National Identity in Elementary Moral Education Textbooks in the Philippines: A Content Analysis

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Introduction

National identity is a multidimensional concept, which evokes emotive meaning. It calls for identification or belongingness to a number of interrelated components of a nation, such as, ethnic, culture, historic-territory, economic and legal-political (Smith, 1991, p.15). The sense of identification provides a bond between an individual to a nation and a means of locating and defining oneself as member of a nation state. According to Guskin (1968), an individual may be said to have national identity when he is emotionally and behaviorally conditioned to national symbols or when his image of himself includes the nation or when he perceives his present function in society and his way of life as tied into the national structure (p.20). This could be achieved through various means of socialization of the members as nationals and citizens. In contemporary time, the most obvious means is through education. In the case of the Philippines different regimes pursue a considerable energy of socializing its members to the nations' concerns and ideals under the influence of various conditions and occurrences within the nation.

The Philippine society has experienced variety of economic, political, and sociological upheavals as it trudges along the way to development. As a developing country, it necessitates to surmount the problem of poverty that gave rise to some societal problems indicative of moral degradation. The two past administrations of Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos paid great concern to moral conditions in the Philippines. Both converged at a common point that the country is suffering from poverty in material sense

engendered by, among other things, the poverty of Filipino spirit. In line with this, The Aquino administration declared 1988 to 1998 as the Philippine Decade of Nationalism. As a response, the education sector reinforced Moral Education program in the elementary level and in other levels as well. This was ensued by the National Moral Recovery Program under the Ramos administration in 1992. The main thrust is the awakening of the sense of nationalism for national development. Both of the programs placed paramount importance to Nationalism or love of country or the Filipino ideology.

1. National Identity and Moral Education

National identity prefers politically thinking citizens to identify themselves with the nation, on which they exist, and to know also what are the values and tasks, the mentality and the needs of their nation (Poggeler, 1995, p.15). The definition presupposes an identification of a citizen to a nation and entails knowledge of the typical and essential behavior, attitude and values necessary for the way of life in a nation. Hence, identification to a nation necessitates knowledge of the national character or the characteristics that qualify to the so-called "good" members of the nation. This fortifies the fact that national identity cannot be developed in isolation from the development of values among the members of the nation. In this regard, Moral Education can take a significant role in the formation of national identity.

The alarming condition for developing a greater sense of national identity created an impact in the education sector. The Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS) identified the trends and problems in Moral education (National Institute for Educational Research [NIER], 1990, p.97). The efforts of identifying the trends and problems invigorated the teaching of values in Moral Education at all levels. Moreover, values education was integrated in all subject areas although there is a separate Moral Education subject known as Character Building Activities being taught everyday, twenty to thirty minutes in the first two grade levels and twenty minutes in the higher grade levels (Southeast Asian Research Review and Advisory Group [SEARRAG], 1987, p.2). The two broad areas of concern in values development are: (a) the reinforcement of desirable traditional values that bind the people to each other; and (b) the development of

those values which will tie them together into one strong and indivisible nation (Carpio, 1999, p.7). In connection to this, the values that were given priority on the Values Scope and Sequence for elementary program developed by the Bureau of Elementary Education (BEE) include, National Identity and Pride, National Unity and National Loyalty (Carpio, 1999, p.7) although there are clusters of values for ethical themes (DECS, 1997, p.1) reflected in the Minimum Learning Competencies (MLC) and teaching guides.

In the elementary level, the DECS does not prescribe textbooks but provides MLC and teaching guides (Southeast Asian Research Review and Advisory Group [SEARRAG], 1987, p.4) where all the concerns of Moral Education are incorporated. The absence of prescribed textbooks allows the teachers to choose from the wide array of textbooks produced by various publishers. This does not delimit the teachers to choose and use textbooks, available in the bookstores. The system of developing, choosing and using textbooks in the country is therefore lax which in turn could promote commercialization.

The above-mentioned programs of the government, response of the DECS and the absence of a strict policy on the selection and usage of textbooks suggest the need to analyze the textbooks available for elementary Moral Education in the public and private schools in the country. Since textbooks are important media that facilitate learning, create significant impact among children and tangible means for the creation of national identity and narratives that inspire love of country (Cummins, 2001, p.2), this study content analyzed eighteen elementary Moral Education textbooks published from 1989-1999. This period is deemed relevant in relation to the programs of the government. The purpose is to know if the textbooks are responsive to the program of the government and whether or not they contain the values prioritized by the DECS. Through content analysis, this study investigated the extent of the inclusion of National Identity using a set of parameter. Content analysis is a research tool used to determine the presence of certain words or concepts within text or set of texts. Researchers quantify and analyze the presence, meanings and relationships of words and concepts, then make inferences about the messages (Colorado State University, Department of English, 2001, pp. 2-3). Given the programs of the government and the response of the Education sector in

developing a greater sense of national identity, this study contends that, the investigation of national identity in Moral Education/Values Education is as important as how it can be concretized and be drawn to the mind of the students through specific values and actions reflective of the concept. Moreover, Moral Education must be responsive and must enlarge its perspectives to accommodate moral problems that are located within the society (Boyd & Arnold, 2000, p.23). To provide the DECS and publishers, therefore, with pertinent information on the dimensions of the corresponding values manifesting national identity, this study content analyzed textbooks of the subject where the teaching of values are expected to be given greater attention.

2. Method

(1) Sample

There are several Moral Education textbooks produced by the different publishers in the Philippines. The eighteen sample textbooks were randomly selected among the variety of textbooks available for the teachers of Moral Education in public and private schools. The sample was obtained by asking the teachers on the textbooks they are using in class. Based on their response the textbooks for six grade levels published by fourteen publishers were classified into three strata (i.e. 1st, 2nd 3rd commonly used textbooks) per grade level. Then, a random number table was used to select specific textbooks in each stratum. Three textbooks were selected in each grade level — from grade one to grade six, bringing the sample to eighteen.

(2) Procedure

Three textbooks were content analyzed for every grade level. Content analysis was done both qualitatively and quantitatively. The qualitative analysis focused on the nature and complexities of information, illustrations and manner of presentation in the textbooks. The quantitative method involved tallying of frequency of occurrence of national identity orientations and determining the differences of their occurrence using one way Analysis of Variance — ANOVA. The content analysis was based on a set of parameter consisting of sixteen orientations defining national identity designed by

Doronilla (1989).

(3) Scoring and Analysis

The variable, national identity was measured by using the parameter given below, which consists of sixteen orientations divided into four groups. They were used in analyzing the inclusion of national identity in three textbooks per grade level, that is, from grade one to grade six. This study used ANOVA to compare the four groups of orientations in all the textbooks. The aim was to compare the extent of the inclusion using the four groups of orientation and their significant difference in all the textbooks and in every grade level. Every expression, conversation, illustration and story was analyzed based on the sixteen orientations. Since the researcher is the only encoder, the frequency of manifestation of national identity was determined, marked and tallied twice to ensure accuracy of result. The following were carried out:

1. Based on the set of orientations, national identity was analyzed, assessed, and understood, as its inclusion extends and deepens in Moral Education textbooks. Focus was given on the nature, complexities and manner of presentation.
2. A score was given in every expression pertaining to national identity. The frequency of manifestation of the concept was ascertained, marked and tallied. The generated data was presented in graphs to show the extent of the inclusion of the concept in the textbooks in every grade level. The data was further tested using one-way ANOVA and multiple analysis based on Ryan's method.

Set Of Orientations Defining The Concept National Identity, With Specific Application To The Philippine Case

A. Ethnocentrism

1. Preference for one's nationality over all others — Any expression on preference to Filipino nationality and reason for preference over all other nationalities.
2. Generalized pride in one's country over all others — Any statement on pride and reason to be proud of the country. Different aspects such as, the people, manpower, culture, extent of development in the long array of historical events, the natural

resources, technology and influence to other countries were noted.

3. Support of nationalism prior to internationalism — Any expression on different aspects such as, economics, political, social, educational, cultural and historical that relayed priority on nationalism. The expressions about international activities and its benefit to national development and the active role of the Filipino citizens in the different parts of the world in order to contribute to the development of the country were considered.
4. Commitment to the goal of development through national self-reliance, with specific reference to the country's decolonization goals — Any expression on the endeavor of the Filipino people to strive for development and maintenance of independence. The expressions on economics, political, social, educational, cultural, historical and technological aspects were considered.

B. Valuing of cultural aspects reflective of national identity

5. Valuing the special qualities of the people — Any expressions on Filipino qualities such as cheerfulness and fun-loving approach to life, genuine and deep love for family, sense of gratitude (*utang na loob*), hospitality, sensitivity to people's feeling (*pakikiramay*) demonstrated in the Filipinos' ability to empathize with others and helpfulness (*bayanihan*) or mutual assistance.
6. Valuing their characteristic way of life — Any expression on the Filipino way of life. This includes family life, interpersonal relations, clothing or ornaments and various activities associated with Filipino values such as, prayer before and after meal, kissing the hands of elder people in the family at 6:00 P.M.(*oracion*) and etc.
7. Valuing national traditions — Any expression on various religious, historical, legal, customs and other traditions such as, celebration of different fiestas and commemoration of important historical events.
8. Valuing their cultural products — Any expression on the importance of different Filipino arts, culture, scientific, and technological products, literature, architecture and those Filipinos who excelled and became famous in their field.

C. Loyalty to the national community beyond ethnic loyalties

9. Recognition of the membership of other ethnic groups in the Philippine national

community — Any expression on the enumeration and explanation of different ethnic groups.

10. Personal acceptance of individuals who belong to other ethnic groups — Any statement pertaining to personal acceptance of ethnic groups.
11. Recognition of cultural affinities of one's ethnic group with other ethnic groups — Any statement that leads to the understanding of the relationship of one ethnic group to another, and its influence and ties to each other.
12. Acceptance of the membership of other ethnic groups in the Philippine national community — Any statement pertaining to the acceptance of the individuals who belong to different ethnic groups as constituents of the whole Filipino national community.
13. Commitment to the idea of national integration of all ethnic groups — Any statement on the concern for the improvement and development of those who belong to different ethnic groups and their integration to the national community. Expression on plans, actions and considerations for integration of all ethnic groups as equals and as important contributors to nation building were also considered.

D. Commitment to the role requirements of citizenship

14. Pride in national symbols — Any expression that dealt with attachment and pride to national symbols such as, flag, historical places, historical figures, national flowers and etc.
15. Deriving personal identity from identification with the nation — Any expression that gave importance on personal identification to the different aspects of the nation such as, political, social, economic, historical and cultural aspects. For example, an expression that takes pride in participating to the restoration of freedom and democracy, like the non-violent revolution that happened at the Efifanio Delos Santos Avenue — EDSA.
16. Commitment to the duties of citizenship- Any expression that focused on the duties and responsibilities of the citizens to the nation. For example, an active (e.g. being part of the civic organization, community projects), and passive citizenship (e.g. paying taxes, voting, obeying the rules, regulations and laws) were considered.

The above set of orientations defining national identity was designed by Doronilla (1989) based on Clifford Geertz proposed dichotomous scheme for analyzing the basis of the various definition of national identity. According to Geertz (1971), there are two forms of nationalist ideologizing, which may be integrated and not necessarily contradictory with each other: the essentialist and epochalist definitions. The former is focused on the indigenous way of life in which local norms established social institutions and the unity of common cultural experience to form a collective identity. The latter on the other hand, is focused on the historical processes by which the country has developed to its present state, with these very processes being used to define the commonalities in the historical experience of ethnic groups that comprise the national community (in Doronilla, 1989, p.43). In this vein, the two groups of orientation namely, group B and group C take account of the essentialist perspective. Specifically, orientations under group B reflect the repertoire of shared values, traditions and the prism of collective personality and distinctive culture. Orientations under group C show the recognition and acceptance of other ethnic groups that constitute the national community. Orientations show the commitment to cultural values of ethnic groups as well as the individuals' transcendence from ethnic loyalties in favor of loyalty to national community. The orientations under group A and group D take account of the epochalist view. Specifically, orientations under group A reflect the territorial boundaries wherein its territorial resources including its members as manpower, are located and related to the nation's unique historical pilgrimage. Orientations under group D reflect the commitment of the members to the nation-state through their functions in society and attachment to national structure.

3. Results

Based on the nature and complexities of manifestation of national identity in the textbooks, it was observed that; (a) In the lower grade levels, national identity was manifested with the aid of illustrations. There are more illustrations in the lower grade levels than in the higher-grade levels. (b) Some of the orientations were neither explained nor presented in the textbooks. On the other hand, some orientations within a

Figure1. Average frequency of occurrence of national identity in the three textbooks per grade level.

group were given sufficient attention and relevant explanation in relation to national development. (c) Some orientations pertaining to Filipino values greatly focus on strengths without explanation on how it could engender weakness that may hamper national consciousness and development. These observations were augmented by quantitative data obtained from frequency of occurrence of national identity. The data showed that there is no increasing trend of inclusion of national identity in the textbooks. Although the textbooks were designed in accordance to different grade levels, the extent of the inclusion did not increase as the grade level increases (i.e. from grade one to six).

Figure 1 shows that the average frequency of occurrences of national identity in the textbooks in every grade level varied. Grade two textbooks had the highest inclusion of the concept, followed by textbooks in grades four and five. However, their differences were minimal. There was also a slight difference of inclusion between grades one and six, three and five, and three and six.

Figure 2 shows that, Groups B and D were given emphasis on the textbooks. The manifestation of national identity through the orientations under Group A and Group C was low especially in the latter. In grade two, the inclusion of Group C slightly

Figure 2. Inclusion of national identity in all textbooks and in each grade level.

Note: A Ethnocentrism, B Valuing of cultural aspect reflective of national identity, C Loyalty to the national community beyond ethnic loyalties, D Commitment to the role requirements of citizenship.

exceeded Group A, which was entirely different from the rest of the grade levels. There was also slight difference of inclusion between Group A and Group C in grade one and grade three however the former had the higher frequency of occurrence.

The ANOVA was used to determine if the inclusion of the four groups of orientation measured in terms of frequency of occurrence was significantly different in the textbooks and if these orientations were significantly different in the textbooks across grade levels. Nature and extent of inclusion of national identity in all textbooks in six grade levels were marked and the differences of inclusion in each grade level were compared and analyzed. Results showed significant differences of the four orientations in all textbooks ($F(5,12) = 95.18, p < .05$). More specifically, the results showed that the inclusion of Group D—Commitment to the role requirements of citizenship ($M = 22.15$; $SD = 8.78$) was significantly higher than Group C—Loyalty to the national community beyond ethnic loyalties ($M = 1.06$; $SD = 1.36$) and Group A—Ethnocentrism ($M = 3.72$; $SD = 2.81$). Results also showed that the inclusion of Group B—Valuing of cultural aspects reflective of national identity ($M = 19.35$; $SD = 6.96$) was significantly higher than Group C and A.

Comparing the inclusion of the groups of orientation in the textbooks for the different grade levels, significant differences were also obtained. For Grade 1 textbooks, results showed that Group B ($M = 17.44$; $SD = 5.67$) was significantly higher than Group C and A ($M = 1.20$; $SD = 0.60$ and $M = 2.58$; $SD = 1.84$, respectively). Results also showed that Group D ($M = 14.33$; $SD = 7.02$) was higher than Groups A and C.

Significant differences were also obtained in textbooks for Grade 2. Results showed that the inclusion of Group D ($M = 34.33$; $SD = 7.88$) was significantly higher than Groups C ($M = 3.40$; $SD = 0.92$), A ($M = 3.58$; $SD = 3.45$) and B ($M = 18.67$; $SD = 5.86$). Results also showed that Group B was higher than Groups C and A.

Textbooks for Grade 3 also showed significant differences of inclusion. Specifically, Group B ($M = 19.44$; $SD = 4.17$) was significantly higher than Groups C and A ($M = 0.93$; $SD = 1.62$ and $M = 2.42$; $SD = 1.38$, respectively). Results also showed that Group D ($M = 19.33$; $SD = 5.61$) obtained significantly higher inclusion than Groups C and A.

Textbooks for Grade 4 also showed significant differences of inclusion. Group D ($M = 26.44$; $SD = 9.52$) was significantly higher than Group C and A ($M = 0.40$; $SD = 0.69$ and $M = 5.33$; $SD = 4.05$, respectively). Results also showed that Group B ($M =$

20.33; SD = 8.76) was higher than Groups C and A.

Significant differences were also obtained in the textbooks for Grade 5. More specifically, Group B ($M = 23.11$; $SD = 14.05$) was significantly higher than Groups C and A ($M = 0.00$; $SD = 0.00$ and $M = 4.92$; $SD = 4.61$, respectively). Results also showed that Group D ($M = 19.11$; $SD = 5.36$) obtained significantly higher inclusion than Groups C and A.

For textbooks in Grade 6, results showed that Group D ($M = 19.33$; $SD = 3.61$) had significantly higher inclusion than Group C and A ($M = 0.40$; $SD = 0.53$ and $M = 3.50$; $SD = 1.30$, respectively). Results also showed that Group B ($M = 17.11$; $SD = 4.11$) was significantly higher than Groups C and A.

4. Discussion

A. Ethnocentrism — It was observed that very few expressions pertaining to the first two orientations were given in the textbooks. Also, very few and subtle expressions showing the goodness of being a Filipino vis-a-vis other foreign nationals were in the textbooks. There should be an increase on the inclusion of relevant reflection of Filipino identity for national development vis-a-vis the relationship of the Philippines to other countries. On the other hand, support of nationalism prior to internationalism and commitment to the goal of development through national self-reliance, with specific reference to the country's decolonization goals were to certain extent, manifested in the textbooks. Some of its expressions are related to how one can contribute to the pursuit of continuous development and independence of the Philippines from intervention of other powerful countries. Some books gave emphasis on the role of the Filipino in the world. The Filipinos were illustrated as workers in the different parts of the world not entirely due to the preference for internationalism but due to sense of nationalism. The emphases given were on the goal of improving the life of families and helping the country in general through remittances. This would possibly mold the idea among the young of the nobleness of working outside the country and the idea that loving one's country does not necessarily mean staying within the territorial bounds. On the contrary, the territorial bound remains within every Filipino as he/she aims at helping in the development of the

nation. Furthermore, this provides a perception of Filipino identity in an international context and allows for an understanding of Philippines' interrelationships with the destination countries of overseas Filipino contract workers.

B. Valuing cultural aspects reflective of national identity -The textbooks gave great emphasis on the qualities and way of life through the expressions of basic beliefs and values in the daily lives of the Filipinos. For example, the theme on spirituality was exemplified among others through the practices of typical Filipino family. A typical Filipino family was oftentimes presented as religious and God-fearing. On the other hand, valuing national traditions and cultural products also gained relatively high frequency of occurrence. These are expressed through celebrations, festivals and major system of beliefs in the Philippines.

The presentation of the Filipino qualities, way of life, culture and tradition was done in favorable and positive expressions. The textbooks could have also shown how Filipino qualities, way of life, culture and tradition become weakness and engender poverty and slow development. For example, close family ties as one of the Filipinos' greatest strengths, could possibly become a weakness in extremity. "Excessive concern for the family creates an in-group to which the Filipino is fiercely loyal to the detriment of concern for the larger community or for the common good. It also acts as a block to national consciousness" (Shahani, 1992, p.14). There must be an elaboration on the fact that no matter how good Filipino values are, they are susceptible to extreme interpretation that could lead to weakness of Filipino character. Values that are seen as strength may operate on the arena that leads to weakness of national character and thus hamper national development. Moreover, the presentation of the weakness must be done in a cautionary and awakening manner that pave the way for self-analysis and self-reflection in relation to national development. According to Shahani (1992), for the Philippines to progress as a nation, values such as, patriotism and love of country as well as the habit of self-reflection and self-analysis are fundamental to overcome the deep rooted weaknesses, to eliminate the widespread poverty and to survive as prosperous and sovereign nation (p.66).

The expressions and narratives of valuing national traditions and cultural

products were done in mere informative manner. Inasmuch as the Filipino culture is characterized by an openness to outside — adapting and incorporating the foreign elements into their image of themselves (Shahani, 1992, p.4), the textbooks could have also be presented in a way that could provide a foundation for the young generations' commitment to national traditions and cultural products in the midst of development and globalization. It is important to consider how national tradition and cultural products could be maintained in the midst of various influences.

C. Loyalty to the national community beyond ethnic loyalties — The books have almost neglected to include orientations under this group. There are frequencies of occurrence that were marked but they were almost negligible considering the number of books and its pages as well as the grade levels. A total neglect on this aspect would lead to ignorance on the ethnic communities in the country as well as the historical rootedness of Filipinos, who they are and where they come from. It would also lead to neglect of a sense of brotherhood and consideration of ethnic groups as part of the Filipino nation. In the aim for national integration, solidarity, and unity, the inclusion of these aspects must be strengthened in order for Filipino students to heighten their awareness and acceptance of ethnic groups in the country. It is necessary for Filipino students to become conscious of the affinity of ethnic groups, to consider those groups as part of the whole nation, as constituents of the Filipino national community and Filipino national identity. According to Karl Deutsch (1966) "nationality is the observable ability of certain groups to share with one another a wide range of whatever might be on their minds, and their observable inability to share these things nearly as widely with other groups"(in Doronilla, 1987, p.289). This suggests the need to increase the range of information on this topic. Otherwise the goals and objectives of the Master Plan for Basic Education, "Modernizing Philippine Education" (1996-2005), that is, strengthening indigenous culture, arts and sports will just remain a rhetoric.

D. Commitment to the role requirements of citizenship — The orientations under this had high frequency of occurrence in the textbooks. Pride in national symbols and deriving personal identity from identification with the nation have relatively high inclusion whereas commitment to the duties of citizenship is one of the highest among

the orientations in terms of inclusion. The orientations in this group contain the most salient political function of national identity. This includes legitimization of common legal rights, duties of legal institutions, social order and solidarity (Smith, 1991, p.16), which define the peculiar values and character of the nation and reflect the customs and mores of the people. Under this group, the importance of the social and legal role and rights of the citizens were emphasized. Admirably, emphasis was given specifically on the role of the citizens in the protection of the environment.

The above findings, however, may have limitations. First, the study had one encoder. Thus, a replication of this study having more than one coder is needed to gain a fair degree of reliability. Second, this study used a set of orientations, which serves as the parameter in defining the concept national identity. The sixteen orientations may have not fully defined the concept. There might be some other aspects of national identity that were not covered by the set of orientations. It would, therefore, be interesting to explore the parameter and the changing nature of national identity. Third, this study did not ascertain the extent to which the teachers use the textbooks in the teaching process and the impact of the textbooks to the learners' sense of national identification.

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National Identity in Elementary Moral Education Textbooks in the Philippines: A Content Analysis

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The purpose of this paper is to content analyze the nature and extent of the inclusion of national identity in elementary Moral Education textbooks in the Philippines. This analysis has been made possible using a set of orientations as parameters to define the concept national identity with specific application to the Philippine case.

National identity is considered to be the most crucial political belief that any individual ever acquires (Verba (1965), in Doronilla, 1989, p.45). In this vein, it is thought necessary to socialize citizens in order to foster national identity and naturally education plays a key role in making this possible. Socialization of citizens through the education sector involves various methods including the use of textbooks. In the case of the Philippines, the state authorities work hand in hand with the education sector to instill such political belief.

The endeavor of reviving and awakening a sense of national identity among the Filipinos requires not just a process of remembering the glorious past or paying homage to national heroes and their deeds. Significantly, it calls for continuity of values that have been hailed as marks of the true Filipino nation. It calls for the nationalistic ideology known as *Filipinism* wherein the Filipino people are expected to partake in the so-called collective self. This is meant to serve as an awakening mechanism for the sustenance and maintenance of a nation-state under different regimes or administrations. In particular, the recent past two consecutive administrations of Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos saw a need to revive and develop a stronger sense of Filipino national identity. In response, the Department of Education Culture and Sports (DECS) improved the teaching of values associated with national identity, and Moral Education was invigorated as an independent subject within the school curriculum.

The Moral Education program at elementary level holds that developing children's sense of Nationalism or Filipinism, which focuses on Filipino identity, is tantamount to strengthening their humanity (Carpio, 1999, p.2). National identity is therefore a significant element in the teaching of this subject. Considering that identification with any particular nation involves some knowledge of cultural doctrine or, more accurately, a political ideology with cultural doctrine at its center (Smith,

1991, p.15), the concrete manifestation of this national identity inevitably includes interrelated core values. As a cultural doctrine, it encompasses the other core values stated in the curricula and Minimum Learning Competencies (MLC) and which are thus expected in the textbooks.

The efforts to invigorate the teaching of Moral Education in the context of problems in contemporary society would be incomplete if the textbooks are to be ignored. Textbooks are a tangible means of molding young citizens' minds towards the values that engender a sense of national identity. Since they are an important medium in learning, this paper explores the responsiveness of Moral Education textbooks to calls of the government to develop a stronger sense of national identity among members of society and the relevant action taken by the education sector as a result. Furthermore, content analysis is considered necessary since the DECS did not prescribe any particular set of textbooks from grade one to grade six. This means that teachers have freedom to choose from the vast array of textbooks produced by different publishers in the country. The absence of any strict policy in the choice and use of textbooks may serve to promote commercialization and neglect the core content of the subject in question.

In this study, content analysis was conducted on the nature and extent of national identity as observed in eighteen textbooks for elementary level. Frequency of manifestation was determined based on a set of orientations defining national identity with specific application to the Philippine case. Sixteen orientations were divided into four groups as follows: Group A, ethnocentrism; Group B, evaluation of cultural aspects reflecting national identity; Group C, loyalty to the national community beyond ethnic loyalties; and Group D, commitment to the role requirements for citizenship. The design of this set of orientations was based on the Philippine case and took into consideration that no universal set of orientations exists to define national identity. This is because its specific content has variable cultural and historical dimensions, which differ from one society to the next and, within a society, from one epoch to the next (Doronilla, 1989, p. 43). Thus, the set of orientations devised here provides dimensions that focus on national character and the desired national consciousness for members of Philippine society.

Using the above set of orientations this study found that, although some further consideration is still required, there is a significant inclusion of national identity in the textbooks at each grade level. It showed that manifestation in the textbooks was focused on just two dimensions of national identity, so there is a need to include more information on other dimensions that have been comparatively neglected. Moreover, there is also a need for some enlightening explanation of weaknesses in Filipino character that tend to hamper national development. The narratives and

explanations in the textbooks should pave the way for reflection and analysis of the factors that endanger national cohesion, pride and identification. The findings suggest that the major challenge facing the elementary Moral Educators in the Philippines lies in improving the content of textbooks in relation to values thought necessary to foster in citizens a strong sense of national identity beneficial to the country's development.