioned in her paper that gender inequality had been shaping conflict in Mindanao.

**Table 7.**  
Macro level theme: Total institutions

Theme	Title of literary piece
Total institutions	Isandaang hampas

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 7 presents the total institutions. This theme anchors to the organizational structure of the society informally. One literary piece is classified in this theme. The total institutions as social hybrid where it is partly residential and partly formal organization that the intention is to form a bureaucratic management over people (Ritzer 2007). There is a limitation of actions and determining the margin of action depends on the type of institution is built (Serpa 2018). In Isandaang Hampas,

Translated: "The day has come that Rashid is afraid of. It is the day when Jameel and he have to pay what they did in front of their parents, relatives, friends, and acquaintances in Kitango, Maguindanao. They were hit with coconut leaves and torn. They were presented in a stage made for that punishment publicly."

The rule for having a relationship of a man to another man is prohibited because it is not acceptable in the society and religion. The punishment for men or women who do this kind of relationship shall receive a torment of punishment from the authority whether the family head or the governing bodies (the datu). This is similar with the adultery or fornication in Islam that is publicly executed or punished in accordance with the law. It is clearly that total institution is seen in the story. Though seems free to go and out of the community but the existing rule may prevail once someone does an unacceptable action in the society. For some, this is double standard where it does not fit to a democratic society like in the Philippines. That contention inarguably considered since the region is recognized to implement the Islamic Law and traditional rules in datu system perse.

**Table 8.**  
Macro level theme: Urban sociology

Theme	Title of literary piece
Urban Sociology	A reflection When you hear hoofbeats

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 8 is urban sociology. This shows the life in the urban settings. Two literary pieces are classified in this theme. The development and how the life in urban setting advances from the other areas of a country and what advantages and disadvantages are there (Abrahamson 2014). It is an interdisciplinary study that the central discourse is on the socio-economic climate in urban areas (May et al. 2005). In A Reflection, *“Growing up in Manila, I didn’t have food from Maguindanao everyday. From time to time, we received parcels of oddities from Cotabato.”*

The passage tells the story of a Bangsamoro who grew up outside his origin. Everything has been done back in the province deficits the narrator of the story how he was not able to experience such things as he grew up. His new domicile hindered him to understand what is life there (in Maguindanao) and how rich the culture in his hometown. Alien to him what his relatives sent to them is a proof of vacuity to him. When he mentioned the oddities from Cotabato, he is clueless how those items represents their culture and identity. A person who lived in an urbanized area away from his origin and a person who lived in his origin seeing the gradual change of his hometown into more busy and progressive city. Change is inevitable and it has impacted perspectives and the old culture into evolved one (or new).

**Table 9.**  
Macro level theme: Poverty

Theme	Title of literary piece
Poverty	Padyak ni Luay Vagabond

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 9 presents poverty. This commonly highlight the economic status of the community. Two literary pieces imply the economic status in BLR. Poverty has a language and multidimensional, complex, specific or absolute. It has significant implications of the severity and dimensions faced by community (Gweshengwe & Hassan 2020). The cause of poverty lacks sufficient framework and still debatable. Moreover, poverty may depend on the perceived standard of living in given society. In Padyak ni Luay, translated: *“Luay needs to work hard because he knew that the income of his father and mother as vendors of vegetables in market is not enough. The daily income of his parents is just for their daily food.”*

The character depicts how poor life is. Instead of enjoying play at park or studying during leisure time, they have to rush to work to ensure their needs in school. Poverty index can be varied to areas based on cost of living and quality of life. Luay’s life is no extraordinary because a lot of children as child laborers exist. On the ground where majority of the people dwell, the social conditions of Bangsamoro people imply socio-economically challenged by the abrupt change in the social living. The inflation and instability of economy affect the lives of poor families and become poorer. As it was reported, poor living are reported in some areas of Bangsamoro Region (Philippine Statistics Authority 2021).

Table 10 is a theme focuses on family. Six literary pieces are showing the implications of the family in the story and unfold the smallest unit in the social structure of the society. Family is the most common relational symbolic space. It is where individual learned things and socially defined (Naldini 2017). It is a social institution where individual grows, members are living together, do an activities, share resources necessary for life, and have children (Ionuț 2012). In Kata-o, translated: *“Akmilah faces alone her family. Everyone is mad at her. It is a shame in their family. Much better that she would die or kill her.”*

Since family is important and the Bangsamoro people is family oriented, making mistakes particularly offending the name of the whole clan considered a sin. The character in the story when she told about her condition that she was impregnated by her lover floods the anger and disappointment on her. Her irresponsible action was blamed and no one must bear that condition

but only her. Her family turned their back and considered her as a damaged individual who will not find a person who can accept her. Family's name is what they value most. Filipinos share family values such as child rearing, educational attainment, social class, and ethnic groups (Morillo et al. 2013). Therefore, family is truly a treasured social institution among Bangsamoro.

**Table 10.**  
Macro level theme: Family

Theme	Title of literary piece
Family	Kata-o
	Ang Simoy ng Pulbura
	Lupa' Sūg, Hula' Kalasahan and Ina
	Dear Mojahidin
	Dream Carver
	Thindug

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

**Table 11.**  
Macro level theme: Religion

Theme	Title of literary piece
Religion	Children's festival and my dad's gifts
	Isandaang hampas
	Mohammad and his Catholic University adventures
	Ayuno
	An amazing grace
	Dear Mojahidin
	Dunya

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 11 shows the theme about religion. Seven literary pieces are classified into this theme and show strong faith and obedience. The sociology of religion is an interdisciplinary that explores continuity and contemporary interface between society and religion (Clarke 2011). In Mohammad and His Catholic University Adventures,

"Some people asked me in the past why I did not apply for work in my hometown... Now, I am again part of another prestigious Catholic University here in Zamboanga City that embraced me in all my entirety along with more than twenty other Muslim employees. It is actually fun."

The character tells his story about possibility of harmonious relationship despite religious differences. The bond may get stronger once understanding and tolerance with one another. Judgments are impression that can be objectively change based on the behavior of that person and how he shows the beauty of his religion. The theme religion is rich in the stories because majority of the people in the region practice Islam. It has become the compass of their lives. Their way of life and own culture combined together. The richness and diversity of religions among Filipinos shows various beliefs and practices (Pineda 2024).

**Table 12.**  
Macro level theme: Collective behavior

Theme	Title of literary piece
Collective Behavior	Thindug

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 12 shows the theme about collective behavior with one literary pieces are classified into this theme. Collective behavior is described as any group behavior which is not mandated or regulated by an institution (Rothschild 2014). In Thindug, translated: "*They put a new solution to*

*the problem of their clan, however, it will happen if Ameerah agrees. Again, she will be the key to solve for a big responsibility of their clan.*” Members of the family or clan assembled to give solutions to the existing family conflict. Distant relatives are concerned with the problem of the character. This is to show that whether they are requested or informed, they show their support with one another. It is not obligation for them but an initiative to do since for them, the whole clan helps one another.

**Table 13.**  
Macro level theme: Deviance

Theme	Title of literary piece
Deviance	Paphaygwan Pamalian Kata-o

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 13 focuses on deviance. Three literary pieces show deviant attitude among the characters that is socially different in the norms. According to Nalah & Ishaya (2013), deviance is a behavior that violates the existing rules and norms. It is departing from the social expectations. In Paphaygwan, *“My father felt he was about to throw up anytime soon when he saw the news on the possibility of same sex marriage in the Philippines. I just remained silent, acting as though we had the same opinion.”*

Being gay is strictly forbidden, expressing that identity is deviant and considered sinful in their religion. There is no recognition for being gay or any gender preferred. Resistance to accept gayness or anything that is associated with the LGBTQ Community indicates disapproval. The dignity of family defines how moral they are since people look gay as immoral and vulgar. The dilemma in deviating social norms for Bangsamoro, based on these literary works, does not permit person to do it. This exists because of strong values and traditional morality that the society believes. Therefore, to deviate is preferring to be disowned by the family. There is a pervasive discrimination among individuals whose genders are classified as LGBTQ which also includes harassment, attacks, arbitrary arrest and detention (Amnesty International 2021).

#### Micro level themes by Carter & Carter (2014)

In Table 14, optimism and pessimism are stressed. Most of the literary pieces show more positive outlook compare to pessimisms. Optimism refers to the predominance of good over bad, positive over negative forces. On the other hand, pessimism is the opposite disposition of the former wherein it looks the worst aspect of things or circumstances (Coser & Coser 2014). In Hidden Treasure, *“There, I deeply appreciated the importance of Arabic language, and how it was a fresh breath of air to us.”* The signification of the word appreciation to Arabic language is an affirmation of acceptance and enjoying the beauty of language. This posits good disposition of seeing things in a positive outlook rather than the opposite.

**Table 14.**  
Micro level theme: Optimism/Pessimism

Theme	Title of literary piece
Optimism	Paphaygwan Hidden treasure Mohammad and his Catholic University adventures Padyak ni Luay Ayuno An amazing grace Three poems Super moon and in my blood my love constantly flows Isandaang hampas At the repair shop and other poems

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

In at the repair shop and other poems,

“Do you have a fix for worn-out nerves?  
Can you glue together a broken heart?  
Maybe a new coat of paint for faded loyalty?  
Or perhaps a replacement for failed expectations?”

The persona is experiencing misery in her life. The disposition of this woman is negative since she has to ask person to fix her broken heart and wary minds. There is a mistrust in the stanza where she artistically asked about the paint to renew the color of loyalty that slowly fading. Lastly, when she said failed expectations, there is a sudden tone after the other lines and this gives a heavy feeling of self-disappointment and invalidation. The perception of individual might represent the total image of every Bangsamoro who goes with the same situation. Optimism and pessimism are flavors in life and it can be a theme in literary pieces written.

**Table 15.**  
Micro level theme: Ambition/Indolence

Theme	Title of literary piece
Ambition	A reflection Dream Carver
Indolence	---

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 15 presents the ambition and indolence. In the literary pieces screened, there is no indolence depicted. The concept of ambition is the desire for power, to improve, to attain rank, to influence, or preferment. Indolence, as semantic opposite of ambition, is the concept of avoiding trouble, to get things easy, impose laziness, slothfulness or sluggishness (Carter & Carter 2014). There is no literary work that describes indolence. In Dream Carver,

“Saudi Arabia was the prime destination for him. His main motivation, aside from earning, was learning. For him, his arrival in Jeddah was an opportunity to be closer to the Two Holy Cities. He intended to work in Jeddah but fantasized about being able to study, as others had completed their studies at a university in Madinah or Makkah.”

His dream to work in the kingdom and visit the two holy cities are his desires, however, there is the deepest reason to study abroad in one of the universities in Saudi Arabia. His life experience motivates him to strive and excited to arrive soon in the place of hope where he thought that life can be changed in an instant once there. This kind of narrative is perfectly describe how people who deprived of opportunities back home can have a good life in another country. The diaspora of Bangsamoro to Arab lands is a destination of chance to improve the quality of life. This can also be a diasporic stories of Filipinos abroad despite some warnings imposed.

Table 16 shows the betrayal and revenge. There are significant number of literary pieces that accounted in tackling betrayal. Betrayal is breaking trust or loyalty, or leaving the commitment ones entrusted. Revenge is the act of taking reaction against someone who does wrong to a person (Carter & Carter 2014). In Trail to Salagum, *“To my shock and surprise, finally, I saw their leader’s face. My body turned cold, ice-frozen. At that very moment, my life was shattered and broken to pieces.”*

The saddest truth in the story is when the person they trust and thought a good person betrayed them and even commit crime in front of them. A person can change at any time or just pretending to be good before doing his bad intentions in the community. In Kata-o, translated: *“She bereaved, mourned. It was not her plan to turn her back to Yusoph. It was not in her mind to take revenge to his man.”* The cost of humiliation, aborted baby and abandonment of Yusoph took revenge as

she asked help to sorceress to curse him. It was not an intention but the pain it caused her trigger to harm him. If not of his irresponsible act and taking advantage of her, he might not suffer the consequence. Locals still believe, even nowadays, the existence of sorceress.

**Table 16.**  
Micro level theme: Betrayal/Revenge

Theme	Title of literary piece
Betrayal	Pamalian
	Isandaang hampas
	Kata-o
	Trail to Salagum
	Thindug
Revenge	The wedding
	Kata-o
Ang Simoy ng Pulbura	

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

**Table 17.**  
Micro level theme: Curiosity/Apathy

Theme	Title of literary piece
Curiosity	A reflection
	Pagpaygwan
	On Naming
	Tausug and Tau Sug: Melting solidifications
	The wonder of Tausug reduplicated words
Apathy	At the repair shop and other poems
	To where I belong and small things

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

Table 17 presents curiosity and apathy. Most of the literary pieces are fall under the curiosity as a theme. Curiosity is to learn about anything especially on things that interest the person or strange things that forced to inquiry. On the other hand, apathy is the disposition of not having an interest into something, indifference (Carter & carter 2014). In Tausug and Tau Sug: Melting Solidifications, *“I’ve always fancied myself as stingy when propagating my truths, standing on a mighty pulpit burning one fallacy after another.”*

The character of the story always wonder of how identity as Tausug and speaking the Bahasa Sug changed. As far he was wondering, he thought of why Tausug would speak Tausug since this is not how they call their language. He wants solidifications on this terminology but how? Other people used to say Tausug which they refer to people and language.

In to where I belong and small things,

“an identity you can hide in the back of the door—  
and still, no one knows what I am for.  
to where I belong— no one must see.  
I belong in the spaces between.”

The immobile expression of the persona to stay where he is, describes him to stay in his comfort zone of not showing up his identity. Perhaps, he is feeling guarded and safe if he chooses to stay he was known from the very beginning.

In Table 18, doubt and certainty are the themes. Most of the literary pieces found in this theme are under the theme certainty. Doubt is the uncertainty with truth or reality. Certainty, as opposed, is the absolute or precise fact or truth (Carter & Carter 2014). In Pagpaygwan, *“But I did not pass the exam. I did not wonder why because I did not imagine myself working in the bureaucratic system of*

*the government.*" It is clearly that he is not trusting the government as he was fine not to pass the civil service examination because he does not want to be part of a bureaucratic system. He thinks something is going on in the government and doubting the honesty and transparency somehow.

**Table 18.**  
Micro level theme: Doubt/Certainty

Theme	Title of literary piece
Doubt	Pagpaygwan
Certainty	Children's festival and my dad's gifts
	Hidden treasure
	Mohammad and his Catholic University adventures
	Lupa' Sūg, Hula' Kalasahan and Ina
	When you hear hoofbeats

Source: BLR (Mangansakan & Muslim 2023)

In *When You Hear Hoofbeats*, "*After a couple of deep sighs, I stumbled across a favorite memory of my childhood, the calesa ride. I was probably around four or five years old back then, in the late 1970s.*" He went back to the time where he enjoyed the simplicity of city landscape where it was not congested. He does not know why this certain memory is the clearest to his mind but perhaps, as he thought, it was the memory that embedded and has a special place in his long term memory.

As Carter & Carter (2014) imposing an explanation of how essential details on the microlevel must be studied to inform sociological theories, the literature has much expressed and had given an attention to minor details discussed in the paper. Various topics can be filtered in literary works as well as the potential themes which can center to different aspects of sociological investigation. As further mentioned by Carter and Carter, there can be a narrative turn in sociology that values the discourse on storytelling which encouraged taking the other direction to non-traditional forms of what a pure sociological knowledge is (Maines 1993, Berger & Quinney 2004). The Bangsamoro literary works have proven that concepts pertaining to minute components of sociological particles can be observed and critically tackles a more serious interpretation of society.

From the themes both in macro and micro level, it can be encapsulated the social conditions appeared that women regarded to particular roles, displaced Bangsamoro people received apparent discrimination, armed conflict persists, misconceptions being a Muslim in a non-Muslim area are experienced, strengthen the faith to cope up with life's difficulties, arranged marriage has its own merits, ethnic minority vs. ethnic majority existence in the country, migration of Filipinos to work abroad, people suffers socio-economic poverty, multi-ethnic identity as Bangsamoro, security within the region, homosexuality condemned in Islam, strong family supports, social roles particularly women, and diversity in Muslim Mindanao (Lacar 1995, Madale 1998, Castro 2011, Barra 2014, Monato & Torrado 2017, Abuza & Lischin 2020, Mua 2020, Tahir 2021, Paredes 2022).

Meanwhile as BARMM is recognized to represent the Muslims of the South of the Philippines and even some Indigenous People living in the region, this paper is a recognition to the diversity within and present their struggles and self-determination to the national and global audience. Perhaps, for one, these people have so much to show in terms of beliefs and traditions as reflected in their stories, however, the reality of social struggles are continuously occurring which calls for more study to recount them.

## Conclusion

The corrective function of literature e.g. literary pieces of Bangsamoro people brings immense impact in the society and even goes down to the individual perception. The social conditions through the narratives of the Bangsamoro people opened an opportunity to understand some issues that might misconstrued

in public or in media. Similar or particular narratives are observed that requires further readings from history of each ethnic tribes in order to immerse with their vibrant cultures as well as the old sentiments that until in the present happens, which can lead to meaningful understanding. Thematization of social conditions portray different issues in society that just like common dilemmas, the people of Bangsamoro region face the same struggles and stories. Notwithstanding, the sufferings they have as part of the minority in the country.

Social institutions in the region reflected in the literary creations of great mind writers which call for attention and solution. It is worthy to say that literature along with historical records as a source for sociological study constructs a more conclusive interdisciplinarity in social science and humanities. Furthermore, another point of view is unlocked how social conditions e.g Bangsamoro people are comprehended. There is an ocean of narratives that might not be represented from the source literary journal which the researchers recognized as study limitation, however, this study serves as bridge in locating and thematizing literary works of Bangsamoro published in different anthologies. Lastly, the same objective implied by sociology through literature, literary works are anchored in real-life situations, or most of it if not all, that can be utilized as sociological data.

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