



Filipino youth-led place-based geoducation through knowledge sharing between young professionals and residents : the Nomad Projects OpenEdu workshops

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What started as an idea to incorporate geoducation in community art practices evolved into youth-led educational workshops that integrated scientific and local knowledge to understand the physical, social, and cultural aspects of a landscape. The Nomad Projects are community art initiatives in the Philippines that explore the relationship of communities with their landscape through artistic practices and dialogue.

In 2023, The Nomad Projects launched the OpenEdu workshops which invites young professionals (artists, musicians, scientists, etc.) to share their expertise and knowledge relevant to the areas where partner communities reside. These workshops aimed to bring information about the landscape that may not be easily accessible to these communities that reside in them. However, due to the grassroots and participatory nature of these projects, the workshops evolved into a “pot-luck” style knowledge sharing where all participants share knowledge through dialogue. Young professionals with diverse backgrounds, from the humanities to the sciences, shared their expertise and also introduced scientific instruments while residents shared their experiences and their own understanding of their landscape. These workshops became a unique ‘format’ of geoducation that integrates scientific theories and local knowledge for a holistic understanding of the landscape. These workshops also served as avenues to discuss landscape-related social issues such as landscape modification (i.e. dam-building, reclamation), sea level rise, and geohazards. These discussions strengthened calls for social justice, especially for these vulnerable communities that bear the brunt of irresponsible anthropogenic landscape modifications and climate change. Here we share best practices and reflections of two OpenEdu workshops : “Landscape as Classrooms” and “Wetlands as Classrooms”.

Landscape as Classrooms was a small group-conversation facilitated by a geoscientist attended by young professionals like artists, academics and members of the Dumagat Remontado indigenous group. It was held outdoors with the participants sitting in a circle on a gravel bar at the Tinipak River. This allowed the discussion on river processes and river morphology where participants can see the actual landforms being discussed around them. This is one of the first ‘formal’ introductions of the geodiversity concept outside the Philippine academe. Geoheritage value of

the area was recognized from the rare occurrence of a bedrock channel as well as the importance of the river's geosystem services to the indigenous population that reside there.

"Wetlands as Classrooms" included a bigger audience of community members of Sitio Apugan, a hamlet in the Pampanga delta at the coast of Manila Bay. This hamlet has experienced landscape changes through sea-level rise that are documented in the residents' memories of their area. Presently, this hamlet is perpetually flooded and is one of the "sinking" villages in the Philippine coasts. The workshop was also facilitated by geoscientists and included discussions on delta morphologies, watersheds, groundwater, subsidence, and sea-level rise.

We present our experiences and reflections of organising, facilitating, and participating in these workshops to show examples of youth-led initiatives outside the traditional "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches to geoeducation, where knowledge is shared by and for the participants through meaningful exchanges.