

Position Paper on Bullying

While there is no legal definition of bullying, in general terms bullying is the intentional tormenting of another person or persons. Bullying can take on many forms, both direct and indirect. Direct forms may include verbal, physical abuse and/or assault. Indirect kinds of bullying are more subtle, and take the form of coercion and/or manipulation. Combating bullying is needed in order to insure that students have a safe and secure learning environment. Experts agree that such an environment is needed in order for learning to occur.

Students, parents, teachers, and administrators need to be mindful of bullying and its effects on the target, the perpetrator, and the climate of the learning community. Prevention initiatives need input from all stakeholders, so that policies which address bullying can be easily adopted and implemented. Continued research in this social phenomenon is a key component to helping communities change behavioral patterns and instill civility.

Sensitivity awareness to aspects of bullying is the starting point for all stakeholders – students, parents, and school officials. Schools are uniquely qualified to provide educational training in this area by hosting conferences, workshops, and extracurricular activities devoted to bully/victim problems and advocacy. Conferences should be open to the public, with advance notice going out to all parents and guardians. The objective of this training would be to disseminate that bullying is never acceptable, that there are consequences to hurting others, and there exist extracurricular activities within the school system to develop positive peer relations and team building.

Schools can improve communication among school administrators, teachers, parents and students. Disciplinary action can be consistent with immediate consequences for aggressive behaviors. Adult supervision can be increased in the school, particularly in areas where bullying is known to take place - PE classes, recess, hallways, bathrooms, and in the lunchroom. Using parent volunteers and other adult community groups to assist with this supervision in the school would be ideal way to involve the community. Another area which could be pursued by students, teachers, and administrators, would be to form an Anti-Bullying Club in the school (Craig, 1999). The club could hold monthly meeting, and invite experts from the community to conduct workshops/lectures.

Research suggests that 20% of school children have been victims of bullying, and 15% of school children engaged in bullying. Seventy five percent of bullies are boys, and bullying peaks in the age group between 11 and 12 years old. A dis-aggregation of data suggests that 38% of special education students compared to 18% of other students reported being bullied (Ziegler, Rosenstein-Manner, 1991). Bullying incidents lasted an average of 37 seconds, and 79% of the episodes were direct bullying, 18% were indirect bullying, and 3% were both direct and indirect forms of bullying. Weapons were visible in 4% of the episodes. Peers intervened in 11% and school staff intervened in 4% of bullying episodes.

Causes of bullying are varied as the individuals who engage in it. Some of the reasons include: trying to get things (property) for themselves; being impulsive and active in temperament; impressing others; needing social influences; getting attention; needing power over other people; experiencing lack of warmth and attention at home; modeling aggressive behavior form home; having poor

supervision at home; and, viewing violence as a way to settle problems.

Victims of bullying tend to be quiet, shy, lack friends and social support, lack confidence, feel isolated and helpless, and are reluctant to report offenses because they think it will get worse. N.M. Floyd, in his article, *Pick on somebody your own size*, summarizes the bullying cycle in a succinct manner:

“Bullying tends to start off in a tentative way, with some trial and error as the bullying settles on a victim. At first, the incidents may be playful consisting of pranks, jokes, and some rough and tumble. As victims succumb to this treatment and prove submissive, the incidents become more hurtful, escalating from criticizing the victim, to name-calling and taunting, then to personal attacks and public humiliation. In response to this increasingly hostile treatment, the victims change and become more accepting and submissive. The rough and tumble plays give way to slapping, punching, kicking, and beatings. The attacks become more systematized as victims are scapegoated.”

Possible actions for the victims of bullying are: stay calm without looking like a victim; ignore the bully by keeping quiet and walk away; if the aforementioned are not possible, maintain good eye contact and use a calm voice, and try to get help. It goes without saying that school staff should intervene in bullying episodes immediately. Officials should talk to the bully and the victim separately. Involve the administration so that a wider reading on the problem can be obtained, and school policies are followed.

A Position Paper on Legalizing Divorce in the Philippines

[CarolTinga](#) [Uncategorized](#) October 22, 2017 5 Minutes

Marriage is sacred and a must. [Marriage](#) is the process by which two people make their relationship public, official, and permanent. It is the joining of two people in a bond that putatively lasts until death, but in practice is increasingly cut short by separation. Over the course of a relationship that can last as many as seven or eight decades, a lot happens. Personalities change, bodies age, and [romantic love](#) waxes and wanes. And no marriage is free of conflict. What enables a couple to endure is how they handle that conflict. It is lawful which should be followed and taken care of by a married couple or a family. In addition, it is necessary in general. But if a marriage is not working anymore that only leads to fighting then it only becomes an abuse, it requires a legal separation to any of the spouses. This process undergone legally and has a sanction of the court. It could be an annulment just like here in our country, the Philippines, we allow it.

People who say that divorce is not advisable for the Philippines forget or ignore our history. The ethno-linguistic communities of the Philippine archipelago before the Spanish conquest practiced divorce. We had a divorce law from 1917 until August 30, 1950, when the Civil Code of 1950 took effect. The latter law prohibited divorce for Filipinos, and the prohibition continues under the present Family Code. But Muslim Filipinos have always practiced divorce, which Philippine law allowed. Today, divorce continues to be available to Muslim Filipinos under the Code of Muslim Personal Law of the Philippines (Presidential Decree No. 1083), promulgated in 1977.

In the Philippines as well as the other states such as Vatican City and British Crown Dependency of Sark the thing called 'Divorce' is not applicable now a day in the said countries. But a bill recently filed in Congress provides hope for thousands of couples trapped in failed and often abusive marriages, by legalizing divorce. It is now the fight to make divorce legal in the Philippines. The dissolution of a [marriage](#) is almost always an unhappy event, at the very least marked by disappointment and the loss of [dreams](#) and expectations. In addition, there are usually many legal, financial, parental, emotional, and practical aspects that require changes in responsibilities and routines, and it can take people years to regain equilibrium. Nevertheless, [divorce](#) serves an important function in legally and emotionally freeing people to form a more stable relationship.

A divorce law will provide a remedy that Article 36 does not. Divorce does not concern itself with validity or invalidity of a marriage. It terminates a marriage based on a ground that occurred *during* the marriage, which makes the marital relationship no longer tenable, regardless of the spouse's psychological constitution. A divorce law will provide a straightforward remedy to a marital failure. It will benefit Filipinos wherever they are.

It is time to give the remedy of divorce to those who need it, even as we respect the decision of those who want to stay married despite their miserable marital life. First thing is that a couple's conflicts often lead to maltreatment and the women are the most affected in the situation. Simple, because compare to women men are more aggressive and stronger when it comes to strength. Another is that a man has a power to rule the house even in a wrong way, so a woman was set aside because of its poor capability. Lastly, a woman is more emotional so if its trust will be misuse it leads to overthinking and makes a woman struggle a depression which is really unhealthy.

The Catholic Church need not worry. To be sure, the Catholic Church will be the staunchest opponent of the divorce bill. It will once again argue against the bill on moral grounds. It will appeal the constitutional provision directing the State to protect marriage and the family, and another that refers to the sanctity of family life. But these constitutional provisions were never intended to prohibit Congress from legalizing divorce. First, we are a secular state, where no religious group has the right to define law or policy for the entire population. The law should only give people a choice, to be exercised according to their own personal beliefs. Second, non-divorced Catholics need to be careful of assumptions, to discard any trace of judgment toward the divorced. Since most the Filipinos have “been there, done that” when it comes to being judgmental, we can address this issue personally. It is too easy for those who have never experienced the desperation and sorrow of a failed marriage to believe that “they could have done something to save it.” They really have no idea at all. Lastly, not every marriage was joined by ‘God’ even it took place in church. This may seem like a rationalization, but Jesus’ statement in Matthew 19:6 (“Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate”) does not apply to all marriages.

Divorce should be legalized to avoid adultery. It is a voluntary sexual intercourse between a married man and someone other than his wife or between a married woman and someone other than her husband. First, a man or a woman does not need to be trapped in a horrible marriage. If they do not have the love for each other anymore in a way that they tend to cheat, they can have the answer for now and do not need to break the law or even the God’s Ten Commandments. A divorce is an open door for every individual to escape for. Then, every individual could have the power to decide for their own good just like marrying other people whom they really love. It made them set aside their spouse but at least they only think on what is right than to cheat. Lastly, people will get nervous on the consequences and will only do their best in avoidance in committing adultery.

As been stated above it is better to legalize divorced because first it only leads to maltreatment, stereotyping, and depression which may affects women the most. Second, because not all marriage was joined by God, which makes sense that any of the religious beliefs do not have the right to hinder our country in legalizing divorce which is beneficial otherwise. Lastly, it could promote a healthy marriage and family through the succession of finally approving or legalizing divorce in the Philippines.

We are the only country that does not allow divorce now a days it was once a law during American colonial. A divorce law will provide a remedy that Article 36 does not; it terminates a marriage based on a ground that occurred *during* the marriage, which makes the marital relationship no longer tenable, regardless of the spouse's psychological constitution. A divorce law will provide a straightforward remedy to a marital failure. It will benefit Filipinos wherever they are.

Every day people bear children, they get married, and die after all. It is a big breaks again to us Filipinos the enactment of [divorce](#) that serves important function in legally and emotionally freeing people to form a more stable relationship.

Position Paper: PHILIPPINE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2008

- [Home](#)
- [Featured](#)
- Position Paper: PHILIPPINE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT ACT OF 2008

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The Philippines ranks among the world's most disaster-prone countries. It is highly prone to natural disasters, particularly typhoons, floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, and tsunamis, lying as it does in the typhoon belt, in the active volcanic region known as the "Pacific Ring of Fire," and in the geologically unstable region between the Pacific and Eurasian tectonic plates.

Aside from the natural disasters that reap an especially heavy human toll each year, thousands are also displaced by human-made disasters like armed conflict and development aggression. The intensifying effect of climate change also aggravates the already burdened citizens with the worsening economic instability worldwide.

Given this reality, the urgency for a comprehensive disaster management system and program is paramount.

Unfortunately, what we currently have in so far as government response is concerned is a national coordinating committee which as the name implies coordinates and meets only when a typhoon is about to strike the country. At the local level, effectiveness of the said structure is uneven with some focused only on the release of their calamity funds which later on became a source of corruption. Only a few exceptional cases led by the local disaster committees were able to go beyond their limited resources and muster the heroic volunteerism of the ordinary citizen.

While we commend the initiatives of enacting the Philippine Disaster Risk Management Act of 2008, we at the CDRC, together with our network of regional centers throughout the country, are pushing for a comprehensive and pro-people disaster management approach that will truly address the people's needs.

First, a comprehensive disaster management bill has to adequately address the root causes of people's vulnerabilities to disasters. The people's poor economic condition only aggravates their situation during disasters. The poor are the most vulnerable sector when calamities strike, making it imperative to address poverty in disaster management.

Second, a comprehensive disaster management bill has to rely on building people's capacities toward attaining disaster-resiliency through the community-based disaster management approach. It should highlight a proactive disaster management scheme, giving emphasis on people's participation, prioritizing the most vulnerable groups, families, and people in the community. It should adopt risk reduction measures which are community-specific and enhance the existing coping mechanisms and capacities within the community. It should recognize the supporting and facilitating role of the less vulnerable sectors. It should be linked with the overall development framework. Its efforts should strengthen the people's organizations at the grassroots level and provide positive

conditions for the poorest of the poor to be organized as disaster committees on the level of their communities.

Third, the bill should also define comprehensive and concrete disaster management programs and services that focus not only during the relief and emergency phases but also more importantly on the pre and post calamity phases of disasters. It should provide a comprehensive, all-hazard, multi-sectoral, inter-agency and community-based approach to disaster risk reduction emphasizing on disaster prevention, mitigation, preparedness, response and rehabilitation. In addition, this bill should be bold enough to protect the majority of the Filipinos who comprise the most vulnerable sectors all the necessary protections from all form of deprivations and exploitation from both internal and external aggressors who hide under the title of development projects and recite the all too worn out formula of “free market forces and considerations.”

Fourth, any bill which would address disaster in order to be truly effectively managed and implemented should set up machinery which would be free from the influence and depredations of politics and any undue influence of religion, gender and race. In order to guarantee this, an independent body of civilian led and citizenry-based machinery should be set-up at the national level and organize up to the level of the barangays.

Since armed conflict is turning to be one of the major human-made disaster concerns – it is but appropriate to separate the efforts of the military and police to attend to disasters as part of their civil-military operations from that of a truly independent and “neutral” effort. In addition, the military and police in turn could be well utilized on the more urgent and technical work of rescue where their expertise could be put to best use.

Of course, the machinery we have in mind though independent should be within the ambit of government and promote the values and principles of the latter as enshrined in the constitution. In fact, the Department of Social Welfare and Development and the National Anti Poverty Commission could effectively run this machinery which could be in the form of a commission or whatever this august body may deem more appropriate.

In lieu of the military and police forces, the efforts of the civilian body could enlist the participation of established religions and churches who had put up their unblemished reputation on helping the poor.

Without imposing, the bill should be able to monitor efforts of other NGOs and corporate entities and provide an effective venue for pooled resources and efforts based on voluntary cooperation.

And in the very end, the effectiveness of this “disaster bill” would be proven its real worth on the day when it shall conclude that there is not can you get rid of herpes much more work for it to do as the conditions both natural and societal have improved to a point that no major danger or vulnerability is left for it to attend to on a full time basis. This is a dream all right but would be sufficient to guide the course of action of any individual, group, institution or organization who would like to address the issue of disaster. #

A Position Paper on K-12 Program

A Position Paper on K-12 Program

by: **Mark Dave B. Calungsod**

Introduction

The Department of Education (DepEd) has a program which is the K-12 program that covers kindergarten and 12 years of basic education to provide sufficient time for mastery of concept, skills, develop life long learners , and prepare graduates for tertiary education, middle level skills, development, employment, and entrepreneurship.

According to Hawsnetph(2016), K-12 program is one of the most recent update in the education system of the country(Philippines).

K-12 program aims to improve every Filipino child with the education he/she needs to compete in global context. The goal of new Curriculum is to give Filipino students enough time to master skills and concept so that they are ready for tertiary education when the time comes. And enhancing the quality of basic education in the Philippines is urgent and critical. But some of Filipino's people react about the implemented program because parent's have to shell out more money for the education of their children, the drop-out rate will increase because the Filipino's students do not have interest to go to school because of 2 extra years, and every family dreams of having a child graduates from college and it will not come true because of K-12 program we're some of Filipino's disagree because it's wasting time and money.The K-12 program give a quality education and enhance the skills but it's a problem of Filipino,we're Filipino student's do not have interest to go in school.

Counter Argument

1.The poor quality of basic education in the Philippines is reflected in the low achievement scores of Filipino's student's.

=No!!!That's not true. The quality of education in the Philippines is not poor because it's helps the student's, teacher's, and parent's to make their

dreams come true. The education of the Philippines was a high quality and it has a good goal which Filipino student's achieve their dreams. Now!!! If the new curriculum will implemented the number of population of student's will decrease because of the new curriculum and they have no interest to study and go to school and the low achievement scores of Filipino student's is not reflect the poor quality of education in the Philippines.

2. The K-12 program enhancing the quality of basic education in the Philippines is urgent and critical.

=No!!! Even without the K-12 program. Education enhancing the quality of basic education because many of Filipino achieve their dreams and have a good life, so it' reflect the quality of education. The K-12 program is wasting time and money .And K-12 program was a problem on our society today.

3.The K-12 program give Filipino student's enough time to master their skills and concept.

=No!!! The old curriculum of education give time to Filipino student's to master their skills and concepts ,So the K-12 program focuses on the skills and concept of Filipino student's which is not good because it has on old curriculum that master the skills and concept of Filipino student's and K-12 program is not important because the education of the old curriculum was a high quality and I am fully disagree with the K-12 program because it will decrease the number of population of student's and parent's shell out more money for food, money(allowance), and transportation of student's.

My Argument

If the K-12 program implemented the number of population will decrease and the drop-out will increase because student's do not have time to go in school and to study.

According to IsaganiCruz(2014), The drop-out will increase because of the extra 2 years.

The 2 extra years of Education was wasting time and money because parent's shell out more money for students because of K-12 program.

According to IsaganiCruz(2014), Parent's have to shell out more money (for food and transportation) of their children.

The K-12 program was destructing in studying of student's because it has a lot of requirements.

According to IsaganiCruz(2014), we can do it in ten years what everyone else in the world takes 12 years to do. Why do we have to follow what the rest of the world is doing? We are better than all of them. Filipino right now are accepted in prestigious graduate schools in the world ,even with only ten years of basic education.

Conclusion

The K-12 program was wasting time and money. And it is has a big negative impact on our society today. If the K-12 program we're implemented the student's do not have time to go to school and do not have interest to study because it added 2 years of study.

The K-12 program must be stopped. We Filipino must have a rally about the K-12 program and we must go to the government to stopped this program and give all the quality of education to the old curriculum and I encourage everyone to have a plan or make a blog\group that against the program of the government because it is not important. It will destruct the study of Filipino student's and we go to government specially to the Department of Education(DepEd)to stopped this program.

Social Issues

1. Is there a way to reduce abortions without legislation? (policy)
2. Does a police officer's racial background make a difference in how they do their job? (value)
3. Should the racial make-up of a police department be the same as the community they serve? (definition)
4. How can pro-life and pro-choice groups work together? (values)
5. Should Barbie be banned? (value)
6. Should reality T.V. shows have regulations? (policy)
7. What is true beauty? (definition)
8. Is video gaming good or bad? (value)
9. Are beauty contests a positive thing for young girls? (value)
10. Are participation trophies in athletics a good idea? (policy)
11. Are overbearing sports parents helpful or harmful? (definition)
12. Should young children be pushed to compete at athletics? (policy)
13. Should children have scheduled activities or be left more time for free play? (value)
14. What is the cause of the increase in child obesity? (cause)
15. How can we encourage children to be more active? (policy)
16. Should people on welfare be required to submit to drug testing? (policy)
17. Why do so many celebrities have terrible life problems? (cause)
18. Should media coverage be regulated? (policy)
19. What is the effect of media coverage on elections? (fact)
20. What is human trafficking? (definition)
21. How can human trafficking be stopped? (policy)
22. How do elected female officials differ from elected males? (fact)
23. How important is it to have equal representation of genders and races in political office? (value)
24. How can we support the election of more females to political offices? (policy)
25. How can we get more minorities to become police officers? (policy)
26. How can the rights of artists and writers be protected on the Internet? (policy)
27. Why should you pay for your music? (value)
28. Does religious persecution exist? (fact)
29. Should people be allowed to make "designer babies?" (value)
30. What can be done to reduce unemployment among young African American men? (policy)
31. Should the minimum wage be raised or lowered? (policy)

Does sugar make us hungrier?



Source

Sample Student Essays

- [How Christians Can Believe Evolution](#)
Can faith and science be compatible?
- [Should You Put Your Parent in a Nursing Home?](#)
This essay argues that sometimes, a nursing home can be the best choice.
- [Poor Across Oceans](#)
This essay argues that we need to care more for people in developing countries.
- [Hunger Hurts](#)
How can we solve the problem of hunger?

Education Topics

1. Should we have a national high school exam? (policy)
2. Is private school tuition (elementary, high school, or college) really worth it? (value)
3. Does statewide testing (like the TAKS/STAAR test in Texas) really increase student knowledge? (cause)
4. Should colleges abolish reliance on SAT and ACT scores in admissions? (policy)
5. How should the country's school system be reformed? (policy)
6. Should the U.S. adopt an educational system like Europe's? (policy)

7. What causes students to graduate from high school without basic skills? (cause)
8. How do American students compare with students from other countries? (fact)
9. What role should technology play in education? (value)
10. What is the value of a liberal arts education? (value)
11. Should students be required to take foreign language courses (or any other type of specific course)?
12. Does adding days to the school year really improve learning? (fact)
13. Should schools continue to spend money on fine arts? (value)
14. How should students whose first language is not English be taught in public schools? (policy)
15. Should college athletes be paid? (policy)

Social Media Debates

1. Cell phones control our relationships. (definition)
2. Computers are changing the way humans think. (fact)
3. Texting and cell phone use has caused young people to be less able to concentrate and focus (or you can do the reverse—has caused them to be able to handle multi-tasking more effectively and efficiently). (cause)
4. Cell phones have changed the way we relate to each other in positive ways. (value)
5. Cell phones, texts, and emails are not as good as talking face-to-face. (value)
6. Textbooks should be replaced by i-Pads and online resources. (policy)
7. How are online technologies changing the way we live? (policy)
8. How is technology changing our definition of what it means to be human? (value)
9. What laws should we have about cell phone use in cars? (policy)
10. How is social media changing family relationships? (definition)
11. Should parents limit teenagers' use of social media? (policy)
12. What privacy policies should be upheld by social media companies? (policy)
13. What should (and should not) be posted on Facebook by college students? (value)
14. Should scientists be allowed to experiment on human embryos? (value)
15. What is nanotechnology? What are its applications and possible uses in the future? (definition)

Which kind of topic are you most interested in?

- Social issues
- Education
- Technology
- Media
- Relationships

- War and Peace
- Environmental issues
- Politics

[See results](#)

Is China the Next Superpower? (Fact)

Immigration

1. How should we respond to the global problem of illegal immigration? (policy)
2. Would a border fence solve the immigration problem in the U.S.? (fact)
3. What is the relationship between immigration and nationality? (definition)
4. What causes people to immigrate illegally? (cause)
5. Should the U.S. have a visitor work program? (policy)
6. How has immigration affected the history of the U.S.? (definition)
7. Should all states have laws giving policemen the right to require people to prove their legal status? (policy)
8. How can legal immigration be streamlined? (policy)
9. Who should be allowed to immigrate? Who should not? (value)
10. How many illegal immigrants live in the U.S.? Who are they and where do they live? (fact)

Toilet Video Games? Have We Gone Too Far?

War and the Military

1. Is war inevitable? How does war become integral to society? (definition)
2. How do people justify war? (value)
3. What might help establish peace? (policy)
4. Should the U.S. continue to act as a policeman for other countries? (value)
5. How should the United States defend itself against terrorism? (policy)
6. Is drone warfare ethical? (value)
7. How is cyber warfare becoming more important? (fact)
8. Is the U.S. engaging in cyber attacks on other countries? (fact)
9. How did 9/11 change the way Americans feel about themselves as a world power? (definition)
10. Should military spending in the U.S. increase or decrease? (policy)

Race, Culture and Identity

1. How important is race to American identity? (fact)
2. To what extent does individual identity depend on ethnic affiliation? (definition)

3. How does immigration from Latin America affect the culture of America? (fact)
4. Why do Americans think in terms of a person having one race when so many Americans have a mixed racial, cultural, and/or ethnic background? (value)
5. Is it a good idea for people to adopt children from another ethnic group? (value)
6. What is culture? (definition)
7. What is the value of knowing your racial and cultural heritage? (value)
8. Should schools be required to teach multiculturalism? (policy)
9. Should churches work harder to be multi-racial? (value)
10. How can parents help raise their children to be appreciative of other cultures? (policy)

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Bikers on wildflower watching trip: Should helmet laws be enforced? (policy) | Source

Environmental Discussions

1. Is global warming a problem and if so, what can we do about it? (fact)
2. How can we resolve the economy versus environment debate? (policy)
3. How can we be sure to provide clean water for everyone? (policy)

4. What responsibility do Americans have for providing clean water to other nations? (value)
5. How will the worldwide population increase affect our planet? (fact)
6. What can be done to stop poaching of endangered species? (policy)
7. Is hunting good for the environment? (definition/fact)
8. How can citizens be responsible for their local environment? (policy)
9. What can manufacturers do to help clean up the earth? (fact)
10. What is the importance of clean water? (fact)
11. What is the relationship between health and pollution? (fact)
12. How does the current trend of species extinction compare to the past? (fact)
13. What can Americans do to stop global pollution? (policy)
14. How can we encourage people to recycle more? (value)
15. How does global warming increase the dangers of disease in the U.S.? (fact)

Are Group Projects Useful?

Heavenly Father, I thank you for all the blessings received. I ask forgiveness for all the sins committed. I pray Lord God, that you will send your Holy Spirit to enlighten me, to give me the wisdom, knowledge and understanding that I need for the final defense of my dissertation. Guide me during the presentation of my paper, that I will be able to present well the result of my study and hopefully passed successfully my defense. I also pray for the panelists that they will not make it very difficult to me and enlighten my understanding that I will be able answer the questions they will ask. I offer to you oh God the successes of my doctoral program. Amen

OPENING PRAYER : Thank you, Lord for your guidance and love. Thank you for this opportunity to present my Thesis Proposal. Thank you for giving me these Panelists who will help me improve the study. Thank you for my adviser, who invested her time in my work.

Secondly, help me in my defense. May I not be overly-sensitive when offered correction , but may I also know the difference between personal opinion and areas where I clearly could have done better. May I listen to the council of my elders, and may the defense be a reasonably edifying experience for all involved. Bless my advisor, and bless my panelists.. Thank you for their investment in reading and commenting on my work. Please help us, as we meet this day, to draw closer to you and to each other,
For Jesus' sake.
Amen.