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Human Rights from the Margins



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Foreword

Human Rights at the Margins

The different academic units of the College of Social Work and Community Development take turns putting together issues of the Philippine Journal of Social Development. The Department of Social Work is responsible for this volume which, incidentally, is the first to be completely delivered online. It chose the theme “Human Rights At The Margins” to focus on the urgency of operationalizing human rights in our daily lives and in the practice of social work and social development, particularly in a socio-political context where duty bearers themselves belittle human rights, some going as far as violating them and creating a culture of impunity.

Human rights define who and what we are as persons, and how we should interact with each other in groups, communities, societies, and other forms of collectivities. Deny them and you deny your humanity; to paraphrase the late human rights activist and statesman Senator Jose W. Diokno. In a workshop on human rights, the facilitator, Ma. Socorro Diokno of the Free Legal Aid Group, and daughter of Sen. Diokno, asked one group of participants what they do everyday. One response was eating. Ms. Diokno then asked another group of participants what human right that represented, i.e., the right to food. The game proceeded with each activity linked to a specific human right. The key message is that human rights are not abstract concepts that have been imposed on us by the West. They are concrete day-to-day activities that make it possible for us to determine whether or not our quality of life befits human beings. Duty bearers, i.e., those in government, are bound by virtue of their position and authority to enable the exercise, protection and fulfillment of human rights by citizens. When they are remiss, Philippine history teaches us that segments of the citizenry muster the courage



to organize and resist human rights violations in various ways and levels, starting from the margins.

These ideas are highlighted in the four articles and two essays featured in this volume of the *Philippine Journal of Social Development*.

The first article in this journal on the weaving human rights in social work is immediately a call for reflection and action (Espenido, in this volume). Social work is uniquely placed in Philippine society as a licensed profession addressing all forms of social issues that result in and perpetuate people's marginalization. In 2014, the International Federation of Social Work, after a global consultative process, put forward this definition of the profession:

Social work is a practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing.

However, there are many challenges to living up to this definition, not the least of which is challenging the very notion of Social Work as practised itself. Espenido locates the social work profession within the dominant neoliberal capitalist framework, which sees social welfare not as a means to fulfill the human rights of people, but rather as State benevolence, a calculated measure to prevent people from organizing against the ruling class and to maintain the status quo. Conventional social work, for Espenido, acts as a State control over the people couched in the language of charitable service provision. Its primary intervention is to help individuals cope and adapt to the unjust social order that keeps them in perpetual vulnerability to human rights violations.



The reorientation of the social work profession away from the needs or charity approach to one that is affirmative of human rights is crucial, if it is truly to facilitate social change that is geared towards ensuring people's inherent worth and dignity. It will require that the profession and its practitioners reflect on their depoliticized stance guised as "objectivity" and "fairness", and become unapologetically biased for the marginalized.

Ang-Reyes makes a similar case for Social Work with grieving families in the wake of the Philippine government's War on Drugs. The ruthless campaign to purge the country of drug traders and even drug users which began in June 2016 already had a death toll that reached 7,000 in 2018 according to government figures; human rights advocates estimate even more as cases of outside of legitimate police operations and vigilante-style killings were claimed to be underreported, if not ignored altogether in official records. A popular perspective on the killings – and one, which the government has promoted and capitalized on – is that the deaths of drug traders and users were "deserved" and ultimately benefit communities long-plagued with drug-related crimes. Those killed by vigilante groups were literally labeled criminals with cardboards covering or propped against bloody cadavers stating "*Pusher ako. Wag tularan*" [I am a drug pusher. Do not be the same], judged and executed without the benefit of a fair trial as a matter of right.

The number and circumstances of deaths are the most emphasized detail in the assertion that human rights violations characterize Philippine Drug War. Beyond these, though, are also the individuals and families left behind who bear the brunt of society's stigmatization of their loved ones, and even of their grief. The latter in particular is important to note as the social dimension of grief can be easily overlooked in social work interventions dealing with grief, which is generally regarded as a personal and private process.



Ang-Reyes reviewed key international and local literature to understand how grieving is currently understood in the social work context, vis-a-vis the influence of social environments on the recovery individual and families experiencing this. One key features of grief founded on sudden and violent deaths of loved ones is the experience of traumatization and that of having no control over what had happened and is happening at the present. In the context of deaths in the Drug War, this is further aggravated when families are silenced with community stigmatization that their loved ones are criminals and deserved to die. Even when the social worker opts for a therapeutic approach to working with grieving clients, goal setting should be oriented to helping them regain a sense of control over their lives.

Ferrer and Lagos explores human rights and people's sense of community (SOC) in their article on (displaced) people's experiences of living in a resettlement site. As defined in their study, SOC refers to one's feeling of belongingness in a community and confidence that their needs will be met by it. This is influenced by four factors namely, the people's affinity with other community members (membership), their sense of importance of their participation in the community (influence), the feeling that their needs are taken cared of within the community (integration and fulfillment of needs), and the belief that they share a common history and experiences with others (shared emotional connection).

There is limited literature on the links of human rights with the concept of SOC, perhaps owing to the latter being more of a psychological construct than a tangible reality. However, as Ferrer and Lagos point out in their study, SOC has been shown in several researches to influence people's motivations and behaviors with regard to collective action. This holds promise in the discourse of community organizing and development, specifically in building community capacities to assert their human rights in an otherwise disempowering situation of forced resettlement, that is, apart from material and livelihood needs, it is the



social bonds among residents in a geographic space that can form a solid base for people's participation and human rights movement.

Velasco's article also emphasizes people's initiatives to assert their rights, specifically, the workers in export processing zones ("ecozones") demanding for better working conditions through collective action. One distinct character of unionizing within the ecozones is the simultaneously local and globalized nature of their struggle: while workspaces and sources of labor can be geographically localized and specified, the formal and informal policies and practices governing labor conditions, from wages to management, are multi-level and sometimes contradictory. For instance, while the Philippines is party to international human rights conventions and standards relating to decent work, these seem to be largely disregarded in the context of ecozones. Ecozones, as established in the country, are enclaves where industries, often foreign-owned, are not subject to regular Philippine labor policies, on the pretext of attracting more foreign direct investments and, consequently, opening more employment to Filipinos (SEPO 2008). However, projected macroeconomic benefits from ecozones are negated by labor issues that include "low pay, excessive salary deductions, forced overtime, high production quota and lack of incentives" (UN 2004 as cited in SEPO 2008, also in Velasco in this volume).

It is in this context that the limitations of appreciating human rights as simply a matter of legalities is exposed as more often than not, laws or its interpretations are skewed to protect business interests. Instead, what may be more relevant is to enforce human rights principles as embodied in the acronym PANTHER (participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and rule of law). Related to this, holding companies accountable to their corporate values as publicized also proved to be strategic. In the five case studies presented, Velasco showed how supply chain organizing



could be an effective strategy to engage global clients of transnational factories in an ecozone to pressure the latter to respond to the workers' demands.

Two essays are included in this volume.

The first essay is about the people of Tondo, specifically, the *tambays*, who also became targets of the State's campaign on peace and order, explicitly, and against criminality, implicitly, in 2018. As Papa creatively presents, *tambays* are part of the landscape of Tondo, and as such embody as well the stigma of the place: Tondo as an urban poor community, Tondo as a community of deprived and depraved individuals, and Tondo as a violent community within itself and to outsiders. Yet on closer look, and from the eyes of a mother who is bringing child to her old home, this picture reveals itself as a stereotype: the *tambays* are humans after all, and Tondo is also home. In a non-didactic way, Papa's essay emphasizes the perils of stereotyping and stigmatization on the fulfillment of certain groups' human rights. Stereotyping and stigmatization, in effect, not only cut these people from the mainstream, but also puts them up as scapegoats for not being "like us". If shared humanity is the basis for asserting human rights, to be stereotyped and stigmatized as being less human by virtue of one's appearance, socio-economic class, ethnicity and SOGIE, among others is to be less "deserving" of human rights.

The above point is also essayed in the REDO article of participatory video and the Lumad schools. The Lumads of Mindanao have a long history of struggle against displacement from their ancestral domains by mining and logging companies, and other industries aggressively bringing "development" to their area. They are no longer strangers to being stigmatized as "primitive" people who refuse to let go of their "backward" culture, and also being tagged sa rebels and armed communists. The latter in particular paved the State's



intrusion to their communities by way of militarization. In recent years, the issue of military personnel occupying or bombing Lumad schools have been featured in mainstream media.

The article reads as a reflection of the REDO training team who went in Surigao del Sur in 2017 to build the capabilities of Lumad schoolteachers and communities in using video as a documentation and advocacy tool. Communicating and education through stories is not a new terrain for the Lumads, and as the REDO team noted, what they only brought to the former is a form of technology that can enable them to speak their realities to a wider audience.

This volume of the PJSD also publishes the Unity Statement of human rights defenders forged during the National Conference on “Creating Innovations through Collaborative Action Research and Community Dialogue”. The event was held last September 25-26, 2018 at the University of the Philippines, College of Social Work and Community Development. The participants came from various civil society groups, including grassroots-based organizations, faith-based groups, non-government organizations (NGOs) and the academe; many self-identified as human rights defenders.

The Unity Statement is but a glimpse of what human rights and human rights work is at the margins. It is an act of courage as well as of defiance, breaking the public perception that silence is the norm vis-a-vis the killings. Beyond the academic discourse, and still yet to be documented, are the myriad of stories that puts to task claims that human rights are empty words and have no bearing to human life and civil society.

Issue Editors

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Weaving Human Rights in Social Work Practice to Address the Roots of Poverty

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Abstract

Poverty is rooted in the the socio-economic, political and cultural system of the Philippines. Poverty as structural violence is embedded in the system and in the process, continuously violates a wide range of human rights of the Filipinos, from political and civil rights to economic, social, and cultural rights. Social Work, as a profession, has usually paid more attention to human needs than to human rights. With the recognition that at the very core of its existence are conflicts over how competing social-political-economic groups, forces, and classes define, interpret and respond to human needs, the profession has become a contested and highly politicized practice that includes human rights work. With the persistence and gravity of human rights violations, it is imperative for social workers to fully operationalise human rights as a professional value and principle in their practice. This is a path that will contribute to unravelling and addressing the roots of poverty, and engaging in emancipatory, transformative Social Work.

Keywords: poverty, human rights, transformative, Social Work



“Social work exists to serve people in need. If it serves other classes who have other purposes, it becomes too dishonest to be capable of other theoretical or practical development.”

Bertha Reynolds, 1946

Introduction

The Philippines is one country in Asia whose history reflects a catalogue of human rights violations. The current situation may be likened to “a theatre for the violations of human rights in its totality i.e., economic, social, cultural, civil, and political” (Gutto, 1993), and which now includes the violation of its collective and sovereign rights as a nation.

Indeed, it is a continuing narrative of exploitation and oppression where the Filipino people are systematically separated from its means of production, the social fabric that binds the masses are persistently destroyed, abandoned by the state, chained to poverty hence further condemned to live miserable lives and robbed of its collective identity.

Human rights violations innately occur in a society whose members are divided into classes. For example, when a minority (i.e. through the State) overrules the majority (i.e. the masses) the democratic rights of the majority tend to be violated with the State becoming the defender of the minority. The State being a coercive instrument of the ruling class has a wide arsenal to institutionalize domination. From the laws (legitimizing anti-people and unsustainable development paradigms) and the penal systems to the military and police organizations which are all capable of suppressing dissent and resistance in the name of law and order.

Conversely, our collective past is also a historical narrative of people’s resistance. People’s history has taught us that oppression and exploitation always breed resistance. The continuing relevance of Social Work practice with its cherished core principles of social justice and human rights and its potential transformative character, can significantly help in creating a new people’s history sans any forms of exploitation and oppression.



With the recognition that Social Work is not a neutral profession and that the Human Rights terrain is a contested arena, this paper proposes some basic considerations into gradually weaving human rights in Social Work practice with the end view of decisively addressing the roots of the problem of the Filipino people. It will also attempt to describe the parameters of transformative Social Work in the struggle for the people's wellbeing as part of the people's movement.

Philippine Political Economy: Planning Misery and Institutionalizing Violence

Misery and violence in our society have been part of our national landscape since its colonization up to its neo-colonial transformation. They are so pervasive that they have numbed our senses and, in the process, have dehumanized us. Yet, making the individual less human is not natural but an aberration, to say the least.

Galtung's Typologies of violence

Johan Galtung, considered as the Father of Peace Studies, defined violence as an "avoidable impairment of the fundamental human needs or the impairment of human life, which lowers the actual degree to which someone is able to meet their needs below that which would otherwise be possible" (Galtung, 1993). The operative word here is "avoidable" and Galtung offers this example: "if a person died from tuberculosis in the eighteenth century it would be hard to conceive of this as violence since it might have been quite unavoidable, but if he dies from it today, despite all the medical resources in the world, then violence is present" (Ho, 2007).

Galtung also developed a three-pronged typology of violence that represents how a confluence of *malleable* factors merge in particular cultural/historical moments to shape the conditions for the promotion of violence. To understand the crucial distinction between these types of violence (HDS, 2018), we look into their differences and how these operate concretely:



- **Direct or personal violence** represents behaviors that serve to threaten life itself and/or to diminish one's capacity to meet basic human needs. Examples include killing, maiming, bullying, sexual assault, and emotional manipulation.

The Duterte administration's on-going War Against Drug is a case of a direct or personal violence where the actor(s) and object(s) of violence are readily identifiable. In this brutal war, the *actors* are the police force (both those in uniform and the so-called police vigilantes) and the *objects* are the poor becoming victims via planted evidences, being tortured and/or even killed. In the Marawi Siege, thousands died and more than 300,000 Maranaos within and around Marawi City were forced to evacuate (Garcia, 2017). In this case, the actors were the pilots of the Philippine Air Force (PAF) and the ground troops of the Philippine Army (PA) while the objects were the residents living in the commercial district of Marawi City.

- **Cultural Violence** represents the existence of prevailing or prominent social norms that make direct and structural violence seem "natural", "right" or "at least acceptable". Two cases in point would be the belief that Filipinos are ignorant and intellectually inferior to Americans which gave legitimacy for American colonialism in the country, and the assertion that the reason why poor people remain poor is because they are lazy. Understanding cultural violence helps explain how prominent beliefs can become so embedded in a given culture that they function as absolute and inevitable, and are reproduced uncritically across generations.

Cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, and even feel, right or at least not wrong (Galtung, 1990). The psychological mechanism would be *internalization* (Galtung, 1990). The study of cultural violence highlights the way in which the act of direct violence and the fact of structural violence are legitimized and rendered acceptable in society



(Galtung, 1990). One way cultural violence works is by changing the moral color of an act from red/wrong to green/ right or at least to yellow/acceptable (Galtung, 1990). The Philippine government's propaganda of killing drug pushers and addicts to justify the preservation of the youth and the survival of the country is an example of internalization.

Another way is making reality *opaque* so that we do not see the violent act or fact, or at least not as violent (Galtung, 1990). *Ambisyon Natin 2040*, the neoliberal Medium Term Development Plan of the current administration, claims that the Plan is anchored on the Filipino's belief and value system of *malasakit, pagbabago at patuloy na pag-unlad* (concern, change, and continuous development). But its anti-poor content is clearly proven in the implementation of the Tax Reform for Acceleration and Inclusion (TRAIN) Act and the high inflation rate of 6.4% (as of August, 2018). These two instances have already wreaked havoc on the lives of the Filipino people (Rivas, 2018).

- **Structural violence**, as opposed to personal or direct violence, is *indirect* in that there may not be any person who directly harms another person in the structure (Ho, 2007). The violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances (Ho, 2007). These can be formal as in legal structures that enforce marginalization such as laws and programs that essentially renders a neo-colonial status of the country and that legitimatizes neoliberalism in the country since the 1970s.

The country's neo-colonial and semi-feudal character (which is investment led, export oriented, import dependent, and debt driven economy) were further reduced into a virtual death trap when it embraced neoliberalism. It was during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos that neoliberalism was cemented through his Medium-term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP) or more popularly known as "Philippines 2000" (Holden, 2012). But it was under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's term, a Georgetown



University-trained neoliberal economist, who was instrumental in implementing the neoliberal agenda in the Philippines (Holden, 2012).

Neoliberalism intimately linked and sustained the political- economic power of the country's oligarchs, the so-called modern *principalia* (Ortega, 2016). In recent decades, what has emerged is a potent market-oriented environment where the ruling elites are able to articulate a neoliberal form of nationalism and effectively reconsolidate their political-economic and cultural power through market logics (Ortega, 2016).

Over the years, government programs have been primarily compelled to enact fiscal policies on “structural adjustments,” trade liberalization, increased foreign investment, and currency devaluation, with the goal of entangling the country into the volatile vortex of global finance, loans and credits (Bello, 2004).

The Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) were packaged with ‘economic reforms’ aimed at establishing market economies and hastening economic growth among indebted countries, regardless of costs and consequences (Cornwall & Eade, 2010). SAPs sought to “remove the government from the economy”, thus, creating spaces for the expansion of private, transnational capital through corporate activities.

As States shed their functions of upholding social and economic justice and equity; the provision of physical, social, and financial infrastructures and services started to be farmed out to a variety of civil society and market actors (Cornwall & Eade, 2010). The SAPs further laid the foundation of neoliberal economies ruled by neoliberal states in countries like the Philippines. (Cornwall & Eade, 2010)

In the early years after the EDSA revolution of 1986, national invocations of “democracy” and “freedom” served as blockades against fears of cronyism, dictatorship, and centralization (Ortega, 2016). But it was also an ideal period to entrench neoliberal ideology, with its promise of “freedom” in market transactions and for propelling the recently emerged



“democracy” into its status as Newly Industrialized Country (NIC), similar to its neighboring East Asian economies (Ortega, 2016). This conflation of democracy, freedom, and global competitiveness served as the basis for an emerging national-neoliberal ideologue (Ortega, 2016).

The above narrative presents a reality where political power is held in the hands of a few, the central inequality that gives rise to structural violence. Here, the notion of structural violence applies directly because the power to decide over the distribution of resources is highly uneven (Ho, 2007).

In this sense, structural violence has exploitation as the centerpiece (Ho, 2007). It originates in the unequal distribution of power among actors and can further trace its origins to the human agency (Ho, 2007). This unequal distribution of power then systematically disadvantages those who do not hold as much, if any, power at all (Ho, 2007).

Poverty as a Structural Violence

Poverty creates conditions where the actual ability to meet one’s fundamental human needs are obstructed. There are clear indicators where poverty effectively constitutes the violence that creates the disparity between actual and possible abilities to meet fundamental human needs (Ho, 2007).

In the human rights context, the disparity between the actual ability and the potential (or possible) ability to meet needs consists of a gap between the actual or *de facto* rights and the potential or *de jure* rights (Ho, 2007). *De jure* rights are those fundamental human rights that are enshrined in human rights laws. When these rights fail to be recognized or realized, in other words, when the *de facto* rights fall short of the *de jure* rights, violence is present (Ho, 2007). Crucial in making the transition from violence to human rights violations is the recognition that structural causes are responsible for such violations (Ho, 2007).



Structural violence, when applied to human rights, illuminates structural causes of human rights violations (Ho, 2007). It is the effect of structures that results in the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* rights (Ho, 2007).

Poverty consists of a systematic or structural denial of basic freedoms, to the extent that individuals are unable or lack the ‘capability’ to meet their basic needs (Ho, 2007). The denial of one’s freedom implicates the denial of other freedoms, rendering the poor disproportionately vulnerable to a whole array of violations (Ho, 2007). Poverty not only means lack of money; it means a concomitant impairment of access to adequate healthcare, water, shelter, etc.

In terms of *de facto* and *de jure* rights, the poor clearly experiences a different *de facto* realization of human rights...those living in poverty, on balance, have less access to the kind of economic resources that are necessary for adequate healthcare, education and welfare services, which may in turn effect the degree to which they enjoy their civil and political rights (Ho, 2007).

Poverty, therefore, constitutes a structural violation of human rights. There are systemic reasons that explain why the poor bear a disproportionate burden of rights violations (Ho, 2007). Human rights violations are not accidents; they are not random in distribution or effect (Ho, 2007). Rather, they are symptoms of deeper pathologies of power and are linked intimately to the social conditions that so often determine who will suffer abuse and who will be shielded from harm (Ho, 2007).

The Continuing Dilemma of Many Social Workers

In a highly stratified society like the Philippines, a buffer zone is created by the ruling class (Kivel, 2006). The ruling class has always wanted to prevent people at the bottom of the pyramid from organizing for power in order to maintain the power, control, and most importantly, wealth that they have accumulated (Kivel, 2006). To maintain the separation and



to prevent themselves from becoming the objects of people's anger, they have used legal, educational and professional systems to create a network of occupations, careers, and professionals to deal directly with the rest of the population (Kivel, 2006). These buffer zones comprise all occupations that carry out the agenda of the ruling class without requiring them to be present or visible (Kivel, 2006).

The buffer zone has three functions (Kivel, 2006). The first is "taking care" of people at the bottom of the pyramid. Conventional Social Work operates within existing social institutions to assist individuals to adjust and adapt to the status quo (Preston, et. al., 2014). The second function is keeping hope alive by distributing opportunities for a few people to become better off financially. Where economic inequality is high and growing, upward mobility between social classes has to be seen attainable – the message is "work hard and you'll be rewarded." If these messages permeate to the masses who do not enjoy much of the spoils, then they are more likely to tolerate the riches that the few enjoys within that society. The third and final function is to maintain the system by controlling those who want to make changes.

Mainstream Social Work, especially in state welfare organizations, has only one solution to the suffering and problems of the described individuals and groups, namely, control and repression according to a top-down mono-mandate of help as control (Bernasconi, 2016). It perceives the individuals from a deficit stance, requiring service to help them adapt to the norms and practices of society. Furthermore, it tends to view social problem in a depoliticized way that emphasizes individual shortcomings, pathology and inadequacy (Campbell & Baikie, 2012). Interventions are aimed largely at the individual with little or no analysis or intent to challenge power, structures, social relations, culture, and economic forces (Campbell & Baikie, 2012).



Other strands of Social Work maintain that existing social institutions cannot adequately meet human needs and, instead, work towards fundamental structural transformation (George & Marlowe, 2005). Some advance the analysis that social structure is the core of social inequalities (George & Marlowe, 2005). Thus, social reform is considered not a part of social transformation unless it represents one step in a long-range strategy for more fundamental change (George & Marlowe, 2005).

These two different views have resulted to a phenomenon known as “dual loyalty conundrum” among social workers (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2013). On one hand, social workers have loyalty to service users, social movements and a code of ethics, which demands critical practice and on the other hand, social workers have or are expected to have loyalty to their employment agency (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2013). The danger is that too often social workers in practice almost unconsciously adopt benign mode of operating, which, on the surface, seem to provide examples of doing good works, but too often, such practice norms can reinforce oppression (Ferguson & Lavalette, 2013).

Weaving Human Rights In Social Work Practice

There is an observation that Social Work has paid attention to human needs more than to human rights (Healy, 2016). The profession’s focus on human needs shapes its conviction that the fundamental nature of these needs requires that they be met not as a matter of choice but as an imperative of basic justice (UNCHR, 1994). Hence, Social Work moves to a consideration of human rights as the other organizational principle for its professional practice (UNCHR, 1994).

The transition from *needs orientation* to *rights affirmation* has been made necessary because of tangible substantive needs that have to be met (UNCHR, 1994). A substantive



need can be translated into an equivalent positive right, and entitlement to the benefits of that right is sought from the State and beyond (UNCHR, 1994).

The Dialectical Relationship between Structures and Individuals

Understanding why human rights are not defined, realized or protected for many people requires an analysis of structural oppression or disadvantage ((Efi, 2008). This must be the basis of all human rights-based Social Work. Individual accounts of disadvantage, though an important part of a social worker's understanding of particular people and their problems, are insufficient to explain why women and children remain victims of violence, why indigenous people continues to suffer massive disadvantage, and why neoliberalism is affecting everybody, and so on (Efi, 2008).

A Strong Sense of History

Having a strong sense of history contributes to the integration of human rights in Social Work practice. The study of history can be seen as the study of the struggle for human rights, which gives extra immediacy to the human rights issues of the present (Efi, 2008). A historical perspective will also show that what may seem impossible today can become feasible tomorrow. It is increasingly clear that the existing global, social, political and ecological order is so blatantly unsustainable that the one thing of which we can be certain is that the future will not be a simple extension of the present (Efi, 2008).

The history of the human rights movement, including the struggle for the right to vote, the right to form a union, women's rights, the right to political self-determination, the right to education, the right to economic development and the right to clean environment, is part of humankind's history. In these contexts, history becomes very important for social workers who identify themselves as human rights workers, for it can become a central component of Social Work education (Efi, 2008).



Also, understanding history will help the social workers understand “rights” under a neoliberal framework. Human rights in the age of neoliberalism has been called a *powerless companion* – an apology for neoliberal capitalism. (Moyn, 2014) Neoliberalism and human rights share key ideological building blocks the most obvious of which is both commit to the prime significance of the individual, whose freedom matters more than collective endeavors (Moyn, 2014). Moreover, the relationship is essentially one of mutual reinforcement or even having a common identity, especially when rights of property and free enterprise are made keys to the enjoyment of other human goods since these allows the funding for other goods to materialize (Moyn, 2014).

Living in a neoliberal context means accepting or submitting to that bundle of rights necessary for capital accumulation (Harvey, 2005). We live in a society in which the inalienable rights of individuals (and corporations are defined as individuals before the law) to private property and the profit rate outdo any other notion of inalienable rights you can think of (Harvey, 2005). Defenders of neoliberalism argue that these “bundle of rights” encourages “bourgeois virtues” – including individual responsibility and liability; independence from state interference, equality of opportunity in the market and before the law; rewards for initiatives and entrepreneurial endeavor; care for oneself and ones’ own; and an open marketplace that allows for wide-ranging freedoms of choice of both contract and exchange (Harvey, 2005).

If people are not aware of the historical and contextual nature of human rights and that human rights only become realizable by the struggles of people experiencing real instances of domination, then human rights can all too easily be used as symbolic legitimizers for instruments of that very domination (Stammer, 1999).



Uncompromising in Upholding What is Right

Poverty is fundamentally wrong. When Social Work practice confronts and work to eliminate poverty, this becomes essentially a moral activity, as it is based on values and concepts of what is right and wrong (Ife, 2008). One characteristic of the human rights discourse is that the value of human rights is strongly and passionately felt. Framing values in terms of human rights provides a more powerful base for action than mere abstract “armchair” of moral reasoning (Ife, 2008). With such lens, the social worker is able to think through issues of morality; more importantly be able to collaborate with those whom he/she has contact (Ife, 2008). It is in the social worker’s capacity to engage other actors in moral decision-making that the social worker’s effectiveness as a human rights worker can be judged (Ife, 2008).

The Passion of an Incurable Optimist

Human rights-based Social work is not simply a case of careful and sterile “thinking through” of moral issues (Ife, 2008). It is driven not only by careful analysis but by the passion to make the world a better place, addressing injustice and oppression, and a commitment for change (Ife, 2008). Times past has been witnessed to how human rights have been valued even to the point where people die for it; they cannot be classified simply as mere academic or philosophical problem (Ife, 2008).

Social workers need not feel guilty about being passionate for the cause of human rights, or being outraged by the continued violation of human rights in the course of their practice (Ife, 2008). The task of the social worker is not to deny these feelings but, to channel them into effective action that will make a difference (Ife, 2008). Often, it is by maintaining their rage and their vision of a better world, that social workers are able to keep working despite oppressive and dehumanizing structures (Ife, 2008).



Human rights are products of social interaction and struggle, they are not self-evident, pre-existing and immutable. They are, like legal rights and other culturally enforceable norms, developed and created in and by society out of past experiences and the desire to improve on quality of life and harmony in society (Gutto, 1993).

The Dialectical Relationship between Personal and Political

Most Social Work agencies mandated to provide personal services tend not to engage in macro-level intervention and similarly, agencies that focus on social change tend not to include the provision of personal service as part of their mandate (George & Marlowe, 2005). This dichotomy has served to reinforce the separation of the personal and the political in both the broader society and in Social Work practice (George & Marlowe, 2005).

However, the link between the personal and the political is central to Social Work: understanding the personal in terms of the political, understanding the political in terms of the personal, and acting to bring about change at both levels (Ife, 2008).

Within a human rights framework, human rights also need to be understood as both personal and political (Ife, 2008). They are personal because they affect personal wellbeing, security, survival, and self-actualization (Ife, 2008). They are political because human rights are about power and its distribution, about how power is constructed and enacted, about who has and should have the rights to exercise power, and in what circumstances. They must be understood in both contexts, and one can be an effective human rights worker if one can work with both the personal and political (Ife, 2008).

Because this link is central to Social Work, social workers are well equipped to be human rights workers (Ife, 2008). In practice, this means that social workers must always articulate the political aspects of the personal and vice versa (Ife, 2008). The person who is poor, for example, must be understood both at the personal level for the implications of self-



esteem and of income insecurity, and also at the political levels for the reasons of unemployment, the structure of the labor market, the impact of neoliberalism, labor commodification, and so on (Ife, 2008).

Linking the personal and the political is itself a radical act .It is a slap to the face of the dominant social and political order which seeks to divide the two, to see people's personal lives and concern as "no concern of the state." and to see politics as something that is engaged in only by a minority of people who are politically active, and which need not be the concern of the majority (Ife, 2008).

Adopting a Partisan Lens

Adopting a human rights perspective is to take a position that has certain ideological consequences (Ife, 2008). Human rights-based Social Work is inevitably political-social work. It is committing a social worker to an ideological position that incorporates at least some degree of collectivism and a strong sense for the public sector (Ife, 2008).

Many formulations of Social Work are still constructed within an apolitical context, with the assumption that social workers may occupy a full range of ideological positions, or indeed may have no articulated political position at all (Ife, 2008). If at all there is a political position, it is usually identified with mainstream Social Work practice that exalts individualism and a pure reliance on the free market that is completely incompatible with the human rights-based practice (Ife, 2008).

A human rights perspective categorically rejects this. If it is about power relations, then it is certainly political (Ife, 2008). Human rights workers are political workers, and human rights, in the broad sense, require a political commitment (Ife, 2008). Politics and ideological critique, therefore, needs to be part and parcel of Social Work practice (Ife, 2008).



In the era of neoliberalism, Social Work has become increasingly depoliticized and individualized (George & Marlowe, 2005). The professionalization of Social Work has been charged with leading mainstream Social Work away from the integration of social justice toward individualized treatment (George & Marlowe, 2005). Furthermore, the deafening silence of the leaders of the profession's long established and accredited national organization on issues affecting the Filipino people has also become worrisome.

The conventional Social Work's "acquiescence" to the status quo should be stopped (Preston, et. al., 2014). By being ahistorical and apolitical, we risk contributing to, rather than resisting, a neoliberal agenda. Our practice and education should be framed by understanding of power, social structures, collectivism, and resistance (Preston, et. al., 2014). Social work must be understood as more than a repair company for the amelioration of negative social and economic consequences (Stark, 2008).

Transformative Social Work As Part of Building the People's Movement

It is not enough to weave human rights into the Social Work profession. As a frontline profession, unity and rhythm with people-based movements is imperative for political and social transformation. This is necessary for it is only through a movement that people can build their organizational strength, secure tangible victories and gradually realize their legitimate and strategic interests.

While any tangible victories (whether it is economic or political) by the people are actually building blocks in nurturing their political power, a vibrant and fighting political movement will provide the direction for any tactical engagement.

Without clarifying the organic relationship between tactical engagements and strategic objectives to the masses, and by limiting ourselves to specific economic and political issues only, we make them focus on the pursuit of rights which can easily be



snatched away from them because they would not have secured the necessary political power to defend and expand the rights they have won (Gutto, 1993). The strong anti-dictatorship movement during the Marcos regime is seen as a major contribution to the political isolation of the dictatorship and eventual downfall.

Similarly under President Duterte's regime, social workers using a transformative lens have the task of helping the people realize that, without their participation, the struggle for upholding and defending human rights and democracy is unattainable. The tasks at hand are not simple. They are painstaking work that requires organizing, mobilizing and broadening the political awareness of the marginalized sectors.

The logic of transformative Social Work is not the logic of the market and profit. Its progressive discourse and practice have "the potential to flame the resistance against neoliberalism", including, of course, the resistance against Pres. Duterte's administration. Mainstream Social Work education is split on the one hand, casework for social care and community work for social change and, on the other, a centered generalist model of intervention that is rooted in an eclectic knowledge based on systems theory arising from a perspective that is status quo- oriented (George & Marlowe, 2005).

Social Work believes that social relations are enacted by human beings and may generate the ongoing oppression of many groups and individuals (Baines, 2011). That they are enacted by people, means that these oppressive relationships can also be changed by the people themselves (Baines, 2011). Using the term "social relations" underscores that these relations are organized and operated by people and can be arrested or reorganized by them. They are wholly social relations, not inevitable conditions of modern life or one we cannot change (Baines, 2011).

It is noteworthy to look into Baines' discourse (2011, 2012), articulating similar core themes as follows:



- Social Work is a Contested and Highly Politicized Practice

Using this definition, everything is political despite the relatively widespread sentiment that most of everyday life is completely apolitical. For the holders of power, social problems are conventionally understood to be results of individual difficulties and poor decision-making rather than unequal distribution of power, resources and affirming identities. They seek solutions by tinkering with the existing social system, applying managerial techniques to most or all social questions, or encouraging individuals to seek medical or psychological interventions for the problems they experience.

As we try to bridge practice and social activism, it is important to ask who benefits from the way things operate at any given point in time, who can help make the changes we want, how we can help ourselves and others see the many ways in which issues are political, and how multiple strands of power are operating in any given scenario.

At the very core of Social Work's existence are conflicts amongst competing social-political groups, forces, and classes over defining needs and how to interpret and meet them.

- Social Work is Not a Neutral, Caring Profession But an Active Political Process

There is no "politics-free-zone" nor are there ways to avoid power and politics in Social Work, especially when we are trying to meet clients' needs in the context of increasingly pro-market, corporatized society and injustice at the local levels. Every action we undertake is political and ultimately about power, resources, and who has the right and opportunity to feel positive about themselves, their identities, and their futures.

- Social Work's Theoretical and Practical Development Must be based on the Struggles and Needs of those who are Oppressed and Marginalized



Social Work knowledge and practice need to be grounded in the lives of those we serve, assessed in relation to critical approaches in order to ensure that we are building lasting change and not unintentionally reproducing various kinds of oppression.

- Social Justice-oriented Social Work Assists Individuals while Simultaneously Seeking to Transform Society

The problem is not with providing social services; the problem comes when all our time and energy is diverted toward social services to the detriment of long-term social change (Kivel, 2006). Rather than an exclusive emphasis on changing individuals, social justice-oriented Social Work assists individuals in meeting their needs, whenever possible, in a participatory and transformative ways, and simultaneously focuses in challenging and transforming those forces within society that benefit from and perpetuate inequity and oppression.

Placing the masses in the center of the struggle for comprehensive human rights and popular democracy is problematic. The masses are not born with some special genes of human rights and popular democracy. It is the place they occupy in society, as it exists today, that makes the masses the potential force for reorganizing society. This dictates organization, mobilization, and broadening of political awareness among the popular classes. This in itself can only be won through struggle (Gutto, 1993).

Conclusion

The exploitative and oppressive relations inherent in Philippine society create a dominant narrative where our Social Work practice is located. Understanding the relationship between the socially powerful (the ruling class) and the disenfranchised (the poor, deprived, and the oppressed) will always generate a critique that is connected with class structure and economic division.



Structural inequality and oppression are the contexts within which the social workers practice their professions, but if they do not deliberately seek to be part of the solution, their practice will inevitably become part of the problem (Ife, 2008). All social workers must therefore incorporate multi-dimensional analysis of structural disadvantage. This must be at the forefront of Social Work thinking, at whatever level of practice (Ife, 2008).

The question on the causes of social problems, how to address the causes and how to prevent them, are central to the development of a strand of Social Work emerging from a people's movement and aimed at fundamentally transforming the political, economic, social and cultural factors underlying and generating inequality and injustice (Baines, 2012).

The necessity of a people's movement collides against authoritarianism and the neoliberal logic. The promotion and fulfillment of the human right to health, education, housing, and work cannot be a result of transactions in the market. This calls for the creation and re-strengthening of the real human rights movement. The State will only officially guarantee the rights of the people as enshrined in every constitution but it is only the people that can truly guarantee that their fundamental, democratic, and sovereign rights are respected.

The operating system and the character of the State taught us "that the struggle for human rights emanates, is contested and resolved within the relations of contending classes. The struggle for human rights cannot be fully understood and tenaciously fought for the interests of the oppressed outside of class struggle.... [For human rights] "are products of social interactions and struggle." (Gutto, 1993)

Truly, human rights in Social Work can also be a tool for emancipation and liberation. "People's individual and collective initiatives and struggles for their rights do not consider themselves confined to the existing international instruments and local laws".... The people



consider they have the inherent right, and potential power, of creating and extending the frontiers of rights on the basis of the life experiences.” (Gutto, 1993)

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The Effects of Death through Violations of Human Rights on the Grieving Family

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Abstract

The violent and unjust death of a loved one leaves a profound and distinct impact on the lives of surviving family members. Moreso, when human rights violations overlay the circumstances of death. The cases of “extrajudicial killings” (EJK) characterizing the current Philippine Drug War, is one example. Human rights violations leading to violent deaths have irrevocable consequences on the family as secondary victims . This review of literature, covering both local and international studies, highlights the significance of various factors affecting the surviving family’s grief, coping, and recovery in the bio-psycho-social-spiritual spectrum. Social workers are challenged not only to sort through micro level concerns and issues surrounding grief, but also to look into the social environment, which influence the depth, duration, and healing of individual grief.

Keywords: grief; grieving families; recovery; human rights



Introduction

In June 2016, the Duterte Administration launched a ruthless War on Drugs in the country that aimed to eradicate high level and community drug trade in six months. What unfolded instead was a war that resulted to horrific deaths of alleged drug users and pushers, and the suffering of thousands of families they left behind.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) reportedly conducted 40,982 anti-drug operations from July 2016 to January 2017, from which 44,070 were arrested and 2,2016 were killed; the police also acknowledged the 4,047 suspected drug users/pushers who were victims of vigilante-style killings (Palatino, 2017). An alleged 7,000 victims of extra judicial killings (EJKs) – executions done without due process of the law such as the “*palit ulo*” scheme, Operation TOKHANG (“Knock and Plead”), and “mistaken identity” (Palatino, 2017).

Communities were exposed to the tenacity of the police force as they applied these strategies. In “*palit ulo*”, relatives were used as bargaining chips for the heads of the suspected drug users, while in Operation TOKHANG, home visits were conducted supposedly to invite the alleged drug addicts’ to change their ways. But, in reality, the accused were rounded up in public areas where warrantless searches were done (De Jesus, 2017).

The government announced success in the campaign against drugs citing the country’s crime rate dropping by 32 percent. In a media interview, Duterte asserts his dedication to the goal of killing every last drug lord in the Philippines (Bolando, 2016). The number of deaths from police shootouts and vigilante killings that increased in the wake of the War of Drugs were waved aside, the victims were drug personalities and therefore guilty



(Palatino, 2017). The deaths of innocent people, including children, were termed as “collateral damage”, or accidental victims of a noble pursuit (Holmes, 2016). The government itself rejects the label of EJK as, according to the PNP Chief Ronald De la Rosa, 7,000 is not an accurate figure, and these killings were not state-sponsored (Felipe, 2017).

In the midst of the War on Drug are the families left behind by the alleged drug users and pushers, or collectively referred to as EJK families. Their grief is compounded by the death itself and the manner it happened, the community reaction, and even the government pronouncements that the deaths were deserved. This form of complicated grief is not explored in many literatures, and it was observed that embarking on empirical studies in the area of human rights violations and violent deaths, and the impact on surviving families is a venture fraught with numerous disadvantages.

First, existing studies appear to be limited and lack statistical validity because only a few survivors and members of their families are willing to talk about their experiences. For instance, Chito Gascon, Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights (CHR) has reported that the families of extra judicial killings were unwilling to speak out of fear (Legaspi, 2016).

Second, the stigmatization brought forth by being branded as a rebel or deviant seems to complicate the externalization of the breadth and depth of the survivors’ experiences, resulting in them becoming “invisible mourners” (Rosaldo, 1989, as cited in Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005). The lack of statements lead to a lack of support from the community (Walsh & McGoldrick, 1991, as cited in Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005), cycling the situation back into restricted externalization.



Finally, due to family reorganization, acquired grieving, and varied coping processes, family survivors often find themselves isolating their thoughts, feelings, and physical self if possible, in order to deal with the loss and move on (Breen & O'Connor, 2011).

In spite of these factors, interest on the study of the impact of violent deaths compounded by human rights violations with a focus on the holistic perspective of the survivors has increased as a response to the changing times. The article hopes to contribute to this discourse by reviewing the literature on grief and grieving, particularly on the ideas of Kubler-Ross (1982), Clements, DeRanieri, Vigil, and Benasutti (2004), Bowlby-West (1983), and Santiago (2013), and culling out strategies for helping EJK families to cope and recovery.

Definitions and Stages of Grieving

The primary response of the body to trauma, specifically of families of murder victims upon the death notification process, is the fight or flight mode (National Coalition to Abolish Death Penalty [NCADP], 2010). In the emotional response phase spanning anger, frustration, fear, guilt, and sorrow, the brain was observed to disregard cognitive functions, disengaging from the current reality of the trauma. At this point, one's ability to organize and process information falters (NCADP, 2010); hence, their difficulty in articulating their experiences. This may partially explain the shell-shocked phase of surviving family members, and their inability to function following a violent death. They have trouble functioning as well as remembering details of the killing(s). Often, during investigation, witnesses seemed to offer more explicit narratives and details as their shock slowly dissipate, allowing their cognition to regain stability to function.



The onset of traumatic death is also a likely source of the survivors' disillusioned state, wherein their perception of the world and their grief manifests in emotional and physical responses that affect the central nervous system, such as extreme melancholic sadness, avoidance of socializing, and the like. (Jacobs, Wellman, Fuller, Anderson, & Jurado, 2016) The factors that affect traumatic grieving include the suddenness of what may have been a preventable death, the involvement of children, the lack of social support following the death, and the strained relationship with the deceased (Jacobs et al., 2016).

When Clements, DeRanieri, Vigil, & Benasutti (2004) studied the experiences of survivors who lost family members to sudden traumatic death, they noted the survivors' attitude of "don't ask, don't tell" in relation to the deaths because they perceived them to be untimely and unfair. The latter intensified their feelings of disbelief, shock, and anger. Without the ability or time to prepare mentally and emotionally, survivors can be overwhelmed with emotions that eventually lead them to feel victimized by the events (Clements et al., 2004). Clements et al. also noted how grief responses varied among individuals, either being internalized (depression, avoidance, withdrawal) or externalized (anger, outbursts).

McGoldrick (2013), using the family developmental systems framework, examined the immediate and long-term effects of loss in a multigenerational relationship network. He found that the ambiguous circumstances of death inhibit the family's mourning process, complicating their grief as they struggle to comprehend the acts that led to their loss and what they might have done differently to prevent it. Often "the what might have been" is a guilt-laden manifestation expressed by family members. It is an attempt to run through their minds what happened in an effort to process the experience to find meaning and reason, helping them to comprehend, and, hopefully, accept the death.



Complicated grief results to the development of unique biological, physiological, social and spiritual needs in surviving friends and family of homicide victims. Family members of murder victims view themselves as more worn off from people who experienced a loved one's death by natural means. They manifest higher levels of distress (Nakajima, Ito, Shirai, & Konishi, 2012). Deborah Spungen (2017), a clinical social worker whose child had been murdered, stated,

Experiences of others in the grief and bereavement process can be generalized to the experience of families of murder victims; however, the complexities of homicide are such that its sudden nature, intensity of the survivor's reactions and the death at the hands of another make this grief different.

Kubler-Ross details the stages undergone by people who face imminent death: the *denial* of the fact of death, the *anger* at the unfairness of the situation, the way they *bargain* and try to postpone death, the *depression* that comes with the acknowledgement of loss, and the void of feelings that make up *acceptance* (Klass, 1982). Moreover, she says that people in professional and personal contact with the dying also go through their own stages of adjustment (EKRF, 2018). These stages also characterize the reactions of surviving family members.

Bowlby-West's (1983) framework also discusses four important stages of grieving: shock and numbness, yearning and searching, disorganization-despair, and reorganization. He says that survivors need to undergo these stages to process their grief. It is expected that the sudden, traumatic and violent nature of death is a complicating factor in the bereavement process.

In contrast, Clements et al. (2004) describe grief as a process, not an end. The survivors who took part in their study said that the goal of grief is to remember the deceased, understand the changes created by the loss, and determine how to reinvest in life.



In the Philippine setting, Santiago's (2013) study on the differences of the experience of losing one's parents through death or abandonment emphasizes the need to go through the stages of *pagtanggap* (acceptance), *pagharap* (confrontation), and *pagpapatuloy* (continuing life) at their own discretion, with stages sometimes skipped or reversed. In this framework, responses to grief range from confronting the significant reminders of the deceased, enacting the role reorganization necessitated by the loss of a parent, to disregarding these realities. Survivors also commonly put up a brave front and lifted their grief to God (*pagpapasa Diyos*) to avoid the reality of death. In determining how easily survivors come to terms with the death of their loved ones, Santiago (2013) factors in the time that is needed to accept the reality of loss, and the impact of the relationship of the survivor with the deceased. Santiago emphasizes that the process of grieving is not linear. The process is a unique experience leading towards healing and recovery.

Dynamics of Death and the Family

It is important to note that when a family suffers from loss, the impact can cause intense stress in the parents. The possible physical and psychological challenges will test their functioning and coping resources, as most parents are not equipped to deal with the unexpected, insidious grief of loss that may or may not receive closure.

Marital partners may become emotionally alienated from each other and indifferent toward their relationships, or grow stronger as they support each other through the grieving process. Coping styles vary among genders, which affect the family members' functioning and general wellbeing. In their study on parents' coping strategies after a child's violent deaths, Murphy, Clark Johnson, & Weber (2002) found that mothers employed emotion-



focused strategies, but fathers did not. This is an important information for social workers helping couples restore their social functioning after they lost their child or children.

Importance is placed on the healthy state of family functioning even before tragedy hits – having open communication lines, cohesive family bonding, and constructive conflict resolution – as it is a key resource necessary to facilitate the grieving experience. When family functioning is limited, so is the family's adaptability (Delalibera et al, 2013). The stability of family dynamics also lends itself to the shuffling of roles mentioned in the previous section, as the reorganization would proceed more smoothly if the foundations of the family are sound and are adaptable (Delalibera et al, 2013). As such, dysfunctional families with high levels of conflict experience more difficulties in the grieving process. This can be attributed to the inherent poor state of their social functioning, their difficulty in accessing community resources, lower functional capacity at work or at school, among others. Dysfunctional families are also prone to the resurgence of pre-existing behaviors of psychosocial morbidity, such as alcohol or drug abuse, which further hinder their recovery (Delalibera et al, 2013).

Brown's study (2012) emphasizes that the "relational functioning position" of the deceased family member has an impact on the level and intensity of the grief response. This, in turn, affects the capacity of the family to recover. The expected grief response of every family can differ in relation to which family member dies, as the intergenerational relationship patterns would leave varying experiences of pain and recovery. Other factors that affect the grief response of family members are the depth of the factual details of the death and the external support system found in relatives, friends, and the community.



In order to restore the previous functionality of the family prior to the death of the loved one, Bowen (1976, as cited Brown, 1999) underscores that the level of differentiation or the emotional maturity of each family members is crucial in determining the length of time for grieving, and the manner in which families respond to acute or traumatic event. The more cohesive the family members are prior to the death of their loved one, the more they will be able to go through grieving faster.

The psychological consequences of a sudden and violent loss are many (Kristensen, Weisath, & Heir, 2012). Significant findings indicated that mental health disorders such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), major depressive disorder (MDD) and prolonged grief disorder (PGD, also termed complicated grief, have higher manifestations after sudden and violent losses than losses where the deceased suffered from natural deaths. Recovery is slower, depending on several factors linked with the circumstances of the loss of the loved one, causing the bereaved to have an increased risk mental distress (Kristensen et al., 2012).

The unpreparedness for the event results to more difficulties for family members and relatives to comprehend the reality of the death of their loved ones. The untimely death prevents bereaved relatives from exercising their farewell rituals. In addition to this, violent deaths posed many horrific circumstances and details that the surviving family members are left to helplessly witness.

Parental death and role re-organization

Family tasks such as the shared acknowledgement of and the circumstance of death and loss tend to facilitate immediate and long-term adaptation processes. Inherent to this is the re-organization of the family system, as it is compounded by how the loss of a family member necessitates a shuffling of roles and functions (Walsh & McGoldrick, 2013).



As the impact of the death is more intense and profound if the deceased occupied a central role within the family system (Shapiro, 2001, as cited in Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005) – parental death, foremost – the roles and states of relationships of the family should be carefully evaluated in order to identify potential resources in the extended family network or the family’s community. Not uncommon is the scenario where an overwhelmed parent designates an older child to replace the lost parent as the “man of the house” or “little mother”, which may be acceptable as a functional remedy, provided that the child’s own developmental needs are not distorted or neglected.

Parental grief and the marital relationship

Rellias (2011) studied the systemic consequences of the sudden death of a child, particularly on the family functioning from the couple’s perspectives. The study revealed that strategies to deal with loss, both individually and as couples, contributed to their coping, i.e. either making the relationship stronger or leading to its deterioration.

In a complementary lens, Hopwood (2010) discussed the combination of principles that make up the Parental Grief Theory in response to sudden, accidental, or violent child death in their study on bereaved parents who lost their children from sudden accident, homicide, or suicide. These three interrelated principles – connectivity, cultural beliefs, and resilience – can be experienced at various levels and comprise an individual’s capacity for the grieving process.

Coping Strategies

In Santiago’s (2013) *pagpapatuloy* (Continuing Life) stage, the research participants said they grappled with overwhelming feelings of loss, financial constraints, and new decision-making responsibilities in the resumption of social functioning. Support came from siblings, relatives, friends, and partners, as well as from the participants’ hopes and dreams for their own families.



Still, there is no exact method, strategy, or traditionally upheld grief frameworks for assisting homicide survivors applicable to all cases. The survivors need to process their grief, fully externalize their emotions, and accept their loss as the first steps to healing. The impact on the family necessitates a combination of therapeutic approaches: crisis intervention, individual, family and group therapy, peer support groups, pharmacological assistance.

Coping strategies used after traumatic events are different from those normal life situations (Vessier-Batchen, 2007). The process of coping with the aftermath of murder is difficult and may extend indefinitely, adding to the anxiety and stress experienced by the family; some strategies identified included faith and the actions of others (Asaro, 2001).

Yet, where can one expect sympathy when death results from a crime committed by an unknown assailant, when the death of a victim with noted immoral behavior stigmatizes the mourners of the deceased (Shapiro, 1994, as cited in as cited in Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005)? This is particularly true for families of those killed in the Duterte Administration's anti-drug campaign. These families experienced being isolated and regarded as having enabled the unlawful actions of the victim who allegedly deserved their fates (Kyodo News, 2016). The stigma of homicide increases when law enforcement personnel must repeatedly examine the scene of death and question relatives, friends and neighborhood about the death.

Firestone (2016) asserts that a person's coping and capacity to handle anxiety and trauma go back to early childhood experiences: prior to meeting the concept of death, one develops defensive strategies to cope with emotional frustrations and separation anxiety. These defenses are then magnified against emotional pain: at the individual level, affected by defensive reactions to loss, a person's reactions predispose them to either a self-indulgent or self-protective lifestyle; at the interpersonal level, one may retreat from relationships and



intimacy instead of opening up; and at the societal level, one's inner fear may reinforce the submission to authority figures instead of reestablishing autonomy

Jacobs et al. (2016) identify five factors affecting the coping processes of survivors of cold homicide cases: (1) the time spent with other survivors, (2) behavioral changes from being relaxed to becoming over protective, (3) impact on existing relationships, (4) internal and external pressures to stay courageous and strong and (5) upholding the difficulties of family traditions. Their study also highlights the importance of encouraging survivors to participate actively in private and collective grieving, and to adapt open communication patterns to discuss and address the impact of loss on their family (Jacobs et al., 2016).

Adaptive coping is significantly correlated with both individual and community resiliency in Oates' (2003) study on the grief process. Individual resiliency predicts the absence of anxiety and facilitates the development of skills to promote calm, a sense of self- and community efficacy, connectedness and hope, whereas community resiliency plays an important part in preparedness and social trust (Oates, 2003).

Role reorganization involves the redistribution of functions amongst surviving family members in order to reestablish balance after a loss (Rando, 1991). In the Family System Theory, the stimuli that affect the individual eventually reach the family; thus, collective equilibrium is dependent on individual equilibrium (Jackson, 1965, as cited in Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005).

Families require the ongoing support of each individual component to keep the system operating in balance; power, responsibilities, and roles are reassigned as a response to the demands of change and will vary between families (Bowen, 1976, as cited in Brown, 2012). Roles reassigned among family members have serious consequences, and, thus, must be appropriate and within the capacity of the person to fulfill.



Clinical Need

Crucial to any recovery and healing process is the presence of facilitating and hindering elements. Critical factors that affect the recovery process of surviving families or co-victims (Connolly & Gordon, 2014; Spungeon, 1998) are: first, the death notification process which, when poorly executed, predisposes the co-victim to later complications in trauma and grief; and second, the justice system, as family members of the victim have vested interest in participating in the legal proceedings as a response to the victim's murder (Spungeon, 1998). Family members seek the truth, motives, and circumstances of the murder, if their loved one suffered, and expect to be relieved if the case was successfully prosecuted (Spungeon, 1998).

The loved ones of the deceased are secondary or co-victims (Connolly & Gordon, 2014; Spungeon, 1998). They experience trauma from the crime yet are not the focus of criminal justice system processes. Co-victims of homicide are sometimes not informed about the changes to the case including the plea bargain process and the scheduling changes. It is not unusual for families to prepare themselves for the proceedings only to face disappointment amid a convoluted and oftentimes, confusing process. Because the State is the identified victim and not their loved ones, justice for the deceased is important but is not the primary focus (Simmons, Duckworth, & Tyler, 2014).

The ripple effect of grief exists in all families. The grief of one member triggers the grief of another; thereby creating an unavoidably intense situation of compounded grief gathered under one roof (Brown, 1999). The presence of community, the concept of shared losses, and strengths in number is ideally comforting and supportive, however the presence of formal or informal social networks do not necessarily guarantee support (Murray, Toth, & Clinkinbeard, 2005).



Discussion

Surviving family members are the experts on their own grief. In case they seek professional help, they may be guided in developing adaptive coping and functional grief, which are characterized by important goals for emotional and functional stabilization.

The survivors' pain may manifest in different forms. Though shock, numbness, and anger at the unfairness of death are common, it is important to mourn the loss by allowing a full range of emotions while avoiding the minimization of what the loss means in the attempt to expedite "moving on". While tears are not necessary for functional grieving, crying should be validated as a typical and acceptable form of expression.

Survivors should not be alarmed or surprised to find themselves saddened during the holidays and special occasion. These are typical seasons when thoughts drift to loss. As healing progresses, the sadness will decrease but may not completely go away.

Inner healing occurs over time, and survivors may recognize that they have completed the process when they find themselves reinvesting in life. Identification and commitment to small short-term goals can provide as a sense of accomplishment, control, and a sense of getting better.



Table 1. *Comparative Presentation of Various Grieving Frameworks/Processes/Stages of Grieving vis-a-vis Authors*

Authors	Stages of Grief or Grieving Process
Kubler-Ross	Denial Anger Bargaining Depression Acceptance
Bowlby-West	“Don’t ask, don’t tell” / Shock and disbelief Perceiving death as untimely, unfair; feeling angry and victimized Able to commit to short-term goals, sense of control, of feeling better
Clements, DeRanieri, Vigil, & Benasutti	Shock and numbness Yearning-searching Disorganization-despair Reorganization
Santiago	Pagsasangtabi Pagpapasa-Diyos Pagtanggap sa Pagkawala

There are identified factors that contribute to the grieving process of the survivors. First, the language used to identify the survivors, families or victims after the murder. The use of the term “survivors” (Jacobs et al., 2016) can be presumptuous as it assumes that the victims are emotionally equipped to move forward to being survivors. The term “co-victim” (Connolly & Gordon, 2014; Spungeon, 1998) is used to describe that crime has occurred and impacted the lives of other people.

Second, talking about the murder victim provides the surviving family members relief: they either reminisce fondly and happily about their loved one, which brings back even a temporary feeling of joy, or verbalize the shock, anger, and helplessness they carry. This externalization also provides opportunities to release anxieties through crying. Still, others fear speaking about their experience, as the memories may prove too painful – time is perhaps the only balm in these situations.



Third, utilizing simple crisis intervention techniques helps the survivors regain control over their lives in order to begin reprocessing and reconstructing their lives.

It is noteworthy that children's adaptation or coping depends not only on the degree of strength of attachment and degree of care lost, but on how family survivors and extended family members deal with them. Children needed help to make meaning and identify their emotions of loss experience that is appropriate to their developmental capacity or level. Children's way to understand was through observing the reactions of adult relatives and therefore would benefit by being included in shared mourning rites.

Conclusion

The literature review offers varying recourses to the rationale and process of recovery for the family of the deceased. Common among the observed grieving and healing journeys are the need for open communication, identified positive family functioning, and role reorganization. Strategies for therapeutic goal setting should be concrete and reassuring method of stress reduction during the chaotic aftermath of the sudden traumatic death. Goal setting provides directions with tasks on which to focus and accomplish, thereby providing an underling message of future orientation as well as some sense of control over an otherwise seemingly out of control life.

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What Makes a Community: Displaced People's Sense of Community and Human Rights in Resettlement

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Abstract

Resettlement in the Philippines is a phenomenon that often results to deprivation and displacement of many local communities and threatens human dignity and freedoms. Present literature on resettlement programs and communities often overlooks the subjective dimension of resettled community, e.g. people's sense of belonging to their place and community, and how these sentiments are linked to the attainment of human rights in resettlement. Using Q-methodology, a hybrid between qualitative and quantitative methods, this article discusses the process and results of a research on the subjective dimensions of a resettled community in a province south of Metro Manila. It underscores how, despite dispossession and deprivation, resettlers are able to build social ties and forge a sense of community that is shaped by the conditions and contexts of resettlement. The sense of community and the attainment of human rights are inextricably linked to one another.

Keywords: resettlement, sense of community, human rights



Overview

Rhoda E. Howard-Hassmann (1995) opined that the “obligation of the citizen to the community is an essential cornerstone of a rights-protective political regime.” Therefore the principle of commitment to the community is essential in realizing human rights.

On the other hand, housing or the provision of living spaces for people is a basic need. It is recognized as a fundamental human right under the universally accepted International Bill of Human Rights specifically the International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). A broader definition would be the “right to adequate housing” where people’s access to shelter encompasses living in security, peace and dignity expounded by the Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (2009).

In 2008, government forces claimed that residents in an urban area were informal settlers; and were living in a site proclaimed as a danger zone and/or an area for public use, hence, were relocated to a rural area. The bigger dilemma though, relates to the issue of resettlement(s) where in the Philippines it has become a phenomenon for it often results to deprivation and displacement of many local communities and which threatens the very human dignity and freedom of the people displaced.

The National Housing Authority (NHA) defines resettlement program and housing as the “acquisition and development of land and housing units for displaced families from sites that are either danger zones or allocated by the government for infrastructure projects.” Off-city relocation is the more dominant approach in resettling urban poor families. Informal settlers are transferred 25 to 90 kilometers away from their city of origin. Most of these resettlement areas are located in Cavite, Bulacan, Rizal, and Laguna. Families affected are usually poor, whether they came from urban or rural poor communities who cannot afford decent housing.



In recent years, the NHA together with the Local Government Units (LGUs) have engaged on endorsing post-disaster resettlement and housing programs for informal settler families particularly those residing in danger zones around Metro Manila. Starting 2013, some 120,472 informal settler families living in environmentally-risky communities were relocated by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) from Metro Manila to off-city resettlements (DILG-NCR, 2017).

Despite government's claim that resettlement is a sustainable solution, the reality is that resettlement challenges the fundamental and inalienable human rights statutes and principles in varying degrees. Displaced families experience its negative outcomes which include unsafe and substandard housing infrastructure, insecure livelihoods, lack of access to basic services and even a lack of social cohesion. Making matters worse, relocation and resettlement as initiated by the government or other large institutions often render relocatees voiceless in the resettlement process (DILG-NCR, 2017).

Projects of government and private entities disguised as 'shrouds of development' further aggravates displacement. These development-induced displacement and resettlement (DIDR) usually involves direct control of formerly undisputed lands lived overtime by communities. Some examples of these lands now in dispute are related to mining, urban development programs, industrial parks and building of infrastructures such as highways, bridges, and dams. Another type of DIDR involves policies that cause forced migration. Policies, for instance, that transfers jobs to other regions affect migration of people (Stanley, 2004).

The present administration boasts of a 'Golden Age of Infrastructure' through its "Build Build Build" (BBB) program. Under the BBB program, more than 60 mega-projects (including flagship projects of road networks and bridges, irrigation facilities, public transports such as airports, seaports and railways, urban infrastructure and flood control) will



be installed in almost every region of the country. Unfortunately, fast tracking of massive infrastructural projects may result to more suffering and deprivation of many local communities. From communities' experiences, making room for highways, roads, urban expansion and economic hubs, entails uprooting people from their lands, workplaces and livelihoods (Rivas, 2018).

This study points out that existing literatures on resettlement programs and resettled communities more often focused on the material opportunities and deprivation faced by *relocatees* but overlooks the subjective-dimension which could have answered questions pertaining to the sentiments of the displaced communities about their belongingness to their place and community or on how these sentiments about their community maybe linked to human rights attainment in resettled environment. Resettlement per se poses and contributes to a number of challenges in the attainment of human rights particularly on the right to adequate housing. Nevertheless, displaced communities possess the sentiments and resources that propel people as rights-holders to make their claims to adequate housing.

It also contends that despite the massive movement and relocation of people in the Philippines due to environmental pressures and development projects, there is still a shortage of knowledge illuminating how displaced communities are linked through social ties and share common perspectives. Furthermore, it asserts that sense of community (SOC) is usually understood as a contributor in advancing various social change agenda (Hyde & Chavis, 2008). However, there is also limited knowledge exploring how this sentiment about the community enable or discourage human rights attainment in resettlement.

Given these contexts, this study aims to contribute in improving the theory and practice of rights-based development work with resettled communities by incorporating concepts in human rights, community study, and social psychology. It would also attempt to contribute at increasing ones understanding on people's sentiment of community as a



mechanism for mediating practices for human rights attainment. Knowledge on displaced people's SOC can be utilized to advance the protection and fulfillment of the right to adequate housing for underprivileged communities.

Legal Bases on Human Rights and Resettlement

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)-UN Habitat (2009) elaborates on the "right to adequate housing" as recognition of the right to an adequate standard of living enshrined in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The right to adequate housing frames the rights and obligations that need to be guaranteed in the context of housing and resettlement. It contains freedoms such as freedom from forced removal from land or residence and right to choose one's living area; the entitlements such as right to a secure tenancy without discrimination and participation in decision-making related to housing. Beyond the provision of physical structure of a house, adequate housing entails other conditions to ensure adequate standards of living particularly security of tenure, availability of services, affordability, habitability, accessibility, location (such as accessibility to employment) and cultural adequacy (OHCHR-UN Habitat, 2009).

Other international treaties and documents also stipulate the conditions that need to be met in relation to resettlement. The International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 and The United Nations Commission on Human Rights and Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (1990) ensures that every person has a right to a secure tenancy and right to development. In addition, if a forced relocation happens, the Comprehensive Human Rights Guidelines on Development-based Displacement, the United Nations and the Commission on Human Rights declares that conditions for resettlement must have a just and



equitable compensation, safe and secure land or housing and equal rights to vulnerable groups.

Guided by these rights, resettlement programs should promote policies and processes that prevent or reduce harm to people's lives. Relocation must be avoided, prevented or more sustainable alternative interventions must be sought if relocation will lead to suffering and deprivation of communities. Aside from avoiding and reducing threat to wellbeing, resettlement policies and actions should promote higher quality of life for people, especially to the most vulnerable.

Philippine legislations related to resettlement ensure housing for every Filipino people. For instance, RA 7835 or the Comprehensive and Integrated Shelter Financing Act of 1994 declares that "the state shall take on a housing program that will make available decent and affordable housing to the poor" while RA 7279 referring to the Urban Development and Housing Act of 1992 stipulates that government "shall uplift the conditions of the poor, homeless citizens, and resettlement areas through decent and affordable housing". In relation to eviction, Section 10 of the 1987 Constitution stipulates that "poor communities shall not be forced evicted nor their homes demolished, except under the law and in a just and humane way" while Executive Order No. 152 of 2002 stressed that "any demolition or eviction activities shall secure first a permit from the Presidential Commission for the Urban Poor (PCUP)".

These legal instruments enumerate the rights of Filipinos, especially the underprivileged to affordable and decent housing, coupled with basic services. These laws also protect the rights of people from unjust demolition and displacement.

Conceptual Framework

- **Definitions and Scope of Sense of Community (SOC)**



Sense of Community (SOC) may refer to one feeling belonged or one matters to the community or that one's needs will be met by one's community. There are four factors contributing to the fulfillment of this concept, namely: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connection. *Membership* refers to the sense that one belongs to the community and that there are meaningful relationships inside. *Influence* signifies a feeling that one matters and makes a big contribution to the community. *Integration and fulfillment of needs* refers to the feeling that one's needs are prioritized and met by the community. Finally, *shared emotional connection* is the belief that the members of the community, including one's self, share a common history and similar experiences (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

The paper adopts McMillan and Chavis (1986) definition of SOC since their definition incorporates the four categories mentioned above. This definition and categories has been confirmed and validated through factor analysis and multiple linear regression in the quantitative studies of Perkins, Florin, Rich, Wandersman, Clavis (1990) and Peterson, Speer, McMillan (2008). Supporting this are studies from Rivera-Segarra, Rivera-Medina, and Varas-Diaz (2016), Jason, Stevens, and Ram (2015), Stevenson, Jason, Ferrari, and Hunter (2010), Mammana-Lupo, Todd, and Houston (2014), Perkins and Long (2002), Hughey, Speer, and Peterson (1999).

Granting that an actual community is not unitary, standardized, congruent, fixed nor unmoving, an SOC integrating the four categories mentioned earlier would prefer to lean on positive dimensions primarily because an SOC is a psychological construct, not the actual community (Mammana-Lupo, Todd, and Houston, 2014). This contention is supported by studies that show strengthened association between SOC and a few individual characteristics like personal networks, self-efficacy, perception of discrimination and loneliness, and



depressive symptoms that are also related to how individuals interact with their communities. For example, one of the studies found that people who regularly travel back and forth to urban and rural areas have less solid personal networks compared to those who stay in one place (Maya-Jariego & Holgado, 2015).

Conversely, the McMillan and Chavis' (1986) model of an SOC falls short being able to be empirically tested over longer period of time and its application to geographical communities only. Hence, it was suggested that SOC is better understood within the macro- and microsystems, or an ecological model. (Jason, Stevens, & Ram, 2015)

Building and strengthening the SOC has been recognized by psychologists and other practitioners as an important goal in advancing a wide range of social agenda and the promotion of social justice and social change (Hyde & Chavis, 2008 and Pretty, Bishop, Fisher, & Sonn, 2007). It is also conceived as a state and as a result of particular social processes (Pretty, Bishop, Fisher, & Sonn, 2007).

SOC was found to increase health and wellbeing, as well as the resilience to face different stressors (Chavis & Newbrough, 1986; Hyde & Chavis, 2008; Farahani, 2016). Through hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), it was found that drug abstinence-specific self-efficacy was positively related with SOC. This means that SOC could be a factor to increase the likelihood of rehabilitation for those addicted to drugs (Stevenson, Jason, Ferrari, & Hunter, 2010). Moreover, in children of Chinese migrants, SOC mediates between perception of discrimination and loneliness. This means that SOC may be a factor in decreasing perception of discrimination and thereby decreasing loneliness (Liu, et al., 2014). Finally, using hierarchical regression analysis, it was found that feelings of belonging mediate depressive symptoms among the elderly in assisted-care housing. SOC reduces their susceptibility to depression (McLaren, et al., 2013).



SOC was also shown to be a strong predictor of behaviors such as participation, helping and volunteering of community folks for their fellow community members (Davidson & Cotte, 1989; Hyde & Chavis, 2008; Farahani, 2016; Miranti & Evans, 2018). Other studies pointed out that having a sense of community relates to civic forms of engagement, protest activities, public deliberation, and political campaigning or voting. It can help in various areas such as community-building, community development, social capital, service provision, self-help groups, and prevention and resilience in mental health interventions (Hyde & Chavis, 2008; Perkins & Long, 2002).

- **Sense of Community and Resettlement**

Relocation was found to have negative effects on having a sense of community. In a post-disaster resettlement in Taiwan, the community was not able to attain a consensus whether to relocate or not prior to resettlement. Some groups did not want to transfer permanently while others wanted to relocate. This predicament resulted to a low sense of community (Fu, Lin, & Shieh, 2013). In another study of the same context, some relocation processes resulted to unfavorable social conditions. For example, more than 1000 people of different social, economic and cultural backgrounds were brought to live together in resettlement sites after a tsunami in Sri Lanka. It was challenging to attain an SOC in this situation because the relocatees had different socio-economic and cultural classes (Ruwanpura, 2009).

- **Sense of Community and Human Rights**

Very few studies link the sense of community to human rights. Twose & Cohrs (2015) mentioned about predictors in promoting human rights, such as the “sense of belonging to a global community” and subordinate group’s formation of a social identity. Hackett, Omoto, and Matthews (2015) studied the psychological determinants that propel



people to take action and promote human rights. One of their findings stated that people's sense of being is part of a global community which mediates the values of being concerned with human rights, and to partake in actions for their attainment. Staerklé, Clémence, and Spini (2015) refers to the study of Grabe and Dutt (2015) on Nicaraguan feminists saying that social identity formed through participation in social movements can lead to commitment to human rights. Subordinate groups who have learned to interrogate their context of oppression construct a social identity to claim rights.

- **Displaced People's Sense of Community and Human Rights**

The sense of community in displaced and resettled community can have unique attributes compared to other geographic communities. Psychologists and development practitioners working in solidarity with resettled communities need to understand people's capability of developing SOC amidst the challenging environment posed by displacement and deprivation. It should also be recognized that SOC as a condition and a resource can propel people to act towards desired changes in a resettlement community. SOC is a social asset that is commonly overlooked by the local government, businesses, and other large institutions concerned with post-relocation/resettlement. Desired community progress such as community economy, solidarity economy, and other social development aspirations start with social ties, reciprocal engagements, and community relationships (Perkins & Long, 2002).

The study strongly affirms that SOC should be seen as embedded within the macro- and microsystems, or understood in an ecological model (Jason, Stevens, & Ram, 2015). Social cohesion and identity reflect the social and physical contexts within which these cohesion and identity operate (Pretty, Bishop, Fisher, & Sonn, 2007). The context of the place can change and influence residents' affect, cognitions and behaviors (Heft, 2001, as cited in Pretty, Bishop, Fisher, & Sonn, 2007). As such, displaced people's SOC must be



understood in the context of resettlement that could have moderated these sentiments of connections to their community.

Lastly, as mentioned, SOC is utilized to promote social change and social justice (Pretty, Bishop, Fisher, & Sonn, 2007). Striving to build sense of community can catalyze transformations in the community (Hyde & Chavis, 2008). However, how SOC enables the promotion and attainment of human rights in resettlement needs to be better understood. This study asserts that SOC influences displaced people's attainment of human rights in resettlement. In human rights-based approach, one big task is to build the capacities of rights-holders to assert and claim their rights. This study posits that SOC can enable or discourage people as rights-holders to make their claims regarding adequate housing.

Method

- **Study site**

The research studied a resettlement area found in a province south of Metro Manila. Government initiated an involuntary resettlement, claiming that the residents were previously informal settlers living in proclaimed danger zones and areas for public use. The first wave of resettlement was in 2008 and the latest was in 2010. However, the continuous exodus of people meant new houses have to be built to accommodate new relocatees. In 2016, from the original 1,031 resettled households, only 535 still resides in the sites, the rest returned to Manila because of livelihood.

Currently, there are 3, 476 people living in the resettlement site. It now offers a community elementary school, a high school, a health center and a church. Table 1 shows the characteristics of both the sending locality and the receiving locality.



Table 1 *Characteristics of sending and receiving locality*

	Sending Locality	Receiving Locality
Income class	First class city	Second class municipality
	Php10.751 billion revenues	Php24, 990,133.57 revenues
Population	529,039 (2010 census)	80,453
Land area	27.35570km ²	65.40 km ²
Main source of income	financial and business center	Pineapple agriculture and some fishing

- **Participants**

Sixty-four people participated in the study. Twenty-four of them took part in the focus group discussions (FGD's) while forty joined the Q-methodology sorting. The FGD's were transcribed and analyzed using Atlas.ti. Most of the participants were women aged 30-80 years old.

- **Q-methodology**

The Q-methodology was first introduced by British physicist-psychologist William Stephenson in the 1930's (Brown, 1980, as cited in Shinebourne & Adams, 2007). Its aim is to identify broad categories of common themes regarding a specific subject matter (Shinebourne & Adams, 2007). It is similar to an inverted factor analysis. But instead of analyzing the categories of factors, it analyzes the types of reasoning each participant employs over other participants regarding a certain topic. It identifies groups of participants who talk about a group of statements in comparable ways (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

The advantage of this method is that it observes and determines patterns termed as "pattern analytic". It also serves as a taxonomic tool that classifies arrangements and systematic schemes (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004) and does not require a large number of participants. Typically, 40-60 participants are sufficient to come up with fruitful data (Watts & Stenner, 2005). Finally, this method is beneficial in producing a rich set of data



(Simons, 2013) because it seeks meaning through relative statements from the perspective of the participants (Shinebourne & Adams, 2007).

However, the Q-methodology cannot be classified as a statistical analysis that is equivalent to r-statistics (Watts & Stenner, 2005) because it is not a method used for measuring (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004), neither a qualitative nor a quantitative method (Cordingley, et al., 1997, as cited in Simons, 2013), rather it is categorized as a qualiquantological method that signifies a hybrid between a qualitative and a quantitative study (Stenner & Stainton Rogers, 2004).

First Step. In conducting Q-methodology a series of statements were developed that widely cover the topic on Sense of community (Simons, 2013). Shinebourne and Adams (2007) recommend to derive the list of statements from a previous FGD with the same group of participants regarding SOC.

Second Step. A number of statements were identified with the overall goal of representing each theme regarding SOC (Simons, 2013). There are no rules regarding the number of statements or items required because it depends on the subject matter being talked about. In addition, a Q-set of statements can never be complete because it is impossible to incorporate all the themes and opinions about the said topic (Watts & Stenner, 2005).

For this study, a total of 25 statements were used. Below are some sample statements for the q-methodology sorting translated into English by the researchers:

1. I usually drink alcohol to make friends with new neighbors.
2. I usually participate in feasts and celebration.
3. I am more of a leader in the community.
4. I have more obligations in the community.
5. I usually volunteer to receive something in return.
6. I usually talk to my neighbors.



Third Step. Data were gathered by assisting the participants to sorting the statements in the q-sorting table (Simons, 2013). The table permitted the participants to rate each statement in a continuum from most describes to least describes. Figure 1 shows the q-sorting table used in this study.

Figure 1 Q-sorting table

Least Describes			Neutral			Most Describe		

Note: items placed towards the right most describes the participants and least describes towards the left

Participants were asked to group the statements into three files that correspond to statements that describe them, do not describe to them, and neutral. Second, from the piles, they were asked to choose statements that either most describes them or least describes them. For the statement that most describes them, this was placed on the rightmost corner of the Q-sorting table. For the statement that least describes them, this was placed on the leftmost corner of the Q-sorting table. Third, they were asked to place the remaining statements according to how they think it describes them. Fourth, they were given a chance to change the arrangement of the statements in case they change their minds. Finally, they were asked follow up questions to explain their answers. Some of the questions asked were:

1. Why do you think this statement most or least describes you?
2. Why did you put this statement in the neutral column?



3. Why do you think this statement describes you more than the statement next to it?
4. Why do you think this statement describes you less than the statement next to it?

Fourth Step. The last step in the Q-method, data was analyzed and results interpreted (Simons, 2013). The data gathered were encoded and analyzed using the PQ Method software.

- **Procedures for the FGD**

As recommended by Shinebourne and Adams (2007), the first FGD was used to generate statements for the Q-sorting while the second FGD was used to validate the results of the Q-methodology. Q-sort participants also became participants of the FGD's. Other FGD participants were community leaders in the resettlement site. Discussions included people's perception of human rights in resettlement; experience of human rights before, during and after relocation; violations of human rights in resettlement; people's feeling about their community; and the interface of sense of community to attaining human rights in the resettlement.

The FGD was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis sorts and categorizes words, phrases, and sentences with sensitivity on the connotations of the words used. It is a grouping of quotes and materials that are organized based on common topics and into a structure that explains the study's focus. It looks at patterns of ideas emerging from the collective data gathered (Parker, 2005).

Data were organized and analyzed using the following analysis questions:

1. What is the context of resettlement?



2. What are the community's experiences and perception of human rights in resettlement?
3. What are categories of sense of community in resettlement?
4. How is displaced people's sense of community linked to human rights attainment?

Results and Discussion

- **Human Rights Concerns Before, During and After Resettlement**

Before Resettlement. People's Right to Information were violated. Participants recalled diverse experiences of their displacement and relocation. Even before the displacement, the general community members were often left in limbo about the status and processes of their resettlement. In spite of having local community leaders and/or organizations, needed information and decisions made during negotiations were concentrated within the leadership of community organizations. People were kept uninformed until the decision to evict was finalized.

Families evicted were given misleading information. Government agencies persuaded people to leave their homes in the city by promising new housing in the resettlement site. Only to be dismayed later at finding out that they will have to build their own makeshift houses once they reach the resettlement area. Prior to demolition, some of them participated in the protest actions and negotiations to stop or delay the eviction, but with futile efforts. Many of the settlers were displaced without ample preparation.

During Resettlement. Community members who came to the resettlement site were from different batches (starting 2008 to 2010) and different barangays of the *sending* cities. They narrated arriving in an empty lot of the *receiving* municipality with no housing units. It took some time for them to adjust in a new place and with new neighbors. Many expressed



that because they grew up in the city, they were not used to rural living including the lack of city infrastructures, working in an agricultural-setting and the absence of the city vibrancies.

To some who had more resources than others, the transition to the resettlement condition was much easier. For example, they rented a place near their housing unit(s) while the utilities and facilities supplies were being completed. But to the majority, building their units took time for they had very little income and resources to build their houses. Sectors who were mostly and greatly affected during the early phase of settling down were small children, the elderly and the women tasked to care for the children. Because of their stationary location, it is the women who become community leaders. It is typically the men who usually leave the resettlement site to find jobs either outside the community or go back to their old work in the sending city.

“Patao Lang, Walang Pabahay.” In spite of being given spacious lots in the rural environment, there was no appropriate materials and financial assistance given as support in building decent shelters. Those evicted were doubly forced to demolish their own homes and keep whatever housing material they can during the demolition. Whatever were salvaged like pieces of woods, roofs and other materials from their original houses were used to build makeshift houses in their new relocation site. The condition presented denies displaced people on the right to adequate shelter with appropriate material and financial assistance.

“Kanya-kanyang diskarte (ang mga tao). Dadaing ka sa iba, pero pare-pareho lang naman kayo.” There were relief packs, but were insufficient. The lack of electricity results to total darkness at night. People cook their food by burning paper. People recounted how each one of them tried to be resourceful to adapt to their situation. They have no one else to turn to channel their painful stories except with their already distraught neighbors experiencing the same situation.



“Walang nakinabang (sa dati naming pinanggalingan).” There were also issues in sharing the benefits of resettlement as a development endeavor. The sending city explained that the resettlement program’s purpose was for beautification. Now, their former urban homes were turned into playgrounds and for training K-9 dogs. A relocatee could not help but expressed resentment that dogs benefited more than the people.

After Resettlement. There were very little livelihood opportunities in the resettlement site. The receiving municipality, being an agricultural locality, was unable to provide employment to former city dwellers. The resettlement program of the government adequately failed to consider the accessibility of employment opportunities for resettled communities. People asserted that accessing livelihood is a right. However, the glaring neglect to ensure jobs in resettlement push people to find employment usually back in their original city.

Harm and insecurity brought by the displacement are still unresolved. Even after 10 years, electricity connections and water supplies remains unstable and lacking still. A source of concern among community members related to safety and security. Neighbors organized among themselves and took the initiative to connect their power supplies outside their own community so that they could have a steady supply of electricity.

Land Rights. People are also still waiting for the government’s promise to award the land titles to them. *“Ang hinihintay namin ay ang karapatan naming makuha ang titulo ng lupa (rito sa resettlement) para may pinanghahawakan na kami.”*

- **Linking the 5 SOC Categories. Its Contexts and Human Rights**

The experiences shared provided a backdrop on how displaced people’s SOC unfolded, describing distinct sentiments of belongingness and social connection in resettlement. The results below shows the culled categories related to SOC. After presenting



each category, the statements that most describe and least describes each category were also presented. Finally, the defining statements that made a significant difference between categories that seem alike were presented. This is in order to indicate the particular difference between categories.

The following categories were culled out from the q-methodology:

Table 2 *Categories of Sense of Community*

Category Number	Sense of Community
Category 1	SOC through Restoring livelihood
Category 2	SOC through Fatalism
Category 3	SOC through Accessing assistance from the sending city
Category 4	SOC through Social Relationships
Category 5	SOC through Community Leadership

Category 1 is SOC through Restoring livelihoods. It means that the resettlers found their SOC through re-establishing their sources of livelihoods. They began to rebuild or initiated looking for other sources of income as an alternate sources of living. (See Table 2)

Namamasukan sa [Metro] Manila, iyong asawa ko po. Driver po sa [sending locality] po. Doon kami dati... pero na-transfer na kami rito. So siya, natutulog siya sa Cainta [nearer to the sending Locality than the receiving locality]. Every Saturday, umuwi siya rito – Socorro, 49, Female

Dito nagtatrabaho ang anak ko, nagdedeliver ng tubig sa bawat residente rito. Wala naman kasing nagdideliver ng tubig rito kaya may pangangailangan para doon. Tatlo lang kasing gripo ang pinag -iigiban namin. Sidecar ang gamit. – I luminada, 73, Female

Provincial rate kasi rito eh. Sa isang araw kulang pa ang Php200.00 na kikitain para sa mga anak ko. Lalo na lima ang anak ko. – Lilibeth, 43, Female

In these statements, the Items that most described their ways of thinking are Item 25 and Item 24. Statements that least described Category 1 are Item 7 and Item 9. (Refer to Table 2.1)

SOC through Restoring Livelihood is influenced by the livelihood conditions in resettlement. Although resettlers believe that provision of jobs is a right, they have individually assumed the obligation to find jobs on their own from their old place. This also



shows that the state failed its duty to provide adequate opportunities for resettled people to gain their living.

Table 2.1
Category 1: SOC through Restoring livelihoods

	Statements	z-scores
Item 25	The wives are usually left in the new resettlement while the husbands work in the city	1.80
Item 24	My husband or I find more livelihoods in our city of origin.	1.51
Item 7	It's more difficult for me to acquire basic services like water or electricity	-1.30
Item 9	The materials used for the resettlement houses are more durable	-1.92

Note: A higher positive z-score indicates statements that most describe the category while a lower negative z-score indicates statements that least describe the category

Category 2 is SOC through Fatalism. It described those who have accepted that it is their lot to relocate. They have acceded that such is their luck and agreed that they cannot do anything but to transfer to the new site. (See Table 2)

Dati naninibago kasi since birth, nasa [urban municipality] po ako. Noong dumating ako rito - bundok, puno, ilog, usok. Pero ngayon, gusto ko nandito na ako. - Lilibeth, 43, Female

Mag-think ka ng positive. Una, hindi mo na kailangang magbayad nang malaki sa bahay. Tapos kung walang tubig, pwede ka namang mag-igib sa poso. At least lesser ang magiging gastos mo. Sa pag-aaral ng mga bata, malalapit ang schools at hindi crowded ang mga sasakyan. – Melanie, 36, Female

The statements that most describe *Category 2* are Item 10 and Item 11. Statements that least describe them are Item 18 and Item 3. (See Table 2.2)

Table 2.2
Category 2: SOC through Fatalism

	Statements	z-scores
Item 10	I have accepted living here more. I do not want to transfer to another resettlement area	2.04
Item 11	I do not have much choice but to live here	1.40
Item 18	I get invited in the meetings and activities of the receiving municipality more	-0.94
Item 3	I am more of a leader in the community	-1.88

Note: A higher positive z-score indicates statements that most describe the category while a lower negative z-score indicates statements that least describe the category



Statements that made a difference between Categories 1 and 2 are Item 24 on my husband or I find more livelihoods in the sending municipality with a difference score of 2.27. This implies that the resettlers whose reasoning falls under Category 1: SOC through restoring livelihood endeavored more to find sources of income from the sending municipality than those under Category 2: SOC through fatalism.

SOC through Fatalism was shaped by several factors in the process of resettlement. First, the government's provision of affordable housing in the resettlement influences people's acceptance of their fate. Yet, people's experience of failed negotiations with the government, eviction and demolition of their own houses, coupled with their lack of other options, also influenced people's sentiment to accept their fate. Powerlessness and acceptance of their destiny also reflect the ten years of inadequate government's support, neglect for adequate jobs and social services and the impunity related to the gross violations of rights during the eviction and relocation process.

Category 3 is SOC through Accessing assistance from the sending city. It describes people who get their SOC by claiming support from their city of origin. They continue to receive provisions from their city of origin since they are still listed as residents of the said place. They carry on acquiring assistance from the sending municipality. (See Table 2.3)

[Nakatanggap kami dati] ng school uniform, pamasko, medical mission, yellow card, PhilHealth. – Mary Jane, 43, Female

Sa senior [citizen], malaki talaga ang nakukuha [namin mula sa sending locality]. Every six months, Php1,000. May mga age-bracket. – Rosario, 62, Female

The statements that best describe Category 3 are Item 16, Item 5 and Item 15. On the other hand, statements that least describes this category are Item 17, Item 2, Item 6, Item 20 and Item 18. (See Table 2.3)



Table 2.3
Category 3: SOC through Accessing assistance from the sending city

	Statements	z-scores
Item 16	The sending municipality does not neglect us more	1.83
Item 5	I usually volunteer to receive something in return	1.40
Item 15	I receive more benefits from the sending municipality's local government	1.39
Item 17	I know the politicians of the receiving municipality	-1.52
Item 2	I usually participate in feasts and celebration	-1.30
Item 6	I usually talk to my neighbors	-1.06
Item 18	I get invited in the meetings and activities of the receiving municipality more	-0.84

Note: A higher positive z-score indicates statements that most describe the category while a lower negative z-score indicates statements that least describe the category.

The statements that made a big difference between Categories 1 and 3 are Item 5 with a difference score of -2.28 and Item 24 with a difference score of 1.94. This means that the resettlers whose reasoning falls under Category 3, which is SOC through accessing assistance from the sending city, are more motivated to volunteer in community activities because of assistance from the sending city.

SOC through Accessing Assistance was facilitated by people's notion that they deserve the right to services and benefits from their former LGU. They believe that unless all needed services are in place, their former LGU should fulfill the right to provide adequate assistance in the resettlement. These notions and the deprivation of services in resettlement promoted behaviors to demand rights, particularly health, education and elderly social services from the sending LGU.

Category 4 is SOC through Social relationships. The type of reasoning for Category 4 encouraged the resettlers to establish networks and connections among themselves and among other people in the receiving city. They created rapport or bonded with residents of the new area. They generated friendships and affiliations with the people from the relocation site. (See Table 2.4)



Sa senior [citizen], malaki talaga ang nakukuha [namin mula sa sending locality]. Every six months, Php1,000. May mga age-bracket. – Rosario, 62, Female

Di ba mayroon kaming HOA (Homeowner’s Association), kakailanganing tulong, may ambagan kami o monthly dues na maaaring maibigay na tulong... Noong ang tatay ko na-ospital, nakahingi kami ng tulong sa munisipyo ng [receiving locality].– Melanie, 36, Female

Halimbawa po ay may namatay, kagaya sa chapel na may ibinibigay na koleksyon every Sunday. Ginagamit po naming pang-abuloy iyon. – Nilda, 54, Female

Halimbawa Sunday, minsan may okasyon, minsan lalaki, minsan babae ang nagsasalusalalo. Pero sinisigurado naming mayroon pa rin peace and order. Kapag mayroong nagkagulo, police matter na iyon. – Badeth, 39, Female

The statements that best described category 4 are Item 21 and Item 22 while those statements that least described them are Item 19, Item 13 and Item 8. (See Table 2.4)

Table 2.4
Category 4: SOC through Social relationships

	Statements	z-scores
Item 21	We usually help each other inside the community	1.86
Item 22	We have more organizations and associations who help the community members	1.16
Item 19	I don’t usually go outside the resettlement area	-1.13
Item 8	There’s more conflicts between neighbors because there’s no water or electricity	-1.60

Note: A higher positive z-score indicates statements that most describe the category while a lower negative z-score indicates statements that least describe the category

The statements that made a big difference between Categories 3 and 4 are Item 5 having a difference score of 1.98 and Item 2 with a difference score of -1.73. This means that the resettlers who reasons fall under Category 4 took part in community activities like festivals and celebration even without receiving anything in return compared to resettlers under Category 3.

Category 5 is SOC through Community leadership. It described people who took on formal and informal leadership positions. They believed that they have obligations towards their community and serve as point persons in community activities or tasks. They functioned



as people in charge and serving as formal or informal leaders of different organizations inside the community. (see Table 2.5)

Sa tingin ko, isa akong lider, kahit ako ay matanda na, marami pa rin akong pangarap para sa lugar na ito. Basta't kami ay nagkakaisa, makakamit namin ang mga pangarap na ito. Dapat ay nagkakaisa. Kung magkakanya-kanya kami, hindi masosolusyunan ang mga problema rito... Dapat kapag lider ka, kinakausap mo ang mga tao. Dapat pinapakinggan mo ang mga sinasabi nila, hindi lang sa block mo kundi sa lahat ng block rito. – Iluminada, 73, Female

The statements that best describe Category 5 are Item 3 and Item 4. On the other hand, the statements that least described them are Item 19, Item 5 and Item 1.

Table 2.5
Category 5: SOC through Community leadership

	Statements	z-scores
Item 3	I am more of a leader in the community	1.26
Item 4	I have more obligation in the community	1.16
Item 19	I don't usually go outside the resettlement area	-1.06
Item 5	I usually volunteer to receive something in return	-1.24
Item 1	I usually drink alcohol to make friends with new neighbors	-2.03

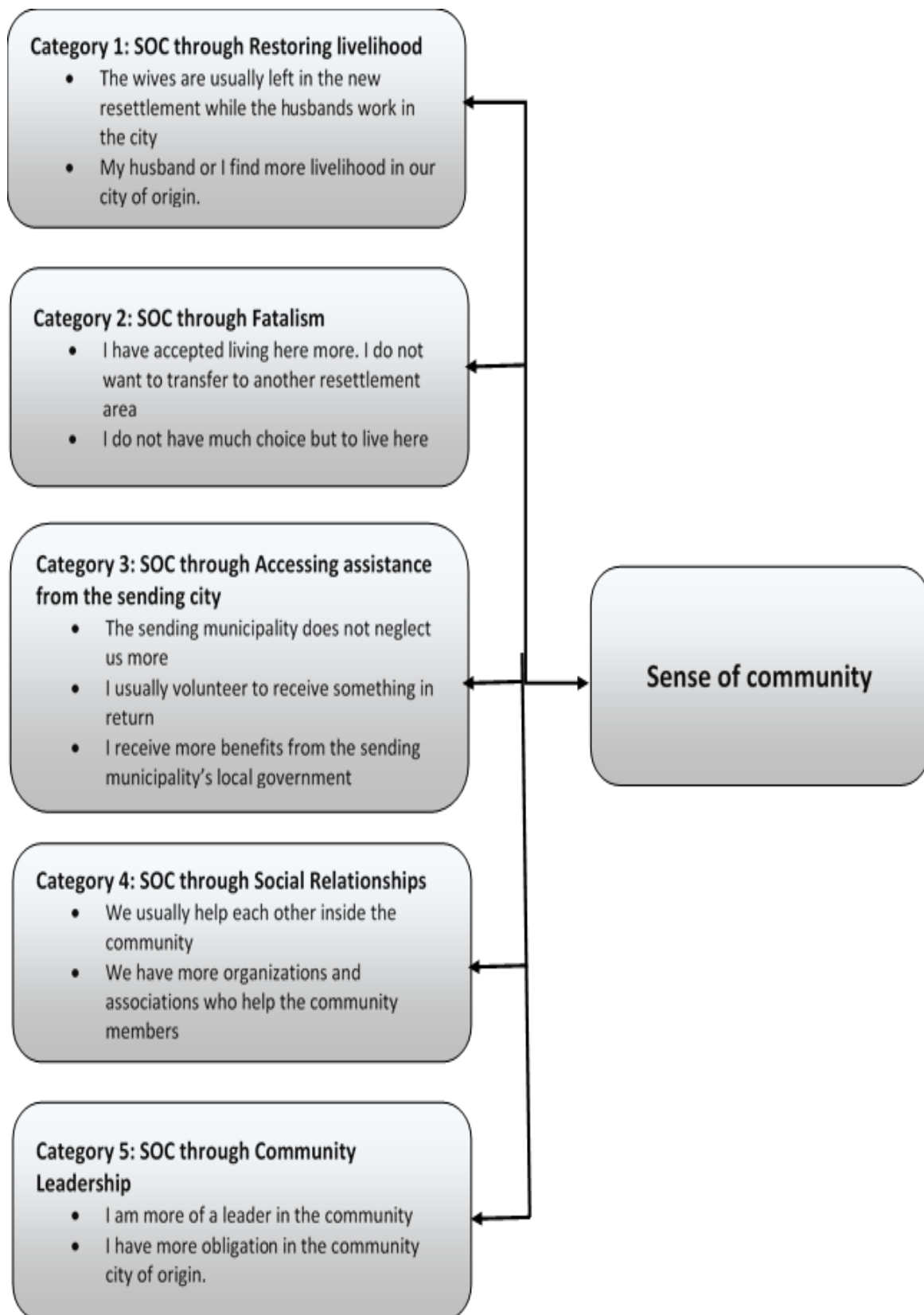
Note: A higher positive z-score indicates statements that most describe the category while a lower negative z-score indicates statements that least describe the category.

The statements that made a big difference between Categories 4 and 5 are Item 6 with a difference score of 2.07 and Item 3 with a difference score of -2.73. This meant that the resettlers whose reasoning fall under Category 4 endeavored more to converse with their current neighbors even though they are not community leaders. On the other hand, resettlers whose reasoning fall under Category 5 believed more that they perform leadership roles in their community.

Both SOC through Social Relationships and SOC through Community leadership were shaped by the need to fill the gaps in relation to inadequate standards of living in resettlement. Through social relationships and leadership, people collectively addressed community problems.



Figure 2 shows the summary of the five categories related to SOC along with the statements under each category.





The study confirmed that even in a new resettlement area they were able to develop a sense of community. While self-efficacy was not included as a measurement, similar to that of Stevenson, Jason, Ferrari, and Hunder (2010) study, the sense of determination of resettlers was recorded particularly on how they felt when establishing new social networks to help each other especially on health issues and death. Also, despite the depressing encounters, they continue to dream of a future for their new community.

Maya-Jariego and Holgado's (2015) studies of people who live or travel back and forth in two localities experienced less solid personal networks were also applicable in this cases. During the FGDs, participants mentioned how their spouses would move to and fro the sending and the receiving municipality to find work or other sources of income. When work is found, husbands would often go home only during weekends. The arrangement is a cause of conflict between couples. As expressed during the sessions, the husbands would go home only during weekends. As articulated by Liu, et al. (2014), challenges in family life have an effect on people's SOC.

- **Link between Displaced People's Sense of Community to Human Rights Attainment**

Resettled people's SOC reveal behaviors and perceptions that can be supportive or unsupportive of claiming human rights.

Table 3 summarizes instances where sense of community enables or hampers the capacity of rights-holder to make claims.



Table 3

Displaced People's Sense of Community and Human Rights

Categories of Sense of Community	People's notions and behavior supportive/unsupportive of right-holders in making human rights claims
SOC through Restoring livelihood	Resettlers have the notion of "Karapatan namin ang kabuhayan". However, the glaring lack of livelihood opportunities in the resettlement has already forced households to restore their livelihoods mostly by accessing jobs in their former place. Because of this, rights-holders no longer demand for their right to adequate livelihoods.
SOC through Fatalism	People feel, "Wala na kaming magagawa" and "Nakamove on na kami". They also recalled, "Wala ring nangyari noong lumaban kami". These sentiments no longer push people to hold government liable to human rights violations. On the other hand, people accepting their fate in the resettlement facilitate the motivation to demand for other rights (such as right to social services).
SOC through Accessing assistance from the sending city	People have the notion, "Karapatan naming makatanggap ng mga benepisyo". This SOC relates to people's behavior to claim social services and assistance from their former city government.
SOC through Social Relationships	Their SOC result to behaviors that promotes the wellbeing and rights of the community. People form groups to access electrification service. Forming their Homeowner's Association was also helpful in taking care of the wellbeing of the community.
SOC through Community Leadership	People were able to access services by asking help from community leaders. For instance, people turn to their block leaders to request health assistance from the government.

The SOC through Restoring Livelihood and SOC through Fatalism demonstrate people's resignation from demanding claims for rights that were grossly unfulfilled or violated such as the right to adequate livelihoods and inadequate social services. to people's attitude against resistance to violations.

SOC through Accessing assistance from the sending city and SOC through Social Relationships enable behavior supportive of human rights attainment. People believe that by coming together, they can strengthen their voice. Their relationship with the LGUs of both



the sending city and the receiving municipality are important in claiming their rights to social services. It shows that intergroup processes can be vital in human rights promotion.

Similarly, the SOC through social relationship and SOC through Community Leadership can be a mechanism to promote human rights. People believe that it is their right to voice out their concerns. They do this by turning to their leaders, who will then represent people's concerns when negotiating with decision-makers.

Conclusion

The study highlights the often overlooked dimension of community life which is people's sentiments of connection to their community. Despite the dispossession and deprivation characterizing resettlement, people were able to build meaningful social ties. The SOC are linked to social identity and social cohesion in resettlement through restoring livelihood, fatalism, accessing assistance from the sending city, social relationships and community leadership.

The conditions and contexts of resettlement shape resettler's sense of community. Deprivation of basic human rights in resettlements influences a displaced people's sentiments of their place and community. The collective sentiment to access services from their former locality stems from the deprivation of the right to adequate housing and support. The SOC through fatalism was influenced by the impunity related to the gross violations of rights like relocation without housing, absence of financial support and access to basic services.

Sense of community and the attainment of human rights are linked to each other. The five SOC categories showed the tendencies of displaced people to yield to what the present environment has to offer such as accepting one's faith (Fatalism) or shouldering the obligation to look for work rather than demand for it as a right (Restoring Livelihood). But it also showed that it can facilitate collective efforts to enhance community life, promote well-being, the value of helpfulness and support from the community members as well as



nurturing relationships with the LGU (receiving municipality) and community leaders in order to support rights-holders to pursue making claims related to adequate housing.

The results of the study elucidate the complex realities faced by resettled communities, including the human rights issues before, during, and after resettlement. For states and other duty-bearers, impunity in connection to human rights violation in resettlement must be met with adequate response. State agencies that failed to anticipate, mitigate and rectify harm in resettlement need to be held accountable for the losses and victimization of displaced people. Resettlement governance that compels sending LGUs to continue providing assistance to resettled communities must be unceasingly upheld.

For development workers, psychologists, human rights advocates and legislators, development work should not only look into material conditions but also the subjectivities of displaced people regarding their place and community. This study may serve as basis for social psychologists and development workers to further measure the sentiments and behavior of displaced communities regarding human rights promotion by facilitating the development of creative strategies and mechanisms on how to cultivate attitudes supportive of human rights thru community organizing, formation of community organizations or setting-up of pro-poor development plans and/or develop capacities of rights-holders capacities to claim their rights via leadership development, negotiation skills and strengthening capacities for protecting human rights.

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Rights at Work and Workers' Resistance in a Luzon Export Zone

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Abstract

Unionization and freedom of association are key labor rights that must be enjoyed by all workers. Yet, they are actively suppressed through various schemes of union avoidance and union busting. Repression of unionization is meant to stop workers from bargaining collectively to better their wages and working conditions. The indifference of the State as represented by the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA) in the case has led to the outbursts of workers' protests and strikes escalating the conflict between workers and capitalists. The study explores the state of rights at work in an Ecozone in Luzon through five case studies of the struggles of workers from different factories. Using the human rights-based approach, it examines how duty bearers are protecting, upholding and fulfilling the rights and entitlements of workers as claim-holders. It also reiterates a set of recommendations by the Partido ng Manggagawa that addresses crucial barriers to fulfilling workers rights in the ecozones.

Keywords: export processing zones, unionism, workers, human rights



Introduction

Labor rights are based on the social justice provisions of the Constitution (Article XIII), on laws enacted by Congress such as Republic Act 9481 which is on strengthening the right to self-organization or with international conventions like the International Labor Organization Conventions 87 and 98 that pertain to freedom of association and collective bargaining, respectively. The Constitution includes among state policies Section 3 that views labor as “a primary social economic force” and guarantees “full protection” to workers. The Labor Code reiterates all the rights enumerated in the Constitution while detailing the mechanisms for their observance and enforcement.

The enjoyment of labor rights is a foundation for the exercise by workers of their workplace-related capabilities to function as human beings. Decent work is promoted by the protection, upholding, and fulfillment of these labor rights and standards.

Diokno (2009) illustrated the vast expanse of the rights at work that workers need to possess. She listed the rights of workers as claim holders and the services that must be provided by the State as duty bearer. She noted two major divisions. One is freedom to choose or accept work, including freedom from unfair deprivation of work. This relates specifically to the right to have work and against illegal termination. Also the provision of state services promoting employment and policies on migration would fall under this category. Another is entitlement to gainful employment and decent work. This narrowly refers to humane wages and working conditions. Examples of these would be the workers’ right to occupational safety and health, and state enforcement through a system of labor inspection and compliance.

However, there are laws and rules that undercut the exercise of these labor rights. For example, Republic Act 6727 (Wage Rationalization Act) institutionalized in 1989 the policy of wage setting at the regional level, thereby resulting in the cheapening of labor at the



expense of the Constitutional mandate of a living wage. Likewise, the series of DOLE department orders (DO) from DO 10 (1997), DO 03 (2001), DO 18-02 (2002), DO 18-A (2011) and finally DO 174 (2017) has been criticized by labor groups for weakening security of tenure and allowing the proliferation of contractualization.

In contrast to the statutory rights of workers, the situation of laborers in the export processing zones (ecozones) is nothing but dismal. In 2009, the Human Rights Report of the US State Department on the Philippines averred that:

Violation of minimum wage standards and the use of contract employees to avoid the payment of required benefits were common, including in the government-designated [Special Economic Zones] SEZs, where tax benefits were used to encourage the growth of export industries.... Complaints about nonpayment of social security contributions, bonuses, and overtime were particularly common with regard to companies in SEZs.

With regard to freedom of association in the ecozones, the same report states that:

Labor groups alleged that companies in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) used frivolous lawsuits as a means of harassing union leaders. Labor groups reported that firms used bankruptcy as a reason for closing and dismissing workers. Labor law applies uniformly throughout the country, including in SEZs; however, local political leaders and officials who governed the SEZs attempted to frustrate union organizing efforts by maintaining union-free or strike-free policies. A conflict over interpretation of the SEZ law's provisions for labor inspection further obstructed the enforcement of workers' rights to organize. The DOLE can conduct inspections of SEZs and establishments located there, although local zone directors claimed authority to conduct their own inspections as part of the zones' privileges intended by congress. Hiring often was controlled tightly through SEZ labor centers. Union successes in organizing in the SEZs were few and marginal in part due to organizers' restricted access to the closely guarded zones and the propensity among zone establishments to adopt fixed-term, casual, temporary, or seasonal employment contracts. Labor unions claimed that government security forces were stationed near industrial areas or SEZs to intimidate workers attempting to organize.

Ofreneo, Bellin & Hega (2007) describe the same miserable condition of garments workers in Cavite and Laguna ecozones. The deplorable state of labor standards and workers' rights at the Mactan ecozone is echoed by Certeza, Adviento and Reyes (2012) in their investigation of working conditions at a multinational company's suppliers:

Workers in all factories continue to receive the prevailing minimum wage despite their long years of working in the factories. This wage was not even sufficient to meet the workers' basic needs especially when there is a family to sustain. Mandatory overtime is largely practiced to save on costs and to beat tight production deadlines (p. 33).



The research by Certeza et al. (p. 34) reveals that, “workers’ participation is completely lacking in the supplier factories.” It affirms that without a union to represent and bargain collectively for workers, rights at work including guarantees provided in the multinational company’s codes of conduct, are meaningless.

Research Objectives and Methodology

The research addressed three objectives: to present workplace grievances, including women’s concerns, in a Luzon-based ecozone; identify factors that motivate unionization; and describe forms of resistance such as traditional direct action, social movement unionism and supply chain organizing.

The focus was on the experiences of workers in five factories in a Luzon-based ecozone. Data gathering was done from 2014 to 2018. The author, at that time, was actively involved in the workers’ struggles as a member of Partido Manggagawa. He assisted the workers by conducting labor education, facilitating strategizing sessions, writing briefing papers and press releases about the disputes, and networking with international labor NGOs engaging transnational companies. The author’s record of observations and insights as a participant-observer is published in the Partido Manggagawa blog (<http://partidongmanggagawa2001.blogspot.com>), of which he was also the primary writer.

The human rights-based approach was found appropriate to use in assessing the exercise by export zone workers of their rights as claim holders and the reaction of duty bearers such as government institutions like DOLE and PEZA, and the private actors like factory management and global brands. The dynamic relationship between claim holders and duty bearers is at the heart of the rights-based approach. Diokno (2009) illustrated it as:

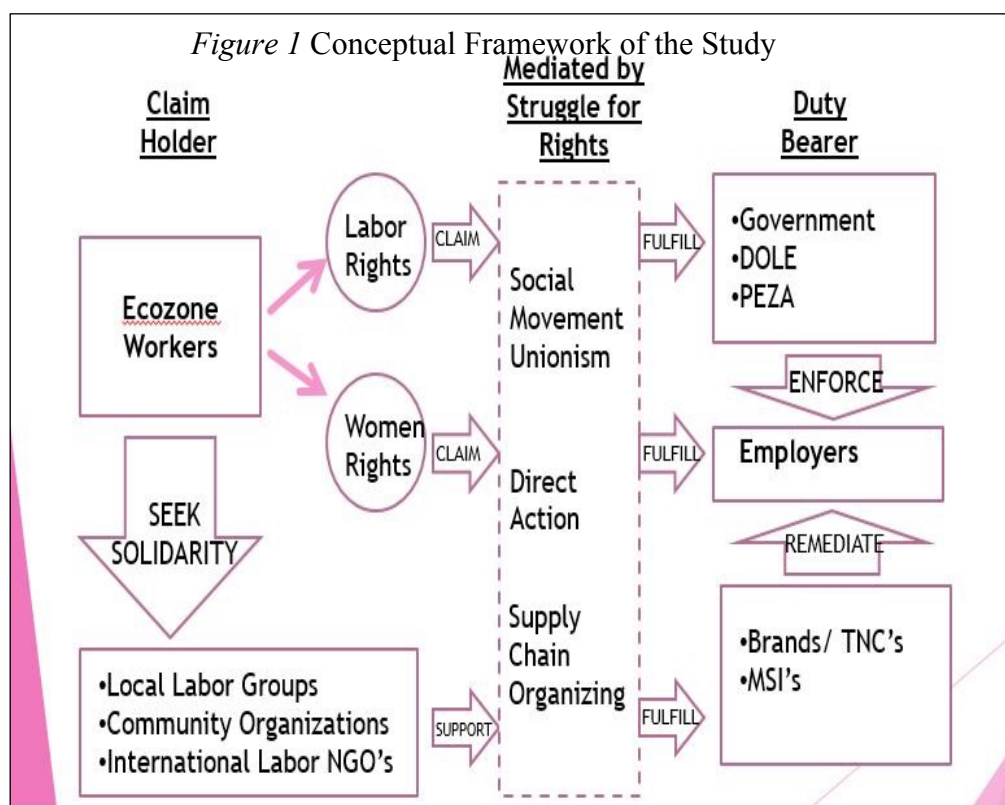
A framework that promotes claimholder’s freedoms and entitlements to goods, services, institutions and resources provided by duty bearers on the basis of human rights standards, in compliance with human rights obligations and in a manner that fully integrates human rights (PANTHER) principles (p. 1).



PANTHER refers to participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and rule of law.

The study tested the hypothesis that the relationship between claim holders and duty-bearers has to be mediated by a strategy of struggle for rights and entitlements. The human rights-based approach has to be complemented by a theory of class interests and power relations. The relationship between claimants and duty-bearers is conflict-ridden and rights and entitlements are contested terrain. Thus, without the mediation of a strategy of struggle, the rights and entitlements of claimants will not be upheld, protected and fulfilled by duty-bearers.

Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of the study.



In the case of workers in the ecozone, class struggle is a characteristic of the relationship between workers striving to improve their working conditions through unionism, and foreign capitalists and local management bent on curtailing freedom of association and



collective bargaining. Workers resort to a strategy of direct action through protests and strikes, social movement unionism and supply chain organizing.

The Marxist theory of class struggle was used in the study to view the conflict between management and workers, and the development of working class consciousness. According to this standpoint (Marx & Engels, 1969), an irreconcilable struggle exists between the employers and the employees that springs from the conflict between the profit motive of capitalists and the human needs of workers. The class struggle is expressed in forms such as protests, strikes, riots and even revolutions.

Aganon, Serrano, and Certeza (2009) state that workers imbued with social movement unionism fight not for their narrow interests as employees in a firm but as a class which has a strategic interest in broader reform and social change. Unions should encompass workers at the enterprise or industry level but must also reach out to the broader mass of workers that are mostly unorganized and located in poor communities.

A global supply chain connects transnational companies headquartered in the developed nations to their subcontractors in many parts of the world, usually in the emerging and developing countries. Supply chain organizing grapples with this challenge by seeking solidarity among workers all along the network of factories, logistics, wholesalers, retailers and laboratories that comprise the modern production system.

There are many aspects and manifestations to supply chain organizing. As will be explained in the case studies, supply chain organizing is manifested in the challenge of ecozone workers to global companies to remediate the violations of their supplier factories. In this, workers are assisted by local labor organizations and international NGO's that engage with transnational corporations. The contestation of workers as claim holders are not only expressed in old school tactics of labor strikes and factory protests but also in new forms of resistance such as social movement unionism and supply chain organizing.



Majority of workers in the ecozone, or the research site, are women. Women worker's issues are distinct and are among the range of concerns that could animate workers' grievances in the ecozone. The intersection of labor and gender issues is integral to the dynamics of unionization and struggle in the ecozone.

The Case Study of Factory A

Company A is a transnational company manufacturing electronics parts. There are around 500 workers, almost all of them men. Half of the workforce are union members and the entire union leadership is male.

Occupational safety and health concerns prodded workers to start organizing a union. The hazardous nature of machine cutting and a lack of safety devices led to workers losing fingers. When management learned of unionization, it moved to cancel the union registration. Despite workers voting overwhelmingly for the union, management filed a protest and used that as an alibi to refuse to bargain. It took the threat of a strike for management to finally open negotiations for a collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

Over the course of more than seven months of negotiations, Company A management did not bargain in good faith, instead harassed the union by firing active unionists and suspending top union officers. It took a two-day strike in 2015 to break the deadlock and conclude a CBA.

Union organizers noted that supply chain organizing was key in the victorious strike. The biggest customer of Company A is a subsidiary of a European company whose workers are progressive unionists. The union organizers in the Philippines engaged the union leaders of the European company to exert leverage upon Company A to settle the dispute in favor of the ecozone workers.

This was a major victory considering the hostile regard of companies inside the ecozone against unionism and strikes. There are very few unions with a CBA in the ecozone,



and the Company A union were the first group in recent years to hold a strike in the ecozone. The victory of the Company A workers inspired workers from other factories to organize and strengthen their unions.

The Case Study of Factory B

The Company B is a transnational factory. It was the largest garments factory in the ecozone before it shut down and left jobless some 1,000 workers, mostly women. Despite years of seniority, Company B workers received only the daily minimum wage of PhP356.50 at that time. Workers who had been there since the factory started—called pioneers—got only an additional peso over the rest. Low wages and the lack of retirement pay were the impetus for unionization and later were the main demands in the CBA negotiations.

Union organizing began a year previous to the shutdown, and it was clear that the management was determined to discourage it. Workers were questioned one by one, told to drop from the union; they were also offered money to resign. Workers, including contractuales who were being regularized, were instructed against enlisting with the union. The intimidation stopped only when workers took to one of the Company B's international customers, which has a public commitment to ensure freedom of association in its supply chain.

During the certification elections, management told workers to vote against the union, closure was threatened should the union win and an anti-union leaflet was circulated. Still the union won a landslide victory.

It took some six months for the CBA negotiations to finally be concluded. The union even filed a notice of strike in order to break the deadlock with the management. However, five months after the CBA, the Company B announced that it was closing down because of cited lack of orders. No evidence was presented for this claim. The workers alleged that closure was a ruse to bust the union. Later, it was found out that one of its biggest customers



did not cancel any work engagements with the company during the year Company B closed down.

Company B workers were barred from marching in protest inside the ecozone. Aside from union busting and illegal closure, workers also complained of blacklisting. The names and pictures of Company B union members were allegedly given to at least two garments factories in the export zone to, in effect, warn the companies against hiring them.

The labor dispute was settled after three months. As reported by union organizers, the deal included provisions for rehiring its retrenched employees if the Company B reopens, additional financial assistance as separation pay, and several sewing machines for a livelihood project.

The Case Study of Factory C

The Company C is a small company with a workforce of less than 100 and with an almost equal number of female and male workers.

The Company C workers decided to organize to resolve violations of labor standards on wages, overtime pay, illegal deductions, and occupational health and safety. The management immediately tried to bust the union with support from the industrial relations (IR) head of the ecozone. Unionists were threatened with factory shutdown and enticed to accept separation pay. Several union officers were charged with spurious cases about producing defective products. One female union officer was disciplined, after she defended herself from physical attack by a non-union worker. She was brought to the eco zone IR office and questioned not about the incident but regarding union activities. Soon after, 20 union officers and members were terminated shortly one after the other.

The union launched a strike for five days until the all the unionists were reinstated. During the strike, union organizers engaged one customer of Company C. This connection proved significant in exerting leverage on Company C to finally settle the strike.



The union moved for certification as the bargaining agent. Yet the DOLE did not certify the union despite it having complied with requirements. Not long after, the company filed for shutdown on the pretext of lack of order even as it continued operating with non-union workers.

In desperation, the locked-out union members barged into the factory and occupied the shop floor. With the PEZA IR head and a DOLE Calabarzon conciliator threatening the workers with cases for barging into the factory, the workers finally accepted a separation offer and ended the occupation.

The Case Study of Factory D

The Company D was established in early 2000s. A large majority of the 500 or so workers are female.

The Company D workers started organizing a union after getting in touch with the union in Company B. The management moved to separate the identified union leaders from the rest of the workers by transferring them to one production line. The company also called for a meeting to disparage the union. Another way that the management discouraged the workers from joining the union is by starting a “whisper campaign” that is, planted rumors that the union victory on the unfair labor practice case it filed will result to the company shutting down. Anti-union leaflets were distributed. Not surprisingly, the union lost the elections.

To finally bust the union, the company shut down temporarily for one month and offered termination pay. The Company D justified this with claims of lack of orders. However, the union countered the statement saying that the orders were just shifted to sister company factories of Company D, and the shutdown was meant to harass union members into accepting separation. The factory reopened in several months after and rehired many



former workers who were non-union members. The 20 union officers and members who refused to accept the offer of separation were locked out from the factory.

The union with the support of labor groups based in the area launched protests at the ecozone. The Company D workers marched inside the ecozone despite harassment by PEZA security guards who wanted to take down the placards they were holding. As these mass actions were being held, international labor NGOs were also communicating with a major customer of the Company D. The union president and seven other union officers were eventually allowed to return to work.

The Case Study of Factory E

Company E is a transnational electronics factory. Almost all of its 200 workers are women.

The Company E union's leadership and membership was entirely female. Workers organized a union to address grievances such as excessive production quota, verbal harassment, and violations of occupational health and safety standards. Another major complaint was the removal of the door of the women's restroom so that managers and supervisors can see if employees were loitering or chatting. The unreasonable time limits and other conditions on the use of the restroom led to numerous cases of workers suffering from urinary tract infection (UTI).

In response, the management interrogated workers about their participation in organizing. Work assignments of union leaders were reshuffled. Overtime was denied to regular employees and instead given to contractual workers. Three line leaders who supported the union were forced to quit.

The union countered by filing a complaint for union busting. With DOLE mediating, Company E agreed to the demand of the union that management release a memo that it will not interfere with workers' freedom of association. However, it also formed another company



union, which intervened in the worker-initiated union's petition for certification as bargaining agent. The latter won the elections to represent the workers in the CBA, but not without hurdling challenges to their victory.

Management continued discriminating against unionists. They were served disciplinary charges on minor grounds such as loitering in the comfort room. Unionists were excluded from receiving Christmas packs. The union president together with other officers and members were later terminated. Likewise, scores of other union officers and members were suspended.

The union filed a notice of strike for union busting. Mediation deadlocked as management was adamant in firing and suspending unionists. At the start of the strike, a fire truck along with guards went to the picket line area. Barricades were set up and workers were refused entry. During the first night of the strike up to dawn of the next day, the picket line was repeatedly attacked by armed men that resulted in injuries to two women workers. These actions were violations of the DOLE-PEZA-PNP Guidelines on the Conduct of Police and Security Personnel During Labor Disputes.

From the very start of union organizing, there were attempts to contact the customers of Company E through the mediation of international NGOs. Communications did not lead to favorable results. Two customer companies denied their link to Company E, while the others did not even respond.

A labor agreement was finally reached after a series of meetings convened by DOLE. Company E reinstated the 64 strikers subject to an investigation by management. In actuality, Company E only reinstated the union members, while the leaders were suspended and later terminated. A notice of strike on the grounds of union busting was again filed. The dispute is still on-going at the time of writing.



Analysis of Case Studies

Export processing zones are gated complexes where capitalists' interests are dominant but also where workers' struggles erupt. It is an arena where workers as rights holders assert their claims in the face of deficits of development due to the dereliction of duty by bearers such as PEZA and employers. They are enclaves of poverty and repression when the right to unionize and bargain collectively is actively suppressed by capitalists, with the connivance of government agencies. Repression of freedom of association is a means to maintain cheap wages, insecure jobs, and docile workers, which in turn, redound to profits of foreign investors. Management interferes in workers' right to organize despite reforms initiated as a result of the ILO High Level Mission in 2009 to investigate killings of unionists and transgressions of the right to organize and bargain collectively.

Using the PANTHER principles (participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and rule of law) as a lens to view the state of human rights at the ecozones, it becomes clear why unions remain a vital force in workers rights promotion. In lieu of participation, workers are subjected to the arbitrariness of management decisions that lead to abuse and harassment.

At the State level, no action has also been leveled on relevant agencies for the persistent and rampant violations of labor standards and labor rights in ecozones, nor has anyone been made accountable for the occurrence of specific cases such as the cases described in the paper. It is worthy to note that the cases of labor rights violations presented in the paper covered at least two Philippine government administrations, up to the present. In all cases, the intervention of government agencies has been limited, if not dismal and skewed towards the interests of transnational and multinational companies operating in the ecozone to the detriment of worker rights protection.



Unionists are discriminated by management through termination and suspensions, with almost absolute freedom and no accountability. Human dignity is transgressed with widespread incidents of verbal harassment, lack of privacy and forced overtime. Empowerment is possible through workers' self-organization into unions but this is suppressed through various union busting and union avoidance maneuvers. The rule of law should have meant wellbeing for workers. Apart from enforcing work standards that affirm the dignity of labor, laws should ensure that corresponding penalties for erring companies are carried out, in the event of violations. But these remain to be realized.

The case studies also showed the supply chain organizing as an important part of the repertoire of actions, complementing the mass actions of workers such as strikes and marches. Engagement with the global companies assisted the struggles of the workers in varying degrees. This was key in the victory of the strikes at Company A and Company C. It led to the stop of the harassment of unionists at Company B and to the reinstatement of union leaders at Company D. In contrast, there was no engagement with the customers of Company E and this affected the lobby of the women workers for better working conditions.

Finally, and related to the gender dimensions of unionizing, the paper notes the active political participation of women in unions, whether as its leaders or members. Only in Company D and Company E do women figure prominently as union leaders; in two cases (Company B and C), the unions have male presidents despite women forming the majority of the workers, although there are also women in leadership positions. The pattern of predominantly male-led unions, even when the membership were mostly women, was also observed by Aganon et al., Pacris & Geges (2015) and Global Labour University Alumni (2011). In contrast, the respondents studied by Ofreneo et al. were women-led unions. This researcher shares the findings of these studies that women's double burden weigh down heavily on their capacity to take leadership positions in unions. Women workers decline from



accepting top positions in unions or later drop out of their union tasks because of the lack of more time and attention to devote to unionism due to domestic chores that have to be done after work in the factories. In contrast, male unionists are relatively not as encumbered.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Using the insights of the rights-based approach to appreciate the five cases presented in the paper highlights an essential feature of workers rights struggles in the ecozone, that is, while claim holders know and assert their rights to unionize and demand for better work conditions from private actors, it is often the State as a duty-bearer who is amiss in ensuring that these rights are protected and fulfilled.

Unions are expressions of empowerment that is continually being suppressed by profit-driven capitalists. The rule of law and other human rights-affirming policies of the country should provide protection to workers against the various forms of violations and abuses in the workplace and by employers, as well as give redress when these occur. However, this is not often the case. The PANTHER principles of participation, accountability, non-discrimination, transparency, human dignity, empowerment and rule of law are empty statements.

In the absence of stronger State measures to uphold worker rights in actuality, unions are combining localized direct action such as securing CBAs, strikes and pickets, with global level engagement of stakeholders and workers solidarity. The cases showed the power of engaging with global companies about their supply chain codes of conduct. In many cases, it is the leverage of these companies on their suppliers operating in the ecozones that forces factories to finally make remediation and uphold rights at work. These global companies have the most to lose in disputes involving their supplier factories that will taint their carefully crafted reputation as good corporate citizens.



This study reiterates a set of reforms that this researcher personally drafted as part of the recommendations by labor organizations to the ILO High Level Mission (Partido Manggagawa, 2009). The recommendations seek to actualize the right to unionize that forms a foundation for the exercise of other rights at work. Without the agency of workers through their self-organization and empowerment through unionism, the labour standards and rights will remain unprotected, not upheld and unfulfilled by duty bearers such as the DOLE, PEZA and factory management. Thus the importance of enabling measures so that workers can exercise their capability to freely choose to unionize as a means to improve working conditions.

Among these reforms are:

1. Implementation of tripartite councils—with the mandate to discuss grievances of ecozone workers and recommend solutions—within all ecozones as provided for in the PEZA Law.
2. Information dissemination at all ecozones about the provisions of the Labor Code that (a) it is state policy to guarantee labor rights, (b) the law encourages trade unionism and collective bargaining, and (c) management interference in the right to organize is illegal and constitutes unfair labor practice.
3. Holding of seminars for ecozone workers, including managerial and supervisory employees, about labor rights, standards and welfare as a tripartite activity by the PEZA, DOLE, employers and labor groups.
4. Inclusion of a course on labor rights, standards and welfare in the mandatory curriculum for senior high school and college students to prepare them for entry in the world of work.
5. Access for representatives of labor organizations to the ecozones and to company premises during break time for the purpose of union activities.



6. Formation of gender committees at the level of each ecozone with representatives from workers, employers and the PEZA to take up gender-related concerns such as workplace discrimination, sexual harassment and violence against women.
7. Strengthening of gender education and women's rights orientation within local unions and labor groups.
8. Advancement of worker power through unity among various labor groups organizing in the ecozones and the use of innovative forms of actions such as social movement unionism and supply chain organizing together with old modes such as marches and strikes.

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Doon po sa Amin sa Tundo: May Hirap, May Buhay, May Tambay

Isang Pagkukwento

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Araw ng Linggo, papunta sa bahay ng aking pinsan. Birthday niya at nakantiyawan akong hindi na 'ko nadadalaw sa kanila. Sa araw na 'to, naisip ko, gusto ko siyang pagbigyan. Makadalaw na rin sa iba pa naming kamag-anak, at mabisita ang lugar ng kabataan ko.

Hawak ko sa kamay ang anak ko, pumasok kami sa masikip na eskinita. Marami kaming nadaanang kung anu-ano -- nakakulang labada na nakasalansan sa yero, laruang bisikleta ng bata, mga basurahang balde takip-takip ng mga palanggana, tulog na aso, dumi ng aso, tumatawid na pusa, mga bangkitong di pantay ang mga paa, halaman sa paso, basag na paso, halamang wala sa paso. Hindi lahat ito ay kalat. Makipot lang talaga ang eskinita, kaya sa mata ng dadaan, kalat at nakahamabalang sila. Ang sikreto, mahusay ka dapat umiwas, magpaekis-ekis ng paglalakad, at maging alisto, makararating ka rin sa pupuntahan mo nang wala ng nadadanyos at di ka nasasaktan.

Sa kalagitnaan ng kahabaan ng eskinita, may apat na lalaking nakahubad, nakaupo sa maliliit na mga bangkong nakapalibot sa maliit na mesang may nakapatong na gin, platito ng mani at basong maliit. Napahigpit ang kapit ng anak ko sakin. Ibinalik ko ang higpit ng kapit sa kanya sabay tagtag ng bahagya. Senyas ko yun na ayos lang, wala siyang dapat ipag-alala. Bata pa kasi siya nang lumipat kami sa ibang lungsod para manirahan, at malamang ay hindi na pamilyar sa lugar na binibisita.



Nang mas malapit na kami, bumati ang isang lalaki. “Magandang tanghali, ‘nak! Kumusta ka na?” Napatingin sa akin ang anak ko, para bang nagtatanong, “Sino siya, ‘Ma?”

Si Tito Edgar pala. Barkada ng tiyuhin ko at ninong ng pinsan ko. Naging manliligaw din daw ng nanay ko. Hindi ko naman siya kamag-anak, pero tito ang tawag ko.

Nagmano ako, sabay sabing “Ok lang po. Kumusta na po kayo?” Hindi ko rin naalis magbiro, “Ang aga niyan, tito ha!” Ngumiti lang siya at kinusot ang buhok ko.

Nagpatuloy kami ng anak ko sa aming paglalakad at nang malapit na kami sa bahay ng pinsan ko ay may biglang bumunghalit na *videoke*. Pagkalakas-lakas. Sinabayan pa ng iyak ng isang bata sa katabing bahay at tawanan ng mga kababaihang nagkukuwentuhan sa isang umpukan. Sabay-sabay na ingay na para kang kinukulong, umaalingawngaw sa makipot na lugar at magkakatabing pader na nakapaligid sa amin.

Dito ako lumaki at nagkaisip. Sa masisikip na eskinita ng Tundo.

Silang mga tambay...

Kailan lang, naging laman ng balita ang mga tambay. Isang “crackdown” ang iniutos ng presidente laban sa kanila dahil potensiyal raw silang maging sanhi ng mga kaguluhan.

Naalala ko si Tito Edgar at ang marami pang mga tambay na nakalakihan at nakilala ko. Makikita mo sila sa mga kanto, sa harap ng kani-kanilang mga bahay, sa harap ng mga tindahan, sa labas ng palengke, sa harap ng simbahan, sa panaderya, at pati man sa rotonda.

Madami talagang tambay sa Tundo. Mga nakapambahay, minsan nakahubad, mga naka- tsinelas, meron ding mga naka-paa. Minsan grupo- grupo, meron ding nag-iisa. Minsan nag-iinuman; pag walang wala, kahit kuwentuhan na lang ang puhunan sa harapan. Meron din namang mga nagmumuni-muni lang, nagpapalipas ng bagot, o kaya nama’y naghihintay sa paglubog ng araw.



Dating OFW si Tito Edgar. Apatnapung taon sa Saudi. Nagsimula bilang construction worker, hanggang naging bisor na sa kumpanya nila. Ipinilit idaos ang pag-aaral ng mga anak niya. Nurse na ngayon ang panganay at ahente ng isang call center ang bunso.

Kahit noong nagsa-Saudi pa siya, tuwing uuwi si Tito Edgar, makikita mo siyang nakatambay kasama ang mga kababata niya. Nagkukuwentuhan. Binabalikan ang kanilang kabataan. Ang mga kapilyuhan sa eskwela. Mga natupad o nabigong pangarap. At pagpapalano sa mga susunod pang pagkikita.

Tulad ng sabi ko, marami sila. Marami sa kanila, Tito o Kuya ang turing ko. Hindi man lahat ay kamag-anak, kinamulatan ko silang bahagi ng komunidad ko, at bahagi ng buhay ko.

Hindi ko makakalimutan, si Tito Ging. Kapatid ng nanay ko. Umaga palang, pupwesto na sa kantong malapit sa palengke. Nakaabang lang. Oo, nakaabang. Nakaabang sa mga pagkakataon na magkaroon ng “kita”. Pagkakataon ang tawag natin. Tsamba ang tawag nila.

Maka-tsamba na may magpatawag ng taxi, o magpatulong magbuhat ng mga pinamalengke, o magpababa ng mga paninda, at pagkatapos, kahit papaano ay maabutan sila. Sa unang “abot” sa kanya nakaasa ang almusal ni Tito Ging. Depende kung magkano, pwedeng lugaw, o kapag sobrang barya, kape at ampaw.

Mas mahabang panahon nga sigurong walang regular na trabaho si Tito Ging. Sa pagkaka-tanda ko, naging security guard siya sa isang eskwelahan sa Quezon City. Sinibak nang magkaron ng inspeksiyon at nakita ng bisor ang mga *tattoo* niya. Naging *bouncer* din sa isang *club* sa Ermita, ngunit minsang nagkaron ng gulo dahil may customer daw na nambabastos sa isang *waitress*, pumagitna siya. Nalaman ng manager, sibak ulit siya. Hindi na yata siya ulit humanap ng trabaho matapos nun. Basta ang pinaka-tanda ko sa pagtambay niya, sa tuwing papasok ako noon sa eskwela, sasamahan niya ako sa sakayan ng *jeep*,



ipapara, at pag ‘pasakay na ako, sasabihan ang *driver*: “Pare, pamangkin ko yan ha, pakibaba nalang sa Lakan Dula¹”.

Araw-araw yun. Lahat yata ng dumaang *jeep*, kumpare niya ang *driver*. Lagi akong nakabilin. At lagi akong matiwasay na nakararating sa eskwela. Minsan hindi pa ako pinagbabayad ng *driver* na ikinatutuwa ko naman dahil pambili din ng puto at sopas ang natitipid ko sa pamasaha. Sa mga araw na nakabibili ako ng pang-*recess*, hindi ko kinakain lahat. Itinitira ko lagi ang kalahati at ipinapasalubong kay Tito Ging.

Hindi nagpamilya si Tito Ging. Lagi niyang sinasabi noon, “Sarili ko nga hindi ko mapakain eh, magdadamay pa ako ng iba?” Tumanda siyang nakatira sa mala-kahong kwarto na itinayo ng barangay bilang “*detention room*”. Nakapatong lang ito sa makitid na bangketa, may pintong rehas, walang bintana at walang sariling kubeta. Pinayagan siya ng barangay na dun manirahan dahil kakilala naman siya at madalas tumutulong sa pagroronda. Isang araw, matanda na ako, at hindi na sa Tundo nakatira, nakita daw si Tito Ging na nakataob sa papag niya, nilalanggam ang mga sugat. Hindi na humihinga.

Si Mang Atong. Barkada siya ng papa ko. Dyanitor sa Lakan Dula. Sa karaniwang araw, makikita mo siyang laging may hawak na *mop*, walis o basahan, palipat -lipat sa mga kwarto ng eskwelahan habang recess o lipatan ng klase. Pag oras nang uwian, nasa gate siya ng eskwelahan, tumutulong sa paggabay sa mga naglalabasang estudyante at nag-iintay na mga magulang.

Tambay din siya. Tuwing Sabado at Linggo, makikita mo siya sa kanto ng callejon nila. Kung masisikip ang eskinita sa amin, hamak na mas masikip itong callejon nila. Hindi man lang magkasya ang dalawang tao kung sila’y magsasalubong. Kailangan pareho silang tumagilid para makaraan at magkasya.

¹ Lakan Dula Elementary School – isa sa mga matatandang eskwelahang pang elementarya sa Galangin, Tondo, Manila



Minsan, hindi dumating ang lolo ko para sunduin ako. Palibahasa bata pa, Grade 1 yata ako nun, natakot ako. Paubos na halos ang mga ka-eskwela ko. Wala na ring mga magulang na naghihintay sa labasan. Nung nagsisimula na akong maniwala na nakalimutan na ako nang lolo ko at hindi na niya ako susunduin, nagpalahaw na ako sa pag-iyak. Nakita ako ni Mang Atong. Inalo niya ako, sabay sabing “Huwag ka nang umiyak, ihahatid nalang kita matapos kong magsara ng kwarto ng *principal*.” Panay ang pasalamat ng mga tiyahin ko kay Mang Atong nang makarating ako sa bahay. Nagkasakit pala ang lola ko at sinamahan ng lolo ko siyang magpatingin sa center kaya hindi na ako nasundo. Mula noon, sa tuwing takot akong maiwan mag-isa sa eskwelahan, hinahanap ko si Mang Atong. Nalaman ko ring marami akong kaklase na kapitbahay niya na madalas ding sumasabay sa kanya pag-uwi dahil walang mga magulang na susundo sa kanila.

Nasa kolehiyo na ako nang magulat akong mabasa ang buong pangalan ni Mang Atong sa diyaryo. Isinilid sa drum saka sinimento, kasama ang iba pa. Ang sabi sa diyaryo, mga miyembro daw sila ng akyat-bahay *gang* na “nagka-bukulan”².

Naka-kuwentuhan pa namin ang asawa ni Mang Atong ilang taon matapos maibalita sa diyaryo ang pagkamatay niya. Ang sabi ni Ate Siony, nag-*resign* si Mang Atong sa pagdya-dyanitor dahil hindi sumasapat ang kita nito para sa limang anak nila na nagsisipag-aral. Pumasok raw ito bilang pintor sa iba’t ibang konstruksiyon, na sa bandang huli ay nakabuo ng isang grupo na kasa-kasama niyang naghahanap ng mga trabaho at kontrata sa pagpipintor.

Napasok daw ng isang miyembro ng sindikato ang grupo ni Mang Atong. Kinumbinsi silang mag-akyat-bahay.³ Magandang paraan daw ang pangongontrata sa pagpipintor para mapasok ang mga kabahayang nanakawan. Tumanggi si Mang Atong na maging bahagi nito.

² Bukulan – salitang ginagamit kapag nagkaron ng dayaan o lamangan sa isang transaksyon.

³ Akyat bahay – katawagan sa mga sindikatong pinapasok ang mga kabahayan para nakawan



Huli siyang nakitang nakahubad at nakatambay sa kanto ng kanilang callejon na may kausap na lalaki, parang nakikipagtalo. Kinabukasan nailathala na sa balita ang kanyang di kanais-nais na pagkamatay.

Si Tito Ben, ninong ng kapatid ko. Matalik na kaibigan ni Papa. Nung kabataan nila, ang tawag sa kanya intsik beho⁴. Kung hindi siya magsasalita, iisipin mong purong intsik siya. Dahil dito madalas siyang pinagtatampulan ng katatawanan at pangungutya.

Kumpara sa iba, may-kaya ang pamilya ni Tito Ben sa Tundo. Iilan ang katulad niya sa kanilang henerasyon sa lugar na nakapagtapos ng pag-aaral. Graduate siya ng kursong *commerce* sa Philippine College of Commerce (PCC).⁵ Sa kabila nito, naging mahirap para sa kanya na makahanap trabaho. Palibhasa nga, kahit madalas ginagawang katatawanan ang hitsura niya, hindi naman siya handa na tanggapin na lang ang mga pangmamaltrato. Sa bawat pagkakatong ipagtatangol ang sarili, dahil din taga-Tundo, madalas nasa kanya ang sisi pag may basag-ulo.⁶ Palibhasa daw taga-Tundo, hinuhusgahan siyang madalas na basagulero, patapon o lasenggo.

Bandang huli, sinukuan na ni Tito Ben ang pagtatanggol sa sarili. Sa halip, siya ay naging tagahanga ng mga malalaking kwento ng swerte: iyong mga nanalo ng *big-time* sa karera, mga naka-jackpot sa pagbola ng *sweepstakes*, nakapulot ng maleta ng pera, nakapag asawa ng milyonaryo, o nanaginip ng numero sa jueteng at nanalo nang malaki. Nauwi si Tito Ben sa pag-uubos-oras at sa pagtambay sa mga pasugalan, pagbabantay sa labas ng bola ng *sweepstakes*, na sa kalaunan ay pati na rin lotto; at pangangarap. Umaasang darating din ang araw ng swerte niya; ang araw na uunlad siya nang hindi kailangang ipagtanggol at ipaglaban ang sarili.

⁴ Intsik beho – tukso sa mga chinoy na mas matinkad ang pagka Intsik kesa pagka Pinoy

⁵ PCC – ang dating pangalan ng Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP)

⁶ Basag-ulo – away, suntukan, sakitan



Si Kuya Restie, isang tambay sa rancho.⁷ Dahil may polyo, hirap humanap ng trabaho. Sa pagtambay niya sa rancho ay umaasa siyang mababalatuhan ng mga mananalo. Kapalit nito, nauutusan siyang bumili ng meryenda o palamig ng mga tao dito. Tanda ko siya dahil sa tuwing kasama ko ang lola ko mula sa pamamalengke, kahit gaano siya kalayo, hahabol at hahabol siya para lang magmano.

Matagal nang nagsara ang rancho. Matagal ko na ring hindi nakikita si Kuya Restie. Huling balita, lumipat na raw siya ng tamabayan. Madalas daw siyang makita sa may San Lazaro⁸ nung nandun pa ang mga kabayo.

Si Kuya Joseph, tambay sa palengke at taga kolekta ng kaning baboy.⁹ Sabi ng nanay ko noon, sa tuwing nag-iinarte ako sa pagkain o nagtatangkang itapon ang pagkain na hindi ko gusto, mahiya daw ako sa balat ko, napakarami daw tao na salat sa pagkain. Kung ayaw ko daw kainin, huwag kong itapon, pakinabangan man lang ng baboy ni Kuya Joseph.

Kilala ang pamilya nila Kuya Joseph na nagkakatay ng baboy minsan isang taon. Dahil maliit lang naman ang bahay nila, isa-isang baboy lang ang kaya nilang alagaan. Yung pagkakatay nila minsan sa isang taon at ang pagbebenta nito ang tumutustos sa pamumuhay ng tatlong kapatid ni Kuya Joseph at sa nanay niyang may sakit. Naalala ko nun, kami pati ang mga kapitbahay namin ay may hiwalay na tapunan ng mga tirang pagkain. Nakahintay yun sa pagdaan ni Kuya Joseph para mangolekta, na araw-araw niyang ginagawa.

Matanda na si Kuya Joseph nung huli ko siyang makita, nakatapos na raw ng high school yung tatlong kapatid niya, at ang nanay niya, namayapa na . Hindi na siya nag-aalaga ng baboy. Mas lalo daw kasing maliit yung bahay na tinitirhan niya ngayon. Pero nandun pa

⁷ Rancho – ang tawag sa lugar kung saan may bukis ng karerahan

⁸ San Lazaro – ang lugar sa Tundo kung saan nandun ang totoong karerahan ng kabayo. Nawala rin ang karerahan at pinalitan ito ng isang malaki at kilalang mall

⁹ Kaning baboy – pagkain para sa baboy; mga tirang paninda sa palengke o lutong ulam na kinokolekta para ipakain sa alagang baboy



rin siya parati sa tambayan niya. Dun na raw siya tumanda, at malamang dun na mamatay, biro niya. Mas kumportable pa daw siya dun kesa sa bahay niya ngayon.

Merong nga ding isang lalaki na tumanda na at nagkapamilya sa pagtambay sa amin, sa kantong malapit sa simbahan kasama ang kariton niya. Dati raw siyang may bahay sa kantong iyon. Hindi kanya yung lupa, kaya nung naibenta, pina-giba ng bagong may-ari ang bahay niya. Dahil wala namang pang-upa, gumawa na lang ng kariton sa konting naipon.

Hindi ko na nalaman ang pangalan niya pero alam ko, marami ang may tiwala sa kanya. Madalas kasi sa mga namamalengke, nag-iiwan ng mga bitbitin nila sa kanya at babalikan nalang pag tapos nang mag-ikot at mamili. Tulad din kasi ng mga eskinita sa amin, masikip ang mga pasilyo sa palengke. Mahirap mag-ikot nang maraming bitbit. Gawi rin ng nanay ko na mag-iwan ng gamit sa kanya at parati namang kumpleto ang gamit na iniwan namin kapag binalikan at kinuha na.

Ang nakakatuwa, hindi siya naniningil sa serbisyong ito. Matapat niyang binabantayan ang mga gamit nang may malasakit at walang inaasahang kapalit. Ang hihingin lang niya sayo, kapag meron kang sirang payong o kaya'y gusto mong magpa-linis o magpagawa ng sirang sapatos, sa kanya mo ipagawa.

Naaalala ko pa na sa tuwing dadaan kami noon sa kanya, aabutan siya ni mama ng isang piling ng saging o tatlong pirasong itlog para sa mga anak niya. Sabi ni mama, hindi daw limos yun, pakikisama.

Giniba ulit yung bahay na nakatayo sa kantong tinatambayan ng pamilya niya. Hindi nagtagal, isang mataas na building ang lumitaw sa kantong iyon. Nawala na rin yung lalaki, ang pamilya niya at ang kariton.

Marami pa sila at marami rin sa kanila a hindi ko na maaalala ang pangalan. Pero lahat sila, ang mga kwento nila at kung paano ko sila nakasalamuha noong aking kabataan,



naaalala ko pa. Lalo ngayon. Lalo na ngayon na madalas mapag-usapan at madyaryo ang mga tulad nila.

Kahirapan ang nag-aanak ng tambay...

Patuloy ang pagtugtog ng videoke. Sa bahay pala ng pinsan ko iyon nanggagaling. Lahat ng bisita bigay-todo sa pagkanta, pinapapak ang kanta nila Engelbert Humperdinck at Tom Jones. Meron ding *sing-alike* nina Karen Carpenters, Claire Dela Fuente at Imelda Papin. Nakaramdam ako bigla ng saya at na may kahalong pangungulila.

Nung buhay pa kasi ang mga tita ko, tuwing Linggo, libangan namin ang magkantahan. Walang kailangang imbitasyon, nagkakatipun-tipon kaming magpi-pinsan; kasama ang ilan pang kapitbahay, at tutuloy na sa unli-kantahan.

Matagal -tagal ko nang hindi nararanasan ‘to. Walang pagkakataong magsaya nang ganito sa tinitirhan ko ngayon. Wala akong malalapit na kamag-anak at ni hindi ko kakilala ang mga kapitbahay ko.

Sa gitna ng pagtugtog ng videoke, narinig ko ulit ang pag-iyak ng bata. Tinanong ko ang pinsan ko kung hindi ba magagalit ang mga kapitbahay sa sobrang lakas ng tugtog namin. Sagot niya, “Sinong kapitbahay ang magagalit? Eh ayan sila o, nakapila number sa videoke,” sabay tawa. Sa labas ng bahay niya, nandun sila, nakatumpok sa eskinita, may pinapapak na mga ulam, may softdrinks at tsitsirya, habang sa paligid nila ay naglalaro ang mga bata.

Ganito nga noon sa amin, sumasaya ‘pag nagsasama-sama. Kahit madalas mga walang pera, kapag nagkita-kita kasi sa labas ng bahay, wala mang maghamon, siguradong masisimulan ang mga buhay na buhay na kuwentuhan at kantahan.

Noong mga panahong iyon, ang konsepto ko ng mayaman ay may sariling bahay na; higit sa isang palapag ang tirahan, may mga kuwarto, may banyo, may palikuran, may *gate*,



maraming halaman sa hardin at may magandang aso na nang hahabol kapag nagkamali kang madikit sa bakod nila.

Konti lang ang tinitingnan naming mayaman noon. Kasama dito si Attorney. Malaking lalaki si Attorney; at madalas lumalabas ng bahay niya na naka-robe at may subong pipa. May anak siyang dalaga na kina-iinggitan naming magpipinsan. Napakaganda kasi niya, mahaba ang buhok, maputi, makinis ang balat at laging malinis ang damit. Lagi niyang hawak ang aso niyang maliit. Tuwing dadaan kami sa bahay nila, sisilip at sisilip kami hanggang tahulan kami ng aso naman nilang nakatali malapit sa *gate*.

Mabait si Attorney at ang anak niya. Madalas pag nakikita nila kaming magpipinsan na naglalaro o nakatambay sa harap ng bahay nila, papapasukin nila kami, paiinum ng “*Tang orange*” at bibigyan ng mga biskwit na noon lang namin matitikman.

Ngayon ko lang nababalikan, noon ngang mga bata kami, mas madalas kami sa labas ng bahay kesa sa loob. Madalas kasi noon maririnig mo ang lola namin na tumatalak habang at kahit pagkatapos maglinis: “Wag na kayong magkalat! Napakahirap maglinis ng sahig. Doon na kayo maglaro sa labas!” Hindi naman masungit ang lola namin. Totoo lang ang sinasabi niya. Yung sahig kasi na nililinis niya, yun din ang tulugan namin. Kaya tuwing hapon, lalampasuhan niya yun at sisiguruhing handa nang latagan ng manipis na kumot at salansanan ng mga unan.

Madami kaming nakatira noon sa bahay na iyon; kasama na ang lolo at lola ko, dalawang tiyuhin, isang tiyahin, dalawang pinsan, ang mama ko at ang kapatid kong mas bata sa akin. Ang “bahay” na ito ay isa lang sa mga magkakadikit at magkakapatong na bahay sa kanto ng Kalye Bato. Lahat ay gawa sa kahoy. Nasa ikalawang palapag kami; sina Lola Memang ang nakatira sa silong, sila Lolo Ipe sa kadikit na bahay at sa ilalim naman nila ay ang pamilya ng kalaro kong si Madelaine. Walang kuwarto ang bahay na ito. Meron lang dibisyon na kurtina para sa higaan ng tiyahin ko. May kusinang hindi na namin nagagamit



dahil parang lulubog na ito at babagsakan ang kuwarto nila Lola Memang. Hindi na rin namin magamit ang liguan at kubeta dahil katabi ito ng kusina at kasama sa nagbabadyang lulubog nang parte ng bahay. Ang liguan namin ay sa baba ng hagdan. Oo, sa pasukan at labasan. Hagdan ang nagiging taguan. Kaya pag may maliligo bawal lumabas o pumasok. Maghihintay kang makapagbihis ang naliligo bago buksan ang pinto. Nakaabang kami noong magpipinsan, tuwing may maliligo, sisiguruhin naming nasa labas na kami. Mas madaling maiwan sa labas, malawak ang laruan. Pag sa loob, napakakipot ng kikilusan, at maingay ang lola namin na laging nagpapa-alalang wag kaming maglikot at dinig sa baba ang mga yabag namin.

Sa tuwing magbabayad ng upa sa bahay, isinasama ako ng lola ko. Babalakin niyang banggitin ang mga sira ng bahay. Pero lagi niyang hindi ito nasasabi sa may-ari; nauuna kasing maiyak siya tuwing susumbatan kaming kulang ang ibinabayad na upa.

Kung tutuusin, malaki na ang bahay na ito kesa sa karamihan. Yung sa isang kalaro ko noon, pagpasok mo ng bahay nila, nakita mo na lahat. Bawal magpasok ng tsinelas kasi yung kapisasong lapag¹⁰ nila, yun na ang kanilang kainan, tulugan at liguan. Wala silang palikuran. Parang sa amin din, sa arinola nagkakatalo ang lahat. Sila lang, walang hagdan na taguan. Kaya pag kailangan, lalabas lahat para makapaglabas ng “sama” ng loob ang tinawag ng kalikasan.

Meron din akong mga kalarong nakatira sa katulad ng tinirhan ni Tito Ging. Mainit pag tag-araw, basa ang dingding pag tag-ulan.

May isang bahay kami noon na laging pinupuntahan. Meron itong malalaking *flower box* sa harapan na may tanim na malalagong bongambilya¹¹ na iba’t ibang kulay ang

¹⁰ Lapag - sahig

¹¹ Bongambilya - bougainvillea



bulaklak. Maraming gamit sa amin ang mga bulaklak na iyon; pang adorno sa buhok at sa damit, kunwaring gulay pag naglutu-lutuan o panulat pag naubusan ng *chalk*.

Pangarap naming magpipinsan noon ang magkaroon ng sariling bahay, ng sariling hardin, ng sariling malawak na laruan. Magkukunwari kami na yung mga *flower box* na yun ang kuwarto namin. Tag-iisa kami. Ang mga puno ang sabitan ng mga gamit, ang sementadong parte ang kama at upuan, ang mga tangkay ng bongambilya ang kurtina at pintuan. Mapuputol lang ang pangarap kapag lumabas na ang matandang bantay ng bahay at itataboy kami. Marami siya parating sinasabi, hindi na namin iniintindi. Kasi pag labas niya may hawak lagi siyang aso na nagngangalit sa pagkahol at gustong makakawala sa pagkaka-tali.

Pinaka-ayaw naming panahon ang gabing maalinsangan. Hindi ko alam kung hindi pa uso ang bintilador noon, o wala lang kami. Sa gabing maalinsangan, halos walang hangin na pumapasok sa loob ng bahay, pinapawisan kami nang malagkit; at nag-papalitan lang sa pamaypay ng lola namin. Kung minsan, dahil hindi talaga kayang tiisin ang init, magpapasya si mama na dalhin kami sa rotunda. Madami kaming magkakalaro na magkikita-kita roon. Sama-samang nagpapalipas ng oras at init, maghihintay ng hamog, o nag-iintay datnan ng antok; alin- man ang mauna, saka lang mag-uuwian sa kanya- kanyang bahay at matutulog nang hindi naabala ng init at alinsangan.

Ngayon lang na binabalikan ko na, naiisip kong bihira ko nga makita sa loob ng bahay ang dalawang tiyuhin kong doon din nakatira. Madalas uuwi sila nang gabing-gabi na at matutulog nalang; hihigaan anumang maliit na espasyong wala pang nakahiga. Pag gising sa umaga, mag-iigib ng tubig at aalis na. Madalas din silang talakan ng lola ko. “Kayo, lagi nalang kayong nasa labas ng bahay, uuwi kayo ni hindi na kumakain, matutulog nalang”. Hindi naman pumapatol ang mga tiyuhin ko, madalas idinadaan sa biro ang sagot nila tulad ng: “Pag nagtagal ako dito sa loob, magkakapalit-palit tayo ng mukha, sayang naman ang



gandang lalaki ko,” “Paano kung may magsabog ng biyaya sa labas, nakakulong tayong lahat dito sa loob ng bahay, maiiwan tayo sa kangkungan,” o di kaya, “Pag umuwi ako nang maaga, aalukin niyo pa kong kumain, hahati pa ako sa pagkain na pinagkakasya niyo nalang. Ok na ko sa labas, madaming madidiskarteng makakainan, wag niyo na akong kulitin”. Malambing kong naririnig ang mga sagot na ito noon. Ngayong inuulit ko na sa sarili ko, nararamdaman ko, hindi pala siya biro o lambing lang. Meron palang hugot, may konting kirot, parang biro pero hindi; may timpla ng pait ng totoong buhay.

Madami talagang tambay sa Tundo...

Bata palang ako, napaliwanagan na ako ng tatay ko: ang tambay ay galing sa salitang istambay, na galing naman sa salitang Inggles na “*standby*”. *Standby*, pag-aabang, pag-iintay. Kung maniniwala ka sa mga salita ng malalaking tao na ipinapalabas sa mga balita sa diyaryo at telebisyon, ang tambay ay mga walang kuwentang tao.

Maraming tambay sa Tundo. Mga nakapambahay, minsan nakahubad, mga nakatsinelas, meron ding mga naka-paa, minsan grupo-grupo, meron ding nag-iisa. Merong nag-iinuman, nagku-kuwentuhan, nagkakantahan, nagtsi-tsismisan, naglalaro, naghahanap ng lugar na pagpapahingahan, naghahanap ng mas malawak na laruan, naghahanap ng mas malaking kikilusan. Meron din namang mga nagmumuni-muni lang, nagpapalipas ng bagot, naglilibang, o naghihintay sa paglubog ng araw. At mayroon ding totoong nakatambay lang: naka-standby. Naghihintay; ng pagkakataon, ng pagkakakitaan, ng swerte, ng tyamba, ng pangtawid buhay.

Kapag nakikita mo kung paano i-trato ang mga hinuhuling tambay batay sa huling utos ng Malacanang, parang maniniwala ka, baka wala nga silang kuwenta.

Sinisita, ipinapahiya, kinakapakan, sinasaktan, binubugbog, pinapasok sa sariling lugar, hinuhuli kahit bumibili lang sa tindahan, o nakatayo sa harap ng sariling bahay, o naglalakad pauwi at napahinto lang sa anumang dahilan.



Umaangal, nagtatangkang mangatwiran, nagpipilit magpaliwanag, pero wala ngang kwenta kaya hindi pinakikinggan. Balewala kahit anong sabihin. ‘Pag nasugsog at napahiya ang nanghuli, sorry lang ang kapalit. Samantala, ang ilan sa kanila nagbuwis na ng buhay.

Sa loob lang ng halos isang linggo matapos ang utos ng Malacanang, iniuulat ng kapulisan na naka-aresto na sila ng halos tatlong libong tambay (Rappler, June 2018). Hindi ako magtataka kung kasama dun ang maraming tambay sa Tundo.

Habang nag-iisip ako sa kawawaan ng utos na ito, nakakaramdam ako ng galit. Naalala ko si Tito Ging, si Mang Atong, si Tito Edgar, si Tito Ben, si Kuya Restie, at Kuya Joseph, ang mamang ilang beses nang nawalan ng bahay at piniling tumira sa kariton kasama ang pamilya niya.

Naalala ko ang paliwanag ng tatay ko. Hindi daw madaling gawain ang pagtambay, lalong mahirap itong maging trabaho.

Walang nasa katinuan ang pag-iisip na pipiliing sa labas sila ng bahay at titiisin ang alikabok at init kung mayroon silang pagpapahingahan sa loob. Walang pipiliing sa labas magkuwentuhan, maglibang, magpalipas ng oras o mag-inuman, kung pwede nila itong gawin sa kumportable at malamig na kuwarto. Walang magpapa-abot nang hating -gabi sa rotonda para magpalipas ng alinsangan kung kumportable ang tulugan nila sa loob ng bahay.

At lalong walang pipiliin na umasa ng kabuhayan sa patsamba-tsamba, sa pag-aabang ng mga suwerteng madalang pa sa patak ng ulan, at sa paghihintay ng mga pagkakataong kumita ng hindi tiyak kung darating man.

Madalas daw ang pagtambay ay hindi nagsisimula sa malaya at kusang loob na pagpili. Madalas itinutulak ito ng pagkakataon, ng sitwasyon. Madalas, itinutulak ito ng kawalan ng pagpipilian.



Pero tama, ang pagtambay ay nagiging kultura na. Nagiging gawi ng buhay. Tinatanggap at kinakasanayan. Hindi dahil tamad lang, hindi dahil walang pangarap o walang tyaga o walang pagpupursige kundi dahil nagsimula sa walang pagpipilian.

Parang multong tumambad sa akin ang isang realisasyon: kahirapan ang nag-aanak ng tambay. Kahirapan dahil sa kawalan ng pagkakaaton; kahirapan dahil sa kawalan ng pagpipilian. At hangga't nariyan ang kahirapan, anuman ang iutos ng Malacanang, anumang patakaran ang ipatupad, hindi mauubos ang tambay.

Pag-alis at pagbabalik sa lugar ng mga tambay...

Magdidilim na at bumubuwelo na kaming magpaalam ng anak ko sa pinsan ko. Biglang may tugtog ng mga musikero na narinig kami galing sa kanto. Katulad ng nakagawian, naglabasan kami ng bahay, at sinundan ang pinanggagalingan ng tugtog.

Prusisyon ng Nazareno papunta sa simbahan. Nakabungad ang mga musikerong galing sa mga komunidad ng Tundo. Malayo ang itsura nila sa mga propseyunal na musikerong mapapanood mo sa telebisyon o mga konsiyerto. Sa kinagisnan, ang mga ganitong musikero ay galing din sa mga tambay ng komunidad. Mga walang trabaho kaya madaling makapag-boluntaryo sa mga sibikong gawain. Habang naghihintay sa mga mas malalaking pagkakataon, mahalaga rin sa kanila ang makapaglingkod sa pananampalataya, at magkaroon ng libreng pagkain. Hindi naman maikakaila sa hitsura nila: mga nakapambahay, naka-tsinelas, hawak ang mga gawang-bahay na pamalo sa naglalakihang tambol, pinapawisan, may tibak ang mga paa, may bakas ng libag na hindi pa nababanlawan ng ligo, masigabong pumupukpok sa mga tambol nila para makagawa ng musika. Para makatawag ng atensiyon. Para maglabasan ang mga tao sa bahay at salubungin ang prusisyon.

Sa malaking kalsada lagi dumadaan ang prusisyon na kalsadang dinadaan rin ng mga sasakyan. Ang mga jeep na sanay na o kaya'y taga-roon din sa lugar ang kusang tumatabi para bigyang daan ang prusisyon. May ilang pribadong sasakyan na pilit sumisingit sa pila ng



mga tao at mga santong ipinaparada. Gumitna ang ilang kalalaking galing sa umpukan, sa tamabayan. Magalang na pinaliwanagan ang mga driver ng mga pribadong sasakyan. Pinakiusapan. Tumuloy ang prusisyon sa ruta papuntang simbahan. Patuloy din ang labasan sa kabahayan ng mga tao. Sumasalubong, nagbibigay galang, nagdadasal, o simpleng natutuwa sa panood sa mga musikero at sa mga pinaparadang santo.

Sinabayan na namin ang dulo ng prusisyon sa pag alis....

Bata pa ako nang una kaming umalis ng Tundo, para lumipat ng tirahan. Maraming bagay ang nagtulak dito. Sa pananaw ko noon, pangunahin ang maya't mayang pagpapalayas sa amin ng kasera ng bahay na inuupahan. Akala ko rin, dahil ito sa dami ng daga na nakikitira sa kanal sa ilalim ng kuwarto naming magkapatid, o dahil sa malaking away nila Mama at Papa bago sila naghiwalay.

Nang may isip na ako, mas naintindihan ko na ang dahilan.

Bahagi si Papa noon ng kilusang lumalaban sa diktadurya. Katulad ng marami pa niyang kasama, tinutugis siya ng pulis, ng militar, ng mga ahente ng gobyerno at kahit ng mga sipsip na kapitan ng barangay. Sabi niya, mas madali sanang kumilos¹² sa Tundo dahil madami ang kasangga.

Tama naman. Natatandaan ko noon, sa ilang pagkakataon kaming walang pagkain sa bahay, may biglang darating na kapitbahay na magbibigay ng kanin at ulam. Ilang beses din kaming maiiwang magkapatid sa bahay nang walang kasamang nakatatanda, at ibinibilin lang kami kay Aling Maria na kapitbahay namin, o kay Kuya Nonong na parati lang nakatambay sa kanto.

Ilang ulit ring may mga hindi kilalang lalaki na umaaligid sa eskinita namin, at agad may magsasabi kay Papa na mag-ingat dahil nakita ang mga ito. Sa isang pagkakataon, muntik na silang mahuling magkasama ni Tito Nognog. Nakatakbo sila, pero tinamaan si Tito

¹² Kumilos – isakatuparan ang mga gawain sa kilusan; gumalaw; mabuhay



Nognog ng bala sa hita. Isang babae ang nagbukas ng pinto nila at pinatuloy sila Papa. Hindi nila kakilala ito, pero hinayaan nito silang makapag -tago sa loob ng maliit na bahay hanggang mawala ang mga tumutugis sa kanila.

Masarap sana talagang manirahan sa Tundo, lalo na kung taal¹³ ka dito. Marami kang kasangga. Mga kapitbahay na magmamalasakit, mga kakilalang magliligtas sa iyo sa gutom o sa kapahamakan, mga kaibigan na handang samahan ka hanggang sa bingit ng kamatayan. At kahit hindi mga kakilala na nagmamalasakit sa kalugar at kabagang¹⁴ nila.

Pero tulad din ngayon, ang Tundo, katulad ng iba pang mahihirap na komunidad, ay bulnerable sa mga mapangdahas na nasa kapangyarihan.

Katulad din ngayon, dahil walang malalaking bakod na nagsisilbing proteksiyon sa mga kabahayan, wala ring pagdadalawang-isip ang mga nasa kapangyarihan na pasukin ito sa anumang dahilang meron sila. Pwedeng mahirapang wasakin ng pananakot at pananakit ang pagmamalasakit ng mga kaanak at kapitbahay. Pero kapalit nito ay laging may masasaktan, o magbubuwis ng buhay.

Katulad din ngayon, pwedeng magsilbing mata ang mga tambay sa kanto para balaan ang mga pwedeng mapahamak sa mga operasyon ng *raid* bunga ng paghahabol sa kota o ng simpleng katuwaan. Pero sila rin ang pwedeng unang tamaan ng pananakit at kapahamakan.

Hindi gaanong pinalad si Papa nang sumunod silang tusugin ng militar. Nahuli siya, kasama ang isa pa, galing sa isang pulong sa Cainta. Nakulong siya, at katulad ng iba pa, nagdaan sa samu't saring pangdarahas sa kamay ng "kalaban". Kasama na dito ang mga berbal at hindi berbal na pananakot na pwede na silang hindi na buhayin at pwede ring idamay ang mga mahal nila sa buhay.

¹³ Taal – lumaki at tumanda sa lugar ng kapanganakan

¹⁴ Kabagang - katulad



Nang makalabas si Papa sa kulungan, trinabaho niya ang paglipat namin. Hindi ito naging madali dahil nangangahulugan ito ng pera, ng pagtira sa lugar na walang kakilala, bagong pakikisama at paglisan sa lugar na kinatandaan. Hindi naging madali, pero pinagsikapan ni Papa, para sa kaligtasan naming magkapatid at para wala nang madamay at mapahamak na mga kapitbahay, kaibigan at kaanak.

Nagpalipat-lipat kami sa maraming lugar, nagpalipat lipat din kaming magkapatid ng eskwelahan. Nagkaroon ng mga kaibigan sa iba't ibang lugar. Pero lagi't lagi, 'pag tinatanong kami kung saan kami galing, Tundo pa rin ang isinasagot namin.

Hanggang sa pagpapamilya ko, malaki ang naging kinalaman ng Tundo. Hindi madali ang maging isang solong ina, at sa tuwing kailangan ko ng ayuda, sa Tundo ako bumabalik para sa suporta ng mga kaanak at kaibigan. Nakikitira sa mga kaanak, bumabalik sa maliliit na eskinita.

Naalala ko pa kung paanong kapalitan ko sa pag-aalaga sa anak kong sanggol pa noon ay si Tito Dey. Galing sa pag-aabang ng mga pagkakakitaan sa pagtambay maghapon, uuwi siya ng alas-9 nang gabi at sasabihan akong matulog, na siya na ang bahala kay Maya. Si Cocoy na kababata koat binibiro kong sumapi na sa lupon ng tambay, ay pinagkakatiwalaan kong pag-iwanan kay Maya sa tuwing mamamalengke ako sa hapon. Si Daddy Bo naman, pinagpapalit-palit ang pagtambay, pagluluto sa bahay at pananahi ng daster ni Maya.

Ang binyag ng anak ko ay pinagtulungan ng mga kaanak at kapitbahay namin sa Tundo. Ang Tita Vengie ko ang gumastos para dito, mga kapitbahay ang nagluto, mga kaibigang tambay ang naglagay ng lona para bubungan ang maliit na eskinitang gagamitin sa salo-salo, at mga kaanak na nagdala ng kanya kanyang gamit na pwedeng ipagamit sa mga bisita sa kainan.



Noong maliit pa si Maya, at doon pa kami nakikitira sa bahay ng isang kaanak, laman siya ng eskinita. Kilala siya ng lahat ng kapitbahay. Walang anu-ano, may pagkain siyang dala, bigay daw ng kaibigan niya. Ang tawag sa kanya ay batang tambay.

Marami ding dahilan kung bakit nagpalipat lipat kami ng tirahan na mag-ina. Pero sinisikap ko na tulad ko, hindi malimot ng anak ko ang lugar at mga taong nagkaroon ng malaking kontribusyon sa buhay naming dalawa, mga kaanak, kaibigan, kabitbahay at mga tambay sa Tundo.

Ang tambay, ang kwenta at kwento ng buhay...

Madami talagang tambay sa Tundo. Mga lalaki, mga babae, mga kabataan, kahit mga paslit na tulad namin ng anak ko noon. Mga nagpapahangin dahil maalinsangan sa loob ng bahay, nagpapahinga galing sa isang linggong pagta-trabaho, naglilibang, nakikipagkuwentuhan, naghihintay ng tsamba, umaasa sa suwerte, naghahanap ng madaliang pagkakakitaan.

Hindi ko alam kung ano ang ginamit na sukatan ng kwenta nila. Wala daw silang kwenta. Kwenta - halaga, importansiya. Ang alam ko lang, katulad nila Tito Ging, ni Mang Atong, ni Toto Edgar, ni Tito Ben, ni Kuya Restie at Kuya Joseph, ni Tito Dey, ni Daddy Bo, ni Cocoy, ni mamang kariton, at ng marami pang iba, may mga kwento sila. At ang mga kwentong iyon, iyon ang kwenta ng buhay nila.

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Pangiyak: Participatory Video Training para sa mga Lumad

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Ang Karanasan ng REDO sa Pagsagawa ng *Participatory Video*

Ang paglilikha ng *participatory video* o PV ay isang proseso kung saan ang mga tao sa komunidad ay kalahok sa pagbuo ng kanilang sariling bidyo. Sa PV, ang mga tao ay hindi lamang tauhan, bagkus, sila rin ang mismong gumagawa ng bidyo kung saan naipakikita nila ang kanilang mga kuwento base sa sarili nilang pagkaunawa sa kanilang kalagayan. Ayon kay White (2003), *empowering* para sa mga tao ang paggawa ng PV. Binigyang-diin niya na sa pamamagitan nito, magkakaroon ng kritikal na pananaw ang mga kalahok na siyang magbibigay-bunga upang sila'y maging mapanlikha sa uri ng pagpapahayag. Nagiging daan ito upang maglunsad ng pansarili, pangkomunidad, pulitikal, at kultural na pagbabago.

Ang partisipasyon sa mismong produksyon ng bidyo ng mga taong direktang nakararanas o apektado ng mga isyu ay nakatutulong sa pagpapaunlad ng kanilang kumpyansa sa sarili. Sa PV, ang mga tao rin ang magpapasya kung paano nila gagamitin ang kanilang binuong bidyo.

Binabasag nito ang konsepto na ang produksyon ng bidyo ay para lamang sa mga may pormal na edukasyon sa paggawa nito at sa mga may akses sa teknolohiya at mga bagong gamit. Binabaligtad rin nito ang tradisyunal na proseso kung saan ang kapangyarihan na magtakda ng *script*, mag-*edit*, magbigay-direksyon at ang partisipasyon ng mga tauhan sa kuwento ay nakasalalay lamang sa may hawak ng teknolohiya at rekurso (hal. ang direktor o prodyuser). Sa halip, binibigyan-diin nito ang kahalagahan ng boses ng buong komunidad na



siyang mapagpasiya sa kalalabasan ng PV. Ang PV ay katulad ng sa pagsasagawa ng *participatory action research*, kung saan nabibigyan ng kapangyarihan ang mga kalahok sa pananaliksik sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigay sa kanila ng higit na boses kaysa sa kumbensyunal na pananaliksik (Yang, 2016). Dagdag pa ni Yang (2016), sa prosesong ito ay nabibigyan ang mga kalahok ng pagkakataong magnilay sa kanilang buhay.

Ang Kolehiyo ng Gawaing Panlipunan at Pagpapaunlad ng Pamayanan ng UP Diliman ay naniniwala sa sama-samang pagkilos para sa pagpapaunlad ng pamayanan, kung kaya't nitong nakaraang dekada, nagsagawa ito ng mga *participatory* na proseso sa paggawa ng bidyo sa pamamagitan ng Research and Extension for Development Office (REDO). Ilan sa mga nabuong PV ay ang *Ta-aw: Buhay at Karanasan ng mga Mangingisda ng Anda, Pangasinan* kung saan binahagi ng mga mangingisda ng Anda, Pangasinan ang kanilang karanasan sa pangangalaga ng kalikasan na kanilang pangunahing pinagkukunan ng kabuhayan; ang *Kwentong Buhay ng mga Manggagawang Impormal sa Pilipinas* na nagsasalaysay ng pakikibaka at mobilisasyon ng mga miyembro ng impormal na sektor-panggawa; at ang *Bahay-bahayan* na tungkol sa kalagayan ng programang pabahay ng pamahalaan sa Vitas, Tondo sa Maynila. Sa pamamagitan ng mga naitalang proyekto, nagkaroon ng tuntungan ang kasalukuyang grupo sa pagbuo ng konsepto ng PV para sa mga Lumad o katutubo mula sa Mindanao.

Panimulang Gawain ng *Participatory Video* sa Lumad

Noong Nobyembre 2016, libo-libong mga katutubo at Moro ang lumahok at nakiisa sa naganap na Kampuhan ng Pambansang Minorya sa UP Diliman. Sa kaganapang ito, nagkaroon ng pagkakataon ang mga Iskolar ng Bayan na lalong makilala, makahalubilo at marinig ang mga kwento o “sugilanon” ng mga Lumad. Dito nagmula ang inspirasyon para sa proyektong *participatory video* kasama ang mga guro sa mga paaralang Lumad bilang gawaing ekstensyon ng REDO.



Ang proyekto ay sinuportahan ng UP Diliman Office of Extension and Coordination (OEC) sa ilalim ng Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Research and Development (OVCRD) na siyang nagbigay ng *extension grant* para maisakatuparan ito. Ang proyekto ay isinagawa ilang buwan matapos ang Kampuhan ng Pambansang Minorya, noong ika-24 ng Marso hanggang ika-2 ng Abril 2017 sa Sitio Han-ayan, Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Higit pa sa isang ordinaryong proyekto, maituturing na panimulang kolaborasyon ito ng REDO at ng Alternative Learning Center for Agricultural and Livelihood Development (ALCADEV) at ng Tribal Filipino Program of Surigao del Sur (TRIFPSS). Ito rin ay isang kongkretong tugon sa hamon sa Unibersidad na aktibong makipag-ugnayan sa pambansang minorya sa larangan ng gawaing ekstensyon.

Ang Sitwasyon ng mga Lumad Community School

Batid ng bawat miyembro ng REDO PV *team* (o PV Team) ang panganib at kawalang katiyakan sa lugar na pupuntahan. Ang ALCADEV at TRIFPSS ay dalawa sa mga paaralang Lumad na inatake at patuloy na inaatake ng mga ahente ng estado at grupong para-militar. Noong ika-1 ng Setyembre 2015, naganap sa isa mismong paaralan ang pagmasaker kay Emerito Samarca, Executive Director ng ALCADEV, at mga lider ng Lumad na sina Dionel Campos at Datu Juvello Sinzo.

Ayon kay Annabelle Campos, isang TRIFPSS Literacy Coordinator, mula pa noong taong 2005 ay walang tigil ang mga banta at paglabag sa kanilang karapatan sa lupang ninuno at sariling pagpapasya dahil sa mariing pagtutol ng komunidad sa mapanirang pagmimina. Makailang-ulit na ring lumikas o nag-”bakwit” ang buong komunidad dahil sa walang humpay na militarisasyon.

Sa kabila ng lahat ng takot, *trauma* at pagkalugmok, patuloy pa ring nagsisikap ang buong komunidad para makabangon at makaalagwa sa mga gawain. Itinuturing ng mga lumad na napakahalagang bahagi ng kanilang pamayanan ang mga *community schools* na



kanilang naipundar. Matapos ang kanilang pagbakwit ng humigit-kumulang isang taon, unti-unti nilang inayos ang mga naiwang eskwelahan. Sa datos ng ALCADDEV, mahigit 200 na estudyante ang muling nag-enrol sa kanilang paaralan at nadagdagan pa ang mga *community schools* ng TRIFPSS sa Surigao del Sur mula sa dating 21 na ngayon ay naging 23 na.

Bagamat nahaharap rin sa mga gawa-gawang kaso at *harassment* ang mga lider ng komunidad at *volunteer teachers*, patuloy sila sa pag-giit ng kanilang mga karapatan dahil pinahahalagahan nila ang edukasyon para sa kinabukasan ng kanilang mga anak at mga estudyante. Para sa kanila, ito ang nagbibigkis sa kanilang komunidad at nagbibigay ng kaalaman at inspirasyon sa mga mag-aaral, kaya ganoon na lamang ang kanilang pagsisikap na ito ay mabuo at mapangalagaan.

Mga Paghahanda at Hamon sa Teknikal na Aspeto ng PV

Sa pagpapakilala ng konsepto ng *PV* at sa teknikal na aspeto nito tulad ng *scriptwriting* at *video editing*, maraming kinaharap na hamon hindi lamang ang PV Team kundi maging ang mga kalahok. Una, ang Sitio Han-ayan ay hindi naaabot ng *signal* ng *cellphone* at ang ALCADDEV at TRIFPSS ay walang akses sa *internet*. Ang tanging pagkakataon na sila ay nakakapag-*internet* ay kapag bababa sila sa sentro ng Barangay Diatagon na mahigit dalawang oras mula sa eskwelahan. Ikalawa, walang kuryente sa eskwelahan na pinagdadausan ng palihan. Nagkakaroon lamang ng kuryente rito kapag pinagagana ang *generator* sa itinakdang oras -- dalawang beses sa isang araw at tumatagal lamang ng dalawang oras kada *session*. Ikatlo, dadalawa lamang ang *laptop* na maaring gamitin mula sa eskwelahan kung kaya't ilan sa mga gurong kalahok ay nagdala ng kaniyong *laptops*. Panghuli, kakaunti lamang sa mga kalahok ang may karanasan sa pagkuha ng larawan; bagama't mayroon silang mga *smartphone*, mga *group shot* at *selfie* lamang ang madalas nilang kinukuha. Dagdag pa rito ang kawalan nila ng karanasan sa *video editing*.



Sa pagsusuri sa resulta mula sa kanilang Training Needs Analysis (TNA), masusing na hinimay ng PV Team ang pagbuo ng modyul na aakma sa kakayanan at pangangailan ng mga kalahok. Maingat din na idinisenyo ang mga aktibidad at *workshop* upang unti-unting maipakilala sa kanila ang konsepto ng PV. Tinugunan din ang mga balakid kagaya ng kawalan ng kuryente sa lugar at limitadong materyales na maaari nilang gamitin kagaya ng *laptop*. Patungkol sa pagpapadaloy ng *training*, isinaisip ng PV Team ang kahalagahan na komportable ang pakikitungo sa mga kalaok para sa malayang diskurso at pagbabahagi ng mga saloobin tungkol sa bawat konseptong ipinipresenta. Ang mga modyul na ginamit ay puno ng mga *workshop* na pang-indibidwal at pang-grupo, at ang bawat isa ay malayang nakapagbabahagi ng kanilang pananaw sa mga gawain.

Ibinahagi ng mga kalahok ang kanilang pananaw sa naging daloy ng *workshop* at narito ang ilan sa kanilang mga naisulat:

“Nakita ang pagtutulongan ng bawat isa na makapagbahagi ng kanilang mga karanasan kaya nalagapasan ang mga limitasyon.”

“Mas nakilala pa ang history ng mga kasamahan at may mga surprising na mga experiences na shocking din para sa amin.”

“Malinaw yung talakayan at handa ang mga tagapagpadaloy sa paksa. Mataas ang pasensiya nila para sa amin kahit halos lahat sa amin ay baguhan.”

“Madaling maintindihan ang mga paksa dahil mula sa teorya patungo agad sa praktika.”

Sa *photography* at *video editing workshops*, bagama’t noong una ay ilan sa mga kalahok ay takot na humawak ng aparato, kalaunan ay unti-unti silang naging kumpiyansang gumamit ng kamera at *laptop* sa tulong na rin ng bawat isa. Ganito naman ang kanilang naisulat sa kanilang pagninilay rito:

“Sa kabuuan, positibo dahil nadagdagan ang kaalaman ko kung paano gamitin ang kamera upang maganda ang kuha ng picture. Ngayon, natuto na talaga ako.”

“Ngayon pa lang ako naturuan kung ano ang paraan sa basic camera at malaki ang naitulong nito sa aming pagserbisyo sa mamamayan.”

“Malinaw ang pagtuturo kung paano gumawa ng bidyo at nakapagtanong kung ano ang hindi naintindihan”



“Nahirapan ako sa pag-edit pero naging hamon ito sa akin dahil first time ko at ‘di ko pa masyadong alam ang pasikot-sikot. Pero malaking tulong naman sa akin kung kaya explore...”

Malaking tulong din na ang *training* ay isinagawa gamit sa kanilang lokal na salita (Bisaya). Sa ganitong pamamaraan, mas malaya nilang naibahagi ang kanilang mga saloobin at agam-agam sa mga paksang tinatalakay. Dagdag pa rito, binigyang-diin ng grupo na hindi kailangan ng mamahaling mga kagamitan upang makabuo ng magandang bidyo. Sa pamamagitan ng magandang konsepto, masusing pagpapalano, kooperasyon ng bawat miyembro ng grupo, at partisipasyon at konsultasyon sa mga miyembro ng komunidad ay makabubuo sila ng magandang PV na sasalamon sa kanilang tunay na kalagayan. Sa pagdaan ng mga araw ng *training*, napagtanto nila na ang kanilang mga *smartphone* ay may mas makahulugang gamit upang maibahagi nila ang kanilang mga karanasan. Sa *video editing*, binigyan sila ng kalayaang alamin ang bawat *function* sa *video editing software* at sumubok ng ilang *functions* na maaari nilang gamitin sa kani-kanilang bubuuang mga bidyo.

Naniniwala ang PV Team na ang paghihimay ng mga aktibidad, ang kagustuhang magbahagi ng mga kalahok ng kani-kanilang mga karanasan, ang malayang pagdaloy ng mga diskusyon, ang malalim nilang pagtingin sa mga isyung kinakaharap at ang kagustuhang matuto sa bawat isa sa kanila ang ilan sa mga dahilan kung bakit naging matagumpay ang pagsasanay ng mga lumad sa PV. Nagbunga ng tatlong PV ang mga kalahok pagkatapos ng *training*: (1) tungkol sa karanasan ng mga guro sa lumad na paaralan; (2) tungkol sa buhay ng isang lumad na magsasaka; at (3) ang kasaysayan ng organisasyon sa komunidad. Dagdag pa rito, nakabuo sila ng dalawa pang *participatory video* ilang linggo matapos ang aktwal na pagsasanay. Tampok dito ang bidyo na nailagay sa *social media* na nanawagan ng tulong at suporta sa kanilang pagbabalik sa kanilang komunidad at paaralan, at ang panawagang *#SaveOurSchools*.



Mga Pagmunimuni at Kabatiran ng PV Team

Ang pagpunta pa lamang sa ALCADEV ay sadyang mahirap at mapanghamon na. Dahil sa kakulangan ng maayos na daan at transportasyon, maaari lamang marating ang ALCADEV sa pamamagitan ng habal-habal o *skylab*. Maputik, matarik at baku-bakong daan ang kahaharapin ng mga pupunta sa eskwelahan, kung saan ang biyahe ay tatagal ng mahigit isang oras. Sa kabila nito, sinalubong kami ng mainit na pagbati mula sa mga guro at mag-aaral nang marating na naming ang paaralan. Bukod pa dito ay kapansin-pansin din ang ganda ng tanawin at pinagyamang mga pananim na nakapalibot sa lugar. Dahil sa ganda ng lugar at mainit na pagbati, unti-unti ay napanatag kami sa aming gagawing palihan.

Sa paglipas ng mga araw ng *training*, nakita namin kung gaano ka-kolektibo ang pamamaraan ng mga Lumad sa kanilang mga gawain. Naobserbahan namin kung gaano sila ka-komportableng magpahayag ng kanilang mga saloobin at aktibong makilahok sa mga gawain. Partikular sa *video editing*, bagama't aminadong nahirapan sila noong umpisa, unti-unti naman nila itong nagamay hanggang sa nakabuo na sila ng kani-kanilang mga bidyo.

Narito ang ilan sa *feedback* ng mga mag-aaral:

“Very interesting ang topic. It promotes collective work para mas mapadali at maranasan lahat ng klase ng gawain ng indibidwal bilang bahagi ng production.”

“Nakikita sa bawat isa ang kagustuhan matuto at makapag-ambag ng mga opinyon upang mapagtagumpayan ang lahat ng activities/workshop.”

“Nakita ang pagtutulungan ng bawat isa, grupo at sa mga nagbigay ng training.”

Hangang-hanga kami sa lalim ng kanilang mga *workshop output*. Dahil sa kagustuhan nila matuto, maganda ang naging pagtanggap nila sa bawat konseptong inilalatag sa kanila. Sapat ang oras na ibinigay sa bawat *session* upang maintindihan nila ang bawat konseptong tinatalakay. Ayon sa kanila, “nakuha ang atensyon ng bawat isa, *give and take* ang mga *ideas*”



Naniniwala kami na malaki ang tulong ng kanilang karanasan at kultura upang mas mapalalim ang mga pagbabahagi. Kahanga-hanga din ang kanilang pagpapahalaga sa edukasyon, kanilang mga estudyante at kanilang komunidad. Naniniwala kami na malaking tulong rin ang aming paglubog sa komunidad upang maging mas madali at komportable ang bawat isa sa daloy ng pagsasanay. Ang simpleng pakikibahagi sa maliliit na gawain ay malaking tulong upang ang mga *facilitators* ay matuto din mula sa kanila. Sa aming pagsama sa kanilang pagkuha ng *footages*, napalalim din namin ang aming pagkaunawa kanilang ipinaglalaman. Sa pakikipamuhay sa kanila, mas lalong tumimo sa amin na hindi balakid ang kakulangan ng magagandang kagamitan, kuryente at abanteng teknolohiya upang makabuo sila ng magandang kwento na maari rin nilang ibahagi sa mga tao.

Sa ilang araw na pananatili namin sa komunidad ng mga Lumad, kapansin-pansin ang kolektibong partisipasyon ng mga bata sa paggawa ng kanilang paaralan kasama ang kanilang mga guro. Nasaksihan namin kung paano nagtutungan ang buong komunidad sa pagtatayo ng dormitoryo para sa mga estudyante. Ang mga bata ang nagbubuhay ng kahoy at mga kagamitan, samantalang ang mga magulang ang nagkakarapintero. Sa mga gawain naman sa dormitoryo katulad ng pagluluto, paglilinis, at paghahanda ng panggatong, may sistema din ng hatian sa gawain ang mga bata. Maging sa paggawa sa bukid, na kasama sa kanilang kurikulum sa agrikultura, ay sama-sama sa paggawa ang mga estudyante at pati mga guro. Damang-dama ang pagiging isang komunidad ng paaralan. Sa pagsasanay tungkol sa PV, madaling naunawaan ng mga kalahok ang konsepto at prinsipyo ng mapanlahok na proseso. Mabilis nilang nagawa ang kanilang *script* at bidyo. Ang proseso sa paggawa ng PV ay madaling naunawaan dahil isinasabuhay na nila sa araw-araw nilang gawain ang samang pagkilos. Ang nadagdag na lamang ng aming grupo sa kanilang kaalaman ay ang teknikal na aspeto sa paggawa ng bidyo katulad ng paggawa ng *script* at paggamit ng teknolohiya tulad ng kamera, kompyuter, at *editing software*.



Karanasan ang pinakamahasay na guro. Sa nakita namin sa mga guro at mag-aaral ng ALCADEV at TRIFPSS, buhay na buhay ang konsepto ng sama-samang pagkilos at pamamahala kung kaya't madali silang nakabuo ng tatlong bidyo pagkatapos ng aming pagsasanay. Nagkaroon din ng pagpapalabas ng kanilang bidyo sa buong komunidad para makakuha ng mungkahi, komento at higit sa lahat ay ang pahintulot sa mga ginawang bidyo. Isa ito sa mga mahalagang bahagi sa proseso ng paggawa ng PV.

Batay na rin sa *feedback* ng mga kalahok, naunawaan nila ang buong proseso dahil ang PV ay akma sa kanilang pangangailangan at kagustuhang magkwento sa mas nakararami pa ng kanilang sitwasyon. Narito ang ilan sa kanilang mga pagmumunimuni:

“Maganda ang video dahil totoo naman ang ipinapakita at malaking tulong ito para sa mga taong hindi alam ang aming kalagayan.”

“Makakatulong ito sa aming patuloy na paglahok upang ipakita sa publiko ang mga tunay na pangyayari.”

“Hinikayat talaga ang lahat na makapag-share.”

Pursigido silang matuto dahil nais nilang isalaysay ang katotohanan sa kanilang komunidad at hikayatin ang iba pa na sila ay suportahan sa kanilang mga panawagan. Sa katunayan, ilang linggo matapos ang buong palihan, nakabuo sila ng dalawa pang bidyo tungkol sa kanilang pagbabalik-eskwela at paghingi ng suporta para sa kanilang kampanyang *Save Our Schools*. Bukambibig ng mga kalahok na natuto sila dahil sa epektibong kombinasyon ng teorya at praktika.

Nais rin nilang mas marami pang mga palihan ang gawin upang mas lalo pa silang maging mahusay sa mga gawain. Ayon sa isang *volunteer teacher*, sana raw ay may susunod pang mga paagsasanay upang marami pa silang matutunan. Sinabi naman ng isang mag-aaral na nabitin siya at nagnanais na sana'y magkaroon pa ng mas mahabang oras sa palihan. Nagpasalamat siya at sinabing, “sa kaunting oras at panahon, marami kaming natutunan sa inyo. At sana bumalik kayo sa lupang ninuno namin.”



Isang mahalaga at kapaki-pakinabang na proyekto ang PV sa mga Lumad. Isa itong paraan ng kolektibong pagsasalaysay ng mga tunay na pangyayari, pagbibigay-bose sa komunidad sa paraang gusto at akma sa kanila, at pagpapalakas ng kanilang diwa ng pagkakaisa at paglaban upang makamtan ang kanilang mga mithiin. Kung bibigyan raw ng pagkakataon, sana ay sa mas marami pang komunidad makaikot ang *workshop*. Ayon sa isang ALCADDEV na mag-aaral, “sana hindi lang kami kundi sa mas marami pang nangangailangan [makarating] [a]ng training na ito.”

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Unity Statement

Only in Defiance and Resistance can We Regain Our Humanity

We come from different places, from the urban centers as well as from the countryside. We belong to different classes, genders, sectors, groups, and tribes. In our lives, we each experience different forms and varying intensities of violations of our human rights. What *is* common to all of us are the perpetrators of these gross violations of our human rights - State security forces and those working under their command.

We have suffered pain, suffocating paralysis; and, for others, desperation and near-insanity. We have witnessed how bullets pierced the bodies and skulls of our loved ones, their cadavers left on the streets, covered with corrugated cartons that label them as drug addicts or drug pushers who should not be imitated. Others still await decent housing years after being ravaged by disasters like Typhoon Yolanda. Some also face demolitions in their communities. There are others who have been abducted just because their faces approximated a standard terrorist profile. Some were not able to bury their dead – who were killed as collateral damage in the Marawi siege – or had only been able to afford them with Islamic final rites. Davao City is enjoying peace, but one that only comes from a cemetery. Dissent is taboo.

Our communities are shattered, our families live in fear, and our children traumatized. Collectively, our only crime is that we are poor.

The killing of our organizations' leaders and members are justified with the lame excuse that they were linked to drugs, either as pushers or drug addicts and drug pushers themselves. This justification of their killings has trivialized and depoliticised our struggle and legitimate issues.



Embedded in these narratives on the systematic assault on our lives are also heroic narratives of how we have managed to survive using our individual skills and collective resources. Through our institutions, networks, programs and services, we were able to bury our dead, and provide psychosocial services to those who experienced individual and collective trauma; we were also able to document human rights violations, file the appropriate charges in courts against the perpetrators, secure witnesses and victims through sanctuaries, and pursue advocacy at the national and international levels. We also joined the growing number of protests against the inhuman treatment accorded to us, our kin and our countrymen and women.

The outpouring of support among our ranks has once again reaffirmed the nurtured value of helping and working together to defend our human rights however perilous the political situation. It is a clear manifestation that regionalist tendencies can be surmounted. Despite the divide and rule tactics of the present regime, the spirit of collectivism and solidarity is alive. It draws strength from our belief in the basic idea that “the worth of life, human and non-human existence, is the fountain-head for all ideals and values that follow” (UN Centre for Human Rights, 1994). It draws its unwavering inspiration from our collective experiences as a people who fought – and are once again fighting the Marcos dictatorship.

But more than the institutionalized and sustained helping processes, it is a growing testament of our collective rejection of President Duterte’s tyrannical rule against the Filipino people. He has mangled the long-cherished practice of separation of powers between the executive, legislative, and the judiciary. He is undermining constitutional bodies such as the Office of the Ombudsman, Commission of Human Rights (CHR), Commission on Audit (COA), and is threatening to abolish them. He continues to intimidate with the declaration of martial law.



We perform different roles in society through our respective professions that demand much of our time. Yet, we *find* time for this conference to collectively address these pressing problems confronting us all. It is our smoldering defiance against a President whose penchant for violence is sickening and whose rule essentially anti-poor. It is a reaffirmation that even in the darkest times, we Filipinos have not lost our humanity and solidarity. It is a reaffirmation that Filipino lives matter.

History has taught us that tyrants are fleeting leaders. They come and go. Let us transform our individual anger into a collective defiance and in the process, a national people's resistance against Pres. Duterte's tyrannical rule. It is only in the performance and actualization of this historic task of defiance and resistance can we regain our humanity.

BREAK THE CULTURE OF FEAR AND SILENCE!

END THE CULTURE OF IMPUNITY!

JUSTICE AND REPARATION TO EJK VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES!

THWART ANY AND ALL ATTEMPTS TO ESTABLISH A DICTATORSHIP!

RESPECT THE RULE OF LAW!

IMMEDIATELY LIFT MARTIAL LAW IN MINDANAO!

UPHOLD HUMAN RIGHTS AT ALL COST!

Signed by more than 70 participants from Metro Manila, Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao during the National Conference on "Creating Innovations through Collaborative Action Research and Community Dialogue" held last September 25-26, 2018 at the University of the Philippines College of Social Work and Community Development.