ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

UGNAYAN: HOW THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND FILIPINO CULTURE BUILD

RELATIONSHIPS THAT HELP URBAN POOR WOMEN SURVIVE AND THRIVE

A Dissertation Presented to

The Faculty of Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS)

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Transformational Development
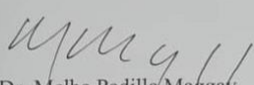
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ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
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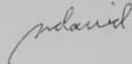WE HEREBY APPROVE THE DISSERTATION SUBMITTED BY

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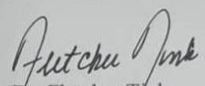RELATIONSHIPS THAT HELP URBAN POOR WOMEN SURVIVE AND THRIVE

AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE PH.D.
IN TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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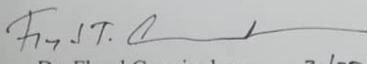
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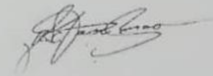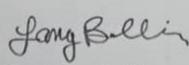
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ABSTRACT

This research explores the experiences of women living in urban poor communities. It aims to identify, understand, and articulate how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable them to create relationships for their survival, as well as for their flourishing as human beings created after God's image. It is also the goal of this study to provide an indigenous theoretical model of development—one that is both in line with the tenets of the Bible and in touch with the uniqueness and intricacies of the Filipino culture. Transformational grounded theory, a research design that combines principles from participatory action research and grounded theory methodology, was employed for this study. Fifty women from urban poor communities in Antipolo, Taytay, and Quezon City, Philippines participated in the research. The data shows that women build relationships in two main loci: in their neighborhoods and the Christian centers in their communities. Also, employing open coding, axial coding, and selective coding, the data shows that the Christian faith and Filipino culture are instrumental to what women consider to be true development. From the participants' data, the interweaving of Christian values and Filipino values creates relationships that are crucial for their progress. Christian values (faith, stewardship, harmony, generosity, wisdom, and love) and Filipino values (*damayan, kapwa, loob, pagkakaunawaan*) are the fiber or the threads to the relationships they share that serves as their organic safety net. An indigenous framework of development, "*Banig*: Development as Building Relationships through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values," was drawn from the analysis of the participants' data. The definition of women from urban poor communities of development is not limited to financial and economic bounds—their view of development

as having good *ugnayan* (relationship) with God, with one's *kapwa* (neighbors), with one's *loob* (inner self) is closer to the Biblical definition of development as *shalom.* This work offers research-based and empirical evidence that when the poor understand development from the finest of their culture and the power of God's Word, they begin to perceive beyond economics and begin to live lives of meaningful transformation.

CERTIFICATION OF PROOFREADING

I, **Marie Joy Pring** (name of the researcher) certify that this dissertation has undergone proofreading and editing by **Dr. Eileen Ruger**, an authorized proofreader of the Asia- Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.

Marie Joy Pring   **February 20, 2021**

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Signature of Researcher   **Date**

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in the dissertation has been submitted in support of an

application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institutes of learning.

Marie Joy D. Pring   March 28, 2022
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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY COMMITMENT

As a child of God and a servant of Christ's church, I recognize the importance of academic honesty and integrity in all of the work I undertake as part of my studies. I Pledge myself to uphold the highest standards of integrity in my work. As part of this pledge, I will submit only those papers that I myself have written and that give clear and appropriate citations for all the sources I have used in their preparation. I also understand that allowing another student to copy my work constitutes academic dishonesty on my own part as well as that of the other student.

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February 20, 2022

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all the Filipino women who glorify Christ and nurture

this nation with their fierce love and selfless sacrifice for their families and communities.

Mabuhay kayo! Kasihan kayong patuloy ng Poong Maykapal habang patuloy kayong
nagiging ehemplo ng maka-Kristong pagbabayunhay at tunay na pagunlad.

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All praises, glory, and thanksgiving belong to God! *Dakila ka Panginoon, sa Iyo ang pinaka mataas na pasasalamat at papuri!*

The completion of this dissertation would not have been possible without the help provided by the faculty and staff at APNTS. I am especially indebted to Dr. Fletcher Tink, Ph.D. in TD Program Director, who has been supportive of my goals and who worked actively to help me reach this far; to Dr. Nativity Petallar who has encouraged me since day one of my Ph.D. journey; to Dr. Eileen Ruger who helped me not only with proofreading but also with her prayers; to Dr. Bruce Oldham and Dr. Peggy Oldham who have been second parents to me at APNTS and who always embolden me to believe in God's calling for my life.

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fellow Langham scholars and graduates, I am sharing the joy of finishing this dissertation with you.

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Finally, I would like to thank the women who participated in this research, as well as their organizations. This study would not have been done without their openness and willingness to participate. Thank you for showing me and all who will read this work that development is not about financial and material advancement, but about relationships and *shalom. Malaking bahagi kayo ng tagumpay na ito, at sa ngalan ni Kristo Hesus, alay ko ang obra na ito para sa inyo.*

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ACRONYMS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ANE	Ancient Near East
DOLE	Department of Labor and Employment
DOLE-ILS	Department of Labor and Employment-Institute for Labor Studies
DOLE-NWCP	Department of Labor and Employment-- National Wages and Productivity Commission
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
DtrH	Deuteronomistic History
FBO	Faith-based Organization
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GTM	Grounded Theory Methodology
HDI	Human Development Index
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
NCR	National Capital Region
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority\
NGO	Non-government Organization
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
MVP	Millennium Village Project
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PCW	Philippine Commission on Women
PSA	Philippine Statistic Authority

PREDA	People's Recovery Empowerment Development Assistance Foundation
TD	Transformational Development
TGT	Transformational Grounded Theory
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The rays of the morning sun pass through the peepholes of Linda's shanty. It had been raining in the past days; hence, the light brings a welcome warmth to her cheeks as she lays on her cold bamboo bed. Routinely, the sunrise is Linda's signal to get up and get ready for another workday as a *lavandera* (laundry woman), but not today. More than a week ago, Linda figured in an accident while she was walking in the dark alley of the *looban* where she and her family lives. It was a terrible fall. Linda knew it from that moment because she could not stand up on her own. She had to ask her neighbors to carry her to their home. Linda thought that perhaps after a few days of rest she would recover and get back to work. Even at 58 years old, retirement is not in the widow's mind. Linda would always tell her patrons that laundry is the only work she knows to do. "*Hanggang gusto n'yo pa ako at hanggang kaya pa ng katawan ko, maglalaba ako kasi kailangan tulungan ko pa ang mga apo ko* (As long as you want my service and as long as my body can still handle the toil, I will do the laundry because I still need to help my grandchildren)," she often tells her clients.

Today, the sharp pain in Linda's legs when she attempts to stand-up is stronger than her gusto to earn and help her family—the bruising and swelling on her right hip are not improving. Just when Linda was about to slide into the feeling of helplessness and worry, she heard a knock on her door. It was Maya, Linda's neighbor, and a worker in the church she frequents. Maya said she was wondering why Linda has not shown up in the church and even at Norma's sari-sari store. Norma's store has a spacious make-shift canopy, the usual place for the ladies of looban like Linda and Maya to have an afternoon

chat or escape the heat in their homes due to the frequent electrical disruption. When Maya heard Linda's story and learned that her children did not bring her to the hospital because they worried about the expenses of treating her, Maya wasted no time. Maya spoke to the *kapitan* of the looban to help in transporting Linda to the hospital. She raised donations for Linda from the other ladies of the looban and from the church to pay for Linda's treatment.

The next evening, Linda was back home from the hospital, with a cast on her hip, a bag of grocery items, along with her medicines. The doctor at the health center told Linda that if she waited for few more days, the damage on her hips would have been permanent—leaving her with a limp and unable to do her laundry job. Linda was told it will take many weeks before her mobility gets back to normal, and even more weeks before she could do her laundry work. Nevertheless, Linda felt less anxious, less dejected, and even less lonely tonight than the previous ones. As Linda lay down in her bamboo bed and watched the stars in the clear night sky through the peepholes of her shanty, tears fell on her cheek as she whispered a prayer, "*Panginoon, salamat sa malasakit ng mga ka-sisteran at kapitbahay ko* (Lord, thank you for the concern of my sisters and neighbors)."

Linda and Maya are pseudonyms, but they are real persons whose story took place few years ago. I know this because these two women are members of the congregation I pastor, and this story is the testimony Linda gave at our pulpit on our annual thanksgiving Sunday we call "Body Life." Linda's story and how the network of women rallied behind her may sound incredible, but this is a story of women joining together. Finding ways to alleviate their abject situations together is an everyday phenomenon in urban poor

communities. This is true for the many *manicuristas* (manicurist), *lavanderas* (washerwomen), *plantsadoras* (ironing woman), *tinderas* (lady vendors), and other women living in the *looban*. This is the little story that is often untold: women contribute greatly in assuring their families' survival, and they play a significant part in the well-being of their communities.

Every research tells a story, and this is a story of resistance and resilience. It is a story of hope that is stubborn, like the tender Sampaguita that blooms under the harsh tropical sun. Many Filipino women are deprived of opportunities, but their attitude has always been that of persistence and resilience. Filipino women refuse to fade into the nothingness of the peripheries; they are determined to rise above the systems of inequity and injustice that puts them down. From stories like that of Linda and Maya, this research hopes to explore how Filipino women in the urban poor communities forge relationships that help them meet their needs to survive and flourish as significant members of their communities.

Background of the Problem

The auspicious outlook of economic progress does not spell out the general picture of development in the Philippines. Millions are still left struggling in the margins and inter-generational poverty continues to menace Filipino families (ADB 2009; Cudia 2016; Bayudan-Dacuycuy and Lim 2014; NEDA 2017, 11; Albert and Vizmanos 2018, 22; NEDA 2018, 26; World Bank 2018a, 2-45; Oxford Business Group 2018). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) estimated 17.7 million Filipinos in the urban areas live below the poverty threshold (PSA 2020). In another survey conducted and released by the Social Weather Stations (2020) earlier this year,

Filipinos provided the highest self-rated poverty in 5 years. Based on the food that they can afford to purchase on a day to day basis from the survey, 54% of Filipino families self-identified as poor. The pandemic made the poverty situation in the Philippines worse, and the propitious development achieved in recent years was proven to be rather precarious. With the world's longest lockdown from March 15, 2020, up to the present, hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who have seen a better financial situation for themselves are expected to slip back into poverty and come up against joblessness and starvation. In Metro Manila alone, a Social Weather Station survey estimated around 693,000 Filipino families experienced involuntary hunger from February to April 2020 (Lalu 2020). The state-run think tank, Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) states that at the height of the lockdown 75% of the economy stopped and rendered 7.5 million Filipinos jobless (de Vera 2020). The unemployment figure dropped to 4.6 million in July as the lockdown restrictions were eased and the economy began to re-open (Lopez 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic only worsened the chronic poverty and the condition of the weaker sectors in society (ADB et al 2009; Cudia 2016; Bayudan-Dacuycuy and Lim 2014; Albert and Vizmanos 2018, 22; NEDA et al 2018, 26; Lalu 2020; de Vera 2020). The Filipino women, one of such sectors were placed at 18.1 vulnerability rate (Albert and Vizmanos 2018, 22; World Bank et al 2018, 45). This implies that many of the women in the Philippines continue to experience inequitable opportunities for economic growth (World Bank et al 2018, 17, 46). The pandemic did not only magnify the precarity of development; it also magnified how the weak are left struggling in the margins.

Another truth that needs to be told about the development narrative is that progress comes at high stakes that goes beyond economic and financial costs. Development alters the social and cultural structure of a society (Maggay 2015). Scholars then and now articulate that trade-offs inevitably occur as the socio-economic landscape of the people transforms (Tönnies 1957; Weber 1968; Dingley 2008; Maggay 2015). One of the results of these development trade-offs is the atomization of societies (Offutt 2012, 37; Tönnies 1957). This development theory purports that the more a community moves to modernization, the more it loses its communal bonds—the focus is turned from "we" to "I" or from "others" to "self." The traditional community which used to be fortified by relationships and shared values now becomes a market society that operates via contracts and fixed-term agreements (Tönnies 1957; Weber 1968; Waters 2016, 1-2). This transition which comes with advancement and development tends to reinforce an even stricter "survival of the fittest" schema in the society. This puts a higher risk for the vulnerable sectors to be further relegated to the peripheries, and the relationships and social connections that could serve as their safety nets are threatened to corrosion.

Despite these development drawbacks, one must deal with the fact that progress will always be a part of human existence. Humanity intuitively desires to advance, and therefore, there is potentially more profit in grappling with the downside of development than in haphazardly sweeping these issues under the rug. These issues are core and crucial from the vantage point of Transformational development because this paradigm upholds that everyone must be afforded the freedom of human flourishing (Friedman 1992; Sen 1999, 30; Jayakaran 1996, 14; Myers 2011, 15, 29, 131). Issues of

marginalization and the corrosion of communal relationships are understood from the vantage point of this discipline as impediments to attaining true and just progress.

As it stands, women have always been the primary torchbearers in serving the ones at the lower echelon of society and keeping the connections in the community. Whether in Christian organizations or non-sectarian foundations, women are actively involved, especially at the grassroots level, on making sure that the community is intact, and that no one will be relegated, discarded, or left behind (Pease 2011; Brice 2012; Khunou, Pillay, and Nethononda 2012). Witte-Garland (1988, xii) suggests that because women are traditionally concerned with home and family and community, they are the first to recognize and act on these threats to survival. She also adds that these women have less to lose when problematic structures are shaken and destabilized because they are mostly excluded from the traditional male-dominated systems. Women's instinct to preserve and nurture life drives them to build from the ground up an alternative perspective on addressing poverty, one that is "based on harmony and cooperation, non-violence and dignity" (Ledwith 2016, 151).

Women have been leading the way for social transformation that benefits the poor. In 1984-1985, a large union of organized miners in the UK went on strike. The British government tried to force the miners back to work by starvation tactic—cutting government aid for their families (Ledwith 2011, 30). The women of the mining community set up soup kitchens to feed families whose benefits had been cut. Also, despite the fact that most of them had only known life inside their mining communities, the government's threats gave them the confidence to give public talks all over the country and abroad, to seek support. They have contributed greatly to the "stamping

ground of political activism" in the UK (Ledwith, 2011). The Nicaraguan literacy campaign launched in 1980 is another example of women greatly contributing to transform society (Darder 2002, 205; Ledwith 2011, 84). Back in 1979, almost 50% of the Nicaraguan population is illiterate. Volunteers, mostly youth and women, went to the countryside to teach the farmers and other marginalized Nicaraguans. The campaign did not only reduce the illiteracy in Nicaragua from 50% to 13% within five months, but it also helped the rural people who were once disengaged and disenfranchised to find their social and political voice.

Filipino women are not short of examples on creating organic social safety nets for themselves and other vulnerable members of their families and communities. The Center for Community Transformation (CCT) bears witness to how thousands of women who have participated in their economic empowerment programs have changed their lives and that of their families for the better (Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000; Maggay 2015). More important than increasing the income of family, these women have discovered significance and value to their lives (Maggay 2015). On the issue of food security, public school teachers (mostly women) deals with the malnutrition problem in the Philippines through the "Bio-intensive Gardening" (BiG) initiative by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (International Institute of Rural Reconstruction n.d.) Filipino women have also been at the forefront of ecojustice— demonstrating solidarity with their fellow Filipino who are further disenfranchised politically and socio-economically due to the ecological degradation (Peracullo 2015, 42-44). Recently, on the war on drugs, Filipino women were brought together again by the image of a grieving woman cradling her slain partner who was a suspected illegal drug

peddler (Peracullo 2017, 139). From the concerns of *kumakalam na sikmura* (hunger) to the issues of human rights, Filipino women are never taking the backseat to ensure the survival and welfare of those around them.

This research at hand which is a contribution to the field of transformational development, privileges the accounts and insights of Filipino women, specifically women in poor urban communities. The information that the women will share out of their struggles and lived experiences will help in providing new insights on the Christian paradigm of development. Further, through years of working with non-government organizations and faith-based organizations, as well as years of intensive studying and observing the Filipino society through the Ph.D. in Transformational Development program, I have observed that the Filipino culture and the Christian faith seem to influence the connection and the collaboration of Filipino women. However, the process of how these connections come about, the elements, the principles, even the axiology of these relationships, have yet to be explored, identified, and articulated. This research aims to contribute a substantive theory that takes into account the roles of faith and culture in moving people forward, a theory informed by the very people who experience this meaningful and transformational—albeit unhurried—kind of development.

Statement of the Problem

The main inquiry of this study is: "How do the Christian faith and Filipino culture enable women to create relationships that help them survive and thrive in urban poor communities?"

Statement of Purpose

This research that explores the experiences of women living in urban poor communities aims to identify, understand, and articulate the ways in which the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable them to create relationships that build organic safety nets for their survival, as well as aid them in their flourishing as human beings created after God's image. From the data that is already existing on the ground, this study aspires to draw an indigenous theoretical model of development—one that is both in line with the tenets of the Bible and in touch with the idiosyncrasies and complexities of the Filipino culture. This research that interweaves thoughts from Transformational development, the Christian faith, and Filipino culture also aims to ascertain the epistemological and practical implications of this relationship-building process. Consequently, the indigenous framework that will be drawn from Filipino women can be an ancillary tool for churches and organizations to evaluate and calibrate development efforts that they implement in urban poor communities.

Research Questions

The knowledge this study aims to acquire and the research problem stated above require a qualitative method of inquiry. The following are the subset of research questions that will guide and help answer the main problem of the study:

1) Who are the Filipino women living and working in urban poor communities?

2) What are the informal and formal relationships created by the women to meet their needs for survival and build opportunities to thrive in urban poor communities?

3) How does the Christian faith play into the creation of these relationships?

4) How does the Filipino culture play into the creation of these relationships?

5) What are the implications of these relationships to the knowledge and practice of transformational development?

Theoretical Framework

The study at hand utilizes the Transformational Grounded Theory (TGT) methodology, a research design built upon grounded theory methodology and principles from participatory action research (Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2015, 1-12). This research follows the tradition of Grounded Theory Methodology (GTM) that goes against the normative practice of other qualitative studies espousing that research should have a definite theory prior to commencement of the study (Robson 2002; Green 2014). This work will employ an inductive method—theory will be generated from the data that is obtained and analyzed using comparative analysis (Glaser and Straus, 1967; Robson 2002; Corbin and Straus 2008; Green 2014).

While this research aims to come up with a theory from observed phenomenon on the ground—there are ideas that have been significant in the ideation of this study:

1) development is cultural, 2) development is relational, and 3) women are agents of cultural and relational development. These concepts are discussed in greater depth in the review of related literature. What follows now is an overview of these concepts.

Development Is Cultural

Development became a buzzword in the wake of the Second World War as wealthier Western countries aimed to help in the economic growth of countries in Asia and Africa (Rostow 1960; Balaam and Dillman, 2011; Offutt 2012). It was during this time that the terms "developed countries" and "developing countries" were coined and were widely used. Development was framed and measured in terms of the increase in per

capita income and standard factors of production such as technology, physical capital,

and human capital. Nevertheless, using only the lens of economy to understand

development ended up with purblind visions of growth for nations. Unprecedented

economic development resulted to the opposite desired outcomes as it only exacerbated

social problems such as poverty, low welfare improvement, income inequality, and

adverse effects to the environment (Bhandari and Yasunobu 2009). This only means that

the Western thought of development is not a one-size-fits-all solution for all the other

nations to take. As hegemonic economic models failed to deliver promised results,

scholars began to consider cultural factors into the development discourse (Inglehart

1997; Ben-Ner and Putterman 1997; Fukuyama 2001; Easterly and Levine 2001;

Christoforou 2005). They realized that cultural values deeply permeate economic

structures and behavior, thus, this must be engaged to come up with an analysis of

development that is fuller, more valuable, and more useful as it is able to capture the

nuances of the realities on the ground (Chambers 1983; Granovetter, 1985; Fukuyama,

2001; Harrison and Huntington, 2000; Guiso et al., 2006; Bhandari and Yasunobu).

The Philippines reached its glory days of studies on the Filipino culture and its

role on development during the years following the EDSA Revolution through the

leadership of the late Senator Leticia Shahani (1993, 6-7). In 1987, Shahani's Senate

Resolution No. 10 resolved to:

> ...immediately conduct a joint inquiry into the strengths and
> weaknesses of the character of the Filipino with a view to finding
> solutions to the ills plaguing our society and strengthening the
> moral fiber of the nation... to invite resource persons from the
> appropriate departments of the Executive Branch of government
> and recognized experts in the fields of psychiatry, psychology,

sociology and other social sciences, who may be of assistance in identifying such strengths and weaknesses...

The senator's efforts resulted to a report called the "Moral Recovery Program" headed by Patricia Licuanan who identified relational values such as *pakikipag-kapwa* (treating others as *kapwa*) and family centeredness as the strengths of the Filipino culture (Shahani 1993). Even more, Shahani's work gave way for the Executive Order No. 319 of former President Fidel Ramos. Here, the government and all of society were enjoined to "to lay the necessary foundations of the moral recovery crusade for Filipino core value infusion into the organizations' culture, systems and processes" (Ramos 1996).

It is unfortunate that the interest to recover the richness of the Filipino culture and its value in social discourses seems to have lost its vibrance at the dawn of the 21st century (Reyes 2015). Nonetheless, there are still scholars who continue the crusade that the late Senator Shahani began even when there is no longer the once active participation of the government. For instance, in the field of transformational development, there is the anthropologist and pioneer scholar on integrating the gospel and the Filipino culture, Melba Padilla Maggay (2015). Maggay (2015, 55) warns that one needs to be highly discriminating and selective in borrowing foreign theories and methods, lest communities be detached from their socio-cultural root and thereby create far more social ills. Maggay's caveat is an invitation to see development not as a unilinear process where nations are in an assembly line, manufactured and bedecked with marks of progress. Instead, development is better understood as a discourse wherein the finest aspects of one's culture can contribute and shape a narrative of a national progress that is effective and sustainable. For the Filipino people, this means that developmental efforts must incorporate the articulation of relational Filipino core values of *kapwa* (shared identity)

and *loob* (relational will) in their thought and methods (Enriquez 1992; Alejo 1990; De Guia 2005; Reyes 2015). Likewise, economic growth must include Filipino societal values of *karangalan* (dignity), *katarungan* (justice), and *kalayaan* (freedom) as its outcomes (Enriquez 1992; De Guia 2005 37-40).

Development Is Relational

That development should no longer be seen just from the economic purview, did not only allow for the acknowledgement of cultural nuances but also the crucial role that relationships in attaining improvements in the quality of life (Sen 1999, Narayan-Parker 2000). What this means for the Christian paradigm of development is that the true work of progress is towards the restoration of humanity's relationships with God, with one another, with one's own self, and with creation (Christian 1994; Christian 1999; Myers 2011). Transformational development uses the Hebrew word "shalom" to communicate this end goal. Often translated to "peace," shalom also means "wholeness," that nothing—including relationships—is broken or fractured (Myers 2011). Yet, here lies a conundrum: modernization, one of the trademarks of progress, tend to break relationships and atomize societies (Tönnies 1957; Offutt 2012; Waters 2016). Modernization, as Maggay frames it (2015, 13), becomes more of a "siren call"—promising economic gains but tearing away cultural roots and relationships that hold communities together. Highlighting the plight of the urban poor who are always bearing the brunt of modernization that disrupts communities, Maggay (2015, 56) writes:

> Social alienation and loss of community were the price of this uprooting from the bonds of land and people. The urbanized poor are forced to be mobile; pressed by the exigencies of survival and the insecurities of informal settling, they go where livelihood and space for themselves can be found. While crowded together, they can be as atomized as anonymous individuals...

Progress at the expense of corroded relationships is a "mis-development" from the perspective of transformational development, a maladaptation to the demands to innovate and advance.

To say development must be relational is not only Biblically apt but also culturally apt from a Filipino perspective. Relationship is at the core of the *kulturang Pilipino* (Filipino culture), and it is the canopy of *kamalayang Pilipino* (Filipino consciousness). One of the earlier academic articulation of how central relationships are to the Filipino people was that of the US-born Jesuit priest and social anthropologist, Frank Lynch. Father Lynch (1962), who has contributed greatly in the post-war discourse on Philippine social sciences, identified that the main value of the Filipino culture is "smooth interpersonal relations" or SIR. Father Lynch defined SIR as an aptitude at getting along with others in such a way as to avoid conflict and to maintain harmony (Lynch 1962, 89). SIR implies a smile, a friendly lift of the eyebrow, a pat on the back, a squeeze of the arm, or a word of praise. It is a "sensitivity to what other people feel at any given moment, and a willingness and ability to change tack (if not direction) to catch the lightest favoring breeze" (Lynch 1962, 89). While Lynch's contribution cannot be discounted, many Filipino scholars argued that the American Jesuit has not fully captured the entire picture. SIR was only scratching the surface; avoiding conflict, maintaining harmony, and catching the favoring breeze is not all there is in what makes relationships for the Filipinos.

As a response to Lynch and by way of providing an authentic Filipino voice, local scholars led by Virgilio Enriquez (1978) began the movement *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino Psychology) in the 1970's. Enriquez postulates that *kapwa*,

(*kagandahang*) *loob*, and *pakiramdam* are what really lie at the core of Filipino cultural values (Enriquez 1978; Enriquez 1992, 76). Similar to the findings of Shahani's (1992) Moral Recovery Program, *kapwa*, (*kagandahang*) *loob*, and *pakiramdam* show that the indigenous Filipino framework is profoundly relational. *Kapwa*—often poorly translated to the English word "others"—is actually "the unity of the 'self' and 'others'" (Enriquez 1992, 52). The indigenous Filipino idea of *kapwa*, "self shared with others," is unheard of in the Western thought that there is no exact equivalent terminology for it (Enriquez, 1992, 52). On *loob*, the word means "inside" and is correctly translated as such when referring to a location. Nevertheless, when the word pertains to cultural values, the more apt translation would be "relational will" (Enriquez 1992, Reyes 2015). Specifically, *kagandandahang loob* is more aptly translated to "shared nobility" (Enriquez 1992; De Guia 2005, 30). Albert Alejo, Jesuit priest and cultural anthropologist, emphasizes the relational quality of *loob* and its inherent link to *kapwa* by saying that the Filipino *loob* is like a *bahay kubo* (home) and that the *kapwa* can knock, be welcomed, and reside too (Alejo 1990). Finally, *pakiramdam*—crudely translated to "feelings" in the English language—is better expressed as "shared inner perception" when it pertains to cultural values (Enriquez 1992, 62-3). De Guia (2005, 29), following the viewpoint of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, highlights the relational nature of this Filipino core value by stating that "*pakiramdam* is a participatory event where[in] emotions are shared quite naturally and frequently."

The intrinsic relational quality of the Filipino core values, —*kapwa loob*, and *pakiramdam*—make for a profitable starting point to explore what it means for development to be relational.

Women Are Agents of Development

Aside from the intention to open a space for women's voice to be heard in the transformational development discourse, the focus on women is also influenced by social, psychological, cultural and historical underpinnings.

Traditional gender stereotypes have been vigorously challenged by scholars in the recent decades (Epstein 1980; Correll 2001; Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman 2011; Taylor 2016). For instance, the notion that women are more relational than men have been contended by a biosocial experiment on women in male-dominated occupations and men in female-dominated occupations (Taylor 2016, 49). The salivary cortisol results showed that men and women are equally likely to exhibit a physiological stress response to social exclusion, implying that men are predisposed to seek connection as women (Taylor 2016, 79). While physiologically, both genders showed propensity to desire relationships, from the stance of social psychology wherein cultural norms, social expectations, and social behavior come into play, the difference on how men and women relate is starkly evidenced (Eagly 1987; Abele and Wojciszke 2014, 196; Wood and Eagly 2012; Sczesny, Nater, and Eagly 2019, 103).

Alice Eagly (1987), a psychologist who dedicated her life's work in studying women in various organizational and social settings, proposed the Social Role Theory. Eagly posits that agency and communion represent the two fundamental modalities of human nature, and that psychologically, men are more agentic and females are more communal (Ridgeway et. al. 2009; Sczesny, Nater, and Eagly 2019). According to the Social Role Theory, the masculine-agentic traits refer to goal achievement and task functioning (competence, assertiveness, decisiveness), while the feminine-communal

traits refer to the maintenance of relationships and social functioning (benevolence, trustworthiness, morality) (Eagly 1987; Abele and Wojciszke 2014, 196; Wood and Eagly 2012; Sczesny, Nater, and Eagly 2019, 103). These two modalities must not be understood as mutually exclusive categories, but rather, these are set of traits present within individuals. Men, while many of them are agentic, can also be communal. In the same manner, while most women are psychologically predisposed to be more communal, they can also be agents to achieve goals.

Philippine history proves that ancient Filipino women exhibit both agentic and communal traits. *Pantayong Pananaw* (for-us perspective), an academic movement lead by Zeus Salazar, identified that there are four figures of authority in the indigenous Filipino society: 1) the *datu* or the chieftain, 2) the *babaylan* or the priestess 3) the *bagani* or the local hero, and 4) the *panday* or the craftsman. In the ancient *barangay*, men and women can be a *datu's, bagani's*, or *panday's* (Salazar 1999; Mangahas and Llaguno 2006). Nevertheless, the role of the *babaylan* is a task special for women (Salazar 1999; Mangahas and Llaguno 2006). The *babaylans* are the ones who hold the relationships together in the ancient Filipino communities (Mangahas and Llaguno 2006, 150). They serve as the intervening agency between the community and individuals to the spiritual world—to the *Maykapal* (Almighty Creator) and good or bad spirits roaming in nature (Salazar 1999). The *babaylans* also help to keep the relationships harmonious and stabilize social structures by providing wisdom and counsel to the *barangay* people in times of confusion or conflict (Mangahas and Llaguno 2006, 150).

The presence and work of the *babaylans* greatly contributed to the survival and thriving of their communities. Beyond their shamanistic roles, the ancient Filipino

women were repository of folk wisdom and indigenous technology. They were keepers

and transmitters of ancient Filipino culture. Their crucial cultural role is one of the

reasons why the Spaniards resorted to force, violence, blood, and fire to eliminate the

babaylans from the society (Mangahas and Llaguno 2006, 37). A community that is

strongly rooted on its own cultural identity is impenetrable and most difficult to colonize.

Through physical violence and texts of terror, the colonizers strove to reduce Filipino

women from fierce *babaylan* leaders to subjugated *Maria Clara's* (Mangahas 2019, 48).

Yet as Mangahas has aptly shared in her study of history (2019, 57), there is a sacred

space in the "Filipino unconscious" that remains—where the Filipino woman is equal

with her male counterparts, where she has, in her, both the capacity to be agentic and

communal.

Such ancient truth about Filipino women does not only live in the pages of

history. In times of adversity, what is at the unconscious level arises and becomes

concrete reality. While there are no longer foreign colonizers who tyrannize, systemic

and structural oppression today, like poverty, brings about the ancient vigor of the

Filipino women that enable them to resist and be resilient. In a research conducted by the

Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture (ISACC), Ruben de Lara, the former

head of one of the biggest microfinance institution in the Philippines, shared: "I think

there is something in Filipino women that makes them capable of rising above difficulties

in carrying out responsibilities. They are very resilient, hardworking, dedicated in

sacrificing..." (Maggay 2015, 176). The reflection of de Lara from years of observation is

also a theme found on an earlier study done with women assisted by the Center for

Community Transformation (CCT). Women who have participated in CCT's economic

empowerment program which included regular Bible study meetings, showed significant

transformation (Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000). The Christian faith helps them to

move from negative self-portrait to positive self-image, from economic helplessness to

becoming breadwinners, and from disjointed members of society to leaders who

contribute to developing stronger social cohesion (Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000;

Maggay 2015). Similar to the best qualities of the *babaylans* in the ancient days, the

present-day Filipino women show that they are relational individuals who can also be

agents of development and human flourishing.

Towards Building A Culturally Rooted Theory

As shown in the discussion above, there has yet to be a theoretical model that

weaves in the ideas of development, culture, relationships and the Christian faith into one

coherent framework. Nonetheless, the intrinsic relational and spiritual qualities of the

Filipino culture amply demonstrated by Filipino women then and now, offers a viable

ground to build one. The theoretical model that this study aims to derive from the ground

is not a grand theory, but a substantive theory that reflects the nuances of the indigenous

Filipino consciousness and yields practical implications to the lived reality of the subjects

of this study. The idea of this research is standing on the shoulders of giants, those of the

Filipino culture-bearers who have since laid out the suitability and value of investigating

social science inquiries using the relational and spiritual Filipino lens (Shahani 1993;

Maggay 2015; Alejo 1990; Enriquez 1992; Salazar 1999; Mangahas and Llaguno 2006;

Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000; De Guia 2005; Reyes 2015)

Significance of the Study

Transformational development is a young discipline that has only emerged in the past four decades (Balaam and Dillman, 2011; Offutt 2012, 38). There is a need to further explicate and articulate transformational development in greater breadth and depth. This research at hand is an additional source on this field of study. In particular, this work will add to the scarce non-Western sources about the Christian paradigm of development. The hope is for this research to help provide a point of departure for other scholars who aspire to render an understanding of development from their own cultural perspective.

Another significance of this research is its contribution to understanding how the Christian faith can respond to one of the conundrums in transformational development. Stephen Offutt (2012), a Wesleyan scholar, pointed out that transformational development upholds two concepts that cancel each other out. On the one end, transformational development believes that poverty is caused by broken relationships—between God and humanity, human and other human beings, and humanity and creation. On the other, transformational development upholds that shalom which includes restoring and making these relationships whole is the end goal of development. On the other hand, many Christian organizations support and create multiple projects that develop communities from traditional to modern and globalized societies. Yet the unwanted consequence of such development interventions is the corrosion of communal bonds (Offutt 2012; Tönnies 1957; Weber 1968). Thus, they become agents of modernization rather than transformation. The research aims to identify ways on how the Christian faith can enable people to progress and not lose the bonds that hold the community together. The results and findings of the research will prove helpful to Christian organizations and

congregations that engage in developmental work. This work intends to underscore the non-monetary resource base like Christian relationship values that can be leveraged to help alleviate poverty.

Finally, the study is significant because it honors, celebrates, and supports the voices of women from the peripheries. There is a wealth of epistemological and practical implications that urban poor women can share. The research aims to prove that women can exercise their agency to make epistemic and practical contributions. This study hopes to highlight that women's knowledge, experiences, and very existence matter in expelling the asymmetries of power in society and in nurturing equity and solidarity in their communities.

Definition of Terms

Babaeng Malaswa- The *babaeng malaswa* (indecent woman) is someone who receives payments for sexual transactions, working as a prostitute, hostess, or call girl (Jocano 1975, 125).

Babaeng Marangal- Directly translated to "decent women," who have meager income, but takes pride in their decent work (Jocano 1975, 125).

Babaylan- Priestess who takes on the role of spiritual leadership in the indigenous Filipino society, *barangay* (Mangahas and Llaguno 2006).

Bagani- A warrior, a local hero in the *barangay* (Agoncillo and Fe Mangahas 2010).

Barangay- The word refers to the indigenous Filipino society (Salazar, 1999); the word originated from the word *balangay* which is the boat used by Austronesian peoples to reach the Philippines.

Datu- A title which denotes leadership; chieftain of the *barangay* (Salazar, 1999).

Human flourishing- The term "human flourishing" has been defined using different scholarly frameworks—education, sociology, anthropology, etc. In development, Sen (2000) refers to human flourishing as humanity's end goal, is the reversion of all lack or oppression that entangles a person. Nevertheless, in this research, human flourishing is used close to its Tagalog word equivalent, *pagyabong* which means "to grow" or "to develop." Hence, while Sen (2000) perceives human flourishing as an end, this study perceives it as an ongoing, continuing process, a struggle to develop and thrive.

Infraculture- The concept of infraculture was developed in a transdisciplinary research project on sustainable development meshing socio-cultural factors, economic growth, environmental protection (Ostrom 1990; Hofmann 2014). This research, nonetheless, follows Bret Frischmann's (2012) nuance and use of "infraculture," the one with emphasis on the (1) social and intellectual dimensions and the (2) non-economic social value.

Kapwa- This is often translated as "other person," but the essential meaning of the word is untranslatable into English. Kapwa has been translated by local scholars as 'shared self', 'shared identity', or 'self-in-the-other'. I use 'together with the person' (Enriquez 1992; De Guia 2005; Reyes 2015)

Loob- Literally translated in English to "inside," it pertains to the interior of a thing or place. When used to refer to a person, it pertains to the "relational will" (Reyes 2015).

Looban-The term "*looban*," which roughly translates to "inside area", is a euphemism for slums or squatter's area, and is an accurate description for its geographical location, because the *looban*'s are not visible from the main streets (Jocano 1975).

Maria Clara-fictional character from Jose Rizal's novels, *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo* who is thought to be the Filipino feminine ideal. Nevertheless, Filipino feminist, Fe Mangahas, critiques this concept and considers Maria Clara an epitome of silent captivity and destructive subjugation (Mangahas 2019).

Pagkakaisa- *Pagkakaisa* which can be translated to "oneness," the highest realization of *kapwa*—it applies to a person's relationship with the Creator and with other created beings (Reyes 2015).

Pakikisama- It is derived from the root word *sama*, meaning 'to accompany, to go along. It is a willingness to subordinate one's own interest in favor of others, in the spirit of harmony, friendship, cooperation, and deference to majority decision so that group goals can be easily achieved (Jocano 1997).

Pakiramdam- "shared inner perception" (Enriquez 1992, 63); the ability to pay attention to subtle cues and non-verbal behaviors (Mataragnon 1987); a skill highly important for a high context culture wherein human interactions are highly nonverbal (Maggay 2002).

Ugnayan-In this research, *ugnayan* pertains to the bond, the camaraderie which is forged and fortified by women in the community that has helped them meet their needs for well-being.

Well-being-This study follows the definition of development thinkers Sen (2000), as well as Narayan-Parker et al. (2000). Well-being is the aggregation of a person's collective needs—physical, social, and spiritual—in order to survive and flourish.

Scope and Limitations

This research focused on women whose family income falls below the poverty threshold. According to the National Economic and Development Authority, 42,000 Php a month is the needed income for a family of four members to live above the poverty line, and that 90% of Filipino families fall below the limit (NEDA 2018). The unit of analysis will be restricted to women whose family income is no more than the poverty threshold. Thus, the study may not apply to women who do not share the same characteristics. With respect to participants, another natural delimitation of any grounded theory research is a theoretical sampling. While I am confident to find 20 women who can be included in the initial purposive sampling, it is more likely that the research will require more than this number to reach data saturation. The need to find more women to recruit as participants can be mitigated by my already established connection to various organizations in the research sites.

Choosing a qualitative research design, specifically TGT methodology, offers both advantages and disadvantages. One of the significant benefits is that qualitative methods discern underlying themes, dynamics in social interactions, and cultural information that a standardized quantitative tool could not illuminate. On the other side, one of this design's limitation is its susceptibility to biases and prejudices. To maintain objectivity, I will have a peer debriefer and will implement member checking that is asking the participants to review and verify the information they have provided after transcription. Additionally, I will code the data in two cycles and will enlist the help of the participants to hone and streamline and hone the codes between the two cycles. Another givenness of the research design with multiple iterations is the challenge of

sustaining participation (Stringer 2013). To mitigate this possible risk, I will employ a participant-centric process from ensuring beneficence up to scheduling meetings at their convenience.

Lastly, the limited generalizability of the findings is also one of the challenges of qualitative research designs (Creswell 1994, 158; Feeler 2012, 16; Patton 2015). Nonetheless, I remain confident that by abiding by ethical measures, collecting well-substantiated information, and implementing rigorous member checking and audit trails procedures, the study at hand is assured of having credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability (Leedy and Omrod 2016, 239).

CHAPTER TWO

Introduction

The second chapter of the dissertation provides an overview of local and foreign literature that is related to the study. This research is a work that chiefly aims to expand the discourse on the Christian paradigm of development. Even more, this study intends to amplify the voices of women and their potential contribution to an articulation of development that is both aligned to Biblical truths and sensitive to Filipino culture. Hence, this research about women cuts across discussions on the Christian faith, transformational development, and the Filipino culture. The first section of this chapter provides the Biblical underpinnings of this work. In "Women and Development in the Bible," I discuss the studies done by the Biblical scholars who bring into the forefront the socio-economic contribution of women in Biblical times. These scholarly works redress the neglect of the previous generation of Biblical historians who failed to provide a vivid picture of women's socio-economic participation in the Bible. The second section of this chapter, "Women and Development in the Urban Philippines," answers for the need to expound on the component of this research that pertains to the Filipino context, specifically the culture in the urban poor communities. Pertinent literature providing qualitative and quantitative data to help illumine the vista of Filipino women living in urban poverty is discussed in this part. On the third section, two relevant theories on development and relationships in society, the Gemeinschaft und Gesellschafts theory and the Social Capital theory, are discussed. While a further examination prove that the two theories are unable to capture the fundamental concepts of transformational development and the research at hand, they were helpful during the incipient ideation of this research.

Description of the two theories in broad strokes is provided to better locate the study in the wider body of knowledge. The fourth section, "Transformational Development and the Relational Nature of Poverty" reviews literature that proves poverty is not merely caused by the lack of financial and material resources but of broken relationships. Evidences from research studies on why there is a need for Christian development thinkers to diverge from the secular conception of poverty are given. Finally, the fifth section presents a survey of literature and studies that provide conceptual tools on relationships from the perspective of the Christian faith and the Filipino culture.

Women and Development in the Bible

The Historical Neglect of Women's Socio-economic Contributions in the Bible

Literature and studies on the topic of women and development in the Old Testament and the New Testament are scant. Biblical historians have relegated to oblivion the female socio-economic involvement in ancient times. Scholars argue that the chief cause of this neglect is inherent—the inattention of ancient sources towards the consequential roles that women played in society (Schuller 1989; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). The extant narratives in the Scripture are androcentric—they were mainly recorded, preserved, and reproduced from the lens of male scribes. As a result, the Bible as a literary piece has an intrinsic normativity of the male experience. Consequently, it fosters an innate desensitization to female life and work. With respect to socio-economic contributions, male labor is depicted elsewhere, but female labor is truncated. Schuller's (1989) "Women of the Exodus in Biblical Retellings of the Second Temple Period," Wu's (2001) "Women on the Boundary: Prostitution, Contemporary and in the Bible," Streete's (1997) *The Strange Woman: Power and Sex in the Bible*, and Saller's (1994)

Patriarchy, Property, and Death in the Roman Family, among many other works, portray that women who belong to the lower strata of society in the Biblical times are often taken and treated as disempowered properties and not active participants in the socio-economic chain.

Scholars Adams, Nicholas, and Adams (2014, 41) point out that it is only in recent years that textual critics have delivered a more detailed description of the rhythms of women's daily existence and their efforts to make their household and community function properly. DeMarre (2002), DeMaris and Neufeld (2010), Bachman (2013), Adams, Nicholas, and Adams (2014, 41), all point out that archeological findings have been instrumental to fill this gap in Biblical studies. Out of this disciplinary cross-section, came two monumental works that have provided a comprehensive outlook on women and development. The first is Carol Meyers' groundbreaking book, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* which was first published by Oxford University Press in 1991 and was reprinted in 2013 with the title, *Rediscovering Eve*. In this work, Meyers (2013), through the vista that Eve provides, reconstructs the life of women in the Ancient Near East (ANE). Meyers creates two categories of Eve, the "Eve" of the Biblical narrative and the "everywoman Eve" or the ordinary women in ANE. She went on to provide an explication of "everywoman Eve's" economic, reproductive, socio-political, and religious activities. Meyer's work contributed to a better understanding of how women went about their day-to-day life in the ANE. Even more, Meyers introduces the concept of "heterarchy" which continues to be a helpful theoretical handle to contemporary scholars who study gender and the Scripture. Nonetheless, there is a common critique among

scholars on Meyers' work: not all women in the ANE share the reality of Eve, and that makes the "everywoman Eve" category untenable (Graybill 2015).

It is Meyer's methodological waterloo of creating a sweeping category that Mercedes Bachmann (2013) used as a point of departure for her monumental work *Women at Work in the Deuteronomistic History*. Instead of focusing on the "winners" or the prominent characters like Eve whom scholars frequently discuss, Bachmann's work focuses on the "little people" of the Deuteronomistic History (DtrH) (Bachmann 2013, 17-18). Bachmann (2013) expounded on the place of the forgotten female laborers, whose lives were left unrecorded: the female farmers, artisans, traders, midwives, slaves, prostitutes, etc. in the socio-economic milieu of the Bible. Bachmann points out that the number of female workers during the DtrH is higher than one tends to think and that the social status of women has been influenced by vast socio-economic and political factors. Further, Bachmann (2013, 114) leaves a poignant reflection to scholars who grapple with issues concerning women today in light of the Scripture: "the picture concerning women is, if anything, worse than that of men, because of the high imbalance in the use of power and of the added sexual discrimination—facts which, incidentally, still apply." The socio-economic disparities which pushed vulnerable women to prostitution during the Biblical times still exists today.

The Socio-economic Life and Contributions of Women in the Bible: Ruth, the Capable Wife and Lydia of Thyatira

Meyers (2013), Bachmann (2013), Adams, Nicholas, and Adams (2014), and others have effectively brought to attention the much-needed nuances to the understanding of the socio-economic system of the Bible. The conception that women in

the Bible were passive participants in the development of their society and that their labor only had significance within their households have been challenged and refuted. Even though absolute certainty on the roles that women played in the ancient communities cannot be guaranteed, claims that are tenable and verifiable can still be made from such Biblical texts. The stories of Ruth, the Moabite (Ruth 1-4), the "capable wife" (Proverbs 31:10-31), and Lydia of Thyatira (Acts 16:11-15, 40), together with pertinent archeological, historical, and anthropological studies on these texts, offer propitious exploration. Such texts provide cues wherein a socio-economic reading and analysis are possible. This means that the socio-economic activities of women in the passage can be identified and the impact of their involvement in the social and economic life of their time can be scrutinized.

Ruth

Of the three women who offer a hint of female socio-economic contribution, Ruth is the most prominent. Firstly, Ruth, along with Esther, are the only two books named after women in the 66 books of the Bible. Secondly, Ruth is explicitly mentioned as one of the ancestors of Jesus in the Matthean genealogy. Thirdly, among the three Biblical figures in this review, Ruth is arguably the one that is read in most perspectives. Some of the rather more novel reading of Ruth that comes to mind is Bakke's (2009) urban anthropological perspective, Masenya's (2013) African feminist perspective, Nelavala's Indian feminist perspective (2015), and Rees (2015) and Tong (2015) on Ruth and migration. This reading of Ruth, however, provides a brief background on her story and specifically looks at the information her narrative shares on female labor.

The story of Ruth unfolded during the time of Judges—those days when there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in their own eyes (Judges 17:6). Bledstein (1993, 117) noted that concomitant with the Israelites' haughtiness was the abuse of women: Samson had an insatiable appetite for women, the tribe of Benjamin exceeded the Sodomites in their contemptuous behavior towards women, and a Levite hacked up the body of his ravaged concubine to rally the people for vengeance. Nevertheless, these dark days of religious and socio-cultural schizophrenia became a defining moment for individuals to shine the light of devotion and obedience to God. Here in the book of Ruth, Naomi's commitment to Yahweh allowed her to be released from grief and be reinstated in her own land after years of exile, Ruth the Moabite chose Yahweh over the gods and goddesses of her people, and Boaz understood the power God placed in his hand to redeem women who are otherwise categorized as discarded in their society. The account of Ruth is a narrative of death, loss, grief, vulnerability, uncertainty, valor, loyalty, companionship, redemption, new possibilities, and new life that can be found in connectedness and covenant community.

There is no arguing that the story of Ruth is an extraordinary tale of God's faithfulness—not only in times of spiritual faltering but in times of insurmountable socio-economic hardships. Famine was widespread throughout the land, and there were two women who had very little choice. Ruth and Naomi/ could die in Moab or risk migration to Bethlehem where there might still be--as the root word *lehem* implies—some "bread" (Tong 2015; MacDonald 2008). In Judea, Ruth was a migrant living in a dominant culture; she needed to adapt, to glean grains in the field in order to survive. Adams, Nicholas, and Adams (2014, 64) denote that Ruth provides a voice to describe the

experiences of young, single women, specifically those in migration during the ancient

Biblical days. The social standing of women like Ruth in these days was precarious, to

say the least. In her story, the security brought by the "house of the father" and the

dangers of living without it are highlighted (Bendor 1996). "The house of the father" is a

prominent social structure in the Biblical times--led by the patriarch of the family, this

system provides security for the women and children in a family (Adams, Nicholas, and

Adams 2014). For Ruth, as well as for Naomi and Orpah, their security and provisions

used to come from Elimelech, Mahlon, and Chilion, but the death of these men exposed

the vulnerabilities of the women in their family. The women became unmoored and they

easily slid into desperate economic status.

In Bethlehem, Ruth became a part of the agricultural system which was the

primary economy of Judea. Here, she was not one of the hired workers but one who was

recipient of what seems to be Israel's social assistance program for the impoverished

members of their communities. This social safety net for the poor is found in the Torah

(Leviticus 19:9-10): "do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of

your harvest...leave them for the poor and the foreigner." The passage in Ruth hints that

there were also other women who were working and gleaning in the field. Boaz

instructed Ruth to stay close behind these women who work for him (Ruth 2:8-9). This

passage depicted women's important socio-economic contribution in farming, especially

during the time of harvest. Anthropologist Esther Boserup (1970) claims the females had

diverse duties during this season, and women were often enlisted in the work of pruning

the vineyard and harvesting grains and cereals. Women working in the field during

harvest is a common practice for families who are involved in subsistence farming,

horticulture, or viticulture (wine-growing) who may have the capacity to hire male harvesters like the nobleman Boaz (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014, 46-47; Boserup 1970; Goody 1976, Pastor 1997).

That women are present and at work in the field does not necessarily mean that agriculture is a safe industry for women during Ruth's time. Men and women working in the agrarian economy of the ANE were not inequitable standings. There was a suggestion of warning in Boaz's instruction when he first encountered the young widow. The nobleman urges Ruth to remain with the young women working in the field: "Do not go to glean in another field or leave this one but keep close to my young women. Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped, and follow behind them. I have ordered the young men not to lay hands on you" (Ruth 2:8–9). Boaz did as any good master would do; he has preestablished safety rules and limited male interactions with the females in his field (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). Ancient Israelite women faced great risks as they worked in the fields. Adams, Nicholas, and Adams (2014) point out that Boaz's order for the men are "not to lay their hands you" (Heb. nogʿēk) connotes deeds that are "more than lewd comments or mildly offensive behavior," but physical encounters that intends to violate or hurt a woman. The Scripture used the verb haptō, which can translate to "grasp" or "take hold of." This therefore does not mean that men were playing around with awkward workplace jokes, this means that men often targeted women for violence and abuse. This part of the passage shows that unmarried women who were part of the labor force in agriculture could not work in isolation. Women always had to gather together not merely because they wanted to, but because they had to in order to safely survive a workday in the field.

The book of Ruth puts forth "the language of camaraderie" among the ancient female labor force as they perform tasks in the public arena and engage in agrarian activities with men (Meyers 1999; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). Even in ancient Israel, women had to connect and co-exist alongside one another to avoid dangerous or compromising circumstances. In many ways, the book of Ruth is a nod to the weakest of women workers who persist and make socio-economic contributions—to the migrant woman who works odd jobs to survive in a foreign land, to the widow who lost her security and safety yet labors to find her economic stability again, and to those who work in dangerous environments only to come home to their families with a bag of grains to get them by the day. What is more, a socio-economic reading of Ruth will lead one to see that the book celebrates how women connect in the workplace and build relationships that foster safety and harmony.

The Capable Wife in Proverbs 31

The book of Proverbs, which is an anthology of the sayings of the wise, stands out from among the wisdom literature because of its conspicuous feminine imagery. Camille (2014) points out that not only does the book personify wisdom as a lady calling out on the streets, but it also portrayed women as worthy teachers who are capable to provide sound counsel. Proverbs show the possibility of female balance in instruction and leadership. Hence, placing a powerful poetic portrait of the "capable wife" as the capstone of the book is congruous to the underlying theme of lady wisdom. The authorship and the subject of the text have been topics of scholarly debates (Lang 2004; Erre 2008; Camille 2014). Traditional scholarship claims that King Solomon wrote it as an ode to his mother, but others believe that "Lemuel" is a historical person, a sagacious

Arabian foreigner (Camille 2014). On the personhood of the Proverbs 31 woman, Yoder

(2003), along with other Biblical scholars, are of the opinion that the "capable wife" is

not one person but a hyperbolic amalgam of the ideal Jewish woman. The disjointed

picture of various attributes and activities throughout the poem privileges this

assumption. Yoder (2003) likens the poem to an impressionist painting—an up-close look

reveals the individual brush strokes, but steps away from it reveal a cumulative of a

woman. Additionally, its frame of the Hebrew alphabet acrostic suggests that this is not

about one woman but rather the "A's to Z's" of a perfect wife (Yoder 2003).

Lang (2004, 196) asserts that the "capable wife" depicts the primevally separate

spheres of male and female labor. The division of labor is simple: "the men in the forest

and the women in the house" (Engels 1951, 279). This is the dichotomy of men's and

women's location in the society (Cohick 2019). The husband of the "capable wife" is out

at the city gate, seated with the respected elders (Prov. 31:23). As an aristocrat during

that time, he must have been involved in the discussions about the socio-political

concerns of their city (Prov. 31:23; Erre 2008; Lang 2004). It is likely that the husband is

a noble landowner of Hebrew antiquity, and he is the patriarch of their family (Lang

2004, 199). The house of the "capable wife" is that of a patrimonial household model or a

"house of the father" which includes not only their children but the females who are

married into their families, their servants, their servants' families if the servants are

married (Bendor 1996). Yet these "house of the fathers" are sustained and held together

by the care and services of the mothers. For instance, while her husband and other

noblemen discuss public affairs, the "capable wife" is focused on the duties for the

management of the home (Prov. 31: 14-15). Lang (2004, 191-92) and Meyers (2007, 68-

71) point out that the management task includes looking after the needs of her children; instructing and supervising maidservants, as well as providing for them. These scholars believe that the Proverbs 31 woman devotes careful attention to the meals of her entire household. The typical diet in olden Palestinian times consists of wheat which could have been grown from the plains of Jezreel, and fish which may have been imported by merchants from as far as Egypt or even Spain (Lang 2004; Applebaum 1976). Hence, the metaphor of her being like a merchant's ship bringing food from afar.

The passage also alludes to her skills in managing the household with the help of her maidens. Crook (1954, 139) writes that aside from securing resources for her maidservants, she also shares with them her skills in weaving and in making fine linens (Prov. 31:26-27). The "capable wife" and her maidens grasp the distaff and spindle to craft bed covers and clothes for everyone in their house. Nonetheless, her fabric and clothing are not only for domestic use; verse 24 says she is also an entrepreneur who sells the surplus of these linen garments and supplies sashes to merchants. She produces such products with quality and vends these with vigor and enthusiasm to travelers. Yoder (2003, 436) and Erre (2008) claim that the pilgrims who patronized the capable wife's goods are those who traveled the interconnected road constructed by the Persian empire. In addition to retail, the "capable wife" grew her profits through property investment. She purchased fields from her earnings, and got her vigorous hands into horticultural activities (Prov. 31: 16). While the Scripture depicts that the "capable wife" purchased the field with her earnings, it must be noted that there is still a continuing debate among Biblical scholars on female access to the property in the Hebraic society (Lang 2004,

201-204). If ownership is not possible, it could be likely the fields were named under her husband or her male children (Falk 1966; Westbrook 1991).

Proverbs 31 illustrates that women were dynamic participants in the economic life of the ancient Jewish world. Their main work indeed revolved in the maintenance of their household and their basic needs such as food and clothes. Nonetheless, the passage also shows that women were also involved in purchasing and planting fields, teaching skills such as weaving and garments production, and marketing sashes and clothes to merchants from all over the Persian empire.

Lydia of Thyatira

Similar to the book of Proverbs, there are two books in the New Testament that stand out for its deliberate inclusion of women, the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts (Parvey 1974, 141; D'Angelo 1990, 441; Motz 2012). One of these women mentioned in Luke-Acts is a merchant named Lydia. Readers only know about Lydia through six short verses—Acts 16:11-15, 40. Paul and Silas were on their evangelistic mission in Macedonia in the district of Philippi, and on the Sabbath, they were hoping to find a Jewish synagogue. What they found, however, is an assembly of praying women. Here, they met Lydia who was trading purple cloth from Thyatira.

Thomas (1972), Abrahamsen (1987, 18), Trebilco (1991), Murphy (2009), and McCarty (2014) note that Lydia was a significant figure in the early Christian church because she was Paul's first convert in Europe as she was baptized in the Roman city of Philippi. Graham (1976) noted that Lydia's conversion is a "major milestone in the Christian witness as it moves slowly but surely 'to the ends of the earth'—which in Acts moves through 'distant lands' and terminates in Rome". Because her conversion

happened in Europe, she is consistently depicted as a white female (Klubnik 1926).

However, new scholarship evidence that Lydia is of northwest African descent, and the

possibility that she was even a freed slave must not be discounted (McCarty 2014). It is

likely, McCarty (2014) notes, that Lydia is a black woman who might have gained some

share of economic freedom by inheritance from the estate of her father or her husband.

Murphy (2009, 15) adds that Lydia's ancestry is that of the Numidians who have moved

along a Roman postal route that links Africa to Europe. As armed militias, the Numidians

would also have been allowed to travel with their families to other strategic Roman

provinces in North Africa and Asia Minor (Clark 1993; Fitzmyer 1998; De Marre 2002).

They settled in Thyatira which was later known as a home to a sizable Numidian

population of military leaders, cavalrymen, and archers (Acts 16:14; Murphy 2009). Male

and female artisans and merchants were drawn to do business in this area as it was a

strategic military outpost. Migration was also encouraged to grow commerce along

Numidian-protected roads like Via Egnatia. Thyatira, Lydia's city, became a melting pot

of Black, Asian, and Mediterranean merchants, military garrisons, and artisans (Levick

1967; Fitzmyer 1998; Witherington 1992; Clark 1993, 61; De Marre 2002, 190-212).

Murphy (2009, 20) asserts that among the diverse population, the darker complexioned

Numidian mauri could have been in principal positions in the military commerce and

civic affairs. Such was the case for Lydia who grew up in a city known for its dying

industry, particularly its purple cloth (Acts 16:14; Fitzmyer 1998). Tiny marine snails,

murex trunculus, were harvested in large quantities from the Mediterranean and is used to

craft the luxurious purple dye (North 1988; Fitzmyer 1998; Murphy 2009).

Producing, selling, and exporting the purple cloth of Thyatira was a very lucrative commercial trade. As one of the most precious commodities during that time, purple cloth was sought after by aristocrats of the Roman empire (North 1988, Fitzmyer 1998). Purple fabric was considered so luxurious that it was often monopolized by the imperial family; those engaged in the production and sale of it were sometimes referred to as 'Caesar's household (McCarty 2014). The purple cloth that women like Lydia sold to an elite commercial clientele could have generated her immense wealth. These business women's influential clientela afforded them protection, benefit, and respect (Joubert 1995). Lydia and other women in commerce held wide spheres of influence—from their servants and apprentices to their fellow entrepreneurs, up to their elite patrons.

Lydia is another Biblical figure who provided a vista to the many other socio-economic activities of women in the Graeco-Roman world. A socio-economic reading of Acts 16: 11-15,40 vis-à-vis a survey of the concurrent ancient sources unfolding during Lydia's time shows the increase of female participation in the public trade. Looking after the needs of the household remained to be the main expectation for married women in Graeco-Roman society (DeMaris and Neufeld 2010, 47) . However, many women like Lydia in the Roman empire used their skills in crafts, personal services, baking, winemaking, and textile production to seamlessly transition from domestic activities to commercial enterprises (Clark 1993, 61; De Marre 2002, 190-212).

House of the Fathers, Village of the Mothers: The Impact of Women's Trade on their Households and Communities

From the socio-economic activities of Ruth, the "capable woman" and Lydia (Ruth 1-4; Prov. 31:10-31; Acts 16:11-15, 40), it becomes evident that there are two

industries in the Bible women largely participated in: the food industry and textile

industry. What comes at this juncture is the review of the literature and studies that point

to the impact of these industries to the women's households in particular and their society

in general. These works highlight how such seemingly menial activities of the women

largely contributed to three important things, the survival and health of their society, the

leadership, and networking in their communities, and the cultic life of their people.

<div align="center">**Impact on Survival and Health**</div>

In the Biblical worldview, the land is not only a place to inhabit. The land is

inescapably tied to a people's identity. Their possessions thereof show who they are

among other peoples and who they are before the provident Creator God who provided

them those fields for life and for meeting their daily needs. Agriculture was the ancient

economy of the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions, and the fields yield grains,

vegetables, and fruits that are crucial to nourish and sustain life (Lenski 1966; Oakman

1998; Davies 2008, 77; DeMaris and Neufeld 2010, 195). Nonetheless, the widely

accepted concept that men dominated the farming industry in the Bible needs a nuanced

understanding. While this is thoroughly proven by Biblical passages and anthropological

findings from ancient times, the contributions of women must not be overlooked.

Boserup (1970, 50-51) noted that a cross-cultural analysis of the society in the Bible will

show that women's involvement in farming depends on where she lives. A great deal of

work is expected from women in a society where farming is more primitive (Boserup

1970; Goody 1976, 32-33; Pastor 1997, 14). This is supported by Goody (1976, 32-33).

anthropological studies that show household members, including women, help in the

farm when food supplies are not enough. Boserup (1970) concludes that in places where

plow becomes commonplace, men dominate the farming duties. Meyers (2013) offers a caution, nonetheless, by citing the example of Ruth and other young unmarried or widowed women participating in the agricultural activity of the community.

There are also women in the Bible who have more resources like the "capable wife." Yoder (2003) and Fox (2009) claim that women also participated in food production by purchasing fields and planting vineyards and grain products. Yet for women who did not have enough resources to acquire fields, they still participated in the agrarian economy by enlisting to prune and harvest in these vineyards along with other male servants (Yoder 2003). Female landowners and farmers in the Bible have contributed to the ancient food production system and increased the food security of their community.

Farm-to-table has been the catchphrase of the movement that began in the 1940s which advocates for locally-sourced wholefoods. Nevertheless, the idea of farm-to-table is not necessarily a modern invention since ancient women have long been doing this. Women in Biblical times were not only part of the farming industry. Scholars like Applebaum (1976) Van Leeuwen (1997) Lang (2004, 191-192) Meyers (2007, 68-71) emphasize archeological evidence that shows women have always led in food preparation and nutrition. It is an expectation for women in the Biblical times to manage the storage and preparation of meals in the "house of the fathers" (Bendor 1996; Lang 2004). Jewish girls began their training by helping with food preparation, performing other domestic chores, and attending to the needs of their smaller siblings (Archer 1990, 43-45). Likewise, in the Graeco-Roman societies, girls married in their teens, and they moved into the home of her husband's family to learn how to manage the household (DeMaris

and Neufeld 2010, 47). This is evidence that the "house of the fathers" is not only patrilineal but patrilocal, and that this family structure was also normative in the Graeco-Roman world.

Women both in the Jewish and Graeco-Roman households were the ones who designed the structure of the supplies in their homes so that constant food needs were met. Famine brought by drought or political conflicts were constant threats to the families in these ancient communities. In a subsistence economy, a mundane task such as food preparation became an important daily duty that exacted wisdom and skills from these women. In order to sustain their provisions, women had to make critical decisions including but not limited to the regimen for everyone and ration of resources (Meyers 2007; Meyers 2013; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). A woman who mismanaged the food and nutrition of their households did not only disadvantage her family economically; she also jeopardized the survival and health of her household members.

Furthermore, since women are the ones in charge of food preparation, they too are the ones at the helm of the health of their people. Nathan MacDonald's book, *What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat*, offers valuable insight into the food that women stored and prepared in the ancient Israelite. Along with bread and cooked grains, women had to prepare meals that incorporated fruits and vegetables in season, as well as protein sources such as legumes and fish (MacDonald 2008, 19-38). The women's skills in rationing and preparing nutrition-dense meals ensured the health and proper caloric intake of their households, allowing them to contend with periodic starvation brought by climatic and political conditions. Women in the Bible were proto-nutritionists whose works were pivotal to the health and survival not only of families but social groups as well.

Impact on Leadership and Networking

Women in ancient Jewish and Graeco-Roman communities also created an impact on leadership and network by means of their economic activities such as food preparation and textile production. Grain was the staple food in Biblical times. Danby (1933) identifies that the Mishnah (m. Šabb. 12:2) speaks of women and female servants as leading the task of food preparation such as grinding, kneading, and baking. Scholars agree that women in the Bible always prepared *lehem* or bread along with other foods for their families (Pastor 1997, 5; MacDonald 2008, 19-23; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014, 43). MacDonald (2008), who studied the ancient Israelite diet and food preparation, shares that bread-making was a laborious chore that entailed milling the grain with grindstones. The first grindstones resembled mortar and pestle (Numbers 11:8), but shortly after 1200 BCE, the use of larger contraptions for grindstones (Prov. 27:22) became widespread due to its efficiency in producing more flour at a fraction of the usual time (MacDonald 2008). When such development took place, women turned bread-making into a communal enterprise and displayed community organizing skills. Scholars who studied life in Ancient Palestine found out that in adjacent households with smaller living spaces, women began to gather together in a common area, a courtyard where they placed grindstones and ovens for common use (Stager 1985, 18-19; Fiensy 1991, 127; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014, 44). Faust (2011) adds that archeologists have found evidence that women also pooled their resources and built communal storage to ensure adequate food supply. This collective effort of the women in food preparation transformed adjacent homes into small villages (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014, 44).

Consequently, this collective enterprise of the women largely influenced the welfare and solidarity of their villages.

It is also in these common grinding and baking spaces that women in ancient times honed their ability to network and stay informed about the important events and developments within their area. This was alluded to in The Egyptian Instruction of *Ptahhotep* (1800 BCE): "Good advice is rarer than emeralds, and yet it may be found among women at the grindstones" (Simpson, 2003). In the ancient Jewish and Graeco-Roman communities, women took up hours to prepare food (MacDonald 2008). The lengthy time the women spent working together in common spaces like threshing floors and courtyards translated into opportunities to build important relationships among themselves and develop communal cooperation. A good example of this is the story of Ruth. Prior to her marriage to the nobleman, Boaz, Ruth was a migrant widow who gleaned on his field. Women who were working in the fields are often preyed on by violent men. Nonetheless, the women realized that the system of working alongside one another and keeping together protected them from compromising situations (Meyers 1999). Ruth's narrative shows that vulnerable women's solidarity can serve as their very own protection from insidious dangers. Further, Ruth 4:17 depicts the strength of the relationship that Ruth formed with the women she used to work with in the field—it was the "women of the neighborhood" who gave the name "Obed" to Ruth and Boaz's son (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). The power of the village women to influence the naming of their master's son came from their connection with Ruth—a relationship forged through their shared weakness and collective effort on what was seen as the mundane task of food gathering and preparation.

The same thing could be said in the process of textile production. Weaving was a common skill among women in the ancient Near East—female servants and even royal women were depicted holding spindles (Yoder 2003). Spinning and weaving on horizontal looms, as well as dyeing fabrics, took diligent effort and patient tutelage from skilled female elders. Women typically worked in groups for hours to facilitate this economic activity; they wove with their family members and neighbors (Ebeling 2010, 57-58). Archeological discoveries of seal impressions, administrative lists, and letters from Mesopotamia and Egypt support both conjectures about the prominence of women in textile production and the existence of ancient female guilds of weavers (Marsman 2003, 407-408). Weaving as a communal activity did not only foster the women's bond but also opened commercial prospects for them. The surplus of their woven products was sold for profit; hence, clothing was considered a woman's liquid wealth in ancient times (Pomeroy 1994, 62; Lang 2004, 195). The Bible also reflects commercial networking that formed via the textile industry. In Proverbs 31:24, merchants purchase the sashes made by the "capable wife." and Lydia's prominent purple cloth business draws clients from Thyatira to Philippi (Yoder 2003, 79; DeMaris 2010, 47; Hemelrijk 1999, 9-10). Textile production allowed women to ply another income source other than farming which helped them attain a living standard not otherwise possible (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014, 41). It is certainly not a far stretch to claim that the leadership and networking of women in this trade opened commercial opportunities for their communities and also greatly contributed to the economic life of their time.

Impact on Cultic Life

Women's activities such as food preparation and textile production had a far-reaching effect on society. Nevertheless, beyond economics, these female activities also shaped the cultic life of their communities. The androcentric frame of reference of the priests and prophets that dominate the Bible failed to represent the private sphere of the religious life which, in truth, is as important as communal worship (Ebeling 2010; Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). The authors of the Hebrew Bible mainly focused on male figures like Aaron, Ezra, Eli, Samuel, etc. who contributed to the life of the community through public worship. However, when it comes to worship in private spaces such as households, women made significant contributions.

Women led the affairs of the household, and they also exercised great authority in those spaces. For instance, scholars affirm the ancient tradition that it was the female elders of the home who took care of the tutelage of young children that included training on religious observances (Miller 2006, 138; Weinfeld 1991, 261; Tigay 1996, 200; Rawson 2003, 175-177; Saller 1994, 151-153). The book of Proverbs constantly depicts women as capable instructors of wise living; Luke-Acts and Titus show women as teachers of what is good, even the Word of God (Prov. 31: 26; Acts 18:26; Titus 2:3-4; Camille 2014). Boys may cease to be under the instruction of their mothers or other female tutors at a certain age, but the girls continued to be trained by their female elders until they were in their late teens (Yarbrough 1993, 41-49; Barclay 1997).

On religious rites, women were taught how to prepare food offerings (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). Bread offerings, which are common elements in Jewish worship, were always prepared. Jeremiah 44:19 speaks of the prophet's condemnation of

the worship of the "queen of heaven," the amalgam of Semitic female idols (Ackerman 1989). Nonetheless, the passage inadvertently shows how women facilitated the worship done at home: women burned incense, poured drink offerings, and baked loaves of bread impressed with images. One can learn from Jeremiah that worship is a domestic matter as much as it is a public affair, and God is concerned with both. When the children gather scraps of wood, the fathers kindle fire, and women bake bread to be offered to idols, God is repulsed (Jeremiah 7:18). The passage shows that the food preparation of women has a direct correlation to worship.

The dawn of the first century BCE showed more involvement of females in the leadership at the synagogues despite the prevailing patriarchal worldview. This is supported by extant inscriptional evidence in the temples (Brooten 1982). Likewise, prominent roles were ascribed to women in the house churches of the New Testament. Women began to have more freedom in participating and leading the cultic life in the Graeco-Roman world (Adams, Nicholas, and Adams 2014). Writings dating back to the Anti-Nicene period also evidence that women outnumbered men in the church and courageously shared the burden of the work for the kingdom (The Shepherd of Hermas, Fluegge 2016, 314). Nevertheless, most women continued to lead in domestic tasks like food preparation and the health and nutrition of the people. These became the distinctive activities of the women's ministry in the young Christian church. Their ministry included preparing meals for widows and orphans, tending to those with grave illnesses, showing hospitality to missionaries in transit, and serving imprisoned martyrs who were awaiting execution (Ad Uxorem; Fluegge 2016, 314-315). New Testament scholars add that these women literally dedicated their time and money to the disenfranchised of the society

reaching to the extent that they even encountered hostility from their very own families for their generous giving. (Fluegge 2016). The selfless sacrifice of the early Church women exhibited in their offering for the poor and their seemingly banal ministries enacted a "social message," one that attracted many of those who had slim chances for upward social mobility in the strictly hierarchal Graeco-Roman society (Harnack 1904, 184). As the women continued with these domestic ministries carried out in *caritas*, multitudes were added in the fold. Church historians like Chadwick (1967, 56) even considered the women's ministry—these small domestic deeds done with significance and care—as "the most potent single cause of Christian success" in the early church.

Valorizing and Not Marginalizing Women's Socio-economic Participation in the Bible

The evidence from literature and studies shown above trumps the conception that the maintenance activities of women in Biblical times were only consequential inside the four walls of their households. Women's domestic activities had direct and large impact on social and economic life in Biblical times. Food production and preparation steered their communities towards survival and health, especially when circumstances pushed their households to subsistence economies. Also, even within the "house of the fathers" system, the communal and cooperative nature of women's breadmaking made it possible to transform individual adjacent houses into small villages. These "villages of mothers" evidenced women's capability to build solidarity and network towards the development and common good of their people. The same can be said with women's leadership and networking capacities evidenced in textile production. Selling the surplus cloth they had woven for their families, women developed extra income into a robust enterprise that permeated the travel routes of the great Persian and Roman empires. In addition, the

review of literature and studies on this section has shown that women's domestic tasks

were crucial to the private sphere of the cultic life. Women were the caregivers and

instructors of righteousness to the children; they are also the constant leaders of preparing

offerings such as bread for performing religious rites at home. Further, in the New

Testament, we see that the women used these domestic tasks to reach those who dwelt in

the peripheries of their communities—feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and

nurturing the rejects of society. By doing what they knew best such as food preparation,

clothes making, and providing care, the gospel swept through the Graeco-Roman world

and beyond.

Rediscovering the immense impact of female socio-economic contributions

comes with a redemptive call that the field of transformational development can resource.

It is regrettable that Biblical accounts alone cannot make for a robust study on female

work and its value to society. As this review has shown, there is a need to employ studies

on ancient Near East anthropology and archeology to shed light and recover truths about

the impact of female socio-economic activities. It is important to stop relegating and

begin esteeming female socio-economic contributions in the Bible and today. With

respect to building knowledge in transformational development, women's socio-

economic contribution in the Biblical times must be a part of its Biblical underpinnings.

This is important in the discipline's conception of a theology of work that says all value-

added labor is part of fulfilling the *missio Dei*. Transformational development, as a young

discipline, is at a critical juncture to develop theories and concepts with Biblical tenets

that steer away from the androcentric theology and move towards a Biblical

understanding, sensitized to the presence and contributions of women. Also, with respect

to community development principles, ancient social movements led by women like the communal food storages, courtyard with grindstones and ovens, as well as the guilds of female weavers could offer fundamental insights on community organizing and mobilization. The false dichotomy that women are only good for the home and men are effective in public spaces needs to be dismantled, especially since historical and archeological evidences say otherwise. Even now in this post-modern age, women continue to be the champions of communal efforts and collective productivity towards development. With respect to transformational development practice, women, especially those from the grassroots, must have a seat and a voice at the table where development is being discussed. This is imperative so that women can contribute and inform the goal-setting and action planning of development efforts—making progress inclusive, equitable, and just. One can only think of the wealth of knowledge and potential strategies that women from peripheries could offer in community-making and poverty alleviation. And most importantly, if transformational development is to be a true Christian field of discipline, then the studies it produces must follow the way of Christ who has always honored and valued women, who has always valorized those who are often marginalized.

Women and Development in the Urban Philippines

Meaningful development is impossible without engaging the context. When culture is not taken into careful consideration, myopic transplantations of development strategies often result in disillusioning, even devastating results (Bhandari and Yasunobu 2009; Stanford University 2018; Wilson 2018; Oxfam 2018). Todaro (2000) accurately notes that development is a complex and multidimensional process. Far more than

economic growth, progress and its process must make sense and fit in the cultural and social structures to truly bring changes that will reduce poverty, narrow inequalities, and improve the quality of life of the people (Bhandari and Yasunobu 2009). This transformational grounded theory research on development aims to draw a substantive theory out of the information from a specific context—that of the Filipino urban poor. Even more specifically, the theory will be drawn from Filipino women who are living amidst urban poverty. They are vulnerable socio-economic actors but are also invaluable contributors to development. This section aims to provide the socio-cultural background of these women, as well as the economic realities in which they live. This will be done through the presentation of both numerical and descriptive, even ethnographic data from relevant literature and studies.

Urban Poverty in the Philippines

The face of poverty is not homogenous. There are those who live in poverty that is entrenched farther in the peripheries. Studies on poverty, specifically vulnerability to poverty in the Philippines, women have always been identified among those who are most vulnerable (Albert and Vizmanos 2018, 22; World Bank et al 2018, 45). There have been important steps for Filipino women in the past. In 1975, through Presidential Decree No. 633, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW) was set in place. NCRFW was mandated to review, evaluate, and recommend measures, including priorities to ensure the full integration of women for economic, social and cultural development at national, regional and international levels, and to ensure further equality between women and men (Philippine Commission on Women n.d.). NCRFW programs included: "organizing women into a nationwide movement called "*Balikatan sa*

Kaunlaran" (shoulder-to-shoulder in development); conducting policy studies and lobbying for the issuance of executive and legislative measures concerning women; establishing a clearinghouse and information center on women; and monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)" (Philippine Commission on Women n.d.).

The 1987 Philippine constitution was also pivotal for securing the place of women in society and acknowledging their contribution to the development of the country. The first Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW), 1989-1992 was adopted through Executive Order No. 348, and enacted shortly was the "Women in Nation-Building Act" (RA 7192), which promotes the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation-building (Philippine Commission on Women n.d.). The government's focus on poverty alleviation also resulted in empowering women to ensure that the mainstream efforts of the government are contributing to the improvement of their lives. The effort also enabled women to participate in the policy-making. More than a decade later, the Magna Carta for Women (MCW) Implementing Rules and Regulations was set in place. MCW is a comprehensive women's human rights law that seeks to eliminate discrimination through the recognition, protection, fulfillment, and promotion of the rights of Filipino women, especially those belonging to the marginalized sectors of the society (Philippine Commission on Women n.d.).

The Philippine legal framework has placed basic guidelines and processes for women empowerment nevertheless this seems to be only good in paper (Anonuevo, 2000). There are still socio-cultural impositions that create barriers for the acknowledgment and support of women's ability to greatly shape the development of the country; realized and

actualized equality for women still seems to be a far cry. Filipino feminization of poverty occurs continuously and is still in the foreground of issues that the country faces (Chant 2015). Filipino women are still highly vulnerable to fall deeper between the cracks. They were placed at an 18.1 vulnerability rate which is only slightly lower than that of children who were at 25. 4 % (Albert and Vizmanos 2018, 22; World Bank 2018a, 45). This implies that many Filipino women still lack better access to education and more equitable opportunities to participate in the labor force for economic growth to be genuinely inclusive (World Bank 2018a, 17, 46).

This part of the literature review aims to shed light on the plight of Filipino women living in poverty, specifically those who are in urban areas. To provide a cultural context on the subject, quantitative data on urban poverty and women are presented. These are from recent studies done by state-run think tanks and statistics agencies, as well as international financial institutions such as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank. F. Landa Jocano's landmark ethnographic magnum opus, *Slum as a Way of Life,* together with other qualitative studies done in recent years, help paint the picture of these women living in urban poverty.

Filipino Women and Urban Poverty by the Numbers

For the first time in history, there are more people living in cities than in rural areas. UN Habitat (2016) reports that cities are home to 54% of the world's population, and by the middle of this century that figure will rise to 66%. In 2030, millions of women and girls will be among those who will live in towns and cities in 2030 (UNICEF 2012). The Philippines has been going in this direction and has been one of the early "urbanizers" in Asia (World Bank 2017, 7). Urbanization in the Philippines is traced to

have begun during the 1960s; it slowed down in the 1990s but continues to remain positive until today (World Bank 2017). It is not uncommon for Filipinos who are living in the countryside to move into the cities in search of more opportunities for business and employment. In 2014, the Asian Development Bank estimated that 65% of the country's population or about 102 million Filipinos will be living in urban areas by 2050—half of this figure will be women. People who live in urban areas are presented with the duality of the city—one hand offers possibilities but the other holds perils. The city does not only represent progress; there is also a gamut of predators in the concrete jungle who prey on the weak. This environment penalizes the most vulnerable, especially women and girls (UN 2016; Plan International 2018). Women living in the urban Philippines are facing many challenges, mainly poverty and violence.

Poverty is more prevalent in rural areas of the Philippines, but the disparities in living conditions are more evident in urban areas (World Bank 2018b). The poverty rate increases along with household size, and poverty incidence is highest in households where the dependency ratio is greatest; this is when there are more consumers in a family than their income earners. For instance, a family of six may only have one worker among them who single-handedly provides for all their necessities. The table below is from the analysis of World Bank (2018b) on the 2015 FIES; it shows the household size, poor versus non-poor (percentage of households).

Table 1. Household Size, Poor vs. Non-Poor
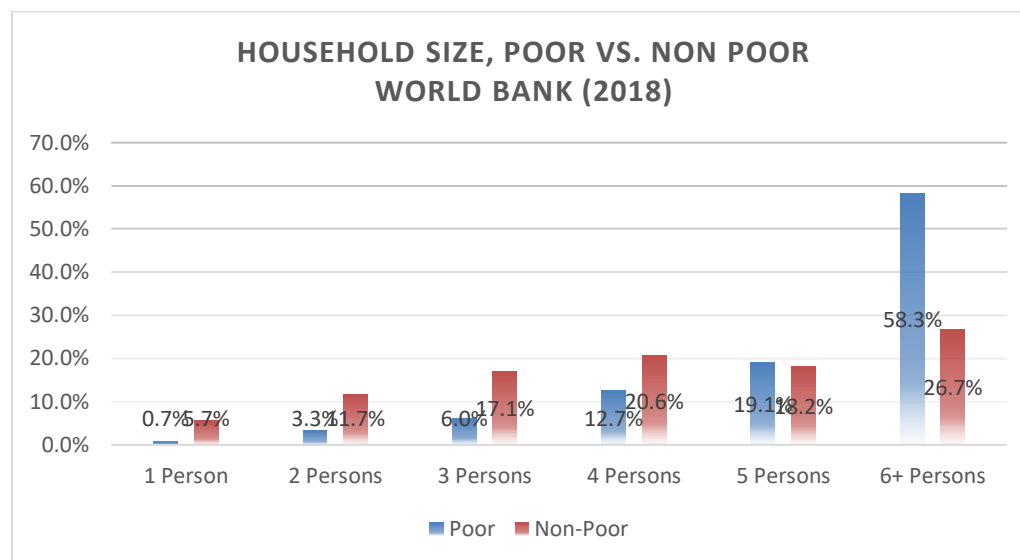
Women who are poor have more children, and recent years show that women continue to increase their economic participation. In 2019, female labor force participation is estimated at 47.6% as more women get involved in sales and personal services (PSA 2020). From the PSA data, an estimated 2.6 million Filipino women living in urban poor communities also work on casual employment and daily wage labor—some work as laundry ladies, house cleaners, vendors, etc. Witte-Garland (1988, xii) suggests that because women are traditionally concerned with home and family and community, they are the first to recognize and act on threats to survival. These women's natural instinct to preserve and nurture life drives them to build from the ground-up alternative ways to address food insecurity and other problems related to poverty.

It is typical for women living in poor areas to work as *uwiang kasambahay* or a helper who works for a day in an employer's house but comes home to her family after the day. This type of arrangement among *kasambahay's* dates back to ancient Filipino

social structures. Historians Teodoro Agoncillo and Fe Mangahas (2010) mentions that prior to the colonization of the Spaniards, the Filipinos have what is called "*aliping namamahay*." The "*namamahay*" was made up of servants who would help in the households and farms of the nobles during the day but had their own houses and families to come home to at the end of the day (Agoncillo and Mangahas, 2010). In the ancient Filipino social structure, servants or "*alipins*" are not slaves in the real sense of the word. "*Alipin*" is better translated in to "dependents" because they become dependent on the nobles due to debts or captivity from tribal wars. The dependent can move back up the social ladder once their debts are paid through service. Being in the lower class of the society is not permanent. Social mobility seems to be easier back in the pre-colonial period Philippine than in the present Filipino socio-economic structure. Today, a woman who works as "*uwiang kasambahay*"—the set-up which is similar to the ancient "*aliping namamahay*"—could earn only about 10-12 USD a day (DOLE 2018). This daily wage can only help a family of four to get by their daily food expense, and it does little to no help if the goal is upward social mobility (PSA 2020).

There are also non-income dimensions to poverty that must be considered such as education and learning. The more years of education a female has, the more advantage she will have on employment and income. Zamora and Dorado's (2015) study on access to education in the Philippines reveals that female urban dwellers, as well as males, have better access to education than those who live in rural areas. Cudia (2017, 36) indicates that education continues to be a significant positive factor in poverty mobility, and high school education is proven to be the threshold. It is particularly important for women to at least complete high school if they intend to apply for wage jobs as their employability

increases by 3.4% compared to men at 1.7% (World Bank 2018a, 45). This means that with an additional year of schooling, a Filipino woman increases her earning power and avoids perpetuating inequality across generations.

However, not all women finish high school. PSA (2017) 1 out of 10 Filipino females between 15-19 years old is either pregnant or already has given birth to her first child. Marriage and family matters are the third reason for women dropping out of high school, and only women drop out for this reason (World Bank 2018a, 47). In her lifetime, a typical Filipino woman from the poorest 20% of the population will give birth to an average of 5.2 children (PSA 2017; World Bank 2018b). With a lack of access to health facilities, mortality is high among young women living in poverty. This is the reason why the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) prioritized providing prenatal care and birthing facilities on their conditional cash transfer program called 4P's (*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*). From 2011-2016, 7 out of 10 live births among the beneficiaries of 4P's were delivered in a health facility (PSA 2017). DSWD reported 443, 488 women were served in 2019 alone (PSA 2020).

Aside from poverty, Filipino women who live in urban poor areas must contend with violence. Exposure to attacks and the fear of rape, sexual assault, humiliation, and harassment infringe upon women's freedom and enjoyment of community life (UN 2014). For many women in poverty, violence seems to be an inescapable cycle. Many of the women in urban poor communities have been abused by their fathers or step-fathers, and as they move out of the house, they experience intimate partner violence (IPV). The Philippine Commission on Women (2016) noted that 1 out of 4 women at the age of 15-

49 would have experienced violence at least once in her life. The table below shows the different types of abuse that women at varying ages experience (PSA 2020).

Table 2. PSA 2020 Different Types of Abuse that Women at Varying Ages Experience

Forms of Violence	Age Group					
	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	Total
Percentage of Women Age 15-49 Who Have Experienced Various Forms of Physical and Sexual Violence, by Current Age						
Physical violence only	12.0	15.2	13.4	13.0	13.3	13.3
Sexual violence only	1.4	1.6	2.0	1.8	1.6	1.7
Physical and sexual violence only	1.3	2.6	3.5	4.6	4.6	3.5
Physical or sexual violence	14.7	19.4	18.9	19.4	19.5	18.5
Number of Women	3,453	3,048	2,708	4,770	3,989	17,968

In an earlier report published by the PSA (2017), 14% of the women surveyed agreed that a partner is justified in beating the woman for at least one of the following circumstances: if she burns the food, if she argues with him, if she goes out without telling him, or if she neglects the children, and if she refuses to have sexual intercourse with him. A positive correlation is also seen between a woman's number of children and her experience of violence, while a negative correlation is seen between a woman's

educational attainment and experience of violence (PSA 2017). This means that women who have five children or more and have only reached primary or secondary level education—two distinct characteristics of women living in poverty—are more susceptible to IVP. Consequently, women who have more years of education and less number of children are less vulnerable to IVP.

<div align="center">The Looban and the Faces of Filipino Women in Urban Poverty</div>

The typical representation of women living in the urban poor communities in the media is the *losyang*, a woman wearing tattered clothes who cradles her many children beside her, a woman who has already lost her beauty and has been left out without opportunities. This depiction is equally truncated and historically inaccurate. The ancient Filipino society, before the arrival of the Spaniards, has made a space for women to participate in trade and industry, even in leadership just as any person could (Agoncillo and Mangahas 2010, 17). Ancient Filipino women participated in industries such as agriculture, livestock raising, fishing, and textile production from banana and cotton plants (Agoncillo and Mangahas 2010, 15). Most notably, the ancient Filipino women were commonly adorned with gold. In 1596, Miguel Lopez de Legazpi reported to the Spanish empire that there was an abundance of gold from the rivers and the mines in which the natives work—"very good gold" can be found from the northern mountains of the Ilocos region to the southern Butuan river in Mindanao (Agoncillo and Mangahas 2010). Ancient Filipino women, even those in the lower strata, were respected and were never short of opportunities to make meaningful contributions to their tribes.

In the Spanish and the American occupation, Filipino poor women living in the early cities of the country have since shown the audacity to provide for herself and her

family. Camaggay's chapter "Working Women of Manila in the Nineteenth Century" in the compendium, *More Pinay than We Admit*, a book she edited herself, lends a great perspective to women in this time of Philippine history. Camaggay (2010, 94) identified that Tobacco was one of the main industries in 19th century Manila, and many women worked as *cigarreras* or tobacco rollers. Some Filipino women also worked in the urban areas during this time as *vendedores* (women vendors), *comadronas* or *hilots* (midwives), *sinamayeras* (weavers of abaca, and pineapple cloth), *lecheras* (milkmaids), and *buyeras* (betel nut vendors) (*Camagay* 2010, 93-103). Filipino women living in poverty have always been opposite the stereotype of being coy, dull, and weak. They always had a mind of their own, enterprising and persistent in finding means to participate in the economic life of their communities.

From then until today, Filipino women living in urban poverty continue to exist in a community in the city called looban. The term *looban*, which roughly translates to "inside area", is a euphemism for slums or squatter's area, and is an accurate description for its geographical location. Most of these *looban's* are not visible from the main streets (Jocano 1975). Often these pockets of neighborhoods whose residents are members of the low-income sector are interspersed in non-poor communities and are concealed by commercial establishments and residential buildings (Jocano 1975, 13; Pernia 1996, 5-8). One needs to go through a narrow, unmaintained side street that could barely fit a motorbike to reach a looban, but once inside, the dynamics of life in the urban poor community is at full display.

Jocano (1975, 41) noted that the streets of the *looban* are indicators of the social phenomena in the community, a "social barometer" through which one can learn the way

of life in the area. On the narrow streets of the *looban* are the different faces of Filipina

women living in poverty. Jocano's landmark ethnography, *Slum as a Way of Life*, may

have been completed five decades ago, but the picture he vividly painted remains true

today. Unlike the assumption that these women are only *istambays* (bystanders) and

tsismosas (rumormongers) who waste the day on *tsimis* (gossips), they are actually

women who work. The women of the *looban* never sleep—they work day and night.

The experience of *kumakalam na sikmura sa gutom* (gnawing stomach in hunger)

is common in the looban. This is the embodied experience of hunger that affects more

women than men (Percullo 2015, 27). This is one of the reasons why more women than

men are working daily in the looban. Jocano (1975, 160) articulated this crucial

observation in the urban poor communities—many men rely on the women to provide for

the needs of the family. These men live a happy-go-lucky life, and they become the envy

of their *barkadas* (peers) because these men have found a woman who will provide them

money. The wife or partner of a man like this must also deal with infidelity. This type of

man usually has a *kabit* or mistress from the looban, either a prostitute, a laundrywoman,

or even an office worker (Jocano 1975; 161). Ruben de Lara of *Tulay sa Pagunlad* shares

that this phenomenon continues based on his observation from the field (Maggay 2015,

176):

> I think there is something in Filipino women that makes them
> capable of rising above difficulties in carrying out responsibilities.
> They are very resilient, hardworking, dedicated, sacrificing…I am
> not sure if I can say that about the men…Filipino men, especially
> the poor, tend to give less priority to the small needs of the family,
> and satisfy themselves instead. I find the men in this category, the
> daily wage earners, for example, to prefer spending money on a
> bottle of beer with their *barkadas*…women in the same category
> make sure that every centavo is set aside, that the basic needs of
> the family are well taken care of.

On top of these struggles and despite being the breadwinners, these women are expected to perform their familial duties of child-care and housekeeping (Jocano 1975; 161). Work is non-stop for these women—they wake up before dawn to prepare food for their families—if there is any—and spend the morning until the afternoon at their workplace. Once they get home, they keep their hands busy with house chores and looking after the children. Many of the women in the looban work as lavanderas, plantsadoras (ironing woman), and *taga-linis* (house cleaner) who work for the families in the non-poor communities. There are also tinderas (sales lady) who either work on their own small sari-sari store (general merchandise store) or work on the nearby commercial buildings. Out of necessity, the daughters of these women are introduced to these types of work early. The female children are asked by their mother to learn and perform such work for their own families such as laundry, ironing, cooking, etc. as she is out serving others (Jocano 1974, 163).

Another reason for this is that these girls are trained so they can be their mothers' assistants. The women who work as vendors, *lavanderas*, *plantsadoras*, and *taga-linis*, as well as the women who provide personal services like massage, hair styling, and nail care also train their children on these jobs at an early age so they can go and assist their mothers. They do not only help to lighten the workload of their mothers; they also get additional income for their families. In the *looban*, the female children, and at times even the male children, inherit the trade of their parents (Jocano 1975). Especially when they do not get the chance to finish secondary or tertiary education, most children end-up doing what their parents know and taught them how to do. Many times, this causes poverty to become chronic and intergenerational (Tuason 2008, Cudia 2017). The

generations of people living in poverty remain employed in labor-intensive jobs that offer little income.

While the women mentioned above have meager income, they can take pride in their *marangal na trabaho* (decent work). Women of the looban make a strong distinction of who among them are *marangal* (decent) and *malaswa* (indecent) (Jocano 1975, 125). The *babaeng malaswa* (indecent woman) is someone who receives payments for sexual transactions, working as a prostitute, hostess, or call girl. In 2012, Senator Pia Cayetano estimated that there are about 800,000 prostitutes in the Philippines—the majority of them women and girls (PREDA 2012). These women get into a myriad of troubles: they are at risk of contracting STD's (sexually transmitted diseases); they frequently experience violence and rape from their patrons; they have an increased likelihood of falling into substance abuse; they are disenfranchised of their rights, and they are shunned by their neighbors and even family members (Parmanand 2019; Jocano 1975; PREDA 2012). They are also less likely to report abuse and exploitation because they are often victims of discrimination and stigmatization due to their line of work. Stories of shaming and victim-blaming from police officers and other government workers are not uncommon (Parmanand 2019). Comments like, "*pinasok mo yang gulong yan*" (you got yourself into that mess) and "*yan ang napapala mo*" (that's what you get) are among others that these victims have heard. Behind the *koloretes* (make-up) on these women's faces are bruises, cuts, and tragic stories.

The ethnographic accounts by Jocano (1975 123-149) on these "deviant females" remain true today. No girl ever dreamed of becoming a prostitute—they were victims of vicious predators and unjust socio-economic system. The categories Jocano used,

provinciana, and *Manileña* are relevant to show how these women are initiated into prostitution. The *provincianas* (province lady) are women lured into the city with a promise of work as a maid or sales lady (Jocano 1975, 129). Unwittingly, they trust these people not knowing that they will be brought into brothels as sex slave. In 2013, Filipino rapper, Gloc-9, debuted the rap-ballad, *Magda*, which tells the story of a *provinciana* who got lured and trapped into the sex trade. The track bears striking representation not only of Jocano's account but of the many accounts one hears in the looban.

The counterpart of the *provicianas* is the *Manileñas*. The *manileñas* are the girls who grew up in poor urban communities. These women enter into prostitution at a young age—some go to this trade on their own volition, citing poverty as the reason (Parmanand 2019). Prostitution has become a tough socio-economic coping mechanism for these women (Jocano 1975). "*Wala na pong makain, at wala naman po akong ibang alam na gawain para magkapera* (I do not have anything to eat, and I do not know any other skill to earn money)," are the common lines one can hear from these women. Jocano (1975) also cites what is still prevalent today—mothers who are prostitutes become the way for these young girls to also enter the trade. If the *lavanderas* teach their daughters to do laundry to earn money, some prostitutes bring their children to the bars and make them sell cigarettes outside for the patrons (Jocano 1975, 1963). By the time some of these girls lose their virginity to a boyfriend or because of rape, they easily fall into prostitution. Dejectedly, with the advent of technology—faster internet connection and money wiring—the domain of sexual abuse and exploitation have quickly transferred from the dark streets into the dark web (Pring 2020). Online sexual exploitation of girls and women is rapidly becoming one of the greatest challenges Filipino women and girls

are facing, especially with the country becoming the epicenter of sexual abuse and exploitation of material production (UNICEF 2016). While this type of exploitation occurs in both urban and rural areas, prevalence is still higher in urbanized towns and cities (Pring 2020). Whether a woman is categorized as a *provinciana* or *Manileña*, this enduring common thread begs recognition—initiation to prostitution happens through trickery, coercion, and emotional manipulation (Jocano 1975; Pring 2020). Their trust and confidence were exploited along with their youth, and their future was flung into a dangerous trajectory. At the end of the day, these "deviant females," just as Jocano (1975, 123) calls them, do not desire to be told what to do or prescribed on how to get their act together. These women struggle to be heard and seen more than being saved (Parmanand 2019).

The Need for Filipino Women to be Heard and Seen in the Development Narrative

There are times when poverty is oversimplified and discussed in a sweeping manner even among development thinkers. Poverty may be the condition of millions of Filipino people but it does not affect each one of them the same way. As it is in the nations of the global South, the poor and vulnerable in the Philippines are often women. The statistical and anecdotal data on this section specifically surfaces the struggles that women living in Filipino urban poor communities contend with daily. It is crucial for Christian development practitioners to grapple with this information because no development program is done in void—a thorough understanding of the culture and context of the people is imperative. For those who endeavor to work with Filipino women, challenges on employment, access to health services, and support towards finishing high school education must be engaged. Issues on violence, sexual abuse, and

exploitation that plague the vulnerable poor must be confronted. These women need to be seen, heard, and support must be provided. Most importantly, the data presented in this review also show a significant historical and cultural truth about Filipino women that development thinkers and practitioners must always consider. To start with: the tenacious audacity of Filipino women living in urban poor communities to survive and thrive. These women always find ways to provide for themselves and their families, as well as add significance to the lives of the people around them. Filipino women continue to resist defeat and death that loom over the margins; they show indomitable determination to rise above the poverty that pulls them and their families to death.

Development and Relationships: Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft and the Social Capital Theory

Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft

One of the most notable theories of development is how people move from being a *Gemeinschaft* (pre-modern community) to a *Gesellschaft* (market society). While *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* have been used by other German philosophers, it was Ferdinand Tönnies who introduced these words as dichotomous analytical categories (Bond 2011, 1189; Waters 2016, 1; Tönnies 1957, 37-102; Maggay 2015, 56). Tönnies understood that development is social evolution, a process wherein the *Gemeinschaft* community that used to be built upon personal relationships, loyalty, and shared values transforms into a *Gesellschaft* society that is characterized by impersonal relationships, fixed-term contracts, and individual advantages (Tönnies 1957; Waters 2016, 1-2; Maggay 2015). On the one hand, Tönnies thought of the *Gemeinschaft* bonds as emerging from what he called the "natural will"—solidarity is naturally established

among those who have the same ethnicity or religious persuasions or social status. On the

other hand, he thought of the *Gesellschaft* bonds as emerging from "rational will"—

attachments are rationally constructed depending on one's approximation of a

relationship's value (Tönnies 1957). Typically, Gesellschaft bonds are gauged through

monetary measures (Bond 2011, 1187-1188). Tönnies thought of *Gesellschaft* as the

more progressive society since it represents the advantages of modernity and it annuls the

inefficiencies that come with the sentimental biases evident in *Gemeinschaft* (Tönnies

1957; Cahnmann 1995; Bond 2011, 1197-1199).

Tönnies paint a picture of a society that positively moves towards progress and

modernization, yet loses its very core—the bonds, the "natural will" that establishes it

and makes it a community. If indeed, atomization of societies is the product of this

modernization trade-off, this presents a theoretical dilemma to Transformational

development, a paradigm that champions shalom—all relationships healed and made

whole—as the end goal of all development efforts (Myers 2011; Jayakumar 2011; Offut

2012). In addition, Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* und *Gesellschaft* dichotomy does not capture

the complex realities of cultures such as that of the Filipino people. The Filipino people

do not resist modernization and progress. For instance, a study by the World Bank shows

that the Philippines was one of the early adopters of urbanization (2017, 7). Couple this

with the fact that millions of OFWs leave the country to work abroad, to provide for their

families back home so that they may taste modernity and progress (Aguilar 2003, 140;

Barber 2000, 400; Hau 2004, 4; Hochschild 2002). Yet the deep structures such as filial

bonds and relationship values remain resilient and is at the core of the Filipino

community (Asis 2006; Reyes-Taylor 2008, 16; Pring 2019). The Filipino culture

contravenes Tönnies' theory and shows that it is possible for a society to move towards a modernized *Gesellschaft*, while not losing the bonds which are characteristic of a *Gemeinschaft* (Pring 2019).

Social Capital Theory

The germinal concept of social capital can be traced back to classical economists, Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill, as well as German sociologist Max Weber (Guiso et. al. 2006). Nevertheless, it was in the 1990s that the theory entered into academic and policy debates. Leading the contemporary discussion on social capital are Pierre Bourdieu (1986), James Coleman (1988), Robert D. Putnam (1993), Francis Fukuyama (1995), and Nan Lin (2001). Despite the complexity of this theory and other scholars' disagreement on its use as a metaphor, social capital theory is perhaps one of the most successful exports from sociology to the public square, even to economic and development dialogues (Schiff 1992; Putnam 1993; Portes 2000; Bhandari and Yasunobu 2009; Haynes 2009).

In a modernized society, economic or material resources mean an advantage to the individuals possessing them. Social capital also emphasizes advantage—however, not that of monetary or material assets but that of relationships. Despite having no single, universal definition, social capital has a key postulation: relationships are important assets through which individuals can engender benefits and resources. Putnam (2000), building upon the work of Gittell and Vidal (1998), identifies two types of social capital: bonding social capital which speaks of relationships that exist within a group, and bridging social capital which are connections between two separate social groups. Social capital allows for gains that are otherwise unattainable without the connections.

Relationships as capital assets are created through a person's investment of information

and trust (Coleman 1990; Bhandari and Yasunobu 2009). Once information and trust

have been accumulated, the individual can utilize the "credits" by virtue of connections.

Coleman (1990) points out that if not maintained over time, social capital depreciates,

and the reciprocity declines. This means that keeping communication normative and

continuing the investment of trust and information reinforces social capital. Bourdieu

(1986) divides the elements of social capital into three extensive categories: 1) the social

relationship that enables actors to gain access to resources possessed by their associates

(i.e., it is resources embedded in social connections); 2) the amount of those resources

produced by the totality of the relationships between actors, rather than merely a common

quality of the group; and 3) the quality of those resources.

At first blush, the social capital theory seems to fit the research at hand. Unlike

Gemeinschaft und *Gesellschaft* that speaks of the breakdown in shared traditions, values,

and norms, the social capital theory allows for a discussion of development that takes into

account relationships and the socio-cultural dimension of a given group (Lucas 1976;

Harrison and Huntington 2000; OECD 2001). However, a further investigation of the fit

of this theory to this research that is built on the Christian paradigm of development

shows incompatibility. Among other scholars, Fine and Green (2000), Fine (2002)

Fischer (2005), and Haynes (2009) have voiced out their criticism that social capital

theory remains to be a fundamental economic concept. Haynes (2009, 5-6) argues that

discourses of the theory with development are "not an expansion through economic

considerations, but a reduction to economic thinking"—an "application of an undiluted

economic description on otherwise social terrain." In agreement with the body of

literature, Haynes argument proves to be true since many of the studies that utilized

social capital theory as a framework of discourse between development and culture

focused on the analysis and implications of economic outcomes and behavior (Putnam

1993, Fukuyama 1995; Ben-Ner and Putterman, 1997; Barro 1997, Inglehart 1997,

Knack and Keefer 1997; Huntington 1998; Inglehart and Baker 2000; Zak and Kanck,

2001; Gradstein and Justman 2002; Beugelsdijk 2003; Pryor 2005; Hjerppe 2003;

Fukuyama 2001; Guiso et al., 2006). The risk of taking social capital as a framework for

the study at hand is grave—the Filipino women who are the subject of the research

cannot be reduced into mere human capital, and how faith and culture enable them to

build relationships that help them survive and thrive cannot be reduced into mere

transactional economic activity. This research aims to draw elements from the process of

human flourishing and community building in light of faith and culture that are otherwise

beyond the rather utilitarian elements of social capital theory.

The misalignment of the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* theory to the Filipino

infraculture and the inadequacy of social capital theory and its categories to capture the

Christian tenets of Transformational development led to the decision that it is best for the

study to derive theory from the social realities and data from the ground. Hence,

Transformational Grounded Theory, which is inductive and participatory by nature, was

chosen to be the design of the research.

Transformational Development and the Relational Nature of Poverty

Expanding the Definition of Poverty

Pete Alcock (2006, 64) argues that defining poverty is at the heart of

understanding poverty and that prior to measuring it or doing anything to alleviate, one

must first identify what it is and when it occurs. Defining a complex social phenomenon like poverty is not an easy task. Nonetheless, as Lister (2004) asserts, poverty is a social construct that has cultural roots, and different people have different ways of seeing the causes and the ways of dealing with poverty. Hence, when I think of defining Filipino poverty, a living image I witnessed in one of the most disenfranchised areas of metropolitan Manila comes to mind. In a paper I wrote for a course, I reflected on the animated montage:

> The main streets of North Harbor in Tondo, Metro Manila is a junk shop parade. On this visual landscape, a live image of *pangangalakal* (scavenging) is displayed. Inside this living picture are men and women on casual employment, spending the day on labor-intensive work that offers meager compensation. Young men and women who are in their teens carry loads of *kalakal* (junk) on their shoulders. They have gathered these scraps of metal, wood, and plastics from the nearby landfill, and they are to make money of what little value is left on these discarded treasures. Such a living image is further vivified by the lackadaisical children in grease-covered clothes, laughing, running, and playing on the streets. People in their cars witness this animated image of poverty as briefly as the traffic light shifts from red to green. Yet for the men, women, teens, and children of Tondo, poverty is their lived experience—they remain stuck in the picture no matter how many times the traffic light changes its colors.

The Social Reform and Poverty Alleviation Act of 1997 determines the people on the living image of Tondo as poor—they are individuals and families whose income fall below the poverty threshold as determined by the National Economic and Development Agency or NEDA (Section 3 of Republic Act 8425). While this definition provides a handle for the government to identify people who belong to the marginalized sectors and what policies need to be placed on their behalf, poverty needs to be better understood. There is a need to go beyond this technical definition and traditional association of having low income and being poor. For one, Matin and Hulme (2003) suggests that it is essential to understand that to be poor is to be in a state of deprivation. People living in

poverty cannot sustain the provision of their essential needs such as food, health expenses, housing, etc. This deprivation can manifest in low educational attainment and socio-economic vulnerability as a result of the inability to access factors for upward social mobility (Edralin, Tibon and Tugas 2015). Also, one needs to grapple with the truth that poverty is a condition of human living that does not only deprive people of adequate resources but of their human dignity (Tullao, 2009, p. 395). There is a sense in which poverty disempowers the people living in it; poverty impedes human flourishing. People are forced to adapt to a "culture of poverty" that is perpetuated from one generation of the poor to the next (Lewis 1966). Oscar Lewis (1966), who studied Puerto Rican families, and F. Landa Jocano (1975, 7), who lived and researched among poor Filipinos, both purport that the people from the slums are situated from childhood to accept certain value systems and attitudes that keep them from taking advantage of opportunities that may occur in their lifetime. This does not mean people living in poverty are ignorant or lazy—this is a far cry from the evidence of their ingenuity and indigenous knowledge on local ecology, traditional medicine, and survival skills (Chambers 1983; De Soto 1989). What this means is that there are systemic structures created by the larger society that perpetuate the culture of poverty and hinder the poor from the freedom to pursue their utmost potential in life. Hence, poverty is not merely about having a low income. Poverty is deficit: it is also the inability to access resources for basic amenities in life. More importantly, poverty is captivity: it is living in a situation that disenfranchises one of the liberties to go in for a dignified and abundant life.

This expanded definition of poverty can only mean that there is more to the financial and material dimension of what causes poverty. In other words, to truly deal with poverty, providing what is materially or financially missing and lacking is not enough. Furthermore, as development practitioners continue to discover, it is not the right way to move forward (Christian 1999; Easterly 2006; Myers 2011, 114). Dealing with poverty through mere giving is only a band-aid solution to a deep cut—it widens the power distance between the giver and receiver, inadvertently sending a message of disempowerment to the people at the receiving end. Their identity as potential agents of liberating change are marred. A holistic solution to poverty deals with its seen and unseen causes.

The Relational Nature of Poverty

At its heart, poverty is relational (Christian 1994). The material and financial deficit of a person living in poverty is only an indication of the broken relationships one has with him/herself, with others, with nature, and ultimately, with God (Myers 2011, 144). To be free from the grip of poverty means to have *shalom*—and it goes beyond the traditional translation of the Hebrew word to "peace." *Shalom* means the "all-rightness" of everything; it means a person's life is whole and nothing missing (Zehr 2002; Myers 2011,143).

Poverty is a result of relationships that go against the foundations of God's rule: justice and righteousness. Poverty is essentially the absence of shalom or a cooperative, dynamic, and vivifying way of living. Myers (2011, 143) noted that this understanding of poverty supports the Hebraic worldview wherein harmonious relationships are the highest good, while alienation is the lowest.

Chief of the broken relationships that a person in poverty suffers from is a broken relationship with God, and the cause of the distorted relationship is sin. In the uncorrupted Eden, humanity enjoyed a harmonious relationship with God (Stevens 2000; Keller 2012). Adam was given the honor to care for creation which he began by giving names to the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and the beasts of the field. Likewise, Eve was Adam's equal partner in the God-given mandate to fill the earth and subdue it. Both the man and the woman reflected God's image as creative and dignified beings (Keller 2012). However, sin has corrupted this perfect relationship (Genesis 3:17). Human beings who were initially made to enjoy life with God were now made subject to *thanatos* (death/separation), and the overarching shalom that used to reign is destroyed. Humanity was banished from Eden—not only are the man and woman poor as they were cut off from God's presence, but they were also cut-off from the garden's abundant supply. Because of sin Humanity was made subject to strenuous labor to meet and sustain the amenities needed for their life. Jayakumar Christian (1994, 252), following Walter Wink (1992), maintains that the fall has also allowed evil principalities and powers to create deception and fear that brings generations of humanity to poverty. This ancient adversary of human beings continues to entangle men and women today with the web of lies that keep them poor (Christian 1994, 264). For this reason, Myers (2011, 145) purports that a Christian discussion of poverty inevitably needs to have a strong systematic theology of sin to arrive at comprehensive explanations of its cause.

The broken relationship of humanity with God also caused the corrosion of inter-personal relationships. Prilleltensky (2003, 19-34) noted that "human interactions" have been marred by disrespect, exclusion, and humiliation. Even more, broken relationships

of human beings with one another have caused the one with the advantage to coerce and oppress the other who has less. Sin had a profound impact on human relationships and man-made institutions (Linthicum 1991, 106-107). The desire for growth which is integral to the creation mandate was perverted and had turned into a pathology of excessive desire that leads to greed and injustice (Wright 1983, 81). The poor are kept in poverty by those in power by fortifying these social structures that offer little to no access for those in the margins to state power, political power, social power, economic power (Friedmann 1992). When the poor are powerless in these four dimensions, the rich continue to amass wealth on the back of the marginalized. The lack of access to these power structures also make it difficult for poor households to move out of their abject situation—they fall into what Friedmann (1992, 67) calls "absolute poverty." This absolute poverty which leads to chronic poverty is caused by a perverted view of one person towards the other—that human beings of lower stature are means to gratify insatiable thirst for money and power.

Poverty is also caused and perpetuated by humanity's broken relationship with the environment. In the fall, the ground was cursed with thorns and thistles; working with nature has become difficult, and at times, dangerous (Keller 2012, 90). What used to be a source of sustenance and delight has become a source of strife. Land and natural resources have been hoarded and squandered by some in the games of domination and tyranny (Wright,1983 71-74). Human beings who were called to be stewards of creation appointed themselves as masters who have gravely exploited the earth and its natural resources. Bamford and March (1987, 19) noted that creation care or cultivation of the earth has been an abandoned spiritual work. It is also important to point out that injustice

to the ecosystem is a corollary of oppression. Bullard (1993, 23), an American educator who has been dubbed as the "father of eco-justice," emphasized that social inequality and imbalances of power are at the heart of environmental degradation, resource depletion, and pollution. In other words, the more broken the relationships of persons in a community are, the more injustice is committed against the environment.

Lastly, poverty is caused by one's broken relationship with him/herself. The internalization of poverty or the marred identity of oneself arguably bears the most fundamental impact on the poor. Civil rights activist, Howard Thurman, observed that there are few things more devastating than to have it burned into a person that he/she does not count and that no provisions have been made for the literal protection of the person (Myers 2011, 127). The poor are made to believe that they are "damaged goods" and that they have nothing significant to offer to others. Wink (1992, 101) cites that people in poverty often feel "non-existent, valueless, and humiliated." This diminished sense of self and vocation leads to the lack of freedom and eradication of hope for the person. Arjun Appadurai (2004 55-56), a development economist, reports that poverty results in a "limited ability to aspire." Engelbert Mveng (1994, 156), a Cameroonian priest, calls this tragic effect of poverty to a person as "the indigence of being." Many of the people living in poverty do not know the wealth of potential and gifts that are inside them because they have emotionally and psychologically adjusted to a society that does not see their true worth (Prilleltensky 2003). And what is more catastrophic is this— children from poor households often inherit this powerless view of the self as normative, ordained, and unchangeable (Lewis 1959, Chambers 1983; Christian 1994; Prilleltensky 2003, Myers 2011, 128).

It is because of this understanding of poverty that Christian development practitioners are encouraged to think of holistic interventions. Hence, the goal of transformational development goes beyond giving state, political, social, and economic power to the poor ala Friedman (1992), or releasing the poor from the "poverty trap" of material lack, physical weakness, isolation, vulnerability, and powerlessness ala Chambers (1983). Transformational development upholds that true progress and human flourishing begins at the cross of Jesus Christ. Through Christ, all relationships are restored and made whole—humans to God, humans to their fellow human beings, human to creation, and even human to him/herself. This places reconciliation at the heart of all Christian development work—all political, social, and economic interventions are means to recover human dignity marred by sin and rediscover ways to live shalom out today and invite others to partake in it.

Now that this fundamental tenet—poverty as a result of broken relationships—has been laid, the following part of this section will provide reasons and evidence on why transformational development scholars cannot follow development models that failed to engage the relational dimension of poverty. Particularly, the next section will highlight Walt Rostow's (1960) Five Stages of Economic Growth, which was also called "the blueprint for Western Development," and the much more recent work called "The Big Push" by Jeffrey Sachs (2005).

Development Works and the Failure to Engage the Relational Nature of Poverty

Development has been a word that is synonymous with two notions: 1) the eradication of poverty and 2) the modernization of traditional cultures (Myers 2011, 26; Balaam and Dillman 2011; Offut 2012, 36-40). This conception came in the aftermath of

the devastation brought upon by World War II--when the West was recovering rapidly and taking off economically while the global South continued to suffer. The West took it upon itself to help develop the countries in poverty and spoke of it as a quasi-religious mission: "as the moral duty of Western industrialized countries to take active steps to help those who are more backward technically (and culturally) to advance along the road of progress" (Tyndale 2006, 156). Questions on the altruistic nature of this moral duty have been brought to the forefront by other scholars (Lairson and Skidmore 2002; Balaam and Dillman 2011; Myers 2011). While conjectures on the motive of the West for fielding this idea of development cannot be fully determined, two messages have become clear—that there is now a distinction created between the developed and developing countries and that path to emulate is the path taken by the West.

The conception of development in the modern world, especially after World War II wherein this massive campaign for modernization has started, can be traced back to Walt Rostow (1960). Rostow was a professor of Economic History at MIT in the 1950s, and he joined the Kennedy Administration in 1960 (Balaam and Dillman 2011). For Rostow, the goal is for the traditional countries to adapt the pattern to the progress of the developed countries, and the way to measure the improvement of the former is through economic growth. In between the traditional and modern societies are the preconditions, take-off, and drive to maturity: urbanization, mass education, occupational specialization, new social networks, modernization. Rostow's theory also assumes that the values of these traditional societies that are not conducive to economic growth must be replaced with "modern" values to accommodate the "modern" economy (Rostow 1960). Rostow's theory gained traction within the government organization and even faith-based

institutions as many development delivery systems such as USAID, US Peace Corps, UNDP, Oxfam, Catholic Relief Services World Vision, Tearfund and many others were organized in the 1960s and 1970s (Myers 2011; Offut 2012).

The luster of Rostow's modernization theory may have influenced major sectors but it did not last for a long time. In retrospect, many of the modernization projects did not pan out as seamless as its textbook outline (Offut 2012, 38). There were always conflicts and allegations of corruption and oppression. The term "mis-development" was coined for when countries seem to trade one form of poverty for another. For instance, the Philippines in the 1960s expanded its labor export known as the Overseas Filipino Workers; teachers, engineers, nurses, doctors, and even domestic helpers were sent to other developed countries (Aguilar 2003, 140; Barber 2000, 400; Hau 2004, 4; Hochschild 2002). By year 2016, the dollar remittances from overseas workers hit a record high with a total of 2.56 billion USD—approximately 1.7 billion USD from the domestic helpers (PSA 2016). While their money remittances caused economic growth, the Philippines took on another form of poverty: national brain drain and dysfunctions it caused to Filipino families. The effects of this trade-off are more pronounced today more than ever. The change of cultural values that Rostow also assumed in his theory is indeed myopic and only feasible on paper. Rostow failed to recognize that cultural values are deeply embedded into peoples' worldviews and changing value systems requires far more than having buy-in on development plans. In Peter Berger's words, "Worldviews are not foundational ideals, feelings, and values, but are worlds that are inhabited" (Berger 1967; Hiebert 2008, 28). These are "sacred canopies" under which making homes, shaping communities, and sustaining life can take place (Berger 1967).

A Christian paradigm of development cannot benefit from a theory that is both economically and culturally myopic. Also, this theory does not confront and address the issues of systemic structures of power—issues that are inherently connected to the relational nature of poverty. Instead, the idea of the developing countries following the ways of the developed countries only fosters a broken relationship of global proportions: dependency on Western countries' aid. Rostow's modernization theory presented a plan that relieves poverty but does not genuinely release the people from it. Moreover, this modernization theory disempowers developing countries by dismissing their culture and natural resources that could greatly hold the key for these nations to come-up with indigenous ideas and resources to eradicate poverty and improve their well-being.

A more recent modernization theory is Jeffrey Sachs's "the big push" (2005). Sachs is a professor of sustainable development at Columbia University and was the UN special adviser on the Millennium Development Goals from 2000-2006. "The big push," according to Sachs (2005, 208), is the significant help that developing countries need from the developed countries so that the former can escape the poverty trap. These countries that are trapped in poverty caused by diseases and geographic isolation among other factors, cannot get out of the trap without outside help (Sachs 2005). He proposes that around 175B USD would be channeled to support countries in reaching the UN MDG's (Sachs 2005, 255; Myers 2011, 36). To demonstrate his vision and evaluate its feasibility, Sachs developed the Millennium Village Program (MVP) throughout Africa (Sachs 2005, 238-241). More than a dozen sub-Saharan villages of about half a million population became the testing ground Sachs's development programs on health, education, agriculture, and infrastructure.

Much like Rostow's theory, Sachs' idea of "the big push" shone with a development luster that did not last. While in 2010 former UN Secretary-general Ban Ki-Moon expressed enthusiasm on the MVP, calling the strategies "effective" and "empowering," this optimism began to fall apart in the following years (Oxfam 2018). Now, after thirteen years of the MVP, the population remains poor and the increase in income created by the infrastructures and business programs was not sufficient to break the poverty trap (Oxfam 2018). The programs' impact on health and education were also inconclusive because "the MVP was not set up as a randomized field trial, nor was there any monitoring of what happened in any comparison areas to make sense of what the intervention had achieved" (Stanford University 2018). Besides, allegations of preventing independent evaluation on the MVP also surfaced (Wilson 2018). Sachs' ideas applied to the MVP garnered the notoriety of being called "the fog of development" since its positive claims were hardly substantiated (Stanford University 2018). Many critics consider the MVP a waste of hundreds of millions of dollars—displaying few wins and presenting the problem of sustainable growth (Oxfam 2018; Stanford University 2018).

Chief of the reasons why transformational development scholars cannot follow Sach's "the big push" is similar to that of Rostow's: people living in poverty are perceived and treated as though they are powerless, incapable of ideating, and employing solutions. It perpetuates the web of lies that Christian (1994) pointed out: that the poor have no significant assets to contribute that will free them from poverty and that the poor's socio-economic role as receivers of aid is fixed. Furthermore, the relational aspect of poverty is once again not recognized and engaged in this theory. Development was

purely seen as the increase of income and improvement of access to health and educational amenities.

Development that Engaged the Relational Nature of Poverty

At its best, development must be liberating—affording people in poverty the freedom to pursue well-being in their own terms, to increase their capabilities to build meaningful relationships, and to improve the way they live over all. What follows at this point are positive examples or development works and studies that have provided building blocks in conceptualizing the research at hand. These are *Development as Freedom* (1999) by Amartya Sen, and *Voices of the Poor: Crying out for Change* by Narayan-Parker et al. (2000).

After transplanting Rostow's (1960) blueprint for Western development to other parts of the world had proven to bring more complications than solutions, development thinkers began to think of poverty and its alleviation from a different stance. One of them is Amartya Sen who called for a way to understand poverty beyond numbers and averages in his monumental work, *Development as Freedom* (1999). Sen was awarded the Nobel Prize for Economics by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences "for having restored an ethical dimension to the discussion of vital economic problems" (ADB 2001). Sen's years of involvement in working with the poor resulted to a shift in measuring progress that is from Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to Human Development Index (HDI)--life expectancy was added as an indicator for health, literacy as an indicator for knowledge, and education to GDP as a measure of standard of living (Myers 2011, 29). Nevertheless, this new index, despite this influencing the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is only next to Sen's best work. Sen's highest work remains to be the

social vision he puts forth which says that well-being is best understood not by what people consume (economics), but by who they are and what they do. In Sen's (1999) language these are "functioning's"—such as having enough to eat, living in an adequate house, and having clean air to breathe and water to drink. More than this, Sen (1999) considers an individual to be functioning when he or she possess higher-value ideals such as self-respect, self-dignity, and participation in the community. In other words, the development includes having a right relationship with oneself and the people around him or her. Sen (1999, 30) further argues that these human "functions" must move towards human "capabilities." This means being able to pursue "valuable acts" for oneself and others. In this way, people are not only surviving; having capabilities allow people to develop. Moreover, development is seen as creating the environment for human functionings and human capabilities to grow (Sen 1999, 30). This placed economic growth in the right perspective, it is but a means to an end, not an end itself (Sen 1999, 14).

Sen effectively diverged from the Western concept of what it means for people to develop. The poor are now seen as active actors who work towards being functioning and capable individuals. No longer are they the passive participants dictated by those who influence the economic chain of supply and demand. It must be noted that Sen is not framing development from a Christian perspective, but his argument and its wide acceptance among economists and sociologists brought a new light to the development discourse. Sen provided a building block for articulating a kind of development that considers what it means for a person to flourish, even relate and contribute in the

flourishing of others in his or her community. It is in such development discourse where the Christian faith can always lend a significant perspective and be a voice of reason.

Another development work that provides a building block for this research is *Voices of the Poor* by Narayan-Parker et al. (2000). This work began in the late 1990s with the advice of Robert Chambers, one of the most influential figures in development conversations. A team of researchers commissioned by the World Bank was sent out to listen to over 60,000 of the world's poorest of the poor on the causes of their sufferings and their ideas of what well-being looks like (Narayan-Parker et al. 2000). Aptly titled, the project listened to what the poor are saying and found out that their material desires are modest—to sleep on beds and not on the ground and to have a roof over their heads are among their other simple wants. In the words of one of their participants, "well-being is a full stomach…and a bamboo platform to sleep on" (Narayan-Parker et al. 2000, 234). Nevertheless, the poor who participated in the massive study quickly noted the other things they believe they need for well-being; these are relational needs. Many expressed the desire for peace of mind, for a harmonious relationship with family and friends, to be able to take care of their families, to help the people in their community, and to be at peace with God (Narayan-Parker et al. 2000, 26-38). The elements identified in the study were peace of mind, lack of anxiety, being God-fearing, and being happy or satisfied in life (Narayan-Parker et al. 2000).

Much like Sen, Narayan-Parker and the team of researchers were able to diverge from the Western perspective of development that is confined in terms of modernization and economic growth. Narayan-Parker et. al (2000, 38) were surprised that "spiritual life and religious observance are woven into the aspect of well-being" and what it means to

develop. Voices of the Poor has provided transformational development scholars a building block to articulate and shape a Christian framework of development. Reading the research findings, the participants living in poverty were hinting at the hallmarks of shalom, of the signposts of God's Kingdom—wholeness with God, meaningful connection with others, peace within oneself, and full enjoyment of creation. Voices of the Poor creates a space for a relationship with oneself, the relationship between people in the community, even a relationship with God a necessary element of the development discussion.

The Christian Faith and Filipino Culture on Relationships

This fifth and final section of the literature review focuses on the idea of relationship and salient conceptual tools from the Christian Faith and Filipino Culture. The concepts presented in this section are not exhaustive, but are fundamental to understanding relationships. For instance, regarding Christian Faith and relationship, I discuss the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the image of God. Other key theological concepts to transformational development such as "sin," "the fall," and "shalom" have already been discussed at the third section. On Filipino culture, I discuss works of Filipino social scientist on *loob*, *kapwa*, and *pakiramdam*--the three main concepts on understanding *ugnayan* (relationship) from the perspective of the indigenous academic movement, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*.

Christian Faith and Relationships

The Trinity: Ontological Mystery, Practical Model for Relationship

"At the center of the universe, there is a relationship"—Darrel Johnson (2002) presented in simple words the profound truth of the Holy Triune God. All of creation and

all we know of God, more importantly, the revelation of who God is in Christ, is hinged on the truth that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are one and in communion with one another. Moltmann (1981) describes the Trinity as a relational event wherein the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit form an interwoven and interdependent community. He (1981) posits that the Trinity is a fellowship of love and mutual manifestation. This understanding of the Trinity is fundamental to Moltmann's "Trinity as a social doctrine." This is a theological view that contemporary theologians like Miroslav Volf (1998) followed. It is beneficial to acknowledge at this point that this conception of the unity of the Trinity as unity in union and not unity in number has been decried by other theologians such as Husbands (2009) and Nauser (2007) among others. Husbands (2009) offer that to see "the significance of the Trinity as principally a model for people to imitate rather than being the constitutive ground of our reconciliation and promise of life" is erroneous. Citing Ludwig Feuerbach (1957), Husbands (2009) cite Moltmann's and Volf's trinitarian theology in danger of projection theory that is making a concept of "god" that mirrors the grandest aspirations of human beings.

Trinity and the communion of Triune God is a mystery and the Trinity is the very foundation where humanity's salvation and life eternal is established (Husbands 2009). From a Trinitarian perspective, Christ's life and ministry, His death and resurrection happened so that human beings can participate in the communion of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit . Salvation through Christ is the means to mend the broken relationship of God and humanity (Myers 2011). Nevertheless, believing that the Trinity is an ontological mystery should not stop a Christian to imagine and shape a social engagement built on the revelation of God's Word about the relationship shared by the

Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (Nauser 2007). There is no other relationship that

provides a foundation for concerns on liberation, political injustice, suffering, and other

passions of being human than that of the Triune God. Volf (1998) asserts that humans are

created after God's likeness. He further elaborates the Trinity perfectly demonstrated

what it means to be a person, to be someone in relation to another (Volf 1998, 409).

Mutual self-donation, cooperation, unity, peace, and perichoresis or mutual indwelling,

making room for one another—these are what the Triune God calls humanity to. The

ontological mystery of the Trinity must not lead the Christians into what Nausner (2007,

27) calls "the metaphysical captivity"—being trapped in knowing the trinity only from

philosophical systems and presuppositions. In the invitation of Catherine Lacugna

(1993): "the doctrine of the Trinity is ultimately a practical doctrine with radical

consequences for the Christian life." The doctrine of the Trinity must not leave the

Christian caught up in a monadic confusion, but rather, a person who believes in the

Triune God must be moved into action. This action must be informed by the fact that God

is a relational God who reconciles all to Godself through Christ and fueled by the vision

of the nature and axiological characteristics of the relationship shared by the Trinity.

Theologians Jurgen Moltmann (1981) and Miroslav Volf (1998) provide a helpful handle

to bring the doctrine of the Trinity from mere erudition to transformative action, from an

exercise of a mind familiar and trained within the boundaries of theological structures to

a communion which is available for anyone who longs to be encountered—to those

whose stomachs grumble, to those whose hands and bodies suffer indentured services,

and to those countless others who are otherwise rejected and isolated in the society.

The Imago Dei: The I and Thou After God's Image

Being created after the Image of God means that human beings are made for relationships. The Triune God who is a relational God created men and women with the ability to respond and relate. Michael Lodahl (2008, 69) asserts that while humanity is no more than mere creatures, men and women are uniquely able to identify themselves as persons, and are able to ask the profound question "Who am I?" This is a question that human beings not only ask oneself; this is a question that is, in very essence, addressed to the One who created, the Initiator of existence. Further, humans are the creatures to whom God speaks—human beings are created capable to be in dialogic relationship with God (2008, 72). This interaction between God and human beings is originally created to be a relationship of love—love to God who created humanity, love to others who are also created after the image of God, and love to oneself as a person created with dignity. With respect to the relationship with creation, Middleton (2005, 89) points out that to be created in the image of God has developmental and transformational implications— human beings are capable of developing cultures and civilizations. It is then the vocation of men and women to care for the creation and make the earth fruitful for human well-being (Myers 2011).

Even when the image of God was marred by sin, Christ Jesus in the incarnation, messianic ministry, and resurrection recovered the Imago Dei for humanity once and for all (Eugenio 2013; Eugenio 2014; Steenberg 2009, ix-x). It is, therefore, appropriate to say that the fullness of the Image of God that we are created for is the Image of Christ Jesus. In the thought of Irenaeus of Lyons, humanity is to transform and mature in the likeness of the Christ, the true beginning and end of all human beings (Pring 2015, 69). In

other words, *cur deus homo?*: Christ became human so that through his atoning sacrifice, humans can become like Christ (Blackwell 2010, 36-37). Christ Jesus' life and work are the basis for what relationships must be—unyielding obedience and submission towards God and generous self-giving in the interest of others. The image of God as a relationship principle takes away the focus from self to others (Eugenio 2013). The greatest commandment (Matt. 22: 36-40) is intrinsically tied to the Image of God (Gen. 1:26). Christ's call to his followers to be in a loving relationship with the Triune God and with one another is a call to express his very imago and realize whom we have been created to be—persons in communion. Human beings experience and express what it is truly like to be in the Imago dei, Imago Christi not when we are introspective and alone, but when we co-exist and co-relate in a community.

Filipino Culture and Relationships

The Filipino culture expresses many ambiguities—what appears at the surface may only be a *pahiwatig*, a hint of what is really going on at the core level (Maggay 1993, Maggay 1999). It is easy for those who are coming from outside the culture to feel lost trying to understand the Filpino communication patterns and behavior. One clear truth about the culture is that Filipinos are relationship-oriented. The core values of loob, kapwa, and pakiramdam serve as pillars that support the virtues which are ultimately dedicated to strengthen and preserve relationships (Enriquez 1992; De Guia 2005; Reyes 2015)

Loob, which literally means "inside," can be used to describe the inner part of a thing. For instance, the interior of the house is called *loob* ng *bahay* and the entrails, "*lamang-loob." Loob* and tits counterpart *labas*—which means "outside" or the outer part

of something—is easily developed into dichotomous categories (Maggay 2002). For instance, a family member or a close friend is someone who is *taga-loob* or an "insider," while a stranger or a mere acquaintance is a *taga-labas* or an outsider. Bifurcations such as *taga-loob* and *taga-labas* are helpful conceptual tools to explain ambiguous Filipino cultural aspects such as what appears to be the intractable communication patterns or the seemingly ambivalent attitude of a Filipino towards a certain person or thing. Nevertheless, Mercado (1994, 37) writes that *loob* cannot be bifurcated when speaking at a personal level: "*loob* has a holistic concept of the body and spirit." On a personal connotation, *loob* talks about the person's "relational will," that is his will towards other people (Reyes 2015).

Mercado (1994) goes on to expound that that Tagalog word *loob* falls short compared to what the Visayan word *buot* and the Ilokano word *nakem* can provide in terms of context and meaning. As an Ilokano myself, I can understand at a deep level what *nakem* is. *Nakem* pertains not only to the *loob* or inner life of a person but also to the way he or she presents himself or herself to the world outside the self. For instance, a person who is compassionate in relation to others is a person who has *nakem*, in Ilokano, *adda nakem*. However, a person who shows disdain or is inconsiderate towards others is called *awan nakem* or someone without *nakem*. When a person's relational will is expressed in the Tagalog vernacular, *loob* must be used as a compound word (Enriquez 1992; Reyes 2015). For example, a person with good intentions is someone with *magandang loob* and a person of evil intentions is someone with *masamang loob.*

Other compound words of *loob* that are helpful to understand relationships in the Filipino are *utang na loob* and *kagandahang loob. Utang na loob,* which translates to

"debt of gratitude" in English, is a self-imposed response of one person to the

kagandahang loob or goodwill that has been presented by the other (Reyes 2015, 159-

162; Vrancken and Goris 2018). The worldview of returning *utang na loob* for

kagandahang loob is true in all relationships. To frame this on a person's relationship to

God, one may say that because of Christ's *kagandahang loob* demonstrated on the cross,

it is a person's *utang na loob* to respond in a manner worthy of the *kagandahang loob*

shown. When used in relation to other persons, one could say that if the *kagandahang*

loob is shown by my neighbor through sending a lunch meal, I can manifest my *utang na*

loob through washing the plate and sending it back with the dish I cooked. Yet one must

not mistake *utang na loob* as similar to a commercial transaction, or to the Western adage

"I scratch your back, you scratch mine"—*utang na loob* demands altruism and

interdependency (Reyes 2015, 162). Otherwise, the relationship is placed in jeopardy,

and the person who is only in it for personal gains will be called, *walang utang na loob*, a

person who do not know how what it means to be grateful. *Loob* is best exhibited in

everyday, ordinary life events that the power of *loob* is manifested in the Filipino culture.

As De Castro (2000, 52) notes, *loob* must be ventilated in everyday acts, "it can only be

manifested and perceived externally."

    Loob is not a stand-alone relational concept, *loob* needs *kapwa* to further explicate

what *ugnayan* or relationship is from the Filipino worldview. *Kapwa* is often translated

into the English word "other" or "other person." However, there is a significant data loss

in this translation. The concept of *kapwa* is embedded in the worldview of the Southeast

Asian tribal culture, a thought-life that is entirely different from the West (Reyes 2015).

This means that a person who belongs to one's tribe is one's *kapwa*. Reyes (2015) notes

that with the dawning of the Christian faith in the Philippines, the tribal boundaries were stretched outward towards all humanity in general. Enriquez (1992, 52), the leader of the seminal movement which surfaces indigenous Filipino culture concepts, provides a definition of *kapwa* that is true to the original sense of the word:

> The Filipino word *kapwa* is very different from the English word 'others.' In Filipino, *kapwa* is the unity of the 'self' and 'others.' The English 'others' is actually used in opposition to the 'self,' and implies the recognition of the self as a separate identity. In contrast, *kapwa* is a recognition of shared identity, an inner self shared with others.

Kathrin De Guia (2005, 28), whose book on *kapwa* bears the apt subtitle, "The Self in Other," purports that "the core of Filipino personhood is *kapwa*." Kapwa means that the "I" is extended to the "Thou." This extension or bridging of oneself to the other captures what the Filipino word for relationship, *ugnayan*, means—the conjoining of two entities that used to be separate. Alejo (1990, 83-84) speaks that the *kapwa,* when invited into a relationship, becomes a part of a person's *kalooban* or inner being. Enriquez (1992, 54) takes this notion higher as he shares that when one separates from other individuals or denies the status of his or her *kapwa*, one denies his or her very own status. The concept of *kapwa* is at the core, because one cannot exist without the other. It is in *kapwa* that the handle to understand compassion in the Filipino worldview is provided. *Malasakit* as Reyes (2015) calls it or *kapwa-puso* as De Guia puts it (2005), pertains to having a genuine concern for one's *kapwa* or fellow, a feeling of willingness to share *kapwa's* burden out of love, and a desire to see the *kapwa* become better. *Hiya* is also a virtue that is best understood from the relational concept of *kapwa*. *Hiya* is often translated to negative words like "shame" and "embarrassment." Lynch (1962, 97)

defined *hiya* as "the uncomfortable feeling that accompanies awareness of being in a socially unacceptable position or performing a socially unacceptable action." Yet Reyes points out that while there is what can be considered as the passion of hiya—when something shameful or embarrassing has been done to you, there is also a virtue of hiya (Reyes 2015, 164-165). *Hiya*, in relationship to *kapwa*, means propriety and preservation of dignity (Reyes 2015). It is where the Filipino saying of parents to rebelling children come from, *bigyan mo ako ng kahihiyan*. Crudely, the saying is translated as "give me something to be ashamed of," but a better translation would be, "save me my dignity." Further, *hiya* is crucial to maintain harmonious relationships. Jocano (1997, 65-66) calls this *pakikisama*:

> *Pakikisama* refers to the commonly shared expectations, desires, or requests to get along with someone if it is necessary for the good of the group. It is derived from the root word *sama*, meaning 'to accompany, to go along with.' 'Getting along with' does not mean blind conformity to traditional ways because one can refuse to do so. Rather, it is a willingness to subordinate one's own interest in favor of others, in the spirit of harmony, friendship, cooperation, and deference to majority decision so that group goals can be easily achieved.

All other virtues such as freedom, justice, integrity, etc. are wrapped into the holistic Filipino thought of *kapwa* (Reyes 2015). Hence, in the Filipino mind, realization of any virtue is only possible when one is in a relationship with the *kapwa*. Also, when pertaining to interpersonal relationships, the idea of *nagkapagpalagayan ng loob* or mutual-trust and connectivity is hinged on the idea of *kapwa* or "the self in other" (Reyes 2015, 154). De Guia (2005, 173) further extends the meaning in that *kapwa* has implications to the feeling of connectedness to nature and creation. To Reyes, (2015)

pakiki-isa which can be translated to "oneness," the highest realization of *kapwa*—it applies to a person's relationship with the Creator and with other created beings.

Finally, the third core value is *pakiramdam* or "shared inner perception" (Enriquez 1992, 63). *Pakiramdam* is a steering emotion; it triggers and initiates actions that are part of sharing the self (De Guia 2005, 29). Without *kapwa,* there would be no *pakiramdam* since *pakiramdam* is a shared and participatory event in its essence. For instance, a person who has a *magandang pakiramdam* (positive feeling/perception) towards his or her *kapwa* will lend a helping hand when the *kapwa* is in need. Nonetheless, if one has a *masamang pakiramdam* (negative feeling/perception) towards another person, he or she may avoid or be indifferent to the other person. Mataragnon (1987) asserts that Filipinos have a distinctive talent, *magaling makiramdam* which means the ability to pay attention to subtle cues and non-verbal behaviors. *Pakiramdam* is important for a high context culture such as that of the Filipinos wherein human interaction is highly nonverbal (Maggay 2002). This "heightened awareness and sensitivity" occurs largely in the *loob* of a person, and it can be considered as the Filipino cognitive style (Enriquez 1992, 62). De Guia (2005), a German transplanted in the Philippines shares: "without *pakiramdam,* a person would have a hard time joining in and blending with groups, sensing when and how to plea for favors, carefully feeling out others, or appropriately navigating unclear conditions. All these ambiguities can be unraveled with *pakiramdam.*"

At its best, *pakiramdam* is equated with empathy or "feeling with others" (Reyes 2015). *Pakiramdam* ceases to be just a tool for navigating social conditions; it becomes the impetus for voluntary, self-less deeds of compassion. Through *pakiramdam,* a

person's *kalooban* (inner being) becomes sensitive to the needs, hurts, or even deep gladness of of his or her *kapwa*. Because of this shared perception or *pakiramdam,* two people become one: the other person is no longer *iba-sa-akin* (different person) but a *kapwa* (shared-self or the self in the other). Just like, *kapwa* and *loob*, *pakiramdam* is a Filipino core value that one must grasp in order to understand Filipino relationship building.

Summary

The review of related literature and studies showed that there has been a neglect among Biblical historians to provide a clear picture of how women contributed to the socio-economic life in the Bible. Nevertheless, the ongoing dialogue between Biblical scholarship and archeological anthropology which began in the recent decades helped shine the light on this subject. From works on salient Biblical passages on women at work—Ruth, the Proverbs 31 wife, and Lydia—it can be seen that women participated in various socio-economic activities. However, these works can be categorized into two large industries: the food industry and the textile industry. These are seemingly mundane tasks, but when they are scrutinized, they prove to yield effects of great proportions. Through food preparation and textile production, women became the forerunners of nutrition health and survival. They have shown subversive but consequential socio-economic leadership as they forged networks. Similarly, they have influenced the cultic life of their people in significant ways. Israel is always referred to as a nation built by forefathers, by patriarchs, but upon the review of literature on women and socio-economic participation in the Bible, it is clear that women were a significant part of

Israel's nation-building. Beyond their patrilineal duty, women also built the nation of Israel by the works of their hands and by the sweat of their brows.

On the second section of this chapter, I argued that a study on development and Filipino women living in urban poverty must not be an ill-fitted and transplanted concept, but instead, it must be one that matches the reality on the ground. Furthermore, I argued that poverty is not homogenous—child poverty, rural poverty, is different from that which females in the urban areas experience. Hence, quantitative and qualitative studies that answer who these Filipino women are and where they are in society were reviewed. Quantitative data shows that women in urban poverty face income-related challenges, specifically that on employment—these are issues such as an unsafe workplace, inequitable pay, an equal job opportunity. On the non-income dimension of poverty, Filipino women experience difficulties in accessing health services even with the help of the government's conditional cash transfer program. Education, too, is a challenge. Many females drop-out of high school due to lack of guidance and teenage pregnancy. This is crucial because Cudia's (2016) research has proven that every year level finished by a female child in high school translates to an increase in earning power. A strengthened capacity to earn is a determining factor to move out of chronic poverty. Increasing violence, sexual abuse, and exploitation also plague and threatens the vulnerable poor females.

From the qualitative data, the culture of poverty and the women in the Philippines were seen through the lens of Jocano's ethnographic work. The *looban* which depicts a typical urban poor Filipino community presented the women who live there as the *babaeng marangal* (dignified woman) and the *babaeng lihis* (deviant female). Despite

this rather discouraging dichotomy of identity which is imposed by the very women of the *looban* themselves, that the *looban* has its very own way of life and women have means of coping with poverty as individuals and as a community is no less than fascinating and impressive. Together with Jocano's work, the recent works of other scholars such as Cammagay, Pernia, and Parmanand helped provide a face to the women who live in urban poverty today.

The third section surveyed pertinent theories on development and relationships, namely the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* theory and the Social Capital theory. The former speaks of development and how it changes communities from traditional and relational to modern and transactional. The latter speaks of the relationships and how people utilize such networks for the society to function effectively.

The review showed that both theories are inadequate to explain the phenomenon happening in the Filipino urban poor communities, especially among women. The *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* theory is not a natural evolution—a close look at the Filipinos who move with the spate of development show that they do not trade their relationships for modernization. Despite the many changes brought about by modernization, Filipinos remain relational. The social capital theory is also a theoretical misfit for the phenomenon happening among the many Filipino women in urban poor communities. While the theory speaks of relationships and effectively utilizing those connections, social capital theory fails to capture the altruistic aspect of the relationships of the poor and the Filipino value of *utang na loob*. Their interactions are not mere transactions to advance each of their own good—many of them help even when there is nothing in return that could benefit them. These generous, self-less, and compassionate

deeds of the poor that are commonplace in their communities, as well as the depth of meaning of *utang na loob*, are beyond the framework of the social capital theory.

The fourth section of the literature review brought shed light to transformational development and argues why poverty needs to be understood from a relational stance. Transformational development works were presented, especially the works that explicate why, in the Christian framework, poverty is caused by broken relationships. To support this argument, I cited two major development theories from the West that gave grand promises only to deliver disenchanting results. Walt Rostow's (1960) *Five Stages of Economic Growth* promised the majority world nations of an economic growth as big as that of America. Rostow's grand theory that "developing" nations will exchange their traditional values to the more efficient, development-receptive modern values failed to engage the truth that nations are not just built through bricks and stones, but through cultures and worldviews. Even more, when these bricks and stones collapse, cultures, and worldviews upon which people are built remain intact, deeply embedded in a nation's way of life and consciousness. It is from the devastating results of Rostow's blueprint that the word "mis-development" was coined. Jeffrey Sachs' "The Big Push" was also mentioned as a disenchanting example of a development idea. Sachs' idea wherein international development agencies poured millions into prove to be as myopic as Rostow's. In the MDG villages in Africa which served as their socio-economic experiment laboratory, no significant improvement on people's quality of life was evidenced even after 13 years.

As positive examples, I reviewed Amartya Sen's *Development as Freedom*. Sen who is the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize Winner for Economics was awarded for his creation

of the Human Development Index (HDI), a way to measure development beyond economic growth. Sen's HDI included measuring "functioning's" such as higher-value ideals such as self-respect, self-dignity, and participation in the community. Sen's work strengthens the theoretical handle for this research—meaningful and value-added relationships are significant to attain development.

Also, I reviewed the work of Narayan-Parker et al. (2000) entitled *Voices of the Poor*. Among the 60,000 participants, themes of "spiritual life and religious observance" are determined to be intrinsically part of what the poor considers to be "well-being" and what it means to develop. *Voices of the Poor* support the transformational development paradigm that relationship with oneself, the relationship between people in the community, even relationship with God are necessary components the development discourse.

The fifth and final section of the literature review took the learnings from the third section: relationships are an indispensable part of development. The main inquiry of the research at hand is how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable relationships that help people survive and thrive. Relevant conceptual tools from the perspective of the Christian Faith and Filipino Culture on relationships were presented. From the Christian faith, the doctrine of the Trinity was reviewed. Here, I clarify that while the Trinity is an ontological mystery the relationship that the Triune God share is revealed in both the Scripture, God's written Word, and Christ Jesus, God's living Word. Because of this, I affirmed the theological position of Miroslav Volf which he developed from Jurgen Moltmann. For Volf and Moltmann, the Trinity shows how Christians must relate to God and engage the society around them—whole relationships characterized by mutual self-

donation, perichoresis, unity, peace, and cooperation. The image of God was also

discussed as a doctrinal basis for defining what whole relationships are. Understanding

that every human being is a bearer of the image of God helps provides a basis for

synergy, a sense of shared identity. Lastly, from Filipino culture, I discuss the three main

concepts to understand *ugnayan* (relationship*)—loob, kapwa,* and *pakiramdam*. The

review of related studies and literature shows that such concepts are inherent to Filipino

consciousness, and these are crucial to grasp when thinking about what it means to

develop and attain a better quality of life for the Filipino people.

CHAPTER THREE

Introduction

This research aims to identify, understand, and articulate the ways in which the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable women living in urban poor communities create relationships that help them survive and thrive. The study aspires to draw an indigenous framework of development that is both in line with the tenets of the Bible and in touch with the idiosyncrasies and complexities of the Filipino culture from the social realities that are experienced by the participants of the study. The chapter provides a description of Transformational Grounded Theory which is the chosen methodology for this research. Other aspects of the methodology such as research design, location of the researcher, selection of participants, development of instruments, field procedures, data collection, and treatment, etc. are also discussed.

Research Methodology

Transformational Grounded Theory

The crux of this study is to identify the ways that women in poverty create relationships that do not only preserve their lives but also help them flourish despite the adversities they face. Thus, this study entails providing detailed, thick-description, and information-dense reports about who these women are, their place in the society, and how they form relationships in their communities. The qualitative research approach best suits this given nature and goals of the study which aims to come up with a theoretical model that is transferable to similar settings. This particular objective stirs the research towards

the direction of Grounded Theory Methodology or GTM (Strauss and Corbin 1998; Jaccard and Jacoby 2010).

The proponents of GTM, sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (1967, 1), originally designed grounded theory to discover theory from data. The data which is systematically gathered and analyzed through the research process provides the open codes, axial codes, and selective codes needed to derive a theory (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 12). Rather than relying on existing literature, GTM relies on the information collected in the field and focuses on the process related to a particular topic including but not limited to people's actions and interactions (Leedy, Ormrod, Johnson 2019, 234). The theory that is derived from data is more likely to resemble "reality" than one that is developed from concepts based on mere intellectual speculation (Strauss and Corbin 1998, 12). The type of theory that is derived through this method is not "grand" but substantive (Corbin and Strauss, 2015). The substantive theory has a specificity, and hence, usefulness to practice often lacking in theories that cover more global concerns—it is more attuned to everyday-world situations rather than imposing concepts and abstractions (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 31). The grounded theory offers insight, enhances the understanding, and provides a meaningful guide to practical actions (Straus and Corbin 1998).

Since Barney and Strauss conceptualized GTM, it has grown as a qualitative research tradition that has been adapted in education, sociology, medicine, architecture, and other sciences (Charmaz 2008; Birks and Mills 2011; Morse et. al. 2009; Tsevreni 2014; Redman-MacLaren 2015). One of such adaptation is that of Redman-MacLaren (2015) called Transformational Grounded Theory (TGT). Redman-MacLaren began to develop TGT as she worked on her Ph. D. research with women in

Papua New Guinea and their risks of contracting HIV. Being a white Australian woman,

Redman-MacLaren sought a research process that ensures power-sharing with the

indigenous participants who are also the co-researchers in her study (Redman-MacLaren

and Mills 2015, 2). Redman-MacLaren posits that love, social justice, and equality are

the values that characterize this research methodology, that critical realism provides an

ontological basis for TGT, and that culture and history situate how one knows and what

one knows (Redman-MacLaren 2015, 4). The table below shows the summary of the

beliefs of TGT:

Table 3. Redman-MacLaren's Summary of Beliefs About TGT

Summary of Beliefs About Transformational Grounded Theory	
Element of Metatheory	Characteristics
Axiology (values)	Love, social justice, equality
Ontology (Nature of Reality)	Critical Realism
Epistemology (how knowledge is gained about the nature of reality)	Knowledge is culturally and historically situated
Methodology (principles which inform steps taken to gain this knowledge)	Grounded theory methodology combined with Participatory Action research

TGT, in essence, takes the inductive and descriptive nature of GTM and combines

with it the best features of participatory research design. Its GTM roots make TGT a

rigorous inquiry into the phenomenon being explored. TGT applies the five core methods

in order to draw a theoretical model from data : (a) coding and categorization of data, (b) concurrent data-generation and analysis, (c) theoretical sampling, (d) selecting core category, and (e) constant comparative analysis along with theoretical sensitivity, and data saturation (Birks and Mills, 2011). At the same time, TGT's participatory research roots make room for reciprocity between the knower and the known, equity of power between the researcher and the participants, mutuality in the research process, and praxis which is the practice of action-reflection. This participatory feature of TGT is what makes it a "transformational" research method (Redman-MacLaren 2015). TGT makes an excellent fit for a study that hopes to draw a fresh theoretical model from the field with the help of a population that is disenfranchised and often less heard.

My previous research experiences made me familiar with the scaffolding of TGT which are GTM and PAR. I have used both methods in research with vulnerable populations—among children and women in poverty, as well as children who are trafficked online. GTM and PAR have always led to satisfactory research outputs. Also, the research process yielded more than the production of new knowledge in study reports. I have witnessed the participants discover new meaning about themselves and the subject of the inquiry. They also feel empowered because they are not mere informants but co-creators of that new knowledge. Furthermore, as a researcher, I have always finished the projects with a greater sense of indebtedness and admiration towards the participants—for their openness and willingness, also with their capacity to reflect and articulate details about the phenomena that concern them. I have also exited the research sites enriched by the information given by the people and the connections we have developed. Hoping for these positive research outcomes, I have opted to go with TGT for this study.

Locating the Researcher

Research is not only a domain of knowledge creation but also of power and representation (Kovach 2009; England 1994; O'Shaughnessy and Krogman 2012). There have been many instances in the past wherein research has been used as a tool to colonize and galvanize systemic oppression, as well as render the other people voiceless and powerless (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). This is especially significant to this research because while I and the participants share the same nationality, live in close geographic location, and language disparity is eliminated, disparities in educational and socio-economic background exist. TGT champions the idea that research must create a space of power-sharing between the researcher and the subjects to foster participation towards seeking knowledge and positive change. Hence, TGT is not a mere exercise to produce information. When done with the right motive and carried out with the appropriate measures and tools, the research becomes a liberating and empowering exercise in itself. Because of this inherent ethic of TGT, it is imperative that I make explicit how I practiced reflexivity throughout the research.

Reflexivity is a deeper and broader dimension of reflection. As a research methodology, it brings into the light a researcher's knowledge, attitudes, assumptions, and experiences that shape the way one engages in the research process (Mills, Bonner, et al. 2006; Lipp 2007; Birks and Mills 2011; Redman-MacLaren 2015). Characteristic in all qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Keen perception of the topic and the participants is developed when the researcher enters into and spends time in the real-world setting being investigated (Lincoln and Guba; 1985, 189; Janesick, 2000). Building

on Finlay (2008, 6) and Redman-MacLaren (2015, 13), there are four forms of reflexivity that I employed throughout the research process. The first is introspection, looking within not to self-indulge but to continually expand the interpretations and meaning-making out of the research data and research experiences. (D'Cruz, Gillingham, et al. 2007; Finlay 2008, 6). The second is an intersubjective reflection or the critical understanding of the researcher's emotional investment in research relationships (Redman-MacLaren 2015). This form of reflexivity is necessary not only to maintain objectivity and steer-away from bias but also to better understand and explicate the axiology and epistemology emerging from the research. The third is mutual collaboration or co-creation of knowledge that can move a single researcher beyond preconceived ideas to amplifying the voices of the participants (Finlay 2008). This is evident in all three phases of the research, as all data-gathering activities are designed to be participatory. Finally, the fourth is a social critique, a form of reflexivity that was expressed through the theoretical coding (Finlay 2008; Redman-MacLaren 2015). A critical understanding of relationships and the appropriation of non-material, social resources such as the Christian faith and culture was the cornerstone of this TGT study. In particular, reflexive journaling provided additional sources of data: revealing elements of my theoretical sensitivity and providing additional context to the decisions made which ultimately generated the grounded theory (Richardson 2000; Redman-MacLaren 2015).

Research Design

The research was designed to have two phases. In both phases, these core grounded theory methods were applied: a) theoretical sampling, b)concurrent data generation and analysis, c) coding and categorization of data, d) constant comparative analysis along with

theoretical sensitivity, saturation, and integration, and e) selecting core category (Strauss and Corbin 1998; Kushner and Morrow 2013; Gibson 2007; Birks and Mills 2011; Amsteus 2014). In phase one, what was employed were participant observation and interviews for clarification of the data that have been gathered. Filipino social scientists call this phase *pakapa-kapa* at *pagtatanong-tanong*, meaning grasping or getting a sense of what is happening and confirming these notions through informal interviews with people (Enriquez 1992; Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino 2000, 59- 60; Reyes 2015). In phase two, the participatory design of the storyboarding technique and FGD was utilized. Reflexive journaling was done by the researcher throughout the concurrent data-gathering and data-analysis phase, and observation was conducted during all interactions with the participants. The figure below depicts research design which I remodeled from Chun-Tie, Birks, and Francis (2018) to fit the study. What follows the diagram is a descriptive discussion on how the research process was carried out in the two phases, as well as how the theory was methodically generated from data.
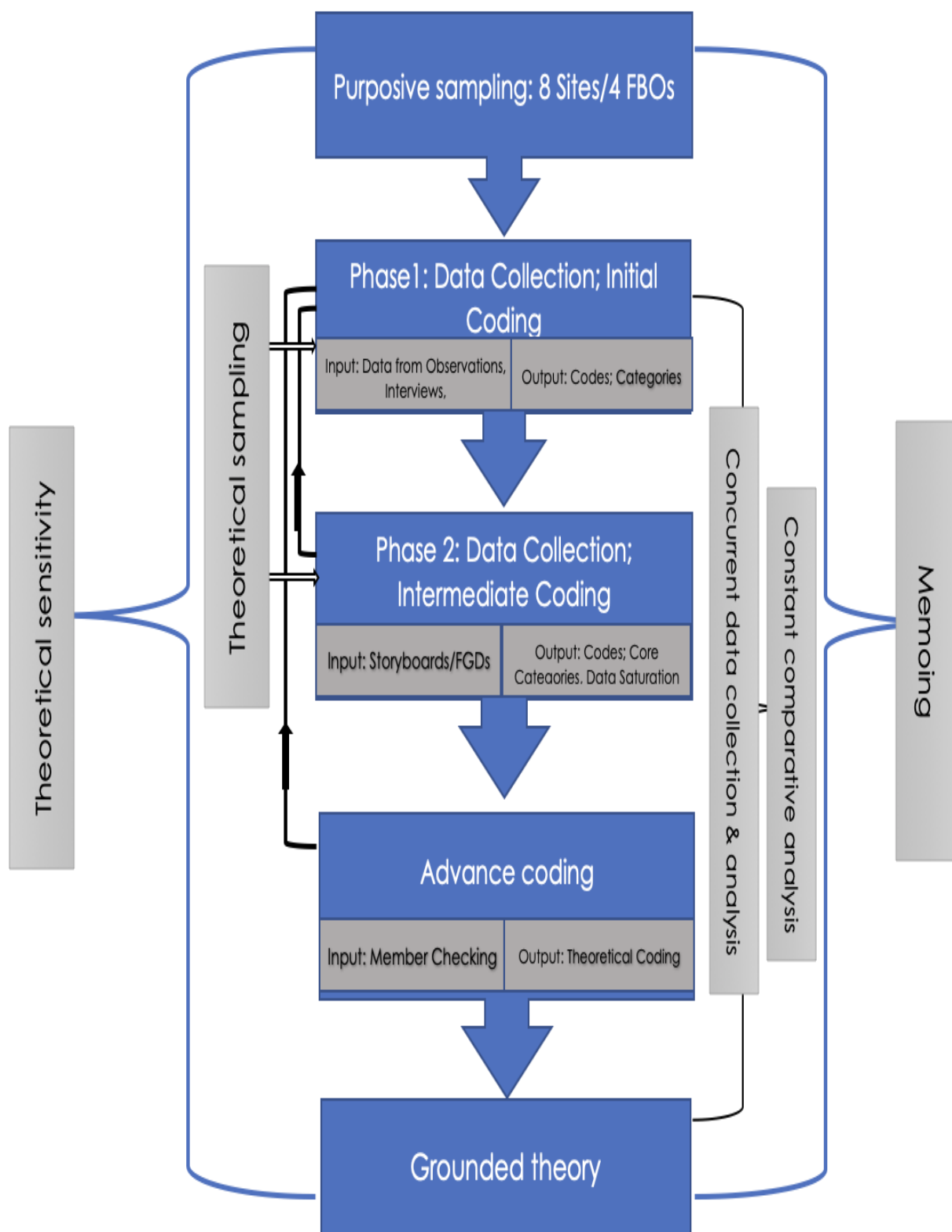
Figure 1. Chun-Tie, Birks, and Francis Model

Phase I

The first phase was meant to answer research sub-problem one and two: "Who are the women living in the urban poor communities?" and "What are the formal and informal relationships created by the women to meet their needs for survival and build opportunities to thrive in the urban poor communities?" This question aimed to elicit not only demographic answers but also descriptive information on their lives. At this stage, I employed participant observation. Participant observation or fieldwork, as other researchers call it, is an intensive and systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the setting of a study (Marshall and Rossman 1989; Patton 2015). This method addressed specific research questions, and when it was subjected to checks and balances, it produces trustworthy results (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Building on Patton (2015) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the following were the questions that guided the observation for this research:

a) physical setting: What is the physical environment like? What kinds of behavior is the setting designed for? How is space allocated? What objects, resources, technologies are in the setting?

b) prospective participants: Who is in the scene? Who is not in the scene? How many people and what are their roles? What brings these people together? What are the relevant characteristics of the participants? What are the ways in which the people in this setting organize themselves? What communication and social interaction patterns are apparent? What are the norms and rules structuring these women observe? How long do they interact?

c) conversations: What is the content of conversations in this setting? Who speaks to whom? Who listens?

d) subtle factors: Are there symbolic and connotative meanings of things and words? Do they use jargon? How is their non-verbal communication? and finally, my behavior as the researcher: How is my presence affecting the scene I am observing? What are the words I used and the things I did? In addition, what thoughts do I have about what is going on?

Immersion in the natural surroundings of the participants was crucial for the study at hand, and it resulted to a better understanding of the women's voice . Diligent and systematic data-gathering using the sight, hearing, smell, and sense of contextually and theoretically sensitive researcher helped create a report that is in-depth and information-dense. Furthermore, because the research aimed to identify the roles of the Christian faith and the Filipino culture in the women's relationship building, being able to observe the women's interaction among themselves lent a greater perspective and rendered a thicker description of the data (Buchanan 2010; Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2019). Participant observation fostered a research process that ensures the data and the theory that emerged from the research is grounded in "lived reality" (Bashkar 1998; Hockey 2010; Potter and Lopez 2001, 9; Iosifides 2011; Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2019, 4).

With the research projects I have done in past, I have seen that deciding on my stance as an observer even before going to the field is beneficial. For this project, the observation was in the middle of the spectrum between the covert and overt stance. To put more plainly, my role as a researcher and the purpose of the research was not explained to the group until phase two begins. In this data-collection technique, it was

required for me to be present, involved, and recording the routine daily activities with people in the field setting while I maintained an active participant role (Schensul and LeCompte 2013, 83).

To supplement the observations, interviews were also conducted to clarify the information taken from the fieldwork. This part of the research was done online via Zoom conferencing. From this phase, the codes that were generated are the open codes. These initial categories identified or open codes were carried over to the second phase of the research.

Phase II

After eight weeks of intensive, moderate, and persistent observation in the field, participants for the second phase were identified. Sub-questions three and four was answered in this phase: "How does the Christian faith play into the creation of the women's relationships in the community?" and "How does the Filipino culture play into the creation of these relationships?" Because this part of the research design was highly participatory and it gave primacy to the voice of the women, it emphasized the characteristics of TGT that privileges emic views and challenges the "context stripping" approach of variable-focused research (Guba and Lincoln 1994, 106; Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2015).

Storyboarding is a technique used in the visual arts that have recently been adapted for use in community development and participatory research (Redman-MacLaren 2015). Storyboards served as a mechanism for the participants to convey complex personal and emotional journeys in a safer, less threatening way. They were able to draw, write, or create images that represented experiences or feelings which are

otherwise harder to describe. Lawthom et al. (2012) posit that creative designs in social science studies are showing more impact than 'traditional' qualitative research methods—they are used to elicit lived experiences and articulate meaning (Cross and Warwick-Booth 2015).

Storyboarding began with a discussion that was facilitated by prompts which were in the form of questions and statements. The data chunks or open codes from the previous research phase shaped these prompts. The following were the questions that served as prompts:

1) How do women in your community get together to help each other?

2) What are the characteristics of these relationships?

3) How do these connections enrich your lives?

The women drew images on their sheets of paper using crayons and felt pens to answer these prompts. They were also provided with magazines to cut out images for their responses to the prompts. The women were given the choice to cut images from the magazines, draw, or write. After 15-30 minutes of drawing, the women were asked to share their drawings. After their individual sharing, they were given as a group a chance to organize their drawings into one storyboard. A spokesperson was assigned to share their final storyboard.

Further details about the participant's experiences were elicited by gentle questioning, prompting, and probing by the researcher through a follow-up FGD (Bowling 2002; Gray 2004). FGD is a technique involving the use of in-depth group interviews in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, specific

population that could give considerable insight on a given topic (Thomas et al.1995). The uniqueness of the focus group method was its ability to generate data-based synergy of group interactions (Green et al. 2003). The focus groups were viewed as social constructions wherein meaning was co-constructed through conversation and dialogue between the researchers and the participants (Wilkinson et al, 2004). The focus group was, therefore, seen as a social encounter and an interactional event (Cross and Warwick-Booth 2015; Rapport, 2004).

Overall, there were a total of eight storyboarding and FGD activities conducted for the second phase of the research. Five of these were done in-person, but due to the spike of COVID cases, the last three were done on-line. During the online activities, the participants were given papers and markers which can were sent to them ahead of time via courier services. I also provided mobile data allowance for each of the participants—an estimated 150 Php for two hours of video conferencing was be sent to their mobile numbers thirty minutes before the scheduled activity.

The data from the storyboarding and FGD activities from the second phase, together with the data from phase one, were analyzed. Out of the codes that emerged, a TGT chart and a theoretical model that explain the phenomenon of how faith and culture enable women to create relationships to help them survive and flourish was illustrated. After this, I discussed the grounded theory that emerged with the participants. This process is also known as member-checking—identifying the key participants who showed great interest, commitment, and leadership skills in the research process. A peer debriefer also helped lend and a critical eye on the data gathering and analysis. Having member-checking, as well as a peer debriefer, allowed for the final output of the

grounded theory to have greater fit, relevance, and modifiability than if the theory had been generated by one person alone (Dick 2008; Lomborg and Kirkevold 2003). Through securing these last steps, the research process became more rigorous than if the findings had been developed and reported in isolation and without the participants (Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2015).

Selection of Subjects

While all theoretical sampling is purposive, not all purposive sampling is theoretical (Hood 2007, 158). TGT belongs to the tradition of GTM and, thus, is still directed by theoretical sampling—a technique that enables the researcher to select participants that maximize the potential to discover as many dimensions and conditions related to the phenomenon possible (Straus and Corbin 1998). Sampling is continually directed by the emerging theory, following up leads as they emerge, and progressively focusing data collection to refine the theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967; Breckenridge and Jones 2009, 2). Therefore, sampling in GTM and TGT is more of a question of "how" rather than "who," and the emphasis is more on the selection process than on the actual sample.

The theoretical sampling process starts with initial data collection and analysis, and once open coding is done to identify initial codes, further data collection is stimulated (Glaser 1978; Breckenridge and Jones 2009, 3). In this stage, theoretical sampling must be employed with memo-writing (Glaser 1978). Memo-writing enables the researcher to conceptualize the boundaries and properties of each category and illuminate gaps in emerging theory, leading the researcher on where to sample next and, for what theoretical purpose (Glaser 1978; Strauss and Corbin 1998, 201; Charmaz 2006; Breckenridge and

Jones 2009, 3). "Constant comparison of codes provides a set of conceptual categories, from which point new categories emerge, and new incidents are fitted and refitted into existing categories" (Breckenridge and Jones 2009, 3). As this process is to be repeated, data analysis becomes more conceptual and the core category emerges clearly and becomes more saturated. When this data saturation is reached, theoretical sampling can then, cease (Glasser and Strauss 1967).

For this particular research, the data collection were with women in urban poor communities whose income are below the poverty threshold determined by NEDA. This predetermination of women as participants was as purpose-driven as it was theoretical-driven: the study conducted aimed to explain how women build relationships that help them survive and thrive. To be faithful to the tradition of "true" theoretical sampling, I was sensitive to the theoretical needs of the study at any given point in the data gathering (Morse 2008). Theoretical sensitivity or a researcher's ability to perceive what is happening in the data rather than being constrained by theoretical assumptions is significant for conducting GTM and TGT research (Mills et.al. 2006; Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2015).

Traditional GTM renders great power to the researcher on sampling, analysis, and theory creation—to borrow the lines from Breckenridge and Jones (2009), researchers can "use and abuse theoretical sampling." To avoid this and to increase theoretical sensitivity, incorporating participatory approaches proved to be beneficial. Since privileging the participants voices and equitable power distribution put the transformational in TGT, it was imperative for this study to make these components of the research explicit. As mentioned above, the participants of the research were, in essence my co-researchers, the people who helped shape the study and the once from the results were generated. They were present

from data collection to the data analysis; they were not powerless information producers who were acted upon, but active co-inquirers who sought to know and to act (Freire 1973; Reman-MacLaren and Mills 2015). Since the researcher and the co-researchers are co-producers of knowledge, I utilized "dialogic communication" to process information gathered from participatory data gathering techniques throughout the research process (Blaikie 2007, 201).

The fieldwork for phase one which is participant observation was be done in three sites: Rowena's Garden in Taytay, Rizal; Solid Cement Community in Antipolo, Rizal; and Culiat in Quezon City. The initial theoretical sample for phase two, storyboard and FGD, were taken from three faith-based organizations whose female members and beneficiaries fit the description of the sample population. These three organizations were present in the research sites. The first NGO is *Rapha* Ministries located in Antipolo, Rizal. Their members are women whose husbands and sons have been the victim of extrajudicial killing in the state-sponsored war on drugs under the Duterte administration. The second is *Gintong Aral* Foundation, which is located in Taytay, Rizal. The organization is situated in an urban poor community called Rowenas Garden. Finally, the third is Tents of Grace Ministry located in Quezon City. The members of Tents of Grace are women who have been displaced from the provinces and are now residing in the community in *barangay* Culiat. The initial sample size were thirty women, but twenty more participants were added in until data saturation was achieved.

Development of Instruments

The first phase of this research employed participant observation, and thus, did require any other tool other than an observation guide. This tool helped me track specific aspects that I needed to observe, and it provided a format for reflexive journaling. For the second phase, two tools were created and administered; the storyboard prompts and the FGD protocol. The storyboard prompts leveraged the power of art to convey meaning. Visual art is a potent and profitable tool for developing transformational grounded theory because of two reasons. First, images are ubiquitous to society and humanity has always been interested in visuals (Banks 2001, 1). With the use of pens, papers and pictures from magazines, the participants illustrated images for feelings and thoughts that are otherwise more difficult to articulate with mere words. Second, once people transition from simply viewing to actually "seeing," perceptual hypotheses were made and a new consciousness was awakened (Gregory 2002, 38). This aspect of art tied in very well to the critical aspect of TGT. Vision is simply the biochemical process of sensing through the optic nerves while seeing is the pedagogical process of making meanings through connecting the present vision to previous knowledge and experiences (Plate 2002, 20). Truthful seeing led to heightened awareness; action and reflection took place as the participants joined in creative and artistic activities that connected them to the reality of their context and awaken in them a critical reflection. Through this process, the participants were able to express their thoughts, fears, doubts, and hopes.

For storyboarding, the prompts were made up of questions and follow-up questions. These prompts were further developed and streamlined after phase one or the participant observation phase.. The main questions used as prompts are as follows:

1) How do women in your community get together to help each other? (People, things, or events that pull them together)

2) What are the characteristics of these relationships? (Communication patterns, reinforcing factors brought about by the Christian Faith and Filipino Culture into these relationships, personal and collective narratives that depict the characteristics of relationship)

3) How do these connections enrich your lives? (Quality of the relationship, what becomes of them through the relationships, attributions to Christian faith and Filipino culture if there is any)

After the storyboarding activity, FGD followed. The conversations opened up space for the women to process the information. FGD was chosen because it did not only highlight the diverse perspectives in a group, but also it enhanced the data quality as the researchers and participants interacted and collaborated (Patton 2015, 478).

Pilot Testing

Other researchers who delve into methodologies like GTM and TGT often chose to dive straight into the field and gather data, arguing that through the elliptical process that characterizes grounded theory, remedial loops would always bring the researcher to the core of the theory (Nunes et al. 2010). Nevertheless, this research has gone through a pilot study. Pilot testing in context-specific inductive theory building study such as TGT allowed for me to heighten not only my theoretical sensitivity but also my contextual sensitivity. Strauss and Corbin (1998, 41) define theoretical sensitivity as a researcher having attributes of insight, the ability to give meaning to the data, and the capacity to separate what is pertinent from that which is not. Nunes et al. (2010) define

contextual sensitivity as researcher's capacity to grasp context-dependent realities such as understanding the macro-social setting of the research: the fit of the activities to the participants, the interaction of the research stakeholders, and the repertoire of actions to be taken to ensure increased depth of analysis. Both theoretical sensitivity and contextual sensitivities were important for risk assessment and implementation of risk-reduced strategies in the actual research activities I conducted.

For this study, the pilot test was done in a community called Ascona. The women living in this community fit into the description of the intended participants. All the data gathering instruments such as the prompts for the storyboards, as well as the protocol for the FGD's, were tested in the site and with the women. The pilot test were conducted in two weeks—and as with any other GTM and TGT studies, the data-gathering and data analysis were done concurrently.

Field Procedures

Research Ethics

Patton (2002) and Merriam (2009) explicate an 'Ethical Issues Checklist' identifying the following items to be considered when engaging in qualitative research: informed consent, explaining the purpose of the inquiry and methods to be used, promises and reciprocity, risk assessment, confidentiality, data access and ownership; researcher mental health, and adviser on ethical matters. Many of these items were explicitly addressed in the Informed consent process, the process by which the participants learn about and understand the purpose, benefits, and potential risks of participating in this research study. The consent process ensured that individuals were voluntarily participating in the research with knowledge of what to expect in the process

and the future. The consent form as well as the letter of invitation for the participants in both English and Tagalog are in the appendices section. As reflected in the oral script, the consent process with the women was viewed as an ongoing process in which they give their agreement to participate and continue participating in research activities. The process began when they were invited to participate in the storyboarding and FGD activity and continued until the member-checking FGD was completed. This allowed respondents to discontinue participation at any time. Fifty women completed the storyboarding and FGD activities, while sixteen of them participated in the member-checking.

Research ethics also requires that the I minimized the risks for the research participants. This included anticipating risks and working to mitigate them. This was especially important because I worked with a vulnerable population such as women living in poverty. Even though the topic deals with the positive relationships they have now, caution was still taken in developing the storyboarding prompts and FGD protocol so as not to trigger remembrance of traumatic experiences and other psychological issues. What this study did is it placed the women in the position of local experts, and they were asked to share their thoughts about how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable them to build relationships that help them survive and thrive amidst adverse situations.

The trustworthiness of data is crucial for this study. Lincoln (1990) noted that while, "conventional criteria for judging the rigor of inquiries [typically] include internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity" (p. 234), naturalistic inquiry brings legitimacy to its approach by developing its own set of criteria for judging the rigor of its inquiries. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985; see also Miles and Huberman, 1994), for each

quantitative methodological procedure of establishing trustworthiness, qualitative inquiries have aligned and parallel procedures. These procedures involved examining the credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability of the data obtained and were used in establishing the trustworthiness of the data for the study conducted.

Credibility is the equivalent of internal validity or the extent to which the findings accurately reflect the construct of investigation. The marks of credibility include establishing that the results of the research are believable from the perspective of the women who participated in the research. Researchers are called to make explicit the strategies they use to ensure the integrity, validity, and accuracy of the findings (Patton 2015; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). To increase the credibility of the findings for the research at hand, I employed methodological triangulation, peer-debriefing, and member checking.

Transferability is the equivalent of external validity. Transferability pertains to the degree to which the findings can be generalized to other settings. Lincoln and Guba (1985) asserts that the degree of transferability is a direct function of the similarity between two contexts or the degree of congruence between the sending and receiving contexts. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) propose for qualitative researchers to think in terms of the reader or user's generalizability. In response to this, I provided enough details and descriptions of the study's context to enable readers to compare the "fit" with their situations. Miles and Huberman (1994) provide useful points to enhance the user generalizability or transferability of a study which I answered throughout chapter four:

(a) Are the characteristics of the original sample of persons, settings, processes, etc. fully described enough to permit adequate comparisons with other samples?

(b) Do the findings include enough —thick description for readers to assess the potential transferability appropriateness for their own setting?

(d) Are the processes and outcomes described in the conclusion generic enough to be made applicable in other settings?

Confirmability is the equivalent of objectivity in qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Studies that rely on quantitative measures are said to be objective. Qualitative research relies on interpretation and is admittedly value-bound, and thus subjective. To achieve confirmability, the qualitative researcher must take steps to ensure that the data secured from participants, along with the interpretations and findings emanating from the data, are "grounded in events rather than the inquirer's constructions" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, p. 324). To facilitate confirmability, the data were be triangulated with multiple data collection methods, and I accessed the perspectives of others such as the participants and the peer debriefer. The data and all related documentation relevant to the study were organized, labeled, and filed to allow for the evaluation of the sources of data. The codes master list can be found in the appendices.

Dependability or consistency is criteria for qualitative studies that involve establishing that the process of the study was stable over time (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) note that consistency is not demanding that outsiders get the same results, rather, a researcher hopes for outsiders to concur that the data and results make sense—they are consistent and dependable. Consistency or dependability is not whether the findings of this research can be replicated, but it refers that the results must be consistent with the data collected. On this note, templates and protocols were used to

guide each activity and focus group discussion to ensure consistency from one respondent to the other.

Entering and Exiting the Field

Since the research sites have been determined a priori, the way I entered the field is through securing the agreement with the directors and officers of the faith-based organizations. I sent a formal letter of intent that outlined the purpose of the study, the length of my engagement with their communities, and the activities to be undertaken. Furthermore, the letter of intent also explicated the use of the data that were obtained and the benefits that the study offer to the women of their communities and other women. This partnership with the organizations who are present at the sites was also strategic because they are the experts of the areas, they guided me on where and when it is best to conduct observations.

In the Filipino culture, we have a concept of location in relationships (Maggay 2002). The insider is called *taga-loob*, and the outsider is *taga-labas*. While I am a *taga-loob* in the larger context of the Filipino culture as I am Filipina and I speak the vernacular Tagalog, I entered the sub-culture of Filipino women living in urban poverty. In this sense, there were many things that I did not immediately understand, and this placed me as a *taga-labas* with respect to their *looban* culture. This made it imperative for me to take the necessary time to develop mutual trust and rapport with the prospective participants. In the first seven weeks of observation, I utilized the time to consider the way of life in their respective sites. Furthermore, this time provided an opportunity for me to speak to the prospective participants, casually and unstructured. Such

conversations were of the data in the reflexive journal. Excerpts of the journal were included in chapter four, presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data.

After establishing rapport with the participants, they were given a formal letter of invitation along with the consent form written in Tagalog. The research tools and digital recorder were utilized during the storyboard activities, FGD, member-checking meetings. Once substantial sets of data are accumulated, I proceeded to slowly phase out my presence. Each of the women who participated received a simple token of thanks for their time and contribution to the work. Wrap-up snacks were also shared with the FBOs by way of appreciation for their hospitality and cooperation.

Data Collection and Recording

The first phase entailed research activities such as observation and reflexive journaling. In the field, I kept a small journal to record thoughts and observation details. Also, with permission from the prospective participants, I used my camera phone to take photos that were pertinent to the phenomenon I observed. After the field visit, I made sure to transfer the notes to my reflexive journal template on the computer and uploaded it to MAXQDA2022 for analysis. This is because TGT calls for concurrent data collection and analysis. Also, I conducted clarificatory interviews with prospective participants. With their permission, those conversations were recorded and were also uploaded to MAXQDA2022, a qualitative data analysis software, for transcription and analysis. This was the process of collection and recording of data for the eight weeks dedicated to observation.

The second phase of the research employed storyboarding and FGD. At this stage, all interactions with the participants were recorded using a digital recorder. The

storyboard images/statements drawn/given by the participants were captured through a camera phone. The final storyboards created by the participants were also photographed. The FGDs were recorded with their consent. The pictures and the transcript of the FGD were placed in MAXQDA2022 so that the axial codes and categories were produced. The reflexive journal where I logged my observation data was still used at this stage. The results of the activities, most especially the theoretical code or the model derived from the data was then presented to the participants for member checking and determination internal validity or credibility.

The flow and time frame of the data collection from the pilot study to the actual research conducted is recorded on the table below:

Table 4. Research Time Frame

Week	Phase 1: Observation and Reflexive Journaling	Location:	Phase 2: Story boarding and FGD	Location:	Data Analysis
1	8 hours	Ascona Village			Concurrent
2	8 hours	Ascona Village	4 hours	Ascona Village	Concurrent
3	16 hours	Antipolo	2 hours	Antipolo	Concurrent
4	16 hours	Taytay	4 hours	Taytay	Concurrent
5	16 hours	Quezon City	3 hours	Quezon City	Concurrent
6-7	Open coding, Cycle 1.				
8	8 hours	Antipolo	8 hours	Antipolo	Concurrent
9	8 hours	Quezon City	6 hours	Quezon City	Concurrent

10	8 hours	Taytay	4 hours	Taytay	Concurrent
11-12	Open coding, Cycle 2.				
13-14	12 hours	Antipolo	6 hours	Antipolo	Concurrent
14-16	hours	Taytay	8 hours	Taytay	Concurrent
17-18	Open coding, Cycle 3.				
19-21	Selective coding and Theoretical coding				
22	Member-checking and Wrap up luncheon at the sites, exiting the field.				

Data Processing and Analysis

At each phase of the research, I did constant comparison on all the data which included the photos and storyboards of participants, the FGD and interview transcripts, as well as the researcher's reflexive journals (Lodico, Spaulding, and Voetgle 2006, 271; Marshal and Rossman 2011, 214). The data have been sorted into chunks (open coding), commonalities among the chunks have been clustered around axes (axial coding), and finally, a core-category that took all the data into consideration was identified (selective coding). MAXQDA2022 was used to analyze the data gathered.

Open Coding. In open coding, the data were broken down analytically to give the researcher new insights. Events, actions, interactions, and other data such as images and texts were compared with others for similarities and differences and given conceptual labels (Strauss and Corbin 1990). Similar concepts were grouped together to form categories and subcategories, and these identified categories and their properties became the basis for sampling on theoretical grounds (Strauss and Corbin 1990; Leedy, Ormrod,

and Johnson 2019, 352). In this process, constant comparison helped break through subjectivity and bias. Even during this phase, data saturation was the goal.

Axial Coding. Axial coding was the process of relating categories to sub-categories and testing the relationships against the data (Strauss and Corbin 1990). In axial coding, core categories were selected around which other categories were identified—this was the coding paradigm. The core category was the axis and other subcategories around it reflected conditions, context, strategies (action/interaction), and consequences (Leedy, Ormrod, and Johnson 2019). Strauss and Corbin (1990) note that all hypothetical relationships proposed deductively during axial coding must be considered provisional until verified repeatedly against incoming data. In axial coding, I repeated the process using other codes as core categories to see which code was most appropriate.

Selective Coding. "Selective coding was the process by which all categories were unified around a 'core' category, and categories that needed further explication were filled-in with descriptive detail (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The core category represented the central phenomenon of the study, and was identified by asking questions such as:

- What is the main analytic idea presented in this research?

- If my findings are to be conceptualized in a few sentences, what do I say?

- What does all the action/interaction seem to be about?

- How can I explain the variation that I see between and among the categories?

The theory derived was in the form of a verbal statement, and I used a visual model to depict the nature of the phenomenon (Leedy, Ormrod, and Johnson 2019). The selective code is the storyline of what happens in the phenomenon.

Summary

In this chapter, I have explored and presented the design chosen for this study which is Transformational Grounded Theory. I have discussed its tradition, origins, and the core-methods that make it a GTM, as well as its features that make it participatory and transformational. It was also imperative that I discussed reflexivity to show where I stood as a researcher in my engagement with the process and the participants. The research design which showed the two phases of the study was also presented in a diagram and was discussed descriptively. It must be mentioned that because TGT follows the concurrent data collection and data analysis method of GTM, the diagram that explains the collection process also depicted how I moved from open codes to axial codes and finally to the theoretical code. Theoretical sampling and how I employed this for participant selection was also discussed in this chapter. Together with this, I have mentioned the sites, communities, and organizations, where the research was conducted. The development of instruments for data collection which are the observation guide, reflexive journal template, storyboard prompts, and FGD protocol were also explained in this chapter. I have also mentioned and showed how the pilot test was be done for this study. Field procedures, data collection and recording, and the process of how I analyzed the data were the other details of the research mentioned in this part of the proposal.

Pilot Test Results

The pilot test for this study is conducted with women who live in Ascona village. This location was chosen for the pilot test because of its similarity to the demographic and geographical profiles of the research locales for the actual research. Ascona is a *looban,* a pocket of urban poor dwellers that is interspersed within middle-class villages in Cainta, Rizal. It is home to about 300 families. Residents of the village belong to the low-income bracket who are employed in the informal economy sector as vendors, laundry service providers, salon workers, house helpers and the likes. These descriptions—the interspersed location of the sites and the demographic characteristics of the community members—are similar to the fieldwork sites for this research in Rizal and Quezon City.

Two observations and one FGD and Storyboard activity were conducted for this pilot test. Since I have done previous research in Ascona, I already knew women who fits the selection criteria for the study: 18-60 years old, live in the community for at least two years, and belong to below minimum or minimum wage earner bracket. Below is the demographic characteristics of the women who participated the pilot test:

Test Participant No.	Work	Income	Age	Field
TP1	Housewife	Below minimum	54	Ascona
TP2	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	27	Ascona
TP3	Housewife	Below minimum	46	Ascona
TP4	Laundry Woman	Below minimum	58	Ascona
TP5	Laundry Woman	Below minimum	54	Ascona

The pilot tests provided an experience to utilize and evaluate the participant observation tool and the FGD and storyboard protocol specifically designed for this study. For the two participant observation activities, the test allowed for notes to be taken. I also tested the FGD and storyboard activity protocol in our *lingua franca,* Tagalog, and it provided the experience for me to gain understanding of the participants, engage with their stories and insights, as well as probe further on how the Christian faith and Filipino values help build relationships that cause these women to survive and thrive. Leedy, Omrod, and Johnson (2019, 165) suggest asking pilot test participants these two questions to assess the validity of the qualitative research tool: "1) Were the questions difficult to understand? 2) What was going through your mind while answering the questions?" I asked whether the participants had difficulties understanding the questions. They all mentioned that the prompts were easy to understand as it was in the vernacular. When asked what were their thoughts when answering the questions through drawing, they shared that they were happy to recall how they have helped and supported each other in difficult times, especially during the pandemic.

Since the validity of the participant observation recording tool and FGD and storyboard protocol have been confirmed, there were no changes made on the instruments. Furthermore, using the *lingua franca* in the instruments provided ease for the participants to freely express their experiences and thoughts with great depth, as well as help narrow the power distance between the participants and myself. The research instrument in Tagalog proved useful to gather rich and thick descriptions of the participants' narratives. Over all, the reflexive journal out of the participant observation

recording tool, as well as the analysis of the FGD and storyboard output of the

participants yielded an informative layer of data that proved to be helpful for the research

that followed in Antipolo, Taytay, and Quezon City.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation, Analysis, and Interpretation of Data

Introduction

This chapter contains the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data on how women from urban poor communities build relationships that help them survive and thrive. First, I present the demographic characteristics of participants in this study. This will help provide an understanding of who the participants of this study are. Second, categories one, two, and three, along with the corresponding codes and subcodes for each category, are presented and discussed. In the presentation of codes and categories, the voice of the participants will be privileged by showing the storyboards and excerpts from the FGD transcripts that ground and demonstrate the emergent codes and subcodes. MAXMaps which is a visualization of the codes and text of coded segments will also be presented for each category. Towards the end of this report, the substantive theory that emerged from the research is discussed, and the transformational grounded theory method chart, as well as the theoretical model, are presented.

Theoretical Sampling and Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

The data in this section responds to the first query of this study: "Who are the Filipino women living and working in urban poor communities?" This study employed theoretical sampling which is a technique that enabled the researcher to select participants that maximize the potential to discover as many dimensions and conditions related to the phenomenon as possible (Straus and Corbin 1998). The participants of this study are women in urban poor communities whose incomes are below the poverty threshold determined by the National Wages and Productivity Commission of DOLE (DOLE-

NWCP). Observations were conducted first in Antipolo City, Taytay, and Quezon City

(see the map on Appendix N). The FGD and storyboard activity were first conducted

with 3 groups of women in Antipolo. Employing theoretical sensitivity throughout the

concurrent data gathering and analysis, it became apparent that a sample similar to the

Antipolo participants—women who are 18-60 years old, who have been residing in the

research locales for 2 years or more, and whose income fall on the minimum or below

minimum bracket—have the lived experiences to answer the questions of this study

(Mills et.al. 2006; Redman-MacLaren and Mills 2015). The maximum number of 50

participants for this study, as well as data saturation have been met in the three research

locale sites: Solid Cement, Antipolo (15 women), Rowenas, Taytay (21 women), and

Culiat, Quezon City (14 women). The table below shows the demographic characteristics

of the women who participated in this study.

Table 5. Theoretical Sampling of Women Participants

Participant #	Work	Income	Age	Field
P1	Housewife	Below minimum	46	Antipolo
P2	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	33	Antipolo
P3	Vendor, Pandesal	Below minimum	38	Antipolo
P4	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	41	Antipolo
P5	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	26	Antipolo
P6	Housewife	Below minimum	25	Antipolo
P7	Service Crew	Minimum	30	Antipolo
P8	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	40	Antipolo
P9	Basahan/ Rag Rug Weaver	Below minimum	36	Antipolo
P10	NGO Staff	Minimum	31	Antipolo
P11	NGO Staff	Minimum	28	Antipolo
P12	NGO Staff	Minimum	33	Antipolo
P13	NGO Staff	Minimum	33	Antipolo
P14	NGO Staff	Minimum	41	Antipolo

P15	NGO Staff	Minimum	55	Antipolo
P16	NGO Staff	Minimum	28	Taytay
P17	Kitchen staff	Below minimum	21	Taytay
P18	NGO staff	Minimum	24	Taytay
P19	NGO staff	Minimum	19	Taytay
P20	NGO Volunteer	Below minimum	19	Taytay
P21	NGO Staff	Minimum	24	Taytay
P22	NGO Volunteer	Below minimum	19	Taytay
P23	NGO Volunteer	Below minimum	55	Taytay
P24	Housewife	Below minimum	35	Taytay
P25	Housewife	Below minimum	32	Taytay
P26	Housewife	Below minimum	36	Taytay
P27	Factory Worker	Minimum	32	Taytay
P28	Sari-Sari Store Owner	Below minimum	54	Taytay
P29	Housewife	Below minimum	26	Taytay
P30	Housewife	Below minimum	23	Taytay
P31	Housewife	Below minimum	43	Taytay
P32	Sari-Sari Store Owner	Below minimum	36	Taytay
P33	Housewife	Below minimum	29	Taytay
P34	Housewife	Below minimum	27	Taytay
P35	Housewife	Below minimum	46	Taytay
P36	Sari-Sari Store Owner	Below minimum	51	Taytay
P37	Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	39	Quezon City
P38	Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	43	Quezon City
P39	Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	43	Quezon City
P40	Personal Care Service Provider	Below minimum	24	Quezon City
P41	Housewife	Below minimum	32	Quezon City
P42	Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	28	Quezon City
P43	Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	54	Quezon City
P44	Vendor, Personal Care Products	Below minimum	36	Quezon City
P45	Sari-Sari Store Owner, Recycled Wallet Weaver	Below minimum	54	Quezon City
P46	NGO Staff	Minimum	52	Quezon City
P47	NGO Staff	Minimum	58	Quezon City
P48	Housewife	Below minimum	32	Quezon City

P49	Housewife	Below minimum	33	Quezon City
P50	Housewife	Below minimum	41	Quezon City

Of the fifty participants, fourteen were unemployed during the data-gathering phase, eighteen women belong to the informal labor sector, four are owners of micro-enterprises called *sari-sari* stores, and only fourteen were employed on a full-time basis. The economic participation of the women in this study is depicted in the pie chart below.
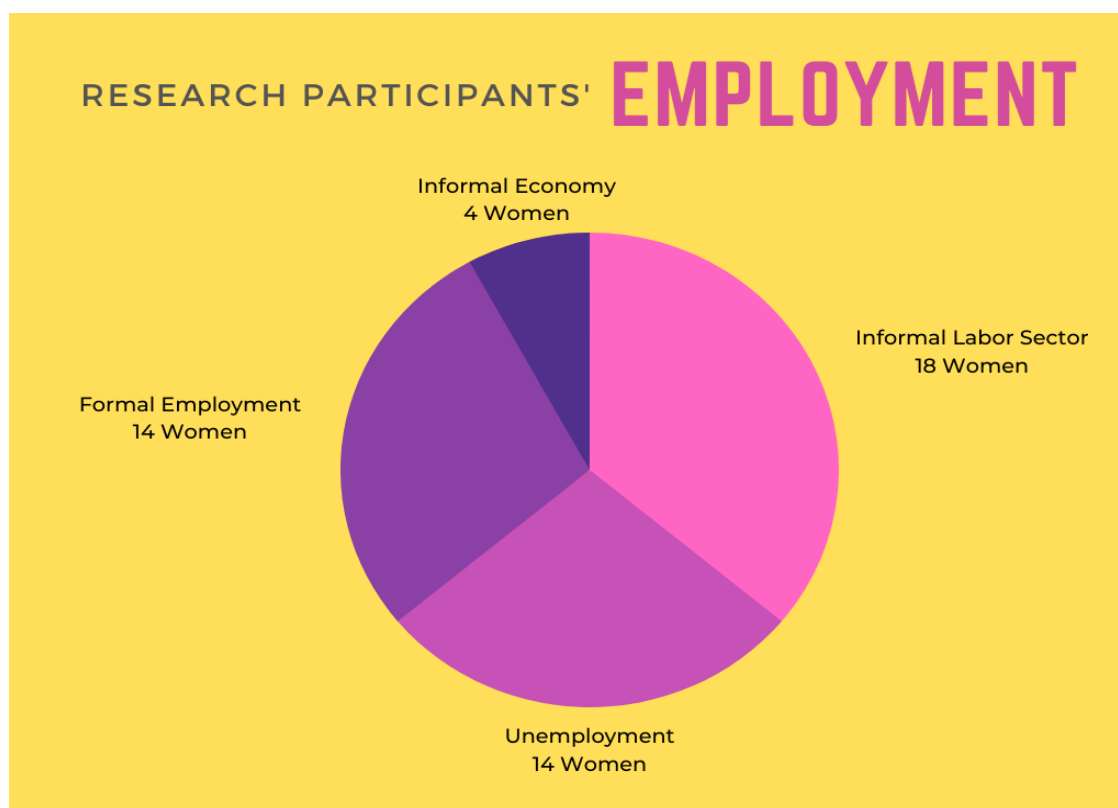
Figure 2. Research Participants' Economic Participation

The 14 women who are formally employed receive basic minimum wage according to the classifications in their areas. For P46 and P47 who live and work in the National Capital Region, specifically in Quezon City, each of them makes about 500-537 Php or 10-10.50 USD a day (DOLE-NWCP, n.d.). The 12 women who are formally employed in Taytay and Antipolo areas which are in Region IV-A receive about 303-400 Php or 6-8 USD a

day (DOLE-NWCP, n.d.). The rest of the participants, thirty-seven of them, earn below the minimum wage in their respective areas. The figure below visualizes this data.

Figure 3. Research Participant's Wages

These findings corroborate the reports that the female labor force participation rate remains low in the Philippines and is still far from parity with men (PSA, 2021a; Hega et al., 2017). According to the Department of Labor and Employment's Institute for Labor Studies (DOLE-ILS), it is in the informal sector where women are overrepresented (UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies, 2021). Women in the informal economy are placed at 57%, and this female labor force comprises the majority of the working poor (Bersales and Ilarina, 2019). Excerpts of observation and interpretation entries from my reflexive journal during my fieldwork in Antipolo and Taytay coincide with this information:

Observation (Antipolo):
There were women gathered around the main water supply, some wearing masks and some were not. I greeted them, "Magandang umaga po, makikiraan lang po (Good morning, I am just passing through)." Then I asked if it was laundry day for their families today. The majority of them answered that they are lavanderas (laundry women), meaning they are washing other people's clothes for money. Then, I saw through the doors and windows of some of the barong-barong (shanties), women sewing trapos (rugs), and weaving basahan (rag rugs). Where are the men? There are men, but there are certainly more women in Solid Cement.

Interpretation:
No woman was idle. Each one does something while chatting with other female friends and neighbors. All these while they are in charge of child care, cooking, and maintaining their homes. When I asked the women, many of the men in their community work as truck drivers and pahinante's (assistants to the truck drivers). This makes sense because Solid Cement is a quarrying area, and one of the country's biggest cement manufacturers is located in the area. The men in their village transport the cement to other provinces in Luzon. One of the women said that their husbands and sons would be on the road for days. The wives and mothers are in charge of their homes when their husbands are away. This is not just a double-burden situation; this is triple-burden—taking care of the home, protecting the home, and earning a living through odd jobs! Wonder woman has nothing on these ladies! She is a hero in movies, but these women are heroes to their families every day.
                                        -July 02, 2021 (Solid Cement, Antipolo)

Observation (Taytay):
There are more women than men here--the women are gathered in groups, chatting and laughing together—very few of them wearing masks...I passed by a lady washing dishes in the community faucet, while other women around her are washing clothes. Just within nearly two minutes of walking into the looban, I have seen seven sari-sari stores. There are also snack stands— women selling rice, viands, samalamig (coolers), banana-q, camote-q, burger, sandwiches, etc.

Interpretation:
It is admirable to think how enterprising these women are! Even with just a small capital and even if these are only low-return ventures, they open micro-businesses like sari-sari stores or snack kiosks. They may not earn much revenue, but this still provides them income and help meet their need. One of the store owners I asked shared that her business also suffered since the people do not have much money to buy because they lost their jobs at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown. She added that her sari-sari store keeps her busy and productive, and this is their family's bread and butter. When I asked other women where the men of Rowenas are, they shared

that many of their husbands and sons work as construction workers. Many of the contractors that hire their husbands provide sleeping quarters for the men at the construction site to mitigate the risk of catching the virus from their homes and communities, as well as from everyday commute. Perhaps, this is also good for the families in Rowenas. Who knows if the virus would come from the construction sites? I remember one young mother in the store; she was nestling her child. She shared that her husband and his workmates were asked to stay on the site for weeks. Her funds, the money was given by her husband before he left for the construction site, are now depleted. When I asked her how she gets food, she said some of her neighbors have been rationing food for her and her children. She shared that she also plans to borrow some money from her neighbor who works in the mall as a saleslady. She also added that her husband will pay this debt as soon as he gets "bali," a portion of his wage in advance. She mentioned she could also take "labada" or laundry for some of her neighbors if one of her friends could look after her two kids for some hours. All these concerns rest on the shoulders of a mother of two who barely turned 18!

-August 7, 2021 (Solid Cement, Antipolo)

The jobs of women in the informal labor force give them more flexibility to perform their familial duties. The drawback, however, is that these types of jobs provide fewer opportunities for fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection (Asian Development Bank, 2013). The participant's low levels of education and the burden of caregiving tasks in their families prevent them from pursuing better job opportunities (UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies, 2021).

The economic situation of women living in poverty has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and strict community quarantine measures enforced by the government. Many of the participants, along with their neighbors in the research locales, lost access to their sources of income and were confined to their homes for months. DOLE-ILS stated that workers and micro-enterprise owners in the informal economy were the ones who bore the brunt of the economic challenge. Many micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises opted for temporary shutdowns, and a number of them permanently closed business. P27 from Taytay who works in a factory that produces and

imports Christmas decorations recounts, "*Noong 2020, nagsara po yung factory na pinagtratrabahuhan ko mula March hanggang July. Talagang hindi ko po alam kung saan kukuha ng pera. Nawalan din po ng trabaho sa construction ang asawa ko* (In 2020, the factory where I work closed down from March to July. I did not know where to get money. My husband also lost his job at the construction site)." P27 and her husband were employed again during the time of the interview, but many of their neighbors remain a part of the staggering number of unemployed Filipinos. In April 2021, 4.14 million Filipino's were without jobs, with 8.5% male unemployment rate and 9.1% female unemployment rate (PSA, 2021 b).

Aside from the income dimension of poverty, the participants are also facing other challenges such as lack of access to health facilities. Women in impoverished communities have multiple and intersecting barriers to healthcare due to the expensive cost of medical care in the country and the limited capacity of underfunded public hospitals (UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies, 2021). One of the participants, P28, was suffering from goiter. When I asked if she has undergone treatment for it, she mentioned that she was on queue for service at the barangay health clinic, but then COVID-19 struck. She shared, "*Wala akong pera para magpa-tingin sa mga private. Gagamitin ko na lang sa pagkain namin ng pamilya ko ang pambili ng gamot ko* (I have no money to pay for a check-up at a private [clinics]. I would rather use the money to buy food for my family than for my medicine)." The pandemic worsened the situation because other health services have been disrupted as the health system shifted its effort to fight COVID-19 (World Bank Group, 2020a).

Another non-income dimension to poverty that burdens women in the research locales is violence. All three research locales have had incidents of extrajudicial killings that the participants attribute to the war on drugs launched by the Duterte Administration (Peracullo 2017, 139). P18 shared about one of their neighbors who was killed in broad daylight a few years ago. "*Naririnig ko lang po yung mga bata na nagtatakbuhan papasok sa looban at sumisigaw po sila na may binaril. Hindi kami makalapit sa takot namin na baka isipin ng mga pulis na kasabwat kami sa bentahan ng drugs; nakahandusay lang po yung kapitbahay namin sa kalsada* (I just heard the children running and shouting that our neighbor was shot. We could not go near him because we feared the police might think we are involved in the drug trade; my neighbor's body just lay on the street"). P15, who is from another research locale, shared that three years ago, there was a shooting incident that even had some innocent people as casualties. She shared, "*Marami na ang namatay dito dahil sa drugs, hindi lang yung mga talagang involved, pero kasama yung mga tambay lang. Yung isang kapit-bahay namin nabaril at namatay. Isa yan sa mga pasan pa ng mga nanay dito sa Solid [Cement].* (Many died because of drugs; not only those who are actually involved but also the bystanders. One of our neighbors was shot, and he died. This a burden that the mothers here in Solid [Cement] carry)." Both P18 and P15's stories of violence in the community remain unsolved during the time of the research.

However, the most painful of violence for the women in these communities is that which is close to home, that which they experience from the very hands of their loved ones. Intimate partner violence (IPV) is flagged at an alarming rate, with one in four women experiencing violence at the hands of their partners (Marquez et al., 2020). A

corresponding trend in the data that is noteworthy is that the poorer the woman is, the more prone to IPV she is. Economic status, along with educational attainment, is a factor in women's experience of violence. According to the 2021 report of University of the Philippines Center for Women's and Gender Studies, 21% of women in the lowest quintile income reported experiencing physical violence, while only 12% of women in the highest quintile income reported having such experience.

Appropriating these statistics to this study's participants, 12 of the 50 women participants may have experienced or are currently experiencing IPV. During one of my observations, I asked one of the NGO workers in Antipolo about IPV in the community. She shared that there have been so many stories of IPV among the women they serve. Some of the husbands get into vices and become physically and verbally abusive to their wives and children. During the FGD and storyboard activities in the three research locales, P10 and P41 were the ones who openly shared that they are victim-survivors of IPV. P41 survived almost 10 years of IPV, and P10 finally decided to draw the line with her abusive partner two years ago. Similar to other factors of poverty, COVID-19 worsened IPV and has caused disruptions in reporting mechanisms and delivery of services for abused women. United Nations Women calls this "the shadow pandemic" as 243 million females have experienced sexual and physical violence in 2020 (UN Women, n.d.).

The data gathered during the field observation and the FGD and storyboard activities with the women corroborate the current statistics and facts reported about women in the Philippines today. With this information, a clearer picture of the women living in urban poor communities has emerged and the first query of this research is

answered. The Filipino women living in urban poor communities struggle with employment opportunities, equitable income, the burden of familial care work, access to healthcare services, as well as safety and justice against violence in the community and at home.

Category One: Formal and Informal Ways Relationships are Created by the Women To Survive and Thrive

The second query of this study aims to identify and articulate the formal and informal ways women in urban poor communities build relationships. Two main codes emerged from the FGD and storyboard activities: "center" and "neighborhood." Both are *in vivo* codes; they were derived from the actual words repeatedly used by the participants in response to the question of how their relationships were formed. The code "center" represents the structured ways women come together through the facilitation of ministries and organizations in their communities. In contrast, the code "neighborhood" represents the organic ways women connect. "Center" and "neighborhood" discernably represent the two loci where relationships begin and grow. In anthropological terms, "center" represents the formal domain of social behavior, while "neighborhood" represents the informal domain (Maggay 2015, 316).

It is interesting to note the disproportionate frequency of the two codes. "Neighborhood" which represents the informal domain and means of beginning and sustaining relationships had 36 coded segments, while "center" which represents the formal domain and ways only had 12 coded segments. What this shows is that while both are loci of relationships, the participants associate the relations that help them survive and thrive more with their informal connections rather than the formal ones. The participants'

data shows that the Filipino people operate largely in the informal domain and that micro-level interactions are fundamental and substantial (Maggay 2015, 319). The figure below is a MAXMap created through the research software program MAXQDA2022 showing the codes for category one, along with the text of the coded segments from the research participants' consolidated transcript.

C1: Formal and Informal Ways Relationships are Created by the Women To Survive and Thrive

Research Participants

P39 (Quezon City): Nabubuo po ang ugnayan sa samahan ng mga nanay dahil po sa mga training sa center. (The relationship of the mothers has been formed through the trainings at the center.)

P11 (Antipolo): Nagkakilala at nabuo po ang samahan namin sa center. (We met and built our connection in the center.)

P38 (Quezon City): Dati hindi mo ako makikitang lumalabas ng bahay; hindi po ako palakaibigan kasi mahiyain ako. Pero since yung panganay ko nakapasok na dito sa center, sa feeding program, dito ako nagumpisa na nagkaroon ako ng maraming kaibigan. (I used to never leave the house; I'm not that friendly because I'm shy. But since my eldest son entered the center in the feeding program, this is where I started and I made a lot of friends.)

P23 (Taytay): Nakita ko rin yung kakayahan ng mga kababaihan dito na magsasama through the center. Lalo na pagka maliwanag sa amin, mas naiintindihan namin kung ano yung dapat i-improve sa community. (I also saw the ability of the women here to come together through the center. Especially when things are clearly explained to us; we better understand what to improve in our community.)

C1 Code: Center

C1 Code: Neighborhood

P40 (Quezon City): "Sa center ako natutong makisalamuha sa iba, nagumpisa sa pakwekwentuhan hanggang nauwi sa pakikipagkaibigan at pakikipagtulungan. Doon po ako natutong makipagugnayan— nagkwekwentuhan, kumakain, nagtatawanan, yung mga ganoon. (At the center, I learned to get along with others; starting with conversation until it ends up in friendship and cooperation. That's where I learned to relate—talking, eating, laughing, that kind of thing.)

P37 (Quezon City): Sa pakikipagkwentuhan mo sa mga kapitbahay mo, doon mo din naipapakita ang pakikiisa mo sa kanila. (When you talk to your neighbors, that's where you show your solidarity with them.)

P17 (Taytay): "Sa observation ko po, hindi mawawala yung nagkakaroon ng kwentuhan yung mga nanay tungkol sa buhay-buhay nila. Yoon po yung yung madalas sa amin; mga nanay na naguusap kaysa sa mga tatay. (From my observation, seeing mothers sharing stories about their lives will always be there. That is the usual situation in our place; mothers talk more to each other than fathers)

P44 (Quezon City), "sa pakikipagkwentuhan, nakapagbibigay po kami ng opinion o suggestion doon sa pangangailangan ng isang pamilya at ng aming komunidad (In conversations, we can give opinions or suggestions on the needs of a family and our community).

P16 (Taytay): Katulad ko na lang; meron akong mga mommy na friends din. Doon kami sa bahay nila, meron kaming spot, tapos doon kami nag-uusap. Ganito nabubuo ang ugnayan sa amin. (Take my case for example; I have mommy friends too. We go to their house; we have a spot, then, we talk there. This is how our relationship is formed.)

P14 (Antipolo): Pagkain! Doon nabubuo ang samahan namin. Mahilig kaming kumain dito. (Food! That's where our organization is formed. We love to eat here.)

P20 (Taytay) Sa akin po, food ang number one na paraan paano nag-uugnayan ang kababaihan sa komunidad…yung kapit-bahay mo na walang-wala, binibigyan mo sila ng bukal doon sa kalooban mo (For me, food is the number one way how women connect in the community… your neighbors who have nothing, you share with them wholeheartedly).

P18 (Taytay): Sa akin, nagkakaroon ng joining together, depende sa generation at sa hilig nila. Kung pareho kayong gumagawa ng basahan, sila yung madalas magkakasama; yung teenagers dito, ganoon din. (For me, the people join together depending on the generation and their likes. Those who make rag rugs, they are the ones who are often together and friends; the same goes with the teenagers here.)

Figure 4. Category One MAXMap

Category One Code: Neighborhood

Figure 5. Storyboard drawing by P37, Recycled wallet weaver

P37 drew a picture of a big *bahay kubo* (nipa hut) to represent the community center operated by Christian missionaries, and a smaller one to represent the homes in their neighborhood. P37 explained, "*Sa papamamagitan po ng aktibidad sa center namin nagkakaroon kami ng ugnayan. Sa kapitbahay naman, nagkakaroon kami ng connection dahil kailangan mo rin silang kausapin at makisama sa kanila* (Through the activities in the center, we create relationships with one another. With our neighbors, we build connection because you also need to talk with them and get along with them)."
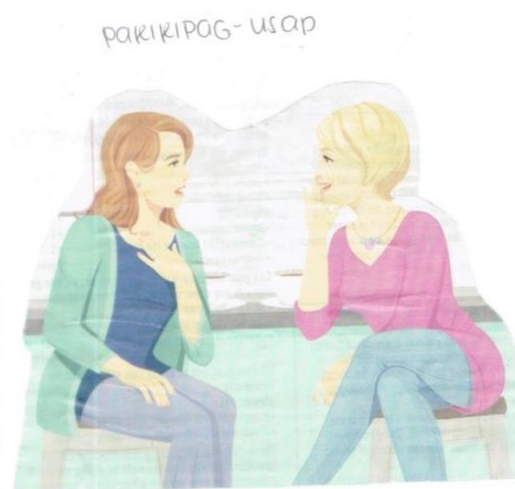
Figures 6-7. Storyboard cutouts by P2 and P19, subcode "*pakikipagkwentuhan*"

Pakikipagkwentuhan, which translates in Filipino to storytelling or sharing of stories, is a subcode that emerged under neighborhood. *"Sa tingin ko po, nabubuo po ang ugnayan namin sa papamagitan ng pakikipagusap at pakikipagkwentuhan sa bawat isa* (The way I see it, we build relationships through speaking and sharing stories with each other)," shared P19.

Figures 8-9. Storyboard cutouts by P20 and P22, subcode "Food*"*
*"*Food*"* is a subcode under "neighborhood" and is a co-occurring subcode with
"*pakikipagkwentuhan*." The subcode, "food," pertains to meals, food items, and drinks,
specifically coffee, that are shared by neighbors with one another. P14 remarked, *"Para
sa akin ang magandang ugnayan nagsisimula sa kumustahan. Siyempre mas masaya
kapag may kaunting meryenda*. ("For me, a good relationship starts with checking in with
one another. Of course, it's more fun when there are some snacks)."

Subcode: Pakikipagkwentuhan

"Neighborhood" refers to the women's organic and informal way of forming

and sustaining relationships. In the code "neighborhood," the subcode

pakikipagkwentuhan or sharing of stories repeatedly surfaced. Other words connected to

this subcode are *kwento* (stories), *usap-usap*/*pakikipag-usap* (talking), and

tsismis/tsismisan (gossiping). Contrary to the stereotypical understanding of

pakikipagkwentuhan in the neighborhood as mere idle talk or pass time, a closer

investigation of the data reveals that *pakikipagkwentuhan* serves significant functions in

relationship building in the communities.

First, the participants perceive sharing of stories as a means of initiating

connections and expression of *pakikiisa* or solidarity in the community. Alejo (1990)

notes that the prefix *pakiki* in Tagalog means an effort of one person to feel what the

other feels. Hence P37's statement,*"sa pakikipagkwentuhan mo sa mga kapitbahay mo, doon mo din naipapakita ang pakikiisa mo sa kanila* (when you talk to your neighbors, that's where you show your solidarity with them)*,"* implies that stories are bridges and bonds of the women in their community. P11, P34, P36, and P38 also shared this perception about their fellow women in the neighborhood. P16, P18, and P22 mentioned that women converge and talk based on common interests and background: the mothers gather with the mothers, the teenagers form *barkadas* or cliques, and the women who weave rag rugs for a living gather in one of their fellow weaver's house.

P17 who grew up in the research locale at Taytay shared a nuance about the *pakikipagkwentuhan* phenomenon: "*Sa observation ko po, hindi mawawala yung nagkakaroon ng kwentuhan yung mga nanay tungkol sa buhay-buhay nila. Yoon po yung yung madalas sa amin; mga nanay na naguusap kaysa sa mga tatay.* (From my observation, seeing mothers sharing stories about their lives will always be there. That is the usual situation in our place; mothers talk more to each other than fathers).*"* P17's remark affirms the Social Role Theory stating that communal traits which refers to the maintenance of relationships and social functioning are more seen on females than males (Eagly 1987; Abele and Wojciszke 2014, 196; Wood and Eagly 2012; Sczesny, Nater, and Eagly 2019, 103). P23 adds that there are certain spots where women can be seen congregating—near the make-shift basketball court, the community outpost, and the stores. Also, while P34, P36, and P32 commented that *pakikipagkwentuhan* may happen anytime of the day with one's neighbor, P17 observed that the converging of women usually happens after their house chores and care tasks in the morning and the afternoon,

around ten o'clock in the morning until noon and two o'clock in the afternoon until it's time to prepare for their families' dinner.

The second function of *pakikipag-kwentuhan* in the neighborhood is that it becomes a means of conveying the problems they face, as well as seeking collective and collaborative solutions to these challenges. P44 stated, "*sa pakikipagkwentuhan, nakapagbibigay po kami ng opinion o suggestion doon sa pangangailangan ng isang pamilya at ng aming komunidad* (In conversations, we can give opinions or suggestions on the needs of a family and our community)." Maggay (2002, 107) elaborates on Alejo's explanation of "*pakiki"* and notes that beyond feeling, the prefix denotes an act of self-inclusion to what the other is doing. Hence, *pakikipagkwentuhan* (sharing stories) turns into *pakikisama* (fellowship) and *pakikisangkot* (involvement) in responding to different difficulties that the women and their communities face. For instance, P1, P4, P8, and P9 from the research locale in Antipolo shared that the women in their village joined together to discuss solutions to their garbage disposal and sanitation problems. P18, P20, P24, P25, and P27, remembered how the women worked together to help those who lost their homes to a fire that devastated the community two years ago. Finally, in Culiat, P44, P48, P49, and P50 remarked how the women in their community sought ways to help put food on the table of their neighbors who were laid off due to the strict pandemic lockdowns.

Subcode: Food

Another subcode under "neighborhood" that unanimously reoccurred in the data gathered from the three sites is "food." This subcode co-occurs or overlaps with the subcode "*pakikipagkwentuhan*." P22 remarked, *"Lagi po magkasama ang paguusap at*

pagkain; diyan po nagsisimula ang koneksyon (Conversations and food are always together; that is where the connection begins). P20 added, "*Sa akin po, food ang number one na paraan paano nag-uugnayan ang kababaihan sa komunidad…yung kapit-bahay mo na walang-wala, binibigyan mo sila ng bukal doon sa kalooban mo* (For me, food is the number one way how women connect in the community… your neighbors who have nothing, you share with them wholeheartedly). Negrillo (2019, 2) who wrote the auto-ethnography *Kumain na Tayo* notes that for Filipinos, "food can be understood as a tangible expression of love: creating something for someone else and giving the energy they need to survive." Hence, to share food is to express gut-deep care and compassion.

Food, along with sharing stories and ideas, facilitates bonds and unity among the neighbors. P16's comment on this Filipino understanding of food in the FGD is remarkable: *"Ganoon din po sa akin. Nagmumula ang pakikipag-ugnayan sa pagkain. Malapit sa bituka! Kapag nakita kasi namin yung isang kapitbahay parang walang makain, mararamdaman mo kasi. Kaya aabutan mo siya* (It is the same with me. Our relationships begin with sharing food. *Malapit sa bituka!* When we see a neighbor who seems to have nothing to eat, you can feel that. That is why we share to with him/her)." The figurative language "*malapit sa bituka*" has no exact English equivalent and can be literally translated to "near the intestines." This does not capture the essence of the Filipino phrase. *"Malapit sa bituka"* is a metaphor used to speak of something that is visceral. A better translation of the phrase would be, "gut-deep sense of empathy." Aoanan (2017) explains the profound origin of this Filipino phrase:

> "A*ng kapatid ay isang kontraksiyon ng 'patid ng bituka.' Ang mga magkakapatid ay nagmula sa iisang bituka. Ito'y nangangahulugan na mayroon silang malapit at matatag na buklod, at ugnayan. Ang bituka ay pinakasentro sa ating pag-iral at pagkatao.* ('Kapatid'

[sibling] is a contraction of 'patid ng bituka' [intestines]. Siblings come from the same intestine. This means that they have a close and strong bond, and relationship. The intestine is central to our existence and being) "

P16, along with the many participants who shared similar thoughts, conveys that food often becomes an expression of hospitality in their communities, a way to create a space wherein relationships in their neighborhood can begin and develop.

Category One Code: Center

Figure 10. Storyboard drawing by P41, Housewife

P41 shared similar thoughts and drew the center in their community, as well as the house of her neighbor that she and other women in the community frequent. *"Itong sa community center, dito ako nahubog ang isip ko, lumawak ung pang unawa ko. Tapos dito sa bahay ni ate Dheng, nagkwe-kwentuhan sa buhay at nagkakainan kami—almusal hanggang tanghalian. kahit tuyo at kamatis lang ang ulam, masaya kami.* (It is here in the community center that my mind gets shaped, my understanding is broadened. Here in ate Dheng's house, we share life stories and we eat together—breakfast until lunch. Even if we only have dried fish and tomatoes, we are happy)."

Figure 11. From the final storyboard of P1-P5 in response to the prompt "How do women in your community get together to help each other?"
The group drew an image of women gathered around a basahan or rag rug. "*Nabubuo din po yung relasyon namin sa pamamagitan ng paggawa namin ng basahan sa center. Maghapon po kami magkakasama, 8AM-2PM, sabay-sabay kumakain. Mas lalo po kaming napapalapit sa isa't isa* dahil sa center (Our relationship is also formed as we make rag rugs in the center. We spend the day together, 8AM-2PM, we eat together. We get closer to each other because of the center)."
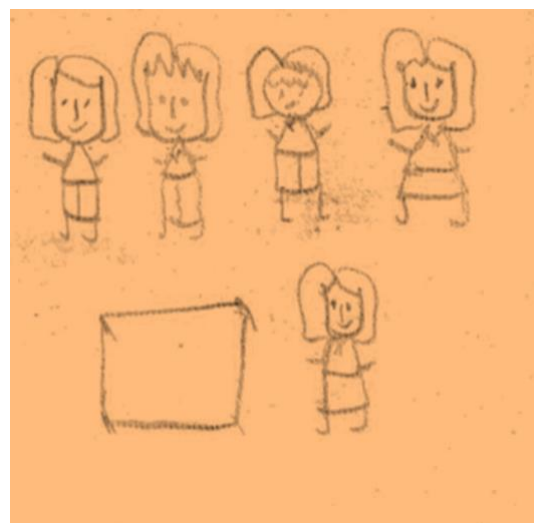
Figures 12-13. Storyboard drawings by P5 and P24, subcode "Bible Study"
"Bible Study" emerged as a subcode under the code "center;" it is identified by the women as an activity facilitated in the centers that helps them create relationships. P5 explained, *"Nagkakaroon po ng samahan ang mga babae dito sa amin sa devotion sa Salita ng Diyos po…Tuwing Wednesday po nagdedevotion muna po kami bago gumawa ng basahan* (The women here build relationships through devotion to God's Word…Every Wednesday, we have our devotion first before making our rag rugs)."

"Center" pertains to the organized ways women gather together. This code refers to the locus of relationships wherein the patterns and frequency of the participants' interactions are rather structured. Many of the women shared building relationships with other people in their neighborhood happened naturally. Nevertheless, some of the women shared otherwise. This is where organizations like the centers in the research locales help facilitate the initiation of relationships among the women. P38 remarked: "*Dati hindi mo ako makikitang lumalabas ng bahay; hindi po ako palakaibigan kasi mahiyain ako. Pero since yung panganay ko nakapasok na dito sa center, sa feeding program, dito ako*

nagumpisa na nagkaroon ako ng maraming kaibigan (I used to never leave the house; I'm not that friendly because I am shy. But since my eldest son got in the center's feeding program, I made a lot of friends)." P40 who was in the same FGD added, "*Sa center ako natutong makisalamuha sa iba, nagumpisa sa pakwekwentuhan hanggang nauwi sa pakikipagkaibigan at pakikipagtulungan. Doon po ako natutong makipagugnayan— nagkwekwentuhan, kumakain, nagtatawanan [kasama sila]* (Through the center, I learned to get along with others; it started with conversations until it ended up in friendships and cooperation. That's where I learned to relate—talking, eating, laughing [with them])." P11, P37, and P41 also credited the organizational centers in their communities as the organizations responsible for initiating important connections.

Subcode: Livelihood

Under the code "center," "livelihood" emerged as a subcode. This is because the centers offer livelihood programs to the women in the research locales. For instance, in Antipolo, the center is known for teaching women how to weave *basahan* or rag rugs. The center in Culiat teaches women how to make wallets and bags from recycled foil sachets and plastic twine. Finally, the center in Taytay trains women who desire to start micro-enterprises. Through these livelihood programs, women begin to connect and build friendships with one another. P2 from Antipolo remarked, "*Nabuo po ang samahan sa paggawa ng basahan. Magkakasama po kami mula umaga hanggang hapon na gumagawa ng basahan, kumakain, at nagkwekwentuhan* (Our friendship was formed through making rag rugs. We spend time together from morning to afternoon making rags, eating, and talking)." P5 noted that these friendships become sisterhood through time: *Sama-sama po kami palagi; nagkakaisa din po parang pamilya* (We are always

together; united as a family).” Such growth of relationships—from livelihood program recipients to becoming like sisters—is also experienced by the participants in Taytay and Culiat. P44 mentioned that getting to know the women in the center feels like finding a family, especially since many of their female neighbors came from the far provinces of Mindanao. She noted, “Yung mga kasama ko sa center parang kapamilya ko na kasi since malayo ung pamilya namin. *Kung may kamag-anak man kami [dito sa siyudad], hindi naman kami close. Dito sa center may masasandalan kami* (My colleagues here at the center are like family to me because our relatives are away from us. Some of us may have relatives [here in the city], but we do not have close relationships with them. Here in the center, we have each other to lean on).”

The women in the research locales who undergo livelihood training aim to join the economy as micro-entrepreneurs. In 2016, the Philippines was named a global leader for gender parity in micro and small entrepreneurship with Filipino women participating at an equal or higher level than men (Department of Trade and Industries, 2016). But while there may be many Filipino women entrepreneurs, a study by Illo et al. (2020) showed that they are less likely to thrive in the economic playing field due to structural barriers hindering them to seek growth and export. In this condition of elusive trade growth, the centers help nourish the space for the women to build a sisterhood that acts as guilds wherein they share both personal encouragement and livelihood support. P2 pointed this out in her remark: “*Habang gumagawa ng basahan, nagkwe-kwentuhan po. Nagshe-share po kami ng idea gumawa ng bagong design sa mga produkto namin* (While making rag rugs, we talk with each other. We share ideas on how to make a new designs for our products).”

Subcode: Bible Study

The subcode "Bible study" also recurrently emerged from the women's data whenever the discussions veer towards the "centers" in their communities. P5 mentioned that apart from livelihood, they also learn about God's Word through the Bible study sessions in the centers. "*Nagba-Bible study po kami para makilala ang Panginoon. Tuwing Wednesday po nagdedevotion muna po kami bago gumawa ng basahan* (We study the Bible to get to know the Lord. Every Wednesday, we have our devotion first before making our rag rugs)," she noted. P5 shared that they began learning about the Bible through their center director, but when the questions that the women asked became more profound and complex, the director sought the help of a pastor from a local church close by. The participants from Taytay also mentioned the study of God's Word as an important part of their relationships. *"Ang sagot ko po sa tanong na paano kami nag-uugnayan, una po yung time na nagba-Bible study kami. Sa totoo lang po, yan ang nagbibigay lakas para magtulungan kami* (My answer to the question on how we build relationships, first of all, is we study the Bible together. Honestly, that is what gives us the strength to help each other),*"* P24 shared. The participants in Culiat also offered meaningful insights about studying God's Word in the center. The center is located at the heart of a Muslim community; the majority of the women whom the center serves come from Muslim families. Nonetheless, through time, many of these women showed remarkable openness to know God through *Isa* (Jesus). P37 shared, "*Madami po kaming activities sa center, pero mahalaga po yung natututunan namin kay Isa po (Jesus), yung tinatawag po na faith* (We have a lot of activities at the center, but what is important is learning about *Isa* (Jesus), that thing we call faith).

Providing Bible study sessions alongside livelihood training is not new to community development work with women in the Philippines. A case study conducted by the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture (ISACC) among beneficiaries of development interventions has shown that development is best achieved "by enriching the spirituality of a person" (Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000, 39). From a socio-cultural stance, Filipinos see the world rather holistically. The religious and spiritual has a place in the Filipino frame of reference. Hence, the women's understanding of labor, livelihood, and economy are enmeshed with their understanding of God. The work of the centers concerning the study of the Bible is crucial to transform their perception that poverty is normative and God-ordained (Lewis 1959, Chambers 1983; Christian 1994; Prilleltensky 2003, Myers 2011, 128).

Other subcodes which emerged under the code "center" are "feeding program" and "social media." The feeding program refers to the service the centers offer to children in the communities. Many of the mothers among the participants shared that their children were first recipients of this program in the centers before they got involved. "Social media" emerged when the participants talked about their mode of communication during the pandemic. P10 drew a cellphone in her storyboard and explained: *"Dati po araw-araw kaming nagkikita sa center, pero ngayon po tuwing Miyerkules na lang. Sa social media po kami naguusap at dito din po namin nalalaman yung mga problema na dapat naming pagtulung-tulungan"* (We used to meet every day at the center, but now it's only on Wednesdays. We talk on social media and here we also know the problems that we should work together)." Nevertheless, many of the participants across all three

research locales shared that they prefer their weekly in-person meeting at the centers over-communicating through digital means.

Category Two: Christian Values that Help Build Relationships for Surviving and Thriving

The third query of this study aims to understand and elucidate how the Christian faith help women in urban poor communities build relationships that help them survive and thrive. During the first cycle of open coding, 17 codes emerged from the responses of the participants (Appendix O). Nonetheless, on the second cycle of coding, the list was narrowed down to six codes—faith, peace, stewardship, generosity, wisdom, and love. These codes captured the essence of the women's answers, as well as the meaning of the 17 initial open codes. The second set of codes is referred to as analytical codes—going beyond descriptive coding, it is a way of "coding that comes from interpretation and reflection on meaning" (Richards 2015, 135; Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 174). Employing constant comparative analysis, the six codes brought about the construction of category two: the Christian faith helps women build relationships that cause them to survive and thrive through the instilling and practice of spiritual values such as faith, stewardship, harmony, generosity, wisdom, and love.

C2: Christian Values that Help Build Relationships for Surviving and Thriving

P33 (Taytay): Meron po kasi kami ditong bible study po...naguusap-usap po kami tungkol sa Bibliya. Yun ang nagbibigay po ng tamang gabay sa buhay namin, kung paano po yung tamang pag-iisip po (We have a bible study activities here... we talk about the Bible. That is what gives guidance in our lives, how to have the right mindset)

P5 (Antipolo): "[mas mahalaga ang comfort na binibigay ng mga kapwa babae] kasi po ang financial [na bagay] nandiyan lang po yan, pero ang comfort at pagmamahalan hindi po nawawala...Mayaman kami sa pagmamahal."

P6 (Antipolo): Syempre po hindi naman po tayo mabubuhay ng tayo lang po, kailangan matuto tayong makibagay. Kung hindi ka po marunong magmahal sa iba, hindi ka po talagang aasenso (Of course we cannot live on our own; we have to learn to get along with others. If you do not know how to love others, you would not really progress).

P5 (Antipolo): Nandiyan po sila [mga kapwa babae sa komunidad] para ilayo kami sa maling landas, para i-advice sa tama. Sila po yung nasasandalan kung baga emotional na suporta po sa amin (They [fellow women in the community] are there to keep us from the wrong path, to give us the right advice. They are the ones we rely on for emotional support).

P37 (Culiat): Sa Word of God kasi meron kang natututunan sa relasyon ng pamilya mo, yung pagsasama ng mag-asawa at pagpapalaki ng mga anak (In the Word of God, you can learn something about your family relationship, marriage and raising children).

P48 (Culiat): Bale ang akin po, maam, pagmamahal din po. Kasi kung mahal mo ang mga kasama mo at kapitbahay mo, maiisip mo ang kalagayan nila at tutulungan mo sila (For me, ma'am, it is love too. Because if you love your friends and neighbors, you can think of their situation and help them.)

P42 (Culiat):Malaki po talaga ang tulong namin sa kalikasan kasi syempre kahit anong wrapper nagagawa na naming wallet o kaya bag. Napansin ko po na mas kaunti na ang basura namin (We really help the environment a lot because we can make a wallets or bags from any type of wrapper. I noticed that we have less garbage now).

C2 Code: Wisdom

C2 Code: Love

P40 (Culiat): Sa tulong ng mga kapwa ko babae dito sa Culiat, natuto akong magdasal na nandoon ang pananampalataya na sasagutin ako ng Diyos. Natuto na din ako na sinasama ko sila sa dasal ko (With the help of my fellow women here in Culiat, I learned to pray with the faith that God would answer me. I have also learned that I include them in my prayers).

P11 (Antipolo): Sa mga Bible study at sa financial trainings, natututo kami. Malaking bagay yun lalo na pag nanay ka, yung pagbudget sa bahay at mga gastusin. Kailangan isabuhay mo din. (We learn through Bible studies and financial trainings. That is an important thing, especially when you're a mother, budgeting for household expenses. You need to put what you have learned in practice).

C2 Code: Stewardship

P16 (Taytay): Nagse-sharing din kami ng mga opinions sa mga negosyo. Kaya mas mapapaunlad pa namin ang mga sarili namin through ganitong usapan (We also share opinions about businesses. We further develop ourselves through these conversations).

C2 Code: Faith

P39 (Culiat): Ang pinaka nakakatulong po sa aming pagunlad sa buhay ay nag-aaral po kami ng Salita ng Diyos para makilala ang Diyos. Marami po kaming pinagaaralan na bumabago sa buhay namin (The most helpful in our development in life is that we study the Word of God to know God. We learn a lot that transform our lives).

Research Participants

P4 (Antipolo): Para sa akin, ma'am, yung pagbibigayan naming mga kababaihan ang tumulong sa aming pagunlad...basta kung ano yung meron na maibibigay, maishashare para dun sa pagsasamahan (For me, ma'am, the women's generosity towards each other is what helps us progress...whatever we can give, we share it for the sake of camaraderie).

C2 Code: Generosity

C2 Code: Harmony

P14 (Antipolo): Madami na graduate na sa livelihood [program] o kaya hindi naman kasama sa livelihood [program] na mga kapitbahay namin pero nandito sila para sa devotion. Ibig sabihin po [nakikita ng mga tao na]maganda yung nabi-build na foundation sa buhay namin dito (Many of those who have graduated from the livelihood [program] or our neighbors who are are not included in livelihood [program] still join for the devotion. It shows that [people recognize] the foundation we are building our lives on is good).

P13 (Antipolo): Minsan kung wala silang bigas, or asukal or ano man po ang hingiin basta nakakapgabigay. Kasi sabi nga ni Lord mas maganda yung nakakapagbigay. Ikaw Kristiano ka...sa pamamagitan nun nakikita nila si Kristo sa'yo (Sometimes if they don't have rice, sugar, or whatever they need, I try to give as long as I can. Because God said that it is better to give. Because You are a Christian...through your giving they could see Christ in you).

P44 (Culiat): Lumalabas ako sa compound, nakarating ako ng Batasan sa House of Representative, yung tumulong lang pala sa akin yung center, mga kapitbahay namin...Sila pala ung may mga busilak ang puso...yun yung isang pasalamat ko, ma'am, sa totoo lang blessings (I was going out of the compound, I even got to Batasan in the House of Representatives, all along it was the center, our neighbors who helped us... They are the ones with golden hearts... that is one of the thing I am grateful for, ma 'am, true blessings)

P5 (Antipolo): Dahil po sa pagkakaisa naming mga kababihin nagkaroon po kami ng pag-unlad. Tulad na lang po sa trabaho namin, nagkaisa kami sa paggawa ng basahan, at sa kapaligiran namin, nagkaisa kami sa paglilinis (Because of our unity as women, we are making progress. Just like in our work, we are united in making rags, even in our environment, we are united in keeping it clean).

P21 (Taytay): Kahit na nga may kumakalat na tsismis na pwedeng sumira sa inyo, dapat nandoon yung trust mo sa isang isang babaeng kagaya mo...Trust na iingatan niya ang reputasyon mo. Kung wala ng trust, magwawatak-watak na (Even if there are rumors that can ruin your relationship with the women, you should trust your fellow...Trust that she will protect your reputation. Without trust, your relationship will disintegrate).

P16 (Taytay): "Yung pagunlad kasi hindi kasi sa pera lang or sa trabaho, nasa mabuting relasyon din yan kay Jesus at nasa pagkatao yan...hindi mo maishe-share sa iba ang pagunlad, kung sa sarili mo hindi mo nakikita yun sa loob mo (Development is not just about money or work, it is also about having a good relationship with Jesus and about having a good character... you cannot share development with others, if you do not see it in yourself)."

P11 (Antipolo): Lahat po ng mayroon tayo galing sa Panginoon at sa tulong din ng Panginoon. Yung kapayapaan po sa puso natin, yung pagkakaisa naming mga babae dito sa Solid [Cement], yung pagibig (Everything we have comes from the Lord and also with the help of the Lord. The peace in our hearts, the unity of our women here in Solid [Cement], the love).

Figure 14. Category 2 MAXMap

Category Two Code: Faith

Figure 15. Storyboard cutout by P5, Rag Rug Weaver
One of the prompts on the FGD and storyboard activity is to describe the characteristics
of the relationships that women have. P5 chose this cutout of Filipino Artist Elmer
Borlongan's piece from a magazine to illustrate the shared faith journey of the women in
the urban poor community. When asked why she chose this image, she elaborated, "*Kasi
po kapit-bisig po na nagkakaisa sa pagkilala po sa Panginoon; yoon po ang nakikita ko
po. Pananampalataya po ang matibay po na pundasyon ng relasyon namin.* (Because we
are united in our pursuit of knowing the Lord; that's what I see. Faith is the solid
foundation of our relationship)." P24 and P33 from Taytay also credited the women's
Bible study and their shared journey of faith as the force that gives women in their
neighborhood the strength to help each other.

Subcode: Journey of Faith

"Faith," with 52 coded segments, is the code with the highest frequency on

category two. This code is *in vivo* and has been used by the women multiple times to

refer to their belief and relationship with God, as well as how this spiritual value changed

them and their most valued relationships for the better. During the treatment of data, the

open code "faith" often corresponded with the subcode "Bible study." P14 stated that the

most important thing is that she and the women in their neighborhood are growing in

their knowledge of God. She said, "*Ang pinaka mahalaga din po ay nakakakilala kami*

kay Lord, kasi yun po yung malaking bagay. Madami na graduate na sa livelihood o kaya

kahit hindi naman kasama sa livelihood na mga kapitbahay namin ang nandito para sa

devotion. Ibig sabihin po [nakikita ng mga tao na]maganda yung nabi-build na

foundation sa buhay namin dito. (The most important thing is that we are learning about

the Lord because that is the most significant thing. Many of those who have graduated

from the livelihood, even our neighbors who are not included in livelihood, still join the

devotion. It shows that [people recognize] the foundation where we are building our lives

on is good).*"* This phenomenon of women staying connected to the faith-based

organizations for spiritual nourishment even after they have graduated from the

livelihood training has also been observed in a case study conducted by ISACC among

women who joined CCT's livelihood projects (Palugod, Lavarias, and Baltazar 2000).

P5 mentioned that their shared journey towards knowing God is what unites

the women in the community, as well as the rock in which their relationships with one

another is built upon: "*Kasi po kapit-bisig po na nagkakaisa sa pagkilala po sa*

Panginoon; yoon po ang nakikita ko po. Pananampalataya po ang matibay po na

pundasyon ng relasyon namin. (Because we are united in our pursuit of knowing the

Lord; that's what I see. Faith is the solid foundation of our relationship)." The women

show solidarity in faith through remembering each other's concerns in prayer. P4, P11,

P13, P14, P16, P27, P32, P45, and P48 mentioned that prayers have been one of the most significant help they have received from the women in the community. P40 credited the growth of her faith to the women in her community: *"Sa tulong ng mga kapwa ko babae dito sa Culiat, natuto akong magdasal na nandoon ang pananampalataya na sasagutin ako ng Diyos. Natuto na din ako na sinasama ko sila sa dasal ko* (With the help of my fellow women here in Culiat, I learned to pray with the faith that God would answer me. I have also learned to include them in my prayers)."

Subcode: God's Word

Aside from prayer, the women identified the study of God's Word as a means to strengthen their faith. P39 shared that God's word is what helps them develop: *"Ang pinaka nakakatulong po sa aming pagunlad sa buhay ay nag-aaral po kami ng Salita ng Diyos para makilala ang Diyos. Marami po kaming pinagaaralan na bumabago sa buhay namin* (The most helpful in our development in life is that we study the Word of God to know God. We learn many things that transform our lives)." P4 observed the transformation brought about by God's Word to the women's lives in the Antipolo research locale. She shared, *"Sa tulong po ng Salita ng Diyos, mayroon pong mga pagbabago sa mga buhay namin. Halimbawa dati po hindi umiimik, sinasarili lang ang problema. Ngayon po, natututo na po na magbahagi ng kanilang mga saloobin. Yung mga di kaaya-ayang ugali nababago, nagiging bagong mas mabuting tao po* (With the help of God's Word, there have been changes in our lives. For example, before, I tended to not say anything, I just kept the problem to myself. Now, I am learning to share my thoughts. Even my unpleasant habits are changed, I am becoming a new and better person)."

P23 also shared similar observation among her fellow women in Taytay:
"*Nakita ko talaga kung paano lumago kaming mga kababaihan, physically, mentally at spiritually. Kasi ang laki talaga ng tulong ng Word of God* (I really saw how we grew, physically, mentally and spiritually. The Word of God helps greatly). *"* P16 who was in the same FGD added, *"Yung pagunlad kasi hindi kasi sa pera lang or sa trabaho, nasa mabuting relasyon din yan kay Jesus at nasa pagkatao yan…hindi mo maishe-share sa iba ang pagunlad, kung sa sarili mo hindi mo nakikita yun sa loob mo* (Development is not just about money or work, it is also about having a good relationship with Jesus and about having a good character… you cannot share development with others, if you do not see it in yourself)." P21 shared that to truly thrive, one needs to have a sense of God's calling in life: "*Sa akin kasi ang pag-unlad hindi lang naman basta nakatapos, or narating mo na yung gusto mo marating. Pag-unlad sa akin, magawa mo yung misyon mo, misyon mo kung bakit ka nandito ka sa mundo. Kaya kailangan po ng pananampalataya at direksyon galing sa Word of God."* (For me, development is not just finishing college, or reaching what you have aimed for. Progress for me is to be able to do your mission, your mission here on earth. That is why we need faith and direction from the Word of God.)

The participants affirm what Chilean sociologist of religion, Christián Parker, has been advocating since: that there are questions and needs that economic growth alone cannot satisfy (Parker 1996, 248-259). For instance, P16's previous comment points to Jayakumar Christian's view of development as the poor's rediscovery of their true identity—that one is more than his or her economic status and is made to be a part of a "covenant quality community" with God and with others (Christian, 1994, 336). Also,

P21's remark relates to Vinay Samuel's idea of the poor's recovery of their sense of value and dignity, understanding that they have a *vocare* or calling (Keller 2012; Myers 2011, 178). Development genuinely occurs when the poor acknowledges that they have been given gifts to contribute to the well-being of others, especially to the redemptive purpose of God in salvation history (Bediako 1996, 8). This development happens among the women as they spoke about how faith in God and their faith community help them progress.

Subcode: Divine Help in Times of Troubles

The code "faith" also refers to how the women perceive God as the one sending divine help to them in times of troubles. P2 mentioned, *"Nakakaluwag po sa [kalooban] kapag lumalapit po kay Kristo. Sa lahat po ng problem po na kinakaharap, ko basta maikukuwento ko sa Diyos nagkakaroon po ako ng bagong pagasa* ("It lightens up [my heart] when I draw near to Christ. With all the problems I face, I just tell them to God, then, I find new hope)." More than the obvious financial challenges the participants face, the women repetitively mentioned marital woes as one of their chief challenges. P3, for instance, mentioned that when her husband has left her and their four children, she turned to her faith to survive the separation. "*Noong iniwan po ako ng asawa ko, kumapit po ako sa pananampalataya ko at sa panalangin,* (When my husband left me, I clung to my faith and prayer),"she commented.

The other participants also shared how their faith in God has helped them survive their respective marital strains. P10 from Antipolo mentioned how her husband changed through her faith in God, together with the prayers of the women from her neighborhood and the center. P10 remarked, "*Dati po grabe siyang adik sa sigarilyo at*

sinasaktan niya ako, pero ngayon po nagbago na siya…Ang pinagdarasal namin ngayon ay magkatrabaho siya ulit (He used to be addicted to cigarettes, and he would hurt me. But now, he has changed…What we are praying for now is for him to get a new job).”

P15 also recalled how her friend's faith has changed her and her marriage for the better: “*Noong nakakilala na si P10 sa Panginoon, lumakas ang loob niya. Sinabi niya sa asawa niya na kung hindi sya magbabago, wala na siyang bahay na uuwian. Paunti-unti nagbago ang mister niya* (When P10 met the Lord, she became more courageous. She told her husband that if he would not change, he would have no family to come home to. Little by little, her husband has changed).” P12 from the same FGD also disclosed the story of transformation in their lives. *“Pinaka the best na nangyari sa buhay namin is yung lalong lumalim ung pag kakakilala naming sa Lord, lalo na ung asawa ko. Ang laki talaga ng pinagbago nya; hindi na sya nagiiinom; hindi na sya nagmumura. Yun yung isa talaga sa pinakamagandang nangyari sa* amin (The best thing that happened in our lives was we got to know the Lord deeper, especially my husband. He changed greatly; he no longer drinks; he no longer swears. That was one of the best things that happened to us).”

P41 from the research locale in Quezon City has a similar story. She shared how her husband used to be a gambler, drunkard, and womanizer. But when she began to know *Isa* (Jesus)*,* she prayed in faith for her husband to change. The women from the center joined her in praying also. P37 and P46 who are neighbors and close friends of P41 testified how P41's husband changed. P46 commented, *“Naging saksi ako sa pagbabago ng mister ni P41. By faith and prayers sa Diyos, tumigil sya sa pag-inom at naging mabuting asawa kay P41 at ama sa mga anak nila* (I witnessed the change of

P41's husband. By faith and prayers to God, he stopped drinking and became a good husband to P41 and father to their children.)"

Intimate partner violence (IPV) continues to plague Filipino families. Abuse and violence negatively impact the victims and even the perpetrators. Nevertheless, the ones who also bear the brunt are the children—they exhibit symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorders and showed a reduced sense of security (Rakovec-Felser 2014). The children are victims of the abuse because even when they were mere witnesses to the abuse, trauma occurs as they observe with helplessness and hopelessness (Campbell and Lewandowski, 1997). Furthermore, a study of children in abusive households in the Philippines showed the likelihood of "intergenerational transmission" of intimate partner violence (Fehringer and Hindin, 2008). Despite the gloomy downward spiral of abusive households, experts affirm that the trajectories for the victims and perpetrators could change (Rakovec-Felser 2014). This is possible through collaborative efforts by the community where the families belong—neighbors, schoolmates, workmates, and even faith-based organizations need to be involved. Beyond criminal prosecutions, the desired change could come when members of the community are aware—reducing aggressive incidents—and when the community helps in introducing new values, new thinking processes, and relationship skills that are incompatible with violent behavior (Rakovec-Felser 2014). These are what paved the way for the positive change in P10's and P41's households.

Subcode: Growth in Relationships

From all research locales, participants identified a correlation of the growth in their faith in God with the growth of their relationships with their children. As observed

by Maggay (2015, 200) from the data of women who participated in faith-based

organizations' initiatives, the women's faith experience bring wholeness that help

improve their family relationships and spills over into positively influencing the well-

being of their community. P13 shared, "*Ngayon po ang mga anak namin tinuturuan na*

po namin silang mag-pray bago kumain, bago matulog. Tinuturuan nadin namin sila

magbasa ng story sa Bible. Dati po kasi lagi ko silang sinisigawan; hindi ko sila

sinasabihan na mahal ko sila. Ngayon lumalaki sila sa pagmamahal, hindi sa palo (Now,

we teach our children to pray before eating, before going to bed. We also teach them to

read Bible stories. I used to always shout at them; I don't tell them I love them. Now

they grow in love, not in beating)." P37, P41, and P48 shared similar insight on how their

faith in God enriched their relationships with their family members. P37 elaborated,

"*Yung faith po natin sa Diyos, yung relasyon mo sa Diyos, dun po naguumpisa yung*

pagunlad mo sa buhay mo. Sa Word of God kasi mayroon kang natututunan sa relasyon

ng pamilya mo…Kasi kahit may pera ka kung hindi naman maganda yung relasyon mo

sa Diyos at sa pamilya, wala rin po. Sasama [susunod] na lang po yung pagunlad sa

trabaho o negosyo kung maayos po yung faith mo at pakikisama mo sa lahat ng tao, lalo

na sa pamilya mo (Our faith in God, your relationship with God, that is where the

improvement of your life begins. In the Word of God, you can learn something about

relationships and family. Even if you have money, if your relationship with God and your

family is not good, it means nothing. Development in work or business will follow if you

have faith and you have a good relationship with everyone, especially your family)."

Category Two Code: Stewardship
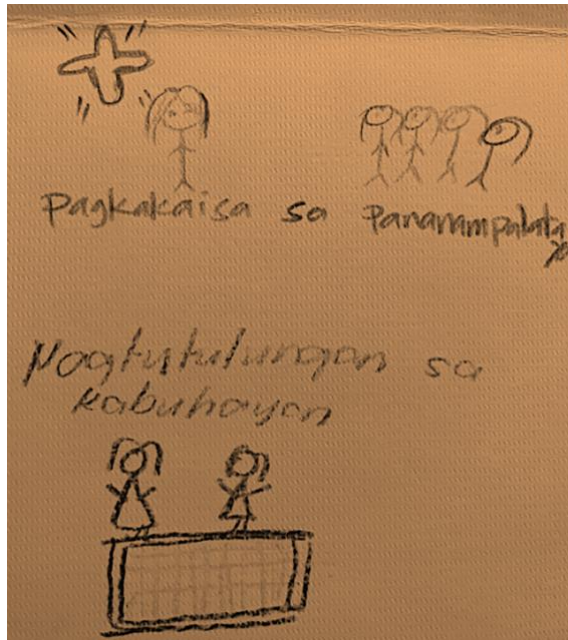
Figures 16-17. P3 and P4's storyboard drawing; P19's storyboard cutout depicting the code "stewardship"

Under the code "stewardship," the subcode "livelihood/finances" emerged. P3 and P4's group identified that what they value most about their relationship in the community is their journey of faith which goes hand in hand with their teamwork in livelihood. The handwritten caption on their illustration translates in English to: "solidarity in faith; helping each other in livelihood." The other image is a magazine cutout by P19 that shows how her relationship with women in their neighborhood teaches her many things, from group loans and micro-enterprise to God's Word and living harmoniously with others. "*Kahit po wala pa akong pamilya, natutunan ko na po paano magnegosyo at mag-ipon. Pinaka importante din po natutunan ko yung Bible para maging mabuti po ang asal ko po* (Even though I do not have a family yet, I have learned how to do business and save. It is also very important that I learn about the Bible so I could build a good character)," she expounded.

Figures 18-19. Storyboard drawings by P1 and P29 depict care for their environment and maintaining cleanliness in their communities

Still under the code "stewardship," subcode "creation care" emerged. P1 and P29 perceived that one of the most important roles of the women in their respective communities is taking care of their surroundings and managing garbage disposal. P1 from Antipolo shared, *"Kapag nakita po naming na maraming basura sa paligid ng kanal, sasabihin ko po sa mga kapitbahay ko, 'Tulungan ninyo ako; ipunin natin yung basura at ilagay natin sa sako para pag dumating ang basura ng truck matatapon natin ng maayos'*(When we see a lot of garbage in the canal, I will tell my neighbors, 'Help me; let's collect the garbage and put it in the sack so that when the garbage truck arrives we can dispose of it properly').*"* Same is true for P29 who lives in Taytay:*"Minsan may pagkakataon na 'di nalilinis ng ibang kapitbahay namin ang paligid nila. Linilinisan na lang namin, lalo na yung dumi ng mga hayop. Sa sapa ganoon din po; tulong-tulong kami para malinis at maayos ang kapiligiran namin* (There are times when other neighbors would not clean their surroundings. We just clean it, especially those animal waste. It is the same with the creek near us; we work together to keep our environment clean and orderly).*"*

"Stewardship" emerged as the second-highest in frequency on category two. There were 46 segments coded as "stewardship" in the collected data from the participants. "Stewardship" is a value that the women learned from God's Word and financial training. The code "stewardship' represents the women's statements on the management of their finances and the significance of their work. Themes on creation care

such as sanitation, garbage disposal, and community gardening also emerged. These statements of the participants were also coded as "stewardship."

Subcode: Livelihood and Finance

There are two discernable subcodes under this code; the first one is "livelihood and finance". The women deemed that livelihood training help women progress albeit in small steps. P42 who has learned how to create wallets from discarded foil packs mentioned: "*Sa akin naman po kahit maliit na pagunlad, nangyayari po dahil natuto po akong gumawa ng wallet. Nagtulungan kaming magkakapitbahay at nagkakaisa para gumawa ng livelihood [activities]* (For me, even small progress happens because I learned to make wallets. We work together as neighbors, united in doing livelihood [activities]). " P38 and P39 who also make wallets from foil packs mentioned how the livelihood program helped send their children to school. P38 commented, *"Dati po yung mga anak ko, pumapasok ng gutom. Ngayon yung kita ko sa [paggawa ng] wallet pambili ng almusal nila atsaka baon nila sa eskwela* (My children used to go to school hungry. Now my income from [making] wallets help me buy their breakfast and food for when they are in school. "

P6 from another research locale expressed similar thoughts, "*Yung pagawa ng ng basahan naming magkakapitbahay, pakikilahok po yun sa ma gawaing nagpapaunlad. Sa amin po, makakain kami ng maayos sa araw-araw, pagunlad na din po* (Making rag rugs with our neighbors is also participation in activities for development. For us, that we can have our meals every day is also progress). P4 added, *"Sa paggawa ng basahan, sabay-sabay po kaming umununlad tulong- tulong po kaming makatapos sa mga toka namin para kumita po kami* (By making rags, we progress together. We help each other

finish our quotas so that we can all earn money).” P27 who works in a factory teaches her neighbors how to paint and embellish the ornaments so they could also earn. She shared, *“Masaya po ako na kakatulong sa kabuhayan ng mga kapitbahay ko. Minsan po kailangan ko lang i-retouch para walang problema sa quality control. ‘Pag nabayaran na po ako, binibigay ko na rin po yung kita nila.* (I am happy to help my neighbors with work. Sometimes I just need to retouch so that there is no problem with quality control. Once I'm paid, I also give them their income).”

Nonetheless, it is never just about earning money for the women. P40 noted the change in herself after connecting with the women in her community and joining the livelihood program. *“Dati kasi po wala din po akong kaalam-alam sa mga ganyang bagay; ang gusto ko lang tumambay, mamasyal. Hindi ko naisip na may ganito palang ugnayan [ng mga kababaihan]. Noong gumagawa sila ng wallet natuto akong gumawa ng wallet. Yung oras ko ngayon, nakagugol na sa tamang [makabuluhang] gawain.* (I used to have no knowledge of such things; I just want to hang out, gallivant. I never thought such a connection [with other women] exists. When they were making wallets, I learned to make wallets with them. My time is now spent on good [productive] activities.” Work in its original design was a means of human dignity because through it all of people’s good capacities and potentialities are realized (Keller 2012). P40 points this out as she shared her transformation from being aimless and unproductive to purposeful and fruitful part of her community.

Work also reflects God’s image in humanity as creative beings (Keller 2012, 49-51). P2 mentioned that she and the other women who weave rag rugs enjoy conceptualizing and sharing new designs and color combination for their products. P45

also shared the pride that her piece of work gives her: "*Sa straw bag po, natutuwa po ako. Kasi kapag magawa ko na po yun tapos maganda yung kinalabasan, ako po ung tao na…Naiiisip ko na, "paano ko nagawa ito?" Nasa loob pala ito ng kaisipan ko* (With the straw bags, I am happy. Because when I create them and then the product is good, I feel very happy…. I think to myself, "How did I do this?" It was in my mind all along)."

The participants also demonstrated their enterprising abilities. P16, P19, and P36 shared that while people think women in poor communities are only busy gossiping, the truth is, they also help each other through working toward micro-enterprises, selling food or clothes. P19 shared that she learned many small business ideas from the women in their community. P16 added, *"Nagse-sharing din kami ng mga opinions sa mga negosyo. Kaya mas mapapaunlad pa namin ang mga sarili namin through ganitong usapan* (We also share opinions about businesses. We further develop ourselves through these conversations)." On a separate FGD, P36 noted, *"Umuunlad po kami kapag napag-isipan ng bawat isa na magnegosyo…sabay-sabay kami namamalengke [ng paninda] para tipid* (We progress when we think business ideas… we also market [for our buy and sell goods] to save money)."

The women also learned how to organize and take group loans from local banks to put up businesses. P16, P18, P20, and P21 who have joined these groups shared that three to fifteen people can come together to take out loans from the small banks in the area which they can use for retail business. Since Taytay is known for its garment industry, most of the women take out loans to put up small garments stores. P18 shared, *"Natuto po kaming maging good payers kasi kung hindi po namin mabayaran sa oras ang nahiram namin, hindi na kami makakaulit* (We have learned to be good payers

because if we do not pay what we borrowed on time, we won't be able to loan again)."

P21 shared that the groups need to be committed to help each other so they can maintain

good records on their account. She commented, "*Dapat po tulungan talaga para lahat po*

ay nakakapag-hulog. Minsan po kailangan ng iba na mag-abono pero nababayaran din

naman po pag nakaluwag-luwag na yung hindi agad nakabayad. (We need to help each

other so everyone can pay their contributions. Sometimes we need to pay for those who

cannot pay yet, but we also get reimbursed)." When approached with a holistic purview,

one that balances the technical aspect of microfinance as well as the spiritual aspect of

stewardship and work, studies have proven that microfinance could help both in

responding to the poor's basic needs, as well as in creating wealth through income-

earning enterprises (Juan 2012, 127).

The code "stewardship" does not only refer to how women manage to earn a

living, but also to how they manage what they have earned. For P11, stewardship means

applying what they have learned from the Bible and financial literacy seminars: *"Sa mga*

Bible study at sa financial training, natututo kami. Malaking bagay yun lalo na pag

nanay ka, yung pagbudget sa bahay at mga gastusin. Kailangan isabuhay mo din. Kasi

nakinig ka nga pero kung walang application; useless, diba? Pero kung nakinig ka tapos

inapply mo, ang ganda (We learn through Bible studies and financial trainings. That is an

important thing, especially when you are a mother, budgeting for household expenses.

You need to put what you have learned into practice. Because if you listened but did not

apply; it is useless, right? But if you listened, then, you applied it, that's what is good). "

P14 compared how she handled her finances before and after learning from the Bible, as

well as financial literacy training. She shared, *"Dati po hindi ako marunong magbudget;*

nagsusugal pa po ako noon. Kaya pagsumasahod yung asawa ko…bayad utang lang. Ngayon natuto na po akong magbudget at magbigay ng ika-pu sa simbahan."(I did not know how to budget; I used to gamble. So, when my husband's salary comes…it is just used to pay off our debts. Now I have learned to budget, and give tithes to the church)." During the time of the FGD, P14 shared that she just opened a sari-sari store or a neighborhood sundries store in their area. P10 who belongs to P14's FGD and is also a part of their community center attested to this change: "*Dati po waldas-waldas kami…Natuto na po kaming mag-open ng [bank] account at kumuha ng insurance.* (We used to just waste our money…We have now learned to open [bank] accounts and get insurance)."

The women from Culiat also shared similar experience. P37 mentioned, *"Wala po akong alam noon sa savings; ang alam ko lang gastos dito, gastos diyan. Ngayon kaming lahat mayroon na kaming savings* (I knew nothing about savings before; all I know is spend here, spend there. Now we all have savings)." P41 who is P37's neighbor explained that this effort among the women in their neighborhood is what they call, "community savings." P41 shared, "*Noong sumali ako sa community savings , natuto akong magsave; tinuturuan kami paano magkaroon ng financial breakthrough. Yung pag-iipon sasamahan mo ng dasal. Ngayon po wala na akong utang, ako na po ang nagbibigay sa mga kapamilya ko.* (When I joined *comsa*, I learned howto save; we were taught how to have a financial breakthrough. You need to do both saving money and praying. Now, I don't have any debt, and I am the one giving to my family and relatives)."

Many Filipino families have fallen into debt traps—household debt in the Philippines is at a near-record of over P2 trillion (Dumlao Abadilla, 2021). This number has been particularly exacerbated by the worst economic recession and job losses in the country's history due to the COVID pandemic. The research conducted by Forrester Consulting which looked at the state of banking and financial wellness in the Asia-Pacific region indicated that seven out of ten Filipinos struggle with debt (Dumlao Abadilla, 2021). The financial literacy seminars coupled with the study of the Bible and principles on money proved helpful to set the women in urban poor communities free of debt traps.

Not only are the women able to become debt-free, but some of the women have also put their finances on important purchases and expenses such as buying their piece of land and ensuring their children remain in school. These purchases and expenses show how the women in urban poor communities work towards upward social mobility. P12 cheerfully shared, "*Nakabili po kami ng lupa, kahit hindi ganoong kalaki…Nagpre-pray pa po kami ng pampatayo bahay* (We were able to buy a piece of land, even though it is not that big… We are still praying for funds to build the house)." P14 also shared that she and her husband have purchased a small property which they are currently using to raise a few hogs for business. Some of the women commented on how they have learned to value their children's education more.

P48 considers the studies of her children as the *puhunan* or investment for a better future. This view of P48 affirms that in Filipino society, education remains to be a significant factor in upward social mobility, and high school education is proven to be the threshold (Cudia (2017, 36). With every additional year of schooling after high school, one increases their earning power and puts a halt to intergenerational poverty (World

Bank 2018a). P18 observed how good stewardship of finances helped the women put the children in their families through college. She shared, "*May ibang parents dito sa community na nagsasabi 'sana maka-graduate din yung anak namin,' kasi nakita nila na kinaya namin. Nagkaka-hope din sila.* (There are other parents here in the community who say 'I hope our children can graduate too,' because they see that we made it. They also find hope).*"* P18 finished BA in Education just two years ago, and she is the very first in her family to finish college.

Subcode: Creation Care

The second subcode under "stewardship" is "creation care." In all three research locales, it was apparent that keeping their communities clean, as well as caring for their environment, is a daily task that still falls upon the shoulders of the women. P6 shared why these communal tasks are often left to the women, "*puro mga babae po ang nakakasama sa gawaing pang-komunidad kasi ang mga lalaki po ay may trabaho. Laging wala sila* (it is only the women who participate in community work because men have jobs elsewhere. They are always gone)." P6's comment provides an insight to the general observation of development thinkers and practitioners: because women are more concerned with the care tasks in their families and communities, they are sensitized to the needs and threats to the well-being of their family and community members, as well as their surroundings (Witte-Garland 1988, xii; Ledwith 2016, 150-151; Maggay 2015).

The urban poor community in Solid Cement cannot be reached by the city's garbage truck; it is tucked uphill in the rocky quarry mountain and can only be reached on foot. The women initiated a group chat to coordinate when they will bring their garbage on the foot of the mountain where the garbage truck would pass. P4 shared,

"*Hindi po namin naririnig ang busina ng [garbage] truck dahil malayo po kami. Minsan po umaalis po sila [garbage collectors] agad, kaya pagbaba namin, wala na po yung truck. Kapag ganoon po, nabubulok sa sobang dami at tagal—tuwing sabado lang po kumuha ng basura. Napakabaho at nagkakasakit po ang mga bata sa dumi. Kaya po gumawa na kami ng group chat para laging makuha ang basura namin.*" (We cannot hear the [garbage] truck's horn because our homes are far. Sometimes they [garbage collectors] leave immediately, so when we go down, the truck is gone. When that happens, the garbage rots— they only collect trash every Saturday. The garbage stinks and the children get sick. So we made a group chat to make sure they can always collect our trash). P1 who lives in the same community mentioned about calling the women in the neighborhood to help clean the small canal in their area. *"Kapag nakita po namin na maraming basura sa paligid ng kanal, sasabihin ko po sa mga kapitbahay ko, 'Tulungan ninyo ako; ipunin natin yung basura at ilagay natin sa sako para pag dumating ang basura ng truck matatapon natin ng maayos'*("When we see a lot of garbage around the canal, I will tell my neighbors, 'Help me; let's collect the garbage and put it in the sack so that when the garbage truck arrives we can dispose of it properly'),*"* she shared. P1 also shared about the community garden that the women initiated in their community: "*Nagtatanim po kami sa harap ng mga bahay namin ng mga talbos at ibang gulay para ibenta namin o kaya po para ulamin* (We plant sweet potato tips and other vegetables in front of our houses for us to sell or to eat)."

The women in the research locale at Taytay live near a stream that comes from Antipolo. While the municipality garbage trucks can reach them better than the women in Antipolo, the constant problem for the women in Rowenas is the downstream

accumulation of trash. P31 noted that cleaning their alleys, as well as clearing the stream

of garbage is a daily activity for women, and it has become an activity that bonds the

women together. P29 added, *"Minsan may pagkakataon na 'di nalilinis ng ibang*

kapitbahay namin ang paligid nila. Linilinisan na lang namin, lalo na yung dumi ng mga

hayop. Sa sapa ganoon din po; tulong-tulong kami para malinis at maayos ang

kapiligiran namin (There are times when our other neighbors do not clean their

surroundings. We just clean it, especially the animal waste. It is the same with the creek

near us; we help each other to keep our environment clean and orderly).*"*

Finally, in Quezon City, the problem is garbage disposal and sanitation due to

the dense population of this urban poor community. The latest census of Quezon City

recorded about 67, 804 residents in this barangay (City Population, n.d.). The participants

shared that there are about 1,000 families in their compound. The garbage of the

compound, specifically wrappers, and packaging of candies, chips, coffee mix sachets,

shampoo sachets, etc. often clogs the sewers and causes flooding. The women observed

that their livelihood program which teaches the women in the community to weave wallet

from discarded foil packs help control the garbage problem in the compound. P43

noted*,"Opo, ma'am, nakakatulong talaga kami sa kalikasan, kasi yung basura*

nababawasan kahit papaano eh. Tulad ngayon pati balot ng chitchirya pwede na din

gawing wallet (Yes, ma'am, we help the environment, because the trash is reduced

somehow. Now, even chips wrapper can also be made into a wallet.)." P42 thought of the

same and shared, *"Malaki po talaga ang tulong namin sa kalikasan kasi siyempre kahit*

anong wrapper nagagawa na naming wallet o kaya bag. Napansin ko po na mas kaunti

na ang basura namin (We help the environment a lot because we can make wallets or

bags from any type of wrapper. I noticed that we have less garbage now). P45 who makes

bags from plastic straws, along with the recycled wallet attested, "May pera sa basura po

(There is money in the trash)." The women in Quezon City help in what the Ellen

MacArthur Foundation calls the "circular economy of plastics," a system wherein plastic

materials are treated not for single usage but are reused and repurposed (Business Mirror,

2021). They have, in their small way, given rise to an industry that makes a profit out of

the trash and helps the environment at the same time.

Category Two Code: Harmony

Figure 20. Storyboard cutout by P26, Housewife
P26 made a paper cutout design to represent harmony and peace of the women in their
neighborhood. When asked what are the characteristics of the the relationships of women
in their community, she explained: "*Kung sa akin po ang sagot ko sa tanong ninyo ay*

pagkakaisa. Mayroon po kaming pakakaisa dito—matanda man o batang babae magkakabuklod po kami (My answer to your question is unity. We are in harmony here — whether the women are old or young, we are in solidarity).

With 42 coded segments, the code "harmony" ranked third in frequency. Repeatedly, the participants used the words "unity," "*pagkakaisa*" and "*magkakabuklod*," to describe the characteristics of the connection of women in the community. P39 and P41 from Quezon City perceive that unity is what their women's group is known for. P39 shared*, "Dito po kami nakilala sa compound; yung katangian po ng samahan namin na mayroong pakakaisa, pakikisama po* (This is what we are known for in the compound; the characteristic of our organization is that there is unity,fellowship.*"* P20 who grew up in Taytay had a similar thought about the women in their community. She acknowledged that while differences exist among the women, they make an effort to live in harmony. P20 shared, *"Ang mga kababaihan kasi dito may mga kanya-kanyang paniniwala; may kanya-kanya silang pananaw sa buhay. Pero kahit ganon yung pag-iisip or kanilang pananaw nagyu-unite sila at ginagawa nila ang lahat para mamuhay ng mapayapa* (Women here have their own beliefs; they have their own outlook on life. But even with different mindsets or points of view, they unite and they do everything to live in peace)."

Subcode: Trust

To keep the unity and peace among the women in the community, P10 noted that patience and understanding, or in other words, tolerance is important. She shared, *"Yung puno na drawing ko, ito yung samahan naming mga babae: mas nagiging maunawain kami, mas tumitibay ang pagkakaisa namin* (The tree that I drew, this is our relationship as women: the more understanding we become, the stronger our unity gets)." In addition to patience and understanding, P21 acknowledged the importance of trust to

keep the harmony and peace in the women's relationships with each other. "*Kahit na nga may kumakalat na tsismis na pwedeng sumira sa inyo, dapat nandoon yung trust mo sa isang isang babaeng kagaya mo…Trust na iingatan niya ang reputasyon mo. Kung wala ng trust, magwawatak-watak na* (Even if there are rumors that can ruin your relationship with the women, you should trust your fellow…Trust that she will protect your reputation. Without trust, your relationship will disintegrate)."

The women also credit their *pag-unlad* or development because they live in harmony with each other. As their FGD group finalizes their final story board, P5 shared: "*Dahil po sa pagkakaisa naming mga kababihan nagkakaroon po kami ng pag-unlad. Tulad na lang po sa trabaho namin, nagkakaisa kami sa paggawa ng basahan, at sa kapaligiran namin, nagkakaisa kami sa paglilinis* (Because of our unity as women, we are making progress. Just like in our work, we are united in making rags, even in our environment, we are united in keeping it clean).*"* P11 had similar thoughts; their bond as women in the community causes them to help and uplift one another. She remarked, *"Kung wala ang pagkakaisa namin, hindi kami magbubuklod para iangat ang isa't isa* (Without our solidarity, we will not unite to uplift each other).*"* Above all, the women shared a clear understanding that the harmony they experience is from the Lord. P11 shared, *"Lahat po ng mayroon tayo galing sa Panginoon at sa tulong din ng Panginoon: yung kapayapaan po sa puso natin, yung pagkakaisa naming mga babae dito sa Solid [Cement], yung pagibig* (Everything we have comes from the Lord and also with the help of the Lord: the peace in our hearts, the unity of our women here in Solid [Cement], the love).*"*

The data provided by the participants regarding living in harmony as a vital part of what it means to survive and thrive coincide with Wolterstorff's (1983, 71) discussion of *Shalom.* For Wolterstorff (1983) there is no scientific advancement or development that can substitute for what it means to build a relationship with oneself, with one's neighbor, and with God. It is just, peaceful, and merciful relationships among individuals in the society that constitutes transformation, even transformation from impoverished lives to lives of purpose and significance.

Category Two Code: Generosity

Figure 21. Storyboard drawing by P32, a Sari-sari store Owner
Many of the women from the three research sites identified generosity as a virtue that they have learned as they grew in faith. Their acts of generosity have also become a means to strengthen their relationships. P35 shared, "*Tumitibay po ang ugnayan ng mga kababaihan sa pamamagitan ng pagbibigayan ng ayuda tulad ngayong sitwasyon ng pandemic.* (The relationship between women is being strengthened by providing help to one another like this situation in the pandemic)." P31 shared that generosity can be shown in small ways, like giving ornamental plants to other mothers in the neighborhood. P13, P34, P38, and P41, nevertheless, shared stories of generosity that helped save their lives and that of their family members.

Subcode: Generosity in Resources

With 39 coded segments, "generosity" ranked fourth in frequency. This code accounts for data that convey the willingness of the participants to share their valuable resources to others as a response to what they are learning from God's Word. P13 shared her belief that one's ability to be generous is from God: "*Alam ko po na lahat ay galing kay God. Ang mga tao ginamit niya para maabot ang pangagailangan namin. Kaya ngayon, ako din po nagbibigay sa iba sa abot ng aking makakaya* (I know that everything comes from God. God used the people to meet our needs. So now, I also give to others as much as I can)." Later in the FGD, P13 detailed that generosity is showing Christ to others. She commented, *"Minsan kung wala silang bigas, or asukal or ano man po ang hingiin basta nakakapagbigay. Kasi sabi nga ni Lord mas maganda yung nakakapagbigay. Ikaw Kristiano ka…sa pamamagitan nun nakikita nila si Kristo sa'yo* (Sometimes if they don't have rice, sugar, or whatever they need, I try to give as long as I can. Because God said that it is better to give. Because you are a Christian…through your giving they could see Christ in you)."

Words such as *pagbibigay*, *bigayan*, *sakripisyo*, and "share-share" are also associated to this code. P4 relates that the deepening of their relationship led to generosity. She shared that if one of the women could not finish her quota for the rag rugs production, they would help her and give her the full payment for the rags. "*Hindi po [namin kinuha ang kita niya], talagang samahan na po namin…Ganoon po kami; hindi po kami nagsisingilan, pero tulungan lang. Parang magkakapatid talaga* (No [we did not take her income], that's how our relationship is…We are like that; we don't charge for any help, but we assist each other. We are like siblings).*"* P7 who is also from P4's area

identified generosity as a factor for women's development in their community. She

shared, "*Para sa akin, ma'am, yung pagbibigayan naming mga kababaihan ang*

tumulong sa aming pagunlad…basta kung ano yung mayroon na maibibgay,

maishashare para dun sa pagsasamahan (For me, ma'am, the women's generosity

towards each other is what helps us progress…whatever we can give, we share it for the

sake of camaraderie).*"* P7's comment is supported by the participants' anecdotes

detailing how they have shared food, money, and other resources to the members of their

communities who were in greater need. Nevertheless, the most meaningful of these

anecdotes are the women's stories of generosity that saved their neighbors' lives.

Subcode: Life-Saving Generosity

P33 who lives in Taytay remembered when she had to undergo an

appendectomy, and the hospitals were requiring her to provide a down payment first. P33

narrated, *"Marami po kaming napuntahang hospital pero yung last po kailangan talaga*

ng pera (We have been to many hospitals, but even the last one we have been to really

asked for money.)*"* P33 shared that it was her neighbors who helped her financially.

"*Lumapit po ako sa kanila at hindi naman ako nabigo* (I approached them and they did

not disappoint)," P33 remarked.

P41 from Quezon City also shared a story of generosity that saved her

daughter's life. P41's youngest child was diagnosed with a congenital heart defect at

birth, and she was recommended for operation. The Philippine Heart Center Journal

claims that Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) still ranks as one of the top ten leading

causes of pediatric morbidity and mortality in the Philippines. P41's child was one of the

five to ten out of 1,000 live births who were born with congenital anomalies (Reganion

2015, 1). Recalling this health challenge, P41 shared: "*Itong bata na 'to…miracle yung nagyari dito! Dahil laging sinasabi [ng mga doctor] na dalawang taon na lang yung ano [itatagal] niya dito sa mundo. Pero by faith, inilaban namin siya* (What happened to this child is a miracle! They [the doctors] always said that she only have two years to live. But by faith, we fought for her).*"* The women from P41's community helped raise the funds for her baby daughter's precarious operation—neighbors volunteered the amount they could give, her fellow women from the center asked churches, NGOs, and politicians for help. P44 who is P41's neighbor explained, "*Sinasabi po namin sakanila kung ano po yung kailangan nilang gawin para lumapit sa isang agency…para po makahingi po sila ng tulong* (We tell them what they need to do to approach an agency… so they can ask for help).*"* P41 remarked her thanks for all who helped in her daughter's heart surgery: *"Nagpapasalamat po ako sa mga tumulong dahil sila po yung naging way para matulungan si baby* (I am thankful to those who helped because they became the way for my baby to get help)." P41 named her baby daughter with the Christian name "Faith," and she is now a healthy four-year-old.

P41's story brought to remembrance the similar story of her son who also needed a heart operation. However, unlike P41 who was able to get help from government agencies and politicians, P44 was denied of help. P44 detailed: "*Ma'am ang dami ko nang napuntahan. Pumunta na ko sa congress, pumunta na ko sa barangay…ang dami kong dala-dalang medical abstract…wala silang natulong kahit piso. Dala-dala ko pa yung anak ko, naka-pajama lang kami* (Ma'am, I looked for help in many places. I went to the congress, I went to the barangay…I had all of the medical abstracts… they did not even give me a peso. I brought my son along with me, we were

just in our pajamas). Despite completing all the paper requirements, they did not receive any assistance from the government officials. P44 tearfully related, "*Umiyak nalang kaming magasawa. Sabi ko, 'sige lang may awa naman ang Panginoon; wag tayong mawalan ng pag-asa*'(My husband and I just cried. I said, 'All right, the Lord is merciful; let us not despair ')." It was from her fellow women in the neighborhood and the Christian center in the community that P44 found the help she needed: *Lumalabas ako sa compound; nakarating ako ng Batasan sa House of Representative. Yung tumulong lang pala sa akin yung center, mga kapitbahay namin…Sila pala ung may mga busilak ang puso…yun yung isang pasalamat ko, ma'am, sa totoo lang blessings* (I was going out of the compound; I even got to Batasan in the House of Representatives. All along, it was the center, our neighbors who helped us… They are the ones with golden hearts… that is one of the thing I am grateful for, ma 'am, true blessings). P44 son's survived the crucial operation and is now studying as a scholar in a state university. P44 hopes that he will be of great help to the family's finances once he finishes his degree.

Category Two Code: Wisdom

Figure 22. Storyboard cutout by P9, a rag rug weaver
One of the common themes among the research participants is their remark on how the women in the community help provide them insights and advice regarding the problems

they face, especially insights they learn from the Bible. P9 explained, "*Itong napili kong picture ito ang nagsisimbolo ng nangyayari sa aming mga kababaihan dito. Kung may problema ang isa pinakikinggan at bawa't isa ay may pagpapakumbaba na tanggapin ang payo ng iba* (This picture I chose symbolizes what is happening to us women. If there is someone who has a problem, we listen, and everyone is humble enough to accept the advice of the other)."

Subcode: Godly Counsel

"Wisdom" ranked fifth in frequency with 32 coded segments. This code stands for the participants' statements on how they have received godly counsel from each other in times of trials or problems, more specifically, insights that the women have learned from when they are instructed with Biblical values. P33 from Taytay distinguished that what characterizes the relationships of the women in their neighborhood is their effort to direct each other towards the right path. She explained, "*mayroon po kasi kami ditong bible study po…naguusap-usap po kami tungkol sa Bibliya. Yun ang nagbibigay po ng tamang gabay sa buhay namin, kung paano po yung tamang pag-iisip po* (We have a bible study activities here…we talk about the Bible. That is what gives guidance in our lives, how to have the right mindset). P41 who lives in the compound at Quezon City professed the same. She shared how she esteems the insights and advices of her fellow-followers of Christ: "*Lagi akong nasa kanila kasi alam ko na kapag sa kanila ako pumupunta, walang ibang nagtuturo sakin ng mali. Kasi puro kabutihan, puro advice na kagandahan ang binibigay nila sa akin* (I am always with them because I know that when I go to them, no one there is teaching me wrong things. It is because they give me good advice, they teach me virtues)."

Biblical stories leverage the power of narratives and dialogues which are essential elements to how women learn through collaborative ways of knowing (Tarule 1996; Maher and Tetreault 1996). Collaborative ways of knowing best fit the way women

in urban poor communities learn—a kind of learning that is profoundly social and that cognitive process can occur through socio-cultural participation and communication (Tarule 1996; Vygotsky in Rogoff 1993, 125). For women, knowing requires both cognition and emotion (Clinchy 1996, 224). More than intellectual comprehension, "the connection must be felt viscerally" in this way of learning (Kohn 1990, 150). Through empathetic learning, the women are able to imagine the reality of others and truly experience the other through their stories.

The women in urban poor community demonstrated this way of learning as they perceive themselves as allies in learning the Bible, providing each other emotional support through godly counsel. P5 noted, "*nandiyan po sila [mga kapwa babae sa komunidad] para ilayo kami sa maling landas, para i-advice sa tama. Sila po yung nasasandalan kung baga emotional na suporta po sa amin* (They [fellow women in the community] are there to keep us from the wrong path, to give us the right advice. They are the ones we rely on for emotional support)." P36 also shared how mere sharing of stories among the women in the neighborhood turns into sharing of wise counsel and formation of a right mind. She remarked, *"Minsan napapaganda yung kwentuhan…nagpapayuhan din, kapag may problema* (There are times when our conversations goes very well…we give advice to those who are facing problems)." P24, P26, and P27 who came from the same village also added their observation that the sharing of wise advice is not only among peers. The participants noted that the older women in their community caringly admonish younger women, as well as children. P24 and P27 used the words "pagsabihan" and "pangaralan" which are words meaning to advise or teach what is good. P26 elaborated, *"Nandoon din [sa mga kababaihan] yung*

gabay ng isang nanay, para tulungan ang mga kabataang babae, para sa paglaki nila ay ganon din ang respeto nila sa mga kapwa nila, sa mga matatanda…(They [women] also give the guidance of a mother, to help young women, so when they grow up, they also have the same respect for their neighbors, for the elderly…).*"*

Subcode: Personal Growth

The wisdom that the women get from godly counsel results in many positive things in their lives. P45 shared how godly counsel transformed her and how she considers this to be a significant part of her "pagunlad" or development. She commented, "*Para sa akin, yung paglawak po ng kaisipan at napapalapit po kami sa Diyos* (For me, it is the broadening of our understanding, and how we have drawn closer to God)." P11 also shared the same thoughts; she noted the change she observed in herself, "*…nagiging positibo ako sa buhay ko ngayon sa pamamagitan ng mga positive din na tao na nakapaligid sa akin…. Nagiging iba na ang [takbo ng] utak ko* (I become positive in my life now through the positive people around me…. My [outlook] mind is changing)."

Also, the women shared how the wisdom from God's Word help them overcome anxious thoughts brought about by the pandemic. P47 shared, "*kahit na po na stress na kami dahil po sa pandemya….nababawasan po yung stress namin kasi po mayroon po kaming natututunan sa God's Word* (Even though we are stressed because of the pandemic...our stress is reduced because we are learning from God's Word). The women shared in the FGD that instead of drowning themselves in fears and negative thoughts, they have made prayers their first course of action. "*Ang unang una po kasi po ang ginagawa po, siyempre yung pagpray natin, yung faith natin sa Diyos* (The first thing we do is to pray; it is our faith in God)," one of the participants shared.

Finally, aside from positive changes in their personalities, the women also noted how wise advice improves their family relationships. These data segments on the code "wisdom" overlap with the code "faith." P37 talked about how applying what she has learned from their Bible study group improved her marriage and relationship with her children. "*Sa Word of God kasi mayroon kang natututunan sa relasyon ng pamilya mo, yung pagsasama ng mag-asawa at pagpapalaki ng mga anak* (In the Word of God, you can learn something about your family relationship, marriage and raising children)*.*" P13, P37, P41, and P48 testified of the same change they have observed in their respective families.

Category Two Code: Love
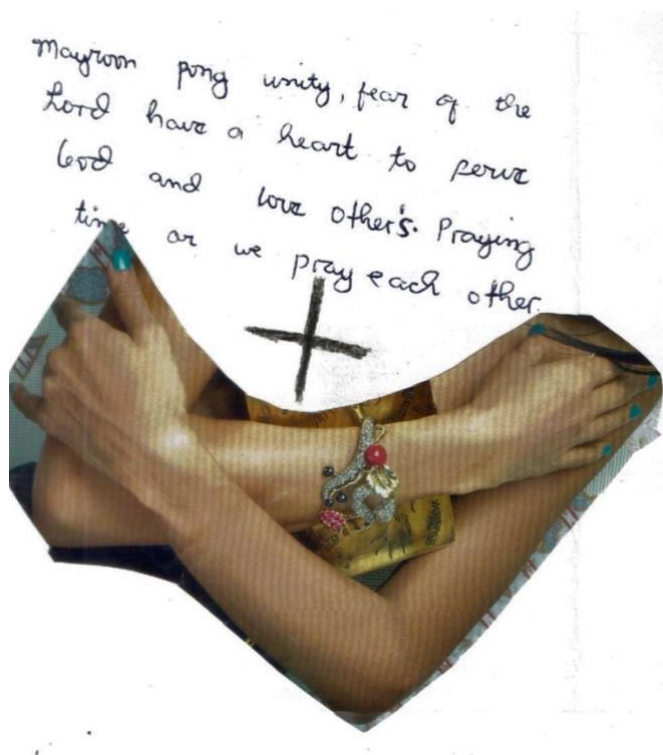
Figure 23. Storyboard cutout by P13, NGO Staff
P13 shared that their relationships are sustained by unity, fear of God, service unto God and love for others, as well as praying for each other. P6 from another FGD and storyboard batch commented:"*Mahalaga po ang pagmamahal sa kapwa. Siyempre po, hindi naman po tayo mabubuhay ng tayo lang po; kailangan matuto tayong makibagay. Kung hindi ka po marunong magmahal sa iba, hindi ka po talagang aasenso* (Loving

your neighbor is important. Of course, we cannot live on our own; we have to learn to get along with others. If you don't know how to love others, you would not really thrive).

Finally, ranking sixth with 17 coded segments is the code "love." This code is associated with the words *pagmamahal* and *pagmamahalan* which are both derived from the tagalog term "mahal" or love. The women frequently commented how the emotional and moral support they receive from their fellow women are more important than any financial help. P5 explained, *"[mas mahalaga ang comfort na binibigay ng mga kapwa babae] kasi po ang financial [na bagay] nandiyan lang po yan, pero ang comfort at pagmamahalan hindi po nawawala…Mayaman kami sa pagmamahal."* (The comfort provided by fellow women is more important] because the financial [things] are just there, but comfort and love stays… We are rich in love)." P4 expounded P5's answer: *Opo, pag binigyan ka kasi ng isang daan, ibili mo ng ulam at bigas yan wala na 'yan. Pero kapag may kaibigan ka ang nagagawa nila para sa'yo support* (Yes. When you are given one hundred pesos, you buy a dish and rice, that's all there is to it. But when you have a friend, they can support you)."

The women consider that "pagmamahalan" or having love for one another is what depicts their relationship as women in the community. P45 shared how she would describe their relationships as women in the community: "*Masaya, nagpapakita ng pagmamahal sa bawa't isa (We are happy, showing love to one other)."* P48 agreed with P45 and mentioned that love for one another in the compound is what compels them to share with each one's burden. She noted, *"Bale ang akin po, maam, pagmamahal din po. Kasi kung mahal mo ang mga kasama mo at kapitbahay mo, maiisip mo ang kalagayan nila at tutulungan mo sila* (For me, ma'am, it is love too. Because if you love your friends and neighbors, you can think of their situation and help them.)*"* Even more, the women

believe that love for one another is what helps them towards progress. P6 explained,

"*Siyempre po hindi naman po tayo mabubuhay ng tayo lang po, kailangan matuto tayong makibagay. Kung hindi ka po marunong magmahal sa iba, hindi ka po talagang aasenso* (Of course we cannot live on our own; we have to learn to get along with others. If you do not know how to love others, you would not really progress)."

Category Three: Filipino Values that Help Build Relationships for Surviving and Thriving

The fourth query of this study aims to identify and explain how the Filipino culture helps the women in urban poor communities build relationships that help them survive and thrive. Fifteen codes were determined from the responses of the participants during the first cycle of open coding (Appendix O). During the second cycle of coding, four open codes emerged: *damayan* (empathy)*, kapwa* (the self in others)*, loob* (relational will)*, and pagkakaintindihan/'di pagkakaintindihan* (understanding/misunderstanding). The four codes are *in vivo*, taken from verbatim responses of the participants. Constant comparative analysis on the four codes as well as the segments from the data that these codes represent rendered the construction of category three: the Filipino culture help the women build relationships that cause them to survive and thrive through the appreciation and practice of Filipino values such *damayan* (empathy)*, kapwa* (the self in others)*, loob* (relational will)*, and pagkakaunawaan/ 'di pagkakaunawaan* (understanding/misunderstanding).

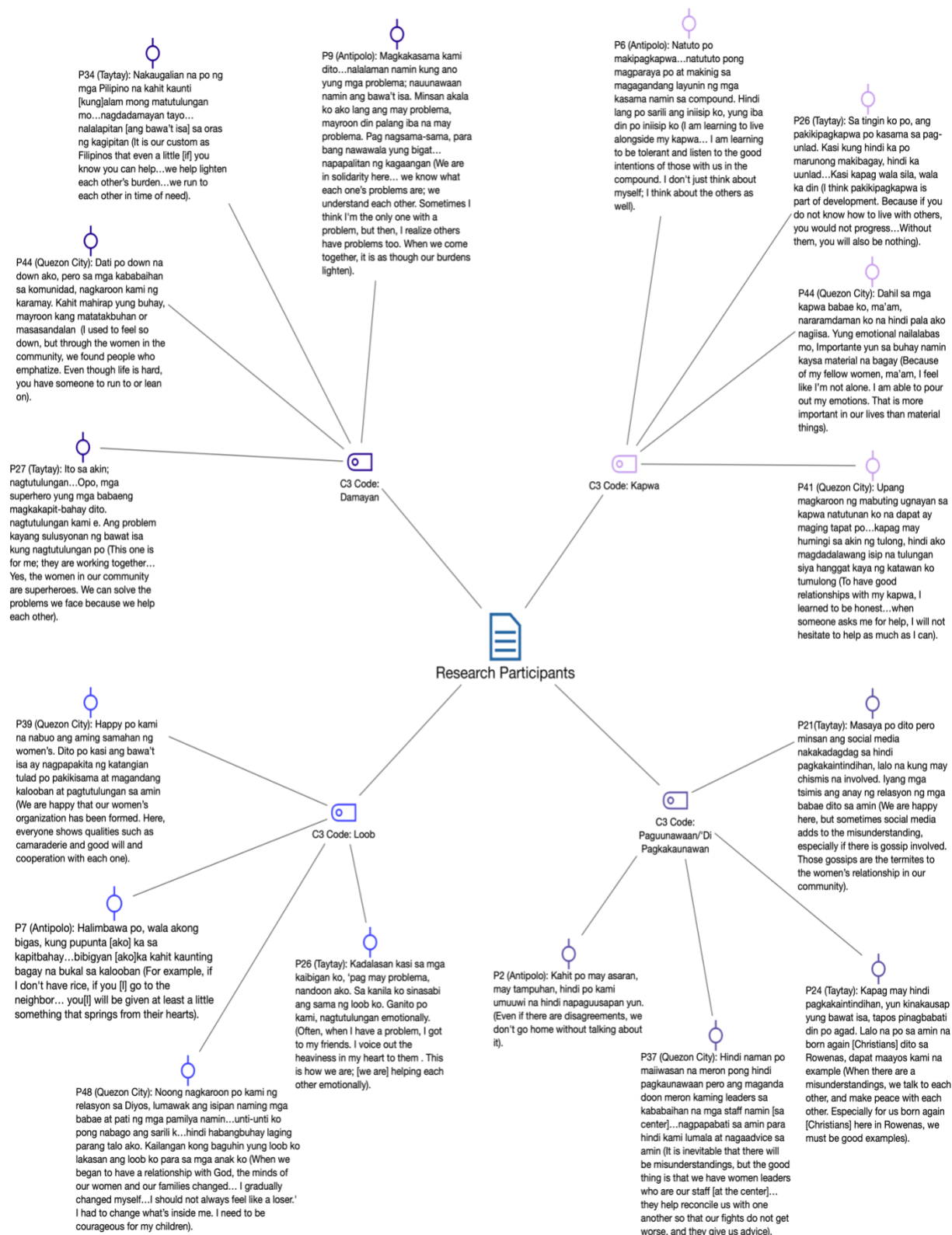# C3: Filipino Values that Help Women Build Relationships to Survive and Thrive

P34 (Taytay): Nakaugalian na po ng mga Pilipino na kahit kaunti [kung]alam mong matutulungan mo…nagdadamayan tayo… nalalapitan [ang bawa't isa] sa oras ng kagipitan (It is our custom as Filipinos that even a little [if] you know you can help…we help lighten each other's burden…we run to each other in time of need).

P9 (Antipolo): Magkakasama kami dito…nalalaman namin kung ano yung mga problema; nauunawaan namin ang bawa't isa. Minsan akala ko ako lang ang may problema, mayroon din palang iba na may problema. Pag nagsama-sama, para bang nawawala yung bigat… napapalitan ng kagaangan (We are in solidarity here… we know what each one's problems are; we understand each other. Sometimes I think I'm the only one with a problem, but then, I realize others have problems too. When we come together, it is as though our burdens lighten).

P6 (Antipolo): Natuto po makipagkapwa…natututo pong magparaya po at makinig sa magagandang layunin ng mga kasama namin sa compound. Hindi lang po sarili ang iniisip ko, yung iba din po iniisip ko (I am learning to live alongside my kapwa… I am learning to be tolerant and listen to the good intentions of those with us in the compound. I don't just think about myself; I think about the others as well).

P26 (Taytay): Sa tingin ko po, ang pakikipagkapwa po kasama sa pag-unlad. Kasi kung hindi ka po marunong makibagay, hindi ka uunlad…Kasi kapag wala sila, wala ka din (I think pakikipagkapwa is part of development. Because if you do not know how to live with others, you would not progress…Without them, you will also be nothing).

P44 (Quezon City): Dati po down na down ako, pero sa mga kababaihan sa komunidad, nagkaroon kami ng karamay. Kahit mahirap yung buhay, mayroon kang matatakbuhan or masasandalan (I used to feel so down, but through the women in the community, we found people who emphatize. Even though life is hard, you have someone to run to or lean on).

P44 (Quezon City): Dahil sa mga kapwa babae ko, ma'am, nararamdaman ko na hindi pala ako nagiisa. Yung emotional nailalabas mo, Importante yun sa buhay namin kaysa material na bagay (Because of my fellow women, ma'am, I feel like I'm not alone. I am able to pour out my emotions. That is more important in our lives than material things).

P27 (Taytay): Ito sa akin; nagtutulungan…Opo, mga superhero yung mga babaeng magkakapit-bahay dito. nagtutulungan kami e. Ang problem kayang sulusyonan ng bawat isa kung nagtutulungan po (This one is for me; they are working together… Yes, the women in our community are superheroes. We can solve the problems we face because we help each other).

C3 Code: Damayan

C3 Code: Kapwa

P41 (Quezon City): Upang magkaroon ng mabuting ugnayan sa kapwa natutunan ko na dapat ay maging tapat po…kapag may humingi sa akin ng tulong, hindi ako magdadalawang isip na tulungan siya hanggat kaya ng katawan ko tumulong (To have good relationships with my kapwa, I learned to be honest…when someone asks me for help, I will not hesitate to help as much as I can).

Research Participants

P39 (Quezon City): Happy po kami na nabuo ang aming samahan ng women's. Dito po kasi ang bawa't isa ay nagpapakita ng katangian tulad po pakikisama at magandang kalooban at pagtutulungan sa amin (We are happy that our women's organization has been formed. Here, everyone shows qualities such as camaraderie and good will and cooperation with each one).

P21 (Taytay): Masaya po dito pero minsan ang social media nakakadagdag sa hindi pagkakaintindihan, lalo na kung may chismis na involved. Iyang mga tsimis ang anay ng relasyon ng mga babae dito sa amin (We are happy here, but sometimes social media adds to the misunderstanding, especially if there is gossip involved. Those gossips are the termites to the women's relationship in our community).

C3 Code: Loob

C3 Code: Paguunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawan

P7 (Antipolo): Halimbawa po, wala akong bigas, kung pupunta [ako] ka sa kapitbahay…bibigyan [ako]ka kahit kaunting bagay na bukal sa kalooban (For example, if I don't have rice, if you [I] go to the neighbor… you[I] will be given at least a little something that springs from their hearts).

P26 (Taytay): Kadalasan kasi sa mga kaibigan ko, 'pag may problema, nandoon ako. Sa kanila ko sinasabi ang sama ng loob ko. Ganito po kami, nagtutulungan emotionally. (Often, when I have a problem, I got to my friends. I voice out the heaviness in my heart to them . This is how we are; [we are] helping each other emotionally).

P2 (Antipolo): Kahit po may asaran, may tampuhan, hindi po kami umuuwi na hindi napaguusapan yun. (Even if there are disagreements, we don't go home without talking about it).

P24 (Taytay): Kapag may hindi pagkakaintindihan, yun kinakausap yung bawat isa, tapos pinagbabati din po agad. Lalo na po sa amin na born again [Christians] dito sa Rowenas, dapat maayos kami na example (When there are a misunderstandings, we talk to each other, and make peace with each other. Especially for us born again [Christians] here in Rowenas, we must be good examples).

P48 (Quezon City): Noong nagkaroon po kami ng relasyon sa Diyos, lumawak ang isipan naming mga babae at pati ng mga pamilya namin…unti-unti ko pong nabago ang sarili k…hindi habangbuhay laging parang talo ako. Kailangan kong baguhin yung loob ko lakasan ang loob ko para sa mga anak ko (When we began to have a relationship with God, the minds of our women and our families changed… I gradually changed myself…I should not always feel like a loser.' I had to change what's inside me. I need to be courageous for my children).

P37 (Quezon City): Hindi naman po maiiwasan na meron pong hindi pagkaunawaan pero ang maganda doon meron kaming leaders sa kababaihan na mga staff namin [sa center]…nagpapabati sa amin para hindi kami lumala at nagaadvice sa amin (It is inevitable that there will be misunderstandings, but the good thing is that we have women leaders who are our staff [at the center]… they help reconcile us with one another so that our fights do not get worse, and they give us advice).

Figure 24. Category 3 MAXMap

Category Three Code: Damayan

Figures 25-26. Storyboard cutouts by P2 and P27 symbolize "damayan," how the women in their community help each other

P2 chose the image from the magazine of men working to haul a boat to the shore through its' *tarik* and *pakaway*. P2 explained the meaning of the image for her: "*Nagtutulungan po kasi minsan kapag nahihirapan na yung isa, pag 'di niya po makuha…Minsan po may mali doon sa ginagawang basahan, tinutulungan po paano maayos* (We help each other because sometimes one of us is having a hard time getting the design done…When there is something wrong with the rag rug, we help her how to fix it)." P27 chose to cut the poster of a superhero movie because for her the way the women help each is sacrificial and heroic. She shared, "*Ito sa akin; nagtutulungan…Opo, mga superhero yung mga babaeng magkakapit-bahay dito. nagtutulungan kami. Ang problem kayang sulusyonan ng bawat isa kung nagtutulungan po* (This one is for me; they are working together…Yes, the women in our community are superheroes. We can solve the problems we face because we help each other)."

Subcode: Damayan in Poverty Situations

The code "*damayan*" (empathy) has the highest frequency under category three with 74 coded segments. *"Damayan*" is derived from the word "*damay*" which means to participate in one's experience (De Guia 2005, 374). One could also perceive that "*damayan*" could be a contraction of the phrase, "*dama iyan*," which means being able to understand and share the same feeling with another. The participants of this study

used "*damayan*" and "*karamay*" to refer to the times when the women from their respective communities join them in bearing the difficulties they face. P44 recounted, "*Dati po down na down ako, pero sa mga kababaihan sa komunidad, nagkaroon kami ng karamay. Kahit mahirap yung buhay, mayroon kang matatakbuhan, or masasandalan* (I used to feel so down, but through the women in the community, we found people who empathize. Even though life is hard, you have someone to run to or lean on)."

For the participants, one cannot survive and thrive with a "*kanya-kanya*" or individualistic mentality. P29 noted, "*bilang kababaihan po, syempre nagkakaroon po tayo ng ugnayan sa pamamagitan ng pagtutulungan sa ating komunidad para po mas lalong mapaunlad tayo* (As women, we connect through helping each other in our community so that we can progress). P34 from the same FGD added, *"Nakaugalian na po ng mga Pilipino na kahit kaunti [kung]alam mong matutulungan mo…nagdadamayan tayo…nalalapitan [ang bawa't isa] sa oras ng kagipitan* (It is our custom as Filipinos that even a little [if] you know you can help…we help lighten each other's burden…we run to each other in time of need)."

"Damayan" also explains how the challenges of living in poverty pull the women together and make them allies with one another. P9 remarked, "*Magkakasama kami dito…nalalaman namin kung ano yung mga problema; nauunawaan namin ang bawa't isa. Minsan akala ko ako lang ang may problema, mayroon din palang iba na may problema. Pag nagsama-sama, para bang nawawala yung bigat…napapalitan ng kagaangan* (We are in solidarity here… we know what each one's problems are; we understand each other. Sometimes I think I'm the only one with a problem, but then, I realize others have problems too. When we come together, it is as though our burdens

lighten). "Adding to this notion, P12 who is from the same research locale chose to cutout an image of two women doing sit-ups together and explained: "*Nagtutulungan ang bawat isa. Halimbawa nalang kung mayroong isang may problema, nandiyan ang iba upang damayan siya* (Everyone helps each other. For example, if someone has a problem, others are there to help one with her)."

P27 chose a superhero movie poster to explain how *damayan* helps women find solutions to their challenges: "*Ito sa akin; nagtutulungan…Opo, mga superhero yung mga babaeng magkakapit-bahay dito. nagtutulungan kami. Ang problem kayang sulusyonan ng bawat isa kung nagtutulungan po* (This one is for me; they are working together… Yes, the women in our community are superheroes. We can solve the problems we face because we help each other)." P27's illustration can be associated with the Filipino concept of *bayanihan* which translates to mutual aid, cooperation, or cooperative endeavor (De Guia, 2005, 376). Interestingly, what ties *bayanihan* to P27's choice of super hero images is that the root word of the word—"*bayani*" in Tagalog or "*bagani*" Southern Philippine language—which means hero or heroine, one who valiantly defends and unite the people to common good (Ocampo 2016).

The participants exemplify *damayan* and *bayanihan* in mundane challenges they encounter. When it comes to livelihood, the rag rug weavers from Antipolo shared how they help each other in meeting their production quota; the enterprising women from Taytay related stories of how they pool resources together for their businesses through group loans, and the women in Culiat remarked how they teach their neighbors to weave wallets and bags from foil packs so they could have extra income. Even with the everyday task of raising their children, the women recounted stories of they share this

burden. P24 shared, "*Damayan maski sa mga anak namin, ganoon po...Sa pagbabantay, pag-aalaga, tulong- tulong po* (We support each other even in raising our children…In looking after them, taking care of them, we help each other)." P27 shared that instead of leaving their children in daycare centers, they feel more at ease leaving their children with each other: "*Pag-umaalis siya [P24], iiwan niya muna ang anak niya sa akin* (If she [P24] needs to leave, she leaves her baby with me).*"* This is customary in many communities. Parents who need to work or run important errands often entrust their children to a trusted neighbor. P27 also added that in their community, if a child is misbehaving, the elders in the community can teach and correct the child. P28 noted, "*Pangaralan at pagsabihan [ng bata); kapag may maling ginagawa, itutuwid mo* (You may teach and rebuke [the child); if they have done wrong, you correct them)." Nevertheless, the women firmly expressed that corporal discipline is to be reserved only for the parents of the children. P27 remarked, "Hindi po [pwedeng paluin ang bata] pagsabihan lang po. (You can't [spank the child] just admonish)."

Subcode: Damayan in Disasters and Calamities

Damayan, nevertheless, becomes more stark when the women related stories of extraordinary challenges brought by disasters and calamities. P4 tearily narrated her recent experience with Typhoon Vamco as it nearly buried their make shift home in a landslide: "*Nung madaling araw na po yung pader namin gumuho na; sabi ko 'wala na.' Umiiyak na po ako, muntik kasi madaganan ang asawa ko at yung anak ko. Sirang sira po yung bahay namin. Pero bandang alas nueve po ng umaga, nagtext po yung mga kasama kong kababaihan na huwag daw po mawalan ng pag-asa, tutulungan daw kami. Nabuhayan po ako* (At dawn, our wall collapsed; I said 'we are no more.' I'm already

crying because my husband and one of my children were almost hit by the wall. Our house was in ruins. But around nine in the morning the women texted, and shared I should not lose hope; they will come to help. I was encouraged).” The women in P4 community's came came with cooked meals for her family, as well as cleaning materials to help clean the area that was left and livable for them. She shared, “*Dumagsa na po ang tulong; hindi ko po inaasahan…Tapos noong umaraw na po, yung mga kapitbahay po namin, nalinis na po yung buong bahay namin para mawala na po ung mga putik at yung hollow blocks na bumagsak. Nagtulungan po sila* (Help came in; I didn't expect it…When the sun came up, our neighbors was able to clean our house and clear the mud and the hollow blocks that fell in our house. They worked together to help us).”

P12 was among those who responded to P4 and their other neighbors who were severely affected by Typhoon Vamco. She remembered, “*Yung Ulysses talagang doble pagod; talagang grocery repack para makatulong sa iba sa community* (During Ulysses we were doubly tired; we were repacking groceries to help others in the community).” P12 also remembered how women like her whose homes were not in the landslide area helped in cleaning the houses of those who were affected. She also shared that the women in the center helped raise funds to rebuild the damaged houses of their neighbors. P12 recalled, “*Yung iba po yung tinulungan po na mabuild yung house nila kasi nasira…may funds po na nalikom para sa kanila* (We also helped others to build their damaged houses…funds were raised for them). The women also noted that some of the funds were shared with other families whose homes in the neighboring towns of Rizal were also devastated.

The women from Taytay research locale are also familiar with the dangers brought about by typhoons. Their community is situated near a creek that overflows when rainwater from the Antipolo mountains pour down. To keep the flood from getting into their homes, the residents need to remove the trash that build up and clog the creek. P32 recalled, "*Noong nagbara po lahat ng basura diyan [sa creek], kahit po mga kababaihan dito nagsusundutan lang po ng basura para po lumusot ang tubig at hindi magbaha* (When all the garbage blocked [the creek], even the women here helped picking up the garbage so that the water could pass through and prevent the flood from entering our homes)." P18 also shared how the women in the community and their teenage sons helped raise the equipment and music instruments in the church so the flood would not reach it. She narrated, "*Itong mga mothers, sila yung tumulong sa amin…dumaan sila dito sa terrace. Pinaakyat din nila yung mga anak nila na mas bata para po tumulong sa amin dito na maakyat namin yung mga gamit kasi nga tumataas na yung water* (The mothers, they are the ones who helped us…they passed here through the terrace. They also sent their teen sons to help us here so that we could bring the equipment up because the flood was rising)." P24, P27, and P28 who reside in the second floor of an apartment near the creek shared that whenever the floodwaters rise, they would make space for their first-floor neighbors to bring their appliances and other belongings to the hallway. P27 shared, "*Kung baha na, ang mga gamit nila nandito na sa taas…nakikitulong din kaming maglinis, lalo na yung mga kabataan. Tulong-tulong na kami* (When it floods, they bring their belongings upstairs… we also help them clean up, especially the young people. We help each other)."

However, it is not only their material possession that the residents worry about. The floodwaters have claimed the lives of many residents in the research locale, mostly children. P18 and P23 recalled how in 2018, the floodwaters swept away a young boy who was reaching for his slippers that fell on the creek. His body was not found until the waters receded the next day. P23 shared, "*Walang pangpa-libing yung pamilya. Damayan kami; may mga nanay na nanghingi sa mga pulitiko at nagcollect sa mga kapitbahay para lang maayos na mailibing ang bata. Laking pasalamat ng mga magulang* (The family had no money for the boy's funeral. We shared the burden; someone asked help from the politicians, and others collected from the neighbors just to properly bury the child. The parents were very grateful)."

The women in Culiat also experience flooding from time to time, but a disaster they dread more is fire in the community. P48 shared, "*Madalas kaming nasusunugan dito, ma'am. Ang ugnayan namin, kahit hindi pa natatapos yung nangyayari, nandyan na kami nagiipon-ipon ng aming maitu[tu]long dito sa aming compound. Kung kailangan nila, magcocontribution kami kahit anong makakayanan ng iba para makakabili kami [groceries] kahit maliit lang* (We often have fire in the community, ma'am. Our relationship, even though when the fire is not over, we are already gathering what we can to help here in our compound. To meet their needs, we will contribute whatever we can afford so that we can buy [groceries] even if it is just a little help)."

The women also related of how they organized to help those who lost their homes in a 2020 fire in the urban poor community outside their compound, in Baseco, Metro Manila. P49 related, "*Noong may nasunugan sa Baseco ang ginawa naming ng*

mga kababaihan dito, nagtipon-tipon kami kung anong magandang maitulong

namin…nagipon kami ng bigas, sardinas, mga damit, kung ano mang mga kailanangan

ng mga nasunugan sa Baseco. Noong naipon na, tinawag namin lahat ng mga

kababaihan para ibabalot yoon…Hanggang sa kumuha kami ng sasakyan (When there

was a fire in Baseco what the women here did was to gather what we could to help…we

gathered rice, sardines, clothes, whatever the fire victims in Baseco may need. When we

were done collecting, we called the women in the community to pack it up…Then, we

rented a vehicle)." The women shared that they had to rent multiple vehicles for all the

relief goods they have gathered.

Since the data for this study was collected during the COVID pandemic,

stories of damayan to survive the consequences of the pandemic were also shared by the

participants. P37 commented, "*Sa pandemya, dito po talaga nakikita yung*

damayan…kasi natutunan mo mas maganda na maging mapagbigay ka, i-share mo kung

anong meron ka. Sa kaunting bagay natutulungan mo yung mga kaibigan mo. Kahit

sabihin mong kaunting bagay lang pero nadamayan mo sila (In the pandemic, this is

where empathy is really evident…because you have learned that it is better to be

generous, share what you have. Even in small things, you can help your friends. Even if

you say, it is only a small thing, you empathized with them)." P35 also shared that the

pandemic became a means to strengthen the relationship of women in their community.

She reckoned, "*Tumitibay po ng ugnayan ng mga kababaihan sa pamamagitan ng*

pagbibigayan ng ayuda tulad ngayong sitwasyon ng pandemic. Nagyayaan kung saan-

saan may ayuda; hindi sino-solo ang biyaya. Tradisyonal din kasi sa ating mga Pilipino

ang pagbibigayan at damayan (Our relationship relationship as women is strengthened

by helping one another in this pandemic situation. We share to each other where we can get cash assistance; the women are not keeping this blessing just to themselves. It is because sharing and emphatizing is traditional for us Filipinos)." P26 who is P35's neighbor affirm this with her comment: "*May mga leaders din po kami na kababaihan na tuwing may tulong na galing sa government, pupuntahan nila kami bahay-bahay, para magpalista kami at masama kami sa mga ayuda na ibinibigay ng gobyerno* (We also have women leaders who whenever there is help from the government, they will go from house to house, so that we can register and we get the assistance that the government gives)."

Yet even with the help from the government, the women shared that the "*ayuda*" or assistance is not enough. P4 remarked, "*Gutom po talaga kami kasi bilang na bilang ko po ang natanggap ko sa gobyerno: 11 kilos and a half na bigas and six sardines at isang kilong manok ung lang po sa buong pandemic* (We were really hungry because we received very little from the government: 11 kilos and a half of rice and six sardines and one kilogram of chicken for the entire time of the pandemic). P2 added that they could not ask for help from their relatives since they also have barely enough ration during the pandemic. Because of the scarce assistance from the government, P15 shared that the women from the center in Antipolo wrote to donors and raised funds to help provide weekly food assistance to the women in the community and their families. They have been running this assistance program for almost a year during the time of data-gathering.

The women from Taytay also helped organize relief efforts in their areas. P21 shared that the leaders in their community center raised funds and goods, while the

women repacked and distributed the food in the neighborhood. P18 also recounted that because the people were losing jobs and had limited access to food during the initial lockdown, the women from the center put up a community kitchen. They pooled the community's resources and were able to feed not only children but hundreds of families in the community. P18 described, "*yung feeding [program] namin hindi siya pambata, talagang for family[ies]…ulam po talaga everyday…for more than year po yan* (Our feeding [program] was not just for kids, we were catering to families…we were serving viands everyday…that went on for more than a year)." P19 who served as their main cook recounted how tired she was, but grateful at the same time for the opportunity to help. P23, a long-time volunteer at the center, shared how the women from the neighborhood helped once they learned about the community kitchen effort: "*May mga mother po kami na nag-volunteer, tumulong sa pagluluto at pahuhugas…Dahil sa mga nanay nagtagal at nagging maayos yung feeding program* (We had mothers who volunteered; they helped with cooking and washing the pots… It was also because of the mothers that the feeding program was sustained and it went well)."

Category Three Code: Kapwa

Figure 27. Storyboard cutouts of P29 showing the importance of pakikipag-kapwa
For P29, pakikipagpakapwa is what characterizes the relationships of women in their community. She elaborated, *"Once po kasi na marunong ka makipag-kapwa, kapag nangailangan ka po ng tulong, maraming tutulong sa'yo. Kahit hindi mo po sabihin, kusa ka nilang tutulungan* (Once you learn how to be a *kapwa*, when you need help, many will come to help you. Even if you do not ask them, they would willingly help you).

"*Kapwa*," which is a Filipino value that can be translated to "shared identity," takes the second highest frequency with 44 coded segments. *Kapwa* is the core of Filipino personhood; it is the recognition of an inner self that one shares with others (Enriquez 1992; De Guia 2005, 28). P26 cited this cultural value, *"Sa tingin ko po, ang pakikipagkapwa po kasama sa pag-unlad. Kasi kung hindi ka po marunong makibagay, hindi ka uunlad…Kasi kapag wala sila, wala ka din* (I think *pakikipagkapwa* is part of development. Because if you do not know how to live with others, you would not progress…Without them, you will also be nothing)." P43 also shared that *pakikipagkapwa* or sharing oneself to others is what forms genuine relationships: "*Ang pakikipagugayan po depende po yan sa tao kung marunong kang makipagkaibigan at makipagkapwa-tao. Doon po nabubuo ang ugnayan* (Building relationships depends if a person knows how to be a friend and a *kapwa* to people. That's how relationships are formed)."

Subcode: Pakikibagay

In the notion of *kapwa,* the identity of individuals is not lost (Enriquez 1992, 52). What occurs is a sharing of emotional space. Hence, *pakikibagay* or adjustment is necessary to accommodate the other into one's *loob* or relational space. P6 shared: *"Sa ugnayan po namin ay mahalaga ang pakikibagay, saka pagbibigay ng pagmamahal sa sarili mo at sa kapwa* (In our relationship, adjustment with one another is important, as well as giving love to yourself and others)." P50's remark on what she is learning from

her relationship with the women of the community reinforces P6's comment: "*Natuto po makipagkapwa…natututo pong magparaya po at makinig sa magagandang layunin ng mga kasama namin sa compound. Hindi lang po sarili ang iniisip ko, yung iba din po iniisip ko* (I am learning to live alongside my *kapwa*…I am learning to be tolerant and listen to the good intentions of those with us in the compound. I don't just think about myself; I think about the others as well)." P6 elaborated that learning to adjust to get along with one's *kapwa* is necessary for both surviving and thriving. She commented, "*Siyempre po hindi naman po tayo mabubuhay ng tayo lang po, kailangan matuto tayong makibagay. Kung hindi ka po marunong magmahal sa kapwa mo, hindi ka po talagang aasenso* (Of course we can't live on our own, we have to learn to adjust for others. If you don't know how to love your *kapwa*, you would not really progress)."

Subcode: Katapatan

Aside from *pakikibagay*, the women also added that *katapatan* or honesty is important in building a relationship with one's *kapwa*. P41 remarked: "*upang magkaroon ng mabuting ugnayan sa kapwa natutunan ko na dapat ay maging tapat po…kapag may humingi sa akin ng tulong, hindi ako magdadalawang isip na tulungan siya hanggat kaya ng katawan ko tumulong* (To have good relationships with my *kapwa,* I learned to be honest…when someone asks me for help, I will not hesitate to help as much as I can)." This is the kind of relationship P29 alluded to: "*Once po kasi na marunong ka makipag-kapwa, kapag nangailangan ka po ng tulong, maraming tutulong sa'yo. Kahit hindi mo po sabihin, kusa ka nilang tutulungan* (Once you learn how to be a *kapwa*, when you need help, many will come to help you. Even if you do not ask them, they would willingly help you)." P44 also thought the same of what it means to be a *kapwa:* "

kung hindi ka marunong makipagkapwa tao at may nangyari sa iyo wala kang aasahan

na kahit isang tulong dahil hindi ka rin naman marunong tumulong. Sabi nga po 'gawin

mo sa iba ang nais mong gawin ng iba sayo' (If you do not know how to be a *kapwa* and

something happens to you, you cannot expect even a single help because you also did not

know how to help. It has been said, 'do unto others what you want others to do to you')."

Subcode: Kapwa-babae

Lastly on the code "*kapwa*," the sub-code *kapwa babae* is discernible from the

women's data. The participants' use of "*kapwa-babae*" implies their awareness and

recognition that they have a shared identity as women—"the *ako* (ego) and the *iba-sa-*

akin (others) are one and the same" in the women's perspective (Enriquez 1989). Because

the women are guided by the *kapwa* principle, community building is seen as their

second nature (De Guia 2005, 28). P6 from Antipolo observed how it is the women who

lead community organizing efforts in their community. She noted, "*puro mga babae po*

ang nakakasama mo sa gawaing pang-komunidad (it is only the women who participate

in community work)." P37 from Quezon City also shared her observation of the women

in their community: "*Yung mga kababaihan po dito ay may mga grupo at doon po ay*

nagtutulungan po silang mga kapwa babae. Marami po silang ginagawa para sa

community, at nagbibigay po sila ng blessings o tulong para sa nakakarami po dito (The

women here have groups, and they work together as fellow women. They do a lot for the

community, and they give blessings or help for many of us here)." P44 who is from the

same community shared the different activities the women lead which she reckons help in

them in their development. She described, "*nagkakaroon po ng pag-unlad ang mga*

kababaihan dito dahil sa mga trainings and seminars na dinadaluhan ng mga kapwa

babae namin… nagkakaroon ng idea ang mga dapat at tamang gawin bilang mga magulang pati mga karapatan ng babae po (the women here develop because of the trainings and seminars that our fellow women attend…they learn ideas on what should be done as parents; they learn about women's rights as well)." P38 added, *nagkaroon talaga ng magandang pagbabago sa family ko, sa sarili ko, dahil sa pakikipagsalimuha ko sa kapwa mother ko po dito* (there has really been a good change in my family, in myself, because of my interaction with my fellow mothers here)." Nonetheless, more than these activities, P44 pointed out that she values the emotional support she receives from the women in her community: *"Dahil sa mga kapwa babae ko, ma'am, nararamdaman ko na hindi pala ako nagiisa. Yung emotional nailalabas mo, Importante yun sa buhay namin kaysa material na bagay* (Because of my fellow women, ma'am, I feel like I'm not alone. I am able to pour out my emotions. That is more important in our lives than material things)."

Category Three Code: Loob
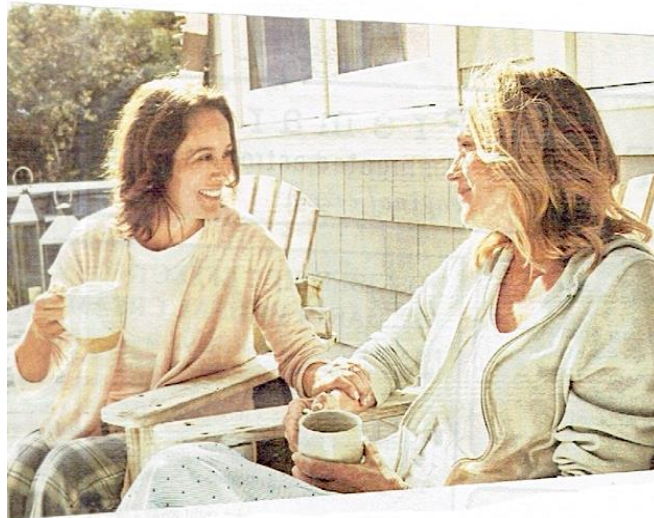
**Figure 28. P34 shared that being in a community with other women wherein she can share what is her *loob* eases her burdens**

She explained,*"Kapag nagsama-sama po kami, nailalabas ko yung mga hinaing, kung anong problema ko…Yung kahit papaano nagkakagaan ng loob* (When we get together, I can share my grievances and problems…My heart somehow feels relieved)."

With 24 coded segments, the code "*loob*" ranked third in frequency under category three. *Loob*, which means "inside," can be used to describe the inner part of a thing. For instance, the interior of the house is called *loob* ng *bahay." Loob* and its counterpart *labas*—which means "outside"—can easily be developed into dichotomous categories (Maggay 2002). Nevertheless, *loob* cannot be bifurcated when speaking about relationships: *loob* talks about the person's "relational will," that has to do with the world around her or him (Mercado 1994, 37; Reyes 2015). Alejo (2018, 25) whose lifework is on *loob* writes:

> *Ang **loob** ay hindi lamang pala isang pitak ng puso o luklukan ng mga damdamin, isip at alaala, hindi ito isang sulok lamang ng dibdib, kundi isang malawak at malalim na daigdig ng sari-sari at sabay-sabay na ugnayan sa sarili, sa kapwa, sa mga bagay, sa panahon, sa lipunan, sa buong kalikasan at sa Maykapal* (**Loob** is not just a compartment of the heart or seat of feelings, mind, and memories, it is not just a corner of the heart, but a vast and deep world of diverse and simultaneous relationship with oneself, with fellow human beings, with things, with time, with the society, with the whole of creation, and with God.)

Loob is inevitably connected to the world outside the self. P9 talks about the growth of this connection—her *kalooban* or inner person with the *kalooban* of the women in their community. In Filipino, reaching this stage of relationship is called *pakikipagpalagayan ng loob* or understanding of one another's sentiments. She mentioned, "*Noong una po hindi pa kami magkakakilala, pero noong nagtagal naging magkakaibigan na po kami. Ngayon po, naiintindihan na namin ang laman ng isip at pakiramdam ng loob mga kasama naming babae.* (In the beginning we didn't know each

other, but later we became friends. Today, we understand the what is the minds and hearts feelings of the women with us).”

Subcode: Kagandahang Loob

The women from the research locales also spoke of “*kagandahan* or *kabutihang loob,”* which is best translated to “shared inner nobility” (De Guia 2005, 30). This theme comes up when women spoke of a time of dire need and their *kapwa-babae* showed them kindness. This data from the women matches Enriquez’s assignment of *kagandahang loob* to the core of Filipino personhood as a linking socio-personal value; it nudges a person towards genuine acts of kindness from a place of empathy (Enriquez in De Guia 2005, 30). P39 shared her gratitude to her fellow women in the community: *Happy po kami na nabuo ang aming samahan ng women’s. Dito po kasi ang bawa’t isa ay nagpapakita ng katangian tulad po pakikisama at magandang kalooban at pagtutulungan sa amin* (We are happy that our women’s organization has been formed. Here, everyone shows qualities such as camaraderie and good will and cooperation with each one).” P7 also recalled that whenever her income is not enough, she can trust her neighbors and her friends from the center to aid her: *Halimbawa po, wala akong bigas, kung pupunta [ako] ka sa kapitbahay…bibigyan [ako]ka kahit kaunting bagay na bukal sa kalooban* (For example, if I don't have rice, if you [I] go to the neighbor… you[I] will be given at least a little something that springs from their hearts).” *Kagandahang loob* inspires people towards selfless acts of generosity (Enriquez 1992).

Subcode: Kagaangan ng Loob

Loob was also used by the participants when sharing how their burdens lighten when the women in their community give them time, listen to them, and show

support. P34 explained, *"Kapag nagsama-sama po kami, nailalabas ko yung mga hinaing, kung anong problema ko…Yung kahit papaano nagkakagaan ng loob* (When we get together, I can share my grievances and problems…My heart somehow feels relieved)." P26 also shared the same sentiment: "*Kadalasan kasi sa mga kaibigan ko, 'pag may problema, nandoon ako. Sa kanila ko sinasabi ang sama ng loob ko. Ganito po kami, nagtutulungan emotionally.* (Often, when I have a problem, I go to my friends. I voice out the heaviness in my heart to them . This is how we are; [we are] helping each other emotionally)."

Subcode: Pagbabalik-loob

The participants also shared how their relationships with the women in their community, especially those whom they consider as good influences to them, have helped turned their will back to God and transform them for the better. Filipino social anthropologist Melba Maggay posits that repentance, *metagnoia,* or change of mind to be right before God, is best translated into Filipino as "*pagbabalik loob.*" P37 shared on this: "*Sa palagay ko po ay natransform po kami. Siyempre po yung una ay dahil sa God and faith po talaga… pero malaking bagay po yung mga kasama naming babae sa center… yung dating hindi maganda sa loob namin napalitan na ng maganda at hindi po kami napariwara sa buhay namin* (I think we have been transformed. Firstly, it is really because of God and faith… but the women in the center were also a big help… what was used to be bad inside us has been replaced by goodness, and we did not take the wrong path in our lives)." P48 who now considers herself a follower of *Isa* (Jesus) testified: "*Noong nagkaroon po kami ng relasyon sa Diyos, lumawak ang isipan naming mga babae at pati ng mga pamilya namin…unti-unti ko pong nabago ang sarili ko…hindi*

habang buhay laging parang talo ako. Kailangan kong baguhin yung loob ko lakasan ang loob ko para sa mga anak ko (When we began to have a relationship with God, the minds of our women and our families changed… I gradually changed myself…I should not always feel like a loser.' I had to change what was inside me. I need to be courageous for my children)." During the FGD, her fellow participants shared how P48 has been one of the opinion leaders and key mobilizers in their compound, especially on their relief efforts for those who were severely affected by community fires in their neighborhood.

Category Three Code: Pagkakaunawaan/ 'Di Pagkakaunawaan
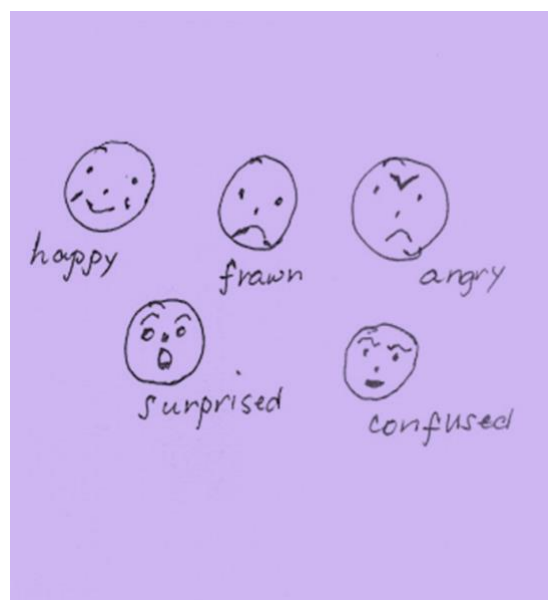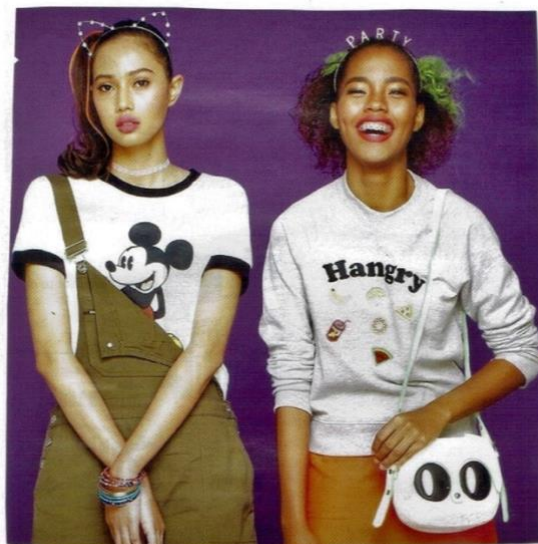
Figures 29-30. Storyboard cutout of P11 and storyboard drawing of P23 on the theme "pagkakaunawaan at di-pagkakaunawaan"
P14 describes their relationship: "*Siyempre nagkaroon kami ng masayang bonding ang bawat isa… Tapos may time din po na nagkakarooon ng hindi pagkakaunawaan, pero naaayos din po kaagad kasi open po kami na magusap-usap* (Of course we share happy bonding moments with each other… But there are also times when we have misunderstanding, but it is resolved right away because we are open to talk things out)."
P23 also shared on this describing the relationships of the women in their community:*"Mayroon akong drawing dito na parang puro facial expression[s]...May masaya, may malungkot, may napipikon kasi normal na may di nagkakaintindihan sometimes* (I have a drawing here that depicts facial expression [s] ... Some are happy, some are sad, some are frustrated because it's normal that people do not understand each other sometimes)."

Finally, for category three, the code "*pagkakaunawaan/ 'di pagkakaunawaan*" or understanding and misunderstanding ranked fourth in frequency with 22 coded segments. When the participants were asked to identify the characteristics of their relationships, many of the women mentioned that it is happy but complicated, even exasperating at times. P2 explained, *Minsan po nagkakapikunan pero all in all po masaya po. Hindi rin po kasi maiwasan yung ganun dahil mga tao lang tayo* (Sometimes we annoy each other, but all in all, we are happy. It is also impossible to avoid those because we are just human beings). P23 from another research locale depicted the same thing in her storyboard drawing. She noted, *"Mayroon akong drawing dito na parang puro facial expression[s]...May masaya, may malungkot, may napipikon kasi normal na may di nagkakaintindihan sometimes* (I have a drawing here that depicts facial expression [s] ... Some are happy, some are sad, some are frustrated because it's normal that people do not understand each other sometimes)."

Subcode: 'Di Pagkakaunawaan as Rupture

The *'di pagkakaunawaan* or misunderstandings among the women can be considered ruptures to their relationships The participants shared various reasons for these. P6 related that there are even times when one is not aware that she offended her fellow woman: *"kapag gumagawa po kami ng basahan dito may time na nagkakapikunan. Magtatawanan po kayo tapos magugulat kami minasama pala yung biro namin* (when we are making rag rugs, there are times when we jest at each other. We would all laugh, then later, we will be shocked that they actually resented the jokes). Other reasons for the *'di pagkakaunawaan* shared by P26 and 27 are envy among neighbors. P27 even considers this the number one cause of disagreements and fights:

"*Number one yan, inggitan na nauuwi sa tsimisan* (That's number one, envy leads to gossip)." P21's comment is in harmony with P27's perception. She considers rumormongering as the biggest threat to the good relationships women have. She noted that these gossips spreads faster in their community because of social media: "*masaya po dito pero minsan ang social media nakakadagdag sa hindi pagkakaintindihan, lalo na kung may chismis na involved. Yang mga tsimis ang anay ng relasyon ng mga babae dito sa amin* (We are happy here, but sometimes social media adds to the misunderstanding, especially if there is gossip involved. Those gossips are the termites to the women's relationship in our community)."

Subcode: Pagkakaunawaan as Repair

In order to repair the relationships, the women mentioned that they communicate to resolve issues. P2 noted, "*Kahit po may asaran, may tampuhan, hindi po kami umuuwi na hindi napaguusapan yun.* (Even if there are disagreements, we don't go home without talking about it)." P8 added that initiative and humility are important to restorate their friendships. She shared*, Hindi mo na kailangang hintayin yung isa…ikaw yung mauunang lumapit. Dapat nandoon din ung pagpapakumbaba kahit ikaw man ang tama at mali sya. Doon sa pag-uusap, doon kayo magpapaliwanag sa isa't isa* (You do not have to wait for the other one… you can be the first to approach. There must also be humility even if you are right and the other one is wrong. There in the conversation, there you can explain to each other)." P10 added that keeping grudges do not only destroy their relationships, but adds "bigat" or burden in their already hard life.

When the women cannot resolve the *'di pagkakaunawaan*, they approach opinion leaders who act as the *tagapamagitan* which means mediators or the "go-

between." P26 shared, "*Kapag kayang pagsabihan, kami-kami na lang po ang nagaayos ng gusot. Kapag hindi po, kailangan ng barangay counselor* (If we see that we can share advice, we are the ones who make the effort to fix the disagreement. If we cannot, we need the barangay counselor).*"* Nevertheless, the women from all research locales shared that they prefer to share misunderstandings with the women leaders in their community. P4 commented, *"[Ang mga leaders] sila din po ang nag-guide sa amin…kung may mga mali, at mga bagay na hindi nagkakaunawaan, nandyan sila [para] pumagitna* ([The leaders] are also the ones who guide us… If we have made mistakes, and there are things we disagree about, they are there to mediate)." P37 from Quezon City also shared the same scenario: "*Hindi naman po maiiwasan na meron pong hindi pagkaunawaan pero ang maganda doon meron kaming leaders sa kababaihan na mga staff namin [sa center]…nagpapapabati sa amin para hindi kami lumala at nagaadvice sa amin* (It is inevitable that there will be misunderstandings, but the good thing is that we have women leaders who are our staff [at the center]…they help reconcile us with one another so that our fights do not get worse, and they give us advice." *Bati* or *pagbabati* in the Filipino language has a wide range of meanings, and one of these means to reconcile after a misunderstanding (Maggay 2002, 105).

The participants pointed out that despite the *'di pagkakaunawaan* the women do their best to understand each other. For one, there are causes that bind them. P20 recalled how in their year-long community kitchen effort, there have been misundertandings among the staff and the volunteers. She shared, *"Minsan may hindi pakakaunawaan; hindi na po sila nagkakaintindihan. Despite po yun, gumagawa pa din naman po sila…tinatapos nila yung goal nila. Katulad noong nagfi-feeding po kami, may*

di pagkakaunawan sa mga nanay pero nagagawa parin namin yung magserbisyo sa

community pa rin (Sometimes there are misunderstandings; they do not understand each

other anymore. Despite that, they are still working… they work towards finishing their

goal. Just like when we had feeding [progam]. There were misunderstandings among the

mothers, but we were still able to serve the community).” P24, nevertheless, shared that a

much deeper reason for their efforts to repair ruptures in their relationships is their

testimony as followers of Christ: “*Kapag may hindi pagkakaintindihan, yun kinakausap*

yung bawat isa, tapos pinagbabati din po agad. Lalo na po sa amin na born again

[Christians] dito sa Rowenas, dapat maayos kami na example (When there are a

misunderstandings, we talk to each other, and make peace with each other. Especially for

us born again [Christians] here in Rowenas, we must be good examples).

Core Category: Development as Building Relationships Through Christian and Filipino Values

As with any grounded theory method (GTM), this research sought not just to

understand but also to build a substantive theory about the phenomenon of interest: how

the Christian faith and Filipino culture help women build relationships that help them

develop. Since the voice of the marginalized were privileged in this study to provide

nuance to the traditional understanding of development, the research at hand is more

aptly classified as a transformational grounded theory method (TGTM). The type of

theory developed from a GTM/TGTM is “substantive”—one “grounded” in the data

collected—rather than formal or “grand” theory. A substantive theory has as its referent

specific, everyday-world situations such as the study at hand. A substantive theory has a

specificity and hence usefulness to practice often lacking in theories that cover more

global concerns (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Moreover, a substantive theory is transferable, rather than generalizable, in the sense that the method and the findings of the study may be applied to similar contexts.

Three phases of coding enable the development of a substantive theory: open, axial, and selective (Charmaz 2014; Corbin and Strauss 2015; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Open coding tagging any unit of data that might be relevant to the study; axial coding is the process of relating categories and properties to each other; *selective coding* is where a core category is developed. The table below summarizes the open codes from the participants' data, shows the categories or axial codes built from the open codes, as well as the final code or the selective code which is the substantive theory that emerged in this research.

Table 6. Transformational Grounded Theory Method Chart

Open Codes	Axial Codes/ Categories	Selective Code/ Core Category
Neighborhood Center	Category 1: Loci/domains wherein women living in urban poor communities begin to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	Theory: Development as Building Relationships through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values Meaning: Women living in urban poor communities create, sustain, and strengthen relationships that help them survive and thrive through living out Christian and Filipino values. The women are championing a values-oriented understanding of development.
Faith Stewardship Harmony Generosity Wisdom Love	Category 2: Christian values that are instilled in the women and practiced by the women living in urban poor communities to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	

Damayan	Category 3: Filipino values that are appreciated and practiced by the women living in urban poor communities to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	
Kapwa		
Loob		
Pagkakaunawaan/ 'Di Pagkakaunawaan		

The women living in urban poor communities provided the data from which this values-oriented theory emerged. Formal theories of development propose that progress is driven by poverty reduction via economic and market systems policies, infrastructure building, and innovation with the latest science and technology (Rostow 1960; Sachs 2005). Nevertheless, as suggested by Banerjee and Duflo (2011, 272), we need to resist the formulaic thinking that reduces the poor to "cartoon characters" and the problem of poverty to a set of general principles:

> If we listen to the poor people themselves and force ourselves to understand the logic of their choices; if we accept the possibility of error and subject every idea, including the most apparently commonsensical ones, to rigorous empirical testing, then we will be able not only to construct a toolbox of effective policies but also to better understand why the poor live the way they do.

Following the lead of 21st-century development thinkers such as Sen (1999), Narayan-Parker et.al. (2000), and Banerjee and Duflo (2011), this study listened to what the poor women have to share about development. The participants of this study demonstrated a clear understanding that relationships with their fellow women in the community have been key for their survival. From basic needs to assistance in life-threatening health situations, the women's relationships served as a safety net, providing security that is otherwise not available if they are not joining together. The women's relationships have also been key to their thriving and flourishing as human beings. The

women provide emotional support for each other, genuine compassion, and encouragement which provide them a sense of stability, especially during times of trials.

Furthermore, while the women have expressed the desire for upward social mobility, they have expressed that development for them is not only about socio-economic stability and wealth building. In this values-oriented understanding of development, the emphasis is on well-being which is not limited to finances. It includes human experiences identified by the women such as the mental, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of life. The end-goal of development for the participants is not gentrification, which was the goal proposed by other development theories (Rostow 1960; Sachs 2005). Development for the women in this study is transformation—how they become better individuals and how they can lead meaningful lives despite the given presence of income and non-income-related challenges of poverty.

The participants have explicitly articulated that development means having and maintaining a good relationship with God, their *kapwa*, their environment, and even with themselves. The women also expressed that the transformation in them and in their lives brought about by their good relationship with God and others is important in their definition of progress. The open codes provide the "properties" of what good relationships for development mean for the women (Strauss 1987; Merriam and Tisdell 2016). A good relationship, one that helps them to survive the difficulties of life and thrive as persons, is where faith, stewardship, harmony, generosity, wisdom, love, *damayan* (empathy), *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity)*, kabutihang loob* (shared nobility)*, and pagkakaunawaan* (understanding) are present.

These values are not only what characterizes their relationships, it is ascertained that the instilling, appreciation, and practice of these Christian and Filipino values which emerged from the data are also what enables the women to build and sustain the relationships for their survival and flourishing. It is apparent from the data that the women identify the Christian values as ones that are instilled through their study of God's Word. While it does not mean that the Christian values are not present and practiced in the women's lives before they studied the Bible, it is clear that the women associate their learning and application of such values to their guided instruction of the Word. The women's shared journey of **faith** binds them together; their shared everyday pursuit to become good **stewards**, to become people of **harmony, wisdom, generosity,** and **love** shape them as individuals and the quality of their lives. With regards to the Filipino values identified in this study, language played a crucial in building this category. Values that find expressions in the vernacular evidence that these are embedded in the Filipino way of life, especially if there is no exact translation offered by a foreign language—this is true of *(pakikipag) kapwa, kapwa-babae, (kagandahang) loob, and damayan.* Also, expressions from the participants such as "*nakaugalian na po ng mga Pilipino* (it is a way of life for Filipinos)" or "*tradisyunal din kasi sa ating mga Pilipino* (it is traditional for us Filipinos)" helped classify the values under the Filipino culture.

It is worth noting that in the study's context and its population there is no clear distinction between which value is Christian only and not Filipino or which is Filipino only and not Christian. In many ways, the Christian values and Filipino values intersect.

Damayan which means participation in another person's experience is deeply tied to the biblical values harmony and solidarity. Paul's call to the Romans to "rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn" as a form of solidarity is lived out by the participants daily as they share each other's burdens (Romans 12:15). *Damayan* is a fundamental concept, a key to understanding and explaining the group-centered culture of Filipinos as opposed to the individualistic culture of other societies. The Pauline call for unity, the concept of many parts but one body, is also exercised by the women when they look after each one and aid one another (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). There is even a Filipino saying that corresponds to this, "*ang sakit ng kalingkingan dama ng buong katawan* (the pain in one small body part is a pain felt by the whole body)*." Damayan* also largely intersects with generosity. The way the women pooled their resources together to raise funds for the one who is most in need in their communities—for those who are sick and those who have been struck by calamities and disasters—is similar to the pooling of resources of the early church (Acts 2: 45; 4:35).

Kapwa among all the Filipino values that emerged in the study is the most pregnant for theological construction. *Kapwa* which means "the self in the other" or "shared identity" is at the core of the Filipino understanding of being. From a biblical stance, the *kapwa* is enriched by a verse in Paul's speech to the Athenians (Acts 17: 26), "from one man he made all the nations," and this one man is made in the *imago Dei*. This passage emphasizes the shared humanity among all people that is at the heart of *pakikipag-kapwa* (act of sharing identity). *Pakiki-pagkapwa* is an act of discovering sameness as human beings rather than accentuating individual differences (Maggay 2022 during a consultation for the dissertation). Taking the concept of sameness as human

beings, *kapwa* is useful to develop a more robust understanding of the doctrine of incarnation (John 1:14) and make this close to the Filipino consciousness. The Word became flesh, our *kapwa* Jesus Christ, as he took on our humanity. Christ identified with us and has become truly one of us. Christ as our *kapwa* is able to empathize with our weakness (Hebrews 4:15), and as our *kapwa* His victory over sin and death is also our victory. If we live in *pakikipag-kapwa* with Christ, sharing in his suffering, then, we shall also share in His glory (Romans 8:17; 1Peter 4:13). Finally, *kapwa* could also help develop an indigenous understanding of the doctrine of *kenosis* (Philipians 2:1-11). While *kapwa* emphasizes sameness--"the *ako* (ego) and the *iba-sa-akin* (others) are one and the same"--Enriquez pointed out that the individuals retain their distinctness (Enriquez 1989; 1992, 52). In the same way that Christ shares our humanity, Christ retains his distinctness as the Eternal Word and Son of God. A Filipino understanding of Jesus Christ as *kapwa* is not only limited to his *kenosis*—what he has emptied himself of—but also includes the space which Christ created and opened for hospitality to accommodate others into himself. Christ as *kapwa,* someone who is like us*,* opened this space for our reconciliation and regaining of our identity as children of God and members of God's family. Hence, even if in Adam all die, in Christ Jesus, all are made alive again.

In line with space and reconciliation, the Filipino value *loob* conveniently fits in. *Loob*, in the Filipino understanding, is not only a corner of the heart "but a world of relationships with oneself, with fellow human beings, with things, with time, with the society, with the whole of creation, and with God" (Alejo 2018, 25). When all these relationships are well, the person experiences harmony or the biblical definition of *shalom*. To Filipinos, this is *payapang kalooban* (peaceful inner life). Also related to

reconciliation, Ephesians 2:7 and Titus 3:4-6 in Filipino used the phrase "*kagandahang loob ng Diyos*" (good will of God) to describe the mercy and forgiveness we have received through Christ. Because of God's *kagandahang loob,* humanity is invited to repent, have a change of mind to be right before God. In Filipino, repentance is better translated as *pagbabalik-loob* or return of one's relational will to God. The participants' data showed that once they experienced *pagbabalik loob* (repentance) to God, they are able to extend the *kagandahang loob* (good will) they have received from God. They too are able to think and perform deeds that show "*kabutihang loob"* which in the concept of community is best translated to "shared inner nobility" (De Guia 2005, 30).

Finally, the Filipino value *pagkakaunawaan* (mutual understanding) is deeply rooted in harmony and *shalom*. *Pagkakaisa* which can be translated to "unity" or "oneness" the highest realization of being, applies to a person's relationship with the Creator and with other creation (Reyes 2015). This cannot be achieved apart from *pagkakaunawaan.* This Filipino value is also deeply connected to being able to forgive and reconcile (Ephesians 4:32). Kindness, compassion, and forgiveness are important tenets of *pagkakaunawaan*. The biblical theme of Jesus Christ as the mediator between God and humanity can also be indigenized through *pagkakaunawaan* (1Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 9:15). Here, Christ as *taga-pamagitan* or the go-between becomes the bridge who brings God and humanity from to a restored relationship.

With respect to coding and the grounded theory methodology, the interrelatedness of Christian values and Filipino values are also evident. For instance, *pagkakaisa* (harmony) *pagbibigayan* (generosity), and *pagmamahalan* (love) were mentioned by the participants alongside *kapwa* and *damayan* in their comments.

Pananampalataya (Faith) and *pagbabalik loob* (repentance) would also be a common combination in the participant's explanation. This seamless interfacing of the two categories of values is also evidenced by the co-occurrence of the codes under Christian values with the Filipino values during the data analysis. One reason for this is that the Filipino culture is deeply religious, and the values that are highly upheld in the Christian faith are also esteemed in the Filipino culture. In other words, what is important in the Christian worldview is almost always as important to the Filipino frame of reference. This affirms that the Filipinos have a holistic way of viewing life and human experiences. Nonetheless, for theory construction in this study, a delineation from the participants was followed: values associated by the women to their learning and application of God's Word were placed under the Christian values category, whereas values identified by the women as customary to being Filipinos were placed under the Filipino values category.

To visualize this values-oriented theory of development, the model *Banig* (woven mat) is created. If relationships are mats that serve as safety nets, then, the Christian and Filipino values are the fibers or threads that constitute these. The figure below shows the loci or domain of relationships—the neighborhood and centers—as the frame wherein these relationships are woven, the Christian values are the spokes/stakes which are the threads that stand upright, and the Filipino values are the weavers which are the threads that go horizontal, the ones that weave through the spokes/stakes.
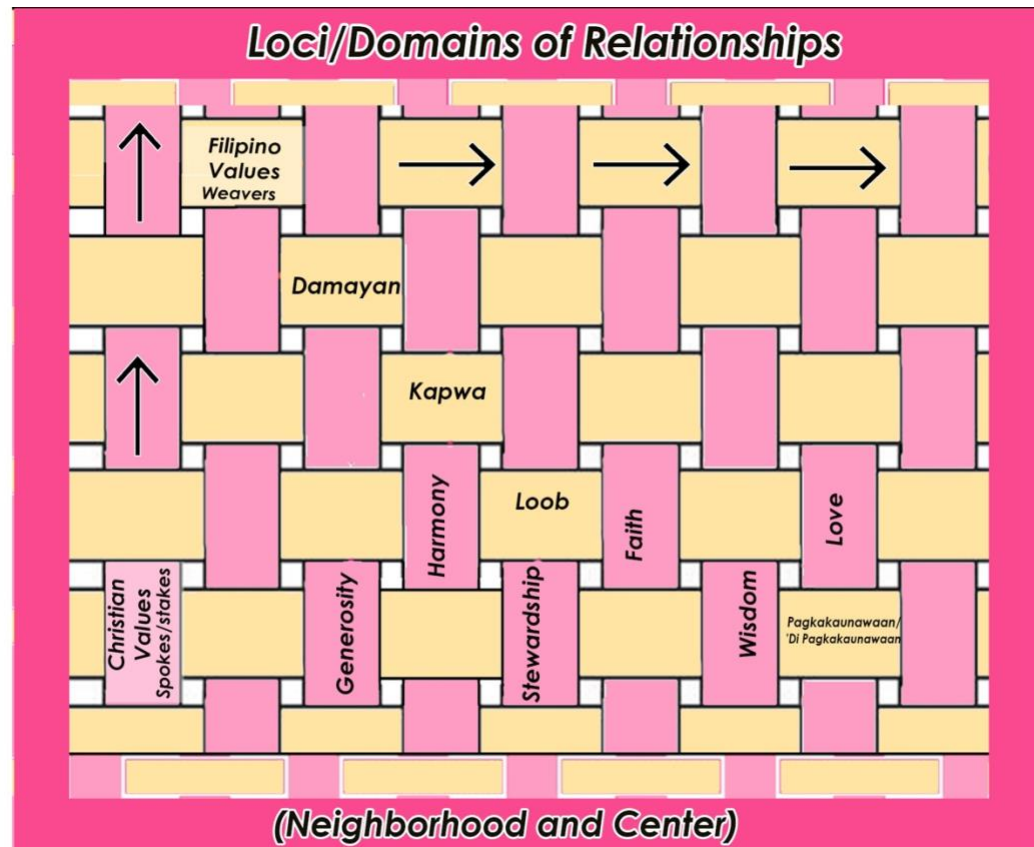
Figure 31. *Banig*, **Development as Building Relationships through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values**
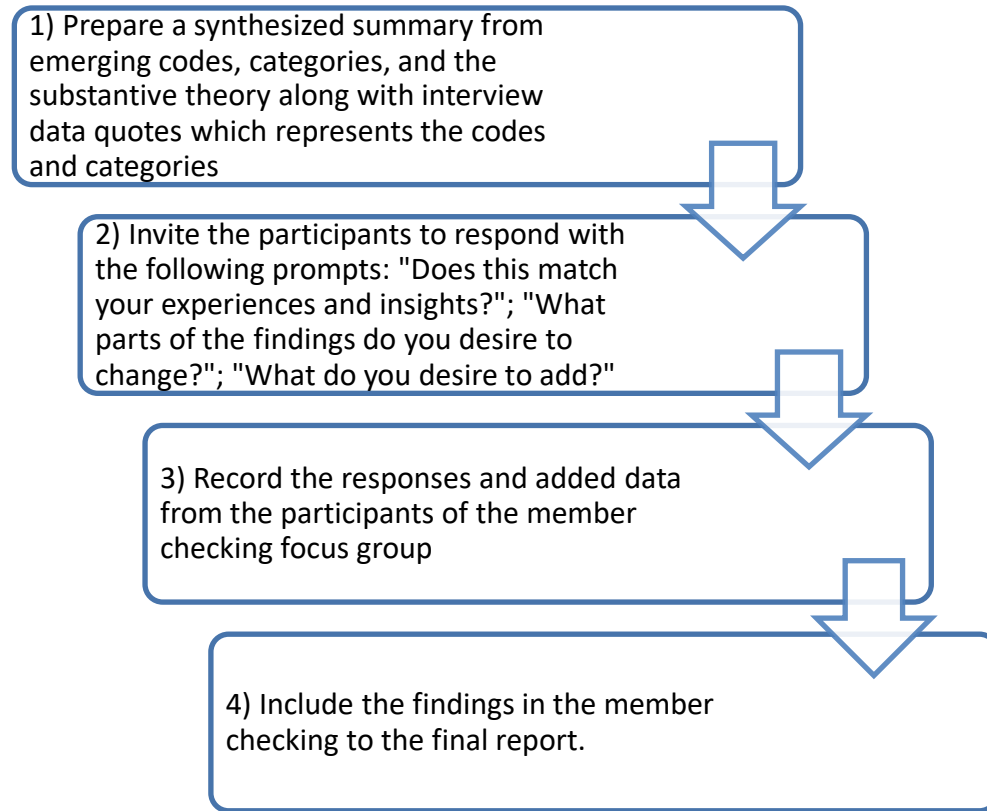
The *banig* was chosen as the model for the substantive theory for three main reasons. Firstly, the interweaving of the weavers and spokes to make one whole mat represents the interfacing of the Christian values and Filipino values that creates and fortifies good relationships among women. Second, *banig* or woven mats are ubiquitous in Filipino society—an apt representation of this indigenous framework of development. Every region from the northern lands of Luzon to the southern areas of Mindanao has distinct ways of weaving dried pandan, palm, or seagrass leaves to make these mats in different sizes and colors (Xavier University 2017). *Banigs* are significant for not only are these mats functional and decorative, but they are also representative of milestones, rites of passage, and rituals for the Filipinos. Banig serve as gifts for newlyweds; it is

where a Filipino mother lay to give birth to her child; and just as they say, "from cradle to grave," some Filipino tribes like the Apayaos of Ilocos Norte traditionally wrap the dead in mats or *ikamen* before laying them in the coffins (Scheans 1964, 394-398). Thirdly, the majority of the women who participated in the study are weavers—the technique in this model is similar to what the ladies in Antipolo use to weave their rag rugs. Not only is this framework paying homage to the women from whom life experiences this theory emerged from, but it is also drawing from an everyday object that is available in Filipino households, making the concept easy to comprehend and close to Filipino consciousness.

Member Checking: Presentation of the Codes, Categories, and Substantive Theory to the Participants

Member checking is a technique for exploring the credibility of a study's results. In this final phase of the concurrent data-gathering and data analysis, the results are returned to participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their experiences (Birt et. al. 2016, 1804). Member checking is essential for researchers to rid the results of bias, as well as to validate, verify, or assess the trustworthiness of the study's results (Doyle, 2007).

Once the codes, categories, and substantive theory have been identified, the participants were invited for a member check focus group. Sixteen women were able to join the process. During the member check focus group, the synthesized member checking (SMC) technique was adapted and followed (Birt et. al. 2016, 1806). The chart below shows the steps undertaken:

1) Prepare a synthesized summary from emerging codes, categories, and the substantive theory along with interview data quotes which represents the codes and categories

2) Invite the participants to respond with the following prompts: "Does this match your experiences and insights?"; "What parts of the findings do you desire to change?"; "What do you desire to add?"

3) Record the responses and added data from the participants of the member checking focus group

4) Include the findings in the member checking to the final report.

Figure 32. Synthesized Member Checking adapted from Birt et. al. (2016)

The focus of the member check FGD was placed on determining the trustworthiness of the substantive theory, as well as its properties: the codes and categories. The participants were shown the TGTM chart, the codes were explained and the categories they belong to were discussed. Quotations from the participants were also provided to elucidate the meaning of the codes and the construction of the categories. The Banig model for the theory, "Development as Building Relationships Through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values," was also presented to the participants.

All the participants who joined the member check FGD validated the codes and the categories. P37 and P38 called the codes complete. P38 shared, "*Lahat po ng ng*

nandyan sa banig ay importante para pagunlad (All the values in the *banig are*

important for development)." P37 added, *"kung susundan po natin ang mga values na*

iyan totoong uunlad po tayo (If we will follow those values we will truly progress)." The

participants also expressed appreciation of the choice of *banig* as a model for the theory

they helped to construct. P20 likened women's relationships with the *banig:* "*Basic need*

po iyan…araw-araw at gabi-gabi po nating kailangan ng banig; diyan din po tayo

nakakahanap ng pahinga kapag pagod tayo (It is a basic need…day and night we need

banig; it is where we find rest when we are tired)."

When asked if there are things they would like to add, P6 mentioned about

"trust" among women to maintain their relationships. "Trust" was placed under the

category "harmony" as one of the virtues that maintain peace among the women. P40

emphasized that development begins with oneself—through gaining self-respect and

dignity. Finally, the women from the urban poor communities reiterated the significance

of values and relationships in their understanding of development. P37 mentioned that

progress at the expense of relationships being broken or Christian values and Filipino

values sacrificed is not genuine development. P18 added that one who lives with

fractured relationships—one with no connection to God, one that has ruined familial

relationships and animosity towards *kapwa* is a broken person. This kind of life to the

participants is a life of genuine poverty.

The women's understanding of development is similar to Myers's (2011)

conclusion in *Walking with the Poor,* his *magnum opus,* and the sum of his decades of

experience as World Vision International's vice president for development and food

resources. Myers (2011, 350) determined that at its heart, "development is about values

and worldviews," transforming these to evidence the character of God and His presence in the world. The study's substantive theory, derived from the data of the women, points to what Myers (2011, 351) call "good development:" it is the women's "everyday acts" driven by Christian values and Filipino values which establish relationships that enhance and give meaning to their lives and the lives of those around them.

Summary

In this chapter, I discussed the demographic characteristics of the participants, the codes that were generated from the data and the categories that were constructed from the codes. Theory construction through grounded theory method of analysis was also demonstrated when the core category or the substantive theory was discussed. Out of the data from the ground a values-oriented framework of development emerged and the theoretical model "*Banig*, Development as Building Relationships Through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values" was presented. Finally, for due diligence, I conducted a member check focus group and presented the study's results. This established the validity and trustworthiness of both the study and the theory that was constructed. The theoretical and practical implications ascertained from this research is discussed in Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendation.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations

In this chapter, I present the summary of findings and conclusion on how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable women in urban poor communities to build relationships that help them meet their survival needs and allow them to flourish as human beings. The substantive theory that was derived from the data and the theoretical model are reviewed. Then, this is followed by discussions on implications for theory and practice. Finally, recommendations for further inquiry are shared.

Findings, Conclusion, and Implications for Theory and Practice

Before discussing the findings, conclusions, and implications for theory and practice, it is beneficial to review the purpose of this study:

1. Explore the experiences of Filipino women in poverty

2. Identify, understand, and articulate how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture enable women to build relationships that help them survive and thrive

3. Draw an indigenous theory of development and a model that is in line with the Biblical paradigm and informed by the idiosyncrasies of the Filipino culture

4. Ascertain theoretical and practical implications that will contribute to the growing discipline of Transformational Development, as well as actual work done by non-government and faith-based organizations in urban poor settings.

The following are the significant findings on these areas of the purpose of the study:

On the Experiences Filipino Women in Poverty

One intent of the study is to provide a clear picture of women living in urban poor communities by juxtaposing the analysis of the demographics and statements of the

participants with current literature on women and poverty in the Philippines. Fifty women from ages 18-58 who earn minimum and below minimum wages from three research locales—Antipolo, Taytay, Quezon City—joined the study. Looking at the income dimension of poverty, I found out that women in the urban poor communities participate largely in the informal economy, 57% of workers in this sector are women (Bersales and Ilarina, 2019). My observation and interpretation logs, as well as *pagtanong-tanong* (unstructured interviews) with the women in the research locales, gave faces to the statistics as I saw the women working as *lavanderas* (laundry women), ambulant vendors, or owners of *sari-sari* stores (neighborhood sundries stores). Women living in urban poverty participate more in the informal economy because of their level of education and the flexibility these types of jobs afford them to perform their familial duties. However, the informal economy operates in ways where women have limited access to opportunities for fair income, security in the workplace, and social protection.

From the data gathered in the field and from recently published literature, I also found out that the COVID pandemic exacerbated the economic situation of women in urban poor communities. By the second quarter of 2021, 4.14 million Filipino's were without jobs and the female unemployment rate was placed at 9.1% (PSA, 2021 b). Many of the participants in the three research locales were affected by the economic losses due to COVID. Some of the women who were employed and were earning at least the minimum wage shared that they lost their jobs as businesses closed down temporarily for months, others for good. This loss is even more devastating for housewives dependent on their husbands and partners who were also unemployed due to the COVID economic recession. Women in the informal sector also shared loss of access to income since those

who pay for their services also lost access to their income sources. Unfortunately, along with the pandemic economic policies that are unable to respond to the plight of the poor, the women and their families also shared how the *ayuda* or food and cash assistance barely aided them and lasted only for a few days.

Women in impoverished communities also contend with the non-income dimensions of poverty. Lack of access to health facilities and services is caused by multiple and intersecting barriers such as the expensive cost of medical care and the limited capacity of underfunded and underemployed public hospitals. The women confessed that instead of prioritizing their health and welfare, they would rather spend their money on the basic needs of their families. Similar to the economy, the COVID pandemic also worsened the women's health situation because many regular medical services, including those related to reproductive health and prenatal care, have been disrupted as the public health funds were placed on pandemic response efforts.

Violence is another non-income dimension of poverty that women in urban poor situations face. The participants lived in communities where alleged drug war-related extrajudicial killings took place. Some of the victims were relatives of the women who participated in the study, and a number of them shared harrowing stories of how violence has traumatized the children and the mothers of their neighborhoods. Nonetheless, the most hurtful violence the women experience is the one that happens at home. Marquez et al. (2020) flagged that one in four Filipino women experiences intimate partner violence (IPV). Two of the participants bravely shared their stories of IPV survival, but appropriating the report with the data of this research would mean that 12 out of the 50 participants have experienced IPV. I also found out that women who

belong to the same economic demographics as the participants are 50% more likely to experience physical violence than women who earn a higher income.

In this specific data set, the key takeaway is that poverty is indeed not homogenous, and it does not affect every person the same. There are specific issues of poverty that affect women more than men: to wit: labor and income, access to healthcare services, and violence, especially intimate partner violence. Further, it is these challenges that bring the Filipino women in urban poor communities together—they form relationships to navigate these struggles in the hope of *sama-samang pag-ahon* or rising above these problems together.

On the Ways the Christian Faith and Filipino Culture Enable Women to Build Relationships that Help Them Survive and Thrive

This study's substantive area of inquiry is how the Christian faith and Filipino culture enable women to build relationships for their survival and flourishing. Since little is known about this phenomenon, transformational grounded theory (TGT) method was employed for this research as the design gives primacy to the voice of the participants in building categories and theory construction. Through a series of participant observations, storyboard activities, and focus group discussions (FGD), I explored the thoughts and experiences of the participants in developing relationships with one another and how the Christian faith and the Filipino culture aid them in this.

I found out that there are two loci of relationship-building for women in urban poor communities. The first one is their neighborhood where the way of building connections is organic and informal. In the neighborhood, *pakikipagkwentuhan* or sharing stories is vital because it initiates connections. It is also a means for the women to convey

the problems they experience and collaborate to seek solutions. Sharing of food was also mentioned by the participants to be a means of starting friendly relationships among neighbors. For the Filipinos, to share food is to show visceral care, *malapit sa bituka*—to express gut-deep compassion.

The second locus of relationships among the women in urban poor communities is the "center." This pertains to the Christian organizations where the connections of the participants are built and where their interactions are more structured. Here, two main activities pull the women together livelihood program and Bible study. The women spend significant time together in the livelihood programs, especially before the COVID pandemic. The centers help alleviate the income-related challenges that come with poverty as they build the capacity of women to augment their household earnings. Even more, because of the camaraderie nourished through the Bible study, the women also find encouragement and emotional support.

A noteworthy finding from the data is that the women referred more to the informal domain of relationship-building than the formal one. The participants associate the relations that help them survive and thrive more with their informal connection relationships in the neighborhood. This data shows that the Filipino people operate largely in the informal locus and that micro-level interactions are vital.

This study was also focused on how the Christian faith enables the building of relationships among women for surviving and thriving. The data of the participants showed that it is through the instilling and practice of Christian values such as faith, stewardship, harmony, generosity, wisdom, and love that these connections which were initiated in the neighborhoods and centers grow and are sustained. "Faith" refers to the

participants' belief and relationship with God, as well as how "faith" transforms them and their relationships with their families for the better. "Stewardship" represents the participants' statements on the management of their finances and the significance of their work which they learned from financial seminars and study of God's Word. "Stewardship" also refers to themes of environmental care such as sanitation, garbage disposal, and community gardening that are taken in hand by the participants. "Harmony" refers to the women's unity and how this unity moves them towards progress. "Generosity" represents the willingness of the participants to share their resources with others as a response to what they are learning from the Bible. This also refers to the women's sacrificial giving of finances and time to respond to the needs of their fellow women whose family members were facing life-threatening health situations. "Wisdom" denotes how the women have received godly advice from each other, especially insights from instructions of Biblical values. Lastly, "love" speaks of the emotional and moral support the participants receive from each other that they value more than financial help.

An important finding in this study is that women who live in urban poor communities understand that progress is incomplete and inauthentic without spiritual and character growth. Repeatedly, they pointed to a framework of development that transcends the capitalistic mindset of wealth building. The women's statements coincide with Parker's (1996, 256) reflection on the poverty of Latin America and its unbridled move towards capitalism: "capitalism carries within itself the limits of its own horizon since it has no possible escape from its own golden calves and shatters on the ultimate unsatisfaction of vital human needs including the deepest longings of the human beings today." The women spoke of dignity and self-worth that comes from having a good

relationship with God, with others, with creation, and with oneself. The women's understanding of progress is similar to transformational development's core tenet of development as a movement towards *shalom*: it is just, peaceful, and merciful relationships that bring beneficial change.

The research also aimed to identify and explain how the Filipino culture helps the women in urban poor communities build connections that help them survive and thrive. This study has shown that the Filipino culture helps the participants build relationships through the appreciation and practice of Filipino values such as *damayan* (empathy)*, kapwa* (the self in others)*, loob* (relational will)*, and pagkakaintindihan/'di pagkakaintindihan* (understanding/misunderstanding). *Damayan* (empathy) refers to how the women in the communities bear difficulties together, from the mundane challenges to disasters like typhoons, community fires, and even the COVID pandemic. *Damayan is* associated with *bayanihan* or mutual aid, cooperation, or cooperative endeavor. *Kapwa,* (shared identity) represents the women's recognition that a part of oneself is shared with others. The participants' use of *kapwa babae* implies their awareness and recognition that they have a shared identity as women. *Loob* refers to the participants' relational will and also covers what the women called *kabutihang loob* or *magandang loob* (shared nobility) and *pagbabalik loob* (to change from negative to positive). *Pagkakaunawan/ 'di pagkakaunawaan* (understanding/misunderstanding) describes the natural rupture and repair in the women's relationships and how *pagkakaunawaan* is important to achieve *pagkakaisa* (unity).

Through this research, I found out that the women in urban poor communities perceive that putting the Filipino values into good practice helps them towards

development. In the participants' worldview, the finest aspects of the Filipino culture—which are its relationship-oriented values—contribute and help build the relationships that lead them to progress. The results of the study show that if culture is taken into account in understanding development, and the voices of those who experience poverty are placed at the center—not the voices of the development experts—the vital queries of what is truly valuable to the people in development and why this is so are answered. Looking at the results of the study, specifically on the data set of Filipino culture, what is most important to the participants is once again beyond money. Contrary to the understanding that the poor only wants to move up the socio-economic ladder, the women shared that it is their relationship with God and especially with their family that is most important. The reason for this is that the Filipino worldview is holistic. It has aspirations for spiritual well-being, therefore, leading to an understanding of development that is enmeshed with their knowledge of God. It has aspirations for emotional well-being, therefore, leading to a concept of progress that is communal, unified, and not sacrificing family relationships and friendships.

On the Construction of an Indigenous Theory and Model of Development

One purpose of this research is to build a substantive theory about the phenomenon of interest: how the Christian faith and Filipino culture help women build relationships that help them develop. Through the three phases of coding—open, axial, and selective—the substantive theory, "Development as Building Relationships Through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values," has emerged. The table below shows the open codes, axial codes, and the selective code or the core category:

**Transformational Grounded Theory Method Chart**

Open Codes	Axial Codes/ Categories	Selective Code/ Core Category
Neighborhood Center	Category 1: Loci/domains wherein women living in urban poor communities begin to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	Theory: Development as Building Relationships Through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values
Faith Stewardship Harmony Generosity Wisdom Love	Category 2: Christian values that are instilled in the women and practiced by the women living in urban poor communities to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	Meaning: Women living in urban poor communities create, sustain, and strengthen relationships that help them survive and thrive through living out Christian and Filipino values. The women are championing a values-oriented understanding of development.
Damayan Kapwa Loob Pagkakaunawaan/ 'Di Pagkakaunawaan	Category 3: Filipino values that are appreciated and practiced by the women living in urban poor communities to build relationships that help them survive and thrive.	

From the data of the women living in urban poor communities, a values-oriented understanding of development has emerged. The emphasis of this development theory is not merely on wealth and material resources, but on well-being that includes the human experiences identified by the women: mental, emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of life. The end-goal of development for the participants is neither gentrification nor mere poverty alleviation, but transformation to a whole and meaningful life of good relationships. The codes are the properties of this good relationship one that helps them to survive the difficulties of life and thrive as persons, is where faith, stewardship,

harmony, generosity, wisdom, love, *damayan* (empathy), *pakikipagkapwa* (shared identity)*, kabutihang loob* (shared nobility)*, and pagkakaunawaan* (understanding) are present.

        A noteworthy finding in this study is that there is seamless interfacing of Christian values and Filipino values. This is seen through the co-occurrence of the codes during the data analysis. This shows that what is important to the Christian worldview is also important to the Filipino worldview. The root cause of this interfacing is the Filipino holistic framework of life and human experiences.

        The image that below is the theoretical model, "*Banig*, Development as Building Relationships Through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values:" the frame represents the loci or domain of relationships—the neighborhood and centers—wherein the relationships are initiated, the spokes/stakes which are the threads that stand upright represent the Christian values, and the weavers which are the threads that weave through the spokes/stakes horizontally represents the Filipino values.
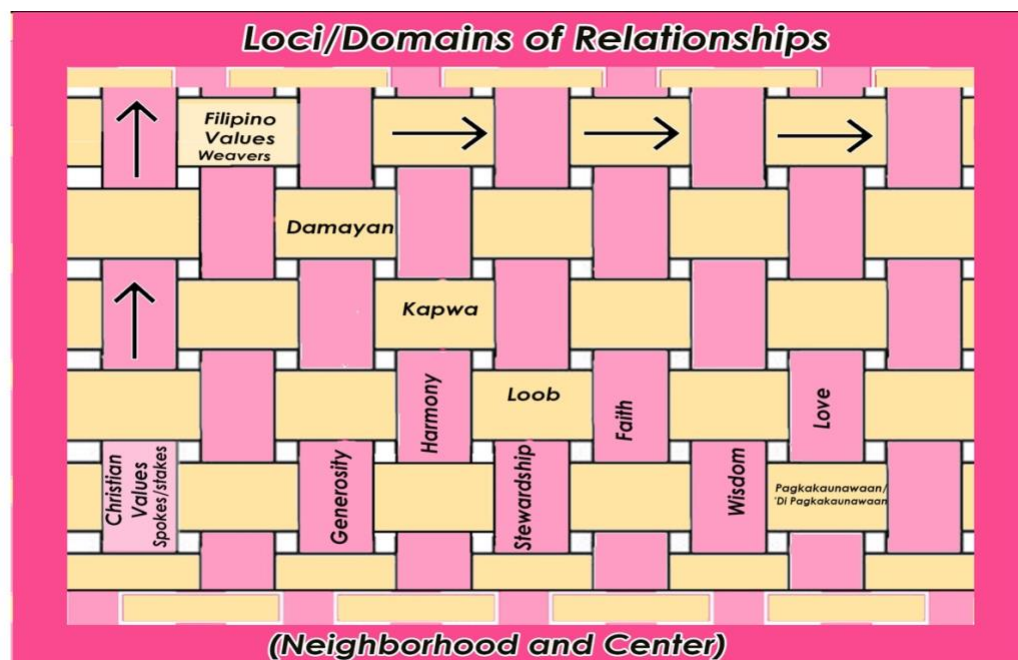
Banig (woven mat) was chosen as the illustration of the theory because 1) the interweaving of the weavers and spokes to make one whole mat represents the interfacing of the Christian values and Filipino values that builds relationships among women which serve as their safety net; 2) *banig* or woven mats are ubiquitous in Filipino society—an apt representation of this indigenous framework of development; and 3) this model is drawn from an everyday Filipino household article; *banig* taps on Filipino consciousness and makes it easy to comprehend.

On the Implications for Theory

This study sought to contribute to the body of knowledge, specifically to the discipline of transformational development (TD). There are two main critiques regarding TD that this research is able to give responses to.

The first critique is that TD's core tenet which puts *shalom* as the end goal of development is merely aspirational and not attainable Offutt (2012) writes, "...no one can point to a community that has ever reached the stated goal of living in *shalom.* No matter how well designed a development project is, no matter how skilled development practitioners are, and no matter how much innovation and creativeness community participants demonstrate, the fullness of shalom is never achieved." Considering this criticism vis-à-vis the data of the participants in the study, it becomes apparent that Offutt's understanding of development is still confined to the notion that to develop is to modernize and emulate the Western market system. This criticism's canon for development is still based on people's economic performance. The women of this study, however, have a framework of development closer to what TD purports (Bryant Myers 2011), that to develop is to transform and live whole, meaningful lives. This study has

shown that *shalom* is not a mere aspiration of TD, it is the aspiration of the poor themselves and the data from the ground proves this. If the discipline of development means to improve the well-being of the poor, then, development scholars must heed what the poor consider to be valuable and aspirational. Further, the research at hand shows that to experience *shalom* here and now is possible. *Shalom* is experienced by the women through faith in God and *pagbabalik loob* (repentance) and through their relationships with their *kapwa* (others) that are characterized by *damayan* (empathy), love, harmony, godly counsel, generosity, and even the inevitable rupture and repair of relationships which is referred to as *pagkakaunawaan/di pagkakaunawaan.* The women also experience *shalom* as they care for the environment. *Shalom* as a goal for development is not elusive; for the women in this study, *shalom* is experienced in pockets; even small deeds towards what is just and good is a foretaste of the fullness of *shalom.*

The second critique on TD is the theoretical tension of making the restoration of relationships central to development when most academicians accept the premise that modernization atomizes society (Offutt 2012). This criticism is built upon the *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* theory, first proposed by Tonnies (1935), which claims that "modern societies embrace the rise of the individual at the expense of communal relationships" (Offutt 2012). This research challenges that assumption because when seen from the perspective of the participants of this study, there is no dichotomy between relationships and progress. Even more, from an indigenous Filipino worldview, communal relationships are seen as a vital and effective means to development. This research shows that development concepts cannot be prefabricated and transplanted from one culture to another. People do not live within one singular cultural frame and culture

does not change at the pace of development programs (Harrison, 1985; Myers 2011). In the Filipino framework, well-being means having a sufficient supply of needs and good relationships. The Filipino values *damayan* (empathy) *kapwa* (shared identity) *loob* (relational will) *and pagkakaunawaan* (understanding/agreement) help elucidate the significance of relationships in development for this culture. This work stands as an addition to the scarce non-Western sources about the Christian paradigm of development. This study also serves as a point of departure for other scholars who aspire to render an understanding of development from their own cultural perspective.

Aside from the substantive theory, "Development as Building Relationships through the Interweaving of Christian Values and Filipino Values," answering to the critiques on the TD paradigm, this study also contributes to the body of knowledge on gender and development, particularly women in development. This research showed that there are gendered dimensions of development in the Philippines. These are the aspects of poverty particularly experienced by women in urban poor communities, to wit: lack of employment opportunities, inequitable income, the burden of familial care work, lack of access to healthcare services, and violence at home and the community. I found out that the feminine-communal traits useful to creating and maintaining relationships as identified by Eagly (1987), like benevolence, trustworthiness, and morality, are related to the Christian values and Filipino values which were shown to be at work in the participant's relationship building. This study that gave primacy to the voice of the often marginalized demonstrated the invaluable contribution of Filipino women to the nurturing of solidarity in their communities and the building of a just and whole society.

On the Implications for Practice

Throughout the conduct of this transformational grounded theory research, practical implications were also determined.

First, development practitioners who work on programs for poverty alleviation need to acknowledge that poverty affects sectors of society differently and that there are dimensions of poverty where women are most disadvantaged. These are the areas of education, labor and employment, healthcare and services, and abuse and violence. Programs aimed at dealing with the Filipino feminization of poverty need to focus on providing better access to education for women, especially to girls who are in the secondary and tertiary levels. Females who can complete at least their high school education increase their employability by 3.4% compared to men at 1.7% (World Bank 2018a, 45).

Filipino women increase their earning power and avoid perpetuating inequality across generations with every additional year of schooling. Aside from better access to education, the creation of equitable opportunities for women to participate in the labor force must also be at the forefront of poverty alleviation. Women comprise 57% of the labor force in the informal economy—this means that the majority of the working poor are female. Efforts towards providing equitable income and benefits, as well as safety and protection for women at work in both formal and informal economy must be given consideration. Better access to healthcare services must also be afforded to women in urban poor communities, especially those which concern prenatal and postnatal care. Finally, yet importantly, the cause against abuse and violence to women in poverty must be taken up with serious zeal. Specifically, IPV is most prevalent among women in

poverty—the women whose income belongs to the lowest quintile, who have fewer years of education, and who have more children are most susceptible to violence. Development programs need not only focus on livelihood projects to increase profit for women; non-income dimensions of poverty that continue the feminization of poverty in the country must also be mitigated.

Second, this study has shown how the informal domain is the usual place of interaction by the participants over the formal domain. In the Filipino worldview, the interactions at the micro-level are more essential and consequential than those at the macro level. Development practitioners must be aware of the power structure and processes in the informal domain. This is where interventions and work that are most meaningful and transformative for the poor happen. Nevertheless, practitioners must recognize that since there are no fixed rules or structures in this sphere, ambiguities are fairly high. Hence, the effectiveness of development work is chiefly hinged on the practitioners' commitment to immerse and understand the culture, as well as their intentional engagement to build rapport with the people.

Third, the leaders of the church are encouraging to provide a seat the table of discussion for compassionate ministries to capable and competent women in the church. This study highlighted the concept of *kapwa-babae*, a notion that women have the ability to empathize with their fellow women. This means that it is the women in the church who will understand with more depth and meaning what ministries could truly serve the interest of the urban poor women. Consequently, there is a caveat to keep in mind for women leaders from the middle or upper class churches who aim to minister to the poor.

These women church leaders must identify barriers to solidarity with women in poverty, and work to diminish the gap between their social locations to truly journey with them

Fourth, concerning Christian faith and development, this study has shown the remarkable work of faith-based organizations in teaching Christian values. Transformational development's large work is to shift perspectives and change value systems, and the participants of this research attested that if such transformation does not occur, genuine development has not transpired. Faith and religion must be given a significant space when one is working with people whose worldview defines human flourishing not only with income and profit, but also with spiritual, emotional, psychological, and social well-being. In this day and age wherein discussions on sustainable development are at the foreground, spiritual sustainability—the belief that a community is dependent on God and not on the government or development agencies—must be included in the programs (Myers 2011, 198). In other words, there is a non-monetary resource base such as spiritual values—faith, stewardship, harmony, generosity, wisdom, and love—that can be leveraged to address poverty, especially its relational nature. It is a specific service that only the Christian church can provide. As Maggay (1994, 72) has written: "If the church is to lead at all, it is in its serving; in applying the creative energies released in Christ towards the stewardship of creation and the bringing of fallen structures closer to God's purposes."

Lastly, another non-monetary resource base that could be leveraged for transformational development is the Filipino cultural values. Development is not a one-size-fits-all solution. Practitioners need to recognize that cultural values permeate institutions, economic systems, and behavior, thus, these must be engaged to effect

transformation. The Filipino culture is deeply relational, and its cultural values have a strong influence over the development or misdevelopment of people. For development practitioners working in the Filipino context, there must be a return to the interest of richness of the Filipino culture and values which was initiated in the "Moral Recovery Program" (Shahani, 1993; Ramos 1996). Harnessing the finest of the Filipino values such as *damayan* (empathy), *kapwa* (shared identity) *loob* (relational will) *and pagkakaunawaan* (understanding/agreement) is necessary to create and implement development programs that take root on the ground and are effective and sustainable.

Recommendations For Further Inquiry

The following are some recommendations for further research:

One, this TGT research began the work of mining data from the ground— identifying codes, building categories, and constructing a substantive theory about the use of Christian values and Filipino values to build relationships for surviving and thriving. Since in-depth insight into the phenomenon is already available through qualitative data, quantitative research could ensue. Quantitative researchers may utilize the frequencies and codes provided in the previous chapter, or they may organize the available data and codes in accordance with the area of further inquiry. For instance, a four-point Likert scale may be created wherein statements corresponding to the Christian values and Filipino values that emerged from the TGT. Providing both qualitative and quantitative data would be helpful for development practitioners in creating projects and drafting evaluation tools.

Second, since the study was conducted in Antipolo City, Taytay, and Quezon City which are mostly in the *Katagalugan* (*Tagalog* Region), it may be beneficial for

future inquiries to conduct a similar study in the different regions of the Philippines. There are an estimated 134 ethnic groups in the country; they represent various languages, customs, aesthetics, and even religious expressions. Conducting this study in the different regions of the Philippines would make for a thicker description and richer data set. It will contribute to a more profound understanding and appreciation of the broader Filipino culture, and will provide more insight into our culture's implications to the theory and practice of TD.

Finally, this study has provided an insight on urban spirituality—ethnographic research exploring the cross-section of poverty and Christian spirituality in the Filipino slums would be a significant offshoot of this work. Further inquiries on spiritual growth and practical application of spiritual disciplines would be advantageous not only to the people living in urban poor situations but also to the workers serving these communities.

APPENDIX A

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS FOR STORY BOARD ACTIVITY
IN ENGLISH

Date: _____

Dear _____,

I, MARIE JOY PRING, am a student enrolled in the Ph.D. in Transformational Development at the Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS). I am conducting a study that explores the ways in which Filipino women build relationships that help them thrive and survive.

With this, I would like to kindly invite you to be my participant in a story board activity which will last for 45 minutes to 1 hour. The objective of this story board activity is to identify process of relationship building, as well as the concepts and tools from the Christian faith and Filipino culture that enable the creation and strengthening of these relationships. Your participation will help me greatly in this research.

The attached informed consent form has further explanation and a place for you to put your signature. This will serve as a sign of you granting me your permission to ask questions and do activity with you.

I am looking forward to your positive response.

Sincerely,

MARIE JOY PRING

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS FOR STORY BOARD ACTIVITY
IN TAGALOG

Petsa: _____

Kaibigang _____,

Ako si MARIE JOY PRING, isang mag-aaral ng Ph.D. in Transformational Development sa Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS). Ako ay nagsasaliksik tungko sa mga pamamaraan na ang mga babaeng Pilipino ay bumubuo ng ugnayan na tumutulong sa kanila upang magkaroon ng kabuhayan at mayabong na buhay.

Kaugnay nito, nais kitang anyayahan na maging kalahok sa aking isasagawang "story board activity." Magtatagal ito sa loob ng 45 na minuto hanggang isang oras. Layunin nito na malaman kung paano nabubuo ang mga ugnayan sa mga babaeng Pilipino at kung paano na ang pananampalataya kay Kristo at ang kulturang Pilipino ay nakakatulong sa mga ugnayang ito. Ang iyong pakikilahok ay lubos na makakatulong sa aking pagkalap at pag-aaral ng mga impormasyon sa pagsasaliksik na ito.

Kalakip nito ang "informed consent form" kung saan kailangan kang lumagda. Ito ang masisilbing katunayan na ako ay pinahintulutan mong kumalap ng impormasyon sa papamamagitan ng "story board activity."

Maraming salamat sa iyong pagpapaunlak. Pagpalain ka ng Poong Maykapal.

Gumagalang,

MARIE JOY PRING

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS   IN ENGLISH

Date: _____

Dear _____

I, Marie Joy Pring, Ph.D. in Transformational Development student at the Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) am conducting a study on the ways the Christian Faith and the Filipino culture help Filipino women create bonds that help them survive and thrive.

The following information is provided for you to decide if you are willing to participate in the study:

1) Agreement of Participation – I will only gather information from you if you agree to participate with me in this study. By signing this paper on the space provided below, you agree to be a participant.

2) Withdrawal of Participation – You are free to withdraw any time after signing. There will be NO penalty or obligation from your end.

3) Freedom to Answer – During your participation, I will be asking some questions. You may choose to answer them in any way that is appropriate for you to express your feelings, experiences and opinions. You may also choose not to answer any question.

4) Confidentiality-The information you provide will be strictly considered as confidential and can only be accessed only by the me, the transcriber, the program director, dissertation supervisor and the panel responsible for evaluation and approval of this project. In cases that might require naming of characters, pseudonyms will be used in place of your name. I will only do audio-video recording of our conversation during our meeting.

5) Privacy and Confidentiality Among Participants: The researcher encourages you not to disclose the stories of others at any cost. The stories and discussions of this project should be kept confidential. Please know: we have to treat each other with love by ensuring confidentiality and privacy

If you agree with the information abover regarding the research activity, kindly sign on the second page of this document. If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is complete, please feel free to contact me by cell phone or email. There is no compensation for your participation, but it is greatly appreciated.

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my rights as a research participant, I may call 09165115031, or send an email to marie.pring@apnts.edu.ph I agree to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization Form.

_____   _____

Type/Print Name   Date

_____

 Signature

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT FOR PARTICIPANTS   IN TAGALOG

Petsa: _____

Kaibigang _____,

Ako si, Marie Joy Pring na isang magaaral ng Ph.D. in Transformational Development sa Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) ay nagasasagawa ng pagaaral sa mga paraan kung saan ang pananampalatayang Kristiyano at ang Kulturang Pilipino ay nakakatulong sa pagbuo ng mga ugnayan ng mga babaeng Pilipino na nakakatulong sa kanilang pamumuhay at pagunlad.

Ang mga sumusunod na impormasyon ay ibibinigay sa'yo upang magpagpasyahan mo ang pagkikilahok sa pag-aaral na ito:

1. Pagsang-ayon sa Pakikilahok – Ako ay mangangalap lamang ng impormasyon para sa pag-aaral na ito. Sa iyong paglagda sa papel na ito, nangangahulugang pumapayag kang makilahok sa pagsasaliksik na ito

2. Pagtigil ng Pakikilahok – Malaya kang tumigil sa anumang oras ng pakikilahok sa pag-aaral na ito. Walang anumang kaparusuhan o kabayarang hihingiin mula sa iyo kung nais mo ng tumigil sa pakikilahok.

3. Kalayaang Tumugon – Sa mga tanong ng pag-aaral na ito, maari kang tumugon sa kahit paanong paraan na nais mo. Gayun din, maari kang hindi sumagot sa mga katanungang ayaw mong sagutin.

4. Pagiging Kompidensyal- Ang mga impormasyong iyong ibibigay ay kompidensyal at maari lamang makita ko, ng transcriber ng aking program director, aking dissertation supervisor at ang mga bahagi ng dissertation panel. Ang iyong tunay na pagkakakilanlan ay itatago sa ibang pangalan. Ang audio-video recording ay gagawin lamang sa mismong "story board activity."

5. Pagkapribado- Hinihikayat ang bawat isa na huwag ibahagi sa iba ang ating mga mapaguusapan. Ang mga impormasyong inyong ibabahagi ay kompidensyal at pribado. Gayun din, marapat na ituring natin ang bawat isa na may pagkalinga sa pamamagitan ng pangangalaga sa pagkapribado ng ating mga kwento sa gawaing ito.

Kung sumasang ayon sa lahat ng nabangit, at nais mong makilahok sa gawaing ito, maaring lamang na lagdaan mo ang pangalawang pahina ng dokumentong ito. Para naman sa karagdagang impormasyon, maari mo akong tawagan o padalahan ng liham sa email. Wala mang katumbas na kompesasyon, lubos kong pinagpapasalamat ang iyong pakikilahok.

Nabasa ko itong Consent and Authorization form. Ako ay nagkaroon ng pagkakataon na magtanong tungkol sa pagaaral na ito, at nakakakuha ako ng karampatang tugon. Batid

ko na kung mayroon pa akong katanungan tungkol sa pagaaral na ito, maaari akong tumawag sa 09165115031, o magpadala ng liham sa marie.pring@apnts.edu.ph Pumapayag akong makibahagi bilang research participant. Sa aking paglagda ay pinahahayag kong nakatanggap ako ng kopya ng Consent and Authorization Form na ito.

_____   _____

      Type/Print Name   Date

_____

      Signature

APPENDIX E

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION RECORDING TOOL

DATE:
SITE:
REMARKS:

TIME	INCIDENT/PERSON/ THING OBSERVED	INTERPRETATION AND EXPLANATION	SELF- EVALUATION

APPENDIX F

STORYBOARD AND FGD ACTIVITY (PROTOCOL IN ENGLISH)

DATE:
SITE:
I. **Preparation**
Face to Face Preparation:
- I, the researcher, must be prepared mentally and emotionally.
- Drawing materials (coupon bonds, post-its, coloring pens, markers, and masking tape) must be prepared.
- The recorder must be tested and the batteries must be full.

Zoom Preparation:
- I, the researcher, must be prepared mentally and emotionally.
- Drawing materials (coupon bonds, post-its, coloring pens, markers, and masking tape) must be prepared and sent to the participants before hand.
- The participants must have ZOOM downloaded and their cellphones must be provided load for data.
- Ensure the laptop is capable to record the zoom session.
- Collection of the materials they drew is imperative. The researcher will coordinate with a key member of the participants to collect and send the the drawings via Lalamove Delivery. The researcher will handle the delivery expense.

II. **Introduction**
Good day, everyone! Thank you all for your willingness to join me. I am Marie Joy Pring. I'm a student at Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) and I am studying how the Christian Faith and the Filipino culture help you, women, to create relationships that help you meet your daily needs, as well as make your life more meaningful and fulfilling. Our discussion will last for at least 45 minutes to one hour.

III. **Instructions**
I have some questions to ask. I will ask the questions one at a time and you may put into drawing your answers to the questions. We can spend about 5 minutes on drawing or writing your response. There are no wrong or right answers; just be honest and candid with your response. For the purpose of transcription, I will record our discussion. Would that be okay with you? This will be one of the best ways to help me listen to your opinions afterwards in my own time. Thank you for giving me permission to record. You are also welcome to ask questions if you need me to clarify a question for you to understand it better. If there is any moment where you want to pause, or if you want recording to stop during our discussion, I am willing to do that. Let us start by introducing ourselves (name, age, years of being the community).

IV. **Storyboard Prompts (Questions)**
Prompt 1: "How do women in your community get together to help each other?"
Prompt 2: "What are the characteristics of these relationships?"
Prompt 3: "How do these connections enrich your lives?"

V. **FGD Follow-up Questions** (After the storyboarding activity, an FGD will follow. This conversation will open up space for the women to process the information from their drawings and writings.)

On Prompt 1: Thank you for your effort! Your drawings look good! Tell me about these drawings.

a)   What is happening here in your drawing?
b)   Who are the people that help women join together?
c)   What are the things that they gather around in?
d)   Now that we discussed the people and things that join women together, what then are the things that keep them apart?

On Prompt 2: These drawings look good! Can you tell me more about them.

a) How do you relate to one another?
b) How do you communicate with one another?
c) Who are the emerging leaders in your group?
d) How do you feel others are treated in the group?
e) How do you feel you are treated in the group?

*Researcher needs to be wary of cultural themes and Christian themes that arise from the personal and collective narrative of the group. It is important to surface them in the discussion and probe the women's thoughts on them.

On Prompt 3: Now we have to these last sets of drawings. Please share your thoughts behind your drawing.

a) What benefits has this relationship brought to your life?
b) Imagine you do not have this relationship with the other women in your community; what would have happened differently to you?
c) What changes could be done to make your relationships better.

*Researcher needs to be wary of cultural themes and Christian themes that arise from the personal and collective narrative of the group. It is important to surface them in the discussion and probe the women's thoughts on them.

VI. **Final Storyboard Output:**

Now that we have discussed what you think individually, let us try to make one story board that represents that thoughts of the whole group. Create the best drawing that represent your answers to these questions:

Prompt 1: "How do women in your community get together to help each other?"
Prompt 2: "What are the characteristics of these relationships?"
Prompt 3: "How do these connections enrich your lives?"

VII. **Appreciation and Closing**

Thank you so much for your time and responses. Do you have any comments or questions before we close? Once again, thank you so much for your help. (Then give token of appreciation.)

APPENDIX G
STORYBOARD AND FGD ACTIVITY (PROTOCOL IN TAGALOG)

PETSA:

LUGAR:

I. **Paghahanda:**

Paghahanda para sa face to face activity:

- Dapat ay handa ang aking kaisipan at kalooban para sa gawaing ito.
- Ang mga drawing materials (coupon bonds, post-its, coloring pens, markers, and masking tape) ay dapat handa na.
- Ang recorder ay dapat nasubukan na at ang baterya ay dapat nasa "full."

Zoom Preparation:

- Dapat ay handa ang aking kaisipan at kalooban para sa gawaing ito.
- Ang mga drawing materials (coupon bonds, post-its, coloring pens, markers, and masking tape) ay dapat naipadala na sa mga kalahok bago pa man ang gawain.
- Ang mga kalahok ay dapat may Zoom na sa kanilang telepono. Tungkulin ko na bigyan sila ng "load" para sa internet data.
- Siguraduhing ang laptop na aking gamit ay makakapagrecord ng Zoom video call.
- Ang pagkalap ng mga ginuhit ng mga kalahok ay lubos na mahalaga. Ako ay makikipag-usap sa isa sa mga kalahok na kolektahin at ipadala sa akin sa pamamagitan ng Lalamove Delivery. Ako ang magbabayad ng pagpapadala.

II. **Pagpapakilala**

Magandang araw sainyo! Salamat sainyong pakikilahok sa akin ngayon. Ako si Marie Joy Pring. Isa akong mag-aaral saAsia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) at inaaral ko kung paano na ang ating pananampalatayang Kristiyano at kulturang Pilipino ay nagiging daan sainyong mga kababaihan upang lumikha ng ugnayan na nakakatulong sainyo na magkaroon ng inyong araw-araw na pangangailangan, gayundin ay nagbibigay ng kahulugan at kabuluhan sa inyong mga buhay. Ang ating gawain ay maaring tumagal ng 45 minutos hangang isang oras.

IV. **Direksyon**

Mayroon akong mga tanong. Isa-isa ko silang tatanungin at ang sagot ninyo ay maari ninyong iguhit o di naman kaya ay isulat. Maari tayong huminto ng hanggang 5 minuto upang iguhit o isulat ninyo ang inyong sagot. Walang tama o maling sagot dito; kailangan lang ay maging tapat at totoo kayo sa inyong mga tugon. Para maitala ng tumpak ang inyong mga tugon, ire-record ko ang ating gawain. Mamarapatin ba ninyo ito? Salamat sa inyong permiso. Maari rin kayong magtanong ano mang yugto sa ating gawain para mabigyang linaw ang mga tanong o naituran ko. Kung nais ninyong ihinto ang aking pag-record, maari ninyo akong sabihan. Malugod ko kayong pagbibigyan. Magpakilala tayo ng ating mga sarili (pangalan, edad, at taon na naninirahan sa komunidad).

V. **Storyboard Prompts (Mga Tanong)**

Prompt 1: "Paano nag-uugnayan ang mga kababaihan sainyong komunidad upang magtulungan?"

Prompt 2: "Ano ang katangian ng ugnayan na ito?"

Prompt 3: "Paano pinauunlad ng mga ugnayang ito ang inyong buhay?"

V. **FGD Follow-up Questions** (Matapos ang storyboard activity, susunod naman ang FGD. Ang paguusap na ito ay higit na magbibigay ng pagkakataon sa mga kababaihan na pagusapan at pagbulay-bulayan ang mga impormasyon na makikita sa kanilang igunuhit at isinulat).

On Prompt 1: Salamat sa inyong mga ginuhit at sinulat! Ang ganda ng mga ginuhit ninyo! Pag-usapan natin ang mga ito.

a) Ano ang nangyayari sa eksenang iginuhit ninyo?

b) Sinu-sino ang nagsisimula ng ugnayan ng mga kababaihan?

c) Anu-ano ang mga bagay na nagbubuklod sa kanila?

d) Anu-ano naman ang mga bagay na pumuputol sa kanilang ugnayan?

On Prompt 2: Maaring ipaliwanag ninyo ang inyong mga tugon.

a) Paano ninyo ilalarawan ang pakikipag-ugnayan ninyo sa isat-isa?

b) Paano ninyo ilalarawan ang komunikasyon sa inyong mga ugnayan?

c) Sinu-sino ang mga tumatayong lider sa inyong grupo?

d) Sainyong palagay, paano ang pakikitungo ninyo sa isa't isa?

   e) Saiyong palagay, paano ka itinuturing ng iyong mga kasamang kababaihan?
(Kailangang maging sensitibo ang mananaliksik sa mga temang kultural and temang Kristiyano na mababakas sa mga personal at kolektibong naratibo ng grupo. Mahalagang mailabas sa usapan ang mga temang ito upang higit na mailabas ang kaisipan ng mga kababaihan tungkol sa mga ito.)

On Prompt 3: Narito na tayo sa huling grupo ng mga iginuhit ninyo. Maari ay ibahagi ninyo ang inyong iniisip sa inyong mga tugon.

a) Ano ang mga magagandang idinulot ng ugnayang mayroon kayo sa inyong buhay?

b) Paano kung wala ang ugnayang ito; ano kaya ang kakalabasan ng inyong buhay?

c) Anu-ano ang mga bagay na higit magpapatibay at magpapaganda ng inyong ugnayan?
(Kailangang maging sensitibo ang mananaliksik sa mga temang kultural and temang Kristiyano na mababakas sa mga personal at kolektibong naratibo ng grupo. Mahalagang mailabas sa usapan ang mga temang ito upang higit na mailabas ang kaisipan ng mga kababaihan tungkol sa mga ito.)

VI. **Huling Storyboard:**

Ngayong nakita natin ang tugon ng bawat isa, subukan nating gumawa ng storyboard na magpapakita ng kabuuang iniisip ng grupo.

Prompt 1: "Paano nag-uugnayan ang mga kababaihan sainyong komunidad upang magtulungan?"

Prompt 2: "Ano ang katangian ng ugnayan na ito?"

Prompt 3: "Paano pinauunlad ng mga ugnayang ito ang inyong buhay?"

VII. **Appreciation and Closing**

Maraming salamat sainyong pakikilahok. Mayroon ba kayong mga tanong o komento bago tayo tuluyang magtapos? Salamat muli sa inyong mga tugon. (Ibigay ang munting handog para kanilang pakikilahok.)

APPENDIX H

PHOTO ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND RELEASE FORM

I _____, as the storyboard

participant, grant my permission for the photo of my drawing and text entitled

_____ to be reproduced and publicly displayed as part of a

research project. I also gran my permission for this photo to be published and publicly

distributed by members of the research team. If I have any questions about how my

photography will be used I may contact the researcher (**Marie Joy D. Pring**) at

marie.pring@apnts.edu.ph or 09165115031.

APPENDIX I

AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

Transcriber

I, _____ agree to maintain confidentiality of all information about any of the subjects if I am hired to transcribe for the observations/interviews of women engaged in by Marie Joy Pring , of the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (Philippines). I understand that I may not discuss the contents of any of the observations/interviews with anyone except Marie Joy Pring and that I may not make reference to the names, identity, living locations or circumstances of any of the individuals who I come in contact with through this project. This is to protect the rights of the women. Finally, I understand that if I violate this agreement to confidentiality it may affect payment for my services as a transcriber.

I understand the above conditions on this project, and I agree to these conditions without reservation.

Signed:_____

(Transcriber)

Date:_____

Signed:_____

(Researcher)

Date:_____

Signed:_____

(Witness)

Date:_____

APPENDIX J

Confidentiality Commitment for Peer Debriefer

Date:

Boundaries for Peer Debriefer:

The peer debriefer is expected to maintain confidentiality by not revealing the names and identities of the research participants. You should not disclose the stories, research data, nor discussions of the project to others. You are expected to maintain integrity and honesty in dealing with the research data including the stories, codes, categories and axial coding of the both phases I – observation phase and II – storyboarding phase.

Please know: we must treat each other with love by ensuring confidentiality and privacy. If you agree with the above statements, please sign and date this form and return it to the researcher -Marie Joy D. Pring . You may keep a copy of the form for yourself.

_____

Peer debriefer Signature

_____

Date

_____

Signature of Researcher

_____

Date

APPENDIX K

CONTACT LIST OF PROFESSIONALS

The following are the list of professionals who have been asked to help review the methodology and tools for this project. Similarly, these are professionals who are significant in the in the Phase I of this research that involves observation and initial stages of theoretical sampling.

Name	Credentials
Rev. Noel Burias	OMF Missionary and Project Leader, Tents of Grace Ministry
Ma. Justina Dedace	President, SheWorks Incorporated
Rev. Jackson Natividad	Executive Director, Gintong Aral Foundation
Mirja Lotz	Executive Director, Rapha Ministries
Ms. Boots Mendoza, MAPsy, RPsy	Community Psychologist
Ms. Hazel Malazarte, MAPsy, RPsy	Community Psychologist

APPENDIX L
APNTS-IRB APPROVAL

DEPARTMENT
of RESEARCH

January 27, 2021

Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Ortigas Avenue Extension,
Kaytikling Taytay 1920, Rizal, Philippines

NOTIFICATION OF REVIEW APPROVAL

Marie Joy Pring marie.pring@apnts.edu.ph

**Protocol Title: UGNAYAN: HOW THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND
FILIPINO CULTURE BUILD RELATIONSHIPS THAT HELP URBAN POOR
WOMEN SURVIVE AND THRIVE**
Protocol#: AR-0008
IRB Review Date: January 27, 2021
Effective Date: January 28, 2021
Expiration Date: January 28, 2022
Review Type: Exempt Review
Review Action: Approved

The IRB made the following determinations:

- Waivers: Waiver of informed consent documentation
- Other Documentations: All necessary attachments submitted
- Risk Determination: No greater than minimal risk

Please contact me at nehemiah.bathula@apnts.edu.ph if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Nehemiah Bathula
Administrative Assistant to the Academic Dean Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological
Seminary

APPENDIX M

CERTIFICATION OF PROOFREADING

I, **Marie Joy Pring** (name of researcher) certify that this dissertation has undergone proofreading and editing by **Dr. Eileen Ruger**, an authorized proofreader of the Asia- Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary.

_____   _____

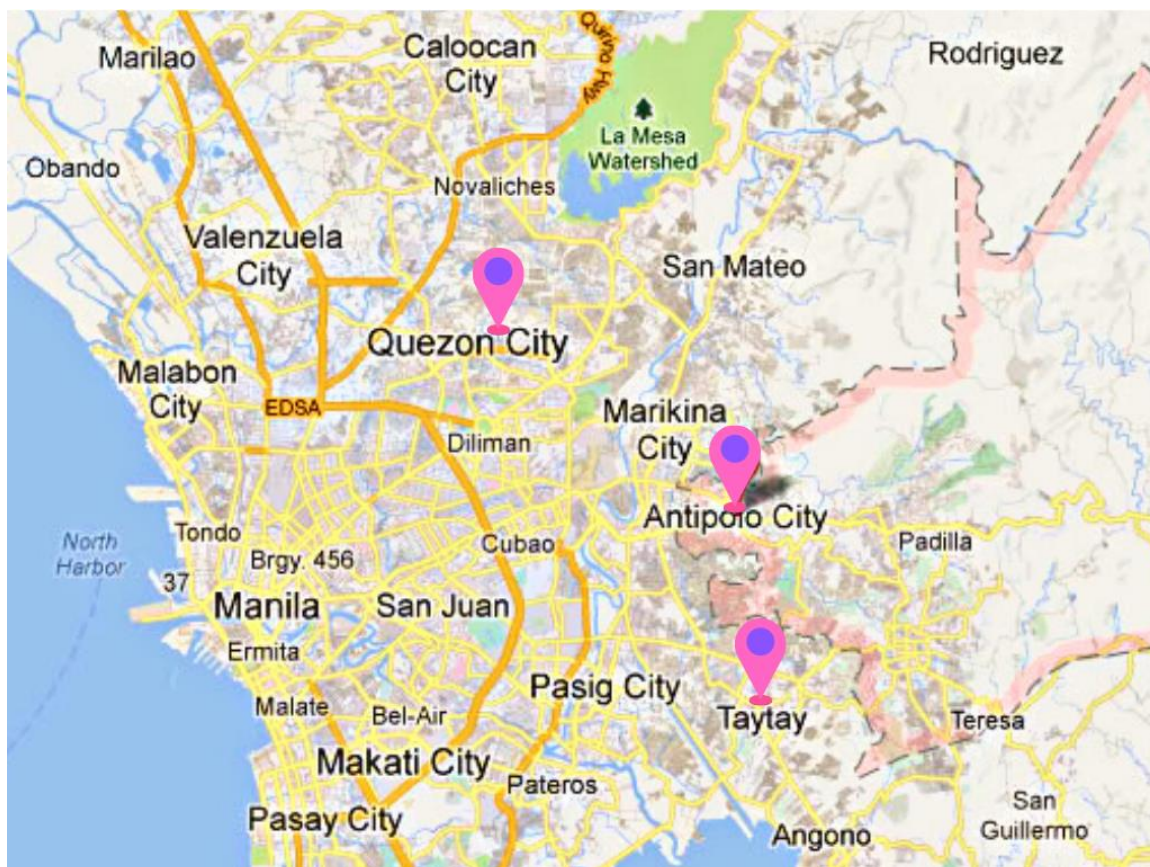**Signature of Researcher**   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Proofreader   **Date**

APPENDIX N

RESEARCH LOCALES

APPENDIX O
Codes Master List

	What are the formal and informal relationships created by the women to meet their needs for survival and build opportunities to thrive in urban poor communities?				
	RQ2: Culiat	RQ2: Antipolo	RQ2: Rowenas	OPEN CODES	OPEN CODES
1	God's Word, Bible Study	God's Word, Faith, Pananalig sa Diyos, Devotion	Bible Study	Center	**Center**
2	Food	Food, Kape	Food, Kape	Neighborhood	**Neigborhood**
3	Center	Center, Center Leader		Center	
4	Kapitbahay, Neighborhood			Neighborhood	
5	Kwentuhan	Kwentuhan, Communication, Sharing Personal Problems	Kwentuhan	Neighborhood	
6	Challenges	Challenges, Problems	Challenges, Problems	Center/Neighborhood	
7		Social Media/Cellphone	Social Media	Center/Neighborhood	
8		Sanitation/Keeping Community Clean	Linis ng Kapaligiran	Neighborhood	
10			Ayuda	Center	
11			Disasters	Center/Neighborhood	
12			Favorite Local Spots (Geographical)	Neighborhood	
13			Livelihood/Negosyo	Center/Neighborhood	
	How does the Christian faith play into the creation of these relationships?				
	RQ3: Culiat	RQ3 Antipolo	RQ3 Rowenas	OPEN CODES	OPEN CODES
1	Prayers - II	God as foundation - different from prayers	Bible study,	Faith	**Faith**
2	Advice			Wisdom	**Wisdom**
3	Spiritual Values-I			Faith	**Love**

4	Pagmamahal - I	Pagmamahalan		Love	**Peace/Harmony**
5		Tiwala sa correction ng bawa't isa		Peace and Harmony	**Stewardship (Subcodes: Creation and Livelihood)**
6	Faith	Faith, Christian Faith, Bible Study		Faith	**Generosity**
7	Personal Develement/character change	Change-personal, also communal development	Personal development; Transformations, from - to	Faith; Wisdom	
8	Familial relationships, marriage and parenting	Familial relationships, marriage and parenting, community, neighbor, creation	Family/parenting	Wisdom	
9	Creation care	Community garden, ulam at tinda, creation care angle		Stewardship (Creation)	
10	Livelihood	Livelihood, kabuhayan, negosyo	Negosyo, livelihood, this is same as Culiat and Antipolo, crafts-teaching others, entrepreneurship; support sa business	Stewardship (Livelihood)	
11	Life-saving, health			Generosity	
12	Financial literacy	Financial literacy		Stewardship (Livelihood)	
13		Values enrichment		Wisdom	
14		Support, emotional, and spiritual-iwas sa maling landas		Wisdom	
15			Gabay sa pagharap sa suliranin	Wisdom	
16			Spiritual mission	Faith	
17			Kaibigan, tamang pag-iisip	Wisdom	
How does the Filipino play into the creation of these relationships?					
	RQ4 Culiat	RQ4 Antipolo	RQ4 Rowenas	OPEN CODES	OPEN CODES

1	Pakikipag-kapwa, tapat, mutual giving, mutual learning - Pakikipag kapwa, learning from each other	turingan na parang pamilya, like family	Neighbor, kapwa; Unity, kapwa;	Kapwa	**Kapwa**
2	Damayan, tulungan, DSWD, gov't, DOH, also as neighbors Karamay, sandalan, especially pandemic	Damayan, tulungan, kapit-bisig; Damayan; Disaster, tulungan	Damayan, even in raising children	Damayan	**Damayan**
3	May 'di pagkakaunawaan	May 'di pagkakaunawaan, tampuhan, respeto, Pakikibagay	May 'di pagkakaunawaan, Pagkaka-isa	Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan	**Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan**
4	Pag-uunawan	Intindihan, conflict resolution; Pagkaka-isa	Diversity, differences, respect	Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan	**Loob**
5	Sakop			Kapwa	
6	Tunay na samahan			Damayan	
7	Masaya	Masaya	Masaya	Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan	
8	Kagandahang loob, kagandahang ugali	Hinaing, kwentuhan= gaan ng loob (loob culture concept)	Labas hinaing = gaan ng loob	Loob	
9	Pagtutulungan		Supporta at bigayan; damayan, tulungan sa PAG-AHON; Tulungan,	Damayan	
10	Pagpapakumbaba, humility			Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan	
11	Pagkakakilala				
12			Communication; Trust, tiwala	Pagkakaunawaan/'Di Pagkakaunawaan	
13			Utang na loob	Loob	

14			Turingan na parang pamilya	Kapwa	
15			safety nets, basic needs, gamot, medical emergency, almost like a safety net	Damayan	

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CURRICULUM VITAE

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EDUCATION

Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Taytay, Rizal	Doctor of Philosophy in Transformational Development (GPA: 3.95) Dissertation: "Ugnayan: How the Christian Faith and Filipino Culture Build Relationships that Help Urban Poor Women Survive and Thrive	(June 2017-May 2022)
Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Taytay, Rizal	Master of Science in Theology Major: Christian Faith and Heritage (Magna Cum Laude, GPA: 3.8) MA Thesis: "The Holy Spirit in Irenaeus's Doctrine of Recapitulation"	(Nov.2012-April 2015)
Asian Seminary of Christian Ministries	Master of Divinity (39 units)	(June 2011-Oct. 2012)
Polytechnic University of the Philippines	Bachelor of Arts in Broadcast Communication (Cum Laude)	(June 2004-April 2008)

EMPLOYMENT

Adjunct Professor	William Carey International University	April 2022-Present
Program Manager	Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture, Quezon City	January 2022- Present
Chief Operating Officer	Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture, Quezon City	March 2021- December 2021
Consultant/Facilitator	The World Bank Group Cross-Cultural Orientation Seminar	December 9-11, 2021
Training/Education	Institute for Studies	August 2020- March 2021

Officer	in Asian Church and Culture, Quezon City	
Adjunct Faculty	Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Taytay, Rizal	November 2019-Present
Research Consultant, "Disrupting Harm"	ECPAT International New York, USA.	August 2020-June 2021
Research Consultant	Nazarene Compassion International Philippines and International Justice Misision	December 2018- January 2020
Director of Research	Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Taytay, Rizal	September 2017- August 2020
Pastor	Church of the Triumphant Christ Cainta,Rizal	March 2015-Present
Faculty Assistant	Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary Taytay,Rizal	June 2012- July 2014
Segment Producer	The 700 Club Asia CBN Asia Makati City	May 2008- May 2010

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Association of Christian Librarians Excellence in Research Award 2022. The ACL Research Award, first given in 2007, provides CLC member institutions the opportunity to accomplish the following: honor great student researchers, get the word out about ACL to the academic institution, and create a library presence at an academic awards ceremony at CLC member schools.

Nagel Institute, Calvin University Research Scholar 2023. The Prophet's Chamber is a program that hosts visiting scholars in theology from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. This program offers a one-to-four month residency at Calvin University to early career theologians who need to finish a book. Scholars have access to Hekman Library, as well as opportunities to engage with other outstanding Christian scholars and ministry leaders for their research and writing. The visiting scholar also receives an office within the Nagel Institute for the duration of the research.

Langham Partnership Scholarship UK 2020-2022. The Langham Partnership Scholarship Program was founded by the famed British pastor John Stott and offers around 75 scholarships a year to outstanding scholars from 35 countries. It is described in this fashion: "Langham identifies men and women who are academically able and recommended by their churches as committed to godly and evangelical faith and life, and equips them for a lifetime of ministry through a Ph. D. in biblical and theological studies."

Asia Graduate School of Theology Visiting Scholar's Program 2020. This award is conferred to Asia Graduate School of Theology PhD students who will pursue research fellowship for their dissertations.

Floyd T. Cunningham Award of Academic Excellence 2015. This award is conferred automatically to those who graduate from any of the post-graduate degree programs of APNTS with a grade point average qualifying the student for summa cum laude or magna cum laude honors.

RESEARCH PORTFOLIO

Presentations:
Research Presenter, Asia Theological Association, Ethics with a Human Face: OSEC Victim-survivors as Everyday Ethicists, 16th September 2021, Singapore.

Responder, Practical Divinity Webinar Series, Sanctified Revolution: Holistic Witness in the Wesleyan Mode, 7th November 2020, APNTS, Taytay, Rizal, Philippines.

Research Presenter, Key Factors that Constitute an Effective Assessment Center for OSEC Victim-survivors in the Philippines, 26th November 2019, Rizal, Philippines.

Research Presenter, The 2018 Lausanne National Forum on Children at Risk, 29th August 2018, Manila, Philippines.

Research Presenter, Association of Christian Schools and Christian Universities (ACSCU) 2nd Research Congress, 7th December 2018, Trinity University of Asia, Quezon City, Philippines.

Research Presenter, APNTS Gender and Development Department's Celebration of the International Women's Month, 19th March 2019, Taytay, Rizal, Philippines.

Published Works:
Author. "Amidst *Gemeinschaft*-ing and *Gesellschaft*-ing: Atomization of Society and Bonds Built by Wesleyan Women." *The Mediator.* 2019, Rizal, Philippines

Author. "Key Factors that that Constitute an Effective Assessment Center for OSEC Victim-survivors in the Philippines." 26th November 2019, Rizal, Philippines.

Co-Author, Conference Proceedings. "Listening and Learning from Various Entities on Dynamics that Help Children Thrive," Presented at the 2018 Lausanne National Forum on Children at Risk, 29th August 2018, Manila, Philippines.

Author, Conference Proceedings. "From Silent Pathology to Constructed Empowerment: Women's Ways of Knowing and Filipino Women's Epistemology of Poverty" Presented at Association of Christian Schools and Christian Universities (ACSCU) 2nd Research Congress, 7th December 2018, Trinity University of Asia, Quezon City, Philippines.

Unpublished Work:
"The Holy Spirit in Irenaeus's Doctrine of Recapitulation." Unpublished. Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, Taytay, Rizal, Philippines.