



SILLIMAN JOURNAL

VOLUME 57 NUMBER 3
JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2016

A JOURNAL DEVOTED
TO DISCUSSION
AND INVESTIGATION
IN THE HUMANITIES
AND SCIENCES

Wynne Wilson

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IN THIS ISSUE

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Lily Fetalsana-Apura

Kristine E. Araguas

Gina A. Fontejon-Bonior

Ian Rosales Casocot

Khounkham Douangphachone

Benjamina Paula G. Flor

Serlie Barroga-Jamias

Nelly Z. Limbadan

Lady Flor N. Partosa

Nelson Vincent Quirejero

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Contents

- 13 **Editorial Notes**
Margaret Helen Udarbe-Alvarez
- 17 **Through Bronfenbrenner’s Eyes: A Look at Grade 1
Teachers’ Enactment of a Reading Instruction Program in
Remote Communities in the Philippines**
Gina A. Fontejon-Bonior
- 39 **Connecting Home and the Diaspora through Hip Hop:
Responding to Deep Foundation’s “Children of the Sun” in
Conceptualizing the Filipino Identity**
Lady Flor N. Partosa
- 67 **Dynamics of Scapegoating in Family Systems**
Margaret Helen U. Alvarez and Nelly Z. Limbadan
- 83 **Use of Facebook by a Science Political Party: A Uses and
Gratification Study of Agham Partylist in the Philippines**
Kristine E. Araguas and Serlie Barroga-Jamias
- 111 **Gender Meanings and Inclusion of Girls in Primary
Education among the Ta-oy Tribe
in Saravan Province, Lao PDR**
Khounkham Douangphachone, Benjamina Paula G.
Flor, Serlie B. Jamias, and Nelson Vincent Quirejero

REVIEW SECTION

- 129 **On Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder’s Constants
in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today**
Lily Fetalsana-Apura
- 139 **In Nikki Alfar’s New Book of Fantasy, the War of the Sexes
Rages On**
Ian Rosales Casocot



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Publication Guidelines

SILLIMAN JOURNAL welcomes submission of scholarly papers, research studies, brief reports in all fields from both Philippine and foreign scholars, but papers must have some relevance to the Philippines, Asia, or the Pacific. All submissions are refereed.

SILLIMAN JOURNAL is especially receptive to the work of new authors. Articles should be products of research taken in its broadest sense and should make an original contribution to their respective fields. Authors are advised to keep in mind that Silliman Journal has a general and international readership, and to structure their papers accordingly.

SILLIMAN JOURNAL does not accept papers which are currently under consideration by other journals or which have been previously published elsewhere. The submission of an article implies that, if accepted, the author agrees that the paper can be published exclusively by the journal concerned.

Manuscripts of up to 10,000 words, including tables and references, should conform to the conventions of format and style exemplified in a typical issue of Silliman Journal. Documentation of sources should be discipline-based. Whenever possible, citations should appear in the body of the paper, holding footnotes to a minimum. Tables must be held to a maximum of five. Pictures or illustrations will be accepted only when absolutely necessary.

All articles must be accompanied by an abstract of 200 words and keywords of not more than ten words, and must use gender-fair language.

SILLIMAN JOURNAL likewise welcomes submissions of “Notes,” which generally are briefer and more tentative than full-length articles. Reports on work-in-progress, queries, updates, reports of impressions rather than research, responses to the works of others, even reminiscences are appropriate here.

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“The grand result of schooling is a mind with just vision to discern, with free force to do: the grand schoolmaster is Practice.”

- Thomas Carlyle

(“Corn-Law Rhymes”, 1832).

““Children have to be educated, but they have also to be left to educate themselves.”

- Ernest Dimnet

(The Art of Thinking, 1928)

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Editorial Notes

“The function of the university is not simply to teach bread-winning, or to furnish teachers for public schools or to be a centre of polite society; it is, above all, to be the organ of that fine adjustment between real life and the growing knowledge of life, an adjustment which forms the secret of civilization.”

- W.E.B. Du Bois

(The Souls of Black Folk, 1903)

Welcome to the third issue of Silliman Journal for 2016 which begins with Gina Bonior’s “Through Bronfenbrenner’s Eyes: A Look at Grade 1 Teachers’ Enactment of a Reading Instruction Program in Remote Communities in the Philippines”. Urie Bronfenbrenner was a Russian-born American developmental psychologist mostly known for his ecological systems theory of child development. Gina uses his bio-ecological systems theory and his process-person-context-time model as a backdrop for collecting narratives from Grade 1 teachers and showed them employing various strategies to effectively exercise their agency within the “complex reciprocal interaction” among the various layers of interrelated systems within a period of dynamic curricular changes in the Philippines, the K-12 reform initiative. The findings also suggest that despite the various structural constraints that impact teacher enactment of the program, teachers find creative ways to position themselves socially and politically to contextualize the program and meet their goal—that of making each child a reader in the mother tongue by the end of Grade 1.

Then, another English instructor, Lady Flor Partosa describes “Connecting Home and the Diaspora through Hip Hop” via a study that brings Deep Foundation’s song “Children of the Sun” to Filipino students enrolled in Philippine Literature classes at Silliman University. The students

responded to the song by watching the video and reading the song lyrics. The author found “the following perceptions of the respondents about the song: 1) the overall message is to proclaim that the artists are Filipinos, 2) the artists view the Philippines as having a long history of struggle for independence, and 3) the respondents connect themselves to the country by identifying with heroes, popular culture icons, Filipino qualities and physical attributes as well as pointing out the problem of colonial mentality.” The author seeks to encourage more exploration on how to connect the diaspora and home—Filipino Americans and Filipinos—both in the fields of research and the Philippine literature classroom.

The third paper, from the psychology discipline, is also about home—literally, the Filipino family system—and, in particular, the role of the scapegoat in family dynamics and interaction. The study takes off from a previous study on the tagasalo (caretaker) role among siblings where a sibling quite unlike the tagasalo is theorized as taking on the scapegoat role. It is hypothesized that the sibling who might be “singled out for disfavor” fulfills an important role in family systems. Eleven respondents described this sibling; the authors suggest that deferential parental treatment is advisable over preferential parental treatment.

This paper is then followed by the “Use of Facebook by a Science Political Party: A Uses and Gratification Study of Agham Partylist in the Philippines” by Kristine Araguas and Serlie Jamias. In conducting a case study on political communication, the authors found not surprisingly, that, contrary to the expectation of Facebook users seeking science-related and development information, they are rather more interested in entertainment, social empathy, and emotional release.

The full-length articles are rounded off by “Gender Meanings and Inclusion of Girls in Primary Education among the Ta-oy Tribe in Saravan Province, Lao PDR” by Khounkham Douangphachone and colleagues from the University of the Philippines-Los Baños, Laguna. Using feminist theories highlighting standpoint theory as anchor, this study used interviews, surveys, and focused group discussions to investigate the meaning of gender in 13 villages in the Ta-oy District, Saravan Province, Lao PDR. Almost half defined gender as “men and women who are working in solidarity in the farm”—the reason why girls doing household chores is prioritized over school participation. Given that fathers among the Ta-oy tribe play a major role in inhibiting girls’ participation in

school, school officials at the local levels need to address this concern to ensure compliance to the development goal of universal access to primary education.

REVIEW SECTION

This issue has two book reviews—the first, a review of Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder’s *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* by religion teacher Lily Fetalsana-Apura. The second, by English instructor Ian Casocot looks at Nikki Alfar’s new book of fantasy, *WonderLust*—which Ian refers to as “a sad, beautiful book that gives definite proof of what a magician of words, and of meticulously articulated loss and unloving, we have in Nikki Alfar.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank all contributors and reviewers of this issue. Special thanks to Gina Bonior who not only took up editorial duties for this issue while on study leave, but also contributed a paper. Gina is a happy and dedicated teacher. I think she believes with me what Robert Frost said in 1960: “Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence.”



Margaret Helen F. Udarbe
Editor



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Through Bronfenbrenner's Eyes: A look at Grade 1 teachers' attempts at implementing a Reading Instruction Program

Gina A. Fontejon Bonior

This study investigates how Grade 1 teachers who are enacting a Reading Instruction Program in remote island communities in Central Philippines navigate through the complexities of program implementation in their local contexts using Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory (1979) and his Process–Person–Context–Time Model (1989). Narratives generated from eight Grade 1 teachers showed various strategies employed to effectively exercise their agency within the “complex reciprocal interaction” (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) among the various layers of interrelated systems (biological, micro-, meso-, exo-, and macro-) within a period of dynamic curricular changes in the Philippines; the K-12 reform initiative. The findings also suggest that, despite the various structural constraints that impact teacher enactment of the program, teachers find creative ways to position themselves socially and politically to contextualize the program and meet their goal: to make each child a reader in the mother tongue by the end of Grade 1. Findings suggest that, in these small island communities, such commitment is driven by a deep faith in God, who they believe is the author of the many privileges they are enjoying and who would eventually hold them accountable for the children in their care. On the other hand, such commitment may be driven by socioeconomic interests in that failure of students may result to high dropout rate, which in remote island communities with small student population may result in the closure of the school. This consequence may not be in the best interest not only of the community but also of the teachers themselves.

Keywords: Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory and Process–Person–Context–Time Model — Application in education; Teacher agency in literacy instruction program implementation; Literacy Instruction Program Implementation — Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Urie Bronfenbrenner contributed to the shift in perspective of developmental psychology when he emphasized that studying the individual without considering the many environmental and societal influences on human development is myopic and ill-conceived. In fact, he criticized the prevailing developmental psychology of his time as "...the science of the strange behavior of children in strange situations with strange adults for the briefest possible periods of time" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 19)

Bronfenbrenner then proposed the bioecological systems theory in 1979, where he posited that the development of an individual is impacted by several layers of social relationships, each influencing the other in a bidirectional manner. Bronfenbrenner emphasized that a person's biological endowment defines the person's potential; however, how this potential is realized or developed over time depends on a multiplicity of environment and social factors, which interact among each other and affect the individual's development. On the other hand, the system is also impacted by the individual's interaction with these layers of social and environmental factors, thereby producing a dynamic, bidirectional relationship which takes place within a given period.

Bronfenbrenner identified six interacting systems that influence an individual's growth (or lack of it). The first layer is the microsystem, which comprises the persons within the immediate environment of the individual and with whom s/he interacts most frequently. Socialization within the microsystem is "influenced by those who are emotionally and practically closest to the individual. Much of the contact at this level is face-to-face but often limited to dyadic relations" (McGuckin & Minton, 2011). The microsystem typically includes family, peers, or close friends and colleagues. Relationships in a microsystem are bidirectional, which means that the dynamics in the relationship among people within one's microsystem is also influenced by the individual's actions and reactions.

The second layer of interrelationships is the mesosystem. This consists of the interactions between the different elements of a person's microsystem, which indirectly impact the individual's development. For example, the relationship between the school supervisor and the principal impacts the development of the teacher in a school. Characterized by the relations between multiple microsystems, the mesosystem is about 'connections between contexts' (e.g., the interrelationships between the home and the schools).

Ultimately, the stronger and more diverse these links are and the higher the levels of communication between the socialization agents involved the more powerful an influence the resulting systems will be to a person's development (McGuckin & Minton, 2011).

The third layer in the bioecological system of an individual is the exosystem. This refers to a setting or "the larger social system in which the person does not function directly" but is affected by it. This includes decisions and decision-making that do not involve the individual but nevertheless impact his/her development. For example, although a teacher may not be involved in the decision-making on the promotion of a colleague to a principal position, the decision and succeeding action may affect the dynamics in the school or the professional development of a certain individual.

The fourth level is the macrosystem, which Bronfenbrenner defined as a context encompassing any group ("culture, subculture, or other extended social structures") whose members share value or belief systems, "resources, hazards, lifestyles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange" (Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009). The macrosystem is the outermost system that influences and is being influenced by all of the inner systems.

Bronfenbrenner posited that the macrolevel provides "the broad cultural, ideological, and organizational patterns within which the meso- and exosystems reflect the ecology of human development. While at first seeming far removed from the immediate ecology of the child's development, the macrolevel is not static and may change through, for example, revolution, economic recession, war, or technological change" (McGuckin & Minton, 2011). One's macrosystem includes larger political systems and structures, the national economy, the country's international relations, globalization and its influences, one's spirituality, customs, and local, national, and international laws and agreements and cultural values, which have a positive or negative effect on an individual's development (Santos, EDFD 301 lecture notes, based on Berk, 2000). For example, the K-12 curriculum, which teachers are mandated to implement, is a product of political decisions grounded on the economic needs of the country in the context of the global economy.

These dynamic interrelationships among the five levels (the child's biological endowments and the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems) take place within a specific "temporal component", called the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1989), in which the ecosystem is immersed. The chronosystem

“accommodates the on-going reciprocal periods of development between the individual and the environment across the lifespan” (McGuckin & Minton, 2011). For example, changes in socioeconomic status over time may have an influence on teacher decisions and actions and perception of his/her identity.

The assumption that underlies Bronfenbrenner's theory is that a person develops within a nest or constellation of systems of relationships that form his/her environment. On the other hand, systems within one's environment are affected by the individual's decisions and actions. In fact, Bronfenbrenner (1979) reiterated that effects are at their strongest when the relationship is bidirectional. Thus, it may be said that Bronfenbrenner was considering an open system where each layer of systems impacts and is impacted by the inner and outer layers.

Despite the relative popularity and influence of his Bioecological Model of Human Development in the field of educational psychology, Bronfenbrenner critiqued his own theory for emphasizing too much on the context of human development such that the bioecological systems theory failed to focus on the role the person plays in his or her own development and his/her ability to modify the context that s/he is in (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). Within this perspective, he and his colleagues presented an “operational research design that permits the systematic investigation” of what he proposed as the Process–Person–Context–Time Model (Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009).

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) advanced two propositions in relation to the PPCT Model. First, they posited that “human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment”. For development to take place, the interaction between the dynamic biopsychological human organism and relevant persons, objects, and symbols within the immediate context of the individual must occur on a “fairly regular basis over extended periods of time”. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996).

In explaining the concept of proximal process within the context of the Process–Person–Context–Time Model, Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) argued that

[t]he form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes effecting development vary systematically as a joint function of the

characteristics of the developing person; of the environment—both immediate and more remote—in which the processes are taking place; the nature of the developmental outcomes under consideration; and the social continuities and changes occurring over time through the life course and the historical period during which the person has lived (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996).

The second element in the model, *person*, refers not only to the biological endowments of the individual but also to the personal characteristics that s/he brings into any social situation namely, his demand, resource, and force. One's demand characteristics refer to an individual's personal qualities that act as immediate stimulus to another person, e.g., age, gender, and skin color. One's resource characteristics are not immediately visible but are sometimes "induced, with differing degrees of accuracy", from the more visible demand characteristics. Resource characteristics include "mental and emotional resources such as past experiences, skills, and intelligence and also to social and material resource" such as access to food, housing, and educational opportunities.

Force characteristics refer to one's temperament, motivation, persistence, and the like. Bronfenbrenner emphasized that one's *person* may be used to change or alter his/her environment. The change can be relatively passive. A person changes the environment simply by being in it, to the extent that others react to him or her differently on the basis of demand characteristics, such as age, gender, and skin color, to more active [the ways in which the person changes the environment are linked to his or her resource characteristics, whether physical, mental, or emotional], to most active [the extent to which the person changes the environment is linked, in part, to the desire and drive to do so or force characteristics] (Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009).

The third element of the PPCT Model, the context, involves the four interrelated concepts in the bioecological systems theory namely, the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems. Finally, the fourth element of the model, time, includes the "microtime [what is occurring during the course of some specific activity or interaction], mesotime [the extent to which activities and interactions occur with some consistency in the developing person's environment], and macrotime [the chronosystem]. For Bronfenbrenner, developmental processes are likely to vary according to the specific historical events that are occurring as the developing individuals are at one age or

another (Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009). For example, students and teachers who experienced the earthquake that shook the islands prior to the conduct of this study may share a similar experience, which impacts their development as individuals, yet their “developmental trajectories” would vary because they experience the tragedy at different points in their lives.

The interaction among the four elements of Bronfenbrenner’s PPCT Model is shown in Figure 1 below.

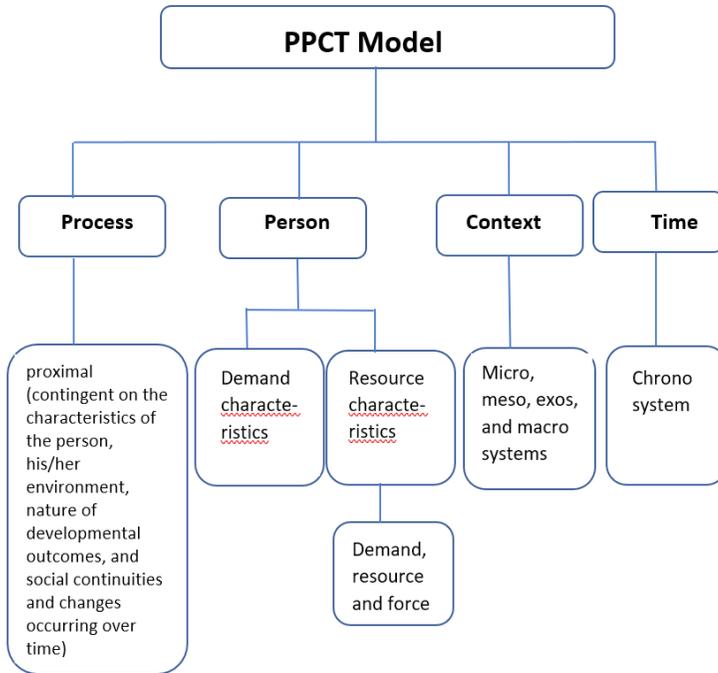


Figure 1. The Process–Person–Context–Time Model (Adapted from Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998).

Although Bronfenbrenner’s bioecological theory was initially intended to explain child development, it has been applied in several related areas. For example, the model was used in the study on school achievement in 2010, bullying in schools (McGuckin & Minton, 2011), and studies in teacher education curriculum and the development of teachers’ identities (Lopes & Pereira, 2012), among others.

This study attempts to employ Bronfenbrenner’s theory to explore and explain the dynamics of teacher enactment of a literacy instruction program

after having participated in several teacher trainings on language and multiliteracy instruction in the early grades, within the context of the recently implemented K-12 education reform program in the Philippines. For the purposes of this study, the program will be called Reading Instruction Program in the Early Grades (RIPEG). The study seeks to answer the question: What are the experiences of Grade 1 literacy teachers in implementing a reading instruction program in their local contexts? How may teachers' enactment of the reading instruction program be explained using Bronfenbrenner's Process–Person–Context–Time Model?

METHOD

Participant Selection

Eight Grade 1 teachers who were, at the conduct of the study, going through several trainings on language and multiliteracy instruction in relation to the newly legislated K-12 education reform program participated in the research. All of the participants were teaching in the various districts in an island province in southern Philippines. One of the participants was also a teacher-in-charge in the school where she was assigned to and was a teacher trainer in an early grades literacy instruction training. All of the participants were female, with an average teaching experience of 14 years. All of them came from remote island communities. Remoteness, here, is defined based on the Department of Education parameters, which include distance from the DepEd Division Office, travel time, and travel cost (Pante, Umali, & Ongkiko, 2015).

Instrumentation

All of the participants were asked to recall their experiences in three areas: 1) their own literacy experiences when they were in their early grades, 2) highlights of their teacher education training, and 3) their experiences as implementers of a literacy instruction reform program after a series of trainings that they had recently attended.

The interview schedule used was composed of loosely framed questions since the researcher wanted to generate narratives of the participants' experiences. Most of the researcher's statements typically began with phases like Tell me about... How was your _____ experience? What do you

recall about your...? What comes to mind when you think about...? The purpose of using loosely framed prompts and questions is to ensure that the interviewee was not led towards any particular direction or orientation during the interview. Also, the researcher was keenly aware of her positionality: she was among the teacher trainers of the Reading Instruction Program (RIPEG) and engaged in reflexive critique during the analysis of the data.

All of the interviews were conducted in the participants' first language, Binisaya. Seven of the eight interviews were done through telephone conversations. The eighth participant, who was also a teacher trainer, was interviewed in person during one of the training schedules.

Procedure

The researcher contacted ten teachers by telephone to seek permission for an interview about their experiences in implementing a reading program related to the K-12 reform program. They were informed that the interview was primarily for research purposes and that it was not in any way related to program evaluation but that the research may be published in a journal or presented in a forum. The participants were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be respected and ensured. Of the ten who were contacted, seven agreed to participate in the study. The eighth participant was with one of the interviewees at the time of the interview and volunteered to participate in the study.

Seven of the interviews were conducted by phone since the participants came from various parts of the island, and one came from a separate islet which is still part of the district. The researcher had a personal interview with the eighth participant since she is both a Grade 1 teacher and a teacher trainer. All of the interviews were recorded and transcribed and analyzed based on Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory and his Process–Person–Context–Time Model of Human Development.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

In this study, Bronfenbrenner's Process–Person–Context–Time (PPCT) Model is used to analyze Grade 1 teachers' experiences in implementing a literacy instruction program in their local contexts.

Persons and Proximal Processes

The interviews with the eight teacher-participants consistently showed that teachers bring into their daily decision-making their demand and resource characteristics, particularly when confronted with challenges in the use of the New Teacher's Guides (NTGs) and instructional materials that they were required to use as participants of the multiliteracy instruction program and implementers of the K-12 program of the Department of Education. The teachers employed "mental and emotional resources such as past experiences, skills, and intelligence and social and material resources" (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, cited in Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009) in order to make critical decisions whether to follow the NTGs that were given to them and with which they were trained to teach. In fact, a majority of the teachers described several points of departures from the NTGs and why they decided to deviate from the plan. For example, when the big books necessary for read aloud activities indicated in the NTG did not arrive in time for the lesson, they made use of big books they made in their previous K-12 trainings or made their own story books using local stories and characters. One teacher said:

Some of the activities [in the NTG] were too long the children no longer paid attention. So, I only focused on activities that I believe the children need best. ... We need to consider the "mental capacity" of our children, which may be different from those assumed by the writers of the NTG, no matter how well written they might be.

Most of the teachers said that, from their experiences with several rushed K-12 trainings, they were already used to materials arriving late or not arriving at all. So, they strategized to ensure that the objectives indicated in NTG were met, with or without the materials that were supposed to be provided for use with the NTG. One teacher narrated:

The materials [indicated in the NTG] for this week have not arrived yet. It is supposed to be the big book detailing a story about a child's friendship with the moon. So, I asked the children if they saw the moon in the previous nights. The timing was perfect as it was full moon. Then, we talked about the full moon, what they saw, what stories they heard about it, and what they thought about the moon. I made a story about the moon based on

the discussion guide questions in the revised NTG. I did an impromptu dramatization, like a monologue so the children would enjoy it. I also made a related leveled text for the children to read. I just wrote it on a manila paper so everyone could read it. (Participant 2)

The teachers employed resource characteristics such as their past experiences and training and skills already learned through years of experience and several trainings attended, as well as their training in the teacher education institutions (TEIs) as they made online decisions to ensure that the lesson objectives were met despite existing conditions that could have potentially derailed it. Such decision may not always be consistent with the principles of literacy instruction espoused by RIPEG. For example, the teacher said that, in the absence of the leveled reader indicated in the Revised Teacher's Guide, she wrote on manila paper a leveled reader that she composed for the children to read. Leveled readers are intended to be read by children who have similar reading ability. These are carefully written considering the length; layout; structure and organization; illustrations; high frequency words; structure of phrases and sentences; literary features such as the level of complexity of the characters, setting, and plot; and familiarity of theme or topic so that the leveled reader matches the child's reading level (Pinnel, n.d.). Since it is unlikely that students in the same class have the same reading level, making the whole class read the same text is not consistent with the principles of the use of leveled reading. However, given the lack of books, the teacher did what she believed would meet the objectives in the NTG. She relied on her experience as a teacher and contextualized the lesson. She used her skills in improvisation and "impromptu dramatization", which had always worked with the children in the past years. The teacher exercised her agency to modify the lessons based on a constant appraisal of the resources at her disposal in the immediate environment at that particular moment.

Bronfenbrenner (1998) stipulated that the context of the proximal processes, which includes a nest of systems that impact human development, should not be perceived in a unidirectional manner. This is because the person, with her biological and genetic endowments, also brings with him/her in any social situation three forms of characteristics which facilitate her ability to modify, alter, or change the force and direction of the interaction. These forms of characteristics include the person's demand characteristics, i.e., personal stimulus such as age, gender, and physical appearance that may influence

social interactions because of the expectations that are immediately formed by others; resource characteristics such as past experiences, skills, intelligence, and social and material resources such as educational opportunities, access to good food and housing, and caring parents; and force characteristics such as differences in temperament, motivation, persistence, and commitment.

The *force characteristics* of the individual, which refer to one's temperament, motivation, persistence, commitment and the like were also demonstrated by the teachers as they negotiated their identities and navigated through the complexities in implementing the multiliteracy reform program in their localities. All of the eight respondents claimed that the source of their motivation to be the best and do the best for the children was anchored on their spiritual beliefs as Catholics. A teacher reiterated that she had a covenant with God when she took the licensure examination for teachers despite the fact that she was unable to attend any review class because of financial constraints. These force characteristics, particularly motivation and commitment, were exemplified when she said:

Ako, I made a promise to God because I had no money for the review. So, I took the LET without taking review classes. I promised God that if I pass the LET, I will do my best as a teacher. Lisod nga dili tumanon ang promise nato sa Ginoo [It is difficult not to keep a covenant with God]. Not only did I pass the LET, I was accepted in all four schools where I applied. ...I promised God that I will give my heart the children. Some of the teachers say that we should only work commensurate to the meager pay that we get. That's not right. (Participant 5)

This was a recurrent theme in the narratives. The majority of the participants claim that their motivation to make the RIPEG work for their students is their faith in God and a sense of gratitude to a divine being for the "blessings" that they enjoy. This is aptly said by one of the teachers:

Motivated ko to do my best to teach kay paninglan unya tas Ginoo [I am motivated to do my best because God will ask me to do an accounting of what I have done]. Our island is culturally deeply religious. Many are devoted Catholics. (Participant 4)

In fact, the majority of the participants have responsibilities in their local

Catholic church. One teacher said:

Maybe, our inspiration to become better teachers stem from our values. Our island is deeply spiritual. Catholicism here is so deeply rooted. Most teachers are also active in church. I am the lector during the mass in our church every Sunday. (Participant 9)

One's spirituality is part of his/her macrosystem, a super structure that influences all the other systems [exo-, meso-, micro-] and is integral to the proximal processes that take place as part of human development. Bronfenbrenner posited that, for proximal processes to be effective as contributors in human development, they have to occur in a fairly regular basis and must be enduring. Religion is grounded on one's history and replete with rituals; and spirituality, in the context of the island in this study, is so ingrained in the participants' social identity it is in fact an integral part of who they are. Thus, it is a strong element in the development of the teachers as literacy instructors.

This is clearly manifested in the ways teachers use their previous knowledge, experiences, skills, and even their demand characteristics such as their authority as teachers in the local contexts. Teachers as persons/actors engaged in proximal processes strategically employ available resources to achieve the goal of developing beginning reading and writing skills among the children. They position themselves in stances of power and exercise their agency to make the program work but within the limits of the resources at their disposal. The implementation of the RIPEG is mediated by a web of interrelated sociopolitical structures and relations that the teachers negotiated with during particular moments and in particular situations to meet particular objectives. However, the strategies they used, e.g., contextualization and localization, endure through the various education reform programs that they have attempted to implement in their classes, such that these have become part of their professional identity. Amid structural constraints vis a vis program implementation, teachers make do, and in continually making do, they become.

Bronfenbrenner posited that "human development takes place through processes of progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment". When these processes

are sustained, they will effectively contribute to human development and learning. Such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment are referred to as proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998, p. 996). These processes “constitute the engines of development because it is by engaging in these activities and interactions that individuals come to make sense of their world and understand their place in it, and both play their part in changing the prevailing order while fitting into the existing one” (Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009).

CONTEXT AND CHRONOS

Bronfenbrenner is perhaps better known for his first proposition on the bioecological systems theory (1979), where he posited that human development takes place within layers of systems, from the person's biology to his/her relations with the tangible immediate environment. An example of these layers of system would be teachers' interactions with their students, their parents, peers, and direct administrators (microsystem); their interactions and relationships among the elements in the person's microsystem, e.g., the lack of community or parental support to the schooling of their children affects the teacher (mesosystem); and the important contexts in which the individuals whose development is being considered are not actually situated but which have important indirect influences on their development (the exosystem). In these small island communities, teachers had to understand when at specific periods, many of the male students would be absent because they are expected to assist their parents in fishing. The teacher is not actually situated in the relationship between the children and the parents and the family's long held practices of communal work. Yet s/he is affected by the situation and therefore learns to modify her expectations, decision, and actions to accommodate the new situation.

The outermost layer of system, the macrosystem, includes such encompassing social structures such as one's cultural beliefs, spirituality, political philosophy, socioeconomic conditions, and such international structures as globalization, free trade, and agreements. All of these take place within given a moment or a stretch of time. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1998) wrote about time as constituting microtime (what is occurring during the course of some specific activity or interaction), mesotime (the extent to which activities and interactions occur with some consistency in the

developing person's environment), and macrotime (the chronosystem), which means that developmental processes are likely to vary according to the specific historical events that are occurring as the developing individuals are at one age or another (Bronfenbrenner, 1989, in Tudge, Makrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009). This is shown in Figure 2 below.

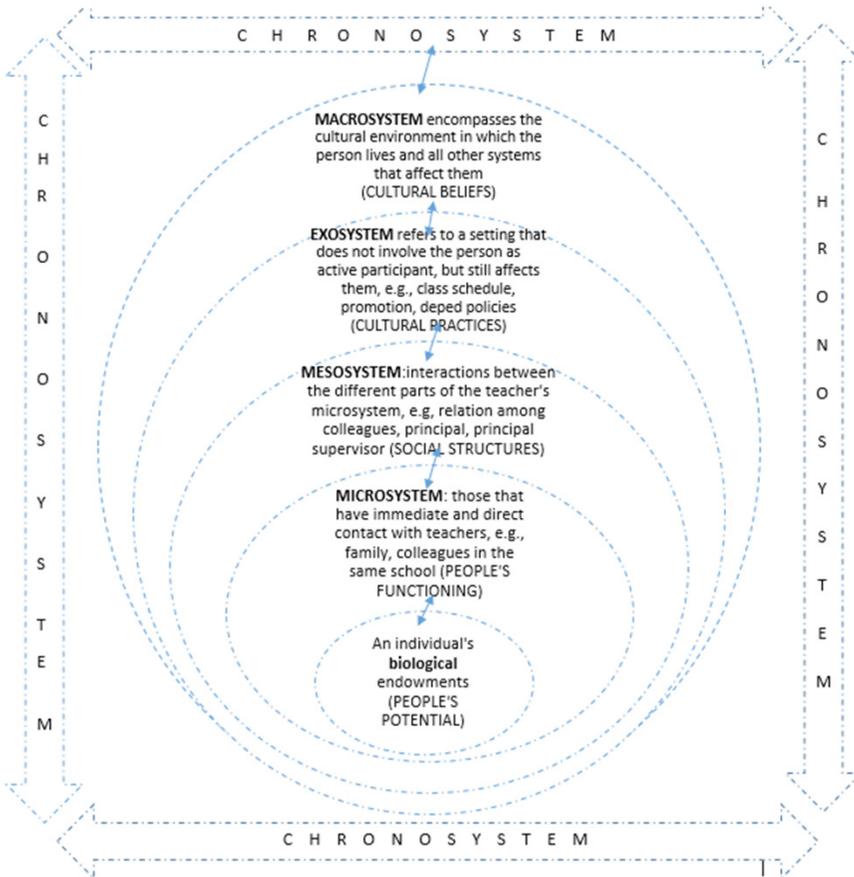


Figure 2. The teacher's bioecological system (based on Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1989).

The teacher's microsystem includes her relationship with her students, the parents of the children, the immediate community, her peers, and her direct administrators. The teachers' daily interactions with the children influence her decisions and actions. In this study, all of the participants claimed that their commitment to the program was grounded on their concern for the

children and their desire to “produce” readers by the end of the school year. This commitment is anchored on the teachers’ macrosystem, e.g., their belief that they are accountable to a higher being who had entrusted the children in their care.

Such larger structures, i.e., the exosystem and the macrosystem, also affect the teachers’ microsystem. For example, one participant said that several students in her class had to walk at least six kilometers to get to the classroom, having had only one boiled banana for breakfast and bringing one banana for lunch. Poverty is not within the control of the teacher as it is closely tied to local and national socioeconomic program and policies (macrosystem). Yet the teachers did what they could to help provide for the basic needs of the children. One teacher narrated:

I promised to give my heart the child. I had one who was so smart but so poor. When I asked her what she wants to be, she said: Mauwaw ko mangandoy ma’am, kay pobre me kaayo [When I asked her what she wants to be, she said, “I am ashamed to dream because we are so poor”]. I was so moved because she was teary-eyed as she said it. I told her that if she studies hard, she can make it, since high school is free. Then, then she could work. I told her that I worked myself through college. She said she wanted to be like me. I helped her with her basic needs. I spent time with her.... She’s already graduating now. I met her once because she won in an essay writing contest, and I was there. Pinakalami jud nga feeling, ma’am [It was a wonderful feeling, ma’am]. My thinking is this... Our time here is limited, so if you give, you must give all.

The teachers’ mesosystem, that is, the relationship among the elements in her microsystem, impacted the teacher’s agency to enact the reading program in her class. For example, two participants mentioned that looting and vandalism often happened in the school. She was disappointed and angry when these incidents happened, but these were an indication not only of the abject poverty that pushed some members of the small island community to steal school properties but also suggesting a poor relationship between the school and the community. One teacher lamented:

We have several problems that also affect us as teachers. This may not be... [the Reading Instruction Program’s] concern, but in a way, it affects the

implementation of the program in our school. Our classroom was looted. Our instructional materials were vandalized. They poured ink on our things. Our problem is not the children. It's the larger society. I feel safe, but our school is not given the respect it deserves by some people in the community. They use the children's toilets without the school's permission. They made it like a public restroom, and they leave their dirt there. We already raised this concern to the barangay captain, but this has not been addressed until now. It is disappointing, discouraging.

Several systems appear to be at play in this context. While it may be true that the concern on vandalism and use of school restrooms as public toilet may be an indication of poor relationship among the school and the community (mesosystem), the fact that the community turned to the school for this basic need is a manifestation of the inability or failure of the local government unit to provide toilets for the community or to establish a program on health and sanitation. This, in turn, is a reflection of the national program and funding for health, hygiene, and sanitation and is clearly a manifestation of the economic depravity of the community (macrosystem). Finally, the decision and/or inaction of the barangay captain and the local government unit in general is part of the exosystem of the teacher. The Grade 1 Reading teachers were not directly involved in such decision-making, but such action had demoralized the teachers, and these feelings affected the teaching–learning experiences and the implementation of the RIPEG at the ground level. Also, the series of salary increases, which was part of the government salary standardization scheme, may have positively impacted the development of the teachers. Several of the participants mentioned that there was little reason to complain since the government had started fulfilling a promise that teachers held on to for decades. They said that, although the series of “rushed trainings” that they were required to attend as part of the newly implemented K-12 curriculum was “burdensome”, they had to do it as part of the DepEd system. Participant 8 said:

Some teachers do not really understand the demands of implementing something like this Reading Instruction Program, so we need to make them understand. Some complain to me: Why do we work harder than the others when we get the same pay? Some asked why they need to change the way they have always taught when their students in the past years also learned

to read without RIPEG strategies and materials. I explained to them that if computers need updating, we do, too, because times are changing and the demands on our children are much greater now than before. Our teachers need encouragement. Many of them are the family breadwinners. Some help out several siblings. They have many things in their mind. I encourage the teachers in my district to take MA units with me. I tell them we have to be forward-looking... I also tell them that, since our pay now is so much higher than before, we need to give more. We will not have blessing and peace if we shortchange the children.

Indeed, several layers of the system are also working together to ensure that the RIPEG was given the support it needed to ensure that the children in the various districts would be able to access the benefits offered by the program. On the mesosystem and macrosystem levels, the division superintendent launched a program called Agak (Guide), which required all public school teachers to adopt the poorest of the poor among their pupils and provide them the basic necessities. The goal was to encourage the children to attend classes and not drop out of school to earn a living. Most of the participants said that, even before Agak was institutionalized, they had already adopted many children. Moreover, they were glad that their effort was presented as a legitimate program of the local DepEd. In fact, the majority of participants have adopted not just one but several children. Participant 8 said:

... ako, walo ka bata ag akong gi-agak ron [I am helping eight children this year]. Every teacher is encouraged to take care of at least one child. We are asked to choose the one needing the most help. We provide the child's basic needs and support the child in terms of tutoring and emotional/psychological concerns. I feed them, I buy secondhand clothes for them. But sometimes, I cannot help but reprimand them, because I do not understand why some still fail to attend classes daily. Then I realized, sometimes, it is the parents. Kulang intawon silag support [The children lack parental support]. Some parents do not seem to care. I called some of them several times already. Naa man jud pod single parent. Galisod sad intawon [Some of them are single parents. They are really hard up].

Participant 8 believed that her main challenge as a Reading teacher was how to keep the children's interest so that they would return to her class the

following day. For her eight kindergarten children, the hook was the Read Aloud activities using colorful big books and the use of LCD projector. She said:

Some of teachers in our school asked me why I used my own money to buy the LCD projector. I tell them that when I was first assigned to this school, I had no classroom. So, I invested in amakan, nipa for the roofing, and asked the parents of my children to help out in building my classroom, so their children will have a good place to study in. The parents appreciated my initiative.

This teacher said that the LCD projector was an effective tool to keep the children in school. She said that when it is harvest time or planting season, when children are told by parents to help out in the farms, she would entice the children with beautiful short movie clips. “Dili ko mo-absent kay magpasalida sa ma’am ugma” [I won’t be absent because we will watch a movie tomorrow]. For these children, the school is the only place to watch a film and to see and touch big, beautifully illustrated books.

In the context of these small island communities, the first order of the day was not Reading Instruction Program. It was getting the children to school. It was getting the parents to understand the importance of schooling and education for their children’s future. The first order of the day was not teaching the children to decode and comprehend the text. It was giving them food so that they would truly enjoy the beautiful stories set in beautifully-illustrated big books provided by the program. In this context, teachers constantly negotiated with other structures within the system to position themselves in stances of power so they could modify constraints into possibilities within a chronosystem of education reform initiatives. They continued to initiate strategies to effectively implement what they believed were a viable, feasible aspect of the program for the best interest of the children in their care. In the end, what mattered most to them and drove their decisions and actions were the children: “It’s all about the children”, one teacher said. “What inspires me to be better are the children.” It appeared that this deep sense of commitment to program implementation was forged from the interactions and negotiations teachers constantly engaged in given the micro-, meso-, exo-, and macrosystems where they operated in daily and over a long period. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (1989) reiterated that “human development takes place through processes of

progressively more complex reciprocal interaction between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment, and to be effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over extended periods of time". The narratives of the Grade 1 teachers who were implementing Reading Instruction Program demonstrated this. Their experiences demonstrated the unique context, where commitments and actions are grounded by one's faith and sustained by one's spirituality.

On the other hand, teachers' decision to extend beyond the conventional role of teachers as facilitators of learning to teachers as providers of basic needs of their students may not be primarily motivated by philanthropic initiatives but by self-serving socioeconomic interests. In a sense, students' failure to attend classes because of socioeconomic reasons might result in high dropout rates, which in remote island communities with small student population might result in closure of the school. This consequence might not be in the best interest not only of the community but also of the teachers themselves.

Also, although the teachers' use of personal funds to "adopt" the poorest of the poor among their students may be commendable, when such was required through an official program of the local DepEd authorities, one might wonder where and how this positions teachers and how this would impact their perceptions of their professional identity. It appeared that teachers were expected to "give more" because of the series of salary increases that they recently received. However, this "initiative" of the local DepEd leadership might unnecessarily burden teachers whose mandate was to prioritize the literacy development of their students and not to address the failure of the government to provide programs towards the upliftment of the prevailing socioeconomic concerns in the community. That the parents were unable to provide for the basic needs of their children was a reflection of the government's lack of program to alleviate the economic condition of the poorest sectors in the society. That the teachers were expected to meet this need was an indication of the government's lack of understanding of the socioeconomic challenges that the teachers themselves face within the complex macro-, exo-, meso-, and microsystems that they were interacting within at a time when multiple education initiatives were thrust upon them and entrusted to them.

CONCLUSION

In the context of the K-12 education reform program, teachers' decisions and actions seem to be made based on a constant appraisal of the circumstances and resources available. In this case, teachers engaged in an ongoing evaluation of the resources at their disposal as they negotiate with powerful others in a nest of systems of relationships that form his/her environment; the strongest and most enduring of which are their spiritual beliefs. Teachers strategically position themselves so they could exercise their agency amid a host of social relations and structures that could potentially derail program implementation for the accomplishment of program goals and objectives. The findings also suggest that, despite the various structural constraints that impact teacher enactment of the program, teachers find creative ways to position themselves socially and politically to contextualize the program and meet their goal: to make each child a reader in the mother tongue in Grade 1. As agentic mediators of the program, the teachers in this study continually reconfigure the program based on shifting local circumstances.

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Connecting Home and the Diaspora through Hip Hop: Responding to Deep Foundation's "Children of the Sun" in Conceptualizing the Filipino Identity

Lady Flor Partosa
Silliman University

The study brings Deep Foundation's song "Children of the Sun" to Filipino students enrolled in Philippine Literature (2nd semester, SY 2014-2015) in Silliman University to examine how the Filipino Americans' constructions of home and identity are received from those within the nation's borders. Students responded to the song by watching the video and reading the song lyrics. In analyzing the listeners' perception of the song and their reflection about Filipino identity, the paper drew from theories about nationalism, postcolonial identity, the "in-between space," and diaspora. To set the background, the paper also discusses the role of Hip Hop among Filipino Americans in asserting their Filipino identity. The study reveals the following perceptions of the respondents about the song: 1) the overall message is to proclaim that the artists are Filipinos, 2) the artists view the Philippines as having a long history of struggle for independence, and 3) the respondents connect themselves to the country by identifying with heroes, popular culture icons, Filipino qualities and physical attributes as well as pointing out the problem of colonial mentality. Most respondents also agree with the song in taking pride of one's country and identity as well as recognize the problem of colonial mentality. The study found that both Filipinos and Filipino Americans celebrate and critically assess their identity. With these results, the study seeks to encourage more exploration on how to connect the diaspora and home—Filipino Americans and Filipinos—both in the fields of research and the Philippine literature classroom.

Keywords: national identity, diaspora, reception study

INTRODUCTION

Diaspora studies have become so popular that terms like “hybridity” and “ambivalence” have become “chic and fashionable” in scholarly venues (San Juan 2000, 230). These conversations, however, only mirror the reality of migration for many people across the globe, whose experiences challenge national narratives of identity. In the Philippines, a recent publication *Migration and Revolution: Philippine Nationhood and Class Relations in a Globalized Age* by Filomeno Aguilar (2014) detailed how the mass movement of Filipinos to different countries not only the US has affected the nation and has revolutionized its foreign policy, economy, and culture (2-8). For his part, San Juan (231) based his scholarly work on the Filipino diaspora from a Marxist perspective, examining how the Philippines is linked to the US and other countries through colonialism and imperialism. In the field of research, Mendoza (2008) critically translated the indigenous theoretical movements (Sikolohiyang Pilipino, Pilipinolohiya, and Pantayong Pananaw) in her groundbreaking book *Between Homeland and the Diaspora* to provide framework for connecting both Filipino and Filipino American experiences. These publications have significantly provided the bigger picture, analyzing the political, economic, and cultural intersections of the Diaspora and Home.

As suggested in their abstracts, the studies of ^[1]Nelia Balgoa and ^[2]Karen Llagas are examples of specific research on how diasporic literary texts position themselves with the home country. In contrast, the study aims to take a more concrete path in connecting the diaspora and the nation not through literary analysis of texts but rather through the examination of student responses. The study aims to see how Filipinos from within the borders of the nation respond to the Filipino American’s expression of their Filipino identity, locating the responses of Filipino students as the site where the Filipino identity ceases to become an abstraction but a real, dynamic concept as mediated by the respondents. With this, not only does the study contribute to the knowledge of diaspora and identity studies, but also to the practical aspect of exploring the

1 Nelia Balgoa’s “Characterizing Philippine Migration Literature: Interrogating the ‘Filipinoness’ of the Themes of Exile, Home and Alienation” was one of the papers presented in the National Conference on Research in English Language and Literature at Misamis University on August 6-8, 2014.

2 Karen Llagas’ “Aswang Update: Notes on the Use of Philippine Folklore in Diasporic Poetry and Short Fiction to Liberate and/or Further Exoticize the Filipino” was one of the papers presented in An International Symposium in conjunction with the 40th Anniversary of the Center for Philippine Studies at the University of Hawai’i at Mānoa (UHM) on April 9-10, 2015.

concept of Filipino identity in the Philippine literature classroom and also in a general sense of connecting the narratives of Filipinos and Filipino Americans.

To find out the students' perceptions of the song "Children of the Sun" and their reflections about the Filipino identity, the study posed these specific research questions:

1. What are the students' perceptions of the song?
 - a. What do the students perceive as the message of the artists in the song?
 - b. For the students, how do the artists construct the idea of the Philippines as their home?
 - c. For the students, how do the artists connect themselves to home?

2. What are the students' reflections about their Filipino identity?
 - a. How do the students compare their own constructions of the Philippines as their homeland with the artists' ideas of the Philippines as their home? Is it similar or different?
 - b. How does the song affirm or change their idea of being Filipino?

Because the main focus of this research is the student responses, the study does not carry out an extensive reading of the song "Children of the Sun" textually or musically. In the same manner, the research does not delve into the biography of the songwriters in Deep Foundation; however, it contextualizes the song by citing the importance of Hip Hop expressions such as rap music among Filipino Americans. In this study, to refer to the song "Children of the Sun," both the terms ^[3]"Hip Hop" and "rap song" are used.

The students represent Filipinos from Home (the Philippines) and Deep Foundation as the songwriters from the Diaspora. Although these two groups are shaped by a myriad of factors (age, gender, religion, social standing, etc.), the study intends to connect the narratives of the Diaspora (who claim to be Filipinos) with the respondents (students who analyze the song as Filipinos) and investigate what emerges from this interaction.

3 Although Hip Hop is associated with rap music, according to the Hip Hop icon Afrika Bambaataa on daveyd.com, Hip Hop culture encompasses not only rap music but also graffiti, breakdance, djaying, and fashion.

However, a caveat is in place: I present this study not so much as to propose an all-encompassing theory of the nation and the diaspora but as to describe a construct of the Filipino that emerges from the particular moment of student responding toward the song. Thus, the study generally aims to find out how the concepts of home and identity from the diasporic margins are received by those from the nation-state. The responses then become the site of interaction of Filipinos and Filipino Americans which will in the future pave the way for more studies about the Filipino identity and enrich such application in literary pedagogy.

RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

Nation: Imagined Community, In-between spaces, and Postcolonial Experience

The study which probes the notion of Filipino identity, a very complicated concept in itself, has to explore the idea of how nations came to be. Benedict Anderson (1991, 12) defined nationalism as “imagined communities” and departed from Gellner who claimed that nationalism is merely an ‘invention.’ For Anderson it is not about authenticity or falsity, but as to how communities—whether small or big—imagine themselves. The nation, although an abstraction, presents an image of unity among individuals, who, even when they do not see each other or will never meet, feel an affinity, “a deep, horizontal comradeship (16)” with each other. This imagined community perceives itself as limited because the nation has boundaries which separate itself from other nations but at the same time the nation desires to be free and sovereign (16). As an imagined community, the Filipino nation is thus held together by an image of communion and solidarity. Since the nation is “a cultural artifact” cultural roots are necessary in analyzing national identity (Anderson, 16).

These cultural roots, for instance, explain why people who belong to the same nation lay their lives—to kill or die—for their country. Anderson (1991, 129) explained: “...nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love.” Anderson further identified language—most especially poetry and songs—as one very important tie that binds people of the nation to their past and to their present situation (132). The nation appears then as a powerful totalizing unit. However, Bhabha (1994, 215) challenged the

homogenizing and essentializing power of communities or nations. In “Dissemination” (one of the essays in his book *Location of Culture*), he drew from various scholars like Fanon and Kristeva in pointing out that the nation is a dynamic, on-going process, one which is “temporal.” Fanon, for instance, stated how easily it is for subordinate people to celebrate the past—their cultural traditions and histories—or to affix and essentialize their present time. For Fanon the people dwell in the ‘zone of occult instability.’ From this, the national culture is articulated not as an idealized static form but ‘a dialectic of various temporalities’ (Fanon, as cited in Bhaba, 216).

Mentioning a work by a performance artist who resided on the Mexico/US border, Bhabha (1994, 7) illustrated how the ‘in-between space’ is a site of “intervention” when the past is recalled not only for some “aesthetic” or “social cause” but becomes “part of the necessity, not the nostalgia of the living.” Native intellectuals, according to Fanon (1963, 210), turn towards the past which has been destroyed by colonialism to give back its value and dignity, and in the process “rehabilitate” the nation and make it move forward into the future. However, glorifying the past culture as a way to exist against the West is not enough. Authentic work of art involves acknowledging that “the truths of the nation are in the first place its realities” (225). Native intellectuals who wish to engage with the people in the decolonization process must take part in the struggle, realizing that the “national culture is not a folklore, nor an abstract populism that believes it can discover the people’s true nature.... A national culture in underdeveloped countries should therefore take its place at the very heart of the struggle for freedom which these countries are carrying on” (Fanon 1963, 233).

In the chapter “The Pitfalls of National Consciousness” from *The Wretched of the Earth*, Fanon (1963) discussed the fate of newly independent nations by using postcolonial experiences of African nations as examples. For a nation to be sovereign and free from the remnants of colonization and the self-serving national bourgeoisie, the concept of the nation should be made real and accessible to the people: “To educate the masses politically is to make the totality of the nation a reality to each citizen (200).”

Critiques like these enliven the discourse of national identity because they question the political, historical, literary signs (the homogenous characteristics) that define the people as a static unit. Bhabha (1994, 1-2) further posed the question and articulation of cultural identities in the “beyond” which is marked with a sense of ambivalence and distortion but

also which leads to boundaries of other voices. Confronted with the diaspora and forced migration, the Filipino people have to confront such realities as a postcolonized nation in conceptualizing the Filipino identity.

However, in critically translating indigenous theories that developed in the Philippines to provide a way for “cross cultural engagements” of Filipino and Filipino American scholars, Mendoza (2006) posited that dwelling in the ‘in-between spaces’ and ambivalences can be detrimental in articulating a national discourse as it only perpetuates neocolonialism, particularly when these terms are “crassly appropriated.” She made this statement in her discussion of the “programmatically trilogy of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, *Pantayong Pananaw*, and *Pilipinolohiya*,” (15) indigenous movements that seek to reclaim psychology, history, and social sciences from dominant Western scholars and their corresponding theories that appear irrelevant and inappropriate in the Filipino context. Mendoza, who herself is familiar with negotiating the in-between space of home and the diaspora, aimed to position herself as a “critical translator” of these indigenous theories with reference to poststructuralist critique. Interestingly, Mendoza has done what Guillermo (2003) has suggested in his critique of *Pantayong Pananaw*: make the theory more accessible and inclusive. According to Guillermo, having “communication and translation protocols” in place will make dialogue and interaction with more researchers possible.

In essence, indigenization is an act of resistance, of Filipinos defining themselves, “within the Filipino’s struggle for meaning, cultural survival, and nationhood (210).” These indigenous theories required an “indigenization from within” by utilizing “the indigenous culture, as at once, the starting point, source and basis of concepts, methods and theories” (55). Using the Filipino language, proponents and advocates of these indigenous movements seek to address the Great Divide which alienates the masses from the language of the elites and the ruling class. However, these theories have also been attacked as essentializing the Filipino experience. *Pantayong Pananaw*, for instance, developed by Zeus Salazar and his colleagues, worked towards a “national discourse” that aims to promote ‘totality’ (and not a totalized identity) through “closed circuit interaction” of the “*tayo*” (exclusive to Filipinos only) who would articulate “shared understanding of the nation’s history that can give force and direction to a collective vision of the future” which is different from the ‘nation’ created by the elites and the ruling class (91-94).

Indigenous theories offer an unequivocal stance about the nation that to others appear limiting and exclusionary. However, these are genuine and necessary responses of a people towards liberation of thought that would precede all physical and tangible liberation. It might also seem contradictory that I present these indigenous movements through Mendoza, someone who--she herself admits--dwells in the in-between space. Hybridity becomes relevant because it gives us a flexibility to articulate these "fixed" codes of identity so these indigenous theories can be made available for the diaspora. Although it is necessary to define ourselves and to identify the construct which emerges from this very definition, we could no longer rest in the static definition of the nation when our realities include migration and the diaspora. Mendoza wrote that in the Philippines, indigenous theorizing is more focused on more pressing issues rather than include the Filipino American diaspora, to which Tabios responded in her personal communication: '[Is] not the diaspora part of the Filipino history' (231). This proves that it is due time to include Filipino Americans in this quest for nationhood.

To articulate a national discourse which includes those of the diaspora might not be welcomed by others who have a straightforward idea of the nation. Some of these Filipino Americans do not speak the Filipino language. They are not born here or raised in the country. It is fitting thus to mention Roxas-Tope (1998, 208) who argued that although the construction of an essential and totalized identity may seem necessary for a nation's stability, "cultural purity is a delusion" (208). In her book *Unframing Nationalism*, the author analyzed postcolonial texts from Southeast Asian countries Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore, and identified how migration and diasporic movements challenge this desire for national homogeneity. For instance, analyzing postcolonial texts written in English, the author claimed that "English has been and can be a language of nationalism." (81) In fact, people inhabit English by modifying it according to their own localized experience (36). Indeed, the area of language is one that can arouse deep sentiments. Insistence of using Filipino (or Tagalog as in the case of the indigenous movements) to craft a national discourse alienate participants who do not speak Filipino. This is the consequence of using specific parameters in defining the nation. With the assumption that no identity is complete, national identity or nationalism then is a process or a construct borne out of difference and contradictions (Roxas-Tope, 1998, 217).

This study, which connects Home and nation as a site to probe the

shared Filipino identity, acknowledges the necessity of hybridity. Although at once discomfoting and uncertain, this point of “ambivalence” can lead to answer the question, posed by Stuart Hall, ‘what we have become.’ (225)

Diaspora and Home

Stuart Hall (1991, 223-225) presented two frameworks of conceptualizing cultural identity in analyzing the formation of identity from the diasporic margins. First is the perception of cultural identity fixed on ‘oneness’ grounded on stable, fixed “cultural codes.” Hall expounded that this is the essence of Caribbean or black experience that the diaspora will have to rediscover through representations in films. The second framework is more “unsettling” and dynamic because it connotes “constant transformation,” which examines the question ‘what we have become’ rather than ‘what we really are.’ According to Hall, the second definition of identity suggests that identity is “not a fixed essence,” thus it demystifies the point of origin as a physical place where a return is possible (231-232).

For the Filipino diasporic subjects, according to E. San Juan Jr. (2000), the point of return is postponed until there is economic security and until “there is a Filipino nation they can identify with.” Critically assessing the colonial and imperial relationship between the Philippines and the U.S.A., San Juan declared that the Filipino nation is not a national autonomy. Because of this, the diasporic subjects desires to return to “a village, town, or kinship network” instead of a nation and associates the homeland with childhood memories, histories, traditions, customs, popular culture icons, among others. However, San Juan emphasized that the future of Filipinos in the age of “global capitalism” lies in the struggle for autonomy in the Philippines. Thus, we can see how San Juan espoused a need for collaboration of Filipinos from the U.S and the Philippines towards freedom in the homeland. Recognizing political-economic roots of the Filipino diaspora, San Juan underscored the necessity of the political sovereignty of the homeland as a space where the diaspora can finally return to (236-237).

In Chapter 5 of *Migration and Revolution*, Aguilar (2014) problematized the concept of transnation, the connection between migrants (both in the US and Southeast Asian countries) and their homeland, the Philippines (174). In this chapter, Aguilar further delved into the concept of transnationalism among second generation Filipino Americans in the

U.S. Recovering their identities as Filipinos through education has become a process of ‘decolonization’ for some Filipino Americans who have moved to the US with their families as young children; learning about their parents’ national identity and claiming to be Filipinos have brought them a sense of “healing” from the “wounds of dislocation” (Strobel as cited by Aguilar 185). This second generation has increasingly identified themselves as Filipinos or Filipino Americans even when they barely or do not speak any Filipino language and know little about the Philippines (Espiritu and Wolf as cited by Aguilar, 191), often expressing their national identity through popular images of Filipino food or cultural symbols. From this, Aguilar described the position of transnationalism by second-generation Filipino Americans as having “consciously cultivate[d] an ethnic identity in order to fit into the multicultural United States. The crafting of difference is in pursuit of sameness.” For Aguilar, ‘decolonization’ is not a mere attempt to liberate the Philippines or to belong to it but “...quite instrumentally, it involves finding the postcolonial country in one’s heart in order to claim some legitimate space in the country where one’s parents have settled (192).”

Although Aguilar critically examined this desire of second-generation Filipino Americans to claim inclusion to the homeland, he did not dismiss them entirely: “They are extensions of the nation who must be welcomed but must also be inspected.” In fact, this transnationalism becomes springboard to interrogate the Filipino identity as he further posed the questions which also reverberate in this paper: “Who is the Filipino? “What does Filipinoness mean?” (198). This transnationalism embodied by Filipino Americans as way to connect to the homeland and/or find a place in the multicultural US present the challenge of setting the goal for a “deterioralized but incorporative nation.” And yet, this enduring question of national identity indicates that as far as the parental homeland is concerned the nation exists above any “discursive transnation.”

Hip hop as Political/Personal Expression: Resistance vs Assimilation

In the United States, Hip Hop has become a platform for Filipino Americans to assert their political and personal experiences. Although Hip Hop evolved from the African American diasporic communities in New York, Jeff Chang wrote in the foreword to *Empire of Funk: Hip Hop and Representation*

in *Filipina/o America* (2014) that Hip Hop "...has always been open to the presence of multiculturalism and polyculturalism" (xiii). Through a compilation of personal accounts and stories, rap songs/poetry, photography, conversations and dialogue, and essays, the book celebrates, chronicles, and critically analyzes the role of Filipino Americans in Hip Hop as well as the role of Hip Hop in the experiences of Filipino Americans.

Bischoff (2014, 250) affirmed the relevance of Hip Hop as "a tool to inspire Filipino American ethnic identity development, a deeper sense of critical consciousness, and ultimately resistance..." These Hip Hop artists, based on Bischoff's interview, are politically aware of the economic and cultural pressures of assimilating and desiring to be included to the dominant American culture. However, they use their knowledge about the historical and political struggles of Filipinos in their resistance against assimilation.

To understand such pressures of assimilation vis-à-vis resistance, it is important to cite David and Okazaki's argument towards a more rigorous assessment of quantifying Colonial Mentality to address the psychological problems of Filipino Americans (2014, 2). Citing various scholarly work on the psychological effects of colonization including Fanon's four phases of colonization, which begins with forced entry by a foreign group and ends with institutionalization of oppression in the colonized country, alongside a brief primer on Philippine history, the authors revealed how CM has made Filipino Americans inferior about their selves, bodies, and culture as well as discriminate "less Americanized Filipinos" and "tolerate oppression" (8). For instance, colonial mentality has also resulted to a divide among Filipino Americans, with more Americanized Filipino Americans discriminating against those who are more Filipinos in their behavior and language tagging them as "FOBs" or fresh-off-the-boats (10).

Filipino Americans, thus, grapple with these issues among themselves, negotiating the need to find a place within their host country and connect with each other in the diaspora based on their ethnic identity. However, the narratives of Hip Hop artists in *Empire of Funk* (2014) show how Hip Hop becomes a tool for "decolonization" where Filipino Americans proclaim their Filipino identity. In this paper, Hip Hop—through "Children of the Sun"—is used as a space where Filipino students learn about the stories of Filipino Americans as well as reflect about their own identities as Filipinos.

Reader's Response as "in-between space"

This study locates the site of the "in-between space" not only in the song "Children of the Sun" but also in the interaction of the respondents and the song. In crediting both the readers and the text as the site of meaning, Iser (1972), for instance, wrote that the text comes to life when it is realized by the reader. The "convergence of text and reader" (279) is brought about by the experience of the reader being "entangled" in the text, formulating expectations, asking questions, and making decisions in the reading process to make sense of the text to form "new experiences" (295). To further describe the experience of a reader in identifying with a character, Iser (1972) cited Poulet who described the individual's thought process in reading a text. However, Iser wished to develop Poulet's stance differently in saying that while the individual articulates the thoughts of the characters in the literary text, the real self does not completely disappear. Thus, the reading process constitutes an interaction of the "alien 'me'" and the "real, virtual 'me,'" with the real reader adjusting itself to the 'alien' aspect of himself/herself which articulates the thoughts of another character. This process yields a discovery of the "unformulated" in the text and about ourselves. Although not a literary text in the sense of the word that Iser was using, i.e., story, novel, play, etc., the rap song in this study is a collection of personal narratives that is rendered into rhythm. With this, the readers from the nation have to accommodate the artists' thoughts which would then shape their 'real selves' as they make realizations about themselves as Filipinos vis-à-vis the artists in the diaspora.

METHOD

The study centers on the song "Children of the Sun" by the New York-based rap group Deep Foundation. The song is part of their debut album "The First Draft" released in 2008. The song "Children of the Sun" was uploaded on YouTube by one of the group's members ILL Poe in 2009. Although Deep Foundation today is comprised of three main members CeeJay, ILL Poe, and Mugshot, they were joined by rappers/emcees Hydroponikz, Nomi, Koba, Proseed, Kiwi, and Incite for "Children of the Sun." All of these artists have lived in the US for "majority of their lives" (Cee Jay, personal communication).

I chose the song for three main reasons. I came across the song when it was introduced in English 846 AK (a class offered by the Kababayan Learning Community^[4]) to springboard the discussion on cultural identity. Also, out of all the songs covered in the said class, "Children of the Sun" primarily and boldly asserts the message of Filipino identity, with the opening lines spelling out "F-I- L-I-P-I-N-O". Thirdly, the songs show an explicit attempt to connect to the Philippines, having lines from Heber Bartolome's "Tayo'y Mga Pinoy" interspersed throughout the song and showing a clip of the said artist singing in the video. For these reasons, I wanted to bring the song from an English class in America of mostly Filipino American students to my own classroom of Filipino students in the Philippines.

The research respondents come from two Literature 21 (Literatures of the Philippines) sections in the second semester of School Year 2014-2015. These students, who come from different colleges (Business, Medical Technology, Education, Agriculture, etc.), are at least in their second year level in college. Their age ranged from 18 to 30. The song is discussed in class with generally aims to involve students in a critical and thorough examination of Philippine writings. Other themes include the self, relationships, society, gender, and transcendence. It was announced in class that they would listen to a rap song as a supplement or a spin-off activity to our discussion of the story *Flip Gothic* by Cecille Manguerra Brainard which explores the interaction of home and the diaspora in the search for identity when a young Filipino American girl born and raised in the US was sent to the Philippines. There had been no prior reference to political issues regarding migration; only those topics relevant to the text, such as cultural identity in the case of *Flip Gothic*, are part of the class discussion. Before participating in the activity, the students were informed that their answers would be used in a research project that I am undertaking and that they would be informed through our Facebook page if and when the paper would be published.

On the day of the activity, the questions were written on the board and read out aloud in class in case there were any clarifications:

1. What do the artists tell the listeners about who they are?
2. How do the artists construct the idea of the Philippines as their homeland?

4 Kababayan Learning Community is a "transfer and support group" which focuses on Filipino and Filipino American cultural experience at Skyline College in San Bruno, California. As a Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant from August 2013-April 2014, I was assigned at KLC to assist in their programs.

3. In the song, how do the artists connect themselves to the Philippines?
4. How is your perception of the Philippines as your home different from or similar to the artists' idea of home?
5. How does listening to the song (and reading the lyrics) change or affirm your perception of being Filipino?

The study situates the song as the Diaspora and the students as those from Home or the Philippines. The first three questions fall under the students' perception of the message of the song: who the artists are and how these artists construct the Philippines and connect themselves to the country. The last two questions address the students' reflections on the song as they compare their own ideas of home and the Filipino identity with those in the song.

To gather the data for the study, the students then watched the music video "Children of the Sun" from YouTube and read the lyrics of the song while writing their answers on a piece of paper. A copy of the song lyrics from English 846 class at Skyline College was used for the activity, but this time it was annotated and a glossary was provided to define important terms in the song which did not have enough context for students to grasp their meaning. After one hour, the papers were collected. A brief discussion followed with a few students sharing their responses to class. Synthesizing the discussion, I then reiterated the purpose of the activity: to discover further what the Filipino identity means to these Filipino American hip hop artists and how they as Filipino students respond to these messages.

The study is both quantitative and qualitative. Firstly, the study read the responses of the students and identified those that clearly addressed the question. From these responses, the most repeated phrases in their answers are counted. Furthermore, the study draws from the students' responses, quoting from them, to further trace how the students perceive song and how the song has made them reflect about their own concept of the Filipino identity.

ANALYSIS

Perceiving the message, connections, and constructions

"F-I-L-I-P-I-N-O"

Out of the 65 respondents in the study, 57 of them answered that the artists' message of the song is to claim that they are Filipinos. Forty-six (46) out of the 57 further specified that the artists are "proud" to be Filipinos and quoted lines from the songs that display their pride toward the Filipino heritage. For instance, 39 respondents use subordinating conjunctions such as "although," "despite," "even if," "but," "no matter" to express that although the artists are not born in the Philippines and are raised in a different country, they proclaim that they are still Filipinos. The line 'I hardly speak Visayan, my Tagalog's even worse/ But I represent the island like I'm down to die for turf' is quoted by 14 respondents to further explain their point that even though the artists don't speak any Filipino language identify as Filipinos. Furthermore, respondents also cited that although these artists are far away from the country, they trace their "roots" to the Philippines. Fifteen respondents also quoted the line 'My swagger be New York, but my blood was brewed in QC to explain that although they are from America they do not forget their homeland. Quoting these two lines from the song, the students acknowledge the diasporic background of the artists—that they are not fluent in any Filipino language and are born/raised outside the country, "not full blooded" or "American citizens" (Respondent 22).

According to Benedict Anderson (1991, 132), cultural artifacts bind the nation together, and one such powerful element is language. In responding to "Children of the Sun," the students listen to artists who do not speak any Filipino language but are deeply connected to the Philippines. This lend evidence to Roxas-Tope's (1998) arguments that language can be a medium of nationalist ideals, and in such case English, which is spoken by Filipino Americans who do not know any Filipino language. Although the country is geographically distant from the artists, they are willing to represent it and even die for the country. Even though the artists speak a different language and are away from the country they identified as home, most students were able to recognize that the message of the song was to proclaim they are Filipinos and they belong to the nation.

“Warriors”

Students also responded to the song by finding out how the artists construct the Philippines as their homeland. Thirty five (35) respondents identified that the artists perceive the country to have had a long history of struggle—“endless and countless fights” (Respondent 16), “different hardships” (Respondent 59), “a lot of suffering” (Respondent 11) — against different colonizers to attain freedom and independence. Respondents pointed that the song highlights our ancestors, heroes, and various historical figures that “[defended] the homeland” (Respondent 23). Respondent 39 explained that “the artists... [visualized] their homeland as the land of the warrior”; Respondent 9 said that the artists view it as a “brave nation.” Similarly, Respondent 53 emphasized that the artists saw the Philippines as “home of warriors, great ancestors,” because although the country is “colonized” it still “stands firmly.” Moreover, 14 respondents mentioned that the artists connect themselves to the Philippines by studying about the country’s history. Respondents 8, 50, 53, and 55 mentioned that studying history and “sharing what they have learned about history” (Respondent 49) provide a link for the artists to the country. They also quoted the lines from the song: ‘I study People Power and what it really means,’ and “Read Amado Guerrero’s book about the Philippines.’ Respondent 30 also mentioned that the artists are “bringing back history” as a source of “inspiration” and pride.

Bhabha (1994, 7) has mentioned how going back to the past can serve as means for “intervention” as it not only connotes a sense of “nostalgia” but “necessity.” We see from these responses that students identified how history is important for these the Filipino American artists from beyond the nation’s border because it is a source of pride and connection to the homeland. As noted by Bischoff (2014, 250), even though Filipino Hip Hop artists are pressured to assimilate into the dominant White culture, they are still motivated to learn more about “Filipino cultural symbols, language, and lineage.” Furthermore, they use their knowledge of history not only to merely remember the past but also to provide a framework for resisting oppressive forces and proclaiming their Filipino identity.

Twenty-four (24) respondents cited that being proud as Filipinos and taking pride of the culture, popular personalities, heroes, and the Filipino’s hardworking attitude is a way for the artists to connect to the country. Six respondents (22, 28, 7, 29, 42, and 59) also took note that the artists

identified with Filipino attributes. This observation is exemplified in the following statements: “The artists connect themselves to the Philippines as having the same strong Filipino Spirit that our ancestors had...They have the will power like our Bayani, leaders, professionals who strive to do their best not to be easily discriminated” (Respondent 28). Six Respondents also answered that the artists connected themselves to the Philippines with their appearance as having “brown, sun-kissed skin” (Respondent 25) and “flat nose” (Respondent 18). Respondent 22 explained further: “We all should not dream about becoming white because being brown is who we are and we should be proud of it.”

Five respondents (52, 12, 55, 32, and 63) pointed out that the artists were able to connect to the homeland by citing the problem on colonial mentality. Respondent 32 explained: “I think the artists were able to connect themselves by relating to the natives of the country. Saying that they too experienced the insecure culture mentality...” Respondent 55 also mentioned the role of the artists in raising the Filipino people’s critical consciousness about their culture: “They connect themselves unveiling the naked truths of our country. They remind the citizens that we are slowly erasing our culture. They help the Filipinos open their eyes to see [what is] happening in our country.” According to David and Okazaki (2006) colonial mentality—the feeling of inferiority to the dominant White culture—poses negative effects to the Filipino American psyche. Because these artists have experienced this “insecure culture mentality” (according to one respondent), they can connect with Filipinos in the Philippines and remind them about the reality and truth of colonial mentality.

It is noteworthy to point out that some students recognize the artists’ role in bringing the truth about colonial mentality. Respondent 55, for instance, acknowledged the artists’ role in “unveiling truths” in the country. Respondent 16, for instance, saw the artists themselves as freedom fighters: “The artists introduced themselves as fighters or warriors...Although they have not been able to live in the Philippines for many years, their eagerness to promote freedom in the Philippines is felt....” In the “in-between-space” (Bhabha, 1994) of listening and responding to the song “Children of the Sun”—a platform for Filipino Americans to assert their identities as Filipinos and reconnect themselves to the country they identify as a place where they belong—listeners are reminded of the colonial past and the postcolonial reality of the country.

Reflecting about the Filipino Identity

Glorious Past, Brown Pride vs White Dreams, Whitening Soap

Seventeen (17) respondents reflected that their perceptions about the Philippines is similar to the artists because like them, they are also proud to be Filipinos. These respondents agreed with the song that the sacrifice of our heroes and the hardworking qualities of Filipinos are a source of pride. In a rather impassioned explanation, Respondent 33 remarked: "I will still be proud of being a Filipino. Even if the western people would insult my culture and my color I would rather [bear] their insults than change my true self and erase my culture. I am proud that the blood of heroes runs into my veins." In listening to the song, students agreed with the artists in taking pride of the country.

Anderson (1991, 129) posited that nationalism inspires "self-sacrificing love." We can see how the artists from beyond the diaspora who have expressed this song in the context of Hip Hop artists asserting their identities in resisting assimilation (Bischoff, 2014) inspire love of country among the respondents. Interestingly, these respondents also have placed themselves in the songwriters' shoes in holding firm to their identity vis-à-vis "insults" against their culture and features.

Aside from celebrating Filipino qualities and history, the respondents also agreed that colonial mentality is a problem in the country. Interestingly, 17 respondents mentioned the problem of colonial mentality or of desiring to be "white," "Americans," or "westernized"; they also reflected about their personal experiences in wishing to be "white" or have "foreign blood." Furthermore, two respondents reflected about the effects of colonization on Filipinos. Respondent 7 stated that "...[al]though the colonizing powers have left, [its] people still have the mentality of those colonizing powers and cannot embrace fully our culture now that we are free to." Respondent 16 critically assessed the vestiges of the colonial power and their effect towards Filipinos' national consciousness:

I couldn't see Philippines as free and independent. Like what they perceive, I still think that we are wrapped around the neck by the Americans because of how strong they influence us through the way we talk and our way of living. We have not shaped ourselves as Filipinos

and haven't embraced yet what it means being a Filipino, physically and emotionally.

San Juan (2000) argued that the Philippines is not autonomous, hence Filipinos should be united in this quest for national liberation. The artists of the song "Children of the Sun" were aware of the struggle for independence in the home country. Listening to the song, respondents acknowledged that "colonial mentality" prevents Filipinos from embracing "what it means to be Filipino." What does it mean to be Filipino? For some respondents, being Filipino means possessing physical attributes such as having brown skin and a flat nose. With these responses, the song seems to rely on the first framework of identity—according to Hall (1991)—which emphasizes on "cultural codes" such as skin color, focusing on answering the question 'what we really are.' This would lead to the danger of essentializing the Filipino as having brown skin. However, "this essence" somehow provides a framework for providing a critique against colonial mentality and a springboard to celebrate one's identity vis-à-vis the dominant western culture.

Interestingly, there were only two respondents who disagreed with the artists' portrayal of the Philippines. Respondent 2 felt that the artists are "adoring the idea of 'Philippines' too well" and that they portray it "as the best country with the greatest history." Even though some respondents took pride with the hardworking nature of Filipinos proclaimed in the song, Respondent 45 observed that most of the Filipinos are unemployed even though they are "hardworking." These responses, albeit only a few, suggest that the songwriters' image of the Philippines is very idealistic. Subscribing to these ideas or symbols about the Filipino identity is important for Filipino Americans as they forged an identity in a multicultural society like the United States (Aguilar, 2014). Thus, there is a danger for romanticizing and valorizing the Philippines among the diaspora as they try to negotiate their identities. The interaction of the song and respondents proves the rich space to challenge preconceived ideas about the nation, from the standpoint of those inside and outside the country.

Pride vs. Inferiority

Ten respondents revealed that the song affirmed their idea that being Filipino is something to be proud of. As for respondent 28, the song affirmed her

idea of Filipino because a “true Filipino always looks back from where he or she came from and never forget that fact...Being a true Filipino is also being proud of who they are and where they come from.” To which she quoted lines from the song, ‘I take pride in the country where I came from... but never fear, just ‘cause I’m livin’ here, The pride for my people will never disappear.’ Respondent 22 felt glad that “even the Filipino-Americans see or view the Filipinos the same way as I do.” Respondent 18 wrote that the song affirmed her idea of being a Filipino because “it is all about being proud” and “not all about being a ‘perfect’ Filipino, as in, speaking the mother tongue, following old traditions, etc.” Meanwhile 8 respondents felt that the song affirmed their idea that Filipinos are slowly losing their culture because of colonial mentality. Respondent 41, for example, wrote that the song affirmed “[his] idea that some of us [are ashamed] of our real identity and shows our colonial mentality. Respondent 2 agreed that “our notion of physical beauty must be changed” and went on to say “I will join them [the artists] as they disagree to what has been imposed.” Four respondents talked about how the song changed their idea of being Filipino. Respondent 4 admitted that the song “changes [him] from just being [apathetic] or ‘baliwala’ to be proud of being Filipino.” Respondent 15 echoed this point when she wrote:

“The...song really has a big impact to me because I was not really that proud of being a Filipino but when I’ve read the lyrics, knowing that the writers are not purely Filipinos but when I’ve read the lyrics, it is so shameful...Some of them aren’t even living here but they [are] able to show how proud they are [even if] a little portion of their blood is Filipino. I am also thankful because they were able to make this song and was able to change my perception of the Philippines.”

Eye-Opener

Eighteen respondents, on the other hand, talked about the song’s effect on them, mentioning that the song made them realize the importance of love the country (even more) or to be proud in being Filipino. Respondent 8 also reflected about colonial mentality and skin color: “I’ve always wanted to have white skin but this song reminds me to take pride of my skin color because it represents my country and my culture.... I always thought that the more white you are, the more beautiful you are, but no. This song reminds

us to change that mindset of ours.” Respondent 7 wrote that she has always wanted to go out of the country but listening to the song, she has not only realized why one should take pride in being Filipino; she was resolved to stop trying to get away and remove myself from the culture that I have grown up with.” Respondent 24 also compared herself to the artists who were very “patriotic,” unlike her who “has always wanted to go out of the country and could barely sing the national anthem “Lupang Hinirang.” She felt “ashamed,” but described the artists as “passionate which made them so inspiring for those people like [her] who almost forgot the essence of [her] nationality.” The song was an “eye-opener” for her to be proud of her identity as Filipino “because there are still Filipinos out there away from the country who really wanted to be here in the Philippines but they can’t, so they’re making so much effort to at least connect with the country through a song.”

The respondents analyzed their attitude towards their country and the Filipino identity by comparing it with those in the song. Responding to the message of the diaspora who are from beyond the center (Bhabha, 1994), students felt that pride of one’s country is what matters and not about being a ‘pure’ or ‘perfect’ Filipino. The song challenged the essential characteristics that define the nation (speaking the native language, following cultural traditions, etc.) The song moved them to admit how colonial mentality made them feel inferior, and to take pride in one’s identity as Filipino.

CONCLUSION

Pinoy Pride: Personal Connection to the Nation

Whether done so to conform to the multicultural U.S. (Aguilar, 2014), the song was nonetheless an indictment against colonial mentality and a declaration of Filipino pride. Listening to the song and reading the lyrics, respondents inhabited the thoughts and narratives of the songwriters while they reflected about their own Filipino identity. According to Iser (1979), this process leads to a discovery about the text and oneself. Listening to the song and reading the lyrics enabled respondents to relate an abstract concept such as nationalism into their own lives. For instance, responding to the artists who narrated their story from the diaspora and claimed to be Filipinos, students felt that language and geography do not define who we really are as Filipinos. What matters most, for instance, is one’s pride towards

his or her culture and heritage. But what have we become then as Filipinos? It appears that Pinoy Pride has become a marker of identity, and it emerged in this study as a concept that hinted toward defining ‘who the Filipino is.’

“Pinoy pride” seemed to mediate between the questions: “Who we really are?” and “What have we become?” Used in popular culture and mass media, Pinoy Pride indicates Filipino triumphalism and exceptionalism. One blog article specifically noted how Pinoy Pride is used to counter feelings of inadequacy and shame for Filipinos to remind themselves that they are exceptional, superior, or “world-class” (Diokno, 2008). In this research, Pinoy Pride however has become a unifying force for Filipinos—both from the Diaspora and the nation—to identify with each other. Confronted with colonial mentality and inferiority, respondents agreed with the songwriters that Filipino identity is worthy of pride. For instance, this is shown in how both the artists and the respondents identify physical attributes such as having “flat nose” and “brown skin” as something that should be celebrated as essential Filipino characteristic in response to the pressures of becoming “white.” Thus although the framing of such identity is narrow and limiting, these views reveal how both Filipinos and Filipino Americans are united in their struggle against colonial mentality and towards decolonization.

As teacher and researcher, I have to admit that it is quite heartwarming to discover that my students embraced these Hip Hop artists into the nation, see beyond their differences, acknowledge that they share the same home and realize that the sense of pride for one’s nation is what makes a Filipino. Some students even perceive these artists as “warriors” or “freedom fighters” who have revealed the truths about their own colonial mentality and inferiority. Although I would have wanted the respondents to do a more incisive comparison between their own ideas of the Philippines and the artists, only two respondents identified that the songwriters tend to present an idealized version of the country. However, even as they agreed with the artists, these respondents sincerely engaged with the song by bringing their own thoughts and experiences. They admitted their own sense of inferiority as Filipinos or their desire to get away from the country.

Where do we go from here? The challenge is to make nationalism, according to Fanon (1963), a personally relevant experience. National identity and diaspora may be complex concepts, but it should not deter anyone to grapple with these ideas and explore their hold and influence on our lives. For one thing, the literature classroom can be a place to tirelessly

ask the persistent questions about the Filipino identity and to experience the answers on a concrete, personal level. With such personal and critical approach, the nation will become less of an abstraction but as an identity which students share with Filipinos both in the country and in the diaspora. This sense of camaraderie, it is hoped, will lead to thought and action which will be more mindful with the progress and welfare of the 'imagined community.' Most of all, I look forward to the conceptualization of more studies that would bring the diaspora and the nation together to give "life and dynamic power" (Fanon, 1963, 204) to national consciousness.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 **Deep Foundation**, consisting of 3 emcees representing Queens and New Jersey, remains a benchmark in socially relevant hip hop. With lyrics based on their lives and personal experiences, Ceejay, ILL Poe and MUG Shot have given voice to an under-represented Filipino American demographic, and seek to imbue their compatriots, both young and old, with a renewed sense of cultural pride. Deep Foundation has brought its boom-bap era influenced hip hop to domestic and international audiences since 2002. With the release of their debut album, "The First Draft," and groundbreaking music videos for "Children of the Sun" and "Sleep," Deep Foundation has captured the hearts and imagination of fans worldwide. In addition to their musical success, the media has also taken note of their drive and originality, having the Myx Channel, PBS, The Filipino Channel, Spike TV and HBO. They have released a brand new EP entitled "Deep Foundation & Hydroponikz present Generation ILL" which is available now on iTunes and CD Baby. From
- 2 **Bulol**, or "Ifugao rice god," is a carved human figurine into which a certain class of anito is said to incorporate itself when worshipped. from
- 3 **Koba** is the name of a popular fugitive in Georgia and fictional hero of Georgian author Kazbek in "Nunu." Both these personas are known to fight for the rights of the people. Stalin also used the nickname in his early years. (from [https:// www.marxists.org/glossary/people /s/t.htm](https://www.marxists.org/glossary/people/s/t.htm))
- 4 **Kaliph Pulaka** also known as Lapu-Lapu who is a Muslim chieftain according to the Sulu oral tradition. (from <http://www.affordablecebu.com>)
- 5 **Elorde, Pancho Villa** are famous Filipino boxers
- 6 **kampilan** or sword used by various ethnic groups in the Philippines (from Wikipedia)
- 7 **veteranos** or war veterans
- 8 **Ka Bel** or Crispin Beltran (1993-2008) was a Filipino politician and labor leader.

Celebrated as the “Grand Old Man of Philippine Labor,” he represented Anakpawis and Bayan Muna as senator. (from Wikipedia)

- 9 **Michelle Malkin** is an American conservative journalist of Filipino descent. She is a blogger, political commentator, and author who has appeared on Fox News. (from Wikipedia)
- 10 **Dilla** is the stage name of James Dewitt Yancey, an American record producer and rapper who emerged from the mid-1990s underground hip hop scene in Detroit, Michigan. (from Wikipedia)

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APPENDIX

(Copy of the song lyrics and footnotes distributed in class)

“Children of the Sun” (REMIX)

Deep Foundation1

<https://youtu.be/Kj1nGRyyoBE>***Hydroponikz:***

I’m an F-I-L-I-P-I-N-O

F-I-L-I-P-I-N-P

F-I-L-I, Yeah, I am Dro, no intro, P-I-N-O you don’t know?

Yeah, I’m comin’ from the motherland, hot like P.I. summer, man

- 5 Harder than the palo of my mother’s hand, understand?
My swagger be New York, but my blood was brewed in QC.
So, chill with the brutal abuse of views we choose to believe,
Children of the Sun, you better rock it if you
Proud of who you are, or it’s red on top of the blue.
- 10 Sylin’ on the Island, the story of a warrior,
From the trouble to the struggle, and from Rizal to Gloria,
We bringin’ you a sequel ‘till our treatment is equal,
This is for my People, People, my People!
We tryin’ to be some citizens, it’s better for our kids, but then.
- 15 We gotta teach ‘em sense, our ancestors weren’t just businessmen
Live with Uncle Sam, he sees I got my Mother’s eyes,
But I’m proud of who I am: Son of the Sun up in the sky.

Nomi:

I hardly speak Visayan, my Tagalog’s even worse

But I represent the island like I’m down to die for turf

- 20 A history of violence when the Spanish went on search
For natural resource, they thought the earth was theirs
Ancestors deserve credit for this verse
‘Cause their freedom fightin’ spirit still observes what occurs
Even in America we think we got it made
- 25 Seen a woman leave her family, just be a maid
I think about history and how we’ve been betrayed
In a capitalist system, you’ll always be enslaved
I study People Power and what it really means
Read Amado Guerrero’s book about the Philippines

- 30 Still got colonized with whitening cream
 U.S. military presence in the jungles that are green
 Foreign companies stealing gold from the earth
 This is the new mind of people; call it rebirth

Koba:

- Rise like Bulol², high like Apo
- 35 Rise from below, o-o, bayan ko
 From the undertow I go and see a million eyes hopin'
 The real dragon flies out when the prison doors are open
 Our roots deep in, in poverty and,
 My Lola's tears fall and water this tree
- 40 Pinatubo of our perils leaves a crater in my soul
 But insurrection in my heart is set and ready to explode
 Let the flood waters go, lay siege to the palace see,
 Change without struggle is an empty fallacy
 Guerilla, emcee, my mic, my gun, verbal
- 45 Clip emptied, the time has come
 DF my kasamas, yes the battlelines are drawn
 Between the lines of the page we storm, singin' our song
 Koba³ movin' mountains 'til the people's war is won
 It's comin' back around again, children of the sun

Heber Bartolome:

- 50 *Tayo'y mga Pinoy*
Tayo'y Hindi Kano
Wag kang mahihiya
Kon ang ilong mo ay, pango

M.U.G SHOT:

- With a longing to embody the soul of my Filipinos
- 55 The love of my native people, sweeter than chicken tocino
 Kaliph Pulaka⁴ the hero, death of Ninoy Aquino
 Marcos's reign, was mo' bleak, word to Cuttino (sino?)
 Who among us are proud of what we've inherited
 Not tryin' to be American, but the spirit of heritage
- 60 We used to be warriors, Spanish destroyed the evidence
 Gave us the Santo Niño, and Jesus as our eminence
 Now, the skin is browned by the sun on our banner
 Same skin we deny, tryin' not to get tanner

- Doesn't matter to the youth I try to touch with this song
 65 The boys that grow to be men, but can't be tuck their barong
 Girls that grow to be women, dream of glitter and gold
 Men dream of giving 'em things for the things they would hold
 'Cause every stroke of my words paints the story I've told
 Give me the spear, and the jungle, and the glory of old

Proseed:

- 70 I take pride in the country where I came from
 Represented by three stars with an eight-point sun
 Known for hard workers, you can compare to none
 Where a smile and a nod's part of our native tongue
 We are nurses, doctors and engineers,
 75 Workin' hard for the dollars with sweat and tears
 But never fear, just 'cause I'm livin' here,
 The pride for my people will never disappear

ILL POE:

- I'm Elorde, Pancho Villa⁵, Pacquiao packed in one
 Pack power in both hands, I pack a punch
 80 Packin' power in my verse, so I impact with words
 Plus they know my skin is tough much like pachyderm
 People Power Revolution, put your deuces up for peace
 Pump your fist up in the air, brown and proud, and to the beat (to the beat)
 Pilipinos be as proud as you can be
 85 Make sure our predecessors are proud of you and me
 From Datu Lapu of the Sultan of Sulu
 Killed Magellan with *kampilan*⁶ and spears, yeah, it was brutal
 Dr. Jose Rizal and La Liga Filipina
 "El Filibusterismo" speaks of freedom for the people
 90 Emilio Aguinaldo, Bonifacio and his sword
 Regardless of the source for the cause we stood and fought
 Remember our history, be proud who we've become
 AS this song will tell the tales of the children of the sun

Tayo'y mga Pinoy

- 95 *Tayo'y Hindi Kano*

*Wag kang mahihiya**Kon ang ilong mo ay, pango*

Kiwi:

- From the shores of Cebu, the hills of Cordi's
 From World War II, the 1940s
 100 The veteranos,⁷ the fight to reclaim
 The colonized mind, the remnants of Spain
 It's the hand of a peasant, the sword of a datu
 That moment when you say you gotta do what you got to
 Well, we gotta take it back for the masa
 105 *Para sa mga kaibigan at mga kasama*
Sa Pilipinas, 'di bali kung walang pera
Sobrang kawawa, maraming mga problema
 I do it for Gabriella, the spirit of Ka Bel⁸
 We celebrate our people but all is not well
 110 Ain't hard to tell, look where we've been
 They're feeding us with poison to whiten up our skin
 They're pushing Fox news, that Michelle Malkin⁹
 I'm lookin' at the screen like, "She ain't my kin..."

Encite:

- Land of the morning, child of the sun infinite
 115 Who spit it? The kid with the sun and start fitted
 No gimmicks, it's Filipino specific
 So listen up! Ears open and mouth shut (fucker)
 These are the people that I'm reaching toward,
 The same people that I'm motherfucking speaking for
 120 Speaking of speaking—I can't with my native tongue
 But with my people, man, you know I'm not the only one
 Pops was a merchang marine,
 Who saw the world beyond the shores of the Philippines
 Met my mother in the U.S. surprisingly
 125 I got the blood of a nomad inside of me
 It inspires me of what I aspire to be
 They speak their stories violently
 I pass it on to my son and I'm hoping
 Bumping him Dillia¹⁰ while teaching him close open

CeeJay:

- 130 They only show light-skinned people on the TV screen
 That's why so many wish that their skin was that white in their dreams
 WE avoid the sun and even use lightening cream

- Insecurely taking this obsession to the extreme
 This is the mentality that I knew as a child
- 135 The ideal, light-skin, pointed-nose profile
 I'd rather bare the comments people say to insult 'ya
 Than poison my skin and erase my culture
 If two percent of the Filipinos are mestizo
 Then TV and movie stars don't represent the people
- 140 Our notion of beauty needs to be changed
 The Spanish are gone, but mindset still remains
 White people conquered our country and change our religion
 Gave us their systems, imposed their way of living
 To them we were inferior, join me an disagree
- 145 I am brown, I am proud, Filipino, this is we

Tayo'y mga Pinoy
Tayo'y Hindi Kano
Wag kang mahihiya
Kon ang ilong mo ay, pango

- 150 *Bakit kaya tayo ay ganito*
Bakit nanggagaya, meron naman tayo

- Tayo'y mga Pinoy*
Tayo'y Hindi Kano
Wag kang mahihiya
- 155 *Kon ang ilong mo ay, pango*



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Dynamics of Scapegoating in Family Systems

Margaret Helen U. Alvarez
Silliman University

Nelly Z. Limbadan
Ateneo de Davao University

This paper concerns sibling roles in family systems, with a focus on the child frequently singled out for disfavor. Eleven Filipino adults were interviewed on family myths and rules, the child who frequently fails to follow such rules, and the behavior and subsequent interaction between family members. Results indicated that this sibling was usually preferred or favored by one or the other of the parents (i.e., parental tolerance), resulting in sibling conflict, the issue usually revolving around a sense of entitlement, responsibility, and financial matters. Some implications for educators, psychologists, and parents include: 1) the importance of nongenetic influences on development; 2) the shift from a family-by-family frame of reference to an individual-by-individual perspective within the family as critical for clinicians; and, 3) the usefulness to parents of acknowledging that differential appreciation is more likely to help their children than preferential treatment.

Keywords: sibling roles, scapegoat, identified patient, family myths, Filipino family.

INTRODUCTION

In an earlier study on the tagasalo personality (Udarbe, 2001), the research focus at the time concerned the dynamics behind the development of tagasalo (caretaker) behavior among families: Who is the tagasalo and why do particular children develop this role? In the course of that study, however, there was invariably identified among brothers and sisters, the

sibling “least like the tagasalo”. The issue in the present study now turns to “that other” sibling—not quite the opposite, but certainly not the tagasalo.

In the tagasalo study (Udarbe, 1998), family members were simply asked to qualitatively describe each of the other family members in order to learn more about tagasalo characteristics. It gradually became apparent, however, that another sibling would be contrasted and compared with the tagasalo in ways that were hardly complimentary. Francine Klagsbrun in her classic study of family relationships—in particular, sibling relationships—aptly titled *Mixed Feelings* (1992), devotes a chapter to the “scapegoat”. It appeared that the issue in such families was not favoritism but its opposite.

Klagsbrun relates how in the Bible two goats were used as part of a ritual in which people atoned for their sins. One, chosen by lot from the two and known as the scapegoat, was symbolically laden with all the bad deeds and wrongdoings of the people and sent off into the wilderness. The other, the pure goat, was set aside as a special offering to the Lord. In modern times, Klagsbrun adds, there exist families in which one child is seen as the bearer of all bad deeds and wrongdoings. While not sent off into the wilderness, the child is picked on, blamed and criticized more often than other children. Often that “bad” child is contrasted to a “good” one.

This latter role of scapegoat seems to be one reminiscent of the family member identified by Filipino child psychologist Ma. Lourdes Arellano-Carandang (1987) as the “identified patient” (I.P.)—the siren that signals that there is something not quite right in the family. Elsewhere, we hear about the “problem child” or the “black sheep”, the child with no readily identifiable outstanding characteristics who then becomes different in a negative way, the “symptom carrier” or the “child tyrant,” even the “family barometer”.

We are warned time and again in parenting, teaching, and clinical psychology to refrain from labelling children. The person who usually suffers is naturally the one, Klagsbrun (1992) says, “singled out for disfavor.” Scapegoating is one of the darker sides of family life for siblings, and one that usually requires professional help to undo. Klagsbrun refers to the dynamics of sibling relationships as one of “balancing the seesaw.” About 80% of people, maybe even more, grow up with siblings, but so few people have actually examined the meaning of the sibling bond in their lives.

The present study examined the sibling relationship with a special focus on the role of a scapegoat. The label is unfortunate, given its history

and the implications in its use. Using the term scapegoat, however, draws attention to the usefulness of its role in family systems.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Much of family literature is replete with studies about the parent-child relationship, the development of personality as influenced by parental behavior, and even the influences of other social forces such as the extended family, the school, or the church. The therapist Daniel Gottlieb, popular for his talk-show “Family Matters” has chapters in his book *Voices in the Family* (1991) entitled *Our Parents, Our Mates, Our Children, and Our Selves*, and hardly a reference to the sibling relationship. Closer to home, Filipino psychologist Alexa Abrenica, in relating the dynamics of midlife through her book *Spaces* (2002), describes the adult’s social network in *Friends, Family, and Kin*; there is no mention of the support to be found in the sibling bond. In writing about midlife, prominent Filipino women and men (Kalaw-Tirol, 1994, 1997) describe relationships with parents and partners, children and grandparents, but no one relates the struggles and triumphs that could only be found in the sibling relationship—a frequently neglected interpersonal network. But the power of Goldklank’s 1986 study of family therapists’ roles in their families of origin lay in its inclusion of siblings who confirmed their differing roles from those of their family therapist-siblings.

As early as the 1970s, researchers such as Kidwell and Smith pointed to the importance of looking into family characteristics related to the structure of the sibling relationship. Kidwell (1981) drew on the “uniqueness theory” that suggests that firstborns and lastborns as well as only-born male or only-born female children enjoy an inherent uniqueness in contrast to a middleborn or a child with same-sex siblings. Similarly, Smith (1984) spoke of the effects of “structural differentiation of positions in sibling groups.” A child in a family in which the majority of the children are of the other sex has a more differentiated position than a child who is not in a “sex minority.” Likewise, a first- or lastborn is more differentiated from siblings than a middleborn, who is “surrounded” by siblings. As a result, particular children “deidentify” (to borrow a term from Schacter (1976). Taking that point a step further, siblings fit themselves into developmental niches that allow them space to express themselves in ways indicative that they are, in Sulloway’s words, *Born to Rebel* (1996).

Family Myths and the Scapegoat

In observations of family dynamics in therapy, Carandang (1987) has mentioned that children complement and need one another to become a whole, therapeutic sibling subsystem: each serves the other with her/his own specific function. The subsystem is therefore used as a built-in support mechanism. “There’s a certain kind of laughing you can do with a sister or brother that you can’t do with anybody else,” Klagsbrun (1992) quotes one respondent saying. Without therapeutic intervention, however, sibling roles and relationships are allowed to take their course from childhood into adulthood and all children play these out even in relationships beyond the family.

There are pervasive belief systems that the family upholds from generation to generation. Carandang (2004) calls these family myths. The strength or force of this mythology comes from the fact that it is usually unconscious; the rules and expectations that come from this belief are usually unarticulated. One of the basic questions to ask of any parent then is: What are/were your expectations of your children? The children themselves may be asked: What messages do/did you get from your parents? The family member who acts and destroys the myth is most likely to become the identified patient (the I.P.).

The concept of the I.P. prevents the instant labeling of any one family member as the patient. The I.P. usually fulfills the function of sending signals that the family system is in crisis and therefore in need of help from outside sources. This is exemplified in the seven-year-old who is frequently referred to the school counselor for lying and stealing, the 10-year-old who collects “tong” from the other parking boys at a busy street corner, the 11-year-old girl prostitute, the 12-year-old who has a growing drug dependency problem, even the 15-year-old runaway who always seems to have some problem with the law.

But how does one get “selected” to be the I.P.? Carandang ventures the theory—based on clinical observation and intuition—that it is “the most sensitive, most attuned, most caring, and most concerned about keeping the family intact and happy” that turns out to be the IP or the symptom-carrier. But the same thing was found in the tagasalo—which is in Carandang’s theoretical formulation just one expression of I.P. behavior. What of the child then who is “singled out for disfavor”?

In investigating the tagasalo personality (Udarbe, 1998), it was found that the tagasalo personality is not systematically related to gender nor birth order, but it can develop out of the need for a child to be different from a sibling who causes emotional upheaval in the family. Implicit in this finding is the rather negative view of the person identified as the least like the tagasalo, if not the opposite of the tagasalo.

What makes for differential treatment of children? On the most immediate level, Klagsbrun (1992) offers various causes: gender bias, disappointment in a child's abilities or achievements, and a basic incompatibility between parent and child—a “mismatch” of temperaments and personality. These immediate causes, she adds, actually mask deeper underlying ones that are closely tied to family or personal issues. Family relationships, Klagsbrun adds, follow patterns of behavior of which the individual participants are unaware; within those patterns, whatever affects one member of a family affects all others, and a member who is regarded as a problem may actually reflect a problem in the larger family system. That problem is often seen as a marital one that the partners are not willing or able to acknowledge, and then, by designating one child as troubled or difficult, the partners/parents may, without awareness, be using that child to deflect the difficulties between them.

This is where the concept of the identified patient comes in—an important aspect of family systems theory. In family systems terms, without realizing it, parents can use a particular child as a scapegoat in order to deny or bury marital problems. In every situation, all parties—parents, siblings, and scapegoated child—find their places and follow the steps that will push the real family difficulties underground. Carandang's metaphor for this is obvious in the phrase “sweeping tension under the rug.”

It is suggested that one way of examining the dark, underlying causes of scapegoating is to look at the parents as individuals who may unconsciously displace their own internal conflicts onto one child (Klagsbrun, 1992). Among the most destructive feelings parents displace onto a child are hatred, fear, or envy of a relative from the past, or identifying a son or a daughter with their own brothers or sisters of the same sex or birth positions.

Such issues undoubtedly have a long history and go very deep and it is expected that family members may not wish to talk about such matters, even if in fact they are aware of causes and effects on family members of how they are actually relating to one another.

Family Dynamics

In describing the Filipino family, Medina (1991) cites Castillo's 1970s work on nuclear and household families rather extensively. Castillo considers the household as the best operational unit for the analysis of family relationships: husband-wife relations, parent-child relations, and sibling relations, all of which are characterized by mutual love, protection and respect. Medina adds that brothers are expected to look after their sisters and protect them from harm; older siblings are given the responsibility to take care of the younger ones; and, younger siblings obey their elders and look up to them with respect. Sibling unity is expected to be carried over even after everyone is already married.

Authority in the Filipino family goes vertically downwards on the basis of age: older children, male or female, are dominant over younger ones. The eldest child, in particular, Medina says, has a "quasi-paternal" status and has authority, including the right to punish younger siblings for misbehavior. Medina, however, indicates that there has been a shift from this traditional authoritarianism due to modernization. Although deference may still be given to the elderly, "the young and better-educated breadwinner today may actually be the decision-maker and the real manager of the household" (p. 29).

Ventura (1985) had earlier pointed out several factors as influential in patterns of child-rearing among Filipino families, including the size of the family, the stage in the family life cycle, age, gender, and birth order of the child, social class, and rural/urban residence. In general, child-rearing is nurturant, affectionate, indulgent, and supportive. Children are encouraged to be dependent on parents and to strongly identify with the family. They are taught to be respectful and obedient to authority, to be shy rather than aggressive, to maintain excellent interpersonal relations with neighbors and kin, and to be self-reliant and industrious. Medina (1991) added that parental strictness depends on site (i.e., dangerous or hazardous to child's health), occasion, and birth order. The youngest child is usually the favorite.

Family Influences and Sibling Relationships

Frank J. Sulloway, in 1995, published the classic *Born to Rebel: Birth Order, Family Dynamics and Creative Lives* based on the premise that

“the personalities of siblings vary because they adopt different strategies in the universal quest for parental favor.” Sulloway’s most important finding was that eldest children identify with parents and authority, and support the status quo, whereas younger children rebel against it. His work illuminates the crucial influence that family niches have on personality, and documents the profound consequences of sibling competition, not only on individual development within the family, but on society as a whole. Harris (1999), however, objected to Sulloway’s findings theorizing, upon meta-analyses of Sulloway’s data that “peers shape personality more than parents do.”

Thus, studies on siblings and the sibling relationship may be found in *The Sibling Bond* by Bank and Kahn (1997), *Separate Lives* by Dunn and Plomin (1997), and *Sibling Relationships* by Sanders (2004). Bank and Kahn (1982, 1997), who conducted one of the first extensive considerations of the sibling relationship, define the sibling bond as “a connection between the selves, at both the intimate and public levels, of two siblings: it is a fitting together of two people’s identities. The bond is sometimes warm and positive but it may also be negative” (p. 15). Yet, unlike other family relationships marked by such rituals as baptisms, confirmation, engagement, weddings, divorce, no such rituals exist to celebrate sibling bonds nor are there legal means to make or break them.

Dunn and Plomin (1997), in accepting that there are differences between siblings, have concluded that these differences are not in themselves exceptional or extraordinary, but rather that all siblings generally differ markedly from one another. Thus, in their writing and research, Dunn and Plomin emphasize differences rather than similarities reasoning that a) similarities are less surprising (given that they grow up in the same family); b) similarities in families are due to hereditary similarity than to nurture; and c) differences greatly exceed similarities for most psychological characteristics such as cognitive abilities, personality, and even mental illness.

Finally, Sanders (2004) asks the question ‘Why are children who are brought up in the same family so different from each other?’ when “children are more alike genetically (with 50 per cent of genetic material in common) than they are like either of their parents, or indeed like anyone else in the world?” (p. 84). Sanders suggests a clearer understanding of ‘nonshared’ influences, including such sources of intrafamilial environmental difference as: 1) sex and number of siblings; 2) ordinal position; 3) the significance of the child’s sex to the parents; 4) differential life courses; 5) reconstitution of families; and 6) changing health of parents from one birth to the next. Sanders (2004) says that parents are not the

only, perhaps not even the major, influence on how children develop, but they are a significant influence. As a result of differential treatment, some children are put into favored family roles and others are put into less favored roles. Sanders adds, for emphasis that the “issue of differential treatment is not one of whether some children are treated preferentially, or with disfavour, whilst others are not, but rather to what extent and how it is perceived” (2004, p. 90).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A basic concept in family systems theory is that any stress or pain experienced by one member is felt and reacted to in some way by all the members of the family, each in his or her own way. This may be reflected in the basic family systems concept of interconnectedness (Nichols & Schwartz, 2001).

A particular focus on the child in the family “singled out for disfavor” brings to mind Heinz Kohut’s ideas about “humankind’s sense of self-defectiveness” (Barrett, 1998). In arguing his theory, Kohut contrasted the family environment of Freud’s time with that of subsequent generations, finding great differences in influences on child development. He observes that families now have looser ties; there is much greater emotional distance among members, and one result is understimulation. In discussing threats to one’s security, Barrett (1998) uses Kohut’s theory to describe how humans—in the absence of optimal parental stimulation—end up feeling shame for this personal deficit. In this “felt inadequacy,” humans invent modes of maintaining the self: some facilitative, others maladaptive, adding:

Of course, shame has always been with us, and the response to it is not a new behavioral act. But now the incidence is much higher, leading to a higher incidence of corrective activity to protect and justify ourselves. ... We live in an age of diminished parental presence and authority and in a general culture marked by increased social disregard. Consequently, we are provided with less feedback on connectedness and worth—or less constructive feedback. We are more on our own and more likely to question our adequacy, experience social endangerment, and respond self-protectively. The results—good and bad, hardly noticeable or blatant—appear in all daily communication: at home, on the job, at school—everywhere. (p. 135)

It was not, however, the intention in this study to find someone or something to blame for the “higher incidence of corrective activity to protect and justify” oneself. Rather, the focus is on the resulting “felt inadequacy”—how

might this be understood in the context of family dynamics from which originate such a desire for corrective behavior—and to suggest ways by which such may be preempted, prevented, and subsequently addressed in the helping profession.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The overall focus in this study is on family dynamics, particularly sibling relationships, and more specifically, the sibling “singled out for disfavor.” Where does this dynamic originate? What factors lead to the development of such behavior, among siblings, and among the “scapegoats” themselves? How can such an understanding help clinicians and other helping professionals address family conflicts and especially help family members understand themselves in the context of their families of origin?

METHODS

In-depth interviews concerning sibling relationships were conducted with a convenient sample of 11 Filipino adults. Particular focus was made on family myths and rules, the child who frequently failed to follow such rules, and the behavior and subsequent interaction between family members.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The focused interview was conducted with 11 adults (age range 33-59 years old, mean age = 44.42 years; female = 9; male = 2).

As was found in the tagasalo study (Udarbe, 1998), the role of a sibling singled out for disfavor is not systematically assigned by sex, number of children, nor birth order. While many of these children are secondborns (recall Schachter’s deidentification hypothesis), there are also two eldest children and two youngest among those singled out.

Family myths revolved around such values as “the eldest child being given more responsibility, authority, and respect” (parentified roles), “all children have to help out with household chores”, and “the importance of keeping appearances.”

Table 1. Sibling Profile of Respondents Interviewed, n = 11.

Respondent	Sibling Sequence (Eldest to youngest from left to right)
1	o o o o □
2	o □ o o o
3	□ o o □ o
4	□ o □ o
5	□ o o
6	□ o o
7	o o o o □ o o □ □ □ o
8	□ □ □ o □ □
9	o □ □ o o □ □
10	o o □ o o □ o o o o □ o
11	o □ o □ o □

- Male
 o Female
 Respondent
 Sibling singled out

When asked to identify the favorite child among the siblings, majority of the respondents (n=10) identified one of their siblings. Descriptions of the sibling “singled out for disfavor” (where female = 5 and male = 6—colored blue in Table 1) included the verbatim labels: “bossy”; “boastful”; “outspoken”; “loser”; “always got her own way”; “the prettiest”; “walang direksyon”; “bully”; and, “the favorite”. One respondent (female) said, “Our parents go out of their way to defend her.” Another female respondent said:

“She would act nice to me when she needs my help and if other people are present. She is very manipulative. She knows that our parents would believe her over me. She seems sweet and thoughtful to people who don’t know her. She is like a politician. Boutan sa uban but *dili sa pamilya* (well-behaved to others, but not to family).”

A third respondent (female) said of their only brother:

“As a child, he obeyed all of the rules imposed by our mother. He is okay with respecting an elder sibling. But he hated having to think and consider what others may say. He would constantly argue with our

mother. He would tell her that in life, one has to be authentic -- not much emphasis should be placed on what others would think.”

Additional references to the singled-out sibling included the following:

- “We don’t see eye to eye.”
- “We haven’t spoken to each other for months.”
- “We haven’t seen each other for years.”
- “Our conflicts always become physical.”
- “We have very different personalities.”
- “He used to be the favorite of my parents; now my father says they just have to accept him—*anak man ni nato* (he is our son after all).”

Based on the narratives (i.e., qualitative descriptions of the respondents of the particular family member singled out for disfavor), thematic analysis resulted in the following patterns: favoritism (by parents), tolerance especially by mother (gender factor), sibling rivalry, inclusion/exclusion (i.e., all siblings vs. scapegoat), money as an issue; entitlement, sense of responsibility, and the issue of generational transmission.

Favoritism. Many parents will say they do not have favorites among their children, but the children themselves are readily able to respond to the question “Were you your father’s/mother’s favorite?” and “If not, who was?”

Tolerance. The attitude of tolerance is a concept related to favoritism. Fathers have been found to be more lenient with their daughters while mothers have been similarly more accepting of their sons’ behavior. In the case of the sibling singled out for disfavor, both parents, but especially the mothers were much more easygoing with this child.

Sibling rivalry. None of the respondents expressly referred to their developmental years as a period of “sibling rivalry.” However, their narratives indicate that they did compare or contrast themselves to their siblings and much of the negative interaction that began in childhood—whether physical or verbal—has extended to adulthood.

Inclusion/Exclusion issue. In family systems, there is a tendency for children to form alliances for reasons that go beyond sibling rivalry such as, for example, same sex siblings, age difference and the gap in age between children, or similar interests and personality. This may also result when children perceive favoritism and parental preferential treatment causing

children to gang up against the preferred sibling.

Financial matters. The matter of finances is a familiar conflict theme. It is a behavioral concept (i.e., operational or instrumental conditioning) that stems from rewards for good behavior or differential granting of allowances in childhood and then translated in adulthood into loans and inheritance of property.

A sense of entitlement. The preferential treatment sometimes leads to the favored child assuming a sense of entitlement. Most of the time, this is an unconscious process that nevertheless causes an upheaval among less favored children.

A sense of responsibility as missing. As a consequence, the favored child does not develop a sense of responsibility through no fault of hers or his.

Generational transmission. Generational transmission of faulty family interaction patterns would have to be the most toxic issue. Family systems theorists, particularly Murray Bowen, believe that family systems are understood in the context of transgenerational transmission. Functional patterns are transmitted from one generation to the next, but so are dysfunctional patterns and concepts, a process that is usually unconscious.

The patterns are interconnected. The child who is favored by parents gets preferential treatment and his or her misdeeds are often tolerated. For example, one respondent narrated: “We all had household chores to complete before we went to school; she didn’t have to do them; but also, if she was found to not have done her chores, we were the ones scolded.” Such incidents led to conflict and rivalry so that the sibling would be frequently excluded in games and other activities—the exclusion, perhaps being the form of punishment for the sibling’s favored role. The special favors extended to money matters—from daily allowance as children to adult gifts, and even property, including continuing to live at home as adults. The favored sibling naturally felt entitled. The parents, after all, are tolerant, although there was indication that the parents did not always agree on how to treat this particular child, causing some friction in the marital relationship. The blaming was a consequence of the perceived preferential treatment even as at the same time the siblings also observed the favored child as the one who violated many of the family’s established rules. It is not certain which came first—the preferential treatment or the sense of entitlement. Clearly, however, the favored sibling is also favored outside the family.

The sense of responsibility on the part of the scapegoat is absent. He or she cannot be depended upon and, more frequently than not, the responsibilities fall on non-preferred children. There are indications that this is a repetitive pattern from parents' roles as children in their own families of origin. Thus, there has been multigenerational transmission.

Finally, more than half of those interviewed (while the rest were sad and/or indifferent) showed hopeful signs of how they saw things would be in their families in the future:

"I'm still looking forward to a reunion with him; we can't always be together. Maybe that's just what family is...there is that sibling who goes away. I hope we'll see him again."

"We will always have each other no matter what."

"No matter what happens, we always would never shun a sibling – we talk to them, advise them and help each other. Blood is, after all, thicker than water. We would rather be at each other, letting-out kept anger than shun each other. Because after every conflict we make something good out of it. Not the other way around."

It is worth noting that these responses were given by those who did not consider themselves "favored" by their parents. Perhaps these respondents were their family's tagasalo (as previously studied)—the caretaker. But even more toxic, it appears, and despite these being in the minority, are that 1) there is both sadness and indifference, and 2) emotional cut-off occurs but nothing is done about it.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It has been found that somewhere within the family system develops the role of 'scapegoat.' This is only one among many possible roles that a child takes on. As has been seen in the demographic data, it is not systematically assigned by sex, number of children, nor birth order. The most ironic finding appears to be that the one singled out for disfavor is the one parents (and sometimes also siblings) favor (preferential treatment), with obvious consequences—good and bad—for that sibling.

As has been mentioned, scapegoating is one of the darker sides of family life for siblings, and one that usually requires professional help to undo, and even more so than the tagasalo. Just as individuals practice parent-child interaction in preparation for adult relationships, sibling relations are an important training ground for broader relations outside the family. Siblings carry over negotiating skills learned from fighting and competing to their relationships in the outside world as well as the crucial skills of reading others' mental states, putting oneself in the place of others, and the capacity for empathy from the dynamics of childhood play.

The results point to the importance of understanding nongenetic influences on development, particularly parental behavior towards their children and children's perceptions and understanding of such behavior. The role of scapegoat appears to be assigned by the siblings rather than by the parents who, on the other hand, favor the child perceived as scapegoat by her or his siblings. Thus, singling out a sibling for disfavor by scapegoating appears to originate in the siblings, not from the parents. However, the role assignment is much dependent upon parental behavior. Parents' preferential treatment is associated with deleterious effects on the unpreferred child without increasing the adjustment or self-confidence of the preferred child. The aim for parents should perhaps be as far as possible to minimize the differences in their relationships with their different children, and to be especially sensitive to the acuity with which children monitor the different relationships within the family. It is useful to parents to acknowledge that differential appreciation (to the extent it is humanly possible) is more likely to help their children than preferential treatment (Sanders, 2004).

While it is important to reexamine parental behavior, the sibling viewpoint has been much neglected in previous studies. Much practice for living as adults is done in childhood and adolescence, but an understanding of sibling relations from the perspective of adulthood is vital for understanding our sense of identity—who we are, what we are, how we came to be where we are now, and where we are going. By using the sibling bond as the research context, the resulting knowledge aspires to help individuals reframe and renew themselves so that they may become more effective as family members and as contributors to social interaction, industry, and citizenship.

Finally, crucial to clinical psychologists and counselors is a shift from a family-by-family frame of reference to an individual-by-individual perspective within the family. Even as we study family systems and endeavor

to understand family members from that perspective, the interviews showed that family members' observations of relationships, interaction, and roles in their family varied depending upon their own phenomenological viewpoint—and acquired/assigned role—despite growing up in the same family. Family members' thoughts and feelings about their family of origin beg further investigation beyond the deceptively simple labels. The data is always rich, the process therapeutic.

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Use of Facebook by A Science Political Party: A Uses and Gratification Study of Agham Partylist in the Philippines

Kristine Araguas

Office of Public Relations

University of the Philippines Los Banos, Laguna

Serlie Barroga-Jamias

College of Development Communication

University of the Philippines Los Banos, Laguna

This case study determined how the use of Facebook community page gratified the communication needs of the AGHAM Party list members and Facebook followers. Content analyzed were the 645 postings in the AGHAM Facebook Like Page by both AGHAM and its online followers from March 17, 2010 to December 29, 2012. Other data were gathered using key informant interviews and participant observation by joining the AGHAM Facebook group. The research was guided by the Uses and Gratification Theory (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, 1974) and Kim (2000) hierarchy of needs in online communities. The needs gratified were (in order): filling in time (entertainment) (16%); social empathy (integration) (12%); emotional release (entertainment) (10%); self-esteem (10%); conversation and social interaction (integration) (8%); self-actualization (8%); and finding out relevant events and conditions (information) (8%). Results were contrary to the researcher's expectations that the Facebook would be used more for seeking science-related or development information.

Keywords: political communication, uses and gratifications theory, political party, content analysis, development issues, science and technology

INTRODUCTION

Development communication is expanding in scope to cover political engagement for development, primarily because development planners

are realizing that development is not possible without good governance. McLoughlin and Scott (2010) stressed that communication is essential in good governance. For them, communication is the factor that leads to the development of state capability, accountability, and responsiveness. Citizens, leaders, and public institutions must relate to each other to make change happen in society. Further, they pointed out that dialogue between the state and the citizens can improve public understanding and support of government projects. Without the public's support, government might not get things done.

In the Philippines, the E-commerce Act of 2000 was enacted because "The state recognizes the vital role of information and communications technology (ICT) in nation-building." Through this Act, government agencies and even news networks have set up a website and other forms of social media where the general public can share their comments to catch the government's attention.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

In the political scene, organizations have begun using the Internet as a space or venue for activism. Advocacies and activism have migrated from the physical environment to the online setting. In the Philippines, for instance, marginalized groups or previously unrepresented sectors as well as underrepresented sectoral groups have been given the opportunity to participate in the political process through the party list system instituted in 1995. On the 28th of February 1995, Republic Act No. 7941 known as An Act providing for the election of party-list representatives through the party-list system, and appropriating funds therefor was passed by the House of Representatives and Senate. This act was also a consolidation of House Bill No. 3043 and Senate Bill No. 1913. Party lists were created for the legal and fair representation of the minorities. This bill was created with the marginalized in mind so that they will have a fair representation in Congress.

Among the 28 party lists in the Philippines that won a seat in 2010 elections is the Alyansa ng Grupo ng Haligi ng Agham at Teknolohiya Para sa Mamamayan, Inc. (AGHAM). Given the proper voice and attention, they believe that science and technology could propel us to be at par with other developed neighbor countries like Singapore.

Others have pointed out the extensive use of AGHAM of online social

media and social networks to enhance the party list's popularity and reach among the public. The AGHAM party list maintains a website (Agham.org.ph). It also has a Facebook community page (<http://www.Facebook.com/aghampartylist>) to be able to reach to the younger crowd, gain popularity, and reach a broader audience. Its Facebook page <http://www.Facebook.com/aghampartylist> was created on March 17, 2010. The Facebook now has more than 3,700 members subscribing to the page, compared to the approximately 2,900 members subscribed to the page when the researcher first started studying the page in year 2011.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Why have they started to use Facebook in 2010? What needs did they have as a political party for such medium? And what needs did its followers have in using the Facebook page? Exploring these questions were guided by studies using the Uses and Gratifications Theory (Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch, 1974). Many of these were of Western origins.

Jere and Davis (2011) applied the Uses and Gratifications Theory to compare consumer motivations for magazine and Internet use in South Africa. Results showed that email and chatting were the most popular online activities. Factor analysis showed seven new factors for Internet gratification such as: interpersonal utility, information seeking, surveillance, self-development, exploration, diversion, and career opportunities.

Smeele (2010) also applied the Uses and Gratifications theory and used three methods of studying participation using Facebook, MySpace, and Twitter among Dutch and Australian users and non-users of social networking sites popular in these countries. The CCM results showed that Facebook offered the biggest possible fulfillment for the gratification 'need for social relationships.' Users searching for these gratifications labeled as features would browse on Facebook to fulfill their needs. Facebook was also the most preferred site to fulfill needs for 'identity construction/self-expression' for the users were motivated to create and maintain their online identities.

Yuan (2011) applied the Uses and Gratifications Theory to study social networking sites in China. He found that socio-integrative needs were the strongest motivation for Chinese SNS users. Other studies in Southeast Asia did not specifically use the uses and gratifications theory but they show how

social media are being used in the Asian culture.

The youth in the Philippines turns more to social media and the Internet for the news and current events. Sarmenta (2013) found that Tweets and links shared through Facebook often trigger moves to websites. In fact, in the last 2013 elections, Sarmenta found a lukewarm reception of the respondents that may be because of the disenchantment with the political process and with the failure of traditional media platforms to connect with the youth.

In Malaysia, Nurul Hidayah Mohammed Zin, Mariah Muda and Mohammed Zin Nordin (2013) found the top six needs and gratifications sought by students when using Facebook. These are entertainment, information, online transaction, social interaction or communication, passing time and personal usage. The study found out that they there is high dependency on the Internet as the respondents in the study were satisfied, having a slim chance of converting to other media sources.

In China, a micro-blog, Weibo, was launched in August 2009. Yu Dong (2013) found that the Chinese have integrated the use Weibo every day after class to get information and communicate with, people they played an active role in choosing specific media to fulfill their needs.

Chartprasert and Yuwakosol (2013) examined the use of Facebook in Thailand in three main areas: establishing personal relationship, identity presentation and personal information disclosure. They found that most Facebook users used their Facebook accounts to satisfy their already existing needs. The identities they portrayed on Facebook were not far behind their identities and personalities offline, although they differed in the levels of privacy for they controlled their information disclosure according to their perception of privacy. Thai users easily adopted technology to satisfy their existing needs and not create new ones.

In summary, the use of the Internet and social media, whether for sports, leisure or politics, gratifies more or less similar needs. These included interactivity, connectivity, and information sharing, diversional, and promotional. The Internet and social media were used for convenience, control, speed, ease of searching, and time/convenience.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The general objective of the study is to describe how communication

through Facebook is helping the party list AGHAM and its followers meet their communication needs. Specifically, the study aims to do the following:

1. Describe the backgrounder of the Facebook for AGHAM Party list and its current status and use;
2. Discuss the communication needs of the key AGHAM party list members and online followers that are being met in using Facebook; and
3. Give recommendations on how sectoral groups may use Facebook to better gratify the communication needs of online followers.

The study had limitations. It focused on only one party list – AGHAM - and results may not generalizable for other political parties in the Philippines. The researcher used only the data that have been captured or documented in the screen shot. The researcher did not have access to statistics about the respondents such as age group, usage of data, location, etc. as only the AGHAM website system administrator had this right/authority. But the researcher enhanced her findings by joining the Facebook page herself and being an active participant in the exchanges online.

THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS OF THE STUDY

The study used as theoretical framework the Uses and Gratification Theory proposed originally in 1974 by Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch. This theory had been enhanced by Amy Jo Kim for online media in 2000.

These theorists said that the social and psychological origins of needs of users and followers, generate expectations of the mass media and other sources, which lead to differential patterns of media exposure or engagement in other activities, resulting in need gratifications and other consequences.

Applying some of the relevant elements of the original theory by Katz, Blumler and Gurevitch (1974) when media was not yet on the web and on Kim's (2000) community building based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, as well as the variables of McQuail's (1983), the researcher came up with a modified framework to analyze the study (Figure 1).

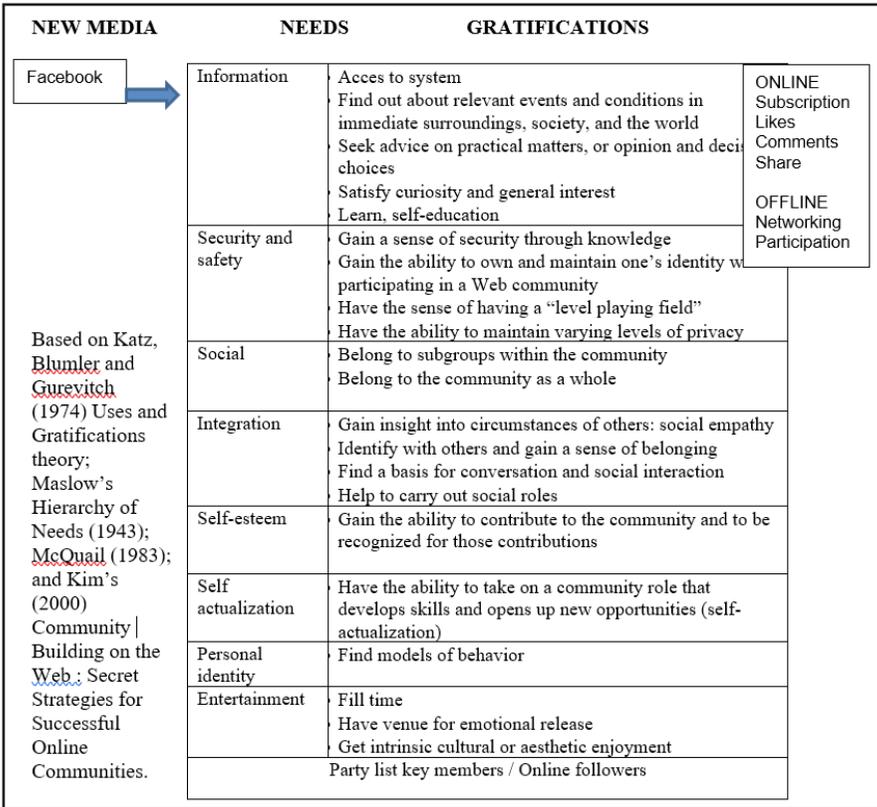


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the study

Users of the Facebook of AGHAM (key party list members and online followers) meet certain needs or are gratified in terms of information, security and safety, social, integration and social interaction, and personal identity. This gratification leads to both online and offline responses.

METHODOLOGY

Design

This research is a case study of the AGHAM Party list's use of social media particularly a Facebook community page. The study was conducted in Los Baños, Laguna and in Manila where AGHAM has its headquarters and because Los Baños is known as a science community. The data gathered from the Facebook Like Page were filtered using the interaction

of online followers from March 17, 2010, the time the page was created, until December 29, 2012.

Respondents and Samples

AGHAM Party list members and staff

For the AGHAM organization, party list representative Angelo B. Palmones and his social media administrators, Key Respondent 1 and Key Respondent 2, were interviewed. Their names were not disclosed in the study as part of a confidentiality agreement.

Posts of online followers

To gather responses from online followers, all of the postings on the AGHAM's Facebook page from the time the AGHAM party list first created its Facebook Like Page account in 2010 until 2012 were collected. Overall, the researcher analyzed 645 postings including the responses, comments, and threads of these posts within the three-year period.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA GATHERING

Key informant interviews

Guide questionnaires for the Key Informant Interview (KII) were prepared for key person/s in the AGHAM party list and for the developers/ administrators of its Facebook. The KII was necessary to get better perspective on how and why the party list used social media (Facebook) heavily aside from the website. Representative Palmones granted an interview last March 12, 2012 at Room 608 of the North Wing Building of the Batasan Pambansa Complex where the Congressmen have their offices.

Participant observation

The researcher conducted participant observation to gain access and get information like the rest of the subscribers who "liked" the Facebook profile of AGHAM. This means that the researcher also received updates in her news feed every time she logged on to her Facebook account just

like the other online subscribers. The researcher was also able to access new postings by AGHAM on its Facebook Like Page.

Textual content analysis

To analyze AGHAM's Facebook Like Page account, the researcher used textual content analysis. The researcher made screenshot of the posts from 2010 to 2012 A coding sheet was used to conduct content inventory. The researcher organized the content in the coding sheet as it appeared in the screen shots. Each post and comment order was logged as it appeared in the thread.

Data Analysis

A coding sheet was used based on the conceptual framework. The researcher started with open coding and logged the posts according to how they appeared in the screenshots. The researcher used axial coding to organize all the postings including the comments in the topic thread according to the communication needs in the conceptual framework of the study.

As for the coding, the needs of the AGHAM Party list members and the Facebook followers were considered as the major themes. Their postings were categorized according to the needs gratified such as information, security and safety, self-esteem, self-actualization, personal identity, and entertainment following some of the of needs of online communities enumerated by Kim (2000).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Summary of Needs Gratified by Facebook Use

Figure 2 and Appendix Table 1 summarize the overall gratifications of AGHAM and its online followers based on the overall number of postings. Of the 645 posts, the top six needs gratified by Facebook use were to fill time or entertainment (15.65%); for social empathy or integration (11.93%); contribute to the community or self-esteem (9.61%); venue for emotional release (9.45%) take on community role that develops skills

and opens up new opportunities or self-actualization (8.37%); and find out relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society and the world or information (7.90%).

Fill time (Entertainment)

This need had the most number of postings (15.65%). Many of the postings were usually statements that were replies to statements posted by AGHAM or mostly, its Facebook followers. Rather than leaving the statements with no response at all, the followers gave reactions without leading to a discussion. This is illustrated in the posts such as the following: “*Tama po si Juan. kc ngayon ko lang napansin laging magkatabi o magkalapi ang Mercury at 7-11. minsan nga po mini stop. hahaha. bakit nga ba?* (P#127;R#9)”, fillers, “☺” (P#9;R#7) and light comments “*Good afternoon in there Rep. Angelo B. Palmones... It’s Monday @ 12:30 am here so good nite/and good morning to you too. Have a great evening!*” (P#132;R#2).

Majority of the postings logged were actual excerpts of AGHAM online followers’ jokes and other light topics. For example, they were also expressions of laughter in textual form (P#127;R#9) as responses to jokes posted by AGHAM. This demonstrated that in the Filipino culture, readers probably feel more comfortable to react to a post if it was something positive. AGHAM posted jokes that got more reactions from its online readers such as various forms of laughter. These also included topics and greetings like wishing Congressman Palmones a happy birthday. This finding is similar to that of Bowman and Willis (2003) that light topics have enhanced online communities and improved social capital among users in Facebook.

Social empathy (Integration)

This gratification came second with 11.93 percent of the postings. The sense of empathy or compassion for others is also very much rooted in the Filipinos’ culture. This was quite similar to the findings of Yuan (2011) in China that social media help people gather themselves together. This result is also similar to Smeele’s (2010) finding that the use of Facebook gratifies the need for social relationships. Readers feel comfortable when they were connected

to the party list of Congressman Palmones. This was also similar to the Pew Research and American Life Project (2012) wherein the audiences relied more on information from the social media compared to the traditional media because they felt that they were getting firsthand information from the former.

AGHAM gets people involved by posting information that might be useful and encourages its followers to join its cause. AGHAM, as much as possible, tries to get its supporters to do something, or it mobilizes them into participating in AGHAM's advocacy-related activities. When AGHAM issues an invitation to the public to participate, it encourages unity of a community. AGHAM also answers specific questions on what it is doing about the concern. Hence, followers are encouraged to be part of AGHAM because their suggestions or questions are being recognized and addressed.

AGHAM makes recommendations to help its followers who seek advice and help. AGHAM's advocacies for science, technology, education, and environment encourages followers to go to AGHAM for assistance. AGHAM, in turn, directly addresses questions and refers them to other sectors that could help.

Key Respondent 1 shared that a lot of people did not really read comments, but they used the site to leave a message. Readers commenting under the same comment thread got to virtually engage in a topic. Readers were encouraged to communicate more when Representative Palmones responded to the thread and replied to comments. They probably 'felt' that in linking with these about these concerns, there was a bigger chance that their own concerns might also be addressed.

AGHAM proactively asking its followers online to contribute to a project it was working on (P#57). The online followers, in turn, also raised issues and suggestions directly to AGHAM that might contribute and support AGHAM's interests.

The two postings from AGHAM were project-related and show collaboration between AGHAM and specific point persons.

Of the 75 logged posts by online followers, 26 postings were on education. Majority of the postings were included in a thread talking about the Philippines' low ranking in universities worldwide. Laws and policies came third as AGHAM Facebook followers suggested bills to contribute to AGHAM's advocacies. Different points of view were raised about our low ranking in education. Some said that it was not the lack of research but the

lack of funds to support educational systems and researches that contributed significantly to the low ranking (P#78;R#4).

The second most talked about topic was classified as being about citizen participation. Facebook followers stated their opinions and informed AGHAM party list their side of the story. Other Facebook users learned from each other's points of view. Followers suggested bills to contribute to AGHAM's advocacies. Online followers felt that suggesting directly to AGHAM about a certain bill or proposal gave them a foot in the door. They have somehow managed to relay the information to AGHAM without going through the bureaucracy.

Contribute to the community (Self-esteem)

This gratification came third with 9.61 percent. Apparently, Filipinos bank on human relationships and the "Bayanihan attitude" of helping one another, hence, they take pride in helping others. It gives a sense of fulfillment to be able to contribute whether it is a referral or a call for movement in the Facebook. Majority of the excerpts in this section were commending AGHAM for its performance as a party list and for contributing to the community. This boosted the pride and esteem of AGHAM as a party list and encouraged its followers to be more involved. Meanwhile, feedback from AGHAM online followers were also acknowledged by AGHAM, giving the impression that the party list noted and valued the opinions of its followers.

As AGHAM is also competing with other party lists for performance and visibility on the Internet and to the public, it makes itself visible and easy to reach by the public. Its network as a science advocate group helps makes AGHAM a credible contact for issues concerning technology, environment, and education. Hence, all (100%) of the posts show that the AGHAM party list and its Facebook followers used the Facebook to contribute to the community and be recognized for such contributions, hence contributing to self-esteem.

AGHAM freely gives out its contact information, which makes the followers and even the Internet lurkers send the party a private email or private message other than posting them on Facebook. This move probably makes AGHAM more approachable as it gives the impression to its readers that AGHAM values what they have to say and contribute. It also seems to indicate that AGHAM is open and appreciative of what its followers are saying.

Commendations coming from AGHAM online Facebook followers

enhanced the party list's image and confidence in its advocacy. AGHAM appreciated feedbacks coming from its online followers (P393; R#2). In return, followers whose comments were acknowledged felt that their inputs were valued.

Excerpts in Appendix 17 show that majority or 45 postings fell under the theme 'citizen participation'. These comments composed of congratulatory messages such as "*congrats congressman...you are doing a great service to our nature and our country, our people.... mabuhay ang Agham party list!*" (P#122;R#8). Another post said:

"IM SO PROUD OF YOU SIR TO BE A REPRESENTATIVE IN THE FIRST DISTRICT OF NORTH COTABATO,CONTINUE YOUR GOOD PUBLIC SERVICE TO ALL PEOPLE,SO THAT THEY WILL LOVE AND SUPPORT YOU MORE,MORE,AND MORE, I'm the one of that people.GOD BLESS AND GIVE YOU MORE POWER (P#148;R#10).

Other postings were on laws and policies, energy, and health. Prominent issues on topics commended by followers were about AGHAM's support for education and scholars (P#50; P#148;R#15; P#154; R#5).

The excerpt from AGHAM shows how it recognized and acknowledged a suggestion raised by its Facebook followers. For example, one post said: "*Asiddin K. Arabain Uap, pa-review ko yung comments mo re the bill. Thank you for the feedback*" (P#93;R#2). Directly addressing a reader's comment shows how AGHAM treats its online followers and values their suggestions.

Venue for emotional release (Entertainment)

This gratification came in fourth place with 9.45 percent. Since Facebook has an interactive feature where AGHAM Party list and its readers can converse in a thread, it has also become a venue for discussion about issues that the AGHAM followers felt strongly about. The followers expressed their opinions, sought help, and asked the AGHAM party list to act as watch dogs especially when it came to issues such as the discrepancy of fundings and the provision of scholarships. This is quite contrary to Branston and Lee's (cited by Taylor, Kent, and White, 2001) assessment of a website. They said that since websites were mainly used for information dissemination, these did not promote interactions and return visits to the site, hence there was no

building of online relationships between the followers and the party list. The AGHAM Facebook, on the other hand, was interactive.

Postings that reflected appreciation from AGHAM followers. “Maraming salamat Jean. Nakakataba ng puso ang iyong sinabi..”(P#48;R#4). In addition, AGHAM followers’ statements reflected objection, defense of a statement, or a strong point of view that showed rather intense emotions. Since AGHAM Facebook serves as a freedom wall where followers can freely post their opinions and insights, it has become an unfiltered virtual graffiti wall, most especially for those harboring strong opinions about a certain topic. Major topics included ‘controversial’ or ‘emotional’ topics such as the passage and debate about the Reproductive Health Bill, (P#66), a Hollywood celebrity’s accusation of corruption in the Philippines, and issues on the economy and monopoly of businesses in the country.

AGHAM followers used Facebook to express and write objections on their wall such as this excerpt:

SINONG NAGSABI NA HINDI CORRUPT ANG MGA AQUINO? ANG NEGOSYO NILA AY PETRON, MERALCO AND LOPEZ CORPORATIONS DEALING WITH ELECTRICITY GENERATION AND DISTRIBUTION WHEREIN THE AQUINOS HAVE SHARES OF STOCKS.” (P#168) And “NOYNOY-BINAY RESIGN!!!! SNAP ELECTION NOW!!!!!!! MGA INUTIL AY DAPAT PALITAN!!!!!!! SERVE THE PEOPLE!!!!!!! NOT THE OLIGARCHS!!!!!!! (P#169)

The above post strongly criticized the Aquino family with statements linking the family to corporations from which the Aquinos benefited as share holders. It also called for snap elections and demanded the resignation of the administration leaders. This demonstrates how AGHAM facebook followers used the page as a platform for emotional outbursts.

Take on a Community Role that Develops Skills and Opens up New Opportunities (Self-actualization)

This gratification came fifth with 8.37 percent. Majority of the excerpts come from the online followers asking the AGHAM party list’s contact information so that they could raise issues and suggest ideas and proposals that are in line with the party list’s advocacy. AGHAM welcomes suggestions

that are mostly about legislation and encourages followers to email them by disclosing their email addresses. Most followers have gotten comfortable in sending a private message or email to AGHAM than leaving them in the comment section for the public to see.

Similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs was the realization that both the AGHAM party list and its online followers made a difference in Philippine politics and took on national responsibilities. Hence, all the respondents (100%) had postings showing that they used the Facebook to assume community roles that developed their skills and opened up new opportunities for self-actualization.

Example of the excerpts were those of supporters offering their services to support AGHAM's advocacy:

Thank you for the kind words Atty. Francisco Nob, we will be posting the full text of the Writ of Kalikasan soon and we're working on a FB campaign for it. Please follow the AGHAM page for updates. 'Kudos to Cong. Angelo B. Palmones. His Writ of Kalikasan for Taal Lake is laudable. To survive is not for agriculture but for recreation and tourist facilities. Can I have details of that plan? I intend to create a FB page to support his move. Great move for us, Batanguenos. We owe him. (P#124)''

For the AGHAM party list, majority of the excerpts were on networking or establishing relationships. This is where AGHAM openly addressed the questions of its followers and openly asked the followers to send an email disclosing their contact information like "Pls. send a letter to cong.angelo@agham.org.ph" (P#60;R#5). This was a way to open up new opportunities for both AGHAM and followers for future collaboration.

Majority of the postings from the followers stated that they had already sent their emails and were following these up with AGHAM. These were responses for potential opportunities between AGHAM and its followers. Two examples are as follows:

Sir, we will be sending an enhanced Balik Scientist bill with explanatory note...senate version sponsored by Sen. Jinggoy Estrada to your office we are just waiting clearance from USec Boy dela Pena (P#57;R#6), and

Cong, I sent you email re green groups position on your HB1359. I hope

you will reconsider your views on incinerators. Let us not waste our future! Thanks (P#87; R#8).

These are bills that can change policies and laws. The statements mentioned were assumptions of AGHAM's community role. From the excerpts under self-actualization for taking on community role that develops skills and opens up new opportunities were of referrals so others could create new opportunities. Certain inquiries like request for funding (P#65) opened new opportunities not only for the online followers but also to those who came across the post in Facebook.

An excerpt from another AGHAM Facebook follower (P#72;R#4) reflected potential collaboration and the opportunity to contribute. It said:

Sir Angelo I already sent by email (you, vicky, usec fot, ann) the enhanced version of your bill on Anti Pilferage of Risk Reduction Equipment/ Instruments of PAGASA and PHILVOLS, ...we are awaiting TWG sked for this bill (P#72;R#4).

The reader proactively sent an email to help enhance of the version of the Anti-Pilferage of Risk Reduction Equipment/Instruments of PAGASA Philvocs. Since AGHAM's advocacies are wide ranging from science to other aspects like education, readers raised concerns such as the one stated in P#72;R#8. The follower was appealing to AGHAM to do something about the amendment of certain sections of RA 544 for it was in conflict with the provision of the architect law RA 9266.

Another follower used Facebook to appeal for reconsideration of a House Bill introduced by Congressman Palmones. HB 1359 was a resolution to direct the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to set standards for the use of incinerators. Although the information and details about the appeal were not disclosed publicly, the proactivity of the followers reflected their self-actualization of wanting to be able to take part in the development of the House Bill.

Belong to the Community

Excerpts of posts from online followers expressed that they wanted to be part of the AGHAM online community as a whole such as P#24. However, some

excerpts did not specify if they were representing a certain organization supporting AGHAM and its advocacies (e.g., “Sama ako dyan”, (P#30;R#6). These statements demonstrated the need for belongingness or association with the AGHAM community as a whole (P#52;R#6).

The Facebook followers responded and participated in science trivia that AGHAM posted. Readers responded more to light topics such as “Good Morning! How’s everyone after the Bgy. Elections yesterday?” (P#19). Nevertheless, these light comments ‘integrated’ them to the AGHAM’s virtual community.

All of the 26 posts of AGHAM were all about AGHAM’s promotion in the Facebook community. AGHAM encouraged all its followers to disseminate information about the AGHAM page so as to get more likes. A total of 13 posts out of 26 posts were about AGHAM encouraging its supporters to share the page. Excerpts of other updates on promotion such as the calendar giveaways, greetings, events, and conversation starters came next (P#2, P#16, P#19, and P #25). This shows that AGHAM used the Facebook to speak to its followers as a community. AGHAM also reached out to its Facebook followers by giving them updates and striking conversations to get them involved.

For the Facebook followers, most of the replies were appreciation, commending the party list for its performance in Congress in behalf of the community (P#122; R#6).

Find out about relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society, and the world (Information)

This gratification came sixth with 7.90 percent. This was contrary to the researcher’s expectations that the Facebook would be used more for information about national issues, especially on science and technology. Personally, this is disturbing because the postings for this need involved important elements of development – such as education, environment, laws and policies, disasters, and enabling technologies.

The postings also covered bills with implications to national development such as House Bill 5295 (Oil Deregulation Act). AGHAM also filed three bills (P#82) endorsed by President Benigno Aquino III such as the K+12 Law (Palmones was one of the authors); R.A. 10344 or the Risk Reduction and Disaster Preparedness Equipment Protection Act in

December 2012 and R.A. 10532 or the Philippine National Health Research System Act on May 7, 2013. Further, AGHAM authored two resolutions to investigate the importation of reconditioned fire trucks (P#80). These issues have great bearing on policies and governance, but unfortunately, the use of the AGHAM Facebook to meet the need for information about these issues is rather low.

The party list members and web administrators used the AGHAM Facebook to share information, while the online users readily accessed information that were updated and relevant to their needs. Other readers were informed by reading the updates and reading the page shared by other readers. The online followers could also access information such as performance reports and other information about AGHAM and science and technology concerns. They could also subscribe and post messages on AGHAM's Facebook Page.

The stakeholders used the AGHAM Facebook to share as well as to gather information about relevant issues on almost all the science-related issues mentioned above, except for nanotechnology. Of the 35 postings, most of the information posted by the AGHAM personnel dealt with education (5 postings), environment (8 postings), laws and policies (7 postings), disaster (3 postings), and enabling technologies (3 postings).

They shared issues on education such as the needed capacity building of science educators in the Philippines (e.g., incentives for Filipino scientists so they will not go abroad (P#59); letting them sign a contract that would require them to serve the country for a certain period of time (P#91); making the science profession more attractive as a career (e.g., S&T scholarships to young students (P#9; P#84;1); increasing government spending on universities so they will rank higher (P#78); organizing scientists and their associations (P#81); and capacity building of various sectors (e.g., Barangay scholars, P#85). Hence, the AGHAM party list gave out information about science education, its status, challenges, and even a glimpse of the future.

High on the relevant issues posted was also on energy covering oil, biogas, and hydroelectric. The House Bill 5295 called for the repeal of the Oil Deregulation Act (P#128). AGHAM Party list representative Angelo Palmones joined with the DOST Region IV-A in helping plan the setting up of a biogas plant using chicken droppings in Rizal, Laguna (P#161).

The other energy issues discussed in the posts were rather controversial. These involved the four-to-eight hour daily power blackouts in Mindanao

that have been affecting 25 million people and their livelihoods (P#151, P#153, P#155, P#157). The AGHAM Party list was planning to file a class suit against the Napocor Power Corporation (NAPOCOR) and its service conduit, the National Grid Corporation, to address the power crisis. It was also reported that Mindanao's residents and business operators would file a Php5 billion class suit against NAPOCOR. Another controversial issue was the anomaly discovered over the power privatization of the Agus-pulangi hydroelectric complex in Mindanao (P#164). These issues were very current and 'gripping' during those times.

Information and issues about laws and policies were also shared or posted. These included lobbying for increased budget for R&D in the country (P#79) and rationalizing the organization of scientists for engagement in policymaking rather than letting them remain in the periphery (P#81).

Again, there were controversial issues that AGHAM was lobbying for. AGHAM authored two resolutions to investigate the importation of reconditioned fire trucks (P#80). AGHAM also filed three bills (P#82) endorsed by President Benigno Aquino III. Followers and other readers were informed on this in AGHAM's official site, which states among others that *"the K+12 Law is one of the three enacted laws with Palmones as one of the authors. In December 2012, R.A. 10344 or the Risk Reduction and Disaster Preparedness Equipment Protection Act, and on May 7, 2013 R. A. 10532 or the Philippine National Health Research System Act were signed by Pres. Aquino."*

AGHAM also informed its followers that Marikina Rep. Romero Federico Quimbo and AGHAM party list Representative Palmones II penned the Anti-pilferage Act of Risk Reduction and Preparedness Equipment of 2011, and they had already obtained the approval of a technical working group and are expected to hurdle committee deliberation soon (P#88). The followers were also informed that AGHAM has filed a resolution seeking a House probe into why official development assistance-funded projects have been delayed, costing the government some Php7 billion in cost overruns (P#100). AGHAM used the Facebook not only to update its followers on the party's advocacies – what it was doing, the bills it was drafting or co-drafting and passing –but also presumably to gain wider support.

Postings about the environment and disasters were also high. Two postings showed that AGHAM asked the Supreme Court to issue a Writ of Kalikasan to stop the alleged degradation of the Taal Lake (P#115; P#122). AGHAM was successful because the justices issued the writ during the

Court's regular executive session (P#122). In P#89, Rep. Palmones said that the community should stop blaming LGU on the garbage problem; instead the community should be involved in waste segregation at the barangay level, which in turn, should start at the household level.

There were fewer postings on disaster than expected by the researcher. These included risks that the Philippines experienced from weather such as typhoons and storm surges (P#53) and what could be done. Again, two controversial issues were posted for discussion. These involved the urgent declaration of bills by no less than Science Undersecretary Graciano Yumul Jr. to address the pilferage of the instruments of the PAGASA and the Philippine Institute for Volcanology and Seismology. These machines and equipment were donated by PAGASA's technical partners (P#99).

It is also worth noting that AGHAM Facebook followers posted or replied to 16 postings. Compared to the AGHAM party members, they were apparently more concerned or they sought more information about with economics (5 posts) and education (6 posts). They posted issues on how to improve investment for technology transfer and livelihood of the community (P#67). Replies followed such as suggestions that the government should promote personal savings to start sustainable projects on food production, housing, energy, reforestation, and infrastructure building (P#67; R#2; R#3; R#4; R#5; R#9). They suggested changing the culture of dole-out and teaching communities 'how to fish' instead. One post (P#67; R#4) even computed that an average savings of Php 5,000 for 50 million Filipinos with per year would be equivalent to Php 250 Billion. Another suggested a concrete strategy to address prevailing problems in the country. It said: "*Government can issue short, medium, and long term bonds at 3-5 percent interest rate. This will help government to prime the economy by investing these funds in building classrooms, sustainable agriculture, housing, infrastructures, energy, and ecotourism.*" Another post (P#67; R#9) suggested that the government should have a trust fund, so poor people can borrow from government financial institutions at the lowest possible interest rate and invest in small enterprises. The post showed support to Rep. Palmones' position against pork barrel of the congressmen because it had turned into funds for the campaign war. "*HINDI PURO LIBRE AT DOLE-OUT! parang kasing tinuturuan silang maging TAMAD ng Gobyerno!*" [It should not be all dole out! It appears that the government is only teaching them to be indolent] (P#67;R#9).

The online Facebook followers also asked questions about the educational system such as the improvement of science education. They asked about the participation of deans of science programs so that “Engineering and Science colleges would include a more visionary and applicable approach in the students’ curriculum” (P#81; R#6). They also asked how foreign scholars will choose studying in the Philippines when our facilities and instruction are inadequate (P78; R#10).

Furthermore, they pointed out the marginalization of our scientists, such as weather forecasters, who are now transferring to meteorological centers in Singapore and in Australia (P#81; R#1). They announced the visit of NASA’s Filipino Physicist Dr. Josefino Comiso to Albay to share his researches and experiences and expressed hope that the Congress will recognize our Filipino scientists excelling all over the world and bring them home (P#51; R#6).

As for laws and policies, they were quite vocal about wanting Rep. Palmones to investigate the illegal act of government officials violating RA 9184 or otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. “*Kailangan ninyo imbestigahan yan Congressman*, [You must investigate this, Congressman,]” they advised (P#80; R#1). AGHAM said that this Act will not only kill the domestic fire truck industry, it will also affect local manufacturers. AGHAM Representative Palmones was questioning Robredo as to why he wanted to push through with purchasing these imported, reconditioned fire trucks.

Finally, an issue with cultural implications and which represented ‘manufacturing and production’ was also raised by Cong. Palmones. It was about a barong Tagalog that he purchased. The issue became national when it was broadcast that Rep. Palmones accidentally found out that the barong he bought was not the genuine pina fiber but a counterfeit. One post commented “*Congressman Angelo, the barong Tagalog issue must be in the context of sensitivity to protect our identity as Filipinos* (Sept 12 on TV)” (P#93; R#1).

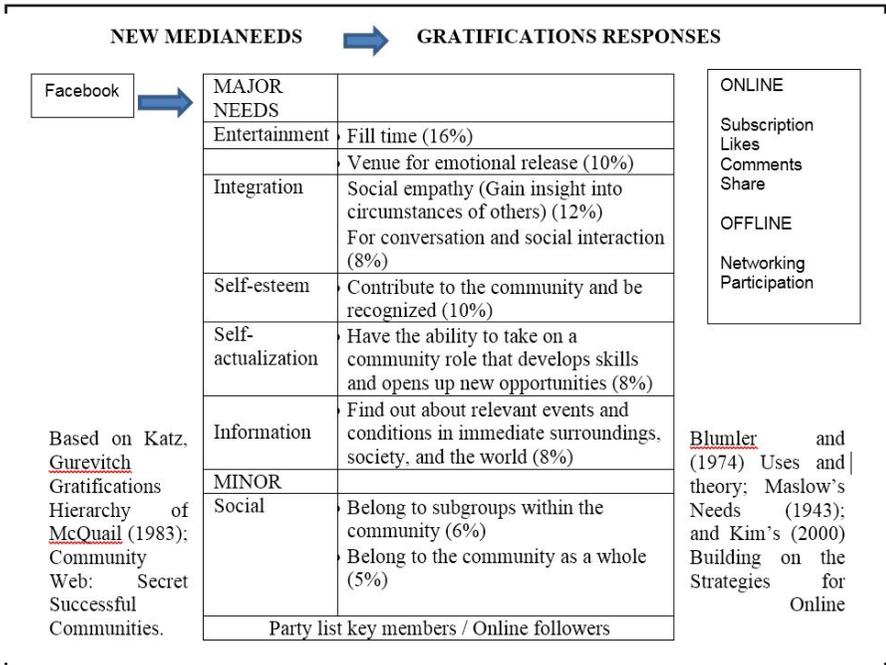


Figure 2. Schematic diagram of the findings of the study

CONCLUSION

Contrary to the researcher's expectations, the AGHAM Facebook seemed to have been used more to fill in time and ventilate emotions rather than to seek useful development information. Of the 645 posts in the AGHAM Facebook, the needs gratified in the use of the AGHAM Facebook were (in order): for filling in time (entertainment) (16%); for social empathy (integration) (12%); for emotional release (entertainment) (10%); for self-esteem (10%); for conversation and social interaction (integration) (8.37%); for self-actualization (8%); and for finding out relevant events and conditions in society (information) (8%).

The recent loss of the AGHAM Party List during the recent Senate and Congressional elections in the Philippines last May 10, 2013 drives a realization that social media like Facebook and media connections may not always give a political party an edge. Philippine politics, it seems, shows that losing or winning may be caused by various factors or a confluence of other factors (e.g., political history, election fund, electoral base in the communities, political partisanship etc.). Social media such as Facebook

may increase awareness of a party list among the public especially among the youth, but these may not necessarily translate to votes. A study by Skoric and Kwan (2011) in Singapore has shown that being a member of a political group increases the member's likelihood of signing online petitions and subscribing, and this was also demonstrated by the Filipino followers of AGHAM. However, signing petitions is still different from actually voting in a national election, and this is a rich area for future researches.

POSTSCRIPT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study covered the period January 2011 to December 2012 or a two-year span. In the recent congressional election last May 10, 2013, however, AGHAM Party list lost its Congressional seat. Given the efforts of AGHAM to engage in social media to the point of even hiring two dedicated staff to maintain these, its loss in the recent election is quite illuminating.

Inside information, however, shows that AGHAM will run again for a seat in the future. The researcher checked the website of AGHAM as of October 14, 2013 and found that it has not been inactivated. Its Facebook Like Page is also running. In fact, its most recent post was shared to the public on September 24, 2013. This was about the approval of the court for AGHAM's petition for the Writ of Kalikasan for the Zambales mountain, a petition filed by AGHAM when it was still in Congress. The post shared on Facebook was a press release from AGHAM's website published on September 19, 2013.

While the Party list is now inactive from the national political scene, it continues to maintain its profile and presence in the web (as it had done when it lost in 2007). After all, its founders and members are still active in the science and technology sector as consultants and policymakers. Former Rep. Palmones also still has his communication programs and media connections as well as clout.

Hence, the recommendations forwarded may be used by AGHAM to recover its position for the next election. However, they are also applicable to other political or sectoral political parties that would like to maximize the potentials of social media, especially Facebook. More importantly, these may enhance the use of Facebook to promote and/ or advocate the development causes of a political party with the aim of inputting to policies on ICT for development.

Content

1. **Establish a clear identity of what AGHAM really is all about.** Although AGHAM says that it advocates for Science and Technology, the Facebook Page still does not depict a clear identity of what it is really advocating.
2. **Post a laymanized, easy-to-understand messages for the general public.** AGHAM needs to create messages that cater to the general public and not only to those with specific science-related interests. In the Philippines, a third world country, many marginalized voters would support a party list that provides them the basic needs such as food and shelter. While AGHAM claims to cater to farmers, and aims to be the bridge for pushing technology that can improve the state of its farmers and marginalized sectors, this is not obvious to readers. AGHAM apparently still had that ‘elitist’ image being a science and technology party. Hence, stakeholders will know and understand AGHAM’s advocacy for the poor better if these were clearly explained in a language they understand.
3. **Use familiar language in posting the messages.** Filipinos react more to familiar things and to development agenda made understandable to the general public. The mother tongue is better understood in many cases, hence using Filipino language can make the page less intimidating.

Policies

Address readers’ feedback and inputs. AGHAM must ensure that it makes its appreciation felt by the followers through fast response to issues raised by readers online. Some posts didn’t get replies, leaving the impression that AGHAM failed to answer and address the concerns or issues raised by the followers. Statements should not be left hanging, and it must continue to be conversational. It may result to a longer thread, but it will establish relationship between online followers and the party list even with the lack of face-to-face communication.

Management

1. **Enhance information needs.** The information need of the followers should be considered even though this was ranked 6th of their needs met. Most followers appreciate being informed and getting the summary of vital issues. When posting information, AGHAM should not just post excerpts but short sentences of what the post is all about is all about but why it should concern the online followers. Development communication is educational and processed so vital information for learning should be shared to followers.
2. **Analyze online activities through monitoring and evaluation** (e.g., Google Analytics). Have a social media team document online and offline activities. With the rapid growth and extensive coverage of the Internet, AGHAM should know what is being said and disseminated about the party list. At the same time, the social media team should always be updated on the projects and activities of the party list.
3. **Face time with people is still effective when it comes to getting support.** Although social media have become popular, the mobilization of the virtual community remains effective. Filipinos, seem to prefer the human touch and to feel a great sense of security and trust. They prefer seeing the person behind the page, rather than let the Facebook page do all the work. Since the study is exploratory in nature, the researcher has discovered that one of Facebook's limitations is not only the lack of face-to-face interaction but some inconsistencies in the showing of documented posts.

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APPENDIX

Table 1. Summary of postings of communication needs gratified
by the use of Facebook

NEEDS	AGHAM		FOLLOW-ERS		TOTAL	
	Freq N=135	%	Freq N=493	%	Freq N=645	%
Information needs						
Find out about relevant events and conditions in immediate surroundings, society, and the world	35	5.43	16	2.48	51	7.90
Satisfy curiosity and general interest	17	2.64	2	0.31	19	2.94
Have access to system	1	0.16	12	1.86	13	2.01
Learn, self-education	2	0.31	9	1.40	11	1.66
Seek advice on practical matters, or opinion and decision choices	2	0.31	7	1.09	9	1.39
Sub-Total	57	8.85	46	7.14	103	15.9
Security and safety needs						
Gain a sense of security through knowledge	0	0	14	2.17	14	2.17
Have the sense of having a "level playing field"	1	0.16	5	0.78	6	0.93
Gain the ability to own and maintain one's identity while participating in a Web Community	0	0	3	0.47	3	0.46
Sub-Total	1	0.16	22	3.42	23	3.56
Social Needs						
Belong to the community as a whole	26	4.03	11	1.71	37	5.73
Belong to subgroups within the community	6	0.93	12	1.86	35	5.42
Sub-Total	32	4.96	23	3.57	72	11.15
Integration						
Social empathy (gain insight into circumstances of others)	2	0.93	75	11.63	77	11.93
Conversation and social interaction	1	0.16	53	8.22	54	8.37
Carry out social roles	0	0	11	1.71	11	1.70

Identification and belongingness	1	0.16	1	0.16	2	0.31
Sub-Total	4	1.25	140	21.72	14	22.3
					4	1
Self-Esteem						
Contribute to the community and be recognized.	1	0.16	61	9.46	62	9.61
Sub-Total	1	0.16	61	9.46	62	9.61
Entertainment						
Fill time	3	0.47	98	15.19	10	15.6
					1	5
Have venue for emotional release	1	0.16	60	9.30	61	9.45
Get intrinsic cultural or aesthetic enjoyment	10	1.55	14	2.17	24	3.72
Sub-Total	14	2.18	172	26.66	18	28.8
					6	2
Personal Identity						
Identify with valued others (in the media)	0	0	1	0.16	1	0.15
Sub-Total	0	0	1	0.16	1	0.15
Self-Actualization						
Take on a community role that develops skills and opens up new opportunities.	26	4.03	28	4.34	54	8.37
Sub-Total	26	4.03	28	4.34	54	8.37



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Gender Meanings and Inclusion of Girls in Primary Education Among the Ta-oy Tribe in Saravan Province, Lao PDR

Khounkham Douangphachone
Vientiane, Lao PDR

Benjamina Paula G. Flor
Serlie B. Jamias
Nelson Vincent Quirejero
UP Los Baños

Using feminist theories highlighting standpoint theory as anchor, this mixed method study investigated how 159 households, 68 lower secondary school students, 10 focus group discussion (FGD) participants and two key informants from 13 villages in the Ta-oy District, Saravan Province, Lao PDR defined gender and its implications to girls' inclusion in primary school. Data was gathered using surveys, FGD, and Key Informant Interviews. The Pearson Chi-square test was used to determine the relationship between socio-demographic characteristics and the respondents' view on gender role. The majority of the respondents were male; with no formal education, upland rice farmers, with an annual income of US\$120.00 or less and got married as early as age 11 with majority between the ages of 16 and 20 years old. Almost half defined gender as "men and women who are working in solidarity in the farm." This is the reason for expecting girls to do household chores as a priority over school participation. The respondents' socio-demographic characteristics such as sex, educational attainment, occupation and annual family income were not significantly related to their view on gender role regarding girls' inclusion in school. It can be surmised, though, that fathers among the Ta-oy tribe played a major role in inhibiting girls' participation in school. Therefore, school officials at the local levels need to address this concern to ensure compliance to MDG number 2 or universal access to primary education.

Keywords: gender, gender meaning, gender role, gender inequality, girls' education

INTRODUCTION

The word gender or the sense of ‘the state of being male or female’ has been used since the 14th century, but this did not become common until the mid-20th century (Oxford Dictionary). Even if the words sex and gender both have the same sense ‘the state of being male or female,’ they are typically used in slightly different ways because “sex” refers to the biological and physiological characteristics that define men and women, while “gender” refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for men and women (WHO-gender).

The concept of education has to be understood in order to understand the factors that would contribute to the definition of gender. Assumptions of having understood a particular concept are dangerous because people define or perceive things or ideas differently. As the saying goes “meanings are in people, not in words.” Therefore, defining gender in the context of education by an ethnic minority group may have some bearing on why girl’s inclusion in school is very low compared to boys in Lao PDR. Such phenomenon more often than not has been attributed to socio-demographic factors, early marriage, older children taking care of younger siblings and the like. Andrabi et al. (2012) studied the impact of a mother’s education on their child’s education in Pakistan and found a causal link between a mother’s education and the time spent by their children on educational activities outside of school. This link showed lower results for children whose mothers had low education levels. Subrahmanian (2002) identified that schooling for poorer households is difficult due to the cost, directly in the form of school supplies, transportation, uniforms, food, etc. but also indirectly in the loss of labor provided to a household, especially by girls. A study by Bayisenge, J. (n.d.) in Africa identified the impact of early marriage on girls’ education which recognized that for poorer families, the value of investing in education for girls is too distant to be recognized as it is perceived as only benefiting the husband’s family and not the girl’s parents.

Research in education in Nepal by Stash and Hannum (2011) found that in general, family decisions about their children’s education depend on the availability of resources as well as the families’ perspective on the

benefit of education for the child. This cost-benefit analysis often ends up detrimentally for girls because they believe that education will not benefit girls in obtaining employment, as jobs requiring education are generally not open for women.

Samal (2012) discovered that low socio-economic status could negatively affect the attitude towards schooling and education in India. For poor families, it is viewed as more lucrative for children to engage in traditional occupations to enhance the family income, whereas education is regarded as a waste of time and money as the outcomes are uncertain.

According to the study on “Girls’ and Women’s Education in Laos” Peters (1998) “girls and women in Laos are not the target of strong discriminatory practices.” In addition, the Lao legal system does not discriminate against women. The results simply showed that there are more males than females in schools. Furthermore, the low education level of women is reflected through the average wage rate for women being 28% lower than that of men and that double the number of women to men, 53%, work in the informal sector (FAO, 2013). One reason that could perhaps explain this is that culturally, girls are expected to do domestic chores, older daughters are responsible to take care of their younger siblings and ethnic minority girls in remote villages of Southern Laos, where this study was conducted, got married and bore children at a young age. These observations perhaps, are applicable to older children but not primary education students.

The various problems attendant to girls’ education in Lao PDR are not limited to this country but also apply to many countries around the world. Currently, the issue of gender in education has been raised at a global level. UNESCO launched the Global Partnership for Girls and Women’s Education in May 2011. UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova welcomed the participants to the Forum, which aimed to galvanize support from the private and public sectors to make quality education available for girls and women everywhere. In Lao PDR, specifically, INGOs have cooperated with JICA through education projects called “Community Initiative Education Development.” These projects were conducted in four provinces in Southern Laos. In like manner, results showed that the number of girls in primary school was lower than boys particularly in remote areas where the majority of minority ethnic groups live. Despite the multiple interventions to mainstream women or girls in

education, there seems to be a gap in explaining the phenomenon. How are women viewed specifically in the Ta-oy tribe? Could there be hidden meanings or untold practices regarding girl's participation in school? Therefore, this study on gender meanings is meant to find out and respond to the gender education issues in the Ta-oy tribe in Southern Laos.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employed a mixed methods research design, the explanatory sequential design and transformative design. The purpose of the explanatory sequential design was to use a qualitative strand to explain initial quantitative results (Creswell, J, & Clark, V. 2011). This design used quantitative results for the first three objectives of the study to guide purposeful sampling for the qualitative phase in the last two objectives of the study.

The method for collecting data for the purpose of this study employed Simple Random Sampling to select the sample from 56 villages, 3,397 households of the Ta-oy District. However, since this study was conducted with the Ta-oy tribe only, therefore the number of villages and households were reduced to 13 villages and 1,017 households which were made up purely of the Ta-oy tribe. Therefore, the computation of the population size of this study for households resulted to 159 and 68 respondents from student representatives (lower secondary school of Pajudon Village) participated in the survey.

Questionnaires were distributed and facilitated by the researcher and his 10 person team who were trained as enumerators. Mostly, they were female enumerators. One of the lower secondary schools in the Ta-oy district was selected for the student respondents, where 68 students were asked to answer the questionnaire. In-depth interviews were conducted with two head office directors of the district, one of whom was from the Lao Women's Union and one from the District Education and Sports Bureau (DESB). An FGD was conducted with 10 members of the Village Education Development Committee.

Data gathered from the study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Relationships of the variables was employed using the measures of association/ correlation test of the data to determine the relationship of

the socio-demographic characteristics and the views on gender roles of the respondents and to find out significant differences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Socio-demographic Characteristics of the respondents

Of the 159 respondents, the majority (64.8%) of the respondents were male with 47.2% of respondents had no formal education (19.5% males, 27.6% females), upland rice farmers (91.8%), with an annual income of US\$120 or less and got married as early as age 11 with majority (62.3%) between the ages of 16 and 20 years old. The young marrying age is a potential reason why students, females in particular, do not continue with higher education and the dropout rate is high.

The male respondents outnumber the females, because, generally, in Ta-oy tribe the wives are expected to be quiet and the husbands are to respond to the questions, unless the husband was not present or the question directly involves the women. This implies that the conclusion by Khamphoui (2012) that men tend to engage in discussions and make decisions whereas women stay quiet was accurate and the impact could be more extensive, in that women do not participate in community activities and leadership as well as education. Furthermore, it indicated the cultural impression of women's role in society, which could negatively impact on female education. Table 1 indicates that female education was previously not prioritized as more women than men had no formal education. Additionally, even where women did have some education, there were significantly less females than males who had achieved higher education.

Defining Gender in the Context of the Ta-oy Tribe

Most of the respondents (56.6%) had heard the word gender. They knew the term from NGOs (35.8%) who have implemented activities related to gender issues. Community meetings (13.8%) were another source that has spread information about gender to the villagers.

Moreover, respondents were asked to define the meaning of the word gender based on their own definition and perspective. Of the 159 respondents, most (49 or 31%) defined gender as "men and women who are

working equally in solidarity in the farm.” This may be because the majority of respondents were upland rice farmers, thus their definition was within the context of working equally in the farm. There were 7 (4%) respondents who defined gender as, “men and women who are equal in working and together make decisions to solve any problem” while 13 (8%) respondents stated that gender is, “both men and women are equal in receiving knowledge in school,” which indicated that some respondents recognized gender inequality in education. More than a third (43 or 27%) gave a very simple definition as “the condition of being female or male.”

Other views of gender meaning came from key informant interviews with the director of the Lao Women’s Union in Ta-oy district who defined gender as, “the relationship between female and male in social and cultural activities.” Different people will give different meanings depending on where their source of knowledge about the word gender comes from. As the standpoint theory asserted, a person’s stand point affects their view of the world and thus the respondent’s position in the community and environment they are living in will influence their interpretation of gender meanings as the role of men and women in the society will be different for each person. For instance, the respondents would define gender in the context of working in the farm equally between men and women, while the head of the LWU defined gender as the relationship between men and women. As both representative respondents were from different livelihood backgrounds, their definitions were distinct.

It can be surmised that in general, respondents knew the word “gender” and they also had their own definitions such as “men and women who are working equally in solidarity in the farm” and some of respondents mentioned gender which means “both men and women are equal in receiving knowledge in school.” More than half of the respondents could define gender with an appropriate definition. It could be seen that NGOs played an important role in terms of spreading information in rural areas where the roads and transport links were still in a bad condition. Community meetings were another source where the villagers could access the information of government policies and other projects’ aids.

This corroborates the finding of Samal (2012) that a family’s worldview can impact their perspective. In this case, how gender was defined as being related to working on the farm was linked to their occupation as upland rice farmers. The respondents’ considerations did not expand outside of their

worldview, for instance to contemplate about women's rights and gender discrimination. Furthermore, this supports the Standpoint theory, in that the respondent's view of the world from the rural location of the Ta-oy district impacts on their perception of women. For the most part a woman's role in society in Ta-oy, would indicate why the majority of respondents related the definition of "gender" to working on the farm. The background and environment of the respondents can be seen to be "meaning-making" as their suggested definitions of gender centered around women's working role in the family and on the farm.

Relationship of Socio-demographic Characteristics and Respondents' View on Gender Role

In order to determine the relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents such as sex, educational attainment, occupation and annual family income, and their views on gender role, the Pearson Chi-square was used. The Pearson Chi-square was used as the statistical test and based on the decision rule of the Chi-square test, the null was rejected (H_0) if the p-value was less than 0.05. Otherwise, it failed to reject the null. All the Pearson Chi-square test results were showed in table 3.

Results of the Pearson Chi-square test showed that there was no association between the respondents' sex and their choice of priority child regarding educational importance; preferred child to be educated when resources are limited; the main child helping with work in the home at a 5% level significance since its p-values (0.052, 0.99, 0.12 respectively) were greater than 0.05 alpha. Thus, those variables were independent and not associated with the sex of the respondents.

At 5% level of significance, it was found that there was no significant association between the respondents' educational attainment, occupation, and annual family income and their choice of priority child in education, preferred child to be educated when resources are limited and the main child helping with work in the home since the respective equivalent p-values (0.10, 0.76 and 0.36 for education attainment; 0.38, 0.29, 0.57 for occupation; and 0.06, 0.53, 0.34 for annual family income) were greater than 0.05 alpha. It could be said that those variables were independent and not related to the socio-demographic characteristics of educational attainment, occupation, and annual family income of the respondents.

In conclusion, statistically most of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents such as sex, educational attainment, occupation, and annual family income had no significant effect on their views of gender roles. However, even if sex of the respondent was not statically related to their preferred child to be educated when resources are limited and the main child helping with work in the home, for instance, it is still significant in that over three quarters of the respondents chose boys rather than girls and there were a greater number of respondents who said that their daughter was the primary person helping with work in the home. This indicated the negative culture towards educating females that their daughters were a second priority and that girls were not given time to attend school or to properly complete homework given at school.

Respondents' View of Girls/Women's Role and its Implications for School Inclusion

There were 29 (18.2%) respondents who did not have a boy-child in school while 52 (32.7%) respondents did not have a girl-child in school. It was seen that there was a disparity between the sexes in education participation since the results showed the number of boy-students was greater than girl-students in school. In fact, the results from the focus group discussion and the interviews with the director of the District Education Bureau and the director of the district Lao women's union agreed that the number of girls and boys in school was not equitable. One of the many problems for gender equality in education that this study was trying to investigate was the reason why the number of female students in higher grades was less than male students. These reasons could be attributed to the meanings that the Ta-oy tribe attaches to gender.

From the respondents' views of the causes as to why there were less girls in school was that most girls were used to help with their parents' work in the home. Also, it was not safe for girls to travel to school when it was far away from their home. When the school was built in the village the females have grown beyond their school age and thus were reluctant to attend school. Only a few parents complained that it was their daughter's laziness to study that kept them at home to help with work. However, it was found that most of the female students who were asked argued that they loved to go to school everyday but that they all also had to work hard at home.

In terms of who was the most influential person in the family regarding decision making about sending the children to school, it was found that 76% of respondents said they equally made the decision whereas 20% of the respondents agreed that the father was the most influential person in making this decision, particularly for small minority groups such as the Tayoy tribe. Only 3% of respondents answered that the mother influenced the decision-making but that was because they were widows. However, due to the multiple projects implemented by the government and NGOs regarding gender rights, these habits were disappearing gradually.

The findings also showed that 100% of respondents were aware that education was necessary for their children. However, when the respondents were asked to choose which child should be educated if their resources would permit them to educate only one child, most of the respondents (77%) answered that they would prefer to educate boys. Only a few respondents (23%) claimed that they would rather educate girls but again, this was mainly because there was no boy-child in the family. The main reason why boy-children were more commonly the first priority to be educated was because traditionally it was boys/men who would look after their parents and stay with the family when they got married. Girls/women were traditionally expected to stay with the husband's family. Girls/women also often got married early so it was seen as a waste of resources to educate girls. It could be said that girls/women were viewed as a second priority in education.

The majority of respondents (54%) would like to see their daughters' career in the future be teaching and 26% of respondents preferred their daughters to become nurses, whereas only 18% of respondents answered that it depended on their daughters' decision. Conversely, the female student respondents revealed that the future job they would like to do would be nursing (26%); teaching (19%), and becoming a lawyer (15%). It was seen that the preferred future profession between the children and parents were reversed. This could be because the more frequently the respondents had seen the job being done in their community, the more likely they were to choose that for their daughters' ideal future career.

Most respondents (43%) mentioned that, if given the opportunity, the highest level to which they would educate their son would be a bachelors degree level, while only 33% would educate their daughter to this level. Meanwhile, the largest proportion of the respondents answered that they

would educate their daughters up to high school or upper secondary school level, which was still a basic level of education and would not give them the necessary qualifications as the minimum requirement for most jobs is at least a complete vocational school at least. Again, despite the respondents being given the scenario in which resources were not limited, they still put their sons as the first priority.

The results (Table 3) showed that the chore work done most commonly by sons included helping with work in the upland rice fields, house construction and repairs, bamboo weaving, taking care of cattle in the fields, finding food, fetching water, and cooking. Most of these chores done by sons were categorized as being done sometimes by the largest proportion of respondents. Some of the respondents agreed that some tasks are never done by male children, such as looking after younger siblings (67%) and searching for firewood (65%). However, male student respondents claimed that they did help with work such as fetching water, searching for firewood, cooking, cleaning the house and looking after younger siblings and they did these tasks every day.

The list of chores done by daughters (Table 4) included fetching water, pounding rice, cooking, searching for firewood, feeding pets, finding food, looking after younger siblings, cleaning and helping to work in the upland rice fields. These tasks were also confirmed by the female student respondents as most of them answered that they got involved in these activities every day. However, some tasks were rarely done by daughters such as house construction and repair, and bamboo weaving, although some of girls/women did cotton weaving instead. It was seen that daughters helped with work for the family more than sons.

The respondents were asked to rank the important reasons for educating girls/women including their social role for the purpose of finding their view on the contents. The responses were as following in the order of the most important to the least important: educating girls/women is important step in overcoming poverty; educating girls/women is important as educating boys/men; educating girls/women is important benefit for society as a whole; educating girls/women will be more productive at home and work; girls/women's biological and physiological characteristics are not strong as boys/men; girls/women should stay and with work in the home helping family; and girls/women are not productive as boys/men. This indicated that most of the respondents realized the importance of educating girls/women.

Proposed Plans to Promote Girls' Participation in School

The DESB statistical report indicated that there was a considerable disparity in the sex distribution in school with the enrolment rate of males being 79% while only 70% for females in primary school (grade 1- grade 5). The gross enrollment rate at lower secondary school was 29% for females and 40% for males. This disparity was also confirmed by the respondents' survey, FGD, and KII results who confirmed the same that the number of boy-students was greater than girl-students. Thus, it was seen that girl-students are disadvantaged numerically in school.

It was found that some of the respondents were aware of the MOES's policies and strategies, but they did not access the information or sometimes misinterpreted the policies because of their low education background. From the results of the one hundred and fifty-nine respondents, 122 (70%) respondents were not knowledgeable about measures taken by MOES to improve education while only 29% respondents were aware, but they could not specifically name any of those measures. In fact, the respondents agreed that the MOES's policies and strategies were not specific on girls/women's education yet.

Fifty-nine percent of the respondents said they could advise girls and other parents; 30% said they should pay fees and provide for the needs of girl-students, while 10% of parents said they should give girls an equal opportunity to attend school. The respondents also suggested that to improve girls' participation in education parents must encourage their children go to school, support sufficient funds for their child's basis educational needs, avoid asking children to help with work in the home and reduce the chores for girls, and seek education to solve their illiteracy. The respondents also suggested that the VEDC should make sure that children go to school regularly and villagers support village volunteer teachers. Finally, village authorities should conduct fundraising to support poor students and meet with families who keep their children out of school.

In addition, most of the respondents believed that if girls/women were offered a scholarship by the government or NGOs, this would increase the number of girls/women in school. They also agreed that employing more female teachers in school would increase girls' participation in school because they would act as good role models to encourage girls to participate in education and its activities.

Alternative suggestions were compiled and summarized from FGDs and KIIs on how to improve girls' participation in school. This includes eradicating illiteracy among parents; implementing early childhood education in rural areas; hiring more female teachers; conducting a campaign stop early marriage; penalizing parents who keep girls out of school; establishing a girls/women committee at a village level; and strengthening the capacity of government of relevant institutions and agencies to address ethnic and gender concerns and equality in education.

These suggestions, based on the experiences and observations of stakeholders in the communities where the programs to improve the participation of girls in schools will be initiated, should be taken into consideration in present and future initiatives to improve female participation in schooling.

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Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

		n	%	Total (n)	Total (%)
Sex	Male	103	64.8	159	100.0
	Female	56	35.2		
Age	19 - 29	14	8.8	28	17.6
		14	8.8		
	30 - 49	57	35.8	94	59.1
		37	23.3		
	50 - 69	27	16.9	32	20.0
	> 70	5	3.1	5	3.1
		0	0.0		
Educational attainment	No formal education	31	19.5	75	47.1
		44	27.6		
	Primary education	58	36.4	67	42.0
		9	5.6		
Secondary education	11	6.9	14	8.7	
	3	1.8			
Vocational education	3	1.8	3	1.8	
	0	0.0			
Occupation	Unemployed/seeking	6	3.8	8	5.1
		2	1.3		
	Salaried/wage worker	4	2.5	5	8.8
1		6.3			
Self-employed	93	58.5	146	91.8	
	53	33.3			
Annual family income range	US\$ 120 or less	42	26.4	78	49.0
		36	22.6		
	US\$ 121 to US\$ 500	42	26.4	62	39.0
		20	12.6		
US\$ 501 to US\$ 1,000	12	7.5	12	7.5	
	0	0.0			
up to US\$ 1,000	7	4.4	7	4.4	
		0	0.0		
Age of marriage	11-15	7	4.4	20	12.6
		13	8.2		
	16-20	63	39.6	99	62.2
		36	22.6		
	21-25	27	16.9	34	21.3
7		4.4			
26-30	5	3.1	5	3.1	
	0	0.0			
> 31	1	0.6	1	0.6	

Table 2. Summary of Chi-Square value between sex, educational attainment, occupation, annual income and three variables

Variables	Socio-demographic Characteristics				Conclusion
	Sex P-value	Educational attainment P-value	Occupation P-value	Annual Income P-value	
the choice of priority child in education	0.0052	0.1	4.14	0.06	ns
preferred child to be educated when resources are limited	0.99	0.76	2.42	0.53	ns
the main child helping with work in the home	0.12	0.36	2.88	0.31	ns

Table 3. The distribution of son's chores in the home

List chore works of son	every day		some time		never		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
upland rice farming	7	4.4	141	88.7	1	.6	149	93.7
build/repair the house			92	57.9	31	19.5	123	77.4
bamboo weaving			107	67.3	24	15.1	131	82.4
feed cattle in the field	9	5.7	121	76.1	12	7.5	142	89.3
find food	1	.6	142	89.3	6	3.8	149	93.7
fetch water	27	17.0	41	25.8	77	48.4	145	91.2
cooking	32	20.1	57	35.8	53	33.3	142	89.3
look after siblings	7	4.4	29	18.2	106	66.7	142	89.3
search for firewood			38	23.9	104	65.4	142	89.3

Table 4. The distribution of daughter's chores in the home

List chore works of daughter	every day		some time		never		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Fetching water	130	81.8	5	3.1			135	84.9
Pounding rice	33	20.8	101	63.5			134	84.3
Cooking	95	59.7	40	25.2			135	84.9
Searching for firewood			132	83.0	2	1.3	134	84.3
Feeding pets	48	30.2	86	54.1			134	84.3
Find food	4	2.5	126	79.2	3	1.9	133	83.6
Looking after siblings	16	10.1	115	72.3	3	1.9	134	84.3
Cleaning	98	61.6	37	23.3			135	84.9
Upland rice farming	1	.6	125	78.6	3	1.9	129	81.1



**On Stephen B.
Bevans and Roger
P. Schroeder's
Constants in Context:
A Theology of Mission
for Today**

Lily Apura

PREMISE AND APPROACH

A treatise that proposes to be a theology of mission for today, Stephen Bevans and Roger Schroeder's *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today* (Claretian Publications, 2005). attempts to cover the Christian traditions that emerged from the ministry of Jesus throughout history, without compromising the depth in their treatise of Christian theology and how this translates to missionary practice. The number six is an important analytical key in this book. The authors dwell on six doctrinal themes the content of the gospel that has been translated in different contexts – the constants, and six historical mission models. Situating each model in its milieu, the dynamics at work in the theologizing process are detailed in view of the six constants. Putting together and expounding the theology and practice of mission in the particular periods, the authors cull theological and practical insights constructing a theology of mission for today.

Taking cue from the followers of the Way in Acts as they responded to Gentile conversion and thus was able to transcend their Jewishness, so the writers contend that the church being missionary has to be open to change in relation to the context. Inevitably this will lead to diversity.

However, amidst diversity they discern a unity rooted in the constants. They cite Andrew Walls for naming two of these: the centrality of Jesus and historical connection and identity as the church (ecclesiology). Bevans and Schroeder do not cite any authority or source in their proposition of 4 others constants namely: the church's eschatological view of history (eschatology), understanding of human nature (anthropology), gospel of salvation, and affirmation of human-lived reality (culture).

To further differentiate the ways through which the constants above have been understood, the authors use the typological characterizations of theological perspectives coined by Justo Gonzalez and Dorothee Solle: the orthodox/conservative theology (type A), liberal theology (type B), and radical/liberation theology (type C). The authors claim that conservative and fundamentalists churches usually adhere to the prescriptive theology (type A). Other church traditions positively regarded human capacity and the philosophical approach as a way of interpreting faith thus exhibit liberal perspective, while others still prefer the concrete situation as the ground of theological construction such as that of liberation theology.

Having clarified the types and how each type generally viewed the constants, the writers proceed by elucidating the contexts of each period, illustrating that the theological types are related to the context.

MISSION IN HISTORY

From the second to the third centuries, as Christianity was adapted to the Hellenistic thought and culture (type B), Tertullian and Augustine of Rome were constructing theologies which laid the foundation for a Christian state (type A). In the East Irenaeus was exhorting the Christians to be true and faithful in persecution and oppression (type C). In this period the martyr was the highest ideal for the Christian community. The authors, following their proposition of constants in theologies, demonstrate that it was on these constants that the theological process revolved.

God in Christ was central to the faith, and the Christology was always at the center of theology two centuries after the apostles. In addition to early understanding of salvation as liberation, it was also interpreted as "eternal life". The understanding of salvation as a present experience of love, forgiveness, and deliverance from evil became the primary motivation of mission that superseded the intense apocalyptic hope of the apostolic

time. Identifying the church with the covenant people, baptism became the primary model of mission through ordinary Christians. While the radical break from culture was the norm in the East, contextualization was being done by Origen, applying Hellenistic philosophy to the understanding of the Christian faith in the West.

If the church was the center of mission in the early church, monasteries filled this role from the fourth century to the close of the tenth century – a time when the church enjoyed the favor of the Roman Empire. Christian asceticism gave rise to monastic movements that embodied the model of life fully devoted to God. Christianity spread following travel routes by Christian travelers either on account of trade or profession, or persecution, or of deliberate missionary efforts. Syria and Egypt played pivotal roles in the spread of Christianity in the East and in Africa respectively. It reached as far as India, China and even Southeast Asia. In the West, its expansion was associated with that of the Roman Empire through mass conversions. Meanwhile, monasticism also emerged during this period and provided the Christian ideal in time when gained power and wealth. The influence of this ideal is evident in the Irish, Celtic, and Anglo-Saxon Christianity.

Bevans and Schroeder stated that theology at this time mainly followed the A type perspective in Augustine (West) and the Type C in the East. Asceticism viewed natural human inclination negatively as monasticism is a way of countering culture. Salvation at this time was primarily identified with the institutional church. Christology reached a definitive form in this period but the way this was understood leaned more towards divinity.

Situating the mendicant Franciscan and Dominican movements in the time of the crusades and socio-economic advancement of Europe, the authors noted that these orders presented an alternative way to the “sword approach” from the 11th to the 15th century, that found expression in the crusades and inquisition. The intellectual-philosophical approach of the Dominicans and the approach of Franciscans that valued theological insight from experience and the exemplary life they lived pointed towards an “international and superpolitical unity” as the “ideal of medieval Christendom.” In the East, the monastic model still prevailed from the 11th to the 15th century. Theologically the supernatural aspect of the faith was prevalent in the understanding of salvation, Christology, and eschatology. The lay-women movements in this period such as those of the Beguines, the Grey Sisters, and Elizabethan Sisters, as well as the emergence of

monastic orders of both of men and women were accordingly concrete reactions to a mission thrust that was church-centered normally oriented towards baptism.

Mission during the age of European colonialism and commercialism, in time of absolute monarchies was understood as subjugation of the outsider -- meaning being sent to another place, to convert either non-Catholics or Catholics (in the case of the protestants), and non-Christians. A time of discovery of new worlds, a renewed drive to Christianize the strange and unknown peoples was undertaken with enthusiasm particularly by Spain and Portugal upon whom the responsibility of missionary endeavor was entrusted by the pope. In carrying out this missionary charge, Spain employed the cross and the sword. Bevans and Schroeder cited a source that pegged the human toll of Spanish conquest to as high as sixty million. Subscribing to the tabula rasa concept, native cultural and religious practices were mostly destroyed as the new faith was introduced.

Mission strategies consisted of the encomienda system, and convent/reduction model. Encomiendas were land grants to Spaniards who were to take responsibility in teaching the Christian faith to the indigenous people, entitling them to a portion of the product of the people's labor. In effect this became a system of slavery. The convento and reduction models were also employed, where missionaries organized the life of a concentrated population under the leadership of the encomenderos. Even at its best, and with the leadership of the religious orders, these systems were always administered to the benefit of its colonial administrators, and more often than not physical and other forms of violence and abuses were the norm.

The missionaries who went to Asia, particularly Japan, China, India, and Vietnam had a better estimation of the people and consequently were more accommodation to the local culture in the transmission of the gospel. There was a deliberate attempt to distance mission from colonization by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (SCPF) established in 1622, but this led to conflicts with the sending governments. Openness to other culture was eventually condemned at the beginning of the 17th century. On account of this the missionary activities of the Jesuits and the SCPF were suppressed.

Among the Protestants, matters of identity, doctrine, and survival were the main focus. The attempt to engage in mission Scandinavia, Brazil, and in the Dutch and English colonies were still both as a state and

religious enterprise. It was the Anabaptist who presented an alternative protestant version of monastic life with the whole congregation submitting to radical life of obedience. This later gave rise to Pietistic movement, which exhibited zeal for mission calling for individual conversion that resulted to Puritanism. It is from these movements that the Great Awakening in the early 18th century emerged giving birth to Quaker and Methodist traditions.

Mission in the 19th century (1792-1914), was an offshoot of the Enlightenment. If the previous period may be characterized as a time of the expansion of Christendom, there was a clear delineation between secular and religious sphere at this time. But the evangelizing zeal was still intertwined with nationalism driven by the desire to extend the benefits of what was perceived as superior knowledge, and the advanced technical and scientific knowledge of the West, and thus was still tied up with imperialism. In the United States, this found expression in the concept “manifest destiny” a perceived duty to annex territories for the sake of evangelization and civilization.

There were dissenting voices who pointed out the incompatibility between mission and colonialism. However, although many missionaries were genuinely concerned with social welfare and education, their mission was generally paternalistic and ethnocentric. It must be noted that the lay and the women played very active roles in this time of intense missionary endeavor.

Rooted in the pietism and the Great Awakening, as well as the emergence of Methodism, faith revivals which led to the organization of missionary societies composed of lay and clergy. These self-supporting mission bodies undertook sending of missionaries from Europe and North America to places in Africa, China, Asia, and India. The authors noted that the mission drive transcended denominational differences. At its peak in 1900, 170,00 to 200,000 missionaries representing 200 mission societies gathered in the New York Ecumenical Missionary Conference.

In the 20th century, the West was engaged in two world wars and witnessed the rise and fall of communism, such leaders as Mussolini, Stalin, and Hitler also rose to power. Asia, especially China, Korea, Philippines, suffered under Japanese imperialism after which was Mao Zedong’s cultural revolution in China. Vietnam and Korea were divided. India also struggled against British rule. In the Middle East, Israel had the six day

war with its Arab neighbors and Africa was torn by apartheid. Protests and demonstration also raged in North America against segregation and for other civil rights.

From the church-centered approach of winning converts and planting churches (*Maximum Illud*, 1919), the Vatican II's understanding shifted, and later elaborations (*Lumen Gentium*, LG) pointed to a "provisional" understanding of the church as a witness of the rule of God. This opened new ways of relating to other churches (*Unitatis Reintegratio*, UR), and *Gaudium Spes* (GS) that called for dialogue with other religions particularly.

Among the Protestants, the trend leaned towards liberalism. Consequently, the positive view of human nature and culture, the stress on social and economic aspect of salvation, and commitment to ecumenism and dialogue with other religions characterized mission. This alienated the conservative and more fundamentalist churches, who eventually organized the Lausanne Congress in 1974 as a distinct group from the World Council of Churches. The Lausanne covenant stressed the "authority of the Bible and the uniqueness and universality of Christ". The covenant also stressed the "primacy of proclamation for mission" though stating that justice and evangelism are Christian duties. The same emphasis on proclamation was reiterated in the Lausanne II document called the Manila Manifesto that mentioned "dialogue, a strong concern for the poor and a more holistic approach."

The Orthodox Churches, having joined the World Council Churches have always had a historical heritage of strong emphasis on "common witness, liturgy and mission, proclamation and witness" based on a trinitarian and incarnational theology as embodied in its liturgy and its life.

Aside from the mission models of the Roman Catholic Church, the World Council of Churches, the World Evangelical Fellowship and Orthodox Church; Pentecostals and indigenous churches such as those in Africa, India, Solomon Islands, China, Japan and other parts of the world, also presented alternative mission models. They have been cut off and have developed independently from their former mission bodies, or may have been offshoots of indigenous mission. And, as a result they have incorporated or adopted beliefs and practices coming from their own reading and understanding of the Bible and the Christian faith, or from their culture. For instance the Pentecostals highlighted the baptism of the

spirit, and the miraculous and supernatural aspects of faith, indigenous spirituality, and pragmatism in technology and, if I may add, pragmatic theology. The authors attributed such to the fact that the Christian faith inherently calls for inculturation and contextualization; and noted that the vitality of these faith communities attests to the fact that “ultimately (ordinary Christians are) the ones who can both sense the constants and engage the context.”

ANALYSIS: THE PROPHETIC DIALOGUE MISSION MODEL

From the survey of mission engagement of known Christian traditions and churches throughout Christian history, and having demonstrated that mission theology and attitudes in different Christian traditions run along the theological constants in relation to the three theological streams, the authors proposed that only a “synthesis of all three will provide the firmest foundations for a model of mission... (that is) most adequate model for these first years of the twenty-first century: mission as prophetic dialogue” (p. 284, not italicized in the book).

Taking a hint from the words prophetic dialogue, the authors suggest that mission may be taken as both prophetic proclamation and dialogue. For instance, as prophetic proclamation, the imperatives of the gospel vis-a-vis human sinfulness manifested in cultures, institutions, ecclesiastical traditions, as well as in other faiths, must be must be confronted. But dialogue requires humility and patient discernment of the divine in the other person, ecclesiastical tradition, culture, and religion.

Theologically, they base their mission model on three theological themes. First, mission as the mission of God is rooted in Trinitarian formulation. God is not understood as a monolithic entity, but as dynamic fellowship of mutuality and equality; and for the sake of love to the world, God the father poured out all divine blessings through the Son, in order to draw humanity into the divine fellowship. The Son gave glory to the father by living a life that is in perfect accord to the divine nature, and in giving his life for the sake of God’s will. In the Holy Spirit sent by the Son, there is unity and fellowship and service as the body of Christ is built through its various gifts.

The authors emphasize that working out the implications of a Trinitarian-based theology will lead to a Christology that stresses the Holy Spirit’s work

and gifts, in realizing the just rule of God. In ecclesiology, communion and unity of the whole church as well as dialogue with those of other faiths will be an important aspect of the church life and mission. Escathologically, the here and now of salvation and Christian life is stressed in communion with Christ and all Christians, but full communion and realization of the rule of God is also presented as a future aspiration. In terms of salvation, it is interpreted as being with God, in fellowship with one another, and with the whole of creation; which will be realized through submission to just and peaceful rule of God, and commitment to uphold the integrity of God's creation. This image affirms solidarity with the human and non-human community, and society and culture as a part of that reality, but at the same time exposes those to the criterion of humaneness and well-being rooted not in individualism but in a community of equality, mutuality and justice that characterize the trinity. Christology also figures prominently in prophetic proclamation. Citing the convergence among Catholics, Evangelicals, and Pentecostals, over that of the World Council of Churches that leans towards inclusivism and pluralism, the authors assert the "uniqueness and absoluteness of Christ" (p. 333). They mention the evangelical theologian John Stott who in reference to the WCC's more "horizontal" leaning asserts that the gospel proclaimed "is not to be defined by the gospel's recipients" but that "all concur that in a single word, God's good news is Jesus" (as quoted by the authors).

Another biblical theme cited as theological basis for mission the prophetic dialogue mission model proposed, is the reign of God. God's reign is the central theme of Jesus ministry and proclamation; the church is but a herald and a witness to the greater reality that calls for radical reorientation of values and practices – conversion. Mission is therefore, theocentric and escathologically directed, but at the same time affirms history and the well being of creation. On account of the reign of God and the reality today, salvation cannot be anything but holistic and the church's proclamation prophetic.

Following the authors' proposition, Christians do not come to the conversation empty. The constants synthesized according to the three theological types provide the form and content of the conversation as well as criteria for listening and learning. Our faith in the Triune God, Jesus the Savior, and the reign of God cannot be compromised. We enter the dialogue not with mere words; it is a dialogue and proclamation of life. That is how the authors envision mission in today's context.

ANALYSIS: PROPHETIC DIALOGUE AS A MISSION MODEL

A synthesis of the constants as mentioned by the authors would mean a theological consensus by at least those who would employ this model for today. While the author has, in presenting the three types generally outlined the main streams into three, there are still finer points in between such differences in eschatological view: conception of the Holy Spirit, the degree of inculturation to name some, which sadly continues to divide the church. But the most formidable barriers for adapting such a model, are institutional allegiances that get intertwined with personalities and power issues. While doctrine figured prominently in the schisms that have plagued the church, it is the practical aspects of the church's life that undermine it witness, not so much the differences in Gospel interpretation. For as the authors claim the Church proclaim the same gospel.

For instance, the cause of division of the church into East and West was the relationship between church leaders. In the same manner institutional interest of the church and leadership played a big factor in the failure of the Catholic Church to be open to diverging theology of Martin Luther. And, this paper illustrates, doctrinal matters are not easily grasped, and an ordinary Christian's lifetime may not be enough to fully grasp the theological nuances of the trinity or the reign of God. But it is the visible aspects of a life devoted to the God overflowing in relationship with people around that touch hearts. In practical aspects we spread the faith we practice. Knowledge is a monopoly of the learned. In an ideal situation where it filters down to the lay people, it still is, in form of concepts that have to be translated to action.

There is one God and one mission, and as the book demonstrates, the mission constants are intertwined in that the doctrine of trinity by way of example has implications to the understanding of other constants. Mission can but serve as a witness and servant to God's love in action towards embracing the whole human and non-human creation within God ordered reality. The church cannot be anything but a missionary church. Yet in view of other living religions vital to the life and culture of non-Christian religions, which like Christianity also enjoin faithfulness to their religious ideals and mandates, one must recognize that Christian mission in the past has caused the destruction and disruption of nature and indigenous culture and advanced the cause of certain nations and that of the institutional church, and the disintegration of foundational values necessary for human

society in the post-modern situation. Christian mission must be faithful to the Gospel, but it must recognize that truth comes out more clearly when it manifests itself in the very way of doing mission: love, humility, respect and genuine openness in the spirit of friendship as Jesus its Lord demonstrated.

Mission from my point of view as illustrated by the historical survey part of this book, is not so much an academic discipline, as a vocational calling. There is a difference for example between a learned skill and attitude. A model for an ideal Christian life therefore is a good mission model. Hence, while I do not discount the importance of academic discourse, I believe that it is still the spirituality of the church that is most influential in shaping people as gospel translators, that matter most. Christian life as a vertical relationship that is translated in horizontal relationship so vividly illustrated by the life Jesus lived and as imitated by the multitude of Christian is still a relevant model. It captures the requisite relationship, content of the message, and practice of ministry. In a context where the gospel has practically been transmitted to most lands and cultures, the best missionaries are those who are naturally in contact and have relationship with the gospel recipients.

In sum, Bevans and Schroeder propose the same message preached – the constants but proposes dialogue in its practice. This is especially remarkable, since the church itself has still to live up to the prophetic call of radical obedience amidst differing contexts and among different ecclesiastical traditions. A good Christian life model is a good mission model.

In Nikki Alfar’s New Book of Fantasy, the War of the Sexes Rages On

Ian Rosales Casocot

In introducing Nikki Alfar’s stunning first collection of short stories, *Now, Then, and Elsewhen* (University of Santo Tomas Press, 2013), which recently won the National Book Award for its category, the fictionist Sarge Lacuesta began by dissecting the triad of fictional places the stories are set in, which defined the structure of the book, and found Ms. Alfar’s fierce and detail-hungry imagination as the pilot light that animates what would otherwise have been “the mechanical task of world-building” in lesser writers’ hands. Mr. Lacuesta also noted with some finality: “[She] writes from a very real place built out of memory and experience, who asks real questions about [these worlds], and who wields a genuine talent that many Filipino writers can only fantasize of summoning.”

Memory and conscientious world-building indeed are the twin heartbeats in Ms. Alfar’s stories, but that last remark is more than true in the consideration of her fictional output. While she has been writing for quite a while—churning out Palanca-winning stories and plays, publishing her works of fantasy in assorted international publications, and helping edit the annual Philippine Speculative Fiction series of anthologies—Ms. Alfar has only very recently took to putting out many of her tales in collected form. Together, these stories seem specifically bundled to effect a common magisterial spell. In the process, perhaps like Ursula K. Le Guin

before her, she has helped demonstrate that genre can be quite literary, and can be effortlessly engaging. If husband Dean Francis Alfar is considered as the godfather of Philippine speculative fiction, she can be more than its godmother. She is its spritely spirit.

Her recent collection, *Wonderlust* (Anvil Publishing, 2014), may well be considered as a continuation of her first book—a kind of sequel that goes farther than its predecessor, because it grows significantly darker. Structured similarly in geographical terms, *WonderLust* offers stories set either in “Familiar Ground” or in “Farther Shores,” mapping out two different sensibilities.

In the latter section, we fly towards the outworldly. The clouds we encounter in many of the stories in this section are the nebulous whimsies of the fantastical, but often anchored in the language of the fairy tale. In “The Dog, the Devil, and the King of Heaven,” we encounter the titular characters and their destinies: the canine is a faithful creature which journeys to dangerous lands to save a foolhardy, even if heavenly, monarch from a disastrous marriage with the devil. In “Doe Eyes,” easily the most delightful story in this section, we follow a princess born with the eyes of a doe, and how she uses this aberration to see people in their truest light. In “Rampion,” we get the Rapunzel story—and witness it throb to a different urging: the sexual awakening of a fairy tale character, and its consequences.

The other stories in this section are less outwardly, but are no less fantastical. In “Divine Light,” a secret agent becomes the bodyguard—or perhaps babysitter—for a god. In “Milonguena,” the tango becomes a deadly negotiation between two spies. And in “The Mechanism of Moving Forward,” the book’s most ambitious story, and which is based on historical characters, we get the tale of a Japanese noble woman fighting to save the life of her samurai father from an assassin by helping create a robot—and in the process, finds true love.

But it is the first section of the collection that easily becomes the source of awe. If only because, in articulating a familiar world with astonishing and wholly unexpected slivers of the fantastical, we get a kind of magic realism that is unlike we have encountered in a Gabriel Garcia Marquez or a Haruki Murakami. It is one suffused with humor, and one where the magical—or the horrific—is rendered to be so completely ordinary, the effect on the reader is jarring. This is demonstrated most effectively with the story that begins the collection, “The Zombie on Cuenca Street.” Here,

an about-to-be-divorced desperate housewife witnesses the beginnings of the Zombie Apocalypse—one just got trapped in the deep ditch that surrounds her posh suburban house—but other things get in the way of her deep considerations: last season’s Nike shoes, her nosy neighbors, her Porthault bed sheets, her estranged husband who is possibly gay, alimony, and the fluctuations in the real estate market. It is gleefully a horror version of a Brett Easton Ellis narrative, but none of the dreadful nothingness. And in “Appliances,” a man goes through a succession of girlfriends—which he buys, after a series of defects and disappointments, from a store. When the perfect girlfriend is finally purchased, things start to change for our protagonist—readily a metaphor for the men in today’s dating realities.

Two things soon become apparent as the main shapers in Ms. Alfar’s narrative. The first is a slaking embrace of the sexual that provides the linchpin in the destinies of the characters, something we’ve seen in the Rapunzel and the robot girlfriends stories, but which is even more graphically demonstrated in “Bound,” a story that is very much a play of sounds and senses where an alien being in female form indulges in a soliloquy of dark sexuality with a man—and soon rapidly shifts to make us question who is prey and who is predator; and in “Revelation,” where a 39-year-old man encounters an uncomfortable epiphany in the middle of oral ministrations.

These sexy stories, however, underline Ms. Alfar’s bigger theme, which is the mine-filed negotiations in the war of the sexes, and often how this slow decay has repercussions for the entire family. In “Tom Yum,” the ingredients of the titular dish become a parable for keeping a family together, even with the problem of distance. In “An Unexpected Stop,” a couple on a road trip to Baguio decides to make a quick overnight stay at a roadside motel—and finds more than they bargained for in the battle for their marriage. It’s very much in the territory of Lorrie Moore’s incandescent domestic fiction, but one that is filled with so much vague horror. In the book’s best story, “The Puppy Years,” we encounter a plotless narrative where the youngest of five siblings recalls, in several vignettes, a childhood of teases and pranks—which all lead to an unforeseen turn in the end that renders the reader mournful for the vagaries our lives take on.

This is a sad, beautiful book that gives definite proof of what a magician of words, and of meticulously articulated loss and unloving, we have in Nikki Alfar. It is a reconfirmation of a major talent.



Gina A. Fontejon-Bonior

Through Bronfenbrenner's Eyes: A Look at Grade 1 Teachers' Enactment of a Reading Instruction Program in Remote Communities in the Philippines

Lady Flor N. Partosa

Connecting Home and the Diaspora through Hip Hop: Responding to Deep Foundation's "Children of the Sun" in Conceptualizing the Filipino Identity

Margaret Helen U. Alvarez and Nelly Z. Limbadan

Dynamics of Scapegoating in Family Systems

Kristine E. Araguas and Serlie Barroga-Jamias

Use of Facebook by a Science Political Party: A Uses and Gratification Study of Agham Partylist in the Philippines

Khounkham Douangphachone, Benamina Paula G.

Flor, Serlie B. Jamias, and Nelson Vincent Quirejero

Gender Meanings and Inclusion of Girls in Primary Education among the Ta-oy Tribe in Saravan Province, Lao PDR

REVIEW SECTION

Lily Fetalsana-Apura

On Stephen B. Bevans and Roger P. Schroeder's Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today

Ian Rosales Casocot

In Nikki Alfar's New Book of Fantasy, the War of the Sexes Rages On

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