



## Subanen: The Opportunity Cost in the Attempt of Industrializing Zamboanga Peninsula

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### ABSTRACT

This study presents a socio-historical analysis of the impact of industrialization of the Zamboanga Peninsula on the Subanen. Indigenous people like the Subanens are already alienated from the migrants' intrusion into their lands. The coming of the logging and mining industries greatly altered the physical environment and the system of living within their ancestral domain. After a thorough analysis, this paper reveals three major aspects which greatly affected the Subanen in the attempt to industrialize the Zamboanga Peninsula; namely environment-related, economic-related, and peace and order. Social theories such as emotional geographies, cultural theory, and subsistence theory have corroborated the difficult and trying experiences of the Subanen under the aforementioned aspects. It is apparent that the Philippine government is willing and interested to integrate the Subanen. In fact, it is a member of various conventions and agreements which commit to assimilate, preserve and protect the indigenous people of the country. Moreover, several laws braced indigenous rights to the ancestral domain, self-government, empowerment, social justice, human rights, and cultural integrity have been legislated. Hence, it is highly anticipated that laws crafted would address the Subanen concern on the environment, economy and peace, and order while Zamboanga Peninsula pursues industrialization. In time, it would be an amazing scenario when Subanen would eventually adapt, compete, and assume as forerunners of development in the region without necessarily forgetting or relinquishing their indigenous life and principles. Indeed, embarking on industrialization inevitable. Nevertheless, industrialization should be mindful and sensitive to the marginalized populace of the region.

**Keywords:** harafora; lutao; timuay; indigenous people mainstreaming; emotional geographies; balyan

### 1 Introduction

Development is a by-product of phenomena such as urbanization, globalization, and industrialization. These phenomena have made unprecedented growth in the 20th Century among the third world countries of Asia and Africa. Every state and region aspire for development. The Zamboanga Peninsula aims no less but a development that could transcend all aspects of the life of its inhabitants.

The Zamboanga Peninsula or Region 9 is an area of the Philippines that lies at the southernmost portion of the archipelago. It is located at the Western tip of the island of Mindanao. The region is strategically situated in close proximity to Sabah, Malaysia, Brunei, and Indonesia. The strategic location of the region served as an impetus to embark on the agricultural, commercial, and industrial enterprise. Accordingly, it is dubbed as the gateway to the Brunei-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area or BIMP-EAGA.

The Zamboanga Peninsula Regional Development Plan 2011-2016 reveals the rich mineral deposits in the region. Its metallic and non-metallic mineral deposits were still largely untapped. Gold and silver are identified in nine areas in Zamboanga Sibugay, seven in Zamboanga del

Norte, four in Zamboanga del Sur, and two in Zamboanga City. Zamboanga del Norte has deposits of copper, zinc, lead, iron, manganese ore, and chromium ore. Non-metallic and industrial minerals such as asbestos kaolin, bentonite, red clay, limestone, marble, gabbro, and schist can also be mined in all provinces of the regions. Quarts mineral can only be found in Zamboanga del Norte, while coal and sand, and gravel are plenty in Zamboanga Sibugay and Zamboanga del Sur (Zamboanga Peninsula Regional Development Plan 2011-2016).

The region's rich forest and mineral resources have been the target of logging and mining companies. The Zamboanga Peninsula is a priority mining area in the Philippines under the government policy to revitalize the mining industry. Thus, the proliferation of micro, small and medium-scale companies is foreseeable. The areas have been host to several mining companies' application overtime by international and national companies including Rio Tinto, TVIRD, Ferrum 168, Geotechnique and Mines Incorporated (GAMI), Franc Real Inc., Zambo Woods, Dacon, Benguet Corporation, and TVI. They extract timber, gold, coal, and other forest and land resources (Masinaring, 2011). How the coming of private companies in the ancestral domains affected the Subanen is focal of this study.

#### 1.1 Objectives of the Study

1.2 This study strives to find out the challenges experienced by the Subanen people amidst the attempt to industrialize the Zamboanga Peninsula. Moreover, the main point of this study is to achieve a profound understanding of the nature of violence experienced by the Subanen as a consequence of industrialization by satisfying the objective below:

1. To point out how the industrialization of the Zamboanga Peninsula pose a negative impact on the Subanen

## 1.2 Theoretical Framework

The *Theory of Subsistence* advocated by Kuokkanen (2011) corroborated the impact of Christian infringement on the lands of the Subanen. The different world views between the non-natives and the Subanen contributed to the said afflictions. Kuokkanen further illustrated that the economic context between the migrants and the Subanen differs in numerous ways. In Subsistence Theory, the natives believed that their lands were a gift from nature and the only wealth they could offer to their children. The value of their land is more than money but attached to their dignity. As they declare, without lands, they are beggars. This gives essence to the functional definition of subsistence among the Indigenous People as a way of life.

Another that supported this study is *Emotional Geographies*. It is a postmodern social science theory which deals with the relationships between emotions and geographic places and their contextual environments (Little, 2003). All the things they do draw them to their environment/ ancestral domain because these give them meaning and surround them with memories (Bondi, 2005). Another equally worthy theory for this research is *Cultural Geography*. This was espoused by Carl O. Sauer. This theory sees cultures and societies as developing out of their local landscapes and at the same time shaping those landscapes.

## 2 Methodology

Basically, this study utilizes archival research and critical qualitative methodologies. This paper uses the narrative-descriptive method in dealing with the problem. It content-analyzes secondary sources. Furthermore, the researcher conducted a survey on the possible references and materials available. The survey aims at collecting various articles and references that talk about the Subanen and the challenges they experience as the Zamboanga Peninsula geared towards industrialization. It likewise employs online resources to supplement the information which cannot be found in available documents. Some data are also obtained from direct observation since the author is also a resident of the mentioned locale. Furthermore, a non-structured conversational type of interview is likewise employed in the study. Data from direct observation is also utilized.

Various literature has been examined to cope up with the core of this study.

### 2.1 On the Subanun

The majority of the framework on the historical background of Subanun in the Zamboanga Peninsula has been supplied by primary resources such as the 55-volume work of Emma H. Blair and James A. Robertson, *Philippines Islands (1493-1898)*, Thomas Forrest's travel accounts entitled *A Voyage to the New Guinea and the Moluccas from Balambangan: Including an Account of Maguindano, Sooloo, and Other Islands* and William Dampier's *A Voyage Round the World* and the *Voy-*

*ages of Captain William Dampier*. These books constituted credible primary sources for this study. Books in the like of Blumentritt's *An Attempt at Writing a Philippine Ethnography*, Sawyer's *Inhabitants of the Philippines*, Canoy's *The History of Mindanao*, David Barrows' *The History of the Philippines*, and Balajula's master's thesis entitled "*Maguindanao Sultanate and Its Impact in Peopling of Zamboanga Peninsula* were also examined. These resources allow researcher to reconstruct and make intellectual reinterpretations about the life of the Subanen in the Zamboanga Peninsula.

### 2.2 On the Violence of the Subanun in the Zamboanga Peninsula

This study entails the evaluation of several reports and studies conducted by ADB, World Bank, UN, and private individuals who commit to eliminating discrimination and gender inequality. It evaluated several papers that shed light on the experiences of the indigenous people in the venture of the state to industrialize.

Breaking the Silence on Violence Against Indigenous Girls, Adolescent, and Young Women (UNICEF, 2013), Indigenous and Rural Women in Defense of Land, Territories and Women's Right (JASS) Just Associates ([www.justassociates.org](http://www.justassociates.org)), Enhancing the Role of Indigenous Women in Sustainable Development, Mining and Violence Against Rural and Indigenous Women in the Philippines by Judy A. Pasimio, Indigenous Women in the Philippine and Its Combat to Injustice, A Channel for Women's Reinforcement Operation by Rafal, 7th and 8th Report to CEDAW Philippines by Franciscan International, Alyansa Tigil Mina, and LILAK, Security Among Indigenous People by Victoria T. Corpuz. Equally important sources are the works of Chona Q. Sarmiento (Rapid Field Appraisal of Decentralization (ZamPen) Region IX, Zamboanga Peninsula Medium-Term Regional Development Plan (2011-2016), Indigenous People's/Ethnic Minorities and Poverty Reduction (ADB), Doyle's Making Free Prior and Informed Consent a Reality and Fiagoy's Adult Education and Indigenous People in the Philippines.

## 3 Results and Discussion

The Subanens/Haraforas is the most ancient and original race of all the Eastern Islands. They are members of the race of alfueros or alfurs (also called Arafura, Harafora, etc), a group of wild and savage tribes ethnologically intermediate between the Malay and Papuan or Negritos (Forrest, 1779). In the Philippines, the notion of *Harafora (Subanen)* as warlike and savage has been advanced by authors like Frederick Sawyer (1900) and Ferdinand Blumentritt(1882). But Canoy (2003) asserted that their lack of unity and sophistication in the art of war made them vulnerable to the more aggressive and well-organized neighbors. In fact, during the Spanish period, they suffered oppression from the Lutaos or Bajaos, the mercenary soldiers of the Maguindanao's. The Subanen have significantly shaped the history of *Sibugay* especially during the height of the Maguindanao Sultanate. Thus, they were dubbed as the key players of the events within Moro Gulf and the Zamboanga Peninsula (Balajula, 2013). Barrows (1905) postulated that new experiences and environments in these warm and tropical islands gradually modified these emigrants from Asia until they become in mind and body quite a different race from their supposed Mongol origin.

In 1667, Father Francisco Combes called the *Subanens* the "*fourth nation of Mindanao*" and referred to them as the inhabitants of the rivers. The Subanen uphold the reputation of being timid, friendly, and peace-loving people living harmoniously in the secluded area of Zamboanga

Peninsula or around Mt. Malindang (Finley, 1913). Although The NCIP stated that there are few of the Subanun that thrive in Surigao Provinces, Agusan del Sur, Bukidnon, Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, and Cotabato. The greater number however is found in Misamis Occidental, Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, and Zamboanga Sibugay. Today, the Indigenous People comprise a third of the region's populace and the Subanen is the predominant among these ethnic inhabitants. The Peninsula, which is traditionally Subanen territory, is home to some 300,000 Subanen. The abundance of mineral reserves draws in mining and logging companies to venture into the region that take a share in slicing the rich ancestral lands of the Subanen. This study found out that the industrializing Zamboanga Peninsula poses grievous threats to Subanen in the aspect of environmental degradation, economic and moral degeneration, and disruption of peace and order.

### 3.1 Environmental Degradation

Quilo (2015) postulated that the Indigenous People believed that their umbilical cords were enchain to their lands and environment. The Subanens, in particular, were greatly attached to their natural environment. They have an inseparable relationship with their land and the communities within it. For indigenous, home is more than four walls and a roof. Home is a freshwater spring, a stretch of virgin beach, a cloud-topped mountain, or a farming valley (Cook, 2013). The Subanen may be nomadic but they maintain a distinct wide territory that may constitute their banwas.

Basically, their environment is the primary source of food, clothing, and shelter (Villanueva, 2013). They live a simple and self-sufficient life within their community. Moreover, like any Indigenous People, the Subanen are the courageous promoter of a sustainable way of life for their communities and for the planet. They practice subsistence living and largely based on agriculture. The Subanen heavily relied on natural resources for production and construction (Morilla, 2014).

One of the herculean challenges faced by the Subanen is the coming of the concessioners which produced drastic changes to the physical environment. Trees were cut, rivers dried up and the lands were no longer suitable for production. Mountains are excavated and deformed resulting in the loss of the home of some animals. And in some destroy their quiet and peaceful living. The natural geographic landscape of the indigenous lands harshly changed. To facilitate industrialization, the government has to build roads and bridges which also altered their ecosystem. The same circumstances happened when roads are constructed to connect Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga del Sur. The Subanen living in that area has to deal with noise and more unconventional changes.

The testimony of Eddie Onto, Subanen and community organizer from Don Victoriano, Misamis Occidental notes that in his village, the Subanen does not have any choice but to work in the coal mines. They only receive meager salaries without benefits such as health insurance or hazard fee and what they receive could hardly provide for their families' basic needs (Masinaring, 2011).

For the Indigenous People, their skills as a healer were also developed and mastered in their environment. Villanueva (2013) validated that their environment is their primary source of medicine. The Subanen traditional ethnobotanical knowledge makes them self-sufficient in their medical needs. Mastery in their habitat's biodiversity allows them to hold knowledge as healers. The forest is the living pharmacy of the indigenous communities. It provides medicines to cure

common ailments. When medicinal plants are rare and only grow in specific areas in the forest that is difficult to reach, the *balyan* (local healer) collected stock and delivers them to his client.

Subanen, like any other Indigenous People, has the greatest tendency of what Wilson called emotional geography. Wherein, their traditional landscape brings them comfort and healing. Indigenous cultures equate sacred territories to health and healing (Wilson, 2003). They believed that nature could heal their ailment. Thus, healers usually order patients to stay temporarily in a hut near the river while on medication. They also offer animal sacrifices to trees, big stones, bodies of water, and other sacred sites which was offended by the patient. Moreover, they also have the practice of offering favorite food and stuff to ancestors' burial sites. An Indigenous person who got sick in a foreign place will be transported back to the traditional homeland. Traditional and sacred lands are deemed to bring comfort with the patient because it is rich with beautiful memories and histories. Their ancestral abodes are carefully chosen and believe to bring them good luck. In case of misfortunes, they would transfer to another area so to halt the bad luck. Consequently, all their chosen homes are landscapes where ties are intertwining solely with good recollections.

The close connectedness of the Subanen to their environment is a key to their survival. Indigenous people rely on the forest, on the river, on all their natural surroundings for continued existence. Knowledge of their natural geography gave them an edge against physical danger. Moreover, mastery of their natural landscapes and biodiversities helped cope with periodic food shortages by utilizing non-timber forest products (Multidisciplinary, 2019). In fact, the Subanen of Lakewood claimed they could identify more than 200 undomesticated plants that are edible to humans. The forest provides them a buffer for hunger. When food shortages occur, they could gather nuts, berries, wild vegetables, honey, and animals from the forest.

When private companies intruded on their lands, things changed. The Subanen has to endure both struggles for survival from physical threats and survival from the unfamiliar system. Aside from altering their environment by cutting trees in the forest, polluting the river, and devouring their mountains, they have to adapt to a foreign system. They were ultimately forced to change their way of life (Cook, 2013).

Like any Indigenous People, the Subanen existed with a unique interconnectedness with nature. Their ancestral domain is a big factor in their interpretation of events and a significant link to their past. Traditional spaces also served as shapers of their identity. Their geographical and cultural disunion from the mainstream populace help preserved their cultural identity. They maintain their traditional way of life and retain distinctive identities apart from the majority. Their traditional knowledge and positive socio-cultural practices and values are their valuable contribution to this plural society.

As custodians of the lands, indigenous people take care of the productive and reproductive power of the earth and its resources. This symbiotic relationship and rational management of the ecosystem define people's ethnic identity and also ensure the cultural continuity of the group (Erni, 2013). While they get sustenance from the land, they take responsibility for caring for it by extracting only what is needed. Because they were able to retain their culture, they remain repositories of a broad range of indigenous knowledge which today is recognized as sustainable and viable (Fiagoy, 2000).

The Subanen has been the key player in Zamboanga Peninsula's history, culture, and tradition. They preserved and transmitted this culture to their lineage. They assume a significant role in preserving our national identity, considering that they are one of the keepers of the core values and traditions. It's individual and societies, represent an irreplaceable diversity. They act as stewards of Mother Nature. The land they live on is the last refuge of nature, the lungs of the earth, the reservoir of water that guarantees physical survival, the reserves of biodiversity that express the wealth and abundance of our world. Their traditional knowledge and values of interconnectedness are essential ingredients for improving an ailing world. (Cook, 2013).

The Subanen value their ancestral domain because their lands have been the sacred spaces and burial sites of their ancestors. They developed unique oneness with nature. The Subanen defenders even claim that they safeguard their territories because they are part of their land. They themselves represent their domain. The lands which they called home are the weavers of their dreams, history, and identity. The said world view was just trivial among the migrants and capitalists leading to Timuay disempowerment, environmental excesses, and cultural disrespect. Being a minority, the Subanen felt they are misrepresented in the local government except for some towns particularly Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay which reserved one seat in their Municipal Council for the Indigenous leader.

### 3.2 Economic Degeneration

Economic distress among the Subanen due to the industrialization of the Zamboanga Peninsula is one of the focal points this study wanted to demonstrate. Among the Subanen, economies is beyond the realm of money but a livelihood providing sustenance to individual or community ensuring sustainability and stewardship of the bounty of nature God afforded them. The Theory of Subsistence advocated by Kuokkanen (2011) substantiated the economic challenges encountered by the Subanen as industries infringe their lands. The different world views between the non-natives and the Subanen contributed to the said afflictions. Kuokkanen further expounded, "the profit to non-natives means money while among the natives, it means a good life derived from the land and sea. Hence, their strong stand to protect their ancestral domain. In Subsistence Theory, natives believed that their lands were entrusted by Mother Earth and the only wealth they could pass to their children. Additionally, they deemed that when their lands will be taken from them, they are truly a pauper. These give essence to the functional definition of subsistence among the Indigenous People as a way of life.

The Subanen may have derived all their needs from the environment, yet, they stick to the principle of responsible consumerism by taking only what they need. In this case, the resources and biodiversity have time to regenerate. The Subanen economy is closely tied to traditional knowledge of the cycle of nature, agriculture, and community cooperation (Cook, 2013). Economically, they are lagging behind the mainstream populace (Cook, 2013). Being secluded from the rest of the population, the IPs have the chance to value and utilized nature's bounty with care and humanity as opposed to the mono-cropping, commercialized and large-scale farming of the capitalist. They were able to sustain the productivity and lushness of their lands.

The advent of commercial development in the Lumad's land brought countless sufferings to the natives, as a result, it is called development aggression. Development such as logging, commercial, agricultural, mining, and wildlife conservation place their traditional rights of tenure in jeopardy. UNICEF's report even supported such contention in

the following statements: *Infrastructural development is a fundamental necessity for the fulfillment of economic, social, and cultural rights, as well as civil and political rights of all citizens. However, when such development takes place on the ancestral land of indigenous people without their free, prior, and informed consent and adequate compensation the consequences lead to the abrogation of the rights of the indigenous people* (UNICEF report, 2013).

The privatization and individual ownership of property are far-off from their traditional ways. Embedded in their subsistence living is communal ownership. The indigenous people feel as if they are strangers to their own land because of the existence of the new order in their community. Gone are the days when they have communal efforts and communal harvest of their produce. The subsistence production was harshly replaced with mono-cropping and bulk farming. This renders them defenseless against the competition. Another new system that inflicted equally unguarded challenges to the Subanen is the monetized economy. Unlike before, when they could ask for fruits and vegetables from the neighborhood for free, everything in their community has monetary value. Aside from putting the Subanen in a desolate position, monetized economy pushes younger generations to migrate and prefer employment in some industries in urban areas which promise better pay than traditional farming.

The new systems of in capitalistic economy drag them down to the lowest echelon of the economic status. Some Subanens welcome foreigners in their domain. Yet, they ended up as tenants or workers of their own lands. The shrewd businessman trapped them with loans to pressure the natives into selling their lands at a very low price to them. The displacement and loss of livelihood saddle indigenous groups of additional burdens to make ends meet. Being unlettered, their options in finding jobs is limited. Their families' responsibilities sometimes force them to seek additional ways to earn a living as laundry workers, cooks, or domestic helpers. Debt bondage between indigenous and non-indigenous population has also emerged which have resulted in the hard toil render by their children just to pay off the debt of their parents (Fia-goy 2000). Some Subanen move to the cities to work, some become victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation (Cook, 2013).

A study by the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) revealed that in Canatuan, Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, videokes (bars with karaoke, with video machines, are played) have been put up and has steadily increased in numbers since the TVI mining operation started. In these bars, there are women available for either table mates or drinking companions or can be paid for sex. There were men who admitted that they spend money on the videokes. Often what they spend on a daily basis in the videoke is more than their take-home pay. This is indeed a phenomenon in Canatuan brought about by the presence of the Canadian Mining Co. (Pasimio, 2013). Thus, engaging in this kind of activity destroy the peace and order within families.

Mining and logging permits are to contribute to the economic alleviation of the place and the local inhabitants. By being true to their social responsibility, some operators shoulder the construction of roads and bridges, sponsor health outreach, and offer other social services to the people. Nevertheless, most residents near mining sites suffer deplorable conditions both in health and economy. In fact, it is evident that Subanen communities where mining and other industries are located are still poverty-stricken with their area being devoured. For this reason, the Duterte administration orders the closure of some companies because aside from the manifestation of lack of accountability to the environment, they are putting into risk the health of the people. Unfortunately,

before the closure order has been deputized, the appointment of the Acting DENR Secretary (the late Gina Lopez) was never confirmed.

### 3.3 Peace and Order Disruption

In the Philippines, the indigenous communities are complaining on the obvious bias of the government between the people and the logging and mining companies. The state became the tool of the companies in penetrating the ancestral lands of the natives. It becomes blind to the abuse and violence suffered by indigenous people. Agents of some logging and mining companies fabricate chaos to frighten the indigenous people, pushing them to give up their lands. This has been realized through militarization.

Militarization and arm conflict are stark realities in many Asian countries. People have been killed, jailed, intimidated, abused, and raped by military and paramilitary forces. Indigenous and rural women report abuses at the hands of security forces. In secluded areas, militarization has also resulted in the sexual abuse of women. Young Subanens are forced to marry coastal arm force because they have no means to resist or they wanted protection (UNICEF report, 2013). The violence committed by the military men has been legitimized by the State (Realizing Indigenous Women's Right, 2013). In fact, it appears that the government has paved way for the private corporations in trespassing Subanen ancestral domain. It confirmed the belief of Fiagoy which stated: *In the Philippines, national oppression takes the form of oppression by the ruling class through state instrumentalities against minority nationalities (Fiagoy, 2000).*

Part of the government militarization strategy is to recruit a paramilitary or private army from local residents and indigenous people. This is possible through the government counter-insurgency program under the National Internal Security Plan Application on the Indigenous People Sector (NISIP-IP), which arms Lumad civilians for combat and military. The military operations were part of the activities of the Investment Defense Force (IDF). The IDF is a special police force and military unit set up by the government in February 2008 to protect power plantation and mineral assets in the rural areas. This is in addition to CAFGU tasked to provide security for private companies (Erni, 2012).

Indigenous and non-government organizations are working to block government land concession to transnational corporations particularly those transactions made without consent and legal process. Despite the opposition of the indigenous people, mining companies created ways to lure local leaders and government officials by granting a loan, giving gifts such as vehicle and home appliances, sponsorship of rituals and community celebrations, exposure trips to cities and other countries, providing infrastructure and basic social services such as health care facilities, schools, markets, farm to market roads and tribal hall (Rafal, 2011). These were very enticing offers that the government remains blind and deaf to the grievances of the indigenous people. As a matter of fact, Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas (KAMP or Alliance of Indigenous People) found that the Aquino government have killed 44 indigenous people since 2010 in extrajudicial killings or politically motivated killings of indigenous people's leaders and community members whose lands were affected by the development of large-scale mining projects (Doyle, 2007).

They appeal for the state to respect basic rights, the environment, and the indigenous communities. State and companies responded by treating the activist like criminals using violence in an attempt to dismantle grassroots resistance. Activists face assassination, kidnapping,

defamation, sexual violence, torture, house raids, and harassment (Cook, 2013). *In Canatuan, Zamboanga del Norte, the Toronto Ventures Incorporated (TVI), a Canadian mining company has been involved in several violent demolitions of houses and violence among the Subanen communities. One of the notorious cases was that of the house of Galves family, where Mrs. Galves was hurt by the armed security men, as she was protecting their house from the demolition (Sanz, 2013).*

Furthermore, the militarization in indigenous territories as a response to protest has resulted in killings, arbitrary arrest, and torture of indigenous people. It escalates conflict and leads to force displacements, massive environmental degradation, food security, ethnocide, and the weakening of the distinct socio-cultural system of indigenous people (Cook, 2013). In Bayog, Zamboanga del Sur one of the most notorious incidents is the ambush of Timuay Lucenio Manda, which killed his 11-year-old son, Jordan. It was one of the series of deaths related to mining (Pasimio, 2013).

Our country recognizes the significant role of the Indigenous People in the preservation of natural resources and prevention of cultural denudation. Nonetheless, the Lumads/IPs cannot showcase their full potential once violence and discrimination exist. As UNICEF posited violence may prevent indigenous people from realizing their potential, knowing and exercising their rights, participating as equal and active members of society and carrying on the transmission of knowledge, culture, identities, and language of their ancestors on an equal footing with the mainstream populace. Addressing violence against the indigenous people is therefore central to the fulfillment of their human rights and the self-determination of indigenous communities (UNICEF report, 2013).

### 3.4 Policies and Legislations That Address Violence on Subanen

The call for gender equality and mainstreaming of indigenous people is pivotal in the passage of laws and policies that ensures equal opportunity, rights, and privileges and at the same time guarantee full protection from all forms of violence. The Philippines also believe that empowering the Subanen, just like any other marginalized sectors will speed up our economic development. It is one of the active participants in signing international and local covenants for the marginalized sectors in our society. Consequently, the Philippines is an active member of international conventions like CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) which is a treaty that served as an important tool for holding the government accountable for respect, protection, and realization of the rights of an individual in a country; The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP) which acknowledged the special vulnerability of women and girls of minority and indigenous background; The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People has reaffirmed the Lumad right to their distinct culture and the right to their ancestral lands; Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). *In 2008, the plight of the Subanen struggling against the encroachment of a big Canadian mining company into their ancestral land caught the attention of the UN Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD). CERD sent the Philippine government a strong-worded statement calling to attention the government's international commitment and the need to respect the Subanen's right to their ancestral domain (Masinaring, 2011); and Indigenous and Tribal People's Convention (ILO Convention 169).*

The Philippines in partnership with international agencies keep on crafting policies and programs for the marginalized people such as the

Philippines Development Plan for Women (PDPW) (1989-1992), Philippine Plan for Gender-Responsive Development (PPGD) (1995-2025), Framework Plan for Women (FPW) (2004-2010), and Women's Empowerment Development and Gender Equality Plan (WEDGE) (2013-2016). The WEDGE pursued the realization of the country's commitment to international conventions and agreements such as the Beijing Platform for Actions (BPIA) and Millennium Development Goals (MDG).

The Philippines is recognized as an active signatory of all these conventions. It put up an agency that would check and monitor the implementation of IPRA (Indigenous People's Right Act) through the creation of NCIP (National Commission on Indigenous People)/ R.A. 8731. The establishment of National (NCIP) has helped integrate into the political and social mainstream of the society, fostering the tribes' distinct cultural identity. Together with these agencies are laws that foster gender equality such as MCW, Anti-VAWC Law, Anti-Rape Law, Law that provide for Day-Care Center and Breastfeeding Facilities, Anti-Trafficking Law, Solo Parents Welfare Act, and the IPRA.

#### 4 Conclusion

Industrialization is the foundation of development. It is the ultimate aim of every nation. The fast pace of industrialization echoed in our country reaching even to its Southernmost region, Zamboanga Peninsula. Recently, the government has been eyeing the Zamboanga Peninsula as the prime location of the major logging and mining activities for the country. As a consequence, various mining sites for coal are open in Sibugay and some gold mines are open in Siocon and Bayog. Fishing and canning industries have been mushrooming in Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboanga City. Aside from these, other industries are thriving in the Peninsula which thrilled its people.

Unfortunately, not all the people of the Zamboanga Peninsula are eager for the said development because every aspiration for development has a trade-off. The Subanen was indeed the opportunity cost of the attempt to industrialize the Zamboanga Peninsula. That is why the Subanen has still a cynical world view about industrialization because industrialization has alienated the Subanen due to the following concerns and challenges: *environment-related, economic-related, and peace and order-related*.

The Subanen's habitats are the source of their needs, medicine, healing, comfort, security, and survival. Their lands are also the burial sites and sacred spaces of their forefathers. Consequently, the destruction of their environment implies decadence of their well-being. Their environments are the key to keep their values, practices, and traditions intact. Economically, the presence of outsiders inflicted hardship on their primary means of living. They unjustly lose their lands and incur more competitors in production. Similarly, the new system like privatization, individual ownership, mass production, and mono-cropping exposed them to another challenge like stunted production and several other risks like abuse from capitalist farmers and businessmen.

Moreover, the peace and order condition poses another challenge to the Subanen as industrialization took place. The government facilitated the entry of logging and mining companies through R. A. 7942 which open the Philippines' mineral resources to full control of foreign companies. Any resistance and aggression were curtailed through militarization. The militarization inflicted innumerable forms of abuse and violence among the Indigenous People. The encroachment of the outlander was viewed indirectly as state-sponsored. Yet, the state failed to protect the Subanen from the exploitation of some capitalists in their

land. When the indigenous communities come up with successful community projects, they are often suspected by the military as having been receiving help from the NPA, armed wing of the leftist, National Democratic Front (NDF). As cited in this paper, more killings and violence happen as an upshot of land conflict in mining.

Putting into consideration these three aspects, it could be inferred that violence and abuses are experienced by the Subanen due to industrialization, particularly the aspect of the environment, economy, and peace and order. As long as these challenges will never be addressed, any attempts for development are bound to fail because the Lumad's will be more assertive of their rights. Violence may prevent indigenous people from realizing their potential as active members of society and may hinder carrying on the transition of knowledge, cultures, identities, and language of their ancestors. Hence, addressing violence against the indigenous people is vital to the fulfillment of their rights and self-determination.

The Philippine government is more sensitive and responsive to the needs of the indigenous people. As a matter of fact, in its effort to integrate and empower the Indigenous people, it created the IPRA (Indigenous People's Rights Act). It provided the legal instruments that include indigenous people's right to ancestral domain, self-governance and empowerment, social justice, human rights, and cultural integrity. Despite, the willingness and active involvement of the Philippines in integrating the Indigenous People into the system of the majority population, still there are challenges and still lagged behind in terms of development. Hence, it is imperative for this paper to recommend more in-depth researches to help legislators and the government in addressing issues with the Subanen. In addition, wide awareness and sensitivity should be observed among the other settlers and the local government of the Peninsula in order not to alienate the social and cultural norms of the Subanen. Lastly, laws for the Indigenous people should be deputized sincerely so as to appease their aggressions and to make them feel that they constitute an important part in carving the identity of the Zamboanga Peninsula.

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