

Editorial Preface

Our journal's increasing influence has been reaffirmed once again, as we have achieved a Q2 (second quartile) ranking, placing us in the top 25% of the most influential multidisciplinary journals worldwide, based on the latest Scopus data used for the 2024 Scimago Journal and Country Rank (SJR) rankings as of March 2025. Within the same subject category, SPJRD claims the top spot in the Philippines while ranking third across all subject areas. It further attests to the scientific rigor of our publishing articles since 2021. In the SPJRD Vol. 30, No. 2, we continue this commitment by featuring critical engagements about the Mindanao and ASEAN regions, conducted by researchers from Indonesia, Oman, Iraq, Portugal, Malaysia, the United Arab Emirates, Japan, Pakistan, Thailand, the United States of America, and the Philippines.

The September 2025 issue opens with three education-related articles that employ mixed-methods approaches. In [Adapting Early Childhood Curriculum to Technology: Insights from South Sulawesi, Indonesia](#), Herlina, from Universitas Negeri Makassar in Indonesia, provides actionable insights for creating adaptable, technology-responsive curricula and advocates for ongoing investment in professional development and infrastructure in developing contexts. In [AI-powered Personalization for Learning and Human-Robot Interaction: A Case Study with Pre-Service Teachers from Indonesia](#), Ahmad Al Yakin and Mutmainnah Mutmainnah of Universitas Al Asyariah Mandar in Indonesia, Luis Cardoso of the University of Lisbon in Portugal, Ali Said Al Matari of the A'Sharqiyah University in Oman, and Ahmed J. Obaid of the University of Kufa in Iraq highlight the effectiveness of AI tools in fostering meaningful collaboration, offering insights for future policy and curriculum development in technologically emergent regions. In [Child-friendly Learning Spaces in the Alternative Learning System \(ALS\): Focus on Northern Mindanao, Philippines](#), Ray Butch D. Mahinay of the City College of Cagayan de Oro, Philippines, Edralin C. Manla of the Xavier University of the Ateneo de Cagayan in Cagayan de Oro City, Philippines, Nancy S. Ramores of the Philippine Normal University in Manila, and Amparo V. Dinagsao of the Heritage University in Toppenish, Washington, United States of America examine how ALS Community Learning Centers (CLCs) in the region align with UNICEF's Child-Friendly School (CFS) framework. Their pioneering study represents the first integration of the CFS framework into ALS research in the Philippines, contributing regional evidence on sustainable, rights-based education systems and offering a contextual model for adapting child-friendly principles to second-chance learning in Southeast Asia.

Moving on to social issues, the next research articles bring us to the struggles and hopes of the people of Mindanao and Sulu. In [Buried Memories, Imagined Wealth: Yamashita Treasure as Collective Memory in Everyday Life in Mindanao](#) by Fumiko Murota of Kyoto University in Japan, the author scrutinizes the contemporary meanings embedded in the continued narratives of the Yamashita Treasure, particularly through the lens of "remembering and forgetting" war memories. Murota believes that while the treasure's existence remains uncertain, its imagined presence generates a sense of possibility—a hope for future prosperity grounded in a painful past. In [Hula-Bangsa-Agama as Padduman: Reclaiming the Tausug Doctrine of Statehood and Islamic Political Identity](#), Hannibal H. Bara and Nagder J. Abdurahman of the Mindanao State University in Sulu articulate how Islamic governance can be understood through localized epistemologies, thereby contributing to broader discourse on decolonization, Islamic political thought, and Southeast Asian indigenous sovereignty.

Enlarging our consciousness on language and culture are the next four research articles in this edition. In [Expressions of Reassurance in the Quran: A Speech Act Analysis](#), Hekmat Abed Daifallah Khazaleh of the National Charity Schools, United Arab Emirates, and his co-authors from Universiti Malaya study the Quran's sophisticated use of speech acts to provide divine and prophetic support, offering insights into the pragmatic dimensions of religious discourse. In [The Language of Praise and Worship: A Corpus Analysis of Register Variation in Christian Songs](#), Raymund T. Palayon of the King Mongkut's Institute of Technology in Thailand, and Irish F. Dalona of the Mindanao State University- Iligan Institute of Technology investigate the key linguistic features in the two sets of Christian songs—church hymns and contemporary Christian songs—to illustrate their register variation, using multidimensional analysis, key semantic tag analysis, and

key part-of-speech analysis. Their study provides a framework for characterizing the linguistic features of worship songs from non-Christian contexts, enabling future research to compare religious music across different traditions. In *Language Encounters in Public Parks: Mapping the Linguistic Landscape of Davao City, Philippines*, Prizza Mia Pil and her counterparts from the University of Southeastern Philippines (USEP), Mindanao State University in General Santos City, Philippines, and Government Arts and Commerce College Larkano in Larkana, Pakistan point out how signs serve both regulatory and identity functions in public spaces, thus recommending the inclusivity of signage policies that enhance cultural representation, particularly of indigenous languages. Their paper contributes to the understanding of the role of multilingualism in public spaces, identity, and accessibility. In *An Archival Study on the Linguistic State of Obo Manobo and Kinamiging Manobo*, Mae-Ann Gasing of USEP and Mohammad Ali Al-Saggaf of Xiamen University Malaysia in Selangor, Malaysia, find out that Obo Manobo is relatively well-documented while Kinamiging Manobo is under-researched. They highly recommend that future researchers investigate the current use and vitality of two threatened Manobo languages spoken in Mindanao, the documentation of oral literature, and the regional variations of Obo Manobo and Kinamiging Manobo to document and map dialectal differences, if any.

The last research article in this issue, *Antimicrobial Activity of Uvaria rufa (Annonaceae) Leaf Extracts*, deals with the potential antimicrobial activity of *Susong kalabaw* (*Uvaria rufa*), which usually grows abundantly in the tropics of Africa and Asia, particularly in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, and in low and medium-altitude forests in the Philippines. Lawrence R. Delgado, Rane Angelica G. Alarcon, Kyla Shane C. Aldea, Trisha Anne B. Samaniego of the Adamson University in Manila, Philippines, and their co-investigators from the University of Texas School of Public Health in USA and University of the Philippines Manila conclude that crude and fractionated leaf extracts of *U. rufa* demonstrated promising antibacterial activity against bacterial samples in the Kirby-Bauer test and Minimum Inhibitory Concentration (MIC) assay. Their findings highlight the potential of *susong kalabaw* as a locally available plant that may one day be developed into affordable natural remedies for common infections, especially valuable in communities facing limited access to conventional medicine.

This issue closes with three reviews of books on indigenous cultural communities in Mindanao and Sulu. Aurelio S. Agcaoili of the University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA, explicates the plausibility and intellectual strength of the book *Indigenous Knowledge Systems and Practices on Disaster Risk Reduction and Management of Selected IP Groups in the Davao Region*, published by USEP, and suggests broader integration of indigenous voices in policymaking and future research directions (e.g., generational participation, gendered impacts of disasters). Nikodemus Niko of Chulalongkorn University in Thailand acknowledges the book *Kapandayan: A Journey to the Wisdom of Selected IP Groups in the Davao Region* as both a cultural archive and a tool for advocacy. In discussing this USEP-published book, Niko offers potential pathways such as conducting comparative studies among indigenous groups in Mindanao, the Sulu Archipelago, and Palawan, and integrating indigenous epistemologies into the national curriculum to enhance academic contribution. Ricardo de Ungria of the University of the Philippines Mindanao critically assesses the three anthologies under Gutierrez Mangansakan II by connecting to the political and cultural realities of the Bangsamoro. He stresses that these three anthologies are laying the foundations for an invigorated modern Moro literature in the next few years—one that is not only forward-looking but also rooted in the older traditions whose blood and barakah continue to flow into the new generations of creatives.

Critiqued by our international advisers and reviewers, we hope that this edition's conversations, based on a rigorous examination of various issues, will spur research and extension projects, as well as policy formulation, for the development of Mindanao and the ASEAN regions.

Sajed S. Ingilan
SPJRD Editor-in-Chief