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From Taboo to Trend: The Evolving Role of Filipino Swear Words in Everyday Expression

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Abstract	The study explored the dynamic and shifting nature of swearing within Filipino culture. Through a qualitative-descriptive methodology, the researchers investigated the perceptions, contexts, and societal impacts of swear words, utilizing written interviews and convenience sampling to gather insights from participants. Findings revealed that swear words, once taboo, are increasingly normalized due to their representation in media such as television, movies, and social media platforms. Participants emphasized the duality of swear words, which can either foster camaraderie or provoke conflict, depending on the context and relationships between speakers. Media's role in shaping perceptions was evident, with respondents expressing concern over the desensitization caused by constant exposure to profanity. Emphasizing the need for media literacy programs to educate individuals, especially the youth, the study implicated the use of swear words and the importance of context in communication. It also recommended stricter regulations on the use of profanity in the media targeting younger audiences.
Keywords	swearing, taboo, context, media, communication, profanity, culture

1. Introduction

Profanity entails the application of certain words that are repellent and emotionally charged in a certain language or culture, and that may offend. These words lack politeness or decency, may provoke indignation, or be considered improper in some or any social setting (Stapleton et al., 2022). These words, also known as curse or swear words, are a particular kind of use of language which flows out from anger, frustration or even surprise and they can be single words or short phrases or even small clauses and common as interjection.

Swear words appear as one of the major factors of human communication in spoken and written language and are widely used in social network texts that are characterized by colloquial language and impulsive writing. These may be related to an abusive context and are part of hatred and of the abusive impact, which is one of hurting and offending. However, swearing is a language game, not always vulgar, and often used informally and it has positive roles in some cases (Pamungkas et al., 2023). There are more instances of people being involved in using swear words than in the pre- era where .5% to .7% of the total conversation is filled with swear words (Lafreniere et al., 2022).

There are many types of swearing which are usually used in communication. Each type of swearing has distinctive characteristics that make it different from others. Swearing words are divided into six types, namely direct swearwords which are swear words directed at other people that are racist, vulgar and insulting; next is blasphemy referring to swearing words to other people and indicating their ugliness or unwished characteristics. Besides, blasphemy has stronger qualities than swearing words. Another is cursing, which means asking for something undesirable to happen to another person while swearing is a word used to swear. Likewise, obscenity refers to sexuality and indecency and expletive, swearing words which are not said for other individuals but used to express anger or frustration. Swearing words can also be divided into four. There is expletive swearing which is used to express the swearing individuals' emotions of anger, surprise, disappointment etc. Examples of expletive swearing includes "Hell!", "Shit!" and "Goddamn!". Following this is abusive swearing, an insult, intending to call a name that is both wrong and unpleasant to a person which include the following: "Go to hell" and "You, bastard!". Another is humorous swearing that is used in a joke usually in a peer group since it is playful and not serious. An example of humorous swearing can be, for example, the phrase "get your ass in gear!" last. The last of them is auxiliary swearing, used in circumstances that do not link to any specific person or situation. An example of auxiliary swearing is "this fucking shit!" (Setyaningtias et al.,2023)

To many contexts, swearing has affirmed two forms of meanings: referential meaning and metaphorical meaning. Swearing expressions have expanded the basic bodily positions into several directions pertaining to functions or aspect, unpleasant people or circumstances, actions, sex, interior sexual invectives, profanity, blasphemy, animal-related, gender, race, ethnicity, and others. Swearing utterances are thus a personal and private phenomenon. Using vulgar language to other people is improper, reprehensible, obscene or vulgar, especially when provoked or in anger; but when it is brought to different types of listeners, different meanings or senses may be assigned to them. Swearing to others in public means that the person is likely to be in a rude, angry, obscene or profane position. On the other hand, swearing to close ones via a joke may evoke solidarity or affirm friendships. Swearing that involves utterances about internal expressions/expletives serves to amplify the messages (Jumanto & Sulistyorini, 2021). Swearing is regarded as powerful, generating a range of distinctive outcomes: physiological, cognitive, emotional, pain reducing, interactional, and rhetorical effects. For the others, slang words are used only by those individuals who fail to understand proper language, or better yet, slang words do not belong to the proper language, where the latter is held as the lay theory. Peculiarities of using taboo language reflect the culture and traditions of a particular society, beliefs of people in everyday life and emotions. 'Mura', or swearing words in Filipino context, is not just a barbaric language used freely but involves a profound element in the comprehensible speech rate of Filipinos. Secondly, the use of swear words is always relative and tends to depend on the situation at hand. Again, the use of bad language depends on the nature of the event or occasion or the existence of a close friendship between the people involved in the conversation.

Filipino swear words, which were traditionally taboo and associated with disrespect, have evolved into multifaceted expressions used for humor, emphasis, identity, and camaraderie, particularly among the youth (Cruz, 2022). This is emphasized in sociolinguistic theory with the dynamic relationship between language and its social functions, focusing on how linguistic forms such as swearing convey meaning within particular social groups. In this view, swearing is not merely impolite language but a powerful social act that encodes community norms, emotional states, and cultural identities. The cultural value, especially the concepts of *hiya* (shame) and *pakikisama* (social harmony), influences how the various expressions are perceived by people. A term such as *buang* (crazy) which would have been jokingly used by Bisaya might be considered very objectionable by Ilonggo, particularly, in formality. Such local variability of the application of social-pragmatic principles is also marked by the fact that in the Waray language, blunt use even in a

social situation, regardless of the word used, is associated with reduced social sanctions on the speaker (Domingo & Jereza, 2020). Having knowledge with this matter is important for any person who wants to get to know the nuances of communication in the Philippines. Because of the increase of language use through modernization, cursing is not so different from the Filipino culture nowadays.

There are usually common lexical items in the idioms and fixed expressions although there is a greater difference in their application and comprehension. As an example, *Wala?y klaro* in Cebuano, which means unclear or indecisive, is found in Waray too (*Waray klaro*), and Ilonggo (*Indi klaro*). However, unlike in Bisaya, where the phrase can be applied as a straight criticism, the Ilonggos are more polite or euphemistic in their use of the phrase, which is a cultural trait of avoiding conflicts and saving face (Malinao, 2023). Even though some similar phrases are frequently used by the speaker of Bisaya, Waray, and Ilonggo, the spirit of interpretation, emotional content as well as acceptability of a phrase in the context varies significantly. Such differences are indicative of the vibrant sociolinguistic nature of the Visayas and they help accentuate the need to consider language in a cultural context. Since the identities that are regional in nature are constantly being transformed (particularly because of the reach of digital media) the study and preservation of these localized manifestations and their significances has become ever more vital.

Filipinos also consider swearing to be strong ways of showing feeling. They allow the speakers to put into words emotions which otherwise can be conveyed only by the use of standard language. As such, they are used to facilitate an important function which encompasses issues to do with interpersonal communication and social interaction. The use of foul language by Filipinos might have been before or after colonization as most of the Filipino bad words are directly translated versions of the English insults. Others are a combination of Spanish and Filipino languages. Most of these terms have their origin in Spanish as a result of more than three centuries of Spanish occupation. For example, the term "putang ina," literally means "from the Spanish origin of the word "puta" – whore and"ina " meaning"mother ". Others include ''punyeta'' ''leche'' ''cono'' and ''pendejo''. This is observed in the Cultural Schema Theory that asserts that people derive their material and mental comprehension and ability to utilize a language based on communal cultural information (Sharifian, 2020). The Tagalog curse words have deep rooted cultural schemas like the emotional salience, social significance and perceived permissibility of the same. It does not only refer to terms such as *gago, putang ina*, or *ulol* as an act of anger, but it has a historical, moral, and even a topical undertone. Nevertheless, new generations tend to redefine them and use even such words as non-expressive manifestations of humor, accentuation, or emotional discharge (Panganiban & Bernardo, 2020).

Swearing can be used when one is angry, frustrated or when one is happy, excited or simply when celebrating together with friends. For instance, phrases such as "putang ina, ang saya ko!" F*ck yeah, I am happy! The examples show that the said expressions do not always mean negative. This duality did not only highlight how feelings were managed and contained within the Filipino culture but also how they can be curved on the same culture. Swearing operates as a mature self-defense mechanism, aiding in stress management and emotional catharsis—comparable to expressive writing or adaptive humor (Husain et al., 2023). This viewed the positive effects of profanity similar to the role of self-defense mechanisms in releasing psychological distress. It could be gleaned that usage of curse words can depend on the person saying it and, on the context, where it is being used.

The generational differences in values are also focusing on the youth. The older generations can see swear words as the antagonization of social rules, whereas younger Filipinos can creatively employ the swear words to break the rules, otherwise to assert their identity or satirize the expectations of the society. This generational gap provides an insight into the varying nature of Filipino values but that the values are dynamic and adaptive to social change especially in the digitalized world. Besides, this paper captures how swearing increases in the social media spheres where the use of swearing is no longer connected to the aggressive context, and, on the contrary, gains a humorous note or is playful, ironic, or performative. This adds to the knowledge in how digital spaces revise the lines of linguistic categories and overturns political taboos particularly in societies such as the Philippines that unites the structural lines of both traditional and postmodern values systems.

Swearing has evolved as a flexible and natural language usage among the Filipino youth group and has in most cases become common in communication, chat activities, and popular culture allusions. This trend has been made faster by the emergence of social media concepts like Tik Tok, Twitter (X), and Facebook. Adopting a mixed language helps young people to demonstrate both cultural hybridity and group identity by mixing English, Tagalog, and local dialects, e.g. "*She so buang na gyud, promise*" (Ramos & Garcia, 2021).

Young Filipinos also engage in swearing which is a generational resistance and formation of identity. The usage of taboo can be a revenge against older people, teachers or religious authority in a small scale. In online communities, these are frequently re-used humorously, sarcastically or as meme, reducing their apparent offensiveness. An example is that it is possible to say *putang ina* not to offend but in an exaggerated sense when referring to some meme or TikTok skit (Bajo & Montejo, 2020). In and out of the classroom, children, adolescents and learners of different ages and social contexts draw on words or affirm to establish the reasons age brought about by modernization, swearing has evolved, making it practically an integral part of Filipino culture. Even within the school's walls, students of various ages and social backgrounds frequently utilize words or swear words to determine the causes and examine the consequences of Filipinos' verbal cursing. Looking forward to the behavior may be possible in schools that are also addressing the moral issues of their students. In addition, it presents a conception of its distinctiveness that is comprehensible for all ages, clear and ideal, easily comprehensible by society.

Hence, this study sought to find out whether the respondents believe that the Filipino abusive words are becoming more acceptable in the society. Specifically, it aimed to determine the Filipinos' general attitude and experience towards swearing; the ways Filipino swear words were employed and differ across different social or generational contexts and how media affected the experience and perception within Filipino society regarding improper use of words.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A qualitative-descriptive research design was used in the study to better understand how Filipino swear words are seen and utilized in daily conversation. Bradshaw et al. (2020) noted that qualitative descriptive research aims to describe a phenomenon or experience in a straightforward and minimally interpreted way, staying close to participants' actual words and perspectives. This approach was suitable since it emphasizes the exploration of meanings, experiences, and viewpoints wherein the study gathered detailed, descriptive data by employing open-ended written interviews, which let participants share their opinions in their own words.

2.2 Locale of the Study

Convenience sampling was used to select the participants based on their availability and accessibility, with an emphasis on those who are aware of the changing function of Filipino profanity. There were ten respondents ages from 15-40 years old, seven are female and three are male, which majority of them are Senior High School students while some are college students and educators. As the data collection was done online using Google Forms, the locality is not a single physical location but rather a virtual one.

2.3 Instrumentation

A Google Forms-created written interview questionnaire served as the primary research tool. Open-ended questions in this tool were intended to entice participants to provide in-depth, thoughtful accounts of how they use and interpret Filipino profanity. The approach gave participants flexibility in articulating their experiences and views while allowing them to write freely and without time constraints.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedure

To collect data, participants who were identified and satisfied with the inclusion requirements received the Google Form link. Before answering the questions, respondents acquired information on informed consent and instructions. Convenient participation and response submission were made possible by the online format. Responses were automatically saved in the researchers Google account for systematic retrieval and analysis after the forms were filled out.

2.5 Data Analysis

The qualitative data collected was analyzed using the thematic analysis that allowed a flexible and rigorous review of the recurrent patterns of meaning in the qualitative data. Aligned with qualitative descriptive model, it enabled the researchers to remain close to the discourse of participants and especially applicable to the study of the use of swear words- which are emotionally and culturally sensitive- since it did not interfere with how, statements produced by the

participants would have liked to frame and sense make around the language behaviors. All responses were carefully examined, recurrent ideas or phrases were coded, codes were categorized, and then broader themes reflecting patterns in participants' perceptions and usage of profanity were identified.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

Ethical measures were carefully reflected since swearing and taboo language can be sensitive and even stigmatizing; thus, many considerations were taken to ensure the safety of participants and the right to their dignity and well-being.

Anonymity of Respondents

The questionnaire was arranged in such a way that no names, addresses, or other contact information is required (e.g., names, addresses, or contact information). They were also advised not to use their real names and other identification aspects in their responses.

Response Confidentiality

The answers were treated as confidential. No raw data was used to be shared with the third parties. Anonymized quotations were recorded only in the presentation of findings, an aspect in which language was changed further as an identification concealer without affecting the meaning.

Right to Participate Voluntarily and Withdraw

Answering the research was voluntary. The participants were made to understand that they could either skip a question they were not comfortable with or leave the form at any time without explanation or penalty. This contributed to the minimization of the sense of coercion and genuine answers. This would reduce harm and emotional safety. Since a few questions in the survey touching upon personal experiences of using swear words may be considered as emotional disturbance and arousing a negative memory, it was asked to the respondents not to answer any question. All the prompts were presented in a respectful neutral tone.

Respect and Cultural Sensitivity

The researchers were also very keen not to judge, but use the right, acceptable cultural lingo, as the meaning of swearing can be varied among societies. This aided in making sure that the participants did not have the feeling that their view was being pathologized.

The Purpose and Use of Data Transparency

The participants were explained on the definite scholarly intention of the study; they were also explained how responses will be processed and reported. It was made clear that data collected would not be exploited on either a commercial basis or shared publicly; it will only be utilized on both educational and research-based matters.

3. Results and Discussion

The outcome of this study reflected the central theme of the research: the transformation of Filipino swears words from socially taboo expressions into increasingly common tools of communication. Swearing has changed from being purely offensive to becoming a subtle component of everyday language as Filipino society negotiates shifting cultural landscapes impacted by generational differences, emotional expressiveness, and media exposure.

This section presents the perspectives of respondents on three key areas that align with the research problem:

3.1 Respondents' Perspectives on:

3.1.1 Filipinos' attitude towards swearing

The insights gathered from participants' responses indicate that the acceptability of Filipino swear words is highly contextual, influenced by emotional expression, cultural norms, and personal relationships. While they can serve as a means of emotional release, their use is often scrutinized based on the audience and situation. Participants provided examples illustrating that swearing can be acceptable among friends but is generally inappropriate in formal or sensitive contexts.

The results also emphasize how important it is to consider context, purposes, emotions, and paralinguistic cues when seeking to understand swear words since it possesses varying meanings depending on these aspects highlighting the

complexity and nuance inherent in its usage (Indiola et al., 2024). People may truly comprehend the complex nature of swear words by delving deeper into the multifaceted nature of swear words. Swearing is subject to social judgements and ideologies. These often draw on ideas of appropriateness for different groups of speakers, which, in turn, reflect folk linguistic beliefs about social groups and linguistic behavior. Thus, swearing is typically associated with men rather than women; with lower socio-economic groupings; and with younger speakers. The utterance of swearing words is used to help parents release their feelings prior to certain events. (Agol et al. 2023). Besides, high schoolers revealing emotional triggers (e.g. anger), peer and community influences, and calls for "No Bad Words" policies—supportive of emphasis on media literacy and regulation (Entegro, 2019).

The findings of this study implies that Filipino swear words are no longer viewed solely as taboo but are increasingly becoming part of everyday language, particularly among younger generations and in informal contexts. This change reflects a larger societal shift brought about by changing media exposure, social conventions, and emotional expressiveness. One significant aspect is the increasing necessity of contextual awareness in communication, which highlights how much the relationship between speakers, the environment, and the emotional tone all influence how acceptable swearing is. This emphasizes how essential it is to educate communication sensitivity, particularly in academic and professional settings. This change is indicative of a larger societal shift brought about by changing social norms, media exposure, and emotional expressiveness.

Furthermore, cursing seems to be normalized by the media, particularly social media and popular entertainment, which can conflate the lines between speech that is considered rude and speech that is considered acceptable. Generations of today usually follow social media influencers which normalize cursing. Concerns are raised by this tendency regarding young people's emotional development, language acquisition, and possible desensitization to offensive language. It is then a necessity to advocate increased critical participation and media literacy, particularly among younger people. The use of swear words as tools for emotional release, humor, or social bonding reveals their complex role in human interaction. Rather than dismissing swearing as purely negative, this study shows the need for a more nuanced understanding of language behavior in Filipino society—one that considers both its expressive value and its potential for harm.

3.1.2 Contexts where Filipino use swear words

Swearing is regarded as a way of conveying thoughts and ideas. A person will utter bad words if a person notices something new or beautiful which is interesting to see. *Example: oh my god that building is way too awesome!* The following is swearing is a way of conveying insult or humiliation. A person will use prohibited words to demonstrate outrage or anger. People use these words to offend other people because the person feels offended by their disposition or physique. It could also be something like bad taste in food*. Example: bitch, don't do that!* The last is swearing is a way to characterize the state of intimacy in the relationship. Sometimes one of the two people will use vulgar language to 'express affection'. Most often, speaking to friends, who have been in a romantic status for a dive and have no desire to offend other people, insulting and humiliating them. *Example: hello, shike miss… where would you like to go!?* Like in President Duterte's speeches showing how profanity was used rhetorically to foster vernacular identity, assert outsider authority, and evoke populist solidarity—demonstrating powerful media influence on societal acceptance of swearing (Montiel et al., 2022). Thus, swear words are used when someone feels stressed or angry, e.g. the common scenarios include standstill traffic, verbal or physical confrontation. They are applied to vent emotions and to stressful feelings. It can also be used to attack opponents during a conflict or an argument, suggesting a given behavioral disposition in stress situations.

These words can be seen in social contexts as a form of an affectionate language, that people use to joke with each other and even tease each other. As for the language, the evidence most of the time, especially of the participants with games like Mobile Legends, says swear words towards their team members due to high pressure in competitions. Swear words are not uniformly acceptable and this feedback suggests that the need to consider contextual factors between the speakers. For instance, if one is talking with friends, it might be acceptable and if talking to an unknown person, it is not acceptable. The emergence of social media and online platforms have also altered the scenery of swearing in the Philippines. The Internet, particularly among the youths, promotes lax use of obscenities that are open, more common, and less monitored. Viral, Hashtags, memes, and even swearing in the colloquial form are more likely to add up to the normalization of the curse words and shield them with the shock effect (Tolentino & Reyes, 2021). But this also brings an ethical issue of how easily impressionable audiences internalize the language which was once thought to be inappropriate.

3.1.3 Impact of Media Use of Swear Words in Filipino Society

Swearing is not only prevalent and exists in television shows and films but also in the making and behind-the-scenes of these shows where the production takes place. Using swearing in the media has a negative implication in that it makes it fashionable and acceptable due to repetitive use. This change is even more worrying for younger audiences because such words may become part of their language along with never really knowing what they mean. Anytime actors and actresses in films or shows use substandard language, especially swearing, and get away with it, they tend to bring that culture into real life situations. There are, however, still areas of society, or specifically media particularly the mainstream media where the use of profanity is still frowned up and as such there is this divide in public opinion. Filipino users deploy profanity on Facebook and Instagram such as catharsis, social bonding, and rule-breaking— supporting your findings on informal, humor-driven profanity that violates traditional politeness norms (Mejia & Ngo 2024). Indigenous Filipino youth identify cuss words as identity markers, emotional outlets, and borrowed expressions, reflecting their contextual duality—solidarity vs. conflict—and the emotional desensitization triggered by frequent exposure (Domingo, et al., 2022).

In addition, digital culture and social media are significant causes of the normalization of swearing among young people in that they copy and acculturate into their unique linguistic toolbox (Tarrayo & Duque, 2021). These exposures redefine what is considered as being offensive or playful and make social disrespect less related to swearing as much as it is to digital self-expression. Such language is socially coded in peer groups, especially in studies of people who speak Tagalog, Bisaya, Ilonggo, or Waray, in which it creates a sense of in-group familiarity with others of the same generation and social distance with older, more conservative generations (Medina, 2020). Among peers and especially females who use Tagalog, Bisaya, Ilonggo, or Waray, this language is coded to acquire social meaning that helps to create in-group familiarity and distinguish between them and more conservative (old) generations (Medina, 2020). The Filipino youth nowadays are influencing as well as enforcing the social meaning of swear words. They do not obey linguistic evolution but are actors of a more complicated negotiation concerning values, identity and expression in the fast-evolving digital and cultural world.

TikTok, Facebook, and Instagram, among other platforms engage children and young individuals with these words and sadly, many use and promote them without consideration of the emotions of other people. Due to their social influence, media can make criticisms become natural integrated phrases when used in comedies, dramas, films, television shows and many more, or in songs. It also results in the use of such terms as, for example T** ina or Ggo in cases where one is complaining or expressing surprise using those terms previously considered vulgar. While some call it art, that is a problem for others because it is vulgar, this illustrates the disconnection between the culture and the new trend. In any case, the way swear words are presented in the media can determine the perception of people in society, asking whether some words of utterance are derogatory in any way or are merely parts of developing linguistic trends.

5. Conclusion

Shifted from being part of the laymen's language, swearing has become a part of television programs, movies, and social media apps including Facebook, TikTok and Instagram. These portrayals put forward help swell the acceptability of swear words and their usage becomes more permissible, particularly in young people's groups. Some people believe that this is simply a continuation of language development and variability as well as creativity. Others, however, believe that this is the deviation from the norms of the culture that they possess. Swearing, thus, depends on the kind of context that it will be used in. Responses from participants suggest that swear words are often acceptable in casual, friendly interactions but remain taboo in formal or sensitive settings. However, repeated exposure to profanity in the media can desensitize individuals, diminishing their awareness of the potential emotional or social impact of these words. These findings raise awareness defining swearing goes beyond the simple understanding of how and why people use it depending on what mood, in what situation and following which culture. Thus, young people should know the effects of using foul language and the value of lawful approach to communication. The recommendations of this study are to implement word usage in schools to educate students on the impact of media in their vocabulary and general use of language and to encourage parents to monitor what media their children watch and listen to and to discuss when and where it is appropriate to use the wrong word. Adults should also advocate for better restrictions on words in media that freely use bad words in the media, especially to young viewers. Also, for indigenous context, tribe leaders can organize meetings where community members are able to address a significant role in determining the appropriateness of swearing aligned with their culture and traditions.

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TABLES

Table 1 presents the Filipinos' attitude towards swearing perceived by the participants. It reveals that swearing may be regarded as a form of offence, and it can contribute to difficulties in communication and even to the development of tension in a certain situation.

Table 1. Filipinos' attitude towards swearing

Key Findings	*Participant Response/Narrative Input*
Swearing can be offensive depending on context and audience	"Ang paggamit ng mga salitang mura sa araw-araw na usapan ay maaaring katanggap-tanggap o nakakasakit, depende sa konteksto."
Excessive swearing is seen as unacceptable in communication	"Filipinos are well known to be respectful. I am saddened about how time or evolution change such a personality. Swear words being normalized these days are so disappointing, instead of saying respectful words such as 'po' and 'opo' people are using bad words. We cannot forbid saying those words because yeah it depends on the situation/context."
Swear words can cause misunderstandings and tension in conversations	"Hindi ako komportable, lalo na sa mga salitang nagdadala ng mabigat na kahulugan. Katulad na lamang ang salitang putang-ina na nangangahulugang anak ng puta na madalas nating marinig sa mga taong nakapaligid sa atin. Ang mga ito ay maaaring magdulot ng hindi pagkakaintindihan at tensyon sa usapan. - Nakakasakit ito dahil labag ito sa moralidad ng tao."
Swear words can cause misunderstandings and tension, especially when meanings are heavy	"Hindi ako komportable, lalo na sa mga salitang nagdadala ng mabigat na kahulugan. Katulad na lamang ang salitang putang-ina... Ang mga ito ay maaaring magdulot ng hindi pagkakaintindihan at tensyon sa usapan. - Nakakasakit ito dahil labag ito sa moralidad ng tao." (duplicate idea for emphasis)
Excessive use of swear words can be offensive, showing a need for moderation	"I find using Filipino swear words acceptable in certain contexts, as they can serve as a powerful means of emotional expression... But sometimes the use of excessive swear words can be offensive in my opinion."
Acceptability of swear words depends on speaker relationship; context matters	"In my case, it depends on who you are talking to. If you're talking to your close friends then it might be acceptable if it is not below the belt, but if you're talking to a person who's not close to you then that is not acceptable."

Table 2 shows the use of wear words by Filipinos in different contexts. It presents that swearing can fulfill several purposes, such as relieving stress, anger or provocation in conflict situations, humor and friendship building with friends, and anger release in online games.

Table 2. Contexts where Filipino use swear words

Key Findings	*Participant Response/Narrative Input*
Swearing as a stress-relief mechanism during frustration or anger	"Situations where Filipino swear words are commonly used is when expressing Frustration or Anger. For example, when people are irritated by something or someone like traffic jams, mistakes, arguments. The purpose is to release pent-up emotions and emphasize their feelings. Swearing can act as a verbal stress-relief mechanism."
Swearing during conflicts to provoke or insult opponents	"People use it most of the time during a fight/argument. To offend, annoy, insult, infuriate, and provoke their opponent, they use swear words. Out of excitement, sadness, anger, happiness, and amazement people can use them also."
Swearing as a form of humor or bonding among friends (love language)	"If a group of friends use these words as a joke to one another then their purpose is to make fun of each other in a way that they use it as they love language towards each other."
Swearing in online gaming due to frustration with teammates	"Madalas ginagamit ang mga salitang mura sa mga sitwasyung puno ng tension. Katulad na lamang sa mga online games... karamihan sa mga manlalaro ay pinagmumura ang mga kakampi... Ang layunin nito ay upang mailabas o maipaalam sa kasama ang 'frustration' na naramdaman nito."

Table 3 reveals how media influence the Filipinos in use of swear words. This shows that media plays a vital role in conditioning audience behaviors, particularly among children and young people by desensitizing norms against swearing by showing it as moderately funny and normal, without serious repercussions and crossing taboo lines on multiple media channels.

Table 3. Impact of Media Use of Swear Words in Filipino Society

Key Findings	*Participant Response/Narrative Input*
Media's influence on children and impressionable audiences	"Media serves as a powerful method to influence people. The usage of swear words in the Philippine media is very inappropriate especially because of the high number of Filipino children who are using social media... It is not a good role model not only for them but for all people that interact online."
Social media normalizes swearing among youth	"Nagdudulot ito ng hindi maganda lalo na sa mga kabataang gumagamit na ng mga social media platforms katulad ng TikTok, Facebook, Instagram... parang tinuturing ng kultura ang mga Pilipino ang paggamit ng mga degoratoryong salita at hindi na iniisip ang mararamdaman ng taong pagsasabihan nito."
Frequent exposure in entertainment makes swearing feel acceptable	"Constant exposure to swear words in movies, TV shows, and music has made it seem normal to use Filipino swear words. What once felt shocking now seems more acceptable... phrases like 'T** ina' or 'Ggo' are now more frequently used to express frustration or surprise, as media representation makes them feel like natural parts of language."
Media's portrayal of swearing as humor affects public perception	"People might perceive it the wrong way, rather than take it as a joke. But it depends on how people use and view them in real life."
Swearing remains taboo in mainstream media, but more accepted in indie films	"The use of swear words are still considered taboo in mass media, however, in indie films... most Filipinos still look down upon people who swear."
Media shapes audience behavior by presenting swearing as normal and consequence-free	"Ang representasyon ng mga salitang mura sa media ay maaaring makaapekto sa pananaw at paggamit ng mga tao... Kung ang isang pelikula o teleserye ay nagpapakita ng karakter na gumagamit ng pagmumura nang walang anumang negatibong epekto, maaaring gayahin ito ng mga manonood sa kanilang sariling buhay."

Author Biography

Kenette Mark B. Adarna is a resident of Barangay Madalipay, Bucay, Abra and presently teaching at Cristina B. Gonzales Memorial High School, Bucay, Abra. He finished his Bachelor in Secondary Education Major in Filipino at Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology, Bangued Campus and his Master of Arts in Teaching Filipino at Divine Word College of Bangued. He was awarded as Best Performing Secondary School Teacher of the Schools Division of Abra in the year 2020. He is also a writer-developer of instructional materials like modules, storybooks, worksheets, radio and television-based instruction.

Jader Bravo Balaoro was born on January 6, 1994, in Ba-i, Lagayan, Abra. A dedicated educator and proud son of Abra, he pursued his passion for teaching by completing his bachelor's degree at the Abra State Institute of Sciences and Technology – Main Campus. Committed to furthering his professional growth, he later earned his master's degree from the same institution's Bangued Campus. Driven by a strong sense of purpose and community service, Mr. Balaoro currently serves as a teacher at Western Abra National High School in Danglas, Abra, where he is continuing to motivate and educate the youth with excellence and compassion. His work in the classroom reflects not only academic instruction but also the nurturing of values and character in his students.

Roweena B. Banjao is 28 years of age educator, residing in Dolores, Abra, Philippines. She is currently a Senior High Teacher III, handling language and research-related subjects at Rosalio Eduarte National High School from November 2021 to present. She was born on September 28, 1996, in Pasig City where she was raised then moved to Taytay, Rizal. She studied primary and secondary in Star of Hope Christian and decided to continue my studies in Abra province. Roweena took Bachelor of Secondary Education major in English where she graduated cum laude in 2017. In 2019, she pursued Master of Arts in English and graduated in 2021. Last year, she started her academic journey with Doctor of Philosophy in Language Education and claimed to finish it in 2026.

Jonathan R. Claro was born on April 28, 1984. He completed his Bachelor of Secondary Education in 2017 and pursued further studies, earning his master's degree in 2022. He is currently working as Teacher III at Northern Abra National High School. As an educator, he aims to shape the minds and hearts of Filipino youth through meaningful teaching. Through his hard work and dedication to his profession, he serves as an inspiration to both his fellow teachers and students.

Melanie B. Valdez earned her Bachelor of Secondary Education, Major in Filipino (BSED Fil.) from ASIST Bangued Campus in 2022. She is currently pursuing a Master of Arts in Teaching Filipino (MAT-Fil.) at the University of Abra, strengthening her expertise in Filipino pedagogy and secondary instruction. In the 2023–2024 academic year, Melanie began her teaching career at Divine Word College of Bangued, a respected private Catholic institution in Abra, where she taught courses in Filipino language and literature to aspiring educators. Since 2024, she has been a dedicated teacher at Tagodtod National High School, mentoring secondary students and fostering their academic and language development. Melanie's trajectory, from higher education instruction to public secondary teaching, demonstrates her strong commitment to Filipino education and her passion for nurturing learners.