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FOREWORD

The 2016 Philippine Journal of Social Development revisits the idea of “creative” or “creativity”, an oft-repeated standard in social development practice yet whose parameters are not always well-defined. What is creativity in social development? Does it entail the utilization of artforms such as songs, poetry or dancing? Is it the same as the creation of something “new”?

The literature on creativity is varied and pulls several ways, depending on the point of view of the discipline defining it. However, some answers have been put across. Creativity, for instance, have been popularly thought of as a characteristic of an individual or “person”, and concretized into a “product” such as a book, a song or a scientific formula. There is also the less tangible creative “process”, a way of thinking and doing that results to effective actions and outputs.

In 1961, Rhodes (as cited in Cropley, 2006) introduced a fourth “P” to the person, product and process concept of creativity: “press” or the pressure from one’s environment. This was an important addition as it locates creativity in people’s time and milieu. Creativity is a social phenomenon. While its attribution is usually individualized, the evaluation of what is creative or not is social. Society also has a role in shaping what kind of creativity can or will flourish in a given period, as well as in motivating people to be creative (Cropley, 2006).

However, creativity and creative actions or products can also influence social standards by (1) expanding its conceptualization of a domain to open new approaches, (2) surfacing issues that were not previously noticed, (3) modifying expectations, and (4) redefining standards for judging subsequent actions (Cropley, 2006). The social acceptance for something as creative is what differentiates creativity from acts that are merely deviant,

eccentric or illegal. Secondly, creativity is transformative: it leads to new insights and different pathways of thinking and acting.

Furthermore, creativity is localized, particular and culturally-specific in as much as social and cultural norms define the boundaries which creativity interrogates and challenges. There are also cultural perspectives on creativity. As Westwood and Low (2003) observed, Western literature on creativity is mostly focused on the product and ideas of newness and originality, while Asian authors highlight “revelation” or “rediscovery” i.e., “The creative person must find ways to access the insight, understanding and truth that are already pre-existent, but must be made psychologically manifest through the creative process.”

The articles in the current PJSJ do not claim to define creativity in the context of social development, rather, they put forward some initial discussion points in various contexts. This issue begins with Nicolas’ article on how social workers engaged in social administration define creativity in their work – what it is, what it entails, and how it can be sustained. The responses from the social workers show that creativity is a multi-dimensional concept referring to personal characteristics, one’s process of working or work ethics, or seen in the work output.

Creativity in social development is also a collective endeavor. It engages people as much as it revitalizes them. First and foremost, creative social development strategies should be effective, something that is not wholly possible if the people who supposedly stand to benefit from them are left out in its process of reflection-action-reflection cycle (or as some would visualize it, an upward spiral). More often than not, this process is sacrificed for the sake of efficiency: within strict program timelines and resource allotments, engaging the participation of vulnerable groups is regarded as time-consuming. At most there are the “consultations” which are mandated by law for development projects, yet conceptualized and implemented as token activities. This only highlights the need for more grounded discourses on social development in its various permutations.

Viliran poses the perspectives of urban poor relocatees against the popular conceptualizations of right to decent housing, that is, one which is based on the structure of the house itself – materials used, hardiness to weather and climate conditions, connection to basic utilities and size. Instead, the idea of decent housing as described by her research participants is closely connected to the idea of a decent life. A primary feature of this decent life is the freedom from the uncertainty of tenure, that one can be evicted from one’s dwelling at any time and thereby displaced from livelihood sources,

by natural disasters, or, more pointedly, by skewed urban development policies.

Similarly, Barrameda makes a case for rural poor women whose participation in local DRRM planning has been minimal, despite their carrying of multiple roles in household survival and food security in agricultural communities devastated by natural disasters. Agriculture is one of the most vulnerable livelihood bases to climate change. In Irosin, Sorsogon, where an average of 17 typhoons visit every year, women's home gardens and their local knowledge on planting vegetables, fruit trees and medicinal herbs take on an important role in ensuring not only the food access but the health of their families in general.

The article of Tungpalan focuses on the perspectives of another vulnerable group in Philippine society: the child laborers in sugarcane farms. Driven by household economic conditions, children are socialized into farmwork as soon as they are able to help their parents, sometimes as early as five years old. One effect of this is the normalization of child labor in the communities, and within the families themselves, even as parents and children decry the hazards it poses to children's health, education, and general wellbeing. In the midst of these are the children's aspirations for a better life which is a source of strength.

Ealdama reviews a classic social work text, *Twenty Years at Hull House (with Autobiographical Notes)*, for the PJSJ. Written in 1912, the book records Jane Addams' reflections on her work in the Hull House Settlement, which she established. During its time, Hull House was a community services hub for slum dwellers in Chicago, poor immigrants, and working mothers. It was also the center of social development discourse as activists, reformers and community members congregated in there. The Hull House also hosted labor union meetings and women's cooperatives. As Ealdama notes, the scope of Jane Addams' contribution to society goes beyond social work where she is most known; Addams was also a public administrator, a sociologist and a feminist.

Finally, the PJSJ 2016 also includes as special feature two reflection papers on the application of creative modalities and kinetic artforms in addressing personal and collective trauma, as well as in teaching. These articles are drawn from the authors' on-going studies in the field, and presented in the PJSJ as their reflections or notes on their experience. Ang-Reyes and Dimarucut are both educators in social work and human kinetics, respectively, who are exploring the possibilities of non-verbal expressions for people to articulate their pain, fear and, eventually, dreams and active

response. Their work, although still being developed, has received positive feedback when utilized with various groups who have gone through highly stressful events such as disasters (whether as direct service providers or victim-survivors), civil conflict and abuse.

Creative modalities can also be used in integrative exercises in the classroom in place of academic papers such as reports or mini-researches. Ang-Reyes reports that, while students found the exercises difficult at first, they also felt freer with the varied modes of expression opened to them to present their insights and lessons learned.

* * *

The celebrations of the past are also celebrations of the future – an affirmative response to the challenges it poses. An atmosphere of quiet reflection hangs over the College of Social Work and Community Development as it nears its 50th anniversary in August 2017. In charting the milestones it passed through the years, it also turns a critical eye on what its role has been in the creation of the present society which is still characterized by poverty, gender inequality and human rights violations, among others. These are essentially not new social issues, however their manifestations may be different and amplified by digital technologies. There have been victories but there is still a lot more to be done. In this sense the challenge to be creative is all the more relevant.

Nancy Endrinal Parreño
Issue Editor

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THE CREATIVE JOURNEYS OF FILIPINO SOCIAL WORKERS IN PROGRAM AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Justin Francis Leon V. Nicolas

In an effort to understand the phenomenon of creativity in the Philippine context, this study seeks to highlight how social work practitioners themselves interpret creativity in their everyday lives. With the social work agency as context, the phenomenological inquiry focuses on the meanings which they attach to, or which they have of, creativity. Ten social workers specializing in program and policy development provide metaphorical themes and definitions of how they see themselves, their contributions, and the work that they do as creative. The creative journeys of social workers open the possibility for a Filipino notion of creativity and suggest the need for systematic theorizing in this area.

Key words: creativity, social work practice, phenomenology, program development, policy development, Filipino social work

Introduction

In Issue (2013) of this journal, the study on creativity of Filipino social workers analyzed the implications of its findings to governance establishing inter alia the absence of literature on the topic prior to this study, at least in the Philippine context (Nicolas, 2012; 2013) and more so in program and policy development. However, in other contexts, some studies have discussed the importance of creativity in macro-level social work (Nissen, 1997), generalist social work practice (Turner, 2002) and the relation of art and creative community practice to social change (Schubert, 2012). These three studies, together with the study being discussed (Nicolas, 2012; 2013) and one forthcoming (Nicolas, in process), are the only known studies (written in English) to have attempted at theorizing on creativity

in social work practice (as of time of publication). The creative journeys (Weisman, 1990) in this study show how, through retrospection of their experiences, participants are actually co-researchers in explicating the meaning of creativity in program and policy development.

Defining creativity is as hard a task as defining social work. Understanding how they work together is a doubly difficult feat. In an effort to understand the phenomenon of creativity in the Philippine context, this study seeks to highlight how social work practitioners themselves interpret creativity in their everyday lives. The inquiry focuses on the meanings which they attach to, or which they have of, creativity. The meanings of creativity may be formed through their everyday lived experiences, particularly in the context of the social work agency which are all part of the social workers' world expressed through the stories told of their 'here and now.'

The interaction of the social worker with the social work agency provides the context for the social worker to describe the conditions experienced in the organization. On the basis of his or her experiences, the social worker may develop ideas or concepts on how the organization appears to him or her and on how the organization impresses conditions and situations that shape the meanings that the social worker attaches to or has of creativity. The social worker's formation of meanings may also be derived from the various relationships and interactions inside and outside the social work agency, such as with clients and co-workers. Since the social work profession is reflective, the social worker's experiences in practice provide a rich description of creativity as a phenomenon in his or her professional practice.

For both contexts, the social worker may be involved in purposive transformation of the situation, the relationship of even the products and knowledge base in the work place. The social worker may not in everyday life consider this as creative, but if his or her experiences are put in context, those experiences will enable him or her to provide meanings of creativity – if indeed they are lived experiences of creativity. Thus, this study describes the phenomenon of creativity through the meanings expressed by the social workers involved in its making. Understanding these meanings based on the different context of their world provides answers to the research question, "What meanings do social workers involved in policy and program development give to creativity?"

Methodology

Using the phenomenological approach, this exploratory study looks into the participating social workers' perspectives on creativity as well as their process of developing the meanings they attach to creativity. As Schutz (1945) notes, meaning is "not a quality inherent to certain experiences emerging within our stream of consciousness but the result of an interpretation of a past experience looked at the present now with a reflective attitude" (p.535). Through reflection and self-awareness, the social worker may communicate through experience to show present representation of the meanings of creativity, seeing the relation of who they are and how they act (van Manen, 2014). This study therefore explores how participants interpret their actions in the *social world* and the ways individuals give meaning to *social phenomena*, using qualitative techniques in data gathering.

To draw out from the respondent social workers the meanings of creativity which they have associated with their practice of their profession or have derived from their everyday experiences in the workplace, the study utilized several methods, such as observation of actual practice, reflective exercises and in-depth interviews. As shown by previous studies on hermeneutic phenomenology, the use of reflective exercises facilitates the building of narratives or stories that help researchers to identify themes and sub-themes (Ajjawi & Higgs, 2007; van Manen, 2014). Reflective exercises were developed for gathering initial data on the creative works that the participants have been involved in.

While the aim of the exercises was to capture the terminologies used in vivo by the social workers in writing the narrative, they also provided the researcher with the opportunity to compare the written data with the text of the interviews (Wilson, 2002). This comparison increases the dependability of the data gathered (Huberman & Miles, 1998) and the 'faithfulness to the participants' constructs' (Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2011). The responses from the reflective exercises were compared with those from the in-depth interviews to form a composite referred to here as 'creative journeys.'

The Creative Journeys of Social Workers

The themes later identified in this study are better understood by relating them to the personal meanings attached by social workers to creativity. These personal meanings, though may be verbally expressed,

are better illustrated through the experiences and stories of the social workers. For the purpose of this article, seven of the ten creative journeys of social workers were selected focusing on responses relevant to policy and program development.

Creativity as a ‘Secret Weapon’

Social Worker B finds policy research work innovative because it always offers something new to work on and does not follow any formula. She is given freedom to develop research proposals and considers the ‘nature of the job’ as a factor in being creative, or as she says, “*Talagang nasa klase ng trabaho yung creativity.*” For her, being able to create something from the beginning is an important aspect of creativity, “*Dito kasi yun ang maganda dito, ikaw talaga, sayo talaga magsisimula.*” (That is what’s nice in this Unit, everything will start from you.)

From her experience, Social Worker B says that creativity is like figuring out how to make ‘square wheels’ roll. More importantly, she considers creativity to be a secret weapon:

...pinakatatagu-tago mong armas na kailangan mo na talagang ilabas. Hindi mo naman siya agad-agad nailalabas kung hindi mo kinailangan eh. Kapag hindi siya hiningi ng panahon, ng opportunity, hindi mo agad siya makikitang lumalabas sa iyo.

(It is your secret weapon that you would not reveal if not needed. If the situation does not ask for it, if there is no opportunity, you will not see that weapon come out of you.)

So for Social Worker B, creativity is a secret weapon used only in situations which may be beyond one’s control. The secret weapon here is finding a solution in times of need, in reconfiguring elements to respond to ‘unforeseen blocks.’ She defines creativity as that which *makes a difficult job easier, so that one will not notice the work anymore.* She also says that verbal reinforcements are like triggers – when others notice her work to be creative, she becomes aware that she is creative.

To summarize Social Worker B’s concepts of creativity: *Creativity is both found in the person and seen in the work of the person. A person does not notice that he or she is creative until others point it out. Creativity is like a secret weapon. Once used, creativity enhances work or makes a difficult job easier. In social work, creativity is seen in research, coordination and collaboration and in*

unique ways of dealing with clients. Specifically, creativity is seen in putting things together to reconfigure something.

Creativity is “Discovering Life.”

According to Social Worker H, creativity is something that one cannot learn from books. Her travels developed her skills in handling people. That is why she considers supervision as her contribution to the profession and as an area where she is truly creative. She prefers a more open style of supervision that gives space both to her and to her staff, “... *ayoko ng one on one supervision. Ako kasi self propelling din ako -- ganun din ang training ko sa staff ko. I know what I need and what I like.*” She adds that, if she will have time to write, she would like to document the ‘supervisory styles’ she has used for specific people.

In her Unit, she chooses good writers and shares some insights on how to keep them: “You can keep your good staff *basta maganda rin yung management and supervision. Kahit na mahirap ang trabaho, kaya yan eh, basta maganda ang relationship – may support, walang fault finding, may training kahit mababa ang sweldo...*” (You can keep your good staff through good management and supervision. Even if the job is difficult, it can be done, as long as there is a good working relationship – with proper support, no fault finding and provision of the needed training, even though the salary is low.)

Social Worker H considers a project concerning children as the height of her career. For her, the whole process of project management, its structure and its components such as pilot testing and designing a system, are all-creative:

“Pero ang maganda kasi doon, we are developing the systems at the same time, we’re learning. Kung ano yung naisip namin na ito yung best, tina-try. Kaya yun ang maganda sa pilot testing, work in progress. Meron siyang blueprint kung baga. I-execute mo pero kung nakita mo siya na hindi applicable, madali mo siyang ayusin.”

(What is nice about it is that we are developing the systems at the same time, we’re learning. Whatever we conceptualize as best, we try it out. That is the beauty of pilot testing, work in progress, it is like having a blue print. You execute it, but if you discover that it is not applicable, then it’s easy for you to fix it.)

She further adds that project-based practice is creative because of the leeway given to decide on what activities to implement:

“Yun yung maganda dun kasi parang we were given the leeway to strategize, how to execute the plans. We develop the manuals, tsaka iba pang systems.”

(That’s the beauty in it, that we were given the leeway to strategize, how to execute the plans. We develop the manuals and the other systems.)

So it is in the creation of the blueprint and in the execution of that blueprint that pilot testing is found to be creative. Creativity is also seen in the production of manuals which documents lessons from the project experience.

She says creativity “makes one go on, to discover life and to explore.” She does not want to be “stuck with what is written in the books,” or else she says the social worker will become stagnant. This is the very reason why she identified project management, specifically pilot testing, as another creative part of her practice. Here, social work practitioners are allowed to design projects and, if they fail, they will re-design them.

So for Social Worker H, *the meaning of creativity is being able to explore, to discover life. Creativity enables the social worker to propel the program or the office out of a difficult situation. Without creativity, “we will be run by events.” So the real meaning of creativity for her is finding life, for the clients and for herself. It is having a win-win solution to a problem. Being creative in social work is an adventure.*

Creativity is “Giving One’s Best,” Being an “All-around Worker”

Social Worker L has conviction that social work is creative; and that a social worker needs to be an “all-around” worker, and sees every client and every situation as unique. She now accepts policy development as a creative way to help others, *“Natanggap ko na rin na isang aspeto ng social work ay gumagawa ng mga policy. At nakakatulong ka, ah nagagawa mo yung propesyon mo sa pamamagitan ng pagsusulat. Matagal ko yun, matagal ko...tinanggap yun.”* (I have finally accepted that policy development is one aspect of social work where you can help others, practice your profession by means of writing. It took me time to accept that fact.)

Social Worker L shares the struggle of their Unit to have some policy recommendations approved and how they developed strategies to overcome resistance to their proposed changes.

One such strategy was the use of the right words in policy formulation, which they employed when they were couching their recommendations on the financial empowerment of senior citizens – e.g., stressing the role of the elderly in sharing their wisdom to the community, providing honoraria to consultants which would not be in conflict with existing labor laws on the employment of the elderly.

Another strategy was pushing smaller but manageable suggestions or, as Social Worker L calls it, “chop-chop.” She relates, “*Chinop-chop po namin yung recommendations assessment. Dahan-dahan namin pong ano nilalagay sa lagi naming comments, sa mga polisiya, isinasama.* Surprisingly, the comments get through the layers of filtering and also get approved.”

Social Worker L also leads an initiative of social workers to start creative means of advocacy, such as organizing the solo parents in their organization to get the attention of management. With this strategy, they learn to deal with the dynamics and politics within an organization.

Social Worker L emphasizes the need for creativity in the social work profession and the awareness of this creativity:

Conscious ka na creativity ‘to. Importante yun na maging creative ka lalo na yung propesyon namin na talagang helping profession. Tao yan, nakasandal din sa ‘yo kung paano mo ili-link yung mga resources, o mga bagay-bagay. Kaya kailangan creative ka talaga.

(The social worker is conscious that this is creativity. It is important that you be creative especially in our profession that is truly a helping profession. These are human lives and they are depending on how you can link them to resources. That is why you really need to be creative.)

To summarize Social Worker L’s views, *Creativity is found to have meaning if closely linked with thinking of innovative ways of helping people, consistent with the principle of uniqueness of the clients. Creativity of the social worker is seen in not being limited or boxed in by existing programs but in always finding means to help the client, or giving one’s best for the client’s welfare.*

Creativity is “Pushing the Work to the End”

Social Worker C introduced the concept of “nurturance of creativity.” For one, she mentions that the nurturing of creativity really belongs to the

academe. She thought that the scholarship cohort experiment be replicated among social work students, to nurture creativity in doing social work.

Social Worker C also considers social work as a good breeding ground for creativity. She reflects further that creativity in social work can be shaped earlier, even as a child. She tells of Ms. M., her role model, as an example of nurturing service by being exposed to the father's advocacy work.

Social Worker C's early practice experiences in the refugee camps helped her form the insight that competence and excellence are needed for one to become creative. That is why she views creativity as something that a social worker must strive for to avoid being "programmatically," i.e., "boxed-in." In the hospital setting, she learned that social work is creative because, even though you do the same work every day, the practitioner is not limited. She sees creativity as having new solutions to problems. In project based endeavors, the feeling of creation comes with completing a process, from design to implementation until "you see it to its completion," "you build, you finish."

In program development, she sees creativity as "an opportunity to begin with a clean slate, to look at things through a new perspective." Also, she sees policy advocacy as a blend of creativity and social work. She refers to writing as an instrument for social work practice, particularly policy advocacy: "I think at most it's really advocating for the people, *yung* fighting for the people, whether its policy or program. Creativity is... pushing the work to the end."

Social Worker C has the notion that social work is going up against "giants" and that the social worker sometimes does not know the "real enemy." In trafficking, for example, the problem is global in scope and that is why the fight must be brought to the international arena. According to her, it is at this level and "in terms of numbers" that "giants" are created:

So papaano ka makikipaglaban if you don't know. If you fight trafficking but you don't know sino ang kalaban mo...kailangan kasi mag-create ng giant eh. You need to create a giant all the time and it's in terms of numbers, in terms of skill. Kasi nga when you fight, malalaki ang kalaban. It's trafficking, it's street children. talagang it will defy the strategy, it will defy everything. Malaki siya...As a social worker, it is really moving in an environment na mahirap - mahirap ang trabaho, maliit ang resources mo, maliit yung tao mo and malaki yung kalaban mo. That's how I see it.

(So how will you fight trafficking if you do not know your enemy? You need to create a giant all the time in terms of numbers and skills. When you fight, the enemy is trafficking, it's street children. It will defy everything, because the enemy is big. The social worker is in a difficult position – the work is hard, resources are limited, and your people are small in number while your enemy is big.)

Social Worker C says that social work is a good breeding ground for creative people. Just like writers, social workers see and are able to speak of the human condition needed in policy advocacy.

So she sees *creativity as creating a giant to be able to fight for the people*. (The giant referred to here is the development of an advocacy, a formidable program or intervention that will respond to a bigger social issue.) *Creativity is not only about the creation but also about the person who created it. It involves both the process and the creation (product). It is the capacity to create. Creativity is self emptying, always going back to zero; to die every day so that one can see outside of the self and be able to create for others. Creativity is pushing the work to the end.*

Creativity is “Responding to Multidimensional Concerns”

In her first job as community organizer, Social Worker E remembers being able to thrive in a non-threatening environment. She likens social work, specifically program development, to the elements and details of an artwork:

Una dapat yung kung iri-relate ko siya sa art, yung mga lines, yung mga curves...ganun din pagnagsi-shape ka or nagdi-develop ka ng isang program. You have to ensure na maayos siya. Hindi siya yung half cooked o half (baked) na project para talaga maging akma siya sa need ng client, maging responsive siya sa needs ng client.

(First, if I will relate it to art, the lines, the curves for a pattern, you shape or develop a program in the same manner. You have to ensure that everything is in order, not half cooked or half baked and that the project matches the needs of the clients, that it is responsive.)

She continues by saying that the social worker, particularly in pilot testing and manual writing, is like an artist in the way the details of

the work are carefully done. “*Dapat keen ka sa nitty-gritty ng dini-develop mong project or kahit manual man yang sinusulat mo, dapat maging ganun ka kapulido sa gagawin mo.*” (You must be keen on the nitty-gritty of the project you are developing, or even the manual you are writing; the work must be crafted well.) She applies this to pilot-testing and manual writing.

Social Worker E emphasizes the social worker’s mandate to develop innovative products and stresses further the need for creativity in social work practice:

Kailangan mo talagang maging creative sa lahat ng gagawin mo as a social worker. Sa social work practice kailangan maging creative kasi nga ang daming concerns. Yung social work profession kasi parang hindi siya confined sa isang concern. Ang dami niyang pinapakialaman.

(There is really a need to be creative in everything that a social worker does. In social work practice, there is a need to be creative due to the variety of concerns. The social work profession is not limited to just one concern. It concerns itself with many matters.)

Being creative, Social Worker E explains, requires the social worker not to be content with the existing programs because the demands change over time. One example is how program development becomes responsive to the emerging demands of direct practice.

Social Worker E says that a social worker can never be creative by simply doing the usual way of managing a case. She opposes the use of “generic social work case management” to deal with cases of “victim-survivors” of violence against women (VAW) or gender-based violence. Instead, she promotes the gender responsive case management.

One thing Social Worker E considers truly creative was her experience in training men from a totally different culture in gender sensitivity without having to offend them. “*Kaya yung creativity even sa mga SLEs [structured learning exercises], inaaral ko talaga even yung kultura nila. Kailangan wala akong masasagasaan kapag ginawa ko yung ganitong SLE. In-ensure ko na wala akong masasagasaang kultura nila, na ‘di ko sila mao-offend.*” (I exercised creativity even in the SLEs. I studied their culture carefully so that the SLEs were culturally appropriate and no one would get offended.)

Here, Social Worker E gives an idea of the social worker being “culturally creative.” She also considers the creation of the manual on gender

sensitive case management as one of her creative contributions. For her, creativity is seen also in the responsiveness and adaptability of the program at the local government level. When creativity is employed, the program becomes easy to market or immediately institutionalized or adapted.

To summarize Social Worker E's views on creativity: *Creativity is seen as thinking out of the box or not being content with what is presented in front of you. Creativity also entails going beyond the task given you. Creativity is like art where the social worker ensures attention to the details and the nitty-gritty of the program – i.e., “pulido.” More meaning is found in using creativity in personal relationships. Creativity also ensures the responsiveness and adaptability of a program. Creativity is necessary because of the varied multidimensional concerns of social work.*

Creativity is “Making the Complicated Simple”

Early socialization to service made Social Worker G think that she is in this kind of work not by choice but because social work brought her there. Her exposure to direct service with inmates and parolees developed in her the conviction that there must be a blending of crafting and delivering a program.

She emphasizes that a social worker's job is in 'giving birth,' but the job of 'child rearing' is even more crucial. She also shares that even if one is wearing a very expensive dress that does not fit well, the dress still would not look nice on the person wearing it. She uses these analogies to argue that, even if a program is well crafted, it will not be effective if it is not delivered well. It is in program implementation that the program fit occurs, through the creativity of the social workers implementing the program. The lessons learned from these adjustments are picked up in program development for re-design. Program development is, after all, dependent on what is happening on the ground.

In developing guidelines for implementation, she says, “You don't go always by the book. The book should only be there as your guide. It's not the 'Be all and end all' of the program.” She adds, “How do you make an available program fit to the people? That's creativity.”

Social Worker G shares further that “how to keep stakeholders interested in the program will need creativity.” She illustrates that, in a therapeutic community, introducing mechanisms motivates the clients to stay and to maintain their attendance. Her own experience was in introducing the revitalization of the volunteer program for parolees,

expanding the list of community volunteers to include professionals who could help the parolees. Social Worker G stresses that, after all, there is no other place that the parolee will return to but to his/her community.

She also explains that a program can be enhanced through research. She shares, for example, that the original concept of one program was based on the idea of their project head. With constant consultation, Social Worker G put together the ideas from the focus group discussions to develop the program framework. Later on, she became the focal person in coming up with the program manual, a guidebook that explains the program framework.

For Social Worker G, similar to Social Worker E and Social Worker I, creativity has more meaning if it is applied to one's own life. Social Worker G says, "I don't think I could survive this long if I were not creative." Her ultimate meaning of creativity is when it enables a person to survive. Similar to Social Worker E's view, Social Worker G considers being a mother as creative, i.e., the concept of "creative parenting." It is in applying creativity to different life skills that one is able to survive. So whether applied to work or to life in general, Social Worker G defines creativity as: *"the ability to find the right strategies, right solutions, right mechanisms or styles, with less time and less resources."* Creativity is really making complicated things simple.

Creativity is "Initiating Change"

While Social Worker K was able to set up an agency, she has devoted her life to her present Unit after her marriage. Within the same Unit, she shifts assignments from direct practice to program development. In learning the ropes, she developed the attitude of being innovative all of the time. She reiterates that their Unit is the think tank of the Department. She boasts that their Unit is the place where "everything gets cooked" and that it is where innovation takes place.

Being an acting head, she is now able to look at things from a different perspective. Following the stages in program development, it is in pilot testing that concepts are applied in the community. Social Worker K's attitude is that there would be times that pilot testing will fail but this must not discourage the social worker. For her, it is in the awareness of potential failure that the social worker must learn to take risks; and that is the beauty of being able to redesign. (Social Worker H who is already a Unit head shares

the same view.) She stresses that one purpose of the agency is to enable social workers to be true catalysts, real initiators of change. To achieve this, it is imperative that social workers have that attitude of being creative.

Aside from technical preparation, Social Worker K shares her insights on the importance or self-awareness, of constant reflection in order to assess one's status as a social worker. She says,

Kung alam ng social worker yung konsepto ng social work as a profession, as a subject or kung anumang level, dapat you dig deeper. Kasi ayaw na natin na makilala na taga-abot lang during disaster. You go beyond that. Ang gusto natin ay maging catalyst, maging initiator ng change. Hindi lang magi-initiate, kailangan may follow through ng entire process ng cycle.

Self awareness will lead the social workers to reflect on how they can be a real initiator of change.

Social Worker K says social work is a venue to really understand life. The social worker must “solidify” as a person and reflect or assess every day what kind of a social worker s/he has become, and what s/he has done to change the lives of others. Creativity is seen as being able say that one has “contributed a little of this onto that.” Social Worker K relates creativity to having a “true heart for service.”

Kasi naniniwala ako na, kung meron ka talagang tunay na paglilingkod, as I understand and I appreciate social work, andun lagi ang puso, andun lagi ang kagustuhan mo, and you have to be creative...Sabi nga, sa wala, sa kawalan, meron kang magagawa.

(I believe that the true meaning of service, as I understand and appreciate social work, is setting your heart, your desire to help others all the time. You have to be creative. As they say, you can build something out of nothing.)

The main thought is that, *if the social worker is not innovative, then s/he cannot be responsive. The social worker must reflect about the profession and should be self aware. Creativity is having the heart for service and for initiating change.*

Finding the Meanings

The responses pertaining to creativity are varied throughout the interviews yielding varied kinds of statements on creativity culled from the

transcriptions. First, there are direct definitions and meanings of creativity provided by the social workers. Second, there are other direct responses to questions relating to creativity, such as what the social workers consider as creative, Filipino and English words they associate with creativity, and their views on the importance of creativity. Other statements are analogies and insights on creativity that the social workers mentioned. These responses and statements are put together into clusters of themes which answer the first research question of this study: What meanings do social workers give to creativity in policy and program development?

Defining Creativity

Each of the participants has attempted to provide several definitions of creativity during the interviews. Shown below are the most common definitions given.

TABLE 1 Definition of creativity by social workers in policy and program development	
Social Worker B	<i>Creativity makes a difficult job easier; one will not notice the work anymore.</i>
Social Worker F	<i>Creativity is being different from the regular thing; it involves adding a little something to make it more interesting or more convenient.</i>
Social Worker H	<i>Creativity is an ability to offer a win-win solution to a problem that would actually benefit the client; it is the ability to exhaust all possible resources and the ability to sell an idea that the implementer will adapt.</i>
Social Worker I	<i>Creativity is doing something out of the ordinary; it is putting your heart and mind into it, not just using the mind but a balance of heart and mind.</i>
Social Worker L	<i>Creativity is being an all-around social worker.</i>
Social Worker C	<i>Creativity is the capacity to create; creativity involves the creation, the person who created it and the process of creation.</i>
Social Worker E	<i>Creativity is thinking out of the box; creativity is not being contented with what is presented in front of you; it entails doing something beyond the task given you.</i>
Social Worker G	<i>Creativity is the ability to find the right strategies, right solutions, right mechanisms or styles, with less time and less resources. Creativity is being able to make complicated things simple.</i>

TABLE 1 Definition of creativity by social workers in policy and program development	
Social Worker J	<i>Creativity is always doing things in a more substantial way.</i>
Social Worker K	<i>Creativity is the need to be innovative always; creativity is the willingness to take risks, and not to be boxed in.</i>

The above definitions suggest some common themes; one definition offers elements by which the meanings can be grouped. The definition provided by Social Worker C above defines creativity as involving not only the “creation” but also the “person who created it” and the “process of creation.” This is also true for the most common definitions given such as “thinking out of the box” which may point to the person who thinks differently, the product which is “different from the ordinary,” or the process where one thinks or works beyond what is expected.

Other themes from the social workers’ insights also show the same cluster of themes. For instance, “unique” may refer to the person, the output, or the process from which the contribution was arrived at. It may refer to “not losing oneself in the system,” “not being one with the crowd,” “not boxed in by existing programs,” “doing things out of the ordinary” or “something created with a personal touch.” In short, to the social workers, creativity means “being different” whether this refers to the person, the product or the process.

Personal Creativity

There are several concepts mentioned in the meanings related to personal creativity. First, there are meanings that point to creativity as applied in everyday life or related to survival. Second, there are Filipino traits mentioned related to creativity. Fourth, there is a discussion on the relation of self awareness to creativity and the ‘true heart’ of service. Fifth, the concept of ‘holding back’ or ‘self restraint’ is mentioned in at least three interviews which has some implication on whether a person has the choice to be creative or not.

Creativity in Everyday Life

Creativity is seen as attached to living itself. If creativity is applied at work, it is because it is also applied in practical matters of life, such as survival or parenting. There are several terms that were introduced based on the interviews, such as *cultural creativity*, *relational creativity*, *parental creativity* and even *professional creativity* which can be related to other terms introduced in existing literature, such as Gardner's (1993) *social creativity* (see also Domingues, 2000; Montuori, 1999) and Miztal's (2007) *civic creativity*. As some participants say, it is when social workers are able to relate creativity to their personal lives that they find it most meaningful. Even inside the organization, an individual may apply skills in everyday survival and this the social workers consider as creative.

Self-awareness and Creativity

For some participants, meanings of creativity are formed during self-reflection. In the process, the person develops self-awareness – knowing and maximizing one's capacity as a social worker and one's willingness to take risks.

A Filipino Notion of Creativity

The responses of the social workers also reveal interesting Filipino illustrations and analogies. There are certain terms that may be used as a basis for a Filipino conception of creativity in relation to social work. Terms such as *paglalapat ng bago at luma* (the fusion of the old and new) and *pulido* (masterfully crafted) have potential for the creation of a Filipino framework on creativity.

These Filipino terms point to the personal meanings of creativity at the individual and the organizational levels of analysis. Shown in the table below of Filipino words is a grouping of words that describe the person, the product or the process – an indication that the Filipino social worker looks at one's self, one's contribution and the process by which the contribution was produced as all forms of creativity.

katangian ng tao (Person)	Malikhain, Maabilidad, Madiskarte; Palaisip, mapagtanong, hindi takot mag-fail; mapanlikha; malikhaing isip; nakikipag-usap ka; mayaman ka sa resources; lagi kang meron maishi-share; Pag creative ka, laging may sagot dun sa tanong; Koboy; Sa factory - productive; Di nakokontento; Malikhain; natatawanan ang problema; kaya i-endure; kaya tumayo nang hindi natitinag; kilala ang sarili; may kakayahang mag-cope; discernment kung alin ang fit; alam kung saan nakatayo; alam kung paano patatakbuhan ang buhay; Malikhain; mahusay; maparaan
katangian ng produkto o Bagay (Product)	Maganda, Magayon, Mas mahusay sa pinagmulan; Makulay, Masaya Kakaiba, Mabusisi Marami; Bago; bebenta; click na click; simple pero rock; parang 3-in-1; Kapaki-pakinabang, Katanggap-tanggap, Tumutugon sa pangangailangan
Ginagawa (Process)	Paglalapat (ng bago at luma); Pagandahin ang isang bagay

Another concept mentioned by at least three social workers is 'holding back' or 'restraining the self.' It may be related to the Filipino value of "*pakikiramdam*" in personal relations (Enriquez in Pe-Pua, 1995). As the social workers share, it is a survival strategy in a bureaucracy. Another implication of 'holding back' is the possibility for a person to choose to be creative or not.

The other side of the coin implies that creativity is determined by the judgment of others or by the environment, sometimes referred to as the 'press.' Here, individual creativity is judged in two ways. First, others may look at the person as possessing the trait of being creative and thus judge him or her to be creative (Boehm, 1961; Gelfand, 1988; Rapoport, 1968; Siporin, 1988; Turner, 1999). The other one is related to the systems view of creativity where a certain *field* or the gatekeepers of a certain *domain*, such as the social work profession, judge a certain work as creative (Feldman, Csikszentmihalyi and Gardner, 1994). The members of the *field* may be senior officers in the organization, members of the NGO communities, funding agencies, the academe, etc. In this sense, it is the product or the contribution that is being judged to be creative, but then the person who created the product is also referred to as creative.

However, consistent with Gray and Webb (2008), some participating social workers saw creativity in the work itself.

Conclusion

Creativity, knowingly or unknowingly, is found in everyday life experiences of social workers. Creativity inheres in the way Filipinos view practice. That is, a creative social worker goes beyond the ordinary in order to best serve the interest of the service users. In Philippine practice context, social welfare officers in the area of program and policy development are considered the *think tank* of the organization. The practice gaps identified, through research, evaluation, and consultation with multi-level stakeholders lead to the formulation and testing of new social technology. Creativity therefore is essential for good practice. Program and policy development practitioners consider themselves and the product of what they do as creative. More than this, the participating social workers find the work that they do, whether direct or indirect practice, as creative and part of the creative process. As such, social work is considered a nurturing ground for creativity. The nature of collaboration consistent with the move towards convergence of different agencies involved in social development and poverty alleviation in the Philippines also shows the milieu in which social workers are able to become creative.

Terms introduced in the interviews such as *cultural creativity*, *relational creativity*, *parental creativity* and even *professional creativity* point to ways creativity is experienced in practice. These, together with the Filipino words associated with creativity, not only open the possibility for a Filipino notion of creativity but more so for a broader systematic theorizing in social work practice.

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HOUSING RIGHTS AND THE URBAN POOR: THE EXPERIENCES OF SELECTED RELOCATEES IN RODRIGUEZ, RIZAL

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In the Philippines, statistics shows that 1 of 4 residents of Metro Manila are informal settlers. This paper is a preliminary effort in looking into the various housing experiences of the urban poor presently residing in a relocation area. It examined how a “bulimic behaviour” of attracting people from the rural and eventually flushing them out of the city was manifested by state agencies as gleaned from the experiences of urban informal settlers. This author engaged in focus group discussions and case studies of urban poor community members who also underwent off-city relocation. The experiences of the urban poor are deemed significant in dispelling wrong perceptions about the sector and also serve as significant backdrop in asserting their right to housing in the city.

Introduction

The urban population worldwide has increased from 40.1 percent to 45.3 percent within 2000 to 2010, and is projected to reach 50.5 percent by 2020 (UN Habitat 2003) and as high as 70 percent by 2050 (UN Habitat 2010). The greatest impact is expected to be in the so-called ‘developing’ regions including South-Eastern Asia where many large cities have been experiencing constant growth. These rapid increases in urban population may lead to a massive crisis in urban housing as people need shelter, employment and urban social services. Since urban

¹One participant died a few days after the FGD was conducted. While this could be due to old age (Imelda was 62), her neighbors believe that inaccessibility of health services in the site compounded by abject poverty caused her death.

centers are unable to meet these needs, the informal economy has been the alternative source of new employment and housing – burgeoning into environments that are hence known as informal settlements (UN Habitat 2003 and 2010). Also called ‘slums,’ these settlements are where more than half of the population in many cities live and work.

Slums and urban poverty are not merely consequences of the population explosion in the cities. In order to understand the context of the emergence of slums and the experiences of the various informal communities and informal settler-families (ISFs), it would be constructive to study these from a holistic, structural point of view.

The neoliberal economic regime that has been in place for more than 50 years affects the lives of millions all over the world (Peet and Hartwick 2009). As big capital owners and their national bourgeois-partners benefit from a capitalist scheme of profit accumulation, human labor has been pegged at very low values. Under the “new international division of labor,” developing countries became new sites for manufacturing, thus it is here that extremely cheap labor is found (Froebel, Heinrichs, & Kreye, 1980). Production was relocated and industrialization in these countries soon became fragmented leading to an export-oriented type of ‘industrialization.’ The Philippines, being one such country, is characterized by this export-oriented economy that exports raw materials and depends on the importation of key manufactured products (Villegas, 2000).

Theoretical Points: ‘Surplus humanity’ and ‘state bulimia’

The massive influx of rural population towards urban centers is a symptom of the lack of upward mobility among farmers in the countryside where landlessness is pervasive. Factors like outdated tools in production, inadequate irrigation, exorbitant land rent, usury, calamities, and militarization when there is resistance by the locals to state-led projects in their areas exacerbate the poverty of the farmers (Kimuell-Gabriel, 2013). Rural dwellers then march to the city as workers and service-providers and are absorbed into the ‘reserve army’ of labor. They travel to Manila to toil as construction workers, factory workers, house helpers, drivers, sales ladies, waitresses, security guards, vendors and anything worth a few pesos.

The ‘trickle-down’ logic of neoliberal economists is founded on the idea that labor is indeed cheap at first. After the labor pool has been dried up, wages will eventually rise (Portes, 1997). However, capitalists can immediately balk at the slightest threat to their investments, and thus are able to command how much they are going to compensate the workers for their labor power. Furthermore, the terms of employment are uncertain. They operate largely on a contractual basis, and global production and circulation of value are now under increasingly insecure under globally competitive conditions (McMichael, 1996). Workers receive very meager remuneration despite very harsh working conditions, a major reason why a lot of workers eschew the formal economy and resort to the informal sector (Portes, 1997). They rely on their friends and family ties or social capital to find alternative livelihood, putting up small businesses and fending for themselves day to day, a survival-of-the-fittest type of existence in the city. They improvise and construct dwellings in communities along foreshores and under bridges using substandard materials.

‘Surplus humanity’

This decoupling of urbanization and capital from industrialization and development is described in Mike Davis’ *Planet of Slums* wherein slums represent the only “fully franchised solution to the problem of warehousing the twenty-first century’s surplus humanity” (Davis 2004). The ballooning of the working population in urban areas bleeds in-to the creation of slums.

With the inflow of foreign capital enabling various condominiums, residential buildings and shopping malls to swiftly crop up in every prime location and major route in the city, informal settlements are seen today as obstructing the ‘development’ endeavors of big construction outfits – with the acquiescence of the local governments which eventually implement their demolition and the national government which facilitates the settlers’ relocation.

At the same time that the city attracts rural migration, the subsequent burgeoning of slums and the problems of unemployment are being dealt with superficially. Some examples of this are the infamous putting up of walls to keep informal settler families hidden from the view of visiting foreign dignitaries and investors along boulevards leading to the airport during Imelda Marcos’ time, as well as the sweeping of hundreds of homeless families off the streets and out of sight during the Pope’s state visit in January 2015.

'State bulimia'

Tadiar (1993) makes use of the term “bulimia” – an eating disorder which is manifested by induced vomiting after bouts of overeating -- to further explain this phenomenon of attracting people from the rural then eventually flushing them. Tadiar describes “Manila’s metropolitan body as the immense pool of surplus cheap labor – the sea – sur-rounding the archipelago edifice system of the upper strata.” The liquidity of petty cash and spatial practices seen in the particularity of Manila’s labor (characterized as “home-work”), is seen by the State as necessary, yet it is an “excess” and is something to be purged. This “bulimic behavior” displayed by the state adds to the contradictory steps in policies or actions regarding the tenure of urban informal settlers.

It is within this structural context of “state bulimia” and failure in policy that the ur-ban poor hang on to their creative and difficult strategies of survival in the city. Life in the city also meant living under the constant threat of eviction. Left to deal with vulnerabilities at various levels – poverty vulnerability due to meager wages and insecure working conditions, and physical vulnerability due to unsafe housing conditions – the urban poor find themselves struggling as claim-holders of basic human rights.

Research Objectives

This study aims to describe the urban poor’s view of the right to housing. It is hoped that by doing so, critical points can be identified to advance the discourse on a more grounded view, that is, from the standpoint of the urban poor not as receivers or beneficiaries of “development” but as rights holders.

The specific objectives are to:

- (1) describe the experiences of urban poor research participants pertaining to housing; and
- (2) cull out the characteristics of decent housing from the experiences and perspectives of the urban poor.

Data Gathering Method

This qualitative study focused on the experiences of 12 relocatees from two adjacent relocation sites – Kasiglahan Village and Southville –

in Rodriguez (formerly Montalban), Rizal. Focus group discussions were conducted in the two sites. The data generated were the basis for the selection of themes for the case studies. The experiences of the three participants were deemed to capture the depth and range of experiences of relocatees.

Going around the vast relocation area with over 30,000 row houses was made possible with the help of the organized members of the Montalban Relocates Alliance (MRA) and KADAMAY or Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap. The FGD participants were chosen from as many phases (zones) of the study sites as possible. It is important to note, however, that not all row houses are occupied since many settlers tend to go back to the inner city. For instance, Phase 1K2 is nearly abandoned after residents experienced roof-high floods in 2010.

Convenience and snowball sampling was used in the study. Two community leaders of MRA and KADAMAY, who were themselves participants in the FGD, were asked to invite active members from other phases. Given the objectives of the study, the participants were selected based on three criteria:

- (1) They are relocatees forcibly evicted from the inner city.
- (2) They continue to experience disaster-related vulnerability. The area is prone to high floods and earthquakes since the relocation site sits within a 500-meter radius of the West Valley fault line.
- (3) Their vulnerability is compounded by financial hardships in the site.

Since the group is relatively homogenous (all but three are women, married and engaged in paid work), the small number of participants would not only be sufficient for a FGD but also manageable in terms of quality of interactions (Freitas et al., 1998). Fictitious names were used in this report to protect the participants' identities.

Limitation of the Study

This study is a preliminary effort in capturing the complex problems of achieving adequate housing rights in relocation sites in the country. Due to the site's enormity, as well as other factors such as budget limitations (two-way fare expenses for each participant from far distances amount to Php 60) and time constraints (participants have different work

locations and schedules), the study opted for sampling by convenience. The results cannot therefore be generally applied to a larger population. However, they can suggest similar patterns.

Data Summary:

3. Experiences prior to relocating

Easier to earn money in the city

All participants, both in the past and at present, belong to the informal sector of the economy. Some of their employment were as house help, laundry woman, tricycle driver, vendor, sari-sari store owner, garbage scavenger, piece-rate worker, construction worker, factory worker and spa worker. Comparing their sources of in-come in the city and in the site, the participants agree that it is easier to earn a living in the city.

Experiences of demolition

All of them experienced demolitions due to disaster-related reasons (the Tondo fire and the Payatas dumpsite tragedy) and 'development'-related reasons (road widening, new road construction and commercial business developments). All of them decry the injustice of being subjected to demolition, with the awareness that the interests of powerful enterprises were given priority over theirs. Those from Lupang Pangako, Payatas filed cases asserting that the area was actually a relocation site and should not have been converted into a landfill. Since their dwellings were demolished by government agencies (like the Department of Public Works and Highways for road widening and road construction), they demanded that their relocation be paid in full. Some residents did receive payment but they all agreed that the amount given was not sufficient for them to survive even the first two months in the new Rodriguez site.

Life in the relocation site

Fear of being evicted from the relocation site

All of the respondents have problems in paying for their respective housing units. They raised questions regarding payment which they explained as akin to 'rent.' Because of this, they have

fears that their stay in the relocation site may be only temporary and they will be evicted again.

Financial hardship

All of them expressed the desire to move out of the relocation site where access to livelihood is the main problem. While some of them earn income by selling food, managing sari-sari stores and selling beauty products within the community, others still work in the central part of the municipality or nearby cities as laundry women. All of them have at least one family member who works in the city and contributes to the household finances. They decry criminality in their surroundings yet they also said that people steal and sell drugs for lack of opportunities to earn an income.

Lack of basic services and utilities

The participants deplore the lack of utilities and services in the relocation site. Until the water and electric connection was secured in the site, a nearby river was the main source of water of the participants during the first months after relocation. It is the practice of water and electric companies to start extending their services in relocation sites only after majority of the row houses are occupied before they

The row houses also did not have windows, doors and toilet bowls when the participants moved in. It was expected that these would be installed by the relocatees themselves.

4. Participants' views on adequate housing

Within access to decent livelihood — The major problem identified in the site is the lack of decent means of livelihood. Thus the settlers are unable to pay for their units and cannot afford basic necessities such as food and water.

With accessible basic social services and utilities — Access to schools, hospitals, affordable means of transportation, water and electricity is a major component in their visions of decent housing.¹

Safe — Phases 1D, 1K1 and 1K2 suffer from high floods during heavy rains and typhoons, and the area is along the West Valley fault line. In the participants' words, they are in 'death

zones.’ They have rallied for flood control and rip-rapping the riverbanks. Cases of crimes such as robbery, theft, drug trade and killings are also rampant in the area.

Secure — Security of tenure or not being threatened or ordered to move out is also an aspiration arising from their past experiences of demolitions.

As mentioned, three case studies were developed as the study progressed. The following are the digests of the cases:

Case Study 1 – Mila, 28 years old

Mila was born in Brgy. Corazon de Jesus, San Juan City in what is, in her own words, a ‘squatters area.’ The youngest of four siblings, she was a constant companion to her mother who was a vendor. The income they got from selling softdrinks and snacks in Greenhills Mall was enough to provide for their food and other basic needs. So despite the noise, common toilets and constant threats of diseases and fire in the squatters area where she lived, they were happy – until the city government took over the community for different projects (the San Juan arena, a police station and a school). The residents were relocated in Rodriguez.

Completing her schooling

Mila was determined to finish grade school. This meant she would wake up at 3:00 A.M. to make it to a free jeepney ride provided by the city council to bring students from the relocation site to their school in San Juan. The jeepney would take them back to their community in Rodriguez by 7:00 P.M.. When Mila reached high school, her mother rented a small room back in Corazon de Jesus (a portion of their original community which was not demolished). This way, her mother could continue working as a vendor in Greenhills.

A temporary school was built in the site by Mila’s sophomore year. Some row houses were converted into classrooms, there was a blackboard, and students only had to bring their own chairs. Mila survived a year in the makeshift school before transferring back to San Juan. She said the ‘riots got worse’ as more and more groups from different communities arrived in the relocation site. She stayed with her mother again in a small rented room but had to go back to the site because there were threats that their unit ‘will be pad-locked’ or taken back from them. To keep their unit, Mila finished her high school in the site.

Life in the relocation

As a 12 year-old, she described the relocation site as bare (*'wala lahat'*). There was no water, no electricity, no toilet, door, or windowpanes in the houses, and no school. To survive the first months, the relocatees had to create a makeshift water spring at the nearest creek they could find. The streets were not concrete and easily became muddy during the rainy season.

Now at 28, Mila has grown to love their row house saying that they worked hard for its improvement (*'katas ng Makati'* or from her work as a sales lady in Makati). She says it is better than their old house because it is concrete.

What could make it truly decent, she says, are: availability of livelihood, social services (she cited schools, hospitals), and secure access to utilities like water and electricity. She deplores the *'kanya-kanya'* (each person for her/himself) relations and favoritism she observed from officials (e.g. some are favored by the National Housing Authority). She also feels that the government should be more sensitive to people's financial capacity to pay for basic services, including amortization.

Mila sympathizes people whose houses were demolished or deliberately burned down to make way for development projects. She asked, *"Bakit' sila ganyan? Sinisira nila kabuhayan ng mga tao, ilalagay nila sa wala"*. ('Why are they like that? They destroy people's livelihood then transfer them to areas where there is no source of income.')



Case Study 2 – Delia, 59 years old

Delia is from a family of sugarcane farmers in Murcia, Negros Occidental. She went to Manila in her teenage years to work as a helper. She married early and first lived in a community in Sucat, Paranaque. Her husband worked as a taxi driver while she was a collector of electricity fees in their neighborhood. She gave birth to all her five children in their house in Sucat. They later moved to another community in Zabarte, Quezon City, which was later demolished to give way to a condominium project. While others went to Bagong Silangan, Delia's family moved to Lupang Pangako, in Payatas, Quezon City. Payatas was already a dumpsite when they arrived. Her husband continued his work as a driver while she and her children earned by scavenging. Despite difficulties, she took in one of her nieces, a single mother who was pregnant and with two children.

Payatas tragedy

Delia was with four of her children, her pregnant niece and grandchildren in their house when the tragedy happened on July 10, 2000. Her youngest daughter was close beside her in a sturdy part of the house when suddenly an avalanche of garbage swallowed their house. They were the only two survivors in their family. Later they found out that the whole community had been almost buried by the garbage. According to Alma, Delia's eldest daughter who was not in Payatas that day, her mother was out her mind for days. Alma also admits instantaneously blaming her parents for her siblings's death. They relocated to the Rodriguez site a month after and, like other survivors from Payatas, their understanding was that the row house was 'just a staging area' until they would be moved back to Lupang Pangako. Lupang Pangako is a relocation site itself, and was not originally part of the landfill area. However, more than a decade after, they were still in Rodriguez.

Delia became involved in actions to demands justice for the victims and survivors of the Payatas tragedy. Later she was hired by the NHA as a fees collector from fellow residents. Within three years, she was able to pay PhP 21,000 to the NHA, still so far behind the stipulated PhP 165,000. She shares that out of the 568 families-relocatees from Payatas, there are only about ten of them left.

Safety and security

Delia developed many illnesses in the Rodriguez relocation site: tuberculosis (for which she underwent six months of medication), diabetes and hypertension. She earns income from selling *kangkong* or swamp cabbage picked from a nearby creek or working in a relative's *carinderia* in Calocan.

For Delia, an important component of decent housing is decent livelihood. While she is grateful that they were slowly able to improve their house, what they cannot fix is hunger and lack of economic opportunities in the site. Having experienced chest-high flood waters during Typhoon Ondoy in 2009, Delia thinks that there seems to be no place where they are truly safe. For her, decent housing should be safe and secure.



Case Study 3 – Hernan, 47 years old

Hernan comes from a family of farmers in Tanawan, Samar but his father decided to take a different path and tried his hand at tailoring for local customers. This small business went bankrupt in 1976. They

shifted to making rice cakes and other delicacies. As a teenager, Hernan sold assorted goods during fiestas. An opportunity was offered to his parents in 1987 to sew basketball uniforms in Manila. He was then left to look after his younger siblings.

His parents' first dwelling was inside the ceiling of the Bureau of Soils building on Maria Orosa Street in Manila where a relative was working as a security guard. They couldn't leave this space during the day and had to be cautious in going in and out of the building. They moved to Pandacan in 1988, and a year later moved again to a community along Brgy. Pinyahan near EDSA.

Hernan was 21 when he first experienced demolition to make way for the construction of the commercial complex known today as Eton Centris. Their family settled in Lupang Pangako (literally, "promised land") which was then designated for informal settlers with promises from politicians that they would no longer be illegal settlers.

Building a house

Hernan's first job in Manila was making lumpia wrappers, then he became a construction worker. He worked in a garments factory from 1989 to 1996 when the factory closed. Although he was a pattern maker in the factory and received an above-minimum wage, the first house he was able to construct for his family was from 40 big tin cans of cooking oil, a few slabs of coconut lumber, and 56 square meters of linoleum which served as the roof. His wife Tika, whom he met at the factory, wept upon seeing their first house because it was so near the road, they could hear everyone passing by.

Political awakening

Hernan became aware of the right to housing when he first heard of the community mortgage program (CMP) under the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA) or RA 7279 in 1993. A census soon followed and land markers ('muhon') were placed in their community. It was then that they formed their organization Samahan ng Kabahayan sa Lupang Pangako (SANGKOP). When the Clean Air Act was passed in 1995 and incinerators were prohibited, Payatas was turned into a dumpsite by the city council. They protested and asserted that Lupang Pangako was a relocation site, but they were overruled by the city government. Soon tons of garbage obstructed their view of the nearby La Mesa Dam and the House of Representatives, and the land where their children used to play was swallowed by the landfill. From the original 19 hectares, an additional 16 hectares were added to the landfill that encroached on their community.

“You cannot force a square to fit into a circle”

For Hernan, now an active leader of KADAMAY, the UDHA is defective because it merely focuses on the physical structures—row house, (dirt) roads, water, electricity— but it is silent on providing or looking into jobs and social services (schools, hospitals, transportation) for the people when they relocate to the houses. “You cannot force a square to fit into a circle,” Hernan adds as he laments the lack of livelihood in their place. He describes the relocation site as ‘a prison house for the poor’ and regards the project not as a genuine service to the poor but rather a business enterprise of rich developers in partnership with the government.

Findings and Analysis

A pattern of continuing rural to urban migration

The data gathered support the well-established information that majority of Manila residents come from families of farmers in the countryside. Tracing their roots as *sakadas* in sugarcane farmlands and as *copra* farmers, the participants typify the *probinsyana* and *probinsyano* who are lured into the city. But with economic vulnerability rendering them unable to afford decent dwellings, they restructure their lives around whatever space is left for them to occupy—near roads, landfills and government lands.

Awakening of the ‘surplus humanity’

Unable to access adequate jobs, these rural-to-urban migrants are driven to settle in slums or relocation sites where availability and access to basic services and livelihood opportunities are sparse. Instead, they take on any livelihood which can earn them an in-come to provide for their needs. All the participants in this study did not want to relocate, but they also wanted a secure house of their own. Being members of the Montalban Relocateses Alliance (MRA), all of them are staunch activists against demolition. Within their community they are active in working for improvements in the relocation site (e.g., flood control and rip-rapping). Their lived realities in the site — no basic necessities unless they pay, no concrete streets and no schools unless they solicit from benevolent personalities, no access to hospitals unless they gas up the ambulances — all contribute to their realization of their marginalization not just from the right to housing but from access to basic services as well. As Davis has put it, the ‘slum poor’ are critical actors that will form historical traditions of

resistance. The surplus humanity expelled from formal world economy are the countervailing forces to a world imperium (Davis, 2004).

Of 'bulimic state' and demolitions

All the participants experienced demolition whether due 'development' projects (e.g. road widening, real estate construction) or disasters (e.g. communities burned down and a 'garbage avalanche'). Due to such experiences of displacement, the possession of a house and a land title is viewed as an important goal. The participants are also fearful of yet another possible displacement even from the relocation site itself. This stems from their observation that there are more and more private buyers, people who are able to put up two-storey houses, hardware and grocery stores, in the area. Although considered as a relocation site, the land is not exclusive to relocates but it is also available to other willing buyers). This could be a sign of 'gentrification' (or improvements conforming to the middle-class taste) which is often a signal for yet another displacement of the unwanted poor.

The rationale behind demolitions and the constant threat of being displaced are analyzed systemically by Frederick Engels in his *The Housing Question*:

*In reality, the bourgeoisie has only one method of solving the housing question after its fashion—that is to say in solving it in such a way that the solution continually reproduces the question anew... No matter how different the reasons may be, the result is always the same; the scandalous alleys and lanes disappear... But they appear again immediately somewhere else... the same economic necessity which produced them in the first place, produces them in the next place.” (Friedrich Engels in *The Housing Question*, cited in Peet and Hartwick, 2009)*

Slums may be put down but, with the social, political and economic structures that have put them up still in place, they will reappear. As lands occupied by informal settlers gain premium value, their settlements are torn down and are replaced with new structures. This is shown by the experiences of the participants—San Roque and Pinyahan along EDSA proved to be profitable for putting up malls, Lupang Pangako originally designated for informal settlers turned out to be a good option for a landfill for Quezon City, San Andres Bukid had to give way to the construction of a road. The places occupied by the urban poor gain value but they will have to be driven out as collateral damages to 'development.'

“You cannot force a square to fit into a circle” and difficulties in relocating

With wages that can barely make ends meet, the research participants had a very narrow chance of successfully surviving in the resettlement area where there were no utilities and services. Yet they improvised to survive: creating make-shift water springs by the creek, collecting and selling plastic garbage and hanging on to their livelihood in the central part of the municipality or cities no matter how costly it proved to be. That they still want to move out of the relocation site is primarily due to the absence of decent means of livelihood in the site. One participant aptly puts it: “You cannot force a square to fit into a circle.” This means that the urban poor cannot be forced to live in a relocation area just because they are eyesores in the city. Their capacities and means for living should be paramount.

Historically, laws have a distinct function as instruments for achieving desired economic and political development. However, based on a study on trends in residential patterns by architects Ramos and Kun (2010), legal instrumentalism has been used as a mechanism towards modernization along the Western model of development. This is a drive towards liberal democratic directions and free-enterprise capitalism in which the legal system is disjointed from the people and is largely identified with the interests of the elite (Magallona 2012). An example of this is the observation of the relocatees’ organization that the government’s housing program for the poor is not just palliative but is even a harmful response to the housing problem. The trend was that although there is an option of an “on-site development” or “in-city relocation” under the UDHA or Urban Development and Housing Act (RA 7292), mostly off-city resettlement has been the default option which thus leads to demolition and eviction of urban poor communities. The effect, in fact, has been the legalization of demolition.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This paper presented the housing experiences of 12 relocatees in a resettlement site in Rodriguez, Rizal. It throws light on the plight of the urban poor as it deliberately aims to assert for their housing rights. It is the hope of this paper that it was able to put in-to serious question extant policies and procedures that were crafted not from the perspective of the relocatees but rather more from those of large commercial developers and housing agencies.

From the perspective of the relocatees who were participants in this study, adequate housing must include access to decent livelihood, basic social services and utilities. It must also be safe from disasters and must ensure security of tenure to the residents. It was shown in this paper that these are the components that are lacking in the relocation site and are the very things that the relocatees continue to seek. Therefore, the relocation program in general needs serious reassessment.

Future research can be conducted in other major relocation sites, both within and outside Metro Manila. It can also include hypothesis generation such as which housing projects generate good practices, if any, and for what reasons.

Researches should lead toward making adequate housing rights more robustly embedded in future housing projects. They could explore on questions like:

- o To what extent can a new and comprehensive urban development and land use program bearing all sectors' interests and welfare be set into motion?
- o What kinds of inter-agency steps can the government take to really get to the crux of addressing the challenges of rural-urban migration and provision of social services and decent livelihood?

Answers to these questions could point towards more areas to pursue in relation to human and community development.

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THE ROLE OF WOMEN'S HOME GARDENS IN THE HOUSEHOLD ECONOMY OF COCONUT FARMING HOUSEHOLDS IN TIMES OF RECURRENT TYPHOONS

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Abstract

This qualitative and descriptive study examines the issue of food security of farm working households in a rural community hit by an average of 17 typhoons a year. It provides a glimpse of how women living in poverty ensure the food security of their households on a daily basis. It examined the lives of women from farm working households in a rural barangay and the multiple roles they play in their households' food security. It highlights women's survival strategies in coping with chronic poverty and the adverse effects of repeated destructive typhoons – loss of livelihoods and incomes, high prices of basic commodities and food insecurity. In such difficult circumstances, the home garden was seen as playing a major role in maintaining the food security of their households.

Key words: poverty, survival strategies, food security, recurrent typhoons, home gardens, women

Introduction

Agriculture is one of the most vulnerable sectors to typhoons due to its dependence on weather and climatic variability. At the same time, a large proportion of people living in poverty belong to this sector (IBON, 2013 as cited in Barrameda, 2015). The lack of access to and control over land further aggravates the vulnerability

of rural women and men to recurrent typhoons and disasters, since their livelihoods depend largely on this resource. In rural agriculture, women comprise the majority of the workforce as low-paid farm workers or as unpaid farm workers in family farms or in subsistence agriculture. In particular, women living in poverty in rural areas are doubly vulnerable in times of recurrent typhoons and especially in times of 'small' or 'negligible' disasters. These disasters are not usually covered by media and nor generate external emergency support. Yet the frequency of its occurrence affects the community in the long-term almost just as greatly as large-scale disasters.

Like other social development issues such as health, disability, peace, climate change, etc., food security is also a development issue that is of critical importance. Amidst poverty and climactic variability such as recurrent typhoons, food security is a primary problem faced by poor farming households, especially the farm working households. Food security, according to the FAO is the continuous accessibility, availability and affordability of sufficient, safe and nutritious food. A household is considered food insecure when it lacks available, accessible, adequate, and appropriate food. Although the discourse on food security has been continuing at the global level since the World Food Summit in 1996, the targets set have not yet been achieved. In a 2001 press release, the FAO noted that very little progress has been achieved by governments regarding commitments to implement the agreements. Particularly in the Philippines, the government has initiated several programs to address food security and hunger. However, these services rarely benefited farm working households. Given such a scenario, this study highlights the initiatives and crucial role of women in farm working households in ensuring the food security of their families in everyday survival and in times of recurrent typhoons.

This paper is structured as follows: Section I introduces the concepts of poverty, vulnerability and food security. Section II discusses the links of gender, food security and the right to food. Section III highlights the policies and programs of the Philippine government in relation to food security and the right to food. Section IV presents cases documenting how ten women cope with poverty and recurrent typhoons and the role of their home gardens in responding to the food insecurity brought about by recurrent typhoons. Lastly, Section V provides the study's conclusions and recommendations.

Poverty, Vulnerability and Food Security

Food security is defined as a condition in which “all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, as cited in HLPE, 2012: p.21). Food security has three pillars, namely: (1) food availability, or the physical presence of food in a particular area, (2) food access, or the capacity of a household to acquire sufficient amounts of food, and (3) food utilization or how households and/or individuals use food (Ofreneo and Narito, 2012). However, there are factors, such as poverty, that affect people’s food security in one or all of these pillars.

The poor are deemed vulnerable to food insecurity (i.e. the inability of securing adequate food today and the risk of the same in the future) because they lack the necessary resources to meet basic needs and are highly sensitive to economic shocks (HLPE, 2012). According to Zia and Gadi (2001), two types of food insecurity may be experienced by people. One is transitory food insecurity which refers to a “temporary lack of access to food caused by such factors as decline in food production or household incomes, instability in food prices, natural as well as human-made disasters or seasonal unavailability of food” (p.73). The other is chronic food insecurity, a situation in which “people face a continuous lack of ability to produce or acquire food” (p.73). As such, poverty is a condition that increases people’s vulnerability to food insecurity.

Vulnerability to food insecurity operates at the national, household, and individual levels. Although social protection responses are available for each level, absence [or lack of] social protection will intensify food insecurity and vulnerability (HLPE, 2012).

The first semester of 2013 registered a poverty incidence level of 24.9 percent, according to the Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS) conducted by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) (GOVPH, 2014). Using the Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES), poverty incidence in the Philippines as of the first semester of 2015 registered at 26.3 percent (PSA, 2016). Although the two surveys are incomparable because they have “income and consumption modules [that] are not the same” (ADB, 2009: p.11), both surveys show that the poverty level in the country remains above 20 percent.

For the first semester of 2015, the Food and Nutrition Research Institute (FNRI) set a food threshold (minimum income needed to ensure

basic food needs) of at least Php 6,365 a month for a family of five, expanded to at least Php 9,140 a month to include both basic food and non-food needs (PSA, 2016)—although household poverty might be underestimated with this index as “it does not take into account that the poor may pay more because they cannot afford to buy in bulk” (ADB, as cited in ADB, 2009: p.11). This “underestimation” may mean that poor families may actually need more than the estimated food threshold in order to obtain their basic food needs.

Looking at Filipino families living in poverty, the PSA also reported an estimated 21.1 percent poverty incidence among Filipino families and a 9.2 percent subsistence incidence (extreme poverty) for the first semester of 2015 (PSA, 2016). Around 80 percent of poor people in the Philippines live in rural areas, with the poorest of the poor in the country being composed of indigenous peoples, small scale farmers, landless workers, fishers, people in upland areas, and women (IFAD, n.d.). The Bicol region is one of the regions where poverty incidence has been persistently high (ADB, 2009). The results of the 2011 Annual Poverty Indicator Survey (APIS) showed that 9.5 percent of families in Bicol experienced poverty three months prior to the conduct of the survey and, if one would only look at poor families, hunger experience would rise to 16.2 percent (PSA, 2013).

To assess the vulnerability of families to food insecurity, possible sources of food and other factors, such as poverty, that affect access to said food sources must be looked into. Amartya Sen (in HLPE, 2012) classified food sources using his entitlement approach and identified four food sources: (1) production (food one grows), (2) labor (food one has worked for), (3) trade (food bought), and (4) transfers (food one is given). When food gathered from all sources is still inadequate for daily needs, food insecurity occurs, but this can be countered with social protection responses at all levels of the entitlement category (Devereux, 2008 as cited in HLPE, 2012).

As stated earlier, food insecurity operates at various levels. Food insecurity at the national level occurs when there is a lack of adequate scalable social protection systems in place. At the household level, food insecurity vulnerability is related to threats to livelihood (whether means of livelihood are inadequate or susceptible to collapse). At the individual level, food insecurity vulnerability can be analyzed by using a life-course framework looking at social protection measures throughout one’s lifespan disaggregated by gender and

disability (HLPE, 2012). On all levels, poverty can be theorized as one of the major factors affecting quality access to food sources, thereby affecting food insecurity at all levels of resources and benefits, taking into consideration the different needs of women throughout the life cycle; division of labor in the household; and decision-making powers).

TABLE 1: Food Security Entitlement Categories and Social Protection Measures (Devereux, 2012)

Entitlement category	Social protection instruments	Food security objectives
Production	2.1 Input subsidies 2.2 Crop and livestock insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote food production • Protect against harvest failure or livestock mortality
Labour	2.3 Public works programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide temporary employment • Create useful infrastructure • Promote agricultural production
Trade	2.4 Food price stabilization 2.5 Food subsidies 2.6 Grain reserves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain market access to food • Keep food affordable for the poor • Ensure adequate market food supply
Transfers	2.7 School feeding 2.8 Supplementary feeding 2.9 Conditional cash transfers 2.10 Unconditional cash transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce hunger • Promote access to education • Promote local food production • Enhance food consumption • Reduce hunger or poverty • Promote children's access to education and healthcare • Reduce hunger or poverty

The study builds on the above framework to integrate a gender perspective and enhance analysis in the study of farm working households (i.e., disaggregation of data; access to and control)

TABLE 2: Food Entitlement Categories and Social Protection from a Gendered Perspective

Entitlement category	Social protection instruments	Food security objectives
Production	land distribution targeting both women and men in farming and farm working households as beneficiaries and supplemented with the provision of capital and technical assistance	ensure food production
Labour	public works programs in times of pre-, during and post disasters targeting both women and men	provide alternative employment in addition to farming and farm work for both women and men
Trade	food subsidies to both women and men taking into consideration the different gender needs over their life cycle	ensure available and accessible food for women and men in all phases of their life cycles
Transfers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school and supplementary feedings targeting both females and males in all phases of their life cycles • conditional cash transfers – responsibilities in regard to CCTs should be shouldered by both women and men as(?) household beneficiaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reduce hunger of girl/adult females and boy/adult males in all phases of their life cycles • promote local food production of women • reduce hunger and poverty of both women and men in all phases of their life cycles

Gender, Food Security and the Right to Food

Ofreneo and Narito (2012) cited that the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) on the Right to Food imposed three levels of obligations on State parties, namely: (1) to respect, (2) to protect, and (3) to fulfill. The obligation to respect requires the State not to take measures preventing use of existing access to adequate food; the obligation to protect requires the State to ensure that enterprises and/or individuals do not take measures that divest individuals from their access to food; the obligation to fulfill requires the State to engage in measures that improve people's access to and utilization of resources to ensure livelihood and food security; and in cases wherein individuals are not able to enjoy the right to adequate food for reasons beyond their control (such as in disaster situations), the State is obliged to fulfill the right to adequate food directly (Ofreneo and Narito, 2012).

Being a signatory to the ICESCR, the Philippines has the obligation to enact policies that ensure the right to adequate food. However, an assessment conducted in 2008 (as cited in Ofreneo and Narito, 2012) showed that there is still much room for improvement. Some of the laws and policies that adversely affect food security include the following: (1) the Agricultural Tariffication Act (which eliminated restrictions on the importation of cheap or dumped agricultural products, thus exposing local farmers to unfair competition); (2) the Biofuel Act (which can affect food producers by converting farm lands into land utilized for non-food products); (3) Agrarian Reform (which still has not finished disbursing lands to farmers); (4) income laws (which do not ensure wage-earners sufficient economic power to purchase adequate food). On the other hand, there are also positive initiatives such as the social protection programs that target children and provide food discounts for the elderly – although other sectors of the population such as persons living with human immune virus (PLHIVs) and persons with disabilities (PWDs) do not have access to the same much needed benefits (Ofreneo and Narito, 2012). Likewise, gender is not given attention, despite the fact that women and men have different food needs over their life cycles.

While the poor in general have problems accessing food resources, there are gendered differences in what little access the poor do have. The annexes in the FAO's Joint Programmes guidelines (2010) state that there are gender inequalities in the entire food

production chain, citing unequal access to productive resources as an example; and that, in determining food insecurity and vulnerability, gender relations should be considered important. The FAO (2010) also mentioned that different gender roles affect women's and men's roles and responsibilities in the agricultural sector, thus affecting how they utilize and benefit from the agricultural sector.

Current Policy Environment Related to Food Security and the Right to Food

The Philippines has been a signatory to various international instruments that promote the right to food for everyone, the ICESCR in particular. Likewise, the Philippine Constitution explicitly guarantees the right to adequate food. It has provisions that both explicitly and implicitly protect the right to adequate food for all its citizens: the right of children to proper care and nutrition, the right of the family to a living wage and income (Article XV, Section 3), and the rights of all workers to a living wage (Article XIII, Section 3).

Recognizing the food security constraints in the country, various government agencies have developed programs and services to address such through these mechanisms: 1) comprehensive and integrated food security programs (to foster productivity and enhance beneficiaries' purchasing capacity); 2) food production programs (to foster self-sufficiency and mitigate hunger); 3) support to farmers and subsidies through grants and assistance; 4) feeding programs (to reduce hunger among school children; 5) nutrition fortification programs (to address micro-nutrient deficiency); and 6) information, education and nutrition awareness programs (to promote enhancement of nutritional status through information drives). In particular, these include

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
1. Comprehensive and Integrated Food Security Programs			
1.1. Accelerated Hunger Mitigation Program	<p>an anti-hunger program that addresses food insufficiency (supply) and inability to buy food (demand)</p> <p>Lead Agencies: National Nutrition Council (NNC), Anti-Hunger Task Force (AHTF) & local government units (LGUs)</p>	Executive Order (EO) 616 S. 2007	2006-2010
1.2. KANIB Enterprise Development Program	<p>related to the national goals of poverty reduction, attainment of socio-economic development and inclusive growth in coconut-farming communities and towards transforming small coconut farmers from subsistence farming to agribusiness entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Lead agency: Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA)</p>		2011-2016
1.3. National Livestock Program	<p>ensures food security and safety, to alleviate poverty, to enhance incomes & profitability, and to achieve global competitiveness for the livestock and poultry sub-sectors under a sustainable environment.</p> <p>Lead agency: Department of Agriculture (DA)</p>		On-going
1.4. Food Staples Sufficiency Program (FSSP)	<p>to ensure food security and to raise incomes for the agriculture sector under the Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016</p> <p>Lead agency: DA</p>	AFMA (RA8435)	2011-2016

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
1.5. Support to Food Staples Sufficiency Program	promotes the consumption of white corn and other food staples under the FSSP Lead agency: DA		2011-2016
2. Food Production Programs			
2.1.Organic Agriculture Program	promotes, propagates, develops ,and implements the practice of organic agriculture in the country Lead agency: Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI)	Organic Agriculture Act of 2010 (RA10068)	2010-present
2.2.Gulayan sa Paaralan	to promote food security in schools and communities through self-help food production activities Lead Agency: BPI		2011-2015
2.3. Agri-Pinoy Urban Agriculture	to attain self-reliance and sufficiency by enhancing the capabilities of people in the production of their own food; to mitigate hunger and to ensure family food security; to integrate farming into the lifestyle of urban dwellers through values formation related to basic food production, healthy food system and clean urban environment. Lead agencies: DA, Congressional Districts & LGUs		2012- present
2.4 Dairy Farm Accreditation	an National Dairy Authority (NDA) program in response to the creation of the Livestock and Poultry Farm Accreditation Program for all food animal	Administrative Order (AO) #09, 4 March 2005	2006-2010

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
3. Support to Farmers and Subsidies			
3.1.Stabilization of Farm gate Prices	domestic procurement in peak seasons when farm gate prices are the lowest but ensure that farmers get 30-35% return on investments Lead agency: National Food Authority (NFA)		1972 –present
3.2. Emergency Relief Operations	provision of rice supply by the NFA to relief agencies such as the Department of Social Welfare and Development, National Disaster Coordinating Council, LGUs and other sectors participating in relief organizations Lead agencies: NFA, DSWD, NDCC and LGUs		1972-present
3.3. Buffer Stacking	to monitor anytime a minimum volume of staples for distribution during emergencies/relief operations and total stocks held to determine volume for importation Lead agency: NFA		1972 –present
3.4. Consumer Protection	to ensure prices of staples (rice and corn) are reasonable & affordable to the public Lead agency: NFA		1972-present
3.5.Direct Marketing Intervention Program	to ensure that market accommodates farmers' produce and to enable farmers a fair return on production investment Lead agency: NFA		1972-present

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
4. Feeding Program			
4.1.Milk Feeding Program	to address malnutrition and to create livelihood opportunities that build asset base and increase farm incomes	National Dairy Development Act of 1995 (RA 7884)	1995-present
5. Nutrient Fortification Policies and Program			
5.1.Mandatory Food Fortification Law (RA 8976)	mandates the compulsory fortification of rice with iron, flour with vitamin A and iron, oil with vitamin A to ensure steady supply of the essential micro-nutrients Lead agencies: Department of Health (DOH), NNC and Food Industry (FI)	Philippine Fortification Act of 2000 (RA 8976)	2000-present
5.2. National Salt Iodization Program (RA 8172)	mandates the compulsory fortification with iodine Lead agencies: DOH, NNC and FI	RA 8172	1995-present
5.3. Milk Standardization	Philippine National Standard on Fresh Milk In which the standard covers milk products such as fresh milk of cow, buffalo and goat for direct human consumption or further processing in conformity with this standard. Lead agency: NDA	Memorandum Circular dated 6 November, 2007 related to the implementation of the National Standard	2007-present
5.4. Cooking/ Edible Oil Fortification	requires oil manufacturers/ refineries and importers to add vitamin A to oil as prescribed by law and compliance of the concerned sectors to the Standard Lead agency: PCA	RA 8976	2005-present

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
5.5. Rice Fortification Program	requires the mandatory fortification of rice except brown rice, and locally produced glutinous rice, including those distributed by the NFA Lead agencies: NFA and DOH	RA 8976	2004-present
6. Information, Education and Nutrition Awareness Programs			
6.1. Nutriskuwela Community Radio Network	to empower the community through the dissemination of correct, relevant and up to date nutrition and health information		2008-present
6.2. Promote Good Nutrition Program	to improve the nutrition knowledge, attitudes and practices of families to increase demands for adequate, nutritious and safe food Lead agencies: NNC, State Universities and Colleges, LGUs	SDC Resolution No. 1 S. 2003; EO 616 S. 2007	2007-present
6.3. Plant Audit and Inspection	to ensure that local milk and milk products made available for consumers are safe and hygienically processed/produced; satisfactory compliance of a plant during the audit in order to obtain a license to operate and renewal from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Lead agency: NDA	Bureau of Food and Drugs and pursuant to DA Administrative Order No. 9 (S-2006)	2005-present
6.4. Milk Quality Assurance Program	to ensure quality control through quality-based milk payment, regular laboratory tests of raw milk, finished products and plant audit. Lead agency: NDA	Bureau of Food and Drugs and pursuant to DA Administrative Order No. 9 (S-2006)	1995-present

TABLE 3: Government Programs and Services Related to Food Security

Food Security Policy/Program	Description/ Objective/s	Legal Basis	Year/s Implemented
6.5. Food and Nutrition Researches Towards Policy Development	to open opportunities for the FNRI researches to continuously reach the national and local policy makers towards action in addressing malnutrition among vulnerable groups. Lead agency: Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology (FNRI-DOST)		2010-2014

Sources: PhilFSIS (n.d.a., n.d.b., n.d.c., n.d.d., n.d.e., n.d.f., n.d.g.).

As viewed from the various policies and programs related to food security, it could be gleaned that the country has a well-developed policy environment as well as adequate measures to address food insecurity. However, in practice, the implementation of these policies and programs has rarely benefited those most vulnerable groups, particularly women and men farm workers in rice and coconut farming communities. For one thing, the programs of agencies related to farmer support and subsidies to increase productivity only target farmers who have farms to till (either as tenants or owner-cultivators), thus excluding those women and men farm workers who only have labor power to sell. Further, despite the presence of programs on comprehensive/integrated food security that aim to foster productivity and to enhance people's purchasing capacity and nutrient fortification to address nutrient deficiency, the purchasing power of farm working households is too low for them to actually benefit from these programs. Finally, the feeding programs intended for the benefit of school children from poorer households are dependent on the budget of the local government units (LGUs) – which in most cases are from fifth and fourth class municipalities having a very small allotment for feeding programs – resulting to intermittent implementation.

And most importantly, these programs and services lack a gender perspective to take into consideration the unequal gender relations in households – particularly the unequal access to food and other resources, access to work and incomes, division of labor in the household, and control over resources and benefits. Evidently, these programs assume that women and men farmers have the same needs and conditions. Likewise,

there is no program that focuses on the special needs of women over their life cycles (i.e., adolescent girls, lactating and pregnant women, and older women), except for the feeding program for children.

Women's Home Gardens and Their Roles in the Household Economy of Coconut Farm Workers

A. The Research Objectives, Methods Used and Profile of Respondents

This qualitative and descriptive study examines the issue of food security of farm working households in a rural community hit by an average of 17 typhoons every year. Drawing from the life stories of ten women, the study examines the coping strategies of farm working households in their day-to-day struggles with poverty and with recurrent typhoons. The study further highlights the role of women in addressing food insecurity as well as the role of women's home gardens in recovering from the aftereffects of repeated typhoons. The study used the 'life story' research method that draws out data on a certain topic or theme from the personal narratives and experiences of the respondents using their own perspectives. Since the study wanted to find out the perspectives of women in making sense of their lived experiences of poverty and recurrent typhoons, the life story was chosen as the most appropriate method to achieve this end. The life story was complemented with the participant observation method, done by the author while immersing in the community during the research period. The study was conducted from June 2014 to December 2015.

The study used purposive sampling. The research participants were all women who have lived in the community for 20 years, and experienced at least one typhoon-related disaster. A total of ten women participated in the study. This number is considered adequate in feminist research, specifically when using the personal narrative method. Hesse-Biber and Piatelli (2007) justified the use of small samples in feminist research in this way, "in situations of oppression, where it may not be safe or possible for an oppressed group to speak, the testimony of one becomes representative of the testimony of many others" (p. 508). At the same time, the sample size of the study is also one of its limitations: it cannot claim to provide a general picture of rural women living in poverty and their conditions in times of recurrent typhoons.

Of the ten women participants, seven are married, two are widows

and one is single, having been abandoned by her husband. The average age is 46.7 with the oldest woman being 57 years old while the youngest is 39 years old. The participants' age distribution is as follows: three are in their 50s, six are in their 40s and one is in her late 30s. The average years spent in school of the women is 6.7, of which the highest level of educational attainment is a completion of secondary education while the lowest is Grade 2. Their educational attainment is slightly higher than that of their husbands. They have been residents of the community for an average of 29.6 years; two are not originally from the area but they are married to local residents.

Of the ten women participants, seven belong to households that are beneficiaries of the 4Ps. Like their husbands, the women are engaged in several livelihoods such as piece-rate work, subsistence gardening, backyard hog and poultry-raising, and providing services in the informal economy. During lean periods, both the women and their husbands shift to piece-rate coco coir twining and net weaving as 'fall back' sources of income. In like manner, when the demand for coco coir twining and net weaving work is low, members of their households look for other sources of income in most cases, informal work. Eight of the research participants are into coco coir piece-rate work as their primary source of livelihood, while the remaining two work in rice or coconut farms. One of the women is a regular farm worker in a nursery, and earns a daily wage of Php 80.00. Although the other farm worker prefers coco coir work over farm work, the distance of her residence from the coco coir factory deterred her from engaging in such work.

B. *The Research Context:*

This study was conducted in Barangay Monbon, one of the 28 rural barangays in the municipality of Irosin in the province of Sorsogon. Brgy. Monbon is a rural barangay composed of seven *puroks* (zones) covering a total land area of 736 hectares. Based on 2014 data, it has a total of 802 households with a total population of 3,999 (no sex-disaggregated data available) and the average household size is five (Monbon Barangay Profile, n.d. as cited in Barrameda, 2015).

It is mainly an agricultural community in which the primary source of livelihood is farming (rice and coconut). Farmers include tenants, small owner-cultivators and landless farm workers. Other stakeholders in the agricultural economy include the informal moneylenders as well as the big and petty entrepreneurs who own the two *palay* and copra buying

stations in the community. In tenanted farms planted to rice and coconuts, the common sharing arrangements are the 60:40 (owner: tenant) and the *tersiohan* (one third of the net harvest goes to the tenant). In both sharing systems, the production cost is shouldered by the tenants. Another sharing arrangement is the *tadiya* system in which a farm worker, in agreement with a farm owner or tenant, works in a parcel of farm lot and is paid half the current daily farm wage but is entitled to harvest the lot and is given one-third share of the gross harvest (Barrameda, 2015).

Both the tenant farmers and the small owner cultivators have farms with sizes ranging from one hectare to one and a half hectares. In most of the rice farming households, rice produced from the small lots is used for household consumption which lasts only for three months. On the other hand, coconut farmers harvest every 45 days. However, with the high cost of copra processing, many of the farmers sell the coconuts to buying stations for immediate cash. In the case of the farm workers, both male and female workers earn a daily wage of Php 200.00. In most cases, they are provided with free snacks or free lunch (Barrameda 2014).

Since incomes from the farm produce, as well as from farm work, are not enough to feed their households, both women and men engage in multiple livelihoods as a strategy for survival. Other sources of livelihood include both on- and off-farm activities such as piece-rate work, backyard hog and livestock-raising, subsistence gardening, and provision of varied services in the informal economy (Barrameda, 2015).

Of the 802 households, 50 percent are engaged in coco coir twining and net weaving which are paid on a piece-rate basis. Because of the seasonality of farm work as well as the vulnerability of farming to extreme climactic variability such as typhoons and droughts, male farmers choose coco coir piece-rate work rather than farm work because of the regular income. They are also not exposed to variable weather conditions which can result to health issues in the future. On the other hand, women prefer the piece-rate work over other work because it is home-based and complementing their reproductive responsibilities. The daily income from this piece-rate work is between Php 80.00 to Php 150.00, depending on the length of time devoted to the work as well as the pace of the worker. In most cases, the work is a household enterprise in which adult and children members are involved (Barrameda, 2014).

The community is one of the five barangays in the municipality of Irosin that registered the highest number of documented poor households based on the poverty estimates of the National Statistical Coordination

Board (2014 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Municipal Planning Office-Irosin, as cited in Barrameda, 2015). But despite the high poverty incidence in the community, only 265 or 33.04% of the households are beneficiaries of the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* or the 4Ps, a national conditional cash transfer program implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (Barrameda, 2014; 2015).

The barangay has a long wet season with an annual average of 234 rainy days, with the heaviest rains being from November to January while May has the lightest rainfall. Since the province of Sorsogon lies within the country's typhoon belt, an average of 17 typhoons hit the barangay every year (Municipal Planning and Development Office Local Government Unit-Irosin, 2014, as cited in Barrameda, 2015). Moreover, the municipality of Irosin is considered by the Meteorological and Geoscience Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (MGB-DENR) as geologically hazardous due to the flooding and landslides triggered by typhoons, tropical storms and strong winds that hit the Bicol Region every year. In addition, the barangay is prone to volcanic hazards as it lies within a seven-kilometer radius around Mt. Bulusan (MPDO LGU-Irosin, 2014, as cited in Barrameda, 2015).

C. Household Food Security Strategies for Daily Survival and in Times of Recurrent Typhoons

The gender division of labor in both reproductive and productive work is evident in farming households. Reproductive work pertains to childbearing/rearing and house maintenance responsibilities which are mostly done in the private space of the home. Productive work covers work that earns income or contributes labor to family enterprises which are done either in the private space of the home (e.g., home-based piece-rate work) or in public spaces outside the home (e.g., farm or community). In terms of reproductive work, the adult males as well as boy-children are responsible for fetching water, repairing the house, gathering firewood and fruits from the forest, and fishing in a nearby river, while adult females and girl-children are in charge of child and elderly care, food preparation, and house maintenance. In terms of productive work, the male adults are responsible for producing income for 'bigger' expenses like children's school fees, farm production and utilities, while the females are responsible for the household's incidental expenses such as the purchase of food and other daily household needs.

In the case of coco coir work, which is considered a household enterprise, the gender division of labor is blurred. Whoever engages in coco coir work, regardless of gender, is exempt from doing housework, particularly tasks that require contact with water because it will result to *pasma* (spasms thought to result from wetting the hands or body after doing long repetitive work). For households with adult children, those who are not into piece-rate work are the ones responsible for the housework. For those households without adult children, the men are the ones who wash and cook, especially when the men have no farm work or are out of work. But in households with young children and with men engaged in productive work, the women do piece-rate work only after the housework is done.

With the meager earnings derived from their multiple livelihoods, these households have established strategies for daily survival. Since putting food on the table is part of a woman's responsibilities, the women respondents are the ones that lead their households in instituting such strategies. These strategies can be categorized into economic, social and resource management.

Economic strategies include: (1) *engaging in multiple livelihoods* that would generate cash or in-kind earnings; (2) *economizing resources* that include limiting food intake, limiting the number of meals, eating only what is available, skipping snacks, and recycling left-over food; (3) *food substitution and changing food patterns* such as root crops in place of rice, eating porridge during meals, using root crops as food add-ons (*sabag*), using food additives like *Magic Sarap* as meat or fish substitute, toasted rice as coffee, and herbal infusion as tea; (4) *postponement of purchase of non-immediate needs* such as clothes, house repairs and medical needs; (5) *tight budgeting* that includes prioritizing fixed expenses such as utilities and school allowances of children, buying only the basic necessities like food, salt and kerosene for cooking; (6) *prioritizing expenses* such as deferment of schooling of smaller children in favor of the older children; (7) *extending working hours for productive work* such as working on weekends whenever there is a work opportunity and working on piece-rate work at nights; and (8) *tending home gardens* to grow food for subsistence and to provide herbal medicines.

On the other hand, social strategies include: (1) *household pooling of resources and earnings*; (2) *in-kind and in-cash intra- and inter-household transfers* from family members, relatives and friends that include cash gifts and contributions, handed-down clothes, etc.; (3) *minimizing*

expenses (children work as unpaid farm workers in households with small farms); and (4) *intra- and inter-household food sharing and exchange* from family, relatives and friends. In addition, the farm households rely on available natural resources such as the forest, open fields, mountain springs and rivers as sources of food, drinking water and firewood. The women respondents noted that they initiated these bundles of strategies to refrain from making loans. But in times of emergencies, they resort to asking for loans from relatives, neighbors, friends and informal moneylenders.

However, a more nuanced gendered coping is evident in situations of recurrent typhoons. For the women respondents, the strategies used for daily survival as discussed above are again utilized to tide them over and to eventually recover from the effects of the typhoons. Since food insecurity is an immediate concern, they mobilize their households to gather whatever crops are available in their home gardens and *banti* (small upland plots). Then, they immediately plant crops that could be harvested within a shorter period to ensure that there is food in the coming months. On the other hand, the men migrate to other places, either on a temporary or short-term basis, leaving their wives behind to fend for their households. As noted by the women respondents, right after a typhoon, work is non-existent in the community, except for the food-for-work and public work programs such as cleaning debris, paving roads and repairing public buildings. Since the work is only for a short period, not all men have access to it, except for a few who are able bodied. Aside from the work being limited, the pay is limited to rice and canned sardines with no provision for salt and kerosene. The women respondents also complained that relief work does not target women. But, because they have to feed their families, most of the women respondents are pressured to employ various strategies for them to survive the aftereffects of typhoons. They also noted that recovery is very difficult when the men migrate for work, and there is no government assistance besides. Outside of their households, they only rely on social networks – relatives, neighbors and friends – for support.

D. The Role of Home Gardens in the Farm Working Households' Food Security

Home gardens are a usual feature of rural households', especially among poorer families. Women are often the ones who are responsible

for these gardens. Of the 802 households in Barangay Monbon, 498 households (62.1%) have home gardens. Although there is no data available regarding the nutrition status of the households, the BNS pointed out that the presence of home gardens as well as the barangay feeding program contribute to the low incidence of underweight among school children (N. Bercasio, personal communication, June 3, 2014). Of the 536 total pre-schoolers, 71 (13.2%) are underweight and 2 (0.37%) are severely underweight; while of the 679 school children, 38 (5.6%) are underweight and 9 (1.32%) are severely underweight (N. Bercasio, personal communication, June 3, 2014). According to the women respondents in this study, none of their children or grandchildren have been beneficiaries of the barangay feeding program. Although this program is a crucial strategy in food security of growing children, the limited budget of the barangay cannot guarantee its implementation on a sustained basis. The budget is so small that it cannot even sustain the program within a six-month period. On the other hand, majority of the households have home gardens which serve as sources of food and vegetables for daily consumption, especially when their purchasing capacity is limited.

In this study, the home gardens tended by the research participants are small, ranging from 20 to 50 sq. meter plots, and located at the back of their houses. Some women take care of a *banti*, which are located in nearby upland areas. Since most of the women respondents belong to landless households, the *banti* are established either in public lands or in unutilized private land owned by their relatives, neighbors or friends. The *banti* size ranges from 100 to 1,000 sq. meters. Home gardens and *banti* have common features: small size, diversified crops, low tillage, low intensive labor, use of horizontal and vertical planting systems.

There are more than six varieties of crops in home gardens of the research participants to maximize land utilization. Crops also have different maturity periods to provide a year-round source of food for consumption and for immediate cash. Root crops planted in home gardens include cassava, sweet potato, taro, yam, and arrow root which are sources of food, especially in times when rice is unavailable or limited. Vegetables grown include water spinach, gourd, chili pepper, okra, and eggplant. Different varieties of legumes are also planted. Herbs and ornamentals are also found in the gardens such as lemon grass, wild basil, mint, marigold, and mugwort (*damong maria*). The crops are intercropped with one or two fruit trees like guava,

jackfruit, and horse radish (*maluggay*). The varying heights of crops and trees ensures that all receive adequate sunlight.

According to the women, each crop has a particular purpose. The fruit trees are integrated in the home gardens not only as sources of fruits and fuel but to serve as wind breakers and provide shade as well as support for vines such as yams, gourd and beans. The wood from *kakawati* trees are used as fences and for fuel, while cassava and arrowroot are interspersed with the *kakawati* trees as fence reinforcement. Legumes and vegetables are used for viands and to bring in immediate cash. Herbs are used as medicines for common ailments; and ornamentals, like marigold, are planted to repel pests.

Given their limited available time, the women respondents practice minimum tillage as the gardens are covered by runners like sweet potato and squash that serve as ground cover as well as natural mulch to discourage weed growth in the rainy season and water evaporation during the summer. The women also barter or exchange seeds with neighbors and friends to propagate, conserve and preserve the seeds. Having experienced recurrent typhoons in their area, the women respondents prefer to raise root crops and typhoon-resistant vegetables like *sigarilyas* (winged beans), *batao*, *kadios* (pigeon pea), *patani* (lima bean), squash, *kangkong* (water spinach) and chili pepper, instead of bananas and papayas which are not typhoon-resistant crops.

For the women participants, their home gardens play crucial roles in the survival of their households i.e., these gardens serve as their 'fall back' in lean periods. For instance, root crops which they make into snack food become their food staple or rice extenders (*sabag*) when there is no rice available in the market or their budget is tight. Living in a community hit by an average of 17 typhoons every year, the farming households have difficulty recovering from the effects of one storm after another. According to one of the women, it takes three to six months for coconut trees to recover, depending on how strong the typhoon was (L. Astillero, personal communication, June 2, 2014).

Further, the women participants noted that the aftereffects of a typhoon on their households are often devastating: loss of livelihood and income, destruction of houses, inability to purchase basic commodities due to high prices, and months of hunger. In response, some adult members of these farming households are forced

to migrate in search of work. It usually takes six months to a year for them to get a job and send money. In many cases, it is the women who stayed with the family to address their day-to-day needs. Women's home gardens, as a source of food and income, supplemented the meager household income from doing piece-rate work in coco coir twining and net weaving until the situation normalizes, i.e., when the coconut trees have recovered or migrant family members start to send cash transfers.

Although home gardens are established by women out of necessity, these are also sites of women's control. The decisions on the kind of crops to plant, the allocation of family labor in the garden, the utilization of the produce (what is for consumption and what is for selling), and the utilization of the cash derived from the sale are the women's domain. At the same time, women's agency is in full play as they apply their local knowledge of plants, herbs and agricultural practices in their home gardens.

Recommendations

The study highlighted several themes in its examination of the lives of women in farm working households situated in a typhoon-prone area:

One, throughout their life cycles, these women had experienced poverty in various ranges and dimensions. Having lived in poverty since childhood, they had developed coping strategies for day-to-day survival. Amidst a situation of recurrent typhoons, their lives are further burdened by the aftereffects of these storms' destruction – loss of livelihood and income, high prices of food, and food insecurity, to name a few. However, these women make full use of survival strategies learned in childhood, as well as their social networks – relatives, friends and neighbors – that women traditionally rely on during emergency situations.

Two, women's coping and survival strategies to respond to food insecurity on a daily basis and after recurrent typhoons are complemented by the presence of home gardens. This is particularly crucial as feeding the household is regarded as women's responsibility. At the same time, women's knowledge and capacities are harnessed and applied in the management of their home gardens: what to plant;

how to propagate, preserve and conserve seeds; what is for food for consumption and what is for selling; etc. Through these home gardens, then, the food security concerns of their households are addressed, with or without the presence of men.

Three, recovery from the aftereffects of recurrent typhoons is gendered. As productive or income-generating work is non-existent for both women and men during the post-typhoon period – except for food-for-work programs that only target able-bodied men – they have adopted different income-generating strategies. Men, together with other adult household members, tend to migrate in search for work. Women are left behind to fend for the households. In the absence of men, the women are burdened with both productive and reproductive responsibilities. At the same time, however, this creates an opportunity for women to develop their agency and decision-making capacity. Part of women's agency is their creativity in ensuring food security for their households through their home gardens.

Four, since the women are unorganized, they have neither voice nor claim over their entitlements as far as the right to food is concerned. Instead, the women – on an individual basis – put much effort into ensuring the food security of their households. At the same time, their home garden initiatives are not even recognized as crucial to household food security in times of recovery. Further studies regarding home gardens as a food security mechanism can be done to provide information on how to factor in home gardens in disaster risk reduction programs as preventive and recovery measures.

Five, though the women are able to respond to the food security needs of their households, the occurrence of one typhoon after another also puts them in a particularly difficult circumstance. As such, women are in dire need of support, especially from the government which has the obligation to protect, promote and fulfill the right to food of every citizen.

Following this, the study underscores the role and obligation of the government to address food security issues in typhoon-prone areas beyond the macro level. Using the entitlement approach of Sen (1981, as cited in HLPE, 2012), that is further developed into a framework by Devereux (2008, as cited in HLPE, 2012), the study forwards what the government can do to ensure that all aspects of the households' food entitlements are addressed.

TABLE 4. Proposed Government Response to Address Food Security of Farm Working Households.

Entitlement Category	Impact of Recurrent Typhoons	Household Response	Proposed Government Response
Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decline in rice and coconut harvest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revival of home gardens as source of food and daily cash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of seeds and tools for home gardens for both women and men • provision of technical assistance for both women and men who have home gardens and farms • land distribution to women and men in farm working households
Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • loss of livelihoods • loss of income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • migration of husbands and adult male and female children in search of work • engagement of household members in work with cash or in-kind payment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • public work and relief programs to target both men and women
Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rise in food prices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • home gardens as source of all food needs • home gardens as source of cash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy on price regulation • food price subsidies
Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decline in social network support • decline in informal food support network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • intra and inter-household food sharing and exchange • cash and in-kind transfers from members who migrated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve the national conditional cash transfer program through prompt grant releases • food aid and relief aid to consider the life cycle vulnerabilities of female and male household members

Alongside the above, the study also asserts that the food security should be framed as a woman's issue, especially because women bear the brunt of the day-to-day struggle for their household's food access in post-disaster situations. Thus, the following recommendations: (1) women must be given a voice in decision-making bodies disaster risk reduction and management at all levels, especially on food security concerns of households; (2) women should have participation in decision making in economic/livelihood

programs at the community level; (3) NGOs and LGUs need to integrate women's home gardens in designing economic/livelihood programs for typhoons and climate change adaptation of households in poorer communities; (4) food security must be a key component in DRR programs; and, (5) organize and empower women to claim their entitlements to food and land ownership.

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CHILDREN'S STORIES ON OCCUPATIONAL RISKS IN SUGARCANE FARMS¹

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Abstract

The 2012 statistics on child labor show that more than 62 percent of children working under hazardous conditions are found in agricultural work (de Castro, 2012). These hazardous conditions include doing tasks which are heavy, prone to accidents, and expose them to farm chemicals and other elements that can lead to health problems. An analysis of 18 cases studies on children's perception of their employment showed that the persistence of child labor has both economic and sociocultural roots. Poverty and lack of opportunities to augment household income form a strong push for families to socialize children into farm work even at an early age, however, parents' attitude toward work was also factor i.e., working in farm will inculcate a sense of responsibility in children. The children were also generally unaware of the long-term implications of their work in hazardous conditions, except for its impact on their schooling.

Key words: child labor in sugarcane farms, hazardous conditions, occupational health and safety

1 The article is part of a bigger study entitled, "Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Analysis on Hazardous Work of Child Workers in Sugarcane Farms," (2014) which was implemented under the ABK3-LEAP Research Program funded by the US Department of Labor. The author was the project director of the said study.

“The bulk of my work is loading sugarcane bundles into the truck. I carry 40 kilos of sugarcane with seven other workers to fill a truck. Loading takes place at night in any weather condition. It is the most difficult part of my job. I work even if it is cold or when it rains heavily.” (Danny, 16)

“I had an accident last year. I was cutting sugarcane when I accidentally stepped on a newly cut stalk and wounded my foot. I did not consult a doctor and only used herbal medicine. I continued to work the next day.....I often get sick with cough, fever, chills and headache about twice a month because of changing weather conditions.” (Jomar, 10)

Agriculture is considered one of the most hazardous work environments, alongside mining and construction, for both working adults and children. The children, because of their frail and developing bodies, are more vulnerable to occupational risks.

In the Philippines, the number of children engaged in child labor increased by 30 percent from 4.02 million in 2001 to 5.5 million in 2011 (Uy, 2012, as cited in OSHC-DOLE, 2013). According to the 2011 Survey on Children in the Philippines, more than half (2.99 million) of the total working children are engaged in hazardous work. And more than 62 percent (or 1.867 million) of the children in hazardous work are in agriculture (de Castro, 2012).

Behind these numbers, however, are young lives of children aged 5 to 17 years old that are continually put at risk because of their exposure to occupational risks, especially in agriculture.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 182 considers hazardous work one of the worst forms of child labor. This is defined as --

- “Work, which by its nature or the circumstances in which it is carried out, is likely to harm the health, safety or morals of children.
- Work that exposes children to physical, emotional or sexual abuse;
- Work underground, under water, at dangerous heights or in confined spaces;

- Work in an unhealthy environment, which may, for example, expose children to hazardous substances, agents or processes or to temperatures, noise levels, or vibrations damaging to their health;
- Work under particularly difficult conditions such as work for long hours or during the night or work that does not allow for the possibility of returning home each day.” (ILO-IPEC, 2011, p.xii)

Recent studies from other countries show that an increasing number of working children in agriculture experience serious occupational risks (ILO-IPEC, 2011). Children doing agriculture-based work are exposed to greater risks compared to children in other work settings. According to Castro and Hunting (2013), agricultural child workers in the Philippines are exposed to five times greater risk or they are five times more vulnerable to work-related accidents and injuries compared to child workers in other industries. The study also cited that the most significant risk factor for non-fatal injury is the use of farm tools. Available data, mostly from developed countries, show that majority of teenaged farm workers perform tasks deemed dangerous or hazardous by national health standards that often lead to work-related injuries. Moreover, accidents and chemical exposure result to health and safety risks. Other possible sources of work hazards are stress and noise in the workplace. In the Philippines, as in other developing countries in Latin America and Asia, more detailed occupational risk analysis for child workers are often scarce or are limited – generally having limited scope in terms of area and crop coverage, and mostly based on anecdotal data (O’Donnell, et al., 2002).

Studies on child labor in sugarcane production reveal that children are vulnerable to different occupational risks. They are not only engaged in cutting sugarcane, but they are also exposed to the hazards associated with planting, weeding, applying fertilizer, and hauling sugarcane. Work safety guidelines for young agricultural workers are part of the labor guidelines in developed countries like the United States, Australia, and Canada. In the Philippines, current occupational safety and health (OSH) standards and regulations are generally made for adult workers in formal work settings or industries. Guidelines regarding hazardous work of children in agriculture are also not crop-specific, making it difficult to identify what types of farm work are allowable or not for young workers. Thus, there is an urgent call to keep children out of danger and ensure a safer work environment.

This report primarily aims to surface the children's voices in relation to occupational safety and health concerns, which are often overlooked as adults tend to dominate the analysis and responses to child labor issues. Specifically, it (1) presents the children's perspectives on the work conditions in sugarcane farms, (2) describes the occupational risks children face in their work, and (3) identifies implications of the first two on children's wellbeing.

Data were obtained from case studies of 18 working children, and interviews of key informants. Supplementary tools like Time Use Matrix and Worksite Checklist were used to provide additional information.

The children included in the case studies are composed of 11 boys and seven girls. They come from the provinces of Camarines Sur, Bukidnon, Capiz, Iloilo and Negros Occidental. Their ages range from 10 to 17 years old. The average age when they started working in the sugarcane farm is 11.20 years old. The youngest age was seven while the oldest was 15 years old when they engaged in paid farm work. All children have experienced being injured or becoming sick because of their work.

The next section presents the data patterns summarized based on five themes: poverty situation, education, work conditions, occupational risks and children's perceptions. The discussion makes reference to specific children's statements and narratives, the children's names used have been changed for confidentiality.

1. Poverty situation

"Life is hard.... There is no other way but to find work for my family.....We do not have enough money for our daily needs and my school needs." (Jeng, 15)

The children's stories are characterized by struggles amidst poverty conditions and hope for a better future. Similar to telenovelas, their situation involves complex realities that are often considered beyond the sphere of normal childhood experiences. Literally and figuratively, they carry burdens inappropriate to their age and capacity.

The children's families are mainly dependent on agriculture for livelihood. Majority of the parents work in sugarcane farms, while a few work in rice and corn fields. Thus, their incomes are seasonal and often inadequate to meet basic family needs. For those who are in non-agricultural settings, most of them are in service-related jobs. The mothers of three

children (Jun, Elmo and Nonoy) are employed as domestic helpers, two in Manila and one in Cavite. Other working mothers take on jobs as house caretaker, laundrywoman, selling homemade chocolate bars, and bakery worker. On the other hand, many fathers engage in multiple jobs: sugarcane worker during harvest season and rice and corn farmer during off sugarcane season, or part-time construction and service worker whenever there are opportunities. There are also fathers who are not agricultural laborers but work as a welder, carpenter, driver or market butcher.

Many of the children from these families also contribute to their family income. Siblings of the working children also work in sugarcane farms, as domestic helpers, or as service workers in Manila or provincial cities. Most of their older siblings are married and have families of their own. These children also come from big families. Alvin's family has the biggest number at 14 children. Dolor comes second with 10 children. Caloy's family has nine children. Seven families have eight children each. This means that more children can help the family but, at the same time, there are also more mouths to feed.

There are also cases of single-headed households and families with absentee parents. Jeng's father died last year while Manuel's father died in 2011. Danny's father had to stop working after suffering a heart attack. Dolor's father also had a stroke that paralyzed half of his body. Recca's story is different. Her mother died five years ago, when she was eight years old. Her father got sick when she was 11 years old, with his illness suspected to be tuberculosis. Since then, Recca has been the family's breadwinner. Moreover, of the seven children, five died for unknown reasons - leaving only her and her youngest sister to care for their father and themselves. Jomar and Nonoy were abandoned by their respective parents. Jomar is an only child. When his parents separated, he was left with his grandmother. Now, he takes care of his sickly grandmother. Nonoy's father left them when the boy was eight years old. His mother works in Manila as a domestic helper, accompanied by his youngest brother. She has not provided support for Nonoy and his two sisters since 2011. The three of them have been adopted by different families.

When asked about their economic situation, all the children said that the family income can hardly provide for the family's basic needs. They need to work in order to help provide food for the family and for their own education. Despite taking on multiple jobs and with parents or siblings working elsewhere, their combined income is still inadequate for their basic needs.

2. Education

“ If I have another option, I would stop working and focus my time on studying so I could get higher grades. But right now, I need to work in the farm.” (Dolor, 15)

Almost all are currently enrolled, except for two 17-year old males who stopped in grade school. Renato stopped attending school when he was in Grade 2 due to financial reasons. Manuel repeated Grade 3 thrice. In Grade 4, he started working. He could not follow the school lessons at that time. So instead of repeating Grade 4, he just dropped out of school.

Many of the children experienced dropping out of school or repeating certain grade levels, although they are now all currently enrolled. Their reasons for dropping out were varied: getting sick, poor academic performance, delayed school entry, farm work and change of residence. Alvin stopped schooling for three years because of his knee pain due to diabetes. Danny was dropped by his teacher last year due to many absences. Jun repeated two years in primary school because of his poor grades. Jeng had to forego schooling several times because of farm work. Jerry also had to stop because they changed residence. Caloy dropped out of school for a year due to limited finances. Recca, on the other hand, started school when she was already eight years old because they moved residence. The major consequence of this is delay in their schooling. Thus, they are much older than their classmates. Alvin is 17 years old but still in Grade 5. Jerry is a year younger at 16 but is in Grade 6. Jeng is 15 but also in Grade 6. Jun is 15 but is in Grade 7. Danny is 16 and enrolled in first year high school. These four teenage boys and one teenage girl should have been in high school if they did not stop attending school.

All the children enrolled reported getting passing grades in school. Some of them are high achievers like Caloy and Nonoy. Caloy was a consistent first honor student in his elementary years. In high school, he worked hard to get high grades. From being in the top 20, he managed to be in the top 5 of his class. He is graduating from high school this school year. He is active in extracurricular activities as Corps Commander of the school's Citizen's Army Training (CAT), member of various school organizations, choir member, and participant in Math and English competitions. Nonoy also takes extra effort to maintain his high grades in school. He makes sure that he is not often absent and studies diligently every night, despite having no electricity at home. He is an active member of his school's baseball team. Even if he wants to join other group activities, he does not have enough resources to do so.

However, not all of the working children are like Caloy and Nonoy. Most of them find it hard to combine school, work and household chores. They expressed difficulty in understanding the school lessons, keeping up with the academic requirements and not having enough time to study. They are often absent from school, mainly due to sickness and work demands, some of them because of limited finances. Many find time to study at night, after finishing their work and household chores. Others resort to remedial measures in order to catch up with school work: do their assignments while in school, ask help from classmates, copy notes from classmates, or take make up exams. Some teachers give consideration, with a few of them having experienced being child workers themselves. But other teachers are also strict regarding absences and school requirements.

3. Work Conditions

“As I look at the sugarcane field under the scorching heat of the sun, I see my whole family and ask myself, ‘When will we stop working?’” (Annie, 13)

It is not hard to understand why these children started working at an early age. Many of their parents, relatives and siblings have worked in sugarcane farms before them. Sugarcane farming was and still is the main source of livelihood in their communities. As very young children, they accompanied their parents to the sugarcane farms. The farms became their playground while their parents work. As they got older and learned farm work, they helped as part of family labor under the pakyaw system. Mainly due to lack of family finances, they later opted to be part of the child labor force on the sugarcane farms. They worked alongside their parents, siblings, relatives and friends.

Some children started working as early as seven or eight years old, either working in their own small farms or in those of relatives, or as part of a pakyaw arrangement for bigger farms. For most of them, heavier (and paid) farm work started between 10 to 12 years old – or after finishing primary school. In about 40 percent of the cases, the children have been working for at least five years – making them ‘old timers’ in farm work.

The decision to work was influenced mainly by economic reasons. When Jun was 10 years old, he asked his mother to allow him to work. She arranged for him to work in a relative’s farm. Jomar’s parents separated when he was 10 years old. His grandmother told him that he needed to work. Recca

started to work when she was 11 years old. She replaced her father in the farm when he got sick. Since then, she has been the family's breadwinner. In Dolor's case, at first her parents did not allow her to work but they had no choice because her father had a stroke. She had to help her mother earn for the family. She started working when she was eight years old.

Both boys and girls are engaged in different stages of sugarcane production. The three most common farm activities for working children are weeding, planting and preparing planting materials. Other tasks are applying fertilizer, peeling sugarcane leaves, piling sugarcane stalks, and doing errands and preparing meals for co-workers. Older boys (aged 15 to 17) are engaged in more difficult (and more dangerous) tasks: cutting and carrying sugarcane, loading sugarcane bundles into trucks, weighing sugarcane, land clearing, canal trashing, burning sugarcane fields prior to harvesting, and driving trucks.

Jun does all farm activities from land preparation to harvesting. His work includes carrying about 45 kg. of sugarcane per load to fill two trucks. He has also driven a truck twice to transport sugarcane to the sugar mill. According to Jerry, he usually carries 30 kg. of sugarcane per load. Renato is also engaged in carrying and loading sugarcane. Aside from these, he also applies fertilizer and sometimes herbicide. He also fetches water and prepares meals for co-workers. Jomar, 10 years old, the youngest boy in the case study, is involved in weeding, planting, land clearing, cutting and weighing sugarcane, and doing errands. The youngest girl, Janet, is 13 years old and has been working in the farm since she was eight years old. She also does weeding, planting and applying fertilizer. She carries about a kilo of fertilizer which she applies to the field with her bare hands.

Manuel, 17 years old carries up to 20 kg. of sugarcane bundles per load; this is almost half of his body weight. He also carries two to four kg. of urea in a sack around his waist. Danny, 16 years old, carries about 40 kg. of sugarcane bundles per load.

Particularly in Camarines Sur, older boys like Danny and Jun, work at nights until early dawn to load sugarcane bundles into trucks. This is because the trucks are often only available during this period. The boys get additional income for their night work.

Those who are currently enrolled work on a part-time basis during school days. They usually work six to eight hours on weekends. But during harvest season or when there is a need to finish work in the field, some children work even on weekdays. Dolor regularly absents himself from

school every Wednesday to work in the farm for extra income. Jomar also incurs regular school absences during harvest season. He attends classes on Monday, but skips afternoon classes from Tuesday to Friday. Ando is usually absent on Mondays and Tuesdays due to his work in the farm. Caloy, on the other hand, used to work on Saturdays and Sundays before. But now, as CAT Corps Commander, he has to be in school on Saturdays. Thus, he can only work on Sundays. Jeng can only work on Sundays because she has to attend church on Saturdays.

During holidays, the children work almost daily, from four to six days a week. The work hours tend to become longer, from eight to 10 hours daily.

Renato and Manuel, who are both out of school, work full time in the sugarcane farms. Renato works from Monday to Sunday, for about eight hours daily. Manuel spends about seven hours daily in the farm, usually from Monday to Friday.

In terms of salary and work benefits, most of the children receive between PhP100 to PhP150 per day, with hardly any work benefit except occasional free meals from the landowner notably during harvest season. The children are paid on a weekly basis with wages ranging from PhP500 to PhP700 per week. Older boys who load sugarcane get higher wages. Alvin said he gets an additional PhP100 for loading sugarcane, while Jun and Danny get an extra PhP200 for night work. In Camarines Sur, gathering sugarcane (*pagtatambak*) is paid PhP3.00 per bundle. According to Danny, the owner pays PhP1,400 for every truck loaded with sugarcane (*pakyawan*). If there are seven workers, they get PhP200 each for the work done.

Renato who works every day reported that he gets PhP900 weekly, with an additional PhP300 for loading. The owner also provides free lunch and snacks. However, the owner deducts PhP20 to PhP50 from the salary for unacceptable behavior (like making mistakes in farm work). Dolor gets PhP120 daily. The owner allows for salary advances. However, her salary is sometimes paid in kind (rice). Janet is paid PhP700 weekly. She narrated that the owner occasionally provides free snacks. However, her salary is often delayed and she gets paid in kind (rice and canned goods from the owner's store).

The children's wages go primarily to family needs, sometimes as much as 50 to 80 percent. In many cases, the salary is given either to the mother or father. The child's share is either a portion of the amount or given in kind, when the child asks the parent to buy clothes or school

needs. The amount kept by the child, ranging from PhP30 to PhP300 weekly, is largely spent for school expenses and snacks. In a few cases, the child has extra money to buy personal 'luxuries' like cologne, lotion or slippers.

Seven of the children have multiple jobs mainly to meet the family's basic needs: Danny, Jeng, Elmo, Recca, Nonoy, Jomar, and Manuel.

- In addition to working in the sugarcane farm, Danny also works in corn fields from June to December. Danny is 16 years old and only his mother works because his father is sick. They are eight children in the family. His siblings also work as domestic helpers.
- Jeng also has two other part time jobs aside from farm work. She cleans a poultry farm, and she is also a live-out maid for a family. Jeng is 15 years old. Her father died last year and her mother does laundry. She is the youngest of eight children, but most of them are already married.
- Elmo also works in the corn fields during off sugarcane season. He is 15 years old. His father is a rice farmer, while his mother works in Cavite as a domestic helper. They are eight siblings, and three of them work in service-related jobs.
- Recca also works in the rice and corn fields of the same landowner. Sometimes, she spends Saturdays in the sugarcane farm and Sundays in the corn farm. At 13 years old, Recca is the family breadwinner, supporting her sick father and younger sister. Her mother died five years ago.
- On Saturdays, Nonoy works in the rice fields in the morning (7:00 am to 9:00 am) before going to the sugarcane farm. At 12 years old, he has to work to help his adoptive parents. His father left them four years ago, while his mother works in Manila as a housemaid accompanied by his youngest brother. He and two younger sisters were left behind and adopted by different families.
- During off season in sugarcane, Jomar takes on different jobs – work in rice fields, selling used bottles, and fruit picking. He is 10 years old, abandoned by his parents and lives with his sickly grandmother.

- In July to August, Manuel engages in slash and burn farming. He and his two younger brothers help their mother earn a living. Two older sisters are married. His father died in 2011. He is 17 years old.

To say that life is difficult for these working children is an understatement. Most of them look like ordinary children who enjoy playing and being with their friends. For most of them, being in school provides a new hope that life can be better. They work hard each day – notwithstanding the health risks involved.

4. Occupational risks

“Working in the sugarcane farm is hard and sometimes dangerous.”
(Alvin, 17)

Both boys and girls usually have 16 to 17 hours of daily routine, combining household chores, school and work. Wake up time is between 4:00 and 5:00 in the morning, while sleeping time varies from 8:00 in the evening to 12:00 midnight.

Only two among the 18 children included in the case studies did not report any work-related injury. All others had injuries. Five of them had multiple injuries at different times, while four older boys said they fell from the wooden planks while loading sugarcane. The most common injuries were cuts caused by sharp farm tools and/or sharp sugarcane leaves and stalks. Most of them suffered finger, hand and/or foot injuries.

Jun lost two fingers on his left hand, one in 2011 and the other in 2012. He had the first injury while he was weeding, and the second injury happened when he dropped his bolo while cutting sugarcane. He had a third injury: his foot was cut when he stepped on his bolo. He just went home and treated the cut with banana leaves and amoxicillin. He reported to work the next day, even if the wound was still painful.

Danny also cut his middle finger more than three years ago (when he was 13 years old) while cutting sugarcane. He applied *madre de cacao* (a local plant) as first aid and later went to a clinic due to the pain. His mother wanted him to stop working. But he went back to work after 15 days when he felt recovered. Last year, he fell from the wooden footbridge while loading sugarcane. This resulted in a dislocated joint which was treated by a *hilot* (local healer).

Annie got bruises from thorns and weeds while weeding. Her eyes also got sore and her hands became itchy because of the sharp sugarcane leaves. These healed after three days, even without medication.

Both Jerry and Elmo fell from a slippery footbridge while loading sugarcane. Jerry went back to work after a day. Elmo's fall resulted to a sprained shoulder that required him to rest for three days before going back to work. He was treated by a *hilot*.

Nimfa had recurring skin rashes and wounds which she got while peeling sugarcane leaves. Her mother applies ointment to her skin when it becomes dry and itchy to ease the discomfort.

Nonoy was cut by sugarcane leaves more than three months ago. Earlier, the fertilizer he was using got into the open wound which then became infected. He applied herbal medicines for treatment.

Rosanna did not report any work-related injury. However, she mentioned that one of her siblings wounded her foot while using an *espading* (a local term for a sharp tool) to do weeding.

The children also reported suffering cuts from various farm tools at different stages of sugarcane production. Caloy's hand was hit by a sickle when he was cutting cane tops. Janet's toe was hit by the hoe she was using for weeding. Manuel and Renato were both wounded by a bolo while cutting sugarcane. Aside from these implements being sharp, their weight and form are made primarily for adult use. There were also other factors that led to these injuries. Dolor was rushing to finish her work when her hand was cut by a bolo. Elmo said that the sugarcane bundle he was carrying was too heavy, thus, he fell from the footbridge.

The children and their parents generally regarded these as minor injuries. Treatment was usually through self-medication using traditional means like massage, herbal treatments and over-the-counter medicines like amoxicillin. The healing period ranged from one day to three days for body pains, one week for cuts, and up to 15 days for fractures or joint disorders.

These accidents were usually not reported to landowners because they were considered minor. Thus, the cost of treatment was generally borne by the family of the injured child.

All the children reported getting sick within the three months prior to the study. Common illnesses included fever, headache, cough,

body pains (shoulder, back), colds and flu. A few also mentioned “shaking knees” and *mabigat ang katawan* (heavy feeling or feeling sick). They considered these as work-related, mainly because of their exposure to extreme and changing weather conditions, as well as work fatigue.

Elmo, Caloy and Janet considered themselves healthy, since they rarely got sick except for an occasional cough and cold. On the contrary, Jun, Jerry and Rosanna noticed that they had become more sickly especially when working. Jun often experienced headache, fever and muscle pains. He had also been suffering from kidney problems for the last five years. Jerry reported occasional fever. Sometimes he felt that his knees were shaking from being too tired. He also complained of shoulder pain. Rosanna said that she felt sick for one or two days monthly. She also had a recurring fever for about a month. According to her, she and her two siblings were often absent from school due to illness. Annie said that she got sick due to being too tired and her body not being able to bear carrying heavy loads.

Dolor has urinary tract infection (UTI) since she was nine years old; she is now 15 years old. She suffered episodes of severe pain until it was diagnosed and treated only recently.. Dolor works with her younger sister who has deformed hands and feet. Alvin had a history of diabetes. Danny also reported that he had a boil due to exposure to weather changes while at work.

Several factors could explain why these children easily got sick. Not only were they exposed to work hazards like extreme weather, but there were also contributory elements like their poor health and nutrition, untreated or unhealed injuries/illnesses, previous ailments, exposure to sick family members, and being overworked. In addition, they used very minimal protective gear such as hats, gloves and boots while at work. Although they said that they wore long-sleeved shirts, jackets, long pants and improvised masks, these were apparently inadequate to protect them from work-related injuries and illnesses.

5. Children’s Perceptions and Aspirations

“I have worked in various farms for one third of my life.” (Jun, 15)

The children have mixed responses when asked if they considered their work on sugarcane farms dangerous. According to Recca, work in sugarcane is not dangerous. One just needs to get used to the work. She said

that she gets nervous about weeding, but it is less tiring than planting. Elmo disagrees with her, saying that work in sugarcane is dangerous because of the heavy load of carrying sugarcane, the use of sharp tools, improper handling of fertilizer, uncontrolled fires while burning the fields, extreme weather, the presence of snakes, and possible water contamination. Nimfa also mentions that carrying the heavy chemical sprayer can be dangerous.

Most of the children said that they do not have the time and resources to get involved in organizations and community activities. Their social life is limited to being with their friends: playing once in a while, chatting with their *barkada* (peer group), watching TV, playing billiards or basketball. A few of them, however, are able to join other social activities. Jeng is a member of the church choir. Rosanna is an officer in their school. Caloy is active in school activities. Manuel is a member of the inter-barangay basketball team, while Caloy is part of the baseball team. Janet once joined a dance group but dropped out due to expenses.

The children generally have three aspirations: to finish college, to have a stable job, and to help their family have a better future. For the boys, their dream jobs are to become an engineer, seaman, office manager, policeman, soldier or teacher. Some are contented to have a stable job as a welder, carpenter or live-in helper in Manila. Many of the girls aspire to become teachers. Recca wants to be a nurse, while Annie dreams of becoming a lawyer.

Most of the children want to continue working in the sugarcane farms for different reasons: to earn their own money, to be with friends, to save money for school, and because there is no other option at the moment. But they all agree that they do not want their younger siblings and future children to work on sugarcane farms because of the risks and difficulties involved.

When asked about possible improvements in their current situation as working children, their answers focus on three main themes:

1. Additional educational assistance

- Full educational assistance from the government
- Scholarships up to the college level
- Financial aid for school needs (school projects, uniforms, supplies, allowance, books)
- Better school facilities

2. Better economic opportunities

- Help for children of poor families
- Additional livelihood opportunities for parents
- Financial aid for poor families
- Lower prices of food commodities

3. Improved work conditions

- Increased wages for child workers
- Provision of protective gear while working
- Health benefits
- Better work facilities and provisions (rest period, work hours, first aid, free meals)

Implications to child labor

Economic and cultural context of child labor in sugarcane

Children are socialized into working in sugarcane farms. They are ‘born’ into it. Amidst poor economic conditions and hard work, many children still opt to work in the sugarcane fields. They work alongside their parents, siblings and friends. The sugarcane fields serve as their second home, and their co-workers are considered their extended family. Work in sugarcane farms offers the most feasible alternative for the children to help their families and earn some cash to continue their schooling.

The case studies point to specific family conditions that tend to ‘push’ children to work: single-headed households, large family size, few working family members, child-headed households, dysfunctional families, parents with low and seasonal income, sick parents, work in family-owned or family-managed farms.

Studies about child workers in sugarcane in other developing countries reveal that children are regarded as ‘helpers’ of their parents in the farm and part of the family work unit (Baas, 2009). Children work in the farms because they have to, they are expected to, and it is regarded as part of their development.

Need for protective measures for occupational risks

If working children remain in the sugarcane farms, what kind of protection do they need to mitigate the potential adverse effects of farm work? The children recommend the following: use of protective gear provided by landowners, health benefits, on-site safety measures like first aid stations, rest areas, source of potable water, toilet and wash areas. Current regulations for child labor need more strict enforcement: child workers must be 15 to 17 years old, working a maximum of eight working hours per day, working only on non-school days, and under parental supervision. In addition, protective measures must be in place such as the use of protective gear, provision of appropriate tools, and assurance of a safe work environment. Additional protective measures need to be provided like greater access to health services and benefits, health monitoring, training of service providers, education and advocacy programs.

Lessening the economic burden of children

Child labor thrives because the children feel that this is their way of helping to ease their families' financial problems. But should children carry such a burden? Part of their parents' responsibilities is to provide them with their basic needs, including education. Child labor cannot be eliminated unless their parents or guardians have alternative ways to improve their financial situation. Children should not need to work merely to provide for their families. While some children may opt to work for other reasons, certain conditions must be met regarding their safety in the work place. Aside from the parents, the government is also mandated to protect the rights of children.

Integrated support programs for poor rural households

Among the support programs mentioned by the respondents are those which address the educational needs of child workers (*Pag-Aaral ng Bata para sa Kinabukasan* or ABK, the 4Ps, Alternative Learning Systems or ALS, assistance from local government units and private entities). They recommend the expansion of such assistance in terms of scholarships beyond high school, increased school stipends, provision for books and school supplies, and additional slots for scholars. However, school assistance must be complemented by other program interventions that

aim to increase the socioeconomic assets of the rural poor, and not be dependent solely on welfare-oriented programs. These may include, but are not limited to, the following: parents' education, viable alternative livelihood for parents and guardians of child workers, health services and health monitoring for child workers and their families, educational assistance for children at risk (potential child workers), a work-study scheme for qualified children, and a community advocacy campaign on child labor and OSH-related agenda.

Aspirations for a better future

Most of the children interviewed seem to have a positive outlook about life in general. Despite their heavy workload at work, school and home – they find time to play and socialize with their peers. A few of them also strive to excel in school or join community activities. They express hope that life can be better in the future. For most of them, this serves as their prime motivation to pursue their studies. They tend to gloss over the hardships and the health risks involved in farm work.

But as children, the hard life that they experience beginning at an early age increases their vulnerability to both its short and long term consequences. There is a need to further investigate the psycho-social effects and more long-term health dysfunctions that may result from prolonged and chronic fatigue and deprivation.

Working towards a safer work environment for children

In many cases, child labor is invisible, unprotected and unregulated. In agriculture, health and safety measures are more complex compared to those of formal work settings – such as in manufacturing and construction – where safety standards and measures are more defined.

There is a lack of awareness about the non-physical consequences of occupational risks, as well as their long-term impact on children's health, education and general well-being. It is quite difficult for many of the children to link work-related conditions to more serious illnesses involving bodily systems such as respiratory, digestive, musculo-skeletal, and neuro-psychological, thus unknowingly affecting their long-term productivity.

Occupational risks have a greater impact on children and can have long-term effects on them. Children are more susceptible to risks due to certain developmental health factors (GOHNET, 2005; ILO, 2012): development of organs and tissues, rapid skeletal growth, higher chemical absorption rates, smaller size, greater need for food and rest, higher metabolic rate, lower heat tolerance, and greater susceptibility to infectious disease and parasites.

In addition to these developmental considerations, children generally lack awareness, experience and maturity to deal with occupational hazards and risks. Being young, they are also more likely to engage in adventure-seeking and risk-taking behaviors that can lead to accidents and injuries while at work.

Children's vulnerability to the consequences of occupational risks is made even greater because of the absence of worksite safety measures. In many of the worksites visited, there are minimal facilities: only makeshift rest places, no potable water source, no first aid provision, no toilet and leisure areas. There is also an absence of OSH-focused support programs. Thus, many of the child workers' injuries and illnesses are not treated properly or are left unhealed. Previous ailments prior to farm work remain undetected until these lead to more serious conditions. There is also no mechanism to monitor OSH-related conditions of children.

In summary, child labor is a complex phenomenon in many poor countries. Amidst modernization and technological advancement in agriculture, a greater part of farm production processes, including sugarcane production, continue to depend on manual labor. As a result, children from poor rural households are more exposed to varied work-related risks that have both immediate and long-term consequences. In the meantime that child labor cannot be totally eliminated, concerted efforts of different stakeholders must be harnessed to at least liberate children from engaging in hazardous work and make their work environment safe.

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BOOK REVIEW: TWENTY YEARS AT HULL HOUSE WITH AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

Yolanda G. Ealdama

Addams, Jane (1860-1935). 1912. *Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*. New York: The MacMillan Company. www.digital.library.upenn.edu/women/addams/hullhouse/hullhouse.html accessed 08 January 2016.

Introduction

Jane Addams, together with Ellen Starr, was instrumental in the establishment of the Hull House Settlement in the midst of the slums of Chicago 1889. Jane Addams got the inspiration for building Hull House when she visited Toynbee Hall in London. The Hull House Settlement was originally meant to provide an opportunity for young educated women to be in solidarity with poor people. It later evolved into an open center where poor people in the area, particularly the poor immigrants, were welcome to engage in recreational activities and even just to rest. Hull House also pioneered the provision of day care centers to enable working mothers to leave their children in a safe place while working. Through the years, Hull House expanded and additional buildings were built. From day care centers for children, spaces for people in crisis – especially women – were also provided.

In addition, Hull House became the home for “The Working People’s Social Science Club.” This club attracted social activists, reformers and community members who were concerned about social issues and social realities. According to Jane Addams, “...All discussions, save that which went to the roots of things, was impatiently discarded as an unworthy, halfway measure.” Hull House also provided space for labor leaders’ meetings and for a women’s cooperative.

Style of Writing

The book has 28 chapters with 427 pages. Addams shunned the chronological narration of events. Instead, she wisely recounted personal experiences which contributed to her social consciousness, putting her involvement in the settlement movement in context. In writing this book, Jane Addams went beyond narrating her personal experiences; she also surfaced voices of poor immigrants and community members. She did not only write about her personal involvement but more so of the contributions of others, as she was conscious about collective efforts in social development.

Jane Addams' style of writing reveals the eloquence of a learned woman who was able to weave personal experiences with societal events and involvement. She could be personal at times as she narrated her firsthand involvement, but she was also able to connect personal experiences with the societal conditions.

As a document, *Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*, can be classified as a research work, specifically as a “narrative social work” (Baldwin, 2013) and an “interpretive autoethnography” (Denzin, 2014). “Narrative social work” as a research methodology frames events and facts in the context of the micro, meso and macro environment. Interpretive autoethnography utilizes constructivism in the interweaving of autobiography with social relationships. Thus, “narrative social work” and “interpretive autoethnography” are now being recognized as research methodologies more relevant to social work practitioners. In *Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*, Jane Addams employed these not only as methods to document her experiences but more so to theorize about poverty, activism, social engagement and social development.

Hull House Settlement: A Social Development Engagement

Jane Addams was one of the early social workers – if not the first one – to identify social development as an area of social work. Reflecting on the early years of the Settlement Movement she mused,

...some of us had numbered our years as far as thirty, and we all carefully avoided the extravagance of statement which characterizes youth, and yet I doubt if anywhere on the continent that summer could have been found

a group of people more genuinely interested in social development or more sincerely convinced that they had found a clue by which the conditions in crowded cities might be understood and the agencies for social betterment developed.” (p. 115)

Addams’ concept of social development was constructed as she lived in the midst of the poor immigrant settlers. As she stated, “(T)he Settlement, then, is an experimental effort to aid in the solution of the social and industrial problems which are engendered by the modern conditions of life in a great city.” (p. 126) In fact, key concepts of social development can be extracted from *Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*.

a. Social democracy and participatory development

Jane Addams’ concept of participatory development was beyond tokenism. In this document, she clearly articulated the participation of the “masses of the people,” the poor and the marginalized. According to her,

“In a democratic country nothing can be permanently achieved save through the masses of the people. It will be impossible to establish a higher political life than the people themselves crave; that it is difficult to see how the notion of a higher civic life can be fostered save through common intercourse; that the blessings which we associate with a life of refinement and cultivation can be made universal and must be made universal if they are to be permanent. (p. 116)

Hull House was, for Addams, a place where everybody was welcome regardless of political or economic principles. (p. 453) Her firm belief in social democracy was affirmed when she wrote that “...the Settlement recognizes the need of cooperation, both with the radical and the conservative, and from the very nature of the case the Settlement cannot limit its friends to any one political party or economic school.” (p. 453) Social democracy as the foundation of Hull House was reiterated throughout the document. In truth, Hull House itself was the embodiment of social democracy. As Addams concluded, “(T)he educational activities of the settlement, as well as its philanthropic, civic, and social undertakings are but differing manifestations of the attempt to socialize democracy, as is the very existence of the Settlement itself.” (p. 454)

b. Scientific inquiry and the role of research

The role of research in social work practice was explicit as Addams recalled the demands of being a member of the Hull House Settlement, “It should demand from its residents a scientific patience in the accumulation of facts ...” (p. 127) One example of this was the community map that the Hull House produced. Although the output was finalized by a Hull House resident member, the community map (or profile) was actually produced collectively.

For the pioneering production of this community map, Jane Addams was hailed by some writers as one of the founding mothers of sociology. For Addams, the gathering of data should not be an end in itself but should be a means to empathize with the poor and the marginalized and therefore “must be grounded in a philosophy whose foundation is on the solidarity of the human race...” (p. 127) Social investigations could then be used to provide data to support advocacies for improved social services, such as better sanitation facilities, and for enactment of legislation addressing social conditions such as child labor, etc. Addams also held that social investigations about social conditions should be linked with studies done by other stakeholders. As she stated, “We find increasingly, however, that the best results are to be obtained in investigations as in other undertakings, by combining our researches with those of other public bodies or with the State itself.” (p. 303)

c. Spirituality beyond religion

In Chapter 6 of the book, Addams identified “Christian Humanitarianism” (p. 125) as a “spiritual force” behind the establishment of Hull House, although she herself was able to creatively navigate the tension between secular humanitarianism and religiosity. She articulated this tension aptly:

Occasionally I obscurely felt as if a demand were being made upon us for a ritual which should express and carry forward the hope of the social movement. I was constantly bewildered by the number of requests I received to officiate at funeral services and by the curious confessions made to me by total strangers. For a time I accepted the former and on one awful occasion furnished the ‘poetic part’ of a wedding ceremony really performed by a justice of peace, but I soon learned to steadfastly refuse such offices,

although I saw that, for many people without church affiliations, the vague humanitarianism the Settlement represented was the nearest approach they could find to an expression of their religious sentiments. (pp. 152-153)

Addams consider religiosity as one of social sentiments which “... are a difficult and cumulating product of human growth and which, like all higher aims, live only by communion and fellowship, are cultivated most easily in a fostering soil of a community life.” (p. 153)

d. Role of social theory and social movement

Addams recognized the role of social theory and social theorists. Hull House provided space for social theorists, including political ideologues, to discuss theories, opinions and analysis of the social realities. Hull House also supported and assisted social movements like trade unions. It was also instrumental in organizing the first successful Housing Cooperative of Working Women. Addams aptly described the Hull House creative engagement with social theorists and social movements in this way:

At any rate the residents of Hull House discovered that while their first impact with city poverty allied them to groups given over to discussion of social theories, their sober efforts to heal neighborhood ills allied them to general public movements which were without challenging creeds. But while we discovered that we most easily secured the smallest of much-needed improvements by attaching our efforts to those of organized bodies, nevertheless these very organizations would have been impossible had not the public conscience been aroused and the community sensibility quickened by these same ardent theorists. (p. 195)

e. Micro-Meso-Macro Engagement

Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes illustrated what it means to care for individuals in crisis, address family problems, organize a community to address community problems, lobby for labor legislations, and make a stand for world peace. Chapter 10 of the book describes how Hull House members got involved in lobbying for labor legislation against

child labor and providing for just working conditions. Wisely, Addams was quick to point out that legislation has to be sustained by organized labor. Quoting an unidentified English statesman, she wrote, “a common rule for the standard of life and the condition of labor may be secured by legislation, but it must be maintained by trades unionism.” (p. 209)

Gaps in *Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes*

Jane Addams exemplified an empowered woman. She plunged into public service, shunned marriage and got a government job as a garbage inspector, classified as unwomanly during her time. As a woman activist and one of the pioneers in social work and public administration, Jane Addams advocated for the human rights of immigrants, and the labor rights of men, women and children. She was disturbed about violence against women, their multiple burdens arising from reproductive and productive work, and prostitution. She promoted women’s human rights, but this writer noted that she mostly focused on issues regarding women’s participation in the public sphere. Discussions and the theorizing about the root causes of women’s issues were limited especially when considered vis-à-vis the treatment of other social issues in the book. She wrote about educating women on their labor rights, but no mention was made about attempts to educate women on their rights as women inside the domestic abode. Furthermore, there was seemingly hesitation on the part of Addams to discuss domestic violence in the community.

Thus, this writer opines that Jane Addams – although ahead of her time – was still a product of her time.

Final Word

Twenty Years at Hull House with Autobiographical Notes is recommended for social activists and social development practitioners, but more so for aspiring social workers. Social work practitioners are also encouraged to read this book – especially those who did not have the chance to look at the original document during their student days. The approach and style in which the document was written provide an excellent model on how to theorize from practice.

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SPECIAL FEATURE: REFLECTIONS ON THE UTILIZATION OF CREATIVE MODALITIES AS AN ALTERNATIVE SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

Jowima Ang-Reyes

Introduction

Creative Modalities have been utilized since the beginning of time to express one's culture, beliefs, history and other pertinent information that had been handed down from generation to generation. In social work, many practitioners have used various forms of expressive arts in working with their clients. However, as these are often left undocumented, there is scarcity of evidence that would have provided illustration of the impact of a non-traditional methodology such as the utilization of creative modalities in data gathering, assessment and even treatment. One of my previous jobs as a social worker in the field of Child Protection abroad involved many challenges. Finding myself in a foreign land dealing cultures different from my own, I needed to find a universal way to work with children and their families as an alternative mode. Thus began my passion for creative arts as a medium of working with my clients. Currently as an educator, I find it helpful in teaching students to grasp various theories and complex concepts with the infusion of arts as a medium of teaching

Looking at the multitude of challenges we face today, dealing with various forms and degrees of disasters, as well as existing social, political, spiritual and economic realities, there is a need for a enrich traditional modes of humanitarian assistance such as provision of basic needs like food, shelter and immediate health treatment, to introduce engaging and innovative approaches which could facilitate the healing and recovery process of the target beneficiaries. There are circumstances in which humanitarian services are needed yet also subject humanitarian

workers to constant exposure to threat and trauma. An example of this is humanitarian work in armed conflict areas which are usually also in the most neglected, remote and critical places in the country. The processing of feelings attached to such stressful incidents needs to be provided creatively and positively. It is noteworthy to mention the works of Lazarus and Folkman (1984), both known to be stress researchers, who explained that stress only commences once the person is able to appraise the situation, ascertain if it is safe or threatening. The danger can be either perceived or actually present, after which the person then identifies what resources can be mobilized to cope with the stressful situation.

Theoretical bases

Two theoretical frameworks have been helpful in the integration of creative arts in my social work practice. First, that of Dr. Peter Levine, Director of the Somatic Experiencing Trauma Institute who states, “*Trauma need not be a life sentence. Of all the maladies that attack the human organism, trauma may ultimately be one that is recognized as beneficial. I say this because, in the healing of trauma, a transformation takes place - one that can improve the quality of life.*” (1997) Dr. Levine’s approach is based on a phylogenetic model, emphasizing that trauma symptoms arise from a frozen residue of energy that is trapped in the body after traumatic circumstances that requires paying attention to how the body responds, as manifested in body sensations. Concentration on the physical manifestations caused by critical events/stressors enables the identification of triggers prior to the onset of any reaction or effects (Levine, 1997).

This leads to the paramount role played by the second concept, the utilization of creative modalities as means to express energies in a productive and positive manner. This means steering away from negative, and sometimes destructive, patterns of self-expression. However, this does not minimize the importance of the release of unnerving energy through crying, shaking, and other physical manifestations. Creative modalities simply provide alternative options for people who would want to deal with stress more creatively. The book entitled *Expressive Therapies*, edited by Cathy A. Maichiodi (2005) has been instructive in this regard. The expression modes of each individual are unique to them. There are those who are inclined to be more verbal, while others are more tactile, visual and express themselves in other forms. Thus as a social worker, I need to consider that providing our clients an opportunity to express

themselves is one thing, but offering various expression modalities is another. In social work case management, there are instances wherein we work with clients unable to express themselves either verbally or in written form. This should not be a barrier in our efforts to seek the pertinent information necessary to assess our client's situation. I believe that it is not about having insufficient information but being creative in the process of data gathering. This is based on the premise that the first step towards healing is expression, allowing the client to express through various creative forms provides immediate form of de-stressing. Simply put, I believe expression itself should not be limiting, rather it should be free flowing.

Working with our clients in a non-traditional approach creates a relaxed working atmosphere that involves veering away from traditional ways of processing insights into various creative modalities. There are instances wherein lectures can be replaced or substituted with games to provide an experiential mode for everyone to elicit insights and learning. Instead of talking about the importance of having a focused mind, these games are designed to provide experiential opportunities in recognizing the critical importance of focusing and stabilizing physical symptoms such as nervousness and anxiety by controlled breathing exercises. Art expression provides a sense of confidentiality for the participants as they creatively express themselves while keeping their privacy at the same time, sharing only what they are comfortable to do so. The use of body movements and controlled breathing exercises, while listening to music depicting nature's sounds – like the cascading of water or birds chirping – allows the mind to focus and relax. The use of sketch pads, molding clays and various art materials enables the clients to create visual images reflecting insights and learning, and provides various tactile experiences stimulating one's sense of touch. Utilization of other craft materials such as colored sand and glue provides another dimension. The participants enjoy the variety of colors and the tactile experience while creating sand art.

The combination of games and creative works allows the participants to enjoy and process their insights productively and in an innovative manner. Visual outputs prompt participants to add information to what they previously shared. The utilization of visual arts as a by product serves to guide participants in presenting thoughts in a logical and coherent manner. Drawings about their families, clear white clouds, trees and other images provide a means of visualizing ideas in their minds that made focusing easier for participants who are introverts. Games and body movements give the participants opportunities to be attuned with the self.

Application

Creative modalities can and have been used to address certain concerns in the dimensions of staff wellbeing, efficiency of delivery of functions and duties in relation to healing and recovery. Integrated into the system of work organization, creative modalities can help maintain the balance between work-related productivity and personal wellness. When this balance is achieved the high turnover of personnel often observed in humanitarian agencies may be prevented.

I was able to work with a group of humanitarian workers who came back from their workplace after a life-threatening situation. Shaken and stressed, the team needed a venue to allow the members to relieve their stress by expression. The use of creative modalities was feasible because there was limited time to process experiences and reflections of the staff. The session design was informed by two objectives: to identify physical manifestations of trauma and stress, and second, to deal with its physical triggers through the use of creative modalities. The team members were mostly interested in learning mental relaxation exercises and positive modalities to deal with their stressors especially while on fieldwork. Immediate issues regarding personal and organizational concerns were discussed, specifically security issues, and a recommended plan for the pre-, during, and post-deployment phases was drafted for approval.

The activities in the session include a focusing exercise and art expression (drawing). In the first activity, the participants were seated in a circle and instructed to remain silent for five minutes. They failed at first attempt as they claimed there were too many distractions. During the second and third tries, however, the group managed to sit quietly for longer periods by focusing on their breathing. When asked what the difference was between the first and succeeding exercises, the participants agreed that controlled breathing and focusing prevented them from losing control, that is, breaking their silence. They found the activity both fun and educational; it is something that they apply as a form of 'health break' when they are on fieldwork.

The art expression activity gave the participants got a glimpse of the others' thought processes and how each one sees things in visual form. One noticeable observation was the way the participants took a longer time describing the details of their artworks as the exercises were repeatedly done. In another activity, the main task is for the identification of a representation of their personal strength, which were described

and explained. Subsequently, the participants displayed enthusiasm by showing their initiative to share in making parallelism of their drawings and narrating the significant relationship of their personal strengths. The participants were also asked to describe their creative works in one word. For some, it was easy to identify words for the artworks. They were noticeably relaxed as evident in their tone of voice, comfort with pause while sharing, smiling and using humor to elaborate their sharing. Next was to utilize the individual artwork and create a group collage making a unifying symbol and theme of unity and cooperation. Each participant studied the artworks as they posted them on the wall and connected each piece to another creating a whole art representation. What was interesting was that since their ideas were represented by their symbols it became the guide in trying to make a sense of unity out of the independent thoughts creating a harmonious expression how the participants visualized each other's strength and how it has been helping the team survive even through their worst situations on the field.

As they explained the significance and meaning of the lines and structures, a sense of purposeful expression was manifested in their tone of voice and in the focusing of their stories. Their drawing of 'calmness', expressed in the form of the ocean or any body of water, helped them remain calm and collected. This highlighted the point that the emotional stability specifically during stressful or critical circumstances affect a person's objective perception and analysis that is paramount during moments which could mean survival or not.

Visual creative modalities also facilitate recall of the person's experiences and thoughts and especially their strengths by the group.

The participants had positive things to say about their experience of the session: "The activity was relaxing by itself...", "More activities like this...*ipagpapatuloy ko ito ...*", "Acquired a new way to manage stress through art...", "More time and more activity like this....", and "Did not realize art can be relaxing."

Way Forward: Creativity in Teaching and Practice

In the practice of social work, we often hear that it is a profession that is both a science and an art. Creative arts have been utilized from the beginning of time not just as a form of artistic expression or entertainment, but as a window to the soul of the artist, sharing to the world in whatever shades and forms aspired for. To provide both an opportunity to express

one's thoughts and feelings in a creative manner that is less threatening, more relaxing and energizing. It is recognizing that expressions are different as people are different from each other as to our learned expression. Application of an eclectic and unstructured form for self-expression releases the energy of people to do so in a less threatening manner. The concept of acceptance provides a valuable principle in allowing our clients start from their own beginning and understanding of self and the freedom and confidence to express it in a manner that they feel most comfortable.

In one of my classes, I had my students use creative works in submitting their integrative paper in one of my classes. Similar to integrative papers, the aim of the students' creative work is to highlight the essence of their learning about the social work profession for the whole semester. I must admit that I was as excited to see their creative work, as students were to present them. The creative works included an original song composition, a short cartoon clip with voice-over narration, action songs, short video presentations and the like. Each presentation shared salient and original insights on what they learned from class. When asked about their insights, the class unanimously agreed that, while the integrative project was a serious requirement, it was made fun as they were given the opportunity to be creative in their manner of expression.

The creative arts, or what others call expressive arts, have been used as an alternative modality in working with various client systems is essentially nothing new. In social work, the potential of the utilization of creative modalities is limitless. This is especially true in dealing with cases of child abuse, violence trauma, even death and the grieving process – stress-filled situations in which people find it difficult to talk about their experiences. Other forms of expressive arts, such as play and music therapy, are useful in dealing with the issues at hand and finding ways for people to express themselves. Such approaches can be easily introduced into the Bachelor of Science in Social Work (BSSW) curriculum as tools and interventions in working with various client systems. Further research on the different creative modalities applicable in different regions in the country can likewise be endeavored: how can creative arts unite families, and create an atmosphere of unity, cooperation and healing of communities? Furthermore, a study on the diverse forms of folklores, myths, culture and traditions of the various regions in the Philippines, and the creative modalities utilized to illuminate them, may also deepen understanding and facilitate innovation in social work.. This is a rich field not yet fully explored toward indigenizing social work in the Philippines.

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SPECIAL FEATURE: DEVELOPING DANCE MOVEMENT EXPLORATION MODEL FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Introduction

This article presents the researcher's initial undertakings in developing the Dance Movement Exploration (DME) model to address collective and community-level trauma, such as those arising from natural disasters, community conflict, and violence. Results from his thesis under the MS Human Movement Science-Leisure Studies in the University of the Philippines College of Human Kinetics showed Dance Movement Therapy (on which the DME is based) to be effective in the prevention and control of academic stressors among 169 college students. Through the Dance Movement Therapy's exploration of the inner self, the students became more aware of their stresses and the emotions and behaviors these trigger in them. This awareness is important for them to identify how they should respond when stress threatens to overwhelm them (Dimarucut, 2014). Thus, its applications in other settings may be explored beyond individuals, and outside an academic institution.

Theoretical Bases

The DME has methodological and theoretical bases on Dance Therapy, Psychosocial Theories and Physical Activity. The Dance Movement Therapy, in particular, forwards the idea that "the body and mind are inseparable" (Levy 1988), and thus one's movements reflect one's personality, a change in movement affects total functioning, and therapeutic relationship is mediated by non-verbal expressions (Meekums, 2002).

Similar to the Dance Movement Therapy, the DME, as an experiential movement application, utilizes inner processes and body expressions. This feature is significant as a psychotherapeutic tool, as well as a motor skill learning and teaching strategy toward recognizing an individual's capabilities in any physical activity. Dance and movement-based interventions open up possibilities for people "to create, symbolize and transcend" the challenges they encounter in their search for meanings in life. The researcher's initial studies on the DME highlighted its viability as a means of understanding people's inner strengths and weaknesses, and identifying their potentials; as well as serving as a tool for communicating, expressing and asserting the self to society (Dimarucut, 2014). Creativity is one of the foundations of the DME because it aims to develop an individual's capability to act. When realized at the community level, creativity can invigorate the social well-being of people and their environments.

In terms of structure, the DME process is also patterned after the Dance Movement Therapy, which has the following stages (Meekums, 2002):

Preparation: the warm-up stage where safety is established;

Incubation: a relaxed state, letting go of conscious control, movements become symbolic;

Illumination: meanings become apparent, having either positive or negative effects; and

Evaluation: discussion of the significance of the process, which prepares to end the session

Although these stages are described as progressive, in practice, the facilitator goes back and forth among these stages several times throughout the process.

In DME, these stages are operationalized in the following sequence:

- I. Introduction, Welcome/greetings, Warm-up
- II. Movement Activity 1 (with de-briefing)
- III. Movement Activity 2 (with de-briefing)
- IV. Relaxation (guided or non-guided)
- V. Sharing, Closure, and Goodbyes

Each sequence may include inner processing through body expression such as: body awareness (grounding, body mapping, tapping, brushing, and breathing), therapeutic dance work (structured dance, unstructured dance and creative dance with or without props), movement activity (magic thread, mirroring, play and games), arts and crafts (drawing, making clay images, and pattern making), and therapeutic dialogue (debriefing with partner, group-guided and non-guided relaxation, and sharing in a circle).

It is important that the design of the sessions is based on the participants' situation or needs, and their functional ability for the activities. This information should be gathered prior to conducting the DME. The conceptions of movement in the participants' culture are also important to know beforehand. For instance, there may be types of dances and movements which are not encouraged in the group's culture depending on a person's gender, age, civil status and social roles.

The change that the DME encourages is still focused on the individual, however, the value of one's self, interpersonal relationships and collective identity are also emphasized. The DME forwards that individual empowerment cannot be taken separately from community development, and vice versa. Thus the question is: How can dance and movement-based activities as utilized in therapy be modified to address collective trauma with larger groups?

Application

The author had the opportunity to utilize the DME as a one-time activity with vulnerable groups, which included survivors of disasters, violence and conflicts. The case studies below present the highlights of this experience.

Case Study 1: DME with Typhoon Haiyan Survivors

Typhoon Haiyan, known in the Philippines as super typhoon Yolanda, was one of the strongest tropical cyclones ever recorded, devastating portions of Southeast Asia, particularly the Philippines, on November 8, 2013. It is thus far the deadliest Philippine typhoon on record, killing at least 6,300 people. Haiyan was also the strongest storm recorded at landfall, resulting in the damage of schools, colleges and universities in Samar and Leyte, particularly the University of the Philippines Visayas-Tacloban College (UPVTC).

One of the responses of the UP system was to immediately issue a memorandum allowing students from the UPVTC campus to cross-register in other UP campuses so they could “continue studying” and “not lose” the second semester. The UP Diliman College of Arts and Letters established *Sagip Bangon Isko Iska*, a project to support the UPTVC students who came to the Diliman campus. It was an arts-based psychosocial support system for the students affected by typhoon Yolanda. The program featured workshops on literature, visual arts and movement, including the DME, from January to March 2014.

The DME facilitation was conducted among 20 UPVTC students, both male and female with ages ranging from 16 to 21 years old. Apart from dealing with the trauma from Typhoon Haiyan, the students also faced problems in adapting to the culture and way of life inside their adoptive university.

The objective of the DME facilitation was to help the students release their emotions through dance and movement. The DME session was conceptualized to provide a safe space for the survivors who were not able, or were not yet ready, to verbally express their reactions to what they had gone through. The students were also asked to represent their feelings in drawings before and after the activity.

At the end of the session, the students reported noticing a change in their feelings and their perception of their traumatic experience. They felt relieved by the exercises, not only because of the free movements it involved, but because it enabled them to reflect and think about themselves in the process. Some students shared that their reflections in the session strengthened their resolve to overcome the challenges of their new situation as students, and as survivors of a disaster.

Case Study 2: DME and the Manilakbayan 2015

Manilakbayan ng Mindanao is a people’s caravan and mobilization from the rural communities of Mindanao to the heart of Manila to seek immediate action on the killings of Lumad (indigenous peoples) as a result of militarization and the plunder by big mining enterprises/corporations and plantations. In line with this, the UP College of Social Work and Community Development coordinated the “*Kampuhan sa UP Diliman*,” a week long activity which aimed to raise the consciousness not only of the UP Diliman community, but also other educational institutions and

citizens about the Lumad and Mindanao issues, especially on the attacks on schools. It sought to generate exposure and exchange between the public and the Lumad through interactive activities such as political and educational discussions, protests, concerts as well as art, sports and food festivals, thereby amplifying the call to stop Lumad killings.

The DME with Lumad and UP students was one of the activities organized during the *Kampuhan*. There were 80 to 90 Lumads and 54 UP College of Human Kinetics students who participated in the DME facilitation. Their ages ranged from 16 to 50 years old, and they were a mix of male and female. The main aim of the DME session was social interaction between two different groups in order to build their understanding of each other's culture and realities. This was done through games and dances. The games in particular were designed to engage Lumads and UP students in working together to achieve a goal. This was reinforced by the dance exercises which were enjoyed by all the participants. According to the older Lumads, they had never seen their fellow Lumads so happy since their (then recent) tragic experience with the militarization in their schools and communities.

On the part of the UP students, the games and dances served as a channel to increase their awareness on the plight of the Lumads: "Well, my expectation was to have fun and understand them. And it was really fun! I felt happy after the event, and I successfully understand them, their problem, why are they here." The DME session also generated personal insights among students because of their interaction with the Lumads. One student commented: "*Hindi lamang paglalaro ang aking alaalang maitatabi sa pakiki-salamuha ko sa mga lumad, kundi natuto rin ako sa kanila na maging matapang at ipagpatuloy ang buhay kahit pa anong sakuna ang dumating. Laban lang at huwag mawawalan ng pag-asa at laging ngitian lang ang mga problemang mabibigat.*"

Case Study 3: DME with Children

In 2012, the author was invited to facilitate a DME session with 25 children from four orphanages. These orphanages cater mostly to children in need of special protection, including survivors of physical and sexual violence, and neglect. The objective was to utilize DME to help heal the 'open wound' from the children's traumatic experiences. The DME was conducted in the annual Summer Development Camp organized by CICM Missionaries.

The participants were boys aged six to 16 years old. The program structure was designed to be easily followed and appreciated by the participants. The session ran for five hours. It included activities such as two-person games, small group playing and a big-group dance presentation, which encouraged creativity and healthy competition among the participants. The progression of activities from small interactions to the big group presentation was also deliberate as it was noted that the children tended to either isolate themselves or interact only with a small group of peers. By the end of the session, the children were comfortable enough with each other to relate their feelings in the big group. A guided relaxation exercise exploring the children's pain and dreams was conducted prior to the sharing.

The immediate effects of the DME on the children's views about themselves – their capabilities, group and situation – were reflected in their feedback:

“OK po yung sayaw. Marunong pala ako pag marami kaming sasayaw. Nakawawala po ng lungkot ko.”

“Dati akala ko po galit sila sa akin. Pero nun pong nagsama kami, hindi naman po pala. Kasi nakabuo po kami ng laro at sayaw na sama-sama.”

“May pag-asa pa po pala buhay ko. Sana mabuo uli ako kasi yung ginawa natin na nakahiga at pumikit ako, nakita ko po mga magulang ko. Mahal nila ako.”

Directions for Further Development

As shown in the case studies, the DME can aid in processing feelings of stress and anxiety, building connections between different groups, and as a complementary activity to on-going therapy. The case studies also highlighted the combinations of variables that can be further explored: participants (relatively homogenous as in the Haiyan and *Bukal na Tipan*, or mixed as in the Lumad and university students), activities (exercises, dance, games vis-à-vis drawing and verbal expressions such as songs and music), and time allotment.

To date, however, the DME has been utilized only as one-time activities with vulnerable groups, and usually as a part of a broader intervention program addressing trauma. This limits the model's evaluation beyond its (positive) immediate effects on the individual. There are other effects which need more documentation and study: the group

games and dances which established a foundation for solidarity and a sense of security with each other to develop; the expression and release of their pain into dances and movements; and the sharing of stories, feelings and thoughts about a personal trauma to form the bigger narrative of a collective experience. As a tool for social development, it was noted that the DME also presents a viable medium for capability building of vulnerable groups and their communities, particularly if human rights perspectives can be integrated into its design and structure. This may entail integrating the DME longer than one-time activities as it is currently done, to elicit deeper insights on the interconnection and interdependence of the self, the collective or group and society,. One example of a theme is the concept of one's rights and responsibilities on the one hand, and State obligations to the people on the other.

While the research on this mode of DME application is still in its nascent stages, the author's experience thus far has surfaced insights which can be pursued toward a model of personal to community healing and revitalization.

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