

On Being Chosen as Ninong or Ninang



by [nobert soloria bermosa](#) in [Subcultures](#), March 6, 2008

Some social customs and traditions somehow affect the financial aspect of living especially among those who are living below the poverty line.

Well, let's start with a bit of trivia. Do you know that the month of January was named after Janus, the god of gates and doorways hence; of openings and beginnings? It is the 11th month of the year in the ancient Roman calendar. In the 2nd century BC, however, it came to be regarded as the first month. Although the month of June is considered traditionally as the wedding month and February is regarded as love month, according to world statistics, most number of couples got married on the month of January. Amazing, isn't it? Believe it or not, you better believe it, because I am convinced that this is true.

So January is not just the first month of the year, not just the month where most couples get married, but likewise it is also the time when most of us became penniless, (especially those people like me who belong to the middle or low class in the society) because of the numerous expenses we have incurred during the yuletide season.

And still, spending spree is not over yet, during this month here come successive invitation cards for wedding indicating that you're one of the principal sponsors again, (and again, and again).

It was on this month (January) that I experienced to be a "ninong"(principal sponsor on a wedding) five times in a row within the month a couple of years back and it has just duplicated this year. And as a matter of fact, at this very young age of mine (I'm only in my late 30's) I already have scores of "inaanak sa kasal", most of it happened on the month of January,(aside from scores of "inaanak sa binyag") because they have started getting or choosing me as wedding sponsor when I'm only in my early 20's.

Most of us, if not all, in the teaching profession, are socially active beings. Agree or disagree? We are often invited on many occasions/gatherings such as birthdays, parties, fiestas, christenings, weddings among others, sometimes as guest, but more often as ninong or ninang. And, in so doing, it is a common practice or as always expected, to bring a present and extra money (depending on the occasion) for "pakimkim" and "sabit-sabit", for sometimes ninongs/ninangs were asked to shoulder the payment of the sound system used on such occasion. Sounds funny but it does happen.

Whether we like it or not, teachers, I think, are the second most in demand, if not the number one (politician being the other, I guess) choice or target as ninong/ninang. And this I guess can be attributed to the fact that there are a hundreds of students each year who pass in our hands. Thus, when they decide to get married, their immediate and foremost prospects are we, their former

teachers. Aside from these, teachers are easy to find and locate. Just go to the school during school days and boom..... there they are. And as their second parents during their school days, who can dare refuse such honor and gratitude to be chosen as ninong/ninang.

Likewise, as a common belief, one should be grateful when chosen as ninong/ninang, for out of the billion people in the world, you were chosen as one.

But we all knew for a fact, that “we” are receiving a minimal wage not even enough to support the basic needs of our family or not even sufficient to live a dignified life, so to speak. And despite the honor and prestige of being a chosen one, there lies the truth that this would mean additional burden on our pocket. This will sometime result to the shortage on our budget and would eventually force us to see ourselves once again in a long queue for transaction at GSIS, Pag-Ibig, banks, or any lending institution (whichever who can provide the needed amount) applying for renewal or another loan, just to comply or continue performing our unending moral, spiritual and social duty and obligations such as this.

Well, that’s just one of the many joys, glories and (sometime) the burdens of being a TEACHER.

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