

The Convergence of Values: Exploring the Values System among the Taal Families of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija Philippines

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Abstract: This study focused on exploring the values system among the *taal* families of San Jose City, Nueva Ecija Philippines. *Taal* families refer to the families who have been considered "natives" in the community. The study was under the qualitative case study approach and used a semi-structured in-depth interview to gather. The study used purposive sampling and gathered data from the nine (9) heads of the family of the selected *taal* families based on the criteria identified in this study. Three themes related to the convergence of values emerged. These include the evolution of the values system, sharing of cultures together with the community, and creating a lasting family legacy: The persistence of traditional values system in this study. This implies that instead of creating and adopting a new values system that will fit our environment today, respondents simply adopted the way of practicing traditional values in the kind of society we have today by practicing it in a new way. Major findings reveal that the values system did not change, it just evolved only to respond to the modernity of our society today so that their children will be able to adopt it easily in which the traditional way of practicing family values just converged to the kind of society we have today.

Keywords: values system, preservation, adoption, creation, convergence

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In terms of defining the Filipino Family, our setup is by far unique from those of our neighboring countries because of the ways our culture has been shaped by the colonizers who came to our shores. Inside the Filipino family, there is presumably a mechanism that continuously preserves the traditions we have inherited from our ancestors such as ancient cultures, beliefs, ideals, and local values that are passed on through us from generation to generation. The family, after all, has been recognized as the foremost essential institution for the conservation of society. Yet in some ways, this same family setup is also subject to all kinds of assaults from different sources over time. This is the reason why society had established different agencies to protect the family.

Traditional Filipino family values are built on traditional values passed on from generation to generation, most of which were anchored on Catholic teachings which formed part of the heritage of the Spaniards. In some ways, these values were constantly reinforced and were seen as evident in Filipinas which give rise at times to American men choosing Filipinas as brides rather than finding their partners

in their own country.

Filipino family values are the values that define what is meaningful in a family which has become one of the most important parts of Philippine history. This can be described from yesterday up today depending on the traditional values. It is because of the invasion and domination of the neighboring nations in the history of the country. The start of invasions in the country became also the beginning of the foreign influence on our native Filipino family values which led to different changes. It is very evident nowadays to see present-day Filipinos be uniquely different from their counterparts from the generations before them, especially regarding the values they manifest in their daily lives.

Relating to the tracing of the preservation of family values inside the family, it is good to start in its roots. According to the study by Morillo, Capuno, & Mendoza (2013) "The Filipino family provides an interesting study because familism is embedded in its social sphere, translating its relational quality outside the family (p.5). Familism is defined by Campos, Ullman, Aguilera, & Schetter (2014) in their study as a cultural value that emphasizes warm, close, supportive family relationships and that family be prioritized over self, which has been associated with psychological health (p.191). Exactly, these are the traits that Filipino families had before up to the present.

If we will look deep inside the family it can be observed according to Tarroja (2010) that "Filipinos have been described as family-centered, and families have been observed to be closely-knit" (p.177). From this description of Filipino Families, we can already imagine how its members preserved the family values inside their own families. It was supported by the study of Hallig (2011) that though Filipinos have been influenced by modernism, many have remained traditional. This is mainly the reason why most of our family values had been preserved. Values guide behavior, which can gauge cultural distinctions among groups of people, nations, or individuals.

Different kinds of literature and studies also gave importance to the preservation of the values system. In them were discussed the following: that despite the hectic schedule of most parents today, it is still best to consider spending time together because as far as children are concerned, quality time

is one of the best gifts families can share with each member. According to the study by Witmer (2020) that as a “parent, you play a key role in cultivating and protecting these family bonds. But, building strong family connections doesn't always happen naturally”.

Parents are highly encouraged to find time to talk with their children. They are reminded to choose a few nights during the week when they expect everyone to gather around the dinner table (Harrison, Norris & Obeid, 2015). They should not allow phones or other electronics. The focus is on just eating a meal and having a conversation together. Sadly, many parents will reason they are unable to do so because of their hectic schedules but if they were unable to get together for dinner as a family, they can try breakfast or any time in which bonding will be done with their children.

The value system is slowly vanishing because of the influence of other countries that were adopted by teenagers nowadays and the modernization of the world today. The citizens of this world now are comprised of a brand new generation. New technologies and modernizations continue to flourish which leads to affect the different aspects of the family including family values. The set of values held by the present-day generation is presumably not as directly imposed and tight in terms of transfer of practice habits unlike that of family members reared by parents of the previous generation.

The practice of family values of the people is constantly changing from time to time (Abigail, 2013). Despite these changes, the study by Fadol (2014), expressed that “we have encountered many Filipinos who have a nuclear type of family and most of them have siblings, they also still call their elders with respect”. To be particular, teens nowadays prefer to be with their friends rather than having a peaceful prayer day with their family." It is because according to Bisin (2017) the “large-scale history of the world through the different modes of production humanity has adopted some other values over time which have implications in terms of moral values”

The question now is how the family gives importance to the family values and keeps teaching them to their children. According to Gemiano (2015) “ with several values taught or instilled over time, they are arguably more enduring when they are picked up on their own. It means that values are still of utmost importance, especially in the life of every person most especially in the way he/she interacts with society. These values are usually taught (and supposedly caught) and developed inside the home of a family; next only to the school which has been considered as the second home of the students as well as in the adjoining community.

The majority of the Philippine population is bonded together by common values and traits that are first taught at home and applied in our day-to-day lives (Goyala, 2019). Thus, Gregorio & Defensor (2011) states that the Philippine culture is diverse and can be reflected in the traits (p.1). The result of these influences emphasizes a shared identity and connectedness, the centrality of the family, acceptance of

uncertainty, ability to relate to others, respect offered according to the individual's place in the structure of hierarchical relations, adaptability, and religiosity (Root, 2005 cited by Bernardo, 2019). Our innate humanity is very much apparent in the caring ways we interact with those close to us including others outside our kin circle (Wong, 2012).

We are now in the modern Filipino family setup wherein most of the traditions became digital. In terms of communicating with our family members, we are connected closer unlike before because of the instant messages and video calls. According to an article posted on rappler.com that “families have group chats where they share the day’s news, photos, and even what they ate with each other”.

There are ways to preserve and promote culture, particularly through the language, religion, literature, music, and arts, of a particular group of people (Dalayoan, n.d). According to Estanislao (2018) “those values articulated by our revolutionary forebears still hold for us today”. According to Bisin (2017) human values Evolution “is a large-scale history of the world through the different modes of production humanity has adopted over time and their implications in terms of moral values” In which was also agreed by Taylor (2012) that your values form the foundation of your life. According to Caldo (2020), that involvement in a positive and encouraging community has a tangible impact on individual self-awareness and fulfillment. This is the reason why values are not only a treasure but also an asset in the community which their children can bring up to the time they will have their own family. According to Cooper (2017) that “it takes effort, but can be so rewarding establishing and maintaining family traditions is a way for families to bond together over shared experiences; they connect us and to our past”. As the study by Alampay & Jocson (2011) concluded that “the role of parents' cognitions in shaping socialization practices and children's developmental outcomes is conceivable of universal significance”. A study by Caldo (2020) stated that involvement in a positive and encouraging community has a tangible impact on individual self-awareness and fulfillment. At the end of the day for Doyle himself (2019) advised that when considering a new job or career, a parent's values count as one of the most important factors that will guide one’s choices.

“We may well be part of a global movement of family setups in fast transition but still, it is the firm belief of this writer that we Filipinos can maintain our unique identity of standing for our race and culture” (Balala, 2018). With the kind of society we have today it is evident that our identity of being a once known to be tightly knit Filipino family is starting to fade. Filipino family values over time started to evolve.

There is a lot of discussion about the Filipino Values system but this research is unique in its way. It is meant to explore the practicing of traditional values in our modern society today of the selected families in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija. This research study was conducted to explore the

preservation of the values system and looks forward to adopting the system to keep the family abreast of valuable treasures in society.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Generally, this study sought to explore the preservation of the values system among *taal* families in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija toward the framing of adopting the modern way of practicing the Filipino values System.

Specifically, this study aimed to answer the following questions:

1. How do selected families preserve common values systems strongly identified to be marks of the traditional Filipino family?
2. How do the selected families adopt new practices on the values system they meet in present-day association with other families?
3. How does the preservation and adoption of the values system create a new way of practicing Filipino Values today?

III. METHODOLOGY

This article is a qualitative case study using multiple real-life cases. The researcher used a purposive sampling method that was best suited to the research design of the study. Using a semi-structured in-depth interview, the researcher selected the nine (9) respondents based on the following criteria: (1.) married couple for at least 10 years; (2.) they can express/articulate their ideas and feelings freely; (3.) they must be willing to participate and share their story; and (4.) with enough experience regarding the objectives of the study. Proper coordination with the Local Government Unit of San Jose City was observed through an approved letter from the office of the City Mayor which permitted the researcher to conduct the study.—Lastly, in terms of data management and analysis, the data gathered were transcribed and analyzed using qualitative data analysis. According to Merriam (2016) that “qualitative data analysis is all about identifying themes, categories, patterns, or answers to your research questions”. Therefore all the data were properly coded, categorized, and formed into themes. "Since as a qualitative analyst you do not have a statistical test to help tell you when an observation or pattern is significant, you must rely first on your sense-making, understandings, intelligence, experience, and judgment" (Patton, 2002, p. 572).

Ethical Considerations

Right to self-determination

The participation of the participants in this research study is completely voluntary. It was indicated in the informed consent that they have an option to withdraw from the study anytime without any obligations. If a participant decided to withdraw his participation, all data provided by him will be eliminated from the study and will be discarded properly.

Right to privacy and dignity

The interview of the participants was recorded using a mobile phone through a zoom meeting. All recordings from the interview were kept private and were only used for documentation. The researcher, research adviser, and research rater were the only people who had access to the data. The researcher was responsible for safekeeping the records during the research. One (1) year after the completion of the study, all recorded data will be properly discarded.

Right to anonymity and confidentiality

The researcher made sure that the identity of the participants remained confidential. Any personal information provided by the participants was kept private and subjected to utmost confidentiality. Hence, the researchers only used code names for the participants throughout the study to maintain anonymity.

Hence, guided by these principles and tools in gathering data, the use of the qualitative method in this research was deemed most suitable for this research.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The way respondents deal with their practices in the preservation of the traditional values system was interwoven in their everyday experiences with their families. How they acquired these values and how they manage them to respond to the kind of generation we have today, were seen in the dynamics that they have at home. In most cases, the lifestyle which was the result of preserving well of the values system instilled in the family of the respondents was indicative of their management of the values system.

Three major themes emerged in this study, and these are 1) Evolution of values system 2 Sharing of cultures together with the community 3) creating a lasting family legacy: The persistence of traditional values system.

1. Evolution of values system

In this study, respondents identified different values system which they considered new and need to adopt to sustain good family life. The majority of the respondents see values today as more specific. It emerged that these values are attributed to the technologies we have today. According to Bisin (2017) human values Evolution “is a large-scale history of the world through the different modes of production humanity has adopted over time and their implications in terms of moral values”

With the constant changes we have today, the values system we hold dear is never spared from these transitions. It was observed in the responses of the respondents that they still have that traditional values but it is observable that they have a new way of practicing and expressing them. Respondents identified different values system which they considered new and need to adopt to sustain good family life. The majority of the respondents see values today as more specific. For them, these values are attributed to the

technologies we have today.

We cannot deny the changes in our generation today. Many will think that when it comes to modernity many things will be changing most especially inside the family. In some places in our country and even in other countries, it was already observed the fading of the values system, especially inside the family. This study is different because it never became an issue to the respondents the modernity we have to fade all the values system they inculcated and instilled inside their families. Instead, they used these changes to respond to the modernization of our society today. As they became open to any changes in society. They creatively practiced in a new way those traditional values systems so that their children will be able to cope with them and easily adapt to them, which sustained their good family life.

2. *Sharing of cultures together with the community*

For the respondents, it was very common for their families to easily adopt the changes that happen in their environment today. Adopting values in a society is quite challenging for them at this present. They have their way to face these challenges but at the same time have the same output- to continuously preserve and adopt traditional and new family values. Technology became a major barrier for the majority of the respondents that challenge them in teaching values to their children. Yet, it became also a new way to discover new values that can teach their children. It might not be new but the way how they teach and instill it in their children makes it new in the society we have today. Technology is usually associated with negative impacts on the young member of the family every time it was introduced to them. According to Alegre (2012) that "kids these days have an online presence even before they are born". But for the respondents, a proper way of guiding them will help and teach them a lot.

The level of seriousness of the respondents in preserving and adopting values was truly exceptional as the head of their families. Despite many changes and challenges in our society today that may have put the values system at high risk, they still stand strong with these values, and they keep on keeping on with these principles consistently with their family. Indeed, their dedication to preserving and adopting values was truly a good manifestation of being good parents and committed to performing their roles in preserving and adopting values for their children.

3. *Creating a lasting family legacy: The persistence of the traditional values system*

Usually, when it comes to the family legacy it is always the business and other material things are the center of it. This includes who will inherit those legacies or who is the most successful member of the family to achieve the legacy that the family is preserving. This study is far from the usual ideas of family legacies resulting in the study. Despite the modern society we have today, respondents did not take it as a barrier to preserving and adopting family values. They

preserve very well the traditional family values to adopt new values in the modern society we have today. As a result, it created a lasting family legacy- preserving traditional values and adopting a values system in modern society today.

Respondents performed well in their roles as parents by preserving well the values system they acquired from their parents as they still passed it to their children. All of them together with their family were still practicing all of the values systems that they inherited from their parents. Generation by generation these values were continuously passed to the present member of the family. Then, became a cycle and was considered a tradition by all the respondents as they continue doing the same process and practice.

V. CONCLUSION

In the modern generation, we have today, the values system is one of the most affected for it appears that it is very challenging to practice the traditional family values system. The initiatives of the parents equipped their children on how to deal with this kind of generation today to inculcate values. This topic was chosen in the hope that families in San Jose City, Nueva Ecija preserved traditional family values and use them to create local wisdom in the values system in a modern generation.

Based on the findings of the study, it was found from the responses of the respondents that the traditional way of practicing Filipino family values complemented the kind of society we have today. All of the respondents showed how they gave importance to the values as they continuously practice them to preserve them. One major factor for this is good parenting in the family especially the parents in the formation of values in their own families which positively resulted in the inculcation of those values as their children still practice them today with them. Parents and other elder family members are the primary people with whom children identify themselves because they serve as their models for the formation and inculcation of the values.

Evident in the responses of the respondents was how the preservation of traditional values and adopting new values converge with each other. The perseverance of the respondents in preserving and adapting values was truly exceptional as the head of their families. Despite many changes and challenges in our society today that may be endangered by the values system they still stand strong with the values, they were practicing with their family. Indeed, their dedication to preserving and adopting values was truly a good manifestation of being good parents and commitment to performing their roles in preserving and adopting values for their children.

Despite the modern generation, we have today, we anticipated that there will be a new value system to be adopted as we adopt modernization in our society today. Since the respondents preserved well the traditional family values, it was carried on up to this modern day. Instead of creating and adopting a new values system that will fit our environment

today, they just simply complimented the environment and fitted the practice of these values in our society today.

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