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THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS: EXPERIENCES OF AMBULANCE NURSES ON EMERGENCY CARE

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the lived experiences of ambulance nurses in selected government hospitals in Cebu who are directly involved in emergency nursing care and health referral. This research utilized a phenomenological research design. A total of ten (10) informants were interviewed about their lived experiences in emergency nursing care. A non-directive conversational interview guide was used during the data gathering. Colaizzi's method was used. Emergent themes and subthemes of these nurses were extracted from their interviews.

The themes created on the experiences of ambulance nurses on emergency care are *Enhanced Nursing Skills* and *Improved Emergency Nursing Care in terms of Patient Transfer and Proper Coordination with the Provider in the Hospital*. On the challenges encountered in the delivery of health services, the themes are *Communication Problems; Safety/Security of Patient and Ambulance Staff; Bulk of Patients at the Emergency Room; Competency of Ambulance Nurse; Ill-equipped Ambulance Services; Unavailability of Stretcher Upon the Arrival to the Referred Hospital; Various Crises During Patient Transport*, and *Receivers' Manners During the Transfer*. Hence, as ambulance nurses, nursing care is crucial because they are the immediate first health responders involved in emergency cases.

Keywords – Nursing, ambulance nurses, emergency care, experiences, challenges, phenomenology, Cebu, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization [WHO], emergency care is an essential part of the health system around the world. In addition, WHO supports the development of quality and timely emergency care that is accessible both to low and middle-income countries to prevent or substantially reduce deaths. Thus, emergency nursing care during health referral plays a vital role in providing adequate and timely health services for patients.

Nursing is also evolving into new healthcare fields (Suserud, 2005). In Sweden, the nursing profession is emerging as the standard in ambulance care. In 2005, the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare decreed that, from that point onwards, it would be mandatory to staff ambulances with a registered nurse, and some healthcare regions required to hold a specialist nursing degree. Available research in ambulance care is often conducted by the individuals responsible for providing ambulance services. In some countries, paramedic training is an academic education within the higher education system, promoting ambulance care research (Ahl et al., 2005).

Wihlborg et al. (2014) stated that competence required by ambulance nurses in the profession remains undefined and provides a challenge. According to the professionals, there is a need to elucidate the desired professional competence of the specialist ambulance nurse. Nurses working in the ambulance service are frequently exposed to situations where they have to take sole responsibility for sick or injured patients, many of which can be emotionally trying. One of the satisfaction in modern hospitals, nursing is the ability to communicate with nurses working in the other hospital to the end that patients receive continuous nursing care and guidance when needed.

Peralta and Peralta (1992) recognized the importance of the emergency medical service system and its necessity for public service. Since emergency care in the field is considered an extension of the hospital, the patient's outcome could be improved if early care is given in the prehospital setting during a health crisis. Efficient prehospital care or emergency care system would save lives and reduce injury or suffering and improve the health care provided in the emergency department, especially for the seriously ill or injured.

The researcher being a nurse and a licensing officer of the Department of Health (DOH), has been exposed to the field of public health. It is indeed a great challenge to explore ambulance nurses' lived experiences because, in our country, there are issues that can be resolved if extensive research were conducted. It is hoped that this study will help in WHO's concern for better health services to the community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Self-Efficacy is defined as people's beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Bandura posits four sources of efficacy beliefs: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, emotional and physiological states (Bandura, 1997).

The first source of self-efficacy is mastery experience. It is when an individual acquires increased self-confidence over a situation by mastery or internalizing and understanding a phenomenon he or she directly experiences. The second source of self-efficacy comes from observing the people around as role models. Seeing someone succeed by sustained effort raises one's belief that they also possess the capabilities to master the activity. The third source is verbal persuasion. When influential people in one's life, such as parents, teachers, managers, or mentors, can strengthen one's belief that they have what it takes to succeed. Someone hearing words of encouragement or positive feedback from somebody influential to him or her will more likely put effort and sustain when challenges arise in a particular activity. The fourth source is the emotional and physiological states where one's emotion influences his or her judgment to self-efficacy. Depression, as such, can petrify confidence in one's capabilities. Stress reactions of tension are construed as signs of vulnerability to poor performance, whereas positive emotions can boost one's confidence and skills performance (Bandura, 1997).

The idea of self-efficacy refers to people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce specific effects and to learn or perform behaviors at designated levels (Bandura, 1997; Schunk & Pajares, 2002). More than that, it is also a belief about what a person can do rather than a person's judgments about one's physical or personality attributes (Zimmerman & Cleary, 2006).

Lent (2005) nevertheless notes that self-efficacy is linked to particular performance domains and activities and is thus crucial to human functioning. A supporting theory is the Situated Learning Theory by Lave and Wenger. This theory concerns how individuals acquire professional skills and posit that learning is unintentional and situated within the authentic activity, context and culture. The concept of situated learning theory involves a community of practice where people are engaged in collective learning. It employs when individuals enter the periphery community until interaction, collaboration, and social engagements provide the proper context for learning. The concept represents the mode of engagement of a learner who participates in the actual practice of an expert, but only to a limited degree and with limited responsibility for the ultimate product as a whole (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Expert nurses develop skills and understanding of patient care over time through a proper educational background and many experiences. Furthermore, improved practice depended on experience and science, and developing those skills was a long and progressive process. She found that nurses developed "skills of involvement" with patients and family when they engaged in various situations and learned from them. Her model has also been relevant for the ethical development of nurses since the perception of ethical issues is also dependent on the nurses' level of expertise. This model has been applied to several disciplines beyond clinical nursing, and understanding the five stages of clinical competence helps nurses support one another and appreciate that expertise in any field is a process learned over time (Petripin, 2016).

Acutely ill and injured people seek care every day. The frontline healthcare providers manage children and adults with emergency care, including injuries and disease complications. Care standards for critical care nursing provide measures for determining the quality of care delivered and serve as means for recognizing the competencies of nurses in the emergency department.

According to the Critical Care Nurses Association of the Philippines [CCNAPI], the following eleven (11) standards are intended to furnish nurses with directions in providing quality care and excellence in critical care nursing: function per legislation, common laws, administrative regulations, which affect nursing practice; (2) provide care to meet individual patient needs on a 24-hour basis; (3) practice current critical care nursing competently; (4) deliver nursing care in a way that can be ethically justified; (5) demonstrate accountability for his/her professional judgment and actions; (6) create and maintain an environment which promotes safety and security of patient and staff; (7) master the use of all essential equipment available services and supplies for immediate care of patients; (8) protect the patients from developing an environmental induced infection; (9) utilize the nursing process in an explicit, systematic manner to achieve the goals of care; (10) carry out health education for promotion and maintenance of health, and (11) act to enhance the professional development of self and others. Indisputably, there are new opportunities and expectations in how nursing practice is delivered, particularly now that there are many challenges surrounding the nursing profession. As studied by USAID, a non-government organization, there is a need to assist frontline healthcare workers with correct and timely referral decisions that affect emergency care outcomes.

The government-mandated creation of a Service Delivery Network [SDN] to ensure safe and quality health services in the Philippine setting. Service Delivery Network is a network of organizations that provides equitable, comprehensive, integrated, and continuous quality health care services in an integrated and coordinated manner to meet the needs of the priority and define population (Department of Health [DOH], 2016).

Health referral is one of the essential guiding principles of the Service Delivery Network. SDN ensures access to any trained health worker (nurses, pharmacists, midwives, dentists, primary care physicians) as the first contact within the health system. Easy navigation appropriate and timely referral to next-level of care shall be ensured. Non-medical services include transportation, communication, and welfare. Emergency care during referral assures appropriate and timely services and acceptance in higher levels of care (Department of Health [DOH], 2017).

In Region 7, the Central Visayas Health Referral manual serves as a guide to healthcare providers and other key stakeholders on the proper approach and management of rendering quality emergency care during referrals, on ethical standards, and proper attitude towards patients and significant others, stakeholders in the community and their co-workers. (Department of Health [DOH], 2015).

Furthermore, to strengthen the policy, the recent issuance of the Department of Health [DOH] Administrative Order 2010-0003 entitled National Policy on Ambulance Use and Services has been crafted to govern all stakeholders and healthcare providers to provide such critical and crucial service. Medical providers render emergency medical care and life support as a particular health service to sustain the patient's stability during transport.

Administrative Order No. 2018-0001 Revised Rules and Regulations Governing the Licensure of Land Ambulance and Ambulance Service Provider seeks to establish that ambulances operate with competent personnel and appropriate equipment to respond to medical emergencies, provide quality care and ensure patient safety.

As one of the requirements for the licensure of a hospital, compliance to Administrative Order 2018-0001 states that each ambulance shall be crewed by an adequate number of qualified, trained, and competent staff (registered nurse) to ensure efficient and effective delivery of quality ambulance services. The minimum qualifications and training required from ambulance personnel shall be following the type of ambulance the hospital operates. The ambulance is categorized into type 1 and type 2 with training requirements. Type 1 ambulance requires training on standard first aid and essential life support, while Type 2 ambulance needs standard first aid and essential life support plus advanced cardiac life support training.

Fayloma and Herbosa (1995) highlighted that one of the hallmarks of trauma care is providing emergency care to patients. The study revealed that in our local setting, prehospital trauma care is given by ambulances that are not well-equipped, thus, not efficient in satisfying the needs of trauma patients in an urban setting. Ambulance service and inter-hospital transfers by medical providers should be improved to emphasize quality emergency care services.

Edwards et al. (2007) examined referrals made by the same nurses prior to and following implementation of the best practice guidelines in the community. The study contributes important information about implementing nursing best practice guidelines on patient referrals. At the same time, the familiarity of the nurse's role in initiating and supporting appropriate referrals to a variety of providers, agencies, and information sources requires further study. The development of care mapping, clear referral criteria, and explicit policies regarding the referral nurse's role as an initiator of referrals also needs to be put in place to reduce the risk of missed referrals and promote continuity of care.

Gupta et al. (2017)further identified common reasons for health referral, either an emergency or routine cases such as those taking expert opinion for the patient, seeking additional services for the patient, seeking better treatment for the patient, and the use of high end diagnostic and therapeutic tools, which is not available in the current level of the facility. The Indian healthcare system is plagued by overpopulation, lack of expert clinicians, and lack of motivation among existing health workers like nurses, laboratory technicians, and an effective referral mechanism. Thus, it is essential to train and motivate healthcare professionals in providing quality health services to the patient.

Magbanua et al. (2018) determined the adherence of the selected health facilities in Negros Occidental to the inter-local health zone referral system, specifically in terms of the coordinating policy, provision of referral slip, and significant situations for a referral. It was concluded that there is weak coordination among health facilities directly concerned with implementing and applying the referral system. The referral system must be open for revision in the light of practical experience in order to meet the goals of the overall health system.

DOMAIN OF INQUIRY

The study explored the lived experiences of ambulance nurses in selected government hospitals in Cebu Province. Specifically, this investigation delved into the lived experiences of the ambulance nurses and their challenges in delivering health services during emergencies.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research informants, research procedures, ethical considerations, and data analysis.

Research Design

The study utilized a phenomenological research design to understand ambulance nurses' perceptions, perspectives, and understanding of a particular phenomenon. This phenomenology method would extract the purest, untainted data and interpret the approach. The researcher used bracketing to document the personal experiences of the informants (Maxwell, 2013).

Research Environment

The interview was conducted in hospitals in the Province of Cebu. The key informants were interviewed at their most convenient time, considering the informant's duty schedule.

Research Informants

The informants of this study were the ambulance nurse of the ten government hospitals in Cebu Province. These include four provincial hospitals, three DOH hospitals, and three LGU-owned hospitals that are directly involved in the health referral system in the province. The ten government hospitals are CPH-Carcar City, CPH-Danao City, CPH- Balamban, CPH-Bogo City, Talisay District Hospital, Eversley Childs Sanitarium, Saint Anthony Mother and Child Hospital, Cebu City Medical Center, Lapu-Lapu City Hospital, and Mandaue City Hospital.

One ambulance nurse was randomly selected in each health facility comprising ten (10) informants. These informants were assigned to Emergency Room or designated as Health Emergency Medical Staff (HEMS) nurses of the hospital.

Research Instrument

An interview guide was formulated to facilitate data collection of the lived experiences of ambulance nurses in implementing the health referral system. The interview guide was composed of crucial informant code, exploration questions, and exit questions.

Key informant code is a specific code used to identify the informant during the interview. This was utilized to preserve the informant's anonymity in the entire study. Exploration questions are questions that explore the variables being studied. These include questions about the lived experiences of the ambulance nurse in the implementation of the health referral system and delivery of health services. Exit questions will precede the conversation to the conclusion of the interview. These include questions about clarifying the exploration questions and some other facts needed in the study.

Research Procedures

The researcher sent a letter to the school for permission of the study. With full permission from the school, the researcher coordinated with the research informant of the selected hospitals through the emergency room supervisor. An informed consent was administered to the ambulance nurse prior to the conduct of the interview. The interview was conducted in the hospitals where the ambulance nurse was assigned. The researcher interviewed the ambulance nurse using an interview guide to elicit data and information that are significant in the study.

For accurate documentation and transcription of the informants' responses, it was audio recorded with the permission of the informants. Results of the interview were encoded and transcribed into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for coding, and the audio recorder was then disposed of.

Ethical Considerations

With due respect to the informants of this study, they were informed that their responses and identity are to remain private. Confidentiality and privacy are vital in this study; thus, consent was provided to the informants to ensure ethical standards. In the interview, the informant was provided and instructed to state the ID code during recording for this purpose. The researcher is the only one who knows the ID codes used for the informants.

Data Analysis

The data gathered were analyzed using Colaizzi's method. It enables the researcher to put aside personal perceptions of the phenomenon and give meaning to the participants' experiences (Colaizzi, 1978), as cited by Morrow et al. (2015).

Specifically, this study employed the following steps (Colaizzi, 1978): First, read and reread all the participants' verbatim transcripts of the phenomena to acquire a feeling for them. Second, significant statements or phrases were extracted directly from participants' transcripts about the research phenomena. Third, formulated meanings were constructed from the significant statements. Fourth, formulated meanings were arranged into themes. Fifth is incorporating the results into a detailed and exhaustive description of the participant's lived experience. The next step is to validate the detailed description from the participants involved in the research. The last step was incorporating any new or pertinent data obtained from participants' validation and adapting to attain congruence with the lived experience of the participants studied. Data saturation is reached when there is enough information to replicate the study (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013; Walker, 2012) when the ability to obtain additional new information has been attained and when further coding is no longer feasible, as cited by Fusch and Ness (2015). As such, the number of key informants was based on data saturation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the data gathered based from the series of interviews conducted to ten ambulance nurses in the province of Cebu. During data consolidation, two subproblems were identified. These include *Experiences of Ambulance Nurses on Emergency Care* and *Challenges Encountered in the Delivery of Health Services*. Under the experiences of ambulance nurses on emergency care, two themes are (1) Enhanced Nursing Skills; (2) Improved Emergency Nursing Care in Terms of Patient Transfer and Proper Coordination Between Referring and Referral Hospital On the other hand, the themes developed for challenges encountered in the delivery of health services, are (1)Communication Problems; (2) Safety/Security of Patient and Ambulance Staff; (3)Bulk of Patients at the Emergency Room; (4) Competency of Ambulance Nurse to Refer Patients; (5)Ambulance not Fully-Equipped; (6)Unavailability of Stretcher Upon the Arrival to Referral Hospital; (7) Various Crises During Patient Transport; and (8) Receivers' Manners During the Handoffs.

I. Experiences of Ambulance Nurses on Emergency Care

Ambulance nurses' experiences on fulfilling their responsibility could boost their self-confidence. In a healthcare environment where emergency nursing care is one of the primary concerns, the roles and responsibilities of nurses are constantly evolving; thus, nurses need to be aware of their obligations under their duty of care as far as patient safety is concern. Ambulance nurses' experiences on emergency care refer to the enhancement of their nursing skills and the improvement of the patient referral process through the help of modern technology. Two (2) themes were created based on the experiences of the informants. They are:

***a. Enhanced Nursing Skills*.** The most visible impact of emergency care in the province of Cebu is the enhanced nursing skills of ambulance nurses. Some of the informants claimed that their nursing skills were improved through proper training and work experiences. Relatively, the informants of the study have undergone training such as standard first aid, basic life support and emergency medical services important to health referral. Proper training plays an important role for continuous learning and it enhances ambulance nurses' skills in dealing with patient especially emergency nursing care during health referrals. Experience, likewise, moulds ambulance nurses to be more effective in executing their tasks. From their view of perspective, working in a moving vehicle was exciting and it motivated them to be assertive. They conveyed this expression as presented below:

> *"My training made the work easier because being trained is an advantage. Our patients expect a lot from us, so trainings would build confidence within us in dealing with patients, especially in a mobile set-up like ambulance"* (SS45).

"Also, through this kind of job, my nursing skills in emergency care have been challenged and somehow enhanced" (SS 18).

"Moreover, when a nurse is trained in ambulance care or prehospital care, the nurse would basically know how to operate the ambulance and care for the patient like the necessary interventions needed when he/she arrests; when to use the siren and the lights as well as when to follow traffic rules depending on the status of the patient inside the ambulance" (SS49).

"For me, however, no matter how trained you are, you will learn things through experience and practice over time. Undeniably, working in a moving vehicle while taking care of your patient is challenging for you would never know what will happen along the way" (SS 50).

"Through observations to my senior nurses and work experiences at emergency room, I continue to care for my patient while on the ambulance until we arrive to the referral hospital" (SS 57).

To be well-trained was an advantage. Ambulance nurses viewed prehospital care training as an essential factor in emergency nursing care during health referral because the nurse's critical thinking and decision-making ability will be enhanced. Integration of knowledge into practice has a significant impact on developing a competent nurse. Relative to this, the informant's personal views were captured. Work experiences and proper training could be huge driven factors to deliver safe and effective emergency nursing care.

Smith (2012) opined that the qualifications to nurse competence would include personal and external motivations. Attaining competence characterized experience, integrating knowledge into practice, critical thinking, proficient skills, caring, communication, environment, motivation, and professionalism. For this reason, these characteristics would deliver confidence, safe practice, and holistic care.

b. Improved Emergency Nursing Care. This is the second theme on the experiences of the ambulance nurses. This is in terms of patient transfer and proper coordination between referring and referral hospital. In 2015, the Central Visayas Health Referral System utilized the Referral and Consultation (ReCo) guide in referring patients. It is an operational guide for the referring and referred health facilities on the mechanics and protocol in the management and approach of referred patients, matching the patients need to the right health facility. A call shall be made prior to the transfer of the patient (Department of Health, 2015).

In addition, a filled up referral form, containing complete information of patient's clinical condition and treatment given, must be presented upon arrival to the referral hospital. Presently, the health referral system is making use of an e- referral in which the referring hospital shall input the details of the patient. These data can be exclusively viewed by the in-charge doctor in the emergency room department. The doctor in-charge shall provide instructions/comments to the referring hospital prior to transfer of patient. On the other hand, referring hospital should take appropriate action to whatever further instructions given by the referral hospital. E-referral system was developed by the Department of Health 7 (DOH) to facilitate smooth flow of health referral from one facility to another. As specified in the Central Visayas Health Referral System Manual, coordination and teamwork among all health providers shall serve as a common approach to attain goals and objectives of effective health referral.

The informants appreciated the usage of modern technology in relation to health referral system in Cebu Province. They observed this e- referral system as favorable and of great help especially in accessing information and intervention to be provided by the referral hospital for the continuity of patient care. They also believed that this would help facilitate the smooth flow of health referral in the province of Cebu. With the help of web technology, the informants explicitly expressed these statements:

"It helps the nurses, particularly at the ER, as we have to refer the patient smoothly to a higher facility" (SS 01).

"First off, the doctor will have to call the referral hospital prior to transfer, then, the ER nurses, included myself, will make sure to carry the entire doctor's order" (SS 03).

"As per protocol, we need to stabilize the patient before we travel. Also, we were able to communicate well with the referral hospital through web referral other than calls" (SS 04).

"I really appreciate the referral system in our province because when we call ahead and log online, the hospital staff would not take much of our time from asking questions. They would only need to verify as soon as we arrive; the staff were already pre-notified" (SS 48)

The e-referral system allows the work processes and mechanism to track referral requests in progress. Kim-Hwang et al. (2010) determined the impact of an electronic referral system (eReferral) that expedites iterative pre-visit communication to improve the referral process. In their study, the referral process has improved and increased effectiveness in promoting standardized referral using technology.

Straus et al. (2011) said that implementing an electronic referral system (eReferral) creates direct communication between primary care providers and specialist reviewers. Despite several challenges, primary care providers had favorable attitudes, including increased workload due to a shift in tasks from specialists and administrative personnel, poor connectivity, and defective hardware.

II. Challenges Encountered in the Delivery of Health Services

Challenges were the issues encountered by the ambulance nurses in the delivery of health services. Some barriers to efficient delivery of health services on emergency nursing care during health referral in the province were depicted by the ten informants of the study.

The challenges encountered by the informants while performing their tasks were the following:

a. Communication Problems**.** The basic information pathway of healthcare providers was through telecommunication services. Cellular phone or telephone was used to communicate easily with other healthcare professionals especially during referrals, however, there were also times that unpreventable communication problems may arise. The informants expressed their sentiments regarding difficulty in contacting the referral hospital due to busy telecommunication lines. As agreed and emphasized by DOH, a mandatory call is necessary especially for hospital to hospital referral and those emergency cases needing special care and attention, on top of e-referral. Because of this gap, the timely delivery of health services was also challenged. The informants relayed this challenge in health referral wherein the following statements were captured:

"However, some of my challenges include communication problems as to difficulty to reach the landline or phone of the hospital" (SS 43).

"There were also times when our calls were not answered immediately or no response from the referral hospital, thus, it will take time for us to refer the patient" (SS 12).

"One of greatest challenges we always encounter is the difficulty in contacting the referral hospital through telephone, and maybe that's because of so many referral calls the hospital is answering" (SS 51).

Telecommunication services becoming increasingly important in health care delivery in the Philippines. The inter-doctor telephone communication in health care setting was very common in which health professional communication skills were exercised. It was also observed that maybe due to increase in number of referrals, the telephone lines were hard to reach.

b. Safety/Security of Patient & Ambulance Staff. The aim of the ambulance nurses during health referral is to make sure that the needs of the patient are attended. Likewise, the informants concern was the safety of the patient and themselves until they reach the referral hospital.

However, the transfer process carries its own risks as a poorly and hastily conducted transfer could lead to adverse events. Various modes of transfer, physiological effects of transfer, possible adverse events that might happen during transfer were considered important components of inter- hospital transfer (Sethi & Subramanian, 2014). Informants of the study identified the same challenge concerning their safety and security while on mobile, as stated:

> *"One of so many challenges I encountered was the referral of a medico-legal case patient, as far as my safety is concern"* (SS 19).
>
> *"I also experienced when our ambulance have met an accident, so after the referral we went straight to the police station where we spent much of our time there"* (SS 24).
>
> *"There was this incident when we met a road accident going to Cebu City. Instead of having 1 patient, unfortunately, it became 2"* (SS 36).
>
> *"For me, I find it very challenging. I have to take care of my patient while inside the ambulance; moreover, I also have to consider our own safety while travelling"* (SS 32).

Indeed, optimal health and well-being of the patient is the underlying goal in health referrals. Earlier studies, Norden et al. (2013), significantly stated that the security of both patient and significant others was considered to be paramount. In addition, ambulance nurses felt relieved when they handed over the responsibility and the patient to the receiving unit as cited in their research study.

c. Bulk of Patients at the Emergency Room. Patients were in the hospital because they basically need medical attention. It was mentioned that one huge challenge in the implementation of effective health referral is due to limited resources such as health human resource which resulted to longer stay of patients at the emergency room. Ambulance nurses expressed the need of additional manpower in the government hospital to serve the increasing number of patients. Undeniably, lack of manpower contributes to delayed delivery of health services to the patient especially during health referral.

According to the study of Scott et al. (2014), the emergency services operation has increased intensely, therefore it needs more emergency physicians, nurses, technicians, and clerks to optimize system efficiency. Two informants of this study significantly conveyed the challenge of understaffing and the importance of teamwork despite the issues. They understand how important multitasking and collaboration in healthcare. One of the informants expressed this challenge as stated below:

> *"There were times, like our doctor, will no longer check online because of so many patients at the ER, so we nurses will check for the responses/instructions given by the referral hospital and will inform our doctor"* (SS 25).
>
> *"Also, due to increase number of patients at the ER, the transfer of patient is delayed as well as the delivery of medical services"* (SS 19).

The number of nurses assigned at the emergency room is of boundless essential and could affect the rendition of service to the patients. It is necessary to analyze how understaffing of nurses in the emergency room could affect the provision of quality services to the patients who are urgently in need of help.

In cognate to the study of Green (2011), overcrowding in the emergency room department was a growing problem in many countries. The use of the emergency room for routine medical care was one reason that covers the potentially fatal concerns for seriously ill patients who do not receive timely care. Bulk of patients at the emergency room can experience the delay of the delivery of health care services.

***d. Competency of Ambulance Nurse to Refer Patients*.** The informants of the study were familiar with the Central Visayas Health Referral System. The protocol and policies were clearly understood by them. While some of the ambulance nurses were trained and have shared their positive experience in health referral as discussed earlier, there were about half number of the informants interviewed who expressed the need to undergo trainings relevant to health referral.

Previous studies, competence required for ambulance nurses in the profession remains undefined and provides a challenge as stated by Wihlborg et al. (2014) in their studies. Nurses working in the ambulance service are frequently exposed to situations in which they have to take sole responsibility to sick or injured patients. Formal education could be regarded as the foundation of competence development; however, they also found experienced-based learning in workplaces, including feedback and reflection on practice, to be of great importance to competence development. Five (5) informants were able to express this in the following statements:

> "*I hope that ambulance nurse designate like me will be sent to trainings necessary for the job. It is not really easy to just ride the ambulance without proper training because personally I have learned things through observations and own experiences"* (SS 60).
>
> *"It is best for me and others who do the same job to undergo training again as to advance our knowledge and skills in handling situations alike"* (SS 14).
>
> *"Aside from that, the trainings needed by the ambulance nurse to handle patients while on the ambulance unit are very important"* (SS 31).
>
> *As ambulance nurse, well, it is not easy especially that I am not trained in ambulance care or pre-hospital care. I was just oriented by our senior nurse on what to do and how to do it"* (SS 31).
>
> *The e-referral system is very helpful coupled with proper training of nurses in-charged as there were times when the patient will arrest along the way or upon arrival to the referral hospital, so it is better one must know what to do"* (SS 63).

Education, regular training and mutual preparation were important aspects in the nursing of patients. Ambulance nurses need regularly training and education to be prepared for saving people's lives and also to be able to make right decisions (Larsson & Engstrom, 2013). Training enhances the skills, capabilities and knowledge of nurses. As such mentoring, coaching and teaching are structured learning opportunities. The process molds the thinking and leads to quality performance. Hence, it is continuous and never ending in nature.

Moreover, it is vital to train and motivate healthcare professionals in providing quality health services to the patient following an effective referral mechanism according to the study of Gupta et al. (2017).

e. Ambulance Not Fully-Equipped. Equipped ambulance vehicle plays an essential role in saving lives. Aside from being used to transport patient, it should be equipped with pre-hospital emergency machines to give temporary medical assistance as what hospitals can offer. A fully equipped ambulance shall be provided with appropriate medicines, supplies and equipment such as but not limited to portable oxygen tank with regulator, suction machine, laryngoscope, bag-valve-mask, nebulizer, sphygmomanometer and stethoscope, and defibrillator. These are essentials in providing immediate response to stabilize patients, should there be changes in patient's condition while transporting.

In this study, two informants were able to recognize and experience inadequacy of equipment and supplies inside the ambulance. It was indeed, a challenge, to work inside an ambulance which is not fully equipped with essential equipment/supplies to save lives.

Besides the wide variation in time spent on arranging for inter- hospital transfer, there were inadequacies in equipment, monitoring and medical care during the transfer. All these can lead to mishaps and adverse events and eventually can create undesirable impact on patient outcome. Hence, there is a need for laying down minimum standards of care as discussed in the study of Sethi & Subramanian (2014). The following statements were captured:

> *"As far as the ambulance service is concern, we do not have cardiac monitor and suction machine inside, thus, we still need to pull it out from ER"* (SS 31)
>
> *"Another issue is the unavailability of some equipment inside the ambulance"* (SS 07).

According to the study of Montalban (2007), common sight in the Philippines was the conversion of a van vehicle to become an ambulance unit. The required space for work inside an ambulance was not met; the air- conditioning system, basic emergency equipment and supplies were inadequate. Moreover, an ambulance service was not simply a matter of purchasing an ambulance, but including the highly technical equipment it needed.

Further development and research concerning the technical equipment inside the ambulance might improve the situation for both the ambulance nurses and the patients (Larsson & Engstrom, 2013).

f. *Unavailability of atretcher Upon the Arrival to Referral Ho*spital. The stretchers, chairs, and wheelchairs are the primary means of transporting patients to emergency departments. When the patient arrives in the emergency room department, treatment priority is determined using a triage system, and a patient may receive the necessary treatment immediately.

Ensuring timely access to health care is a major concern of the Department of Health (DOH) as far as health referral is concerned. Upon arrival at the hospital, patients are directly transferred to the ER using a stretcher. Common problem encountered by some informants was the unavailability of stretcher due to overcrowding of patients. Because of this, patients have to wait long to receive care. The following statements were made by informants to describe the challenges they encountered:

> *"Aside from this, upon arrival to the referral government hospital, the problem is the unavailability of stretcher"* (SS 19).
>
> *Also, sometimes the patient is not accepted immediately due to the unavailability of stretcher upon arrival to the referral hospital"* (SS 30).
>
> *"Another thing is the unavailability of stretcher upon arrival to the referral hospital"* (SS 43).
>
> *"At times, the patient has to wait or the ambulance nurse like myself has to go inside and look for an available stretcher in the hospital"* (SS 44).

"We have travelled more or less an hour to reach the referral hospital and by the time we arrived there was no available or vacant stretcher at the ER, hence, it causes delay" (SS 59).

In relation to overcrowding or bulk of patients at the emergency room, according to Villa-Roel et al. (2012), one contributor could be with those admitted patients occupying emergency department stretchers. There were issues on the unavailability of stretcher that one major reason could be due to increase number of patients at the emergency room departmentAs discussed in the study of Duran et al. (2013), the stretcher was one of the most important piece of equipment in the emergency room department because stretchers were frequently used to transport patients considering patient's safety and comfort.

g. Various Crisis During Patient Transport. Various crisis may arise while transporting patients to the referral hospital. These include traffic issues, road accidents, vehicle malfunction and possible arrest of patient; hence it is usually recommended to have at least two competent personnel accompanying the patient depending on his/her status. The informants conveyed the following statements:

"One of the many challenges so far is the traffic issue in Cebu City, which can highly contribute to the hindrance in timely delivery of the health services to our patients" (SS 06).

"However, one of my challenges is the traffic issues" (SS 43).

"For me Ma'am, the challenge is on how to make the patient stable and comfortable as much as possible inside the ambulance" (SS 28).

"For me, however, no matter how trained you are, you will learn things through experience and practice over time. Undeniably, working in a moving vehicle while taking care of your patient is challenging for you would never know what will happen along the way" (SS 50).

"It is a challenge for me to monitor patient in a moving vehicle" (SS 58).

"During the transport of the patient, one of the biggest challenges for me is the patient's status as I have to properly monitor the patient such as the IV lines, vital signs and level of consciousness" (SS 66).

Ambulance nurses reported that undertaking transports were stressful but they were also alert to the potential risks the patients may face during transport. The work in the ambulance is central to the safety and well-being of both ambulance nurses and patients.

Nurses described the transports as an unsafe and stressful task. Intra- hospital transports of critically ill patients were performed without physicians in accordance to the study of Ringdal et al. (2015). However, ambulance nurses' perception on how to respond appropriately to patients.

Likewise, Kulshrestha and Singh (2016) enumerated the key elements of safe transfer involve pre-transfer stabilization and preparation, choosing the appropriate mode of transfer, personnel accompanying, equipment and monitoring required during the transfer and finally the handover of the patient at the receiving facility.

h. Receivers' Manners During the Handoffs. Handoff refers to the transfer of information during transitions in care across the continuum; to include an opportunity to ask questions, clarify and confirm. The concept of handoff is complex and includes communication between care providers about patient care, records and information tools to assist in communication between care providers about patient care (Friesen et al., 2008).

The handover process between ambulance nurse and emergency department staff has been elaborated in the study of Jensen et al. (2013), a series of particular challenges were identified, including inter-professional interaction and potentially stressful situations. In line with this, the following statements highlighted this phenomenon:

> "*Before, what we usually do is to transfer the patient right away to another hospital without proper communication, thus, we received bad comments from the receiving nurse"* (SS 21).
>
> *"What I usually encounter is some of the ER nurses displayed unpleasant attitude as if we never did our part in managing patients prior to its transfer"* (SS 35).

Ak et al. (2011) concluded in their study that communication skills training can improve emergency nurses' communication and empathy skills. During nurse-patient interactions, it corresponded with increase patient's satisfaction and reduction of complaints as well as undesirable events.

Nurses must display traits of respect, compassion, wisdom, sensitivity and care. Poor attitudes of nurses could demoralize the ability of the health system to provide quality care and improve outcomes for patients according to Rudolfsson (as cited by Haskins et al., 2014).

The interplay between ambulance nurse and emergency room staff during patient transport and their arrival at hospital was another important aspect in health referral.

CONCLUSION

On their emergency nursing care, the ambulance nurses were able to improve their abilities to respond to the patients and appropriate coordination with the hospitals to ensure that the patients will be adequately taken care of appropriately. Moreover, the task of the ambulance is very crucial to the survival of the patient. Hence, in the course of saving the patient who is on the pathway either to survival or death, the nurses faced lots of challenges and dilemmas like *communicating with the receiving health personnel at the hospital, safety and security, shortage of equipment needed during the transport of the patient, and other coordination issues.*

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BROKEN WINDOW FIXERS THROUGH THE EYES OF THE COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

Peacekeeping is the essential function of the police, and police visibility is one of the main thrusts of this peacekeeping activity. It would be desperate for police visibility not to address criminality in all situations without peacekeeping activity. It is needed to maintain the harmonies living of the residents in the community. Thereby, this study explored the community views on the Barangay Public Safety Officers [BPSOs] in Maybocog, Maydolong Eastern Samar. This study is a qualitative type of query that uses the phenomenological approach. This inquiry had ten informants who were professionals who have explicitly resided in Barangay Maybocog, Maydolong Eastern Samar. The main instrument used for this study was the interview guide with open-ended questions prepared by the researcher. The four themes from the community views in the performance of the BPSO are Upholding Peace and Providing Protection, A Deterrence for Crime, Inconsistent Visibility, and Poor Work Ethics. Quiet and Peaceful Community and Resentment and Demoralization are the themes developed from narrations on the effects of the performance of the BPSOs on the community's quality of life. Hence, the Barangay Public Safety Officers or *barangay tanods* should possess appropriate basic and advanced knowledge other skills training to muster enough confidence in the performance of their duties.

Keywords–Criminal justice, Barangay Public Safety Officers, community, phenomenology, Eastern Samar, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Criminality is rampant in our community in this modern world. Law enforcement plays a vital role in protecting lives and property. The general welfare of the people must always be observed.

Under Presidential Decree 1232, the barangay tanod brigade was created. This legislation comprises civilian volunteers, whom the barangay chairman duly appoints. It is currently strengthened by the Philippine National Police Manual on Barangay Peacekeeping Operations and Executive Order No. 546. The PNP is authorized to deputize barangay, public safety officers as force multipliers in implementing peace and order in the community. The barangay public safety officers have now become part of the local crime-fighting unit of the Philippine National Police as the first line of defense against any undesirable acts within the barangay.

The local issues among barangay officials, the BPSO, BPAT is about peace and order and how to handle themselves in terms of their efficiency and competency of their designated work. The most critical problem is their lack of resources and seminars or orientation in order for them to be knowledgeable in their desired work. Being members of BPSO or BPAT is essential because they serve as the first responders in calamities, relief, and other emergency circumstances.

Bayanihan answers the need for the whole neighborhood to get involved in policing and law enforcement. The community relies upon the police to "serve and protect," and the police, in return, rely upon community support and cooperation in order to be effective. In the past, various anti-criminality strategies and concepts were adopted by the Philippine National Police in its effort to curb criminality and maintain peace and order. However, most of the concepts were unsustainable as these were just revised versions of the crime prevention concepts situation in the Philippines. It is along this line that a peacekeeping concept needed to be crafted. The concept calls for Philippine National Police members to fight against all forms of criminality (including insurgency) distinct to their areas of responsibility, utilizing active citizen involvement and community empowerment.

It is observed that even with the current set of BPSOs, there are still many crimes committed in the barangay, namely: robbery, burglary, drugs, juvenile delinquency, vandalism, and property damage. As a community resident, the researcher observed that the BPSOs performance of their duties could not be taken for granted. Some situations might be difficult because of their lack of knowledge concerning some technicalities in crime prevention. Training is needed for the effective handling of sensitive crime situations. Thus, this study aimed to discover possible solutions for their poor performance to help them improve their services to the community.

FRAMEWORK

Self-Efficacy relates to the belief that one's capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action require managing prospective situations. Self-Efficacy is what an individual believes he can accomplish using his skills under certain circumstances. This has been thought to be a task-specific version of self-esteem and influences people's ability to learn and perform only those tasks they believe will be successful. The basic idea behind the self-efficacy theory is that performance and motivation are in part determined by how influential people believe they can be. Albert Bandura outlined four sources of information that individuals employ to judge their efficacy: performance outcomes (performance accomplishments), vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological feedback (emotional arousal). These components help individuals determine if they believe they can accomplish specific tasks. Note that individuals with high levels of self-efficacy approach complex tasks as challenges to master rather than as threats to be avoided. The performance outcome is considered the most important source of self-efficacy.

Positive and negative experiences can influence the ability of an individual to perform a given task (Bandura, 1997).

It is essential to know the self-efficacy of a peace and security officer because research has found that self-efficacy is strongly linked to an individual's competence. Generally, a peace and security officer with stronger and greater self-efficacy demonstrates a higher level of competence in which they can give satisfactory performance and produce higher productivity ratings. On the other hand, peace and security officers with weak self-efficacy demonstrate lower competence, resulting in unsatisfactory performance. The understanding that we have gained through research on self-efficacy is that the employee who is given the flexibility to try a task under various conditions builds a body of knowledge that increases both his natural ability to perform the task and the self-efficacy to believe in his ability to do it (Bandura, 1998).

According to Redmond (2010), self-efficacy is also influenced by encouragement and discouragement about an individual's performance or ability to perform. Using verbal persuasion in a positive light generally leads individuals to put forth more effort; therefore, they have a greater chance of succeeding. However, if the verbal persuasion is negative, this can lead to doubts about oneself, resulting in lower chances of success. Although verbal persuasion is also likely to be a weaker source of self-efficacy than performance outcomes, it is widely used because of its ease and ready availability (Redmond, 2010).

The idea that behavioral achievement depends jointly on motivation (intention) and ability (behavioral control) is by no means new. It constitutes the basis for theorizing on such diverse issues as animal learning (Hull, 1943). Ajzen (1991) stated that intentions are assumed to capture the motivational factors that influence behavior; they are indicators of how hard people are willing to try and how much effort they are planning to exert to perform the behavior.

Ajzen (1991) further said human action is guided by three kinds of considerations: behavior beliefs, beliefs about the likely consequences of the behavior; normative beliefs (beliefs about the normative expectations of others; and control beliefs, beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede the performance of the behaviors.

Ajzen's three considerations are crucial in circumstances/projects/programs when changing people's behavior. Behavior beliefs produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior in their respective aggregates. Normative beliefs result in perceived social pressure or subjective norm, and control beliefs give rise to perceived behavioral control. In combination, attitude toward the behavior, subjective norm, and perception of behavioral control lead to the formation of a behavioral intention. As a general rule, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm and the greater the perceived control, the stronger the person's intention to perform the behavior in question (Ajzen, 1991).

Gollwitzer (1990) discussed that in the implementation intentions, the distinction between a state of willingness in which a given behavioral goal is desired and a state of planning in which steps will lead to a particular end state is specified. It was proposed that the movement toward a behavioral goal starts with a deliberative phase, in which the costs and benefits of pursuing the goal are considered. The deliberative phase culminates in establishing a goal intention or decision to perform the behavior. The factors that directly influence intentions to engage in a healthy behavior include the person's attitudes toward the behavior, the person's perception of subjective group norms concerning the behavior, and the extent to which the person perceives him- or herself to have control concerning the behavior (Fishbein, 2002).

Lewin (1951) suggested that it is helpful to conceive intentions as mental representations made salient by environmental cues. Environmental stimuli can bring chronic or

Knowles (1984) provided an example of applying andragogy principles. There is a need to explain the reasons specific things are being taught. Instruction should be task-oriented instead of memorization – learning activities should be in the context of everyday tasks to be performed by the others, instruction should consider the wide range of different backgrounds of learners. Learning materials and activities should allow for different levels/types of previous experience. Since adults are self-directed, instruction should allow learners to discover things and knowledge for themselves without depending on people, will be provided guidance and help when mistakes are made.

Community policing generally consists of programs and policies based on a partnership between the police and the community they serve. Some observers have used the term "community wellness" to describe the philosophy behind this policing. The emphasis is on collaborating with residents to determine community needs and the best way to address them and involve citizens as "co-producers of public safety. Among the goals of community policing is a reduction in fear of crime, the development of closer ties with the community, the engagement of residents in a joint effort to prevent crime and maintain order, and an increase in public satisfaction with police services. Many programs have been described as community policing, including increased foot patrol, storefront police stations, community surveys, police-sponsored youth activities, and neighborhood watch programs (Adler et al., 2007).

The support of patrol officers for community policing is vital. Some communities are making the patrol officer an integral part of the neighborhood (Wrobsleski & Hess, 2007).

In the old days of traditional policing, police efficiency was dictated by the old concept, wherein the police were reactive. Putting more emphasis on arrests but not so in the new concept, which is now more on crime prevention. The police have now become proactive rather than reactive. Moreover, for it to be successful, the police need the community's cooperation that it serves. Once it gets the community's support, the police will be more effective in crime prevention.

Enlisting the assistance of the community should be emphasized. Who knows the area and the people more than those in that community. Close coordination with the community will free more resources of the police for more pressing needs and, at the same time, make the people participate in making the communities safer and giving them a sense of responsibility (Williams, 1998).

A community policing perspective differs in several ways from a traditional policing perspective. For example, in community policing, the police must share power with the community residents, and critical decisions need to be made at the neighborhood level, not at a downtown police headquarters. Such decentralization of authority means that credit for bringing about a safer and more secure community must be shared with the community, a tall order for any group of professionals to accept. Achieving the goals of community policing requires the successful implementation of three essential and complementary components or operational strategies: community partnership, problem-solving, and change management (Williams, 1998).

Implementation plans for community policing vary from agency to agency and from community to community. The appropriate implementation strategy depends on conditions within the law enforcement agency and the community embarking on community policing. Successful implementation requires that the police and community members understand the underlying philosophy of community policing and have a genuine commitment to the community policing strategy. Communication, cooperation, coordination, collaboration, and change are the keys to putting community policing into action. With community policing, citizens share the responsibility for their community's safety. Citizens and the police work collectively to identify problems, propose solutions, implement action and evaluate the results in the community (Bohm and Haley, 2013).

Community-oriented policing is often confused or associated with previous reform efforts. Community policing is distinctly different, and in order to clarify its unique characteristics, it may be helpful to compare it with other reform efforts that began during the 1960s and 1970s. These programs were designed to enhance the effectiveness of traditional police methods rather than being an alternate approach to delivering essential police services (Peak & Glensor, 1996).

Community policing suggests two kinds of management required for the transition to community policing, change management: change management is the development of an overall strategy that will review the present state of the organization, envision the future state of the organization and devise the means of moving from one to the other. Transition management oversees, controls, and leads current threats to future states (Miller and Hess, 2002).

Many advocates of community policing stress that it is a philosophy rather than a program with that critical dimension. The essential elements within this dimension are citizen input, a broadened function, and personalized service. A broadened function means expanding responsibility into areas such as order maintenance and social services and protecting and enhancing the lives of our most vulnerable and homeless lives. The personal element supports tailored policies based on local norms, values, and individual needs (Miller and Hess, 2002).

Maintaining peace and order is a critical factor in the developmental process. The enactment of the Local Government Code ushered in a new development paradigm, including promoting peace and order in local communities. As enunciated in Section 391 (16) of the Local Government Code of 1991, the barangay may provide the organization of a community brigade, barangay *tanod*, or community service as necessary to assist in the peace and order efforts of the Local Government Unit.

Consistent with the trust of the present administration towards building a strong republic, there is a need to strengthen the capability of the barangay *tanod*s as front liners in addressing the peace and order concerns in the locality. The present challenges, along the area of peace and order that the country confronts today, underscore the need to strengthen community-based mechanisms and citizens' involvement in the government's activities to ensure peace and safety. *Tanods* serve as the front lines in the fight against lawlessness, crime, and terrorism. Their professionalization, therefore, as agents for peace and order is a primordial concern. With this, the DILG provided the different job descriptions for the barangay *tanods* to be aware of what particular tasks they would do (Pace, 2012).

Community policing redefines the mission of the police to focus on solving community problems. Success and failure then depend on solving problems, not just processing arrests, writing tickets, and issuing citations. Community policing initiatives target to serve inner-city environments where concentrated crime and the inadequate provisions and delivery of public services exist. This innovative approach to policing directs urban services delivery towards the achievement of three goals, namely: reducing crime, improving service delivery, and improving quality of life (Williams, 1998).

In the Philippines, the DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42 dated March 10, 2003, laid down the duties and responsibilities of the barangay *tanod*, to wit: assist the barangay officials in the prevention of crime and the promotion of public safety; conduct patrol/ronda in the barangay; report to the concerned barangay officials or through hotline 117 the concurrence of any crime, fire, accident, public disturbance and environmental degradation activities and other untoward incident in the whereabouts of missing persons, in arresting escaped prisoners and other fugitives from justice, and in the recovery of stolen properties; coordinate closely with the barangay officials and police/local authorities in the drive against all forms of crimes such as terrorism, smuggling, carnapping, drug trafficking, drug pushing, illegal gambling, child abuse, crime against women, all forms of vices and syndicated crimes; assist in the institutionalization of PATROL 117 program; assist in the implementation of the Fire Code of the Philippines; detect all forms of fire hazards and other public safety hazards/violations and to institute corrective measures within his capability; assist in facilitating smooth flow of traffic; and perform other functions as may be directed by the Punong Barangay (DILG Memorandum Circular No. 2003-42).

They will be engaged primarily in unarmed civilian assistance, including intelligence information-gathering, neighborhood watch, or rondas. In addition, they shall also render medical/traffic/emergency assistance like conducting beat patrol. Assistance in identifying and implementing community development projects such as roads or streets focuses on assisting traffic and gathering relevant information and data as inputs to peace and order planning and research. The primary functions of BPSOs are surveillance, information gathering and dissemination, and protection of their communities, often acting as an auxiliary group to the regular police. They help law enforcement through pursuit and capture.

Presidential Decree 1232 states the need of having competent force multipliers who can assist and help the police force in their fight against criminality was given attention by the government. The history of barangay goes way back to the Marcos regime in the middle part of the '70s. This decree recognizes the barangay community brigades in Metropolitan Manila and grants them certain privileges. The barangay community brigade has proven to be influential auxiliary groups for beautification, health, sanitation, peace and order, rescue and relief operations, traffic management, and other civic development programs that require barangay participation. The end gave maintaining continued and effective partnership and rapport between government and people. These brigades, consisting of the Barangay volunteer Brigade, Barangay Ladies Auxiliary Brigade, Barangay Disaster Brigade, Barangay Traffic Auxiliary Brigade, and Barangay *Tanod* Brigade, have been conceived as the means for tapping the potential workforce of the country and involving them in barangay affairs.

According to PNP BPAT Manual, the Philippines made an effort to improve their peacekeeping and security officer's skill. The Department of the Interior and Local Government shares crime prevention by equipping the barangay public safety officers [BPSOs] with the necessary skills and knowledge. They are trained by the PNP and DILG field office units in coordination with the municipal and barangay offices thru a program known as Barangay Peace-Keeping Action Team (BPAT). It is training about the importance of ensuring peace and order in the community. Some training modules include first aid and rescue procedures and arnis as self-defense. Conducting these training and seminars will help them improve their capabilities and skills and strengthen their self-efficacy, corresponding to the level of competence an individual may feel.

Determining the level of competence of BPSOs, for instance, can indicate the ability or the inability to perform duties and responsibilities efficiently and address the issues affecting the competence of the peace and security officers. Peace and security officers must believe in their capabilities to exercise control over their functioning and events that affect their lives. Beliefs in personal efficacy affect life choices, level of motivation, quality of functioning, resilience to adversity, and vulnerability to stress and depression. Ordinary realities are strewn with impediments, adversities, setbacks, frustrations, and inequities. They must, therefore, have a robust sense of efficacy to sustain the perseverant effort needed to succeed. Succeeding periods of life present new types of competencies demands requiring further development of personal efficacy for successful functioning—the nature and scope of perceived self-efficacy change throughout the lifespan.

The very essence of police work is peacekeeping. Police officers nowadays face a wide range of problems as far as peacekeeping is concerned, and one of the chief constraints of the effectiveness of the police is dealing with crimes. Therefore, more crime needs the traditional response of citizenry. More and more police administrators and law enforcers concluded that the only way to reduce and prevent crime. Violence and insecurity are to tackle those challenges through a wholesome approach by addressing root causes by a coordinated action of stakeholders and with the municipal/barangay government executives to take the lead. Civil society becomes the convener groups; the police do the leg works, and the community cooperates to fight crime. Meaningful programs on crime prevention and suspension should be endorsed and done aggressively. Likewise, the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG), in its memorandum circular No. 2003-02, viewed that maintaining peace and order is a critical factor in the development of the community and the nation. Specific stakeholders must be held responsible. Nonetheless, local government units/barangay councils will play the principal municipal role in carrying and mobilizing specific individuals or groups of barangay *tanod*s.

In the case of barangay *tanod*, their training, education, and actual performance on the job allow them to analyze the factors regarding their effectiveness. The barangay official's vis-ă-vis with the community must know their contribution to the barangay *tanod's* functions services.

Peacekeeping is the primary function of the police. Moreover, police visibility is one of the main thrusts of peacekeeping activity. Without this, it would be tough to maintain peace and order. However, enhanced police visibility may not work in all situations or fail to achieve its objective of addressing criminality. The police must share the mantle of responsibility for fighting crime with the community members. Community cooperation and support are indispensable. The primary mission of the PNP expressly states that peace and order and public safety can be assured only with the active involvement of the community.

Ganosa (2009) revealed that the barangay *tanods* keep on roving during critical hours in the night and during the day as their omnipresence eliminates some undesirable acts and untoward incidents. Though barangay *tanods* in five barangays in Maasin City are perceived to be consistently performing their duties and responsibilities, there is still room for improvement.

Figer (2013) concluded that the BPSO is primarily in direct contact with the community. So they need to undergo intensive training in information gathering and reporting and arrest and search, both vital in the criminalistics field.

DOMAIN OF INQUIRY

This study explored the community views on the Barangay Public Safety Officers [BPSOs] in Maybocog, Maydolong Eastern Samar.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research informants, research instrument, research procedures, ethical considerations, and data analysis.

Research Design

The qualitative phenomenological design was used with the aid of an interview guide. Phenomenological research is the most appropriate approach for this particular endeavor. Interview guide and Focused Group Discussion [FGD] were used. Some relevant data were gathered from existing documents.

Research Environment

The municipality of Maydolong is a fourth-class municipality in the province of Eastern Samar, Philippines. According to the 2015 census, it has a population of 14 743 people, and it covers a total area of 154.30 sq. mi. Municipality of Maydolong has 20 barangays, namely: Camada, Campakerit, Canloterio, Del Pilar, Guindalitan, Lapgap, Malobago, Maybocog, Maytigbao, Omawas, Patag, Poblacion 1, Poblacion 2, Poblacion 3, Poblacion 4, Poblacion 5, Poblacion 6, and Poblacion 7. Barangay Maybocog of Maydolong E. Samar is the locale of the study. It covers a large tract area and sprawling boundaries. It has a total land area of 651.61 hectares and a present population of more or less than 1,728 residents. This barangay has ten (10) barangay, public safety officers.

Research Informants

There were ten (10) informants in this study. Four (4) informants were individually interviewed, while six were included in the Focused Group discussion [FGD]. The informants were professionals who have resided in Brgy. Maybocog for at least five years.

Research Instrument

An interview guide was used to extract needed information. It consisted of open-ended questions. Part 1 was the informants' experiences on the performance of the BPSOs. The instrument has undergone validation process and approval from the panel members to ensure quality and reliable interview procedure, credible responses, and results from the informants.

Research Procedures

This study's procedure was carried out by asking permission from the barangay captain in barangay Maybocog to conduct the study. After obtaining the permission, the researcher asked for personal permission from the informants. Before the interview, the researcher explained first to the informants the purpose of the research and the proceedings of the interview. Once the informants gave their permission to the interview, the researcher requested him to sign the informed consent. During the interview, the researcher used a voice recorder with the consent of the informants.

Data Analysis

Colaizzi's approach was utilized in analyzing the data. Transcription and translation of languages and experiences of the informants were carefully taken. The interview transcript was read and analyzed multiple times. The next step was the coding of significant statements from the interview transcript of the informants. These significant statements were translated, and formulated meanings were created. These formulated meanings were grouped and analyzed to form cluster themes. From these cluster themes, emergent themes were identified. Emergent themes are the final themes that describe the informants' experiences to the present phenomena being studied.

Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality and privacy are the prime ethical considerations of the study. Informants were duly informed that all their responses and identity remain private. It was emphasized that the research informants could terminate the data gathering at any time. It was emphasized that the informants would receive feedback on results because this is a form of gratitude to participants for their participation. As a researcher, she is indebted to participants for sharing their experiences.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part shows the presentation and analysis of data. The data was collected and obtained by using the experiential method of Colaizzi's phenomenological approach. There were fifty-nine (59) significant statements extracted from the transcription of interviews of the ten informants, which answered all the sub-problems of the study. Out of these significant statements, the researcher was able to formulate the following emergent themes: (I) Community Views on the Performance of the BPSOs; (A) Positive Views of Informants in the Performance of the BPSOs; (1.1) Upholding Peace and Providing Protection; (1.2) A Deterrence for Crime; (B) Negative Views of Informants in the Performance of the BPSOs; (1.1) Inconsistent Visibility; (1.2) Poor Work Ethics; (II) Effects of the performance of BPSOs to the quality of life of the community; (1.1) Quiet and Peaceful Community; (1.2.) Resentment and Demoralization.

I. Community Views On The Performance of the BPSOs

Theme 1: Positive views of Informants in the performance of the BPSOs. Hereunder are the emergent themes under the positive views of informants in the performance of the BPSOs:

a. Upholding Peace and Providing Protection. One of the objectives of this study is to explore the informants' experiences in the performance of the BPSOs. Results showed that most informants were happy that their barangay and was visible continued maintaining their peace and order in the community. They felt comfortable and secured with the presence of barangay tanod.
Informants affirmed the feeling of appreciation brought by barangay tanod always conducting patrol and advised minors to be safe. For the continued conduct of patrol and inspection in the barangay and implementing curfew, they feel safe Informants 1, 2, and 5 said that:

> *"Maybe I just say a little regarding when they conduct foot patrol on minors especially during late nights on making them go back to their respective houses."*
>
> *"There is peace and order in the community. There's an assistance when (there is an) emergency and we feel secure because of their presence."*

When I was young, I have experienced being arrested and being chased because of the implementation of curfew hours. And so, I am in favour of it.

Moreover, the following responses deeply realized how critical their work is, and it displayed an appreciation of the positive outcome.

***b. A Deterrence for C*rime.** The second positive view of the informants pointed an emphasis by comparing how the barangay performed their duties and responsibilities previously until now. They confirmed that their barangay tanods were more committed to performing their duty than before. The informants also shared how their barangay tanods implemented their rules and regulations. They had a different policy, and they are well-respected. Informants 2, 3, and 5 shared their thoughts about their experiences on the performance of BPSOs:

"For me, I appreciate their service because they were able to maintain peace and order especially at night from 9 o'clock until midnight. Another advantage of having a group of barangay tanod is they can easily respond to brawls, accidents, or emergencies before we can call a police. Or they could inform the police."

"They are more active now unlike before where they will just stay in their post. But now, our newly elected barangay chairman required them to do the roving every night."

There is an advantage of having a barangay tanod who is an ex-convict because teenagers are afraid of him, yet they respect him.

After listening to their answers, the researcher realizes how devoted the barangay tanods are to their duty by conducting patrol, maintaining peace and order, and responding immediately in any situation in their respective barangay.

***Theme 2: Negative Views of the Informants in the Performance of the BPSOs*.** Negative views of the informants in the performance of the BPSOs were also conveyed. Two themes from these views came about:

***a. Inconsistent Visibility*.** The informants pointed out that their negative thoughts and feelings were brought out by inactive or not performing well on their duty, no one who tends to assist without request or order, and they were not strict and firm in implementing curfew or doing so their duties. Negative feelings were also identified about the pessimistic view of the performance of the BPSOs while they were on duty Informants 1, 2, and 5 said:

"I can't see it, but if ever one of the barangay officials die, they assist, but if it is just a simple community member, they will not because during daytime, they are on their work for most of them were farmers."

"Before, they always do their roving, checking the whole area. However, nowadays I do not see them do it."

The negative thing about them is that sometimes they become lazy. For example, if it is raining, they will just stay in their post and do nothing. And maybe their low salary affects their performance/service. I'm not even sure if they receive their salary every month. And so the government should increase their salary so that they will be in service 24/7.

Informants also regard the visibility and involuntary assistance into the community during the daytime because most of them are busy at their work.

***b*. *Poor Work Ethics*.** The informants met different types of disappointment in their performance as BPSOs. Also, the informants revealed their observations on the difficulties in resolving conflict by the *barangay tanods*. Informants 4 and 9 said:

> *"What I observed is quite disappointing, when they have their celebration or drinking sessions in their tanod outpost. For me, it is not proper for them to do it.*"
>
> *At midnight, they were not conducting patrol. One time there was an incident where minors stole from a sari-sari store. The barangay tanod maybe was sleeping. In most cases, after 9:00 o'clock, they stay at the barangay hall for the whole night watching television.*
>
> *"Just an observation, like the policy of curfew. There are still loopholes in the policy. They will just respond if someone needed their help or there is a complaint, like there was a trouble they did not respond voluntarily".*

Informants expressed their dismay regarding their barangay *tanods* because they were not conducting patrol at midnight. They slept while watching the television.

***Theme 3: Effects of the Performance of BPSOs on the Quality of Life of the Community*.** This section concerns the changes and improvements to the community's quality of life in the performance of the BPSOs. It is either efficient or inadequate. Two emergent themes came out:

***a*. *Quiet and Peaceful Community*.** It would encompass the performance of the BPSOs if they were performing well, if they met the society's expectations or if the community still gives significance to them or not. Informants expressed their feelings of appreciation and contentment on the performance of their barangay tanod. Informants 2, 3, and 4 disclosed that:

> *"On my part, I appreciate the barangay tanod. They are the ones who maintain peace & order. They have their foot patrol at night from 9:00 o'clock until 12:00 midnight. The advantage of a barangay tanod is that they are around during trouble, calamity or unavoidable emergency."*
>
> *"As what I experienced, if there is quarrel or trouble, you can ask them to facilitate the situation like for example, if there is an accident, they conduct curfew hours."*
>
> *"It's a big thing if they were on their duty. First, as what I said earlier, it will hinder the bad plans of minors. The presence of the barangay tanod instills safety for everyone to sleep at night."*

It was also observed that the barangay *tanods* were continuously conducting a patrol in their barangay, and they were visible in case of accident and trouble. Informant 4 also added his experience on barangay tanod on their barangay that visibility of tanods is a big thing for those minors who have an untoward plan.

***b*. *Resentment and Demoralization*.** Through their responses, we realized how powerful politics influence the performance of the BPSOs. It is always the employee's morale cancer by hiring without standard qualification. Moreover, one thing cannot be hidden, the truth. Most of our employees are underpaid by the government, but they were just devoted and give importance to their work. Informants expressed their appreciation that even though their barangay tanods were underpaid, they were loyal to serving their community. Informants 4 and 5 expressed that:

> *"I admire them because they voluntarily extend their services to the barangay even if they receive a low salary."*
>
> *"The problem is they were underpaid, maybe they were just practical. The government needs to address this by giving them a raise in their salary."*

"There were no rules or qualification on how they choose the barangay tanods."

In terms of choosing or hiring, some individual needs to have a standard qualification in order for them to work correctly because they work as a public servant. They are the front liners of their respective barangay that will maintain the peace and orderliness of their barangay. Some of the barangay tanod were practical; they just rendered their duty that fits their salary. Practicing favoritism lead to resentment and demoralization of the employee, so it must be avoided at all times.

CONCLUSION

The Barangay Public Safety Officers [BPSOs] of locally known as the barangay tanods play a significant role in maintaining the people's peace and quality of life since they are the strong arms in upholding the peace and order protecting the people. Also, their presence deters crimes. However, due to the limited honoraria given to the barangay tanods, their visibility in public is irregular, and due to the lack of appropriate training, they manifested undesirable behavior towards their work and responsibilities in keeping the community safe for all.

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CONSUMPTION PATTERNS OF THE BPO EMPLOYEES IN CEBU CITY: BASIS FOR A PERSONAL FINANCE PRIMER

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the consumption patterns of the BPO employees, Cebu City, 2019. The results will formulate personal budgeting training for the BPO employees. Specifically, it seeks to address the demographic and employment profile of the respondents, their consumption patterns in terms of primary and luxurious goods, and the factors that affect their purchase decision. This study utilized the descriptive survey method. Two hundred ninety-two individuals served as respondents in this study from three BPO companies, namely: Concentrix, Wipro Ltd., and Qualfon Philippines, Inc. The samples were computed using Slovin's Formula. It was conducted in Cebu Business Park and IT Park, Cebu City. It used a researcher-designed questionnaire. This study used frequency counts, simple percentages, weighted mean, and Chi-square Test of Independence to analyze the data. Their consumption behavior and purchase decision determine the consumption patterns of the respondents. The study resulted in respondents who belonged to the bracket of 18 to 23 years old, college graduates, usually female employees, and most are residents in Cebu City. The results showed that most were call center agents with a monthly income of Php 21,000 to Php 25,000. The majority of their reasons for working in the BPO industry were high salaries. Further, salary increases were factored in by excellent performance, rank and promotion, and length of service. Moreover, the respondents' consumption pattern to superior goods was usually purchased, consumed, or budgeted monthly, while the inferior goods were on an annual basis. There were moderate influences on the factors that affected the respondent's purchase decision. Hence, the researcher recommends applying the proposed budget training to symposiums and seminars, a replication of the study, and further studies of personal-financial budgeting and the impact of purchase decisions.

Keywords- Economics, consumer behavior, consumption patterns, business process outsourcing companies, quantitative, Cebu City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

The economic notions of consumption patterns refer to expenditure patterns of income groups across or within categories of products such as food, clothing, and discretionary items. The consumption pattern is both a process and a practice whereby consumers purchase and consume goods and services for a specific purpose to satisfy their wants and needs. As a process, it involves identifying, purchasing, and consuming goods and services; and deciding whether or not to purchase a specific product or service. As a practice, every consumer acquires items from different practices. As such, patterns of consumption in practices – expenditures, possessions, and affordability; and portfolio of social and cultural practices – can therefore be explained by the commitment and consistent purchase routine (Dholakia & Firat, 2011).

Consumers, in general, have the desire to satisfy individual wants and needs. The prevailing consumption behavior of the business process outsourcing (BPO) employees has been an issue in this age, especially since a more significant part belongs to Generation Y or the millennials. The prodding consumption behavior of the business process outsourcing (BPO) employees has been an issue in this age, especially since a more significant part belongs to Generation Y or the millennials. In particular, those earning and working individuals in today's millennial generation can afford to buy products and services that will satisfy their wants and needs. Hence, it is essential to understand consumers' consumption patterns to develop personal budgeting training measures. The employees in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) sector, quantified by Nielsen Philippines, have a higher income than those of other industries in the Philippines (Gregorio, 2018). The consumption behavior of this particular group of the working-class population is greatly influenced by the typical lifestyle of their working environment and purchasing power.

Employees at the BPO tend to be more compulsive consumption, leading to eventual financial scarcity when not controlled. They shared an everyday lifestyle and financial goals. For instance, the consumption behavior observed by the researcher involves shopping, acquiring expensive gadgets, dining out in expensive restaurants, frequent travel to both domestic and international destinations, face and body enhancement services, intake of alcoholic beverages, smoking products, and others. Moreover, the products and services mentioned are related to consumers' ambiguous and ambitious side commonly observed in the BPO sector employee's consumption behavior.

The spending habits of the BPO employees reflect affluence that is more than the general population, spurring consumer spending (Anon, 2019). For the most part, the employees' income goes to spending rather than saving. They often go shopping, travel, and eat out to fulfill their wants. For some reason, most BPO employees lack financial literacy on efficiently managing within their budget, which causes them to get broke at the end of the day. The lifestyle of the BPO employees as consumers is one significant factor that set off this problem of their spending pattern to arise.

The researcher, as a consumer and a working individual herself, has a great interest in studying how consumers decide to spend personal income to be able to establish applications of considerable financial management influence upon the formulation of the perceived risk of irresponsible spending and the way individual consumer decisions impact on their overall financial well-being. Moreover, this study can instill positive notions and improve the concept of practical spending.

The researcher observed the undesirable consumer buying behavior of the millennials, especially those working in the BPO companies. Therefore, she decided to undertake this study to share and contribute her learning into educating the mind of the consumers towards their financial well-being. Hence, this study addressed why millennial BPO employees pursue status consumption despite many young adults relying on limited incomes. Therefore, studying how they behave in consumption is essential to understand their consumption pattern better and inculcate financial education towards practical and responsible buying decisions. The paper focuses on consumers' buying behavior (microeconomic and financial management). It synthesizes previous literature and research aiming to assess the negative effect of the prodding spending habits towards the financial stability and overall well-being of the subject of this study – the BPO employees.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the Veblen effect theory, which pertains to the process involving conspicuous consumption and the setting of canons of taste and preferences on the wealthy class, which members of the lower class seek to emulate (Veal, 2016). Moreover, Veblen argued that consumer demand for goods and services derives from a need to establish social networks and a desire to emulate higher social classes and economic groups (Patsiaouras & Fitchett, 2012). This theory arises from the desire of consumers to achieve social status by signaling wealth through conspicuous consumption.

This theory explains the consumers' buying behavior towards exuberant spending and being mindless of its possible consequence to their financial well-being. Moreover, wealthy individuals often consume highly conspicuous goods and services to advertise their wealth. Hence, each individual's status depends upon perceptions of his wealth among social contacts. Thus, the Veblen effect refers explicitly to consumers who buy and value expensive items to display wealth and income rather than to cover the consumer's real needs (Veal, 2016).

Weber's theory of social class. It explains that motivation in consumption relates to the membership in a social class and confers linkage among members through an everyday lifestyle and accompanying social restrictions (Abraham & Harrington, 2015). Additionally, Abraham & Harrington(2015) opined that social status determines consumption, particularly conspicuous items such as houses and cars, as such purchases symbolize membership in a high-status social referent group.

O'cass & McEwen (2004) explained that young status-conscious consumers are more likely to be affected by interpersonal influences. Kastanakis & Balabanis (2012) added that status consumption is the trait of people who strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products and services confer and symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others.

Phau & Woo (2008) stated that individuals obsessed with power and prestige resulting from having money accelerated consumption to the degree that may result in adverse outcomes such as compulsive buying behavior. Compulsive buying pertains to the frequent preoccupation with buying or impulses to buy commodities perceived as irresistible, intrusive, and senseless (Muller et al., 2005).

According to Bailey (2014), millennials are experiencing the full force of a bad economy, yet, there are no changes in their habits to create some sense of stability. The millennials, as consumers, ought to be practical in their spending behavior to sustain their everyday expenses and avoid future financial instability due to impractical and irresponsible buying decisions.

Bailey (2014) revealed that millennials are stereotyped to buy now, pay later, and typically not saving enough to make a difference in either alleviating debt or paying down a future high-cost event. Koran et al. (2006) added that once an individual cannot control buying, they will frequently purchase unnecessary items or more than they can afford and shop for more extended periods than intended. If these behaviors prevail in the current generation, future financial problems will be apparent with those who do not practice personal budgeting.

Veblen's effect theory harbors the theory of bandwagon effect, making millennials more likely to consume status products that their reference group accepts (Kastanakis & Balabanis, 2012). The bandwagon effect represents the desire of people to purchase a commodity to conform to the people they wish to be associated with. Additionally, Eng & Bogaert (2010) opined that attitudes about luxury consumption are linked to displaying wealth, and the symbolic meanings from one's social position as status consumption fulfill hedonic consumption needs.

Moreover, a growing body of literature looks at the process of changing consumer behavior within a context of a transtheoretical model of change. According to the transtheoretical model of change, behavior change involves progressing through a series of stages, with individuals commonly relapsing before successfully giving up negative consumption behaviors or engaging in positive consumption behaviors. This theory is used to identify the stage at which individuals are ready and able to change their behavior and then apply appropriate intervention tailored to meet individuals' specific needs. This theory provides an insight into how to help consumers change their consumption behaviors (Lyons & Neelkantan, 2008).

According to Rani (2014), consumer behavior refers to selecting, purchasing, and consuming goods and services to satisfy their wants. The society millennials have been raised and socialized with has become increasingly materialistic, and they actively began shopping at a younger age than the generations before them (Kim & Jang, 2014). Furthermore, compulsive buying can exist as consumers' primary response for individuals to compensate for stress, frustrations, disappointment, lack of self-esteem, structural deficit, and distortion of autonomy in their lives through the act of buying (Koran et al., 2006).

According to Abraham et al. (2015), Gen Y or the Millennial Generation has been defined as those born from 1982-to 2002. Abraham et al. (2015) noted that this generation was theorized to employ economic reasons, i.e., preferences for inexpensive products and the desire to comply with social referent groups' values and normative beliefs. According to G. Ordon (2015), the pessimistic point of view towards the millennial generation evaluates them as lazy, irresponsible, impatient and apathetic, selfish, disrespectful, and even lost. Additionally, the millennial generation is labeled as open-minded, social, innovative, energetic, ambitious, confident, motivated, and intelligent from the optimistic view. Hence, Der Hovanesian (1999) stated that Gen Y consumers are more aware of their purchasing power and are likely to spend their cash as quickly as they acquire it, usually on consumer goods and personal services. Impulsive buying behavior is a sudden, compelling, hedonically complex purchasing behavior in which the rapidity of the impulse purchase decision process precludes thoughtful, deliberate consideration of all information and choice alternatives (Kacen & Lee, 2002).

According to Peter et al. (2001), consumer behavior is a dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behavior, and environmental events by which human beings conduct the exchange aspect of their lives. Hence, consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs and the impact these processes have on the consumer and the society.

Koran et al. (2006) added that once an individual cannot control buying, they will frequently purchase unnecessary items or more than they can afford and shop for more extended periods than intended. Hence, individuals with high materialistic values believe that acquiring material goods is a crucial goal for life as a prime indicator of success and the key to happiness and self-definition (Phau & Woo, 2008).

Consumers make many decisions in their daily life, and one of these is the buying decision. They decide to buy some products for several reasons: they need these products, want to try them, others strongly recommend products, or the products will be given as a gift (Al-Salamin & Al-Hassan, 2016). Hence, consumers pay for their purchases out of their limited income. When obtaining, consuming, and disposing of products/services, consumers' activities are known as consumer behavior (Sata, 2013). Consumer behavior involves studying how people buy, what they buy, and when they buy.

According to Rani (2014), many factors, specificities, and characteristics influence the individual in what he is and the consumer in his decision process, shopping habits, purchasing behavior, the brand he/she buys, or the retailer he/she goes to. Thus, consumers' buying behavior and purchase decisions are strongly influenced by cultural, social, personal, psychological characteristics.

Consumption behavior and financial literacy often lie below the surface of age; the researcher could gain a deeper understanding by considering the current generational cohort – millennials, as the focus of this study. The following are the factors that affect consumer behavior and purchasing decision and are discussed below:

Cultural Factor. Culture is part of society and is the fundamental cause of people's wants and behavior. Culture is a complex set of beliefs and principles held by a given society and clearly defines the roles played by the members of the society, traditions, and customs (Durden, 2018).

An individual will be influenced by his family, friends, and cultural environment or society that will teach him values, preferences, and common behaviors to their own culture (Rani, 2014). Solomon (2009) posited that culture corresponds to the fundamental ways individuals characterize the world. It makes distinctions between different times, between leisure and work, between genders, and so on. Members of the millennial generation share the same significant cultural, political, and economic experiences (Kotler et al., 2014). Thus, culture is crucial when it comes to understanding the needs and behaviors of an individual.

Social Factor. Social factors are among the factors influencing consumer behavior significantly. Social factors influencing consumer behavior can be classified as reference groups, immediate family members, relatives, and societal roles (Pagoso et al., 2014). This explains the outside influences of others on the purchase decision of the consumers either directly or indirectly (Rani, 2014).

Kacen and Lee (2002) hypothesized that impulse purchases were likely to be items that symbolized the preferred or ideal self, and such should be affected by social image and the expression of self-identity in the purchase decision. Hence, according to Solomon (2009), social class is the overall standing in the society; people grouped within the same social class are approximately equal in terms of their social standing, occupations, and lifestyle.

Individuals increasingly utilize consumption as an alternative way to express and create self-identity or social status (Phau & Woo, 2008). As a result, consumption has become the social standard of leisure and lifestyle essential, easily accessible, and encouraged by society (Muller et al., 2005). Status consumption is the motivational process by which individuals strive to improve their social standing through the conspicuous consumption of consumer products that confer and symbolize status both for the individual and surrounding significant others. Millennials are considered the first high-tech generation (Norum, 2003) and are perceived as consumption-oriented and sophisticated shoppers who are confident in making purchasing decisions (Barber et al., 2009). Hence, shopping has become an entertaining hobby for many millennial consumers (Bakewell & Mitchell, 2003).

Personal Factor: Every individual has a distinct personality and unique psychological characteristics that influence their buying behavior (Khaniwale, 2015). Yakup & Jablonsk (2012) presumed that personal characteristics like age and lifecycle stage, occupation, economic circumstances, lifestyle (activities, interests, opinions, and demographics), personality, and self-concept strongly influence consumers' buying behavior. Hence, personal characteristics are the causes of influence in buying decisions as consumers often hunt for and decide because of personal opinions. All these being stated as personal factors affecting consumer buying behavior may explain why our preferences change as our situation changes (Rani, 2014). The lifestyle of consumers is another important factor affecting consumer buying behavior. According to Solomon (2009), consumers regularly choose products, services, and activities over others since they are related to a particular lifestyle. A consumer's lifestyle decides the general needs the person connects to various activities and products. Rani (2014) explained lifestyle as the way the person lives in a society and is expressed by the things in his/her surroundings. Moreover, it is determined by the consumer's interests, opinions, activities and shapes his whole pattern and interaction in the world.

Psychological Factor. According to Pagoso et al. (2014), a person's purchases are influenced by psychological factors based on Maslow's Theory of Motivation or Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs), perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes. Solomon (2009) explained that motivation refers to the process that causes people to behave as they do. From a psychological perspective, motivation occurs when a need is aroused that the consumer wishes to satisfy. Perception is how people organize and make sense of information to form a worldview (Sisk, 2019).

According to Durden (2018), learning in consumer psychology comes only through experience. Through the experience the consumer acquires, his learning, and his external influences, he will develop beliefs and attitudes that will influence his/her buying behavior (Rani, 2014).

Pagoso et al. (2014) explained that belief is a descriptive thought that a person holds about something, a conviction that an individual has on something, while an attitude describes a person's enduring favorable and unfavorable cognitive evaluations, emotional feelings, and tendencies toward some object or ideas.

The study of Eastman et al. (2013) stresses that millennial consumers who are motivated to consume for status are more likely to demonstrate the shopping styles of being brand conscious, novelty/fashion-conscious, recreational and impulsive shoppers, and brand loyal. The younger generation is more open to new concepts of conspicuous products and services, such as luxury restaurants and cafés, as a means of self-expression or symbols of their desired lifestyle (Kim & Jang, 2014).

Nielsen Philippines Managing Director Stuart Jamieson cited that BPO employees are formidable members of the country's middle-class population and have a higher income than those from other industries in the Philippines. Over the past decade, the BPO sector has seen an annual growth rate of around 10% and has become not only the country's largest source of private employment but also is the second-largest contributor of foreign exchange earnings after (OFWs) remittances. This is so because the Philippines emerged as one of the most influential players in the BPO industry, which can be attributed to three key features – high English literacy rate, compatibility with Western culture, and steady pool of competency in budget-friendly costs (Gregorio, 2018).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to determine the consumption pattern of the BPO employees, Cebu City, C.Y. 2019. The results were used to formulate a personal finance primer. Specifically, it aims to present the following: 1) demographic data of the respondents in terms of age, gender; civil status, highest educational attainment, place of origin, and years of living in Cebu; 2) employment profile of the respondents in the aspects of the position, nature of job function, employment status, average monthly income, and mode of salary payment; 3) reasons for working in the BPO industry; 4) factors affecting the change of the respondent's income/salary; 5) consumption pattern of the employees in terms of nature of goods that are commonly purchased, frequency of purchase, mode of payment, mode of purchase, and allocated budget; and (6) factors affecting the purchase decision of the respondents.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research respondents, research procedures, and treatment of data.

Research Design

This study utilized the descriptive survey method using a researcher-designed questionnaire to gather data on the profile, reasons for working in the BPO industry, factors affecting the respondent's income/salary, consumption pattern of the employees, and factors affecting the respondent's income/salary the purchase decision.

Research Environment

The research was conducted at Cebu City, located explicitly at IT Park, Lahug Cebu City, and Cebu Business Park Cebu City, where the respondents are working. IT Park is developed to attract locators in the Information Technology services while Cebu Business Park is an economic zone where Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) companies operate and other commercial establishments. The research environment covers three BPO companies, namely; Concentrix (previously Convergys, is a technology-enabled global business services company specializing in customer engagement and improving business performance for some of the world's best brands; Wipro Ltd. (a global information technology (IT), consulting and business process service provider which operated through two segments; IT services and IT products); and Teletech (a global provider of contact center, back-office and business process outsourcing services). These three BPO companies were chosen since they have the most employees.

Research Respondents

The study employed the dynamic BPO employees in Cebu City as participants. These participants were chosen through random sampling wherein all population members have an equal chance of becoming research participants.

Research Instrument

The researcher devised a self-administered survey questionnaire for the data gathering. The first part of the questionnaire pertains to the respondents' demographic data regarding age, gender, civil status, educational attainment, place of origin, and years of living in Cebu. The second part pertains to the employment profile of the respondents in the aspects of the position, nature of job function, employment status, average monthly income, and mode of salary payment. The third (3rd) part aims to unveil the reasons for working in the BPO industry. The fourth (4th) part relates to the respondent's income/salary change factors. The fifth (5th) part pertains to the consumption pattern of the employees in terms of the nature of goods that are commonly purchased, frequency of purchase, budget allocation, mode of payment, and mechanism employed in purchasing. The last part pertains to the factors affecting the purchase decision of the respondents in terms of culture, social, personal, and psychological.

A pilot testing was conducted among the fifteen (15) respondents at Teletech, located at Cebu Business Park, Cebu City, to test the reliability of the researcher-designed instrument. The respondents were from Teletech, located at Cebu Business Park. These respondents were not included in the actual administration of the questionnaire. The questionnaire administration was done in 1 to 2 days since the proponent personally distributed the questionnaires among the identified fifteen (15) dry-run respondents. The items in the survey questionnaire were explained to them. Then, the answered copies of the survey questionnaire were collected, tallied, and tabulated. The incidence of non-response on every question and the trend of responses were noted in the finalization of the survey questionnaire before actual administration. The Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.91 signifies that the researcher-made questionnaire was reliable to administer to the identified respondents.

Research Procedures

The researcher tapped the Human Resource of each company to acquire information as to how many employees their company has in the Cebu City area. The company HR allowed reporting the researcher the average number of employees and not the actual headcount of all employees that their company is employing at present.

The proponent secured permission from the Senior Manager to survey the employees of Wipro Ltd., Concentrix, and Teletech. When permission was obtained, the proponent personally conducted the administration of some copies of the questionnaire. The data gathered lasted for 30 days. The researcher discussed the purpose and mechanics of the study during the administration of the tool to clarify vague items on the part of the respondents.

Treatment of Data

The accomplished copies of the questionnaire were collected and tallied in the data matrix form. The items were grouped according to the categories. Frequency counts and the simple percentage were calculated to analyze the demographic and employment profile of the respondents, reasons for working in the BPO industry, factors affecting the change of the respondent's income/salary, and consumption pattern of the employees, and nature of goods that are purchased. Weighted Mean was applied to analyze the data on the consumption pattern and the factors affecting the purchase decision of the respondents. Chi-Square Test of Independence was calculated to analyze the result on the significant relationship between the respondents' demographic and employment profile and their responses on the reasons for working in the BPO industry, consumption pattern of the employees, and factors affecting the purchase decision. One-Way ANOVA was calculated to test the significant difference in the responses of the various respondents on the reasons for working in the BPO industry, consumption pattern of the employees, and factors affecting the purchase decision.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents, analyses, and interprets the data gathered from the BPO employees in Cebu City. The data pertain to the profile of the respondents, their consumption pattern with regards to superior and inferior goods, and the factors affecting their purchase decision.

The demographic profile of the respondents includes age, gender, civil status, place of origin, highest educational attainment, years of living in Cebu.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n = 292)

Profile Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-23 years old	136	46.58
24-29 years old	99	33.90
30-35 years old	29	9.93
36 years old & above	28	9.59
Gender		
Female	175	59.93
Male	117	40.07
Civil Status		
Single	223	76.37
Married	68	23.29
Seperated	1	0.34
Place of Origin		
Cebu CIty	159	54.45
Mandaue City	26	8.90
Talisay City	23	7.88
Carcar City	12	4.11
Lapu-Lapu City	21	7.19
Other Provinces	29	6.51
Visayas Provinces	17	5.82
Mindanao Provinces	14	4.79
Manila	1	0.34
Highest Educational Attainment		
Doctorate’s Degree	2	0.68
Master’s Degree	11	3.77
College Graduate	195	66.78
College Level	76	26.03
High School Graduate	8	2.74

Years of Living In Cebu		
1-5 Years	34	11.64
6-10 Years	30	10.27
11-15 Years	28	9.59
16 Years & Above	200	68.49

Table 1 shows that more respondents belonged to the age bracket of 18 to 23 years old, comprising 46.58% of the total number of respondents. This data implies that the respondents belonged to the younger working group. Aside from attractive salaries, the attractive environment and benefits offered by the BPO sector have motivated many young adults to seek employment in this industry (Sharma, 2004).

Further, young adults represent a group that is the target of some advertisers for certain products such as alcoholic beverages, fast foods, fashion items, and travel leisure. The lifestyle of the young adults leads to the spending propensity that reflects attitudes of the new generation and attitudes that have been influenced by parents, colleagues, and friends (Ganac, 2017).

Hence, based on shared experience, this age group might be less experienced in making purchase decisions as consumers, leading to unhealthy consumer decisions.

On the other hand, only 9.93% of the respondents belonged to older middle-aged employees. This data signifies that the BPO industry employs experienced workers, offering substantial monetary benefits for supervisory and managerial positions. This age group belonged to the more experimental group of consumers, usually with reproductive responsibility.

According to David (2011), BPO firms see value in the more mature middle-aged job market; hence a large percentage of these people are educated and have work experience. Thus, those above 36-year old brackets bring an element of maturity and stay for a more extended period, which is suitable for the BPO companies in the long run.

Further, the data reveals that among the three BPO companies that were surveyed, 59.93% were females, and only 40.07% were males. This result implies that women constitute a significant number of the workforce in the BPO industry in Cebu City.

This data relates to the data obtained from the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) in 2008, which shows that more than half (52.5%) of the total workforce for BPO activities were female workers. The millennium has witnessed the onset of revolution in the emergence of new industries and fields of work, employment, economic well-being, and increased women's participation in the workforce (Dube et al., 2012). Moreover, the BPO industry provides a promising avenue for women who have conventionally not opted for technical occupations but have an essential knowledge base and flexibility in IT-enabled services.

Additionally, the majority (76.37%) of the respondents were single, 23.29% were married, and only 0.34% or the equivalent of 1 was already separated. This data denotes that the BPO sector employers prefer young and single employees with excellent educational attainment since the rapidly shifting technologies tend to see the work, the remuneration of young new hires rather than those with commitment in marriage. Emphasizing the assembly line nature of the work of the BPO employees, employers require flexible working, which frequently prevents those with families from jobs during off-peak hours (Dube et al., 2012).

By origin, most respondents (54.45%) were from Cebu City. This data implies that Cebuanos dominated the employment workforces of the BPO industry in Cebu City. Since the location of the BPO companies is in Cebu City, the jobs were made easily accessible and available for the Cebuanos.

Moreover, most (66.78%) of the respondents were college graduates, while only two (0.68%) were doctorate holders. Numerous employment opportunities have been created for young educated young people, including fresh college graduates. On the other hand, postgraduate degrees such as a doctorate were less necessary for a center job in the BPO industry. Hence, doctorate holders are fitted for managerial positions, which the BPO companies seldom require because the promotion for managerial positions usually is done within the workforce with excellent performance and knowledge of the process. Henceforth, it comprises young and educated individuals with good spoken English and communication skills. It denotes that the BPO sector needs more college graduates.

The data contained in table 2 further shows the diversity of employees' credentials in terms of the highest educational attainment. Additionally, the BPO sector also gives importance to the high school graduates to fill the gap in the supply of qualified workforce, and a high consideration with those employees with high educational attainment for managerial positions.

Likewise, the data reveals that most (68.49%) of the respondents have resided in Cebu for more than 16 years and more. This data relates to the data above that the bulk of the BPO employees were residents in Cebu City. This implies that the residents in Cebu City have taken advantage of being near the BPO industry.

Table 2 presents the respondents' employment profile, including position, nature of work/job function, employment status, average monthly income, and mode of salary payment.

Table 2. Employment Profile of the Respondents (n = 292)

Indicators	**Frequency** (f)	**Percentage** (%)
Position		
Operating Manager	4	1.37
Team Lead/Supervisor	35	11.99
Agent	127	43.49
Sales Representative	23	7.88
Human Resource Associate	16	5.48
Customer Care Specialist	20	6.85
Accounting Staff	23	7.88
Technical Support	26	8.90
Floor Support	10	3.42
Payroll Associate	8	2.74
Nature of Job Function		
Take inbound calls	66	22.60
Take outbound calls	43	14.73
Blending (take inbound and outbound)	35	11.99
Customer Service	22	7.53
Hire/Recruit Employees	8	2.74
Accounting	20	6.85
Administrative	39	13.36
Market/Promote	23	7.88
Managerial	12	4.11
Supervisory	24	8.22
Employment Status		
Probationary	41	14.04
Regular	248	84.93
Project-Based	0	0.00
Contractual	0	0.00
Seasonal	0	0.00
Part-Time	3	1.03

Average Monthly Income (Php)		
Php 11,000.00 - Php 15,000.00	23	7.88
Php 16,000.00 - Php 20,000.00	97	33.22
Php 21,000.00 - Php 25,000.00	98	33.56
Php 26,000.00 & above	74	25.34
Mode of Salary Payment		
Bi-monthly/Twice a month	292	100.00
Monthly/Once a month	0	0.00
Weekly/Once a week	0	0.00

The data reveals that there were (43.49%) of the BPO employees worked as agents at the time of the survey. This significant number of call center agents working in the BPO sector denotes that BPO companies need more call center agents in the workforce.

According to Kleibert (2014), BPO companies require the availability of large volumes of call center agents for their operations in order to reap economies of scale.

Moreover, BPOs have a limited hierarchical structure with only three to four levels, usually agents, team leaders, supervisors, and managers. There tend to be only a small number of supervisory and managerial positions available within BPOs, and the bulk of the staff was employed as agents. Based on everyday experience, BPO companies employ a significant number of clerical work for accounting, human resource, administrative and regulatory tasks additionally, since the BPO sector is significantly aided by technology and employs technical support for their operation.

Furthermore, out of the two hundred ninety-two (292) BPO employees, there were two hundred forty-eight (248) regular employees, 84.93%, and only forty-one (41) or equivalent to 14.04%, were on probationary employees. This implies that mainly the BPO employees enjoy the privileges and benefits of regular jobs.

When President Rodrigo Duterte campaigned in the 2016 May elections, one of his promises was to end contractualization (Tolentino, 2017). This policy paved the way for the employees who now enjoy the benefits of regularization and job security benefits and a good end of contractualization in the BPO industry.

Regarding the average monthly income, there were ninety-eight employees, comprising 33.56% of the sample who earned within the income bracket of Php 21,000.00 to 25,000.00 and only seventy-four (74) or equivalent 25.34% of the employees who earned Php 26,000.00 per month and above. This implies that the BPO industry offers a higher compensation sufficient for the BPO employees to spend on their wants and needs. The higher pay of the BPO employees is very evident to have substantially sustained their financial well-being. This is one of the reasons why BPO job opportunities are desirable to job seekers.

According to Ganac (2017), BPO employees have enjoyed higher incomes than regular office workers and are driving consumption in the marketplace. Thus, this result implies that earning substantially higher salaries results in significant purchasing power. Hence, purchasing power represents the consumer’s ability to make purchases. Higher-income creates consumer confidence because the consumers are aware of their financial situation (Boundless Marketing: Consumer Income, Purchasing Power, and Confidence, 2018).

Moreover, the data reveals that the mode of the salary payment for all the respondents was bi-monthly, which means that BPO employees received 50% of the salary every 15-day working period. This implies that the BPO employees have more than one opportunity to spend their income. Since the employees expect to receive half of their income twice every month, they have to allocate them on their expenditures more than one time.

Table 3 presents the data for the reasons of the BPO employees for working in the BPO industry.

Table 3. Reasons for Working in the Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Industry
(n = 292)

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
High salary	229	1st
Opportunity for personal and professional growth	187	2nd
Quick salary and rank promotion	136	4th
Work experience	161	3rd
Live a lavish lifestyle	73	5th

Primarily, high salary was the main reason for employment at the BPO. This data implies that the BPO industry pays above-average salaries, with contact-center positions generally paying a higher maximum than other industries. This attracts job seekers to apply and work in the BPO industry.

According to Boundless Marketing: Consumer Income, Purchasing Power and Confidence (2019), when one has a career in BPO, the compensation in this field is often above the market average, plus the added night shift differential and overtime pay benefits. Aside from the mandatory 13th-month pay, some BPO companies provide extra bonuses and incentives to the top performers. This implies that BPO employees are particular about having a high salary to sustain their finances. Based on the everyday experience, due to the economic crisis, people will seek to work in industries that offer higher salary offers to cope with their day-to-day living expenditures.

Secondly, setting aside great pay working in the BPO industry allows the BPO employees to grow together with the company. This signifies the opportunity for both personal and career growth. It further implies that working in the BPO industry creates a positive mindset for the employees to fulfill something while working in the industry and grow together.

As the company grows, they train existing workers for leadership posts and hire new staff to replace vacant primary positions. This means that BPO employees can acquire new skills and experience while working for the same firm. Hence, a career in BPO allows the BPO employees to enjoy the chance of meeting, learning, and working with people with various fortes around the world (Boundless Marketing: Consumer Income, Purchasing Power and Confidence, 2019).

Thirdly, work experience is of consideration for the college level and undergraduates. The BPO industry is the perfect avenue for job seekers, particularly undergraduates who offer job-ready applicants of any field of study. Some BPO employees believe that gaining experience will help them land a better job in the future. Hence, the BPO industry is a promising avenue for the new entrant in the job market with promising financial benefits.

Table 4 presents the factors affecting the BPO employee’s monthly salary change from the three BPO companies in Cebu City.

Table 4. Factors Affecting the Respondents' Change in Income/Salary

Indicators	Frequency (f)	Rank
Length of service	150	3rd
Nature of work or job function	128	4th
Rank and promotion	162	2nd
Designation	68	6th
Excellent Performance	178	1st
Across the broad salary increment	35	8th
Profitability of the account or company	55	7th
General economic condition	19	9th
Employees qualification	81	5th

The data reveals that excellent performance is the first factor that affects the BPO employee's income/salary. BPO firms typically have monthly or quarterly appraisal systems, which will in-still something positive to the mind of the employees by having something to look forward to so they will be motivated to do an excellent job. The nature of work in the BPO industry is performance-based (Bodwell et al., 2016). This denotes that BPO companies are subjective in evaluating possible changes in their employees' salaries. Hence, BPO employees will be motivated to be the best in what they do.

Further, Daoanis (2012) posited that performance appraisal would make employees committed to feeling a particular bond with the organization, which makes them more willing to perform in a positive form. Hence, those individuals who feel motivated, challenged, and satisfied in their jobs are much more likely to be committed to a given work environment, company, or organization.

The second most crucial factor is ranking and promotion. This implies that BPO employees' salaries will significantly increase if they move into higher positions. Ranking and promotion encourage employees to be motivated and produce satisfactory results. It further encourages the employees to achieve beyond their specified targets, and being able to do so will increase their incentives and add to their visibility and opportunities for growth (D'Cruz & Noronha, 2015).

Further, the length of service ranked third among the factors that affect the change of income or salary in the BPO sector. Hence, BPO employees have become aware of providing long-term career growth opportunities and giving employees a chance to advance their career to good performance and continuous honing of technical and soft skills.

BPOs today are focusing on promoting people from within the ranks, ensuring faster career growth for employees who stay, as opposed to those who frequently move (Marcelo, 2018).

Table 5 presents the data on the responses of BPO employees relating to their purchase of superior goods or those highly essential commodities.

Table 5. Purchased Decision of the Respondents on Superior Goods

Superior/Basic Goods	Purchased Yes f	%	No f	%	Rank
Inexpensive/Basic Clothing	292	100.0	0	0.0	**1st**
Sanitary/Hygiene Products	292	100.0	0	0.0	
Food Expenses	291	99.7	1	0.3	**2nd**
Telecom Expenses (, cellular phones, etc.)	288	98.6	4	1.4	**3rd**
Fare & Transportation Expenses	264	90.4	28	9.6	4th
Water & Electricity Expenses	249	85.3	43	14.7	5th
Medicinal Products & Food Supplements	238	81.5	54	18.5	6th
Health Care Services	215	73.6	77	26.4	7th
House or Room Rental/Amortization	208	71.2	84	28.8	8th
Educational Services	184	63.0	108	37.0	9th

**Multiple responses*

All or 100% of the respondents prefer to buy inexpensive clothes and sanitary/hygiene products. This implies that clothes are essential for everyday wear. At the same time, inexpensive clothing enables them to buy more than just one item for it is affordable. Hence, it is evident that earning individuals spend on clothing since the employees in the BPO industry do not wear uniforms and are not required to. This implies that the BPO employees need to acquire several clothes when working. The data further shows that there were only 291 respondents who have purchased food items.

Additionally, 99.70% of the respondents purchase food items. In reality, the respondents now and then since food is highly essential for survival. This implies that almost all respondents have food purchases except for one. For instance, a person cannot spend on food if provided to him/her, or just perhaps the respondents have skipped answering the question on food.

Likewise, 100% of the respondents spend on sanitary and hygiene products or services. This implies that the respondents allocate some of their income to superior goods. According to Rohith & Shrinivas (2010), digestive disorders are common among employees in the BPO industry. Understandably, the BPO employees always have to be extra ready when it happens. In addition, for telecommunication expenses, the data shows that 288 or 98.6% of the respondents' income was spent loading their mobile phones to keep in touch with other people. This implies that due to the prevalence of technology and influence of social media, BPO employees just like the many frequently purchased load and internet data. Hence, the consumer demand for multi-channel communications (including social media, live chat, and others.) has exploded over the past five years (Digneo, 2019).

Table 6 presents the data of the consumption pattern of the BPO employees based on their responses on the frequency of purchase, mode of payment, mode of purchase, and budget allocation on superior goods.

Table 6. Consumption Pattern of the Respondents on Superior Goods

Superior or Basic Goods	Frequency of Purchase								Mode of Payment				Mode of Purchase				Range of Allocated Budget							
	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Yearly		Cash		Credit/Debit Card		Online		Physical Store		Php1,000 and below		Php 1001.-4,000		Php 4,001-5,000		Above Php5,000	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
Inexpensive/Basic Clothing	59	20.2	199	68.2	30	10.3	4	1.4	266	91.1	26	8.9	40	13.7	252	86.3	224	76.7	31	10.6	24	8.2	13	4.5
Sanitary/Hygiene Products	11	3.8	192	65.8	89	30.5	0	0.0	288	98.6	4	1.4	0	0.0	292	100.0	273	93.5	19	6.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
Food Expenses	185	63.6	72	24.7	34	11.7	1	0.3	290	99.7	2	0.7	6	2.1	286	98.3	227	78.0	49	16.8	16	5.5	0	0.0
Telecom Expenses (cellular phones, etc.)	4	1.4	167	58.0	115	39.9	2	0.7	288	100.0	0	0.0	78	27.1	210	72.9	241	83.7	40	13.9	7	2.4	0	0.0
Fare & Transportation Expenses	158	59.8	56	21.2	50	18.9	0	0.0	254	96.2	10	3.8	11	4.2	253	95.8	202	76.5	50	18.9	12	4.5	0	0.0
Water & Electricity Expenses	2	0.8	0	0.0	246	98.8	1	0.4	247	99.2	2	0.8	42	16.9	207	83.1	112	45.0	96	38.6	37	14.9	4	1.6
Medicinal Products & Food Supplements	2	0.8	42	17.6	183	76.9	11	4.6	234	98.3	4	1.7	4	1.7	234	98.3	184	77.3	50	21.0	4	1.7	0	0.0
Health Care Services	2	0.9	0	0.0	61	28.4	152	70.7	213	99.1	2	0.9	2	0.9	213	99.1	127	59.1	76	35.3	11	5.1	1	0.5
House or Room	0	0.0	1	0.5	207	99.5	0	0.0	208	100.0	0	0.0	9	4.3	199	95.7	28	13.5	77	37.0	65	31.3	38	18.0
Educational Services	0	0.0	0	0.0	162	88.0	22	12.0	184	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	184	100.0	15	8.2	73	39.7	67	36.4	29	15.8

About 63.6% of the respondents have spent on food daily, 59.8% have daily expenses on fare and transportation, and about 20.2% on clothing. This implies that food according to necessity was the top contributor to the expenses of the respondents. Additionally, BPO employees either drive themselves to work or commute and thus incur travel costs. Lastly, only a few of the samples were spent on clothing daily. This implies recurring expenses on clothes since it is inexpensive, the respondents can afford to make purchases daily.

Moreover, the top three items that most of the respondents spent weekly were inexpensive clothes, sanitary and hygiene products, and telecommunication expenses, respectively. This implies that purchases of clothes are prevalent in the BPO employees. Further, it signifies that the BPO employees are fashion conscious. Moreover, the majority (70.7%) who spend on health care services are spending annually. This implies that acquiring health care services such as physical checks and other laboratories can be done once a year which medical professionals advise.

The data further shows that payment through cash was mainly the respondents' method. The respondents' top three items that require or prefer cash methods are telecommunication, educational fees, and monthly rent or amortization. Additionally, educational services and monthly rental or amortization are those in which cash is highly required. On the other hand, items were significantly less likely to be purchased on credit. It shows that only 8.9% comprises the ones transacting on a credit basis among all the respondents. This implies that due to the affordability of the unique items, it is almost needless to purchase or consume the item on credit. The data reveals that the top three items that were usually purchased online are telecommunication (27.1%), water and electricity expenses (16.90%), and inexpensive clothing (13.7%), respectively. This implies that telecommunication expenses such as internet and mobile data can be purchased online.

Additionally, although consumed physically, electricity expenses can also be made online. Moreover, lastly is the inexpensive clothing which the purchases can be made through online shopping. This further implies that the advancement of technology made people more prevalent to purchase and make payments online.

Moreover, most (65.8%) of the respondents spend on sanitary and hygiene products, which function as contingent cleaning products to keep them sanitized, especially during digestive problems and routine cleansing. Lastly, most (58%) respondents have weekly telecommunication expenses. This means that these groups of respondents were mainly prepaid users who prefer to purchase on telecommunication every week.

The data further shows that water and electricity expenses ranked first on the monthly expenses which most of the respondents spent. This implies that the respondents mainly had the responsibility to pay bills every month. Additionally, house rental or monthly amortization ranked second, which the respondents mostly spend every month. This signifies that the BPO employees are earning individuals who live independently, live with family, rent, or have invested in real estate. Lastly, the medicinal products and food supplements, which most employees have spent monthly, ranked third. This implies that the respondents spend on maintenance medicines or vitamins to keep an active body fit to work. Since BPO employees have health-related issues due to stress, the medicines and food supplements will help keep them working. The majority of the respondents prefer purchasing in the physical store. Hence, the top three items which the respondents were mainly purchasing in the physical store are educational services (100%), sanitary and hygiene products (100%); health care (99%) and food (98.30%), medicinal products, and food supplements (98.30%). For instance, services like education and health care should be done personally.

Additionally, sanitary and hygiene products, usually purchased in small portions, can be purchased in the store and with food supplements. Moreover, food requires physical contact and assurance of its safety to eat; thus should be done in the physical store. Henceforth, these superior or basic goods were preferably best bought or consumed in the physical store.

The data reveals that the top three superior goods mostly purchased or budgeted at less than Php 1,000 are the sanitary and hygiene products (93.5%). This implies that sanitary and hygiene products can be purchased at retail price and in small portions; it does not require more than P1 000 as per the frequency of consumption. Additionally, 83.7% of respondents, telecommunication expenses budgeted less than Php 1,000. This signifies that loading internet and mobile data need not be as expensive as above Php1,000 budgets, but it also depends on the degree of usage of this particular item since it has become somehow part of the people's routine to check on their phone from time to time. The third most budgeted at less than Php 1,000 is food. This implies that it must be tightly budgeted since food is consumed daily. Due to its superiority of consumption among others, frequency of purchase and enormous spending on this item will deplete one's financials probably.

Moreover, the top three items budgeted at Php 1,001 to Php 4,000 were educational services, water and electricity, and house rent or monthly amortization. Hence, these unique items require quite a sum of money when consumed or engaged.

Moreover, the top three superior goods were house or room rental/amortization, educational services, and inexpensive clothing. The degree to which these items were consumed depends on the frequency of purchase and the degree of the spending propensity of the respondents.

The data reveals that among the two hundred ninety-two (292) respondents, the majority (68.2%) of them spent on inexpensive clothes every week, 91.10% used cash as a mode of payment, 86.3% purchased goods from physical stores, and 76.7% percent spend on the items below Php 1,000. This implies that depending on the spending propensity of the respondents with less than Php 1,000 budgets. Further, a consumer can buy inexpensive clothes as frequently as every week since it is affordable.

Additionally, there were one hundred eighty-five (185) respondents or equivalent to 63.6% spent daily on foods item, there were two hundred ninety (290) respondents or 99.7% who usually uses cash as a mode for payment, the two hundred eighty-six (286) respondents, comprising of 98.3% purchased at physical stores, and there were two hundred seventy- seven (227) or 78% spends below Php 1,000. This data implies that food is highly essential and consumed and spent mainly daily. Moreover, the respondents' purchasing behavior towards food is factored by the degree of its necessity and allocated budget throughout the face of economic crisis (Theodoridou et al., 2019). This further implies that the respondents budgeted food expenses on how much they could afford to purchase and consume as consumers of foods. Hence, it can be said that income is the most crucial factor which shapes consumers' food purchasing behavior.

Further, among the two hundred forty-nine (249) respondents who spend on water and electricity expenses, the majority (98.8%) spends every month; at most 99.2% uses cash as payment for food, 83.1% buys at a physical store, and 38.6% had a budget of Php 1,001 to Php 4,000. Of the 238 respondents who spend on medicinal products and food supplements, 76.9% spend every month, 98.3% use cash and go to physical stores simultaneously, and 77.3% spend below Php 1,000.

Generally, superior goods are goods and services considered a necessity rather than a luxury. According to Pasinetti (2006), the demand for consumption of superior goods is, by necessity, confined to those goods that are essential to survival. This denotes that since superior goods are highly essential and mostly consumed, they should be budgeted and consumed.

Table 7 presents the data on the responses of BPO employees relating to their purchase of inferior goods or non-essential commodities.

Table 7. Purchased Decision of the Respondents on Inferior Goods

Inferior/Luxurious Goods	**Purchased**				**Rank**
	Yes		**No**		
	f	%	f	%	
Signature/ Branded Clothing	291	99.7	1	0.3	1st
Signature/Branded Shoes	284	97.3	8	2.7	2nd
Beauty Enhancement Products/Services	284	97.3	8	2.7	2nd
Fine Dining at Expensive Restaurants	281	96.2	11	3.8	3rd
Domestic Tour/Travel	276	94.5	16	5.5	4th
Signature/Branded Bags	266	91.1	26	8.9	5th
Electronic Gadgets (laptop, smart phones, tablets, etc.)	212	72.6	80	27.4	6th
Alcoholic Beverages (beers, liquors, wines, spirits)	196	67.1	96	32.9	7th
Gyms/Fitness Center Expenses	190	65.1	102	34.9	8th
Jewellery Items	166	56.8	126	43.2	9th
Bar & Clubbing Centers Entertainment	133	45.5	159	54.5	10th
Cigarette/Vape Smoking	125	42.8	167	57.2	11th
International Tour/Travel Tour & Travel	118	40.4	174	59.6	12th

**Multiple responses*

Most (99.7%) of the respondents spend on signature or branded clothing, 97.3% on signature or branded shoes, and 96.2% on fine dining at expensive restaurants. This implies that the respondents spend on these luxurious goods they enjoy. For instance, BPO employees have high spending on clothing, shoes, and other luxuries because they need to have the latest trends to look good and cope with work demands and social pressures that come with the nature of their jobs. Further, it is said that they believe these expenditures on lifestyle products help boost their self-esteem and confidence (Ganac, 2017).

Moreover, most (97.3%) of the respondents spend on beauty and enhancement services, 67.1% consume alcoholic beverages, and 42.8% consume cigarettes. For instance, the respondents spend time enhancing their appearance and spend quite a sum of money on it. The popularity of cosmetics is increasing at a faster rate where the reason may be due to the women who are becoming part of the workforce these days, and hence disposable income is increasing and improving their lifestyle (Junaid et al., 2013).

According to Nadeem 2009, what makes for the pretty faces is more spending cash the ability to exteriorize one's superior class position through brand-name clothing, expensive haircuts, and cosmetics. Additionally, there was also a higher consumption of alcoholic beverages and cigarettes among the BPO employees. With high disposable incomes at a young age, they quickly drink and smoke. Many considered smoking a quick-fix solution to their stress problems (Raja & Basin, 2014). According to Neilsen Philippines, BPO employees considered alcohol a facilitator in establishing teamwork (Ordinario, 2013).

Stearns (2006) cited that the desire to acquire luxury goods and leisure services is a primary force in modern life. Hence, luxurious goods consumption is prevalent in the BPO industry (Vaid, 2009). The respondents, as consumers, have started to improve their lifestyle and have been indulging in a luxurious way of life in this modern-day.

The data reveals that most (99.7%) of the respondents spend on signature or branded clothing, 97.3% on signature or branded shoes, and 96.2% on fine dining at expensive restaurants. This implies that the respondents spend on these luxurious goods they enjoy. For instance, BPO employees have high spending on clothing, shoes, and other luxuries because they need to have the latest trends to look good and cope with work demands and social pressures that come with the nature of their jobs. Further, it is said that they believe these expenditures on lifestyle products help boost their self-esteem and confidence (Ganac, 2017).

Table 8 presents the data of the consumption pattern of the BPO employees based on their responses on the frequency of purchase, mode of payment, mode of purchase, and budget allocation on inferior goods.

Table 8. Consumption Pattern of the Respondents on Inferior Goods

Superior or Basic Goods	Frequency of Purchase								Mode of Payment						Mode of Purchase				Range of Allocated Budget							
	Daily		Weekly		Monthly		Yearly		Cash		Credit/Debit Card		Loan		Online		Physical Store		Php1,000 and below		Php 1001.-4,000		Php 4,001-5,000		Above Php5,000	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
Signature/ Branded Clothing	4	1.4	5	1.7	114	39.2	168	57.7	213	73.2	75	25.8	3	1.0	53	18.2	238	81.8	80	27.5	92	31.6	77	26.5	42	14.4
Signature/Branded Bags	5	1.9	4	1.5	26	9.8	231	86.8	184	69.2	79	29.7	3	1.1	28	10.5	238	89.5	89	33.5	71	26.7	74	27.8	32	12.0
Signature/Branded Shoes	5	1.8	0	0.0	20	7.0	259	91.2	201	70.8	80	28.2	3	1.1	37	13.0	247	87.0	47	16.5	93	32.7	91	32.0	53	18.7
Jewelry Items	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	1.8	163	98.2	127	76.5	23	13.9	1	9.6	8	4.8	158	95.2	0	0.0	8	4.8	38	22.9	120	72.3
Fine Dining at Expensive Restaurants	0	0.0	11	3.9	146	52.0	124	44.1	268	95.4	13	0.0	0	0.0	7	2.5	274	97.5	69	24.6	98	34.9	78	27.8	36	12.8
Domestic Tour/Travel International	0	0.0	0	0.0	24	8.7	252	91.3	2	9	18	6.5	0	0.0	33	12.0	243	88.0	2	0.7	30	10.9	106	38.4	138	50.0

Tour/Travel Tour & Travel Gyms/Fitness Center Expenses									58	3.5															
Cigarette/Vape Smoking	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	118	100.0	86	72.9	32	27.1	0	0.0	80	67.8	38	32.2	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	118	100.0
Alcoholic Beverages (beers, liquors, wines, spirits)	0	0.0	4	2.1	156	82.1	30	15.8	190	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	8	4.2	182	95.8	52	27.4	106	55.8	5	2.6	27	14.2
Electronic Gadgets (laptop, smartphone tablets, etc.)	2	1.6	90	72.0	18	14.4	15	12.0	125	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	125	100.0	105	84.0	5	4.0	2	1.6	13	10.4
Bar & Clubbing Centers Entertainment	0	0.0	8	4.1	134	68.4	54	27.6	196	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	196	100.0	122	62.2	55	28.1	17	8.7	2	1.0
Beauty Enhancement Products/Services	0	0.0	0	0.0	179	84.4	33	15.6	154	72.6	58	27.4	0	0.0	10	47.2	112	52.8	24	11.3	97	45.8	70	33.0	21	9.9

The data shows that luxurious items have almost no one who makes purchases daily. This data implies that, since luxurious goods require quite a sum of money to acquire, purchases are not made daily because it will eventually increase the deficit of one’s income.

Moreover, the top luxurious items frequently purchased every week were cigarettes, which comprise 72% of the respondents who consume cigarettes. This implies that most respondents who consume cigarettes purchase packs of it weekly. Additionally, the top three items that are purchased or spent every month were electronic gadgets (84.4%), gym and fitness centers (82.1%), and alcoholic beverages (68.4%), respectively. For instance, the procurement of electronic gadgets such as mobile phones, laptops, and others, implies that they are post-paid and have monthly dues.

Furthermore, inferior goods such as jewelry, domestic travel, and international travel were the top three items usually purchased with an allocated budget of Php 5,000 and above. For instance, especially genuine ones, jewelry was usually expensive and required more than Php 5,000. Domestic travel was usually budgeted more than Php 5,000 since fares and other expenses were required. Especially, international travel which is evidently cannot be made or acquired when budgeted at only Php 5,000 and below; for one, its fare is a lot expensive when compared to domestic and also other expenses in other countries whose prices and currencies differ and thus require quite a large amount of budget.

Table 9 shows the cultural factors affecting the purchase decision of the BPO employees in Cebu City.

Table 9. Cultural Factors Affecting the Respondent's Purchase Decision

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Response Category	Interpretation
1.My religious belief affects my choice on the goods like clothing, food, education, etc. that I purchase/avail in the market	2.28	Agree	Less Influenced
2.My filipino orientation on the importance of the family lead to my decision to be generous in supporting financially my parents, siblings and other relatives that have an effect on how I allocate my incom and spending my decisions.	3.18	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
3.I choose the goods/services that I buy/avail in the market based on what I am used or accustomed to.	3.26	Strongly Agree	Highly Influenced
4.The teachings and advises of my parents/guardians and elders mold my principle of practically spending on goods that are essential and needed.	3.24	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
5.I only buy the goods and commodities that are within the affordability of my income and I avoid purchasing on credit.	3.35	Strongly Agree	Highly Influenced
Factor Average	**3.04**	**Relatively Agree**	**Moderately Influenced**

Legend: 1.0-1.74 Disagree (DA)/No Influence, 1.75-2.49 Agree (A)/Less Influenced, 2.50-3.24 Relatively Agree (RA)/Moderately Influenced, 3.25-4.0 Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Influenced

The highest weighted mean of 3.26 indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that they choose the goods and services that they buy or avail themselves in the market based on what they are used or accustomed to. Additionally, the family orientation of the respondents as Filipinos does not necessarily affect how they will allocate their income and spending decision; though they will support their family financially, it will not essentially affect their decisions. Thereby, the Filipino culture on socio-cultural orientation had moderately influenced the purchasing decisions of the BPO employees.

On the other hand, the lowest mean of 2.28 signifies that the respondents agreed that religious belief affects the respondents' choice of the goods like clothing, food, education. Hence, the religious orientation of the Millenials had less influence on their choices on essential commodities that they purchase or avail themselves in the market. This implies that religious practices do not essentially affect the purchase decision of the Millenials as to what to buy or not to buy.

The factor mean of 3.04 indicates that the cultural factor had moderately influenced the purchase decision of the employees in the BPO sector. This implies that cultural factors do not directly affect the consumption behavior of the respondents but, at the same time, essentially contribute to their purchase decision. Hence, an individual will be influenced by his family, friends, cultural environment, or society that will teach him his values and preferences, leading to his/her purchase decision and consumption behavior (Rani, 2014).

Table 10 shows the social factors affecting purchase decisions of the BPO employees in Cebu City.

Table 10. Social Factors Affecting the Respondent's Purchase Decision

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Response Category	Interpretation
1. In my household, my parents, my parents usually make decision on the commodities that will be purchase according to the budget.	2.66	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
2. I am motivated/influenced by my friends, workmates, and other people on the goods that I buy such as clothing, shoes, bags, cellular phones, etc.	2.06	Agree	Less Influenced
3. In purchase durable consumer goods such as appliances, vehicles, etc., there is usually mutual/consensus among the family members to avoid family conflict on the difference of choice and preference.	2.74	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
4. I am given a certain degree of freedom to make my own decision in buying my personal things as long my choice is reasonable.	3.24	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
5. I choose the clothes that I buy and wear that will symbolize my status and role in society.	2.68	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
Factor Average	**2.68**	**Relatively Agree**	**Moderately Influenced**

Legend: 1.0-1.74 Disagree (DA)/No Influence, 1.75-2.49 Agree (A)/Less Influenced, 2.50-3.24 Relatively Agree (RA)/Moderately Influenced, 3.25-4.0 Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Influenced

The highest weighted mean of 3.24 indicates that the respondents answered that they are given individual freedom to buy personal things as long as their choice is reasonable. This means that the respondent's reasonable decision has moderately influenced their purchase decision. The result implies that when the respondents have to make purchase decisions, they must be practical and responsible.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 2.06 signifies that the respondents agreed that they are motivated or influenced by their friends, workmates, and other people on the goods they buy, such as clothing, shoes, bags, cellular phones, and others. This result shows that the social environment of the respondents had less influence on the respondent's purchase decisions. Although friends can influence and motivate one's consumption behavior, this implies that it does not necessarily or directly affect the respondent's purchase decision.

The factor average of 2.68 indicates that the social factors had moderately influenced the purchase decision of the employees in the BPO industry. This result implies that social factors essentially affect the respondent's purchase decision since it serves as a social force that gives insight into purchasing products and services. Hence, social factors develop a purchase motivation that encourages consumers and influence their purchase decision (Prachi, n.d.).

Table 11 shows the personal factors affecting the purchase decision of the BPO employees in Cebu City.

Table 11. Personal Factors Affecting the Respondent's Purchase Decision

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Response Category	Interpretation
1.My choice of commodities like food, clothing, shoes, bags is based on what I think is fitted to my age and life cycle stage.	3.30	Strongly Agree	Highly Influenced
2.I buy the goods that are within the income level that I earned based on my occupation.	3.34	Strongly Agree	Highly Influenced
3.Job designation and nature of work affects my choice of the goods that I purhcase and consume	2.87	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
4.I choose the goods/services that I avail/buy based on my personal lifestyle.	3.21	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
5.I buy the goods based on my personal preference without the influence and persuasion of others.	2.97	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
Factor Average	**3.14**	**Relatively Agree**	**Moderately Influenced**

Legend: 1.0-1.74 Disagree (DA)/No Influence, 1.75-2.49 Agree (A)/Less Influenced, 2.50-3.24 Relatively Agree (RA)/Moderately Influenced, 3.25-4.0 Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Influenced

The highest weighted mean of 3.34 signifies that the respondents strongly agreed that they buy the goods within the income level that they earned based on their occupation. This means that the occupation or work of the respondents had highly influenced the goods that they buy. The result implies that the consumption behavior of the respondents is greatly affected by their level of income and therefore influences their purchase decision.

On the other hand, the lowest weighted mean of 2.87 indicates that the respondents agreed that job designation and nature of work affect their choice of goods they purchase and consume. This result signifies that the employee's position in the BPO industry had moderately influenced their decision on the goods they purchase since their financial capability also depends on their position in the company and their salary level. The result implies that the respondents' purchase decisions are not directly influenced by the type of job they have; since their salary is based on it, it does not necessarily determine the level of their purchasing power.

The factor average of 3.14 indicates that the personal factor had a moderate influence on the purchasing decision of the respondents. This means that the respondents' level of income and occupation are influential on the consumer buying decisions. This implies that the purchase decision of the respondents is not directly affected but essentially influences their purchase decision since their level of income determines their purchasing power. Hence, purchase decisions and consumer behavior are influenced by the characteristics of each consumer (Rani, 2014).

Table 12 shows the psychological factors affecting purchase decisions as to the level of influence based on the responses of the BPO employees in Cebu City.

Table 12. Psychological Factors Affecting the Respondent's Purchase Decision

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Response Category	Interpretation
1.I only purchase those goods that will satisfy/pacify my physiological needs.	3.13	Relatively Agree	Moderately Influenced
2.I am persuaded to by certain commodities because I am attracted to the advertisement in television, internet, etc.	2.09	Agree	Less Influenced
3.I made repeat purchase on the goods/commodities once I have good experienced on it/them.	3.36	Strongly Agree	Highly Influenced
4.My emotional, mental state, beliefs and feelings	2.87	Relatively Agree	Moderately

affects my consumption choices and purchasing decisions.			Influenced
5.I choose my clothing, bags, shoes,, electronic gadgets, vehicle based on what I would like to projects in the society as my status symbol.	2.32	Agree	Less Influenced
Factor Average	**2.75**	**Relatively Agree**	**Moderately Influenced**

Legend: 1.0-1.74 Disagree (DA)/No Influence, 1.75-2.49 Agree (A)/Less Influenced, 2.50-3.24 Relatively Agree (RA)/Moderately Influenced, 3.25-4.0 Strongly Agree (SA)/Highly Influenced

The weighted mean of 3.36 signifies that psychological factors on good experience with the products or services influence consumers to make repeat purchases. On the other hand, the weighted mean of 2.09 signifies less influence that the respondents are likely to be persuaded to purchase because they are attracted by the advertisement or promotion in television, social media, and others.

This section reveals the data on the results on the test of the significant relationship between the respondents' profile and their responses on their consumption patterns and factors affecting the purchase decision.

Table 13. Relationship between the Respondent's Demographic Profile and their Spending Pattern on Superior Goods

Variables	Computed $\chi 2$	Critical Value	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Age and Spending Pattern	9.596	12.592	0.142	0.128	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Gender and Spending Pattern	1.285	5.99	0.526	0.066	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Civil Status and Spending Pattern	0.924	9.488	0.921	0.039	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Place of Origin and Spending Pattern	22.620	26.296	0.124	0.197	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment and Spending Pattern	3.622	15.507	0.889	0.079	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Number of years living in Cebu City	2.151	12.592	0.905	0.061	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Tested at a $\leq$ 0.05 level of significance

There is no significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and their consumption or spending pattern on superior goods. This result implies that the demographic profile of the respondents does not essentially determine the consumption behavior of the respondents due to the dynamics of the respondents' economic condition and purchasing power.

Table 14. Relationship between the Respondent's Employment Profile and their Spending Pattern on Superior Goods

Variables	Computed $\chi2$	Critical Value	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Position and Spending Pattern	20.428	28.869	0.309	0.187	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Job Function and Spending Pattern	18.312	28.869	0.435	0.177	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Employment Status and Spending Pattern	7.535	9.488	0.110	0.114	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Average Monthly Income and Spending Pattern	1.301	12.592	0.972	0.047	Accept Ho	Not Significant

There is no significant relationship between the respondents' employment profile and their consumption or spending pattern on superior goods. This result implies that the employment profile of the respondents does not necessarily affect or influence their consumption behavior.

Table 15. Relationship between the Respondent's Demographic Profile and their Spending Pattern on Inferior Goods

Variables	Computed $\chi2$	Critical Value	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Age and Spending Pattern	3.103	12.592	0.796	0.073	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Gender and Spending Pattern	0.081	5.991	0.961	0.017	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Civil Status and Spending Pattern	9.110	9.488	0.058	0.125	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Place of Origin and Spending Pattern	18.997	26.296	0.269	0.180	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Educational Attainment and Spending Pattern	3.869	15.507	0.869	0.081	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Number of Years of Living In Cebu and Spending Pattern	10.739	12.592	0.097	0.136	Accept Ho	Not Significant

There is also no significant relationship between the respondents' demographic profile and their consumption or spending pattern on inferior goods. This result implies that the demographic profile of the respondents does not essentially affect their consumption pattern of luxurious goods.

Table 16. Relationship between the Respondent's Employment Profile and their Spending Pattern on Inferior Goods

Variables	Computed χ2	Critical Value	p-value	Cramer's V	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Position and Spending Pattern	13.751	28.869	0.745	0.153	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Job Function and Spending Pattern	20.106	28.869	0.327	0.186	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Employment Status and Spending Pattern	7.297	9.488	0.121	0.112	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Average Monthly Income and Spending Pattern	6.197	12.592	0.402	0.103	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Tested at a ≤ 0.05 level of significance

The is likewise an absence of significant relationship between the respondents' employment profile and their consumption or spending pattern on inferior goods. This data implies that the respondents' employment profiles do not necessarily affect their spending and consumption pattern on luxurious goods.

Table 18. Relationship between the Demographic Profile of the Respondents and Responses on the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision

Variables	Computed χ2	Critical Value	value	Cramer's v	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Age and Responses on the Factors	18.281	16.919	0.032	0.1445	**Reject Ho**	**Significant**
Gender and Responses on the Factors	1.119	7.815	0.772	0.062	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Civil Status and Responses on the Factors	10.210	12.592	0.116	0.132	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Place of Origin and Responses of the Factors	50.138	36.415	0.0014	0.239	**Reject Ho**	**Significant**
Educational Attainment and Responses of the Factors	15.827	21.026	0.199	0.134	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Number of Years of Living In Cebu City and Responses of the Factors	12.818	16.919	0.171	0.121	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Tested at a ≤ 0.05 level of significance

There is a significant relationship between the age of the BPO employees and the respondents' responses on the factors affecting their purchase decision. The data implies that the young adults' purchase decisions would differ from those mature ones since their lifestyle and expenses are more extensive and not practical.

The employees in the BPOs were mainly young adults. According to Vaid (2009), the tremendous growth of the BPO sector over the years has resulted in considerable changes in the lives of its young workforce. Aside from the attractive salaries, the attractive work environment and benefits offered by the BPO sector have motivated many young adults to seek employment in this sector. The BPO sector has opened vast career opportunities for young adults, but at the same time, employment in the sector impacts young adults' lives. With higher disposable incomes, many BPO employees have reported lifestyle changes. Indeed, among financially independent BPO employees, there has been a visible move towards consumerism (Phukhan, 2006).

Moreover, there is also a significant relationship between the place of origin of the BPO employees and the factors affecting their purchase decision. The data signifies that the purchase decision of those respondents who grew up in cities differ from those who grew up in the provinces.

Consumers tend to have higher expenses than those in the countryside or provinces in urbanized cities. Due to economic and technological development differences, values and attitudes toward consumption and purchase decisions differ between urban and rural areas (Lu Wang & Xiong Chen, 2004). In particular, the relationship between consumption behavior between urban and rural is a sociological concept that refers to the tendency to regard the beliefs, standards, and code of behavior to those found in other societies (Nadiri & Tumer, 2010).

Table 18 presents the data on the relationship between the employment profile of the BPO employees and their responses to the factors affecting the purchase decision.

Table 18. Relationship between the Employment Profile of the Respondents and Responses on the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision

Variables	Computed $\chi 2$	Critical Value	p - value	Cramer's V	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Position and Responses on the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision	29.644	40.113	0.330	0.184	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Nature of Job Function and Responses on the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision	28.479	40.113	0.387	0.180	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Employment Status and Responses on the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision	9.729	12.592	0.137	0.129	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Average Monthly Income and Responses of the Factors Affecting Purchase Decision	20.171	16.919	0.017	0.152	**Reject Ho**	**Significant**

There is a significant relationship between the average monthly income of the BPO employees and their responses to the factors affecting their purchase decision. The data implies that the purchase decision of the young those with higher income would differ from those with lesser income since higher-income earners tend to have more purchasing power.

Higher-income employees tend to have consumer confidence, which signifies that they know their current financial situation; they are likely to purchase more significant consumer goods because they feel confident about the economy's overall condition and financial future (Maverick, 2018). When income grows, consumers buy more goods; the result is an increase in significant purchases and non-essential goods (Leonard, 2018).

CONCLUSION

The BPO employees in Cebu City have enjoyed higher incomes and are believed to be driving consumption in the marketplace. On the whole, the consumption patterns of the BPO employees are determined by their consumption behavior and purchase decision factored by cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors. Moreover, the consumer buying behavior of the BPO employees is determined by their consumption pattern on expenditures in basic and luxurious goods.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers recommends the following: Application of the proposed personal budget training to symposiums and seminars discussions and use the personal finance primer as guidelines in spending the income

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TRAINING NEEDS OF GRADUATE SCHOOL FACULTY OF UNIVERSITY OF CEBU

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ABSTRACT

Faculty professional development is critical to support effective teaching, research, and service contributions. The study determined the perceived training needs of the respondents in terms of professional skills, personal and interpersonal development, and research-related skills. The descriptive–comparative research design was utilized in the study. The respondents of the study were the faculty members of the graduate school. Training related to skills in conducting research emerged as the most needed training among the study respondents. Specifically, the respondents responded that they need to be trained on publishing research papers, writing a publishable article, writing a scientific paper in quantitative and qualitative research, conducting field interviews and focus group discussion, and their analysis.

Keywords- Human resource management, training needs, Professional development, Cebu City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Faculty professional development is critical to support effective teaching, research, and service contributions. However, there are barriers to quality professional development, including time, monetary support, competing teaching and learning centers interests, and individual faculty interests (Hott, 2018). Faculty training program affects the day-to-day teaching practices among teachers significantly. Although there is no proof to establish the strong association between the individual and institutional impact of the training, the long-term effect of a training program depends mainly on contextual elements (Stes, Clement, & Van Petegem, 2007). According to Gunersel (2014), faculty development will influence the teachers' concept of teaching in various ways and facilitate a shift towards a student-centered approach to teaching, leading to active learning methods.

In the University of Cebu Graduate School, the faculty have been teaching for many years. Most of them have become administrators and have exhibited a high level of expertise in their field of specialization. However, with the advent of advanced technology and constant changes in students' learning behaviors, this group of teachers must update themselves to effectively deliver the needs of students in this generation. Hence, the researchers felt the necessity and relevance of conducting this study.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored in Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness, and Growth Needs Theory (ERG Theory). According to Alderfer (1972), there are three categories of human needs: existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. The order of importance of these needs may vary from person to person. As advanced in ERG theory, a person may retreat to lower-level needs, which are easier to satisfy if a higher-level need is not satisfied. Such a situation impacts workplace motivation. If the management recognizes such a condition at an early stage, good moves can be implemented to fulfill the frustrated needs of the employees and become able to pursue growth again.

Professional development for faculty members teaching in the various levels of the academic ladder does not differ from one another. The acquisition of professional knowledge, development of skills and techniques in teaching, development of attitude, and understanding of the ethical principles of teaching can be fulfilled through various ways (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). High-quality professional development is a central component in nearly every modern proposal for improving education. Policy-makers increasingly recognize that schools can be no better than the teachers and administrators who work within them. Learning to be proficient at something new and finding meaning in a new way of doing things requires both time and effort. Any change that holds great promise for increasing teachers' competence and enhancing student learning is likely to require extra work (Guskey, 2002). A professional development program must be well defined and specified before researchers can investigate how multiple facilitators enact it in multiple settings and what resources are needed to ensure its effectiveness (Borko, 2004).

As part of professional development, personal development is most often attended to and demonstrated through reflective activities (Avalos, 1998). As traditional models of teacher development have waned internationally, there has been a new focus on teachers as active participants in their learning encouraged through reflective practice (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). Professional development is both an intellectual and personal endeavor that requires engagement with new and differing ideas about education, trying out new activities and developing classroom practice, and emotional response as personal beliefs are challenged (Day & Sachs, 2004). Meanwhile, interpersonal skills are traits one relies on when interacting and communicating with others. It covers a variety of scenarios where communication and cooperation are essential. Teachers need strong interpersonal skills to work collaboratively with administrators, students, and parents. An empathic and patient teacher can help students learn and grow effectively in their education (Indeed Career Guide, 2019).

There is an urgent call for all higher education institutions to establish effective research capability-building programs and develop a nurturing research environment to facilitate the development and production of quality research. According to Garcia (2018), the research awareness and capability of the faculty are greatly influenced by the number of teaching loads, academic rank, and research conducted. Therefore, it is highly recommended that higher education institutions enhance the faculty's capabilities in doing research and develop incentive programs to boost faculty motivation and participation in research endeavors. Lumanlan and Leynes-Ignacio (2018) revealed that the lack of knowledge, skills, and confidence in the research was the primary reason for the faculty members' limited number of research outputs. Academic leaders and administrators should strengthen students' research capabilities by placing the most competent and knowledgeable faculty in research to enhance students' research competencies.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study determined the training needs of the University of Cebu Graduate School faculty members. Specifically, it aims to present the following: 1) profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, number of research conducted in the last five years, number of research conferences participated in the last five years and number of published researches in the last five years; 2) the respondents' training needs in terms of professional skills, personal and interpersonal development, and research-related skills.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research respondents, and treatment of data.

Research Design

In conducting this study, the descriptive-survey research design was utilized.

Descriptive research is a quantitative research methodology used to unveil in-depth knowledge on a phenomenon. Researchers from various fields of work use descriptive research to accurately define the population, market, or situation. In descriptive survey design, the research investigates more than one variable. However, when you conduct this type of research you cannot manipulate the variables present, unlike experimental research. Descriptive research can only be conducted via, Survey, Observation, and Case Study. As a researcher, you can only observe and collect valid & reliable responses, and analyze them. This research method, like market research, is, therefore, best used to understand concepts that can help you grow your business. Understanding the 'bits and pieces' of your market, target population, branding, offerings, and many more aspects in depth can strengthen and accelerate your business growth (Voxco, n.d.).

Research Environment

The study was conducted at the Graduate School of the University of Cebu, main campus, located at Sanciangko Street, Cebu City, Philippines. The university has four campuses located in strategic areas in Cebu City and Mandaue City.

Research Respondents

The respondents of the study were the faculty members of the graduate school. In this study, out of forty (40) faculty members, 27 of them responded to the survey, equivalent to 67.5%.

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made questionnaire. Part 1 of the questionnaire gathers data on the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, number of research conducted in the last five years, number of research presentations in the last five years, and number of published researches in the last five years. Part 2 of the questionnaire gathers data on the perceived training needs of the respondents in terms of professional skills, personal and interpersonal development, and research-related skills. The respondents utilized a four-category Likert-type scale: 4 for highly needed, 3 for moderately needed, 2, less needed, and 1 for not needed. Instruction on how to answer the questionnaire is indicated before each section.

Treatment of Data

After collecting, the answered questionnaires were processed and subjected to the following statistical computation: frequency count and percentage to analyze the profile, weighted mean to analyze the training needs, and One-Way Analysis of Variance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the profile of the respondents which covers age, gender, civil status, highest educational attainment, number of years in teaching, number of researches conducted in the last five years, number of research conferences participated in the last five years, and number of published researches in the last five years.

Table 1. Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
35 – 44 years old	10	37.04
45 – 54 years old	10	37.04
55 years old & above	7	25.93
Gender		
Male	17	62.96
Female	10	37.04
Civil Status		
Single	12	44.44
Married	14	51.85
Widowed	1	3.70
Educational Attainment		

Master's Degree	7	25.93
With Master's Units	1	3.70
Doctoral Degree	19	70.37
Number of Years in Teaching		
5 to 9 years	4	14.81
10 to 14 years	6	22.22
15 to 19 years	5	18.52
20 years & above	12	44.44
Number Research Conducted for the Last 5 years		
None	10	37.04
1 research	2	7.41
2 researches	9	33.33
3 researches	2	7.41
4 researches	1	3.70
5 or more researches	3	11.11
Number of Research Presentation for the Last 5 years		
None	17	62.96
1 research	4	14.81
2 researches	3	11.11
3 researches	0	0.00
4 researches	1	3.70
5 or more researches	2	7.41
Number of Published Researches for the Last 5 years		
None	16	59.26
1 research	5	18.52
2 researches	2	7.41
3 researches	0	0.00
4 researches	3	11.11
5 or more researches	1	3.70

Table 1 showed that most of the respondents were 35 – 44 years old (37.04%) and 45 – 54 (37.04%) years old. Likewise, most of the respondents are male (62.92%), married (51.85%), and doctoral degree holders (70.37%). Furthermore, 33.33% of the respondents conducted two types of research for the last five years, while 37.04% have not conducted any research within the last five years. On research presentation, 14.81% presented once in a research conference in the last five years, 11.11% presented twice in the last five years, and 62.96% never presented a research paper in the last five years. On research publication, 18.52% had published one paper in the last five years, 11.11% had published four research in the last five years. Meanwhile, 59.26% had not published any research papers in the last five years.

Table 2. Perceived Training Needs on Professional Skills

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Training Needs for Professional Skills			
A. Classroom Management			
1. Classroom discipline issues and management strategies	2.04	Less Needed	12
2. The ground rules for the teaching-learning process	2.04	Less Needed	12
3. Initiation of contract and attention with the students	2.15	Less Needed	11
4. Maintenance of an environment conducive to learning	2.30	Less Needed	9
B. Instructional Delivery			
5. Understanding of instructional services critical to the vision/mission/goals in the quest for providing	2.59	Moderately Needed	7

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
quality education			
6. Identification of effective instructional strategies	2.63	Moderately Needed	6
7. Proper usage of effective instructional strategies	2.56	Moderately Needed	8
8. Use of technology-based instructional strategies and presentation techniques	2.74	Moderately Needed	5
C. Technology Competence			
9. Development of teaching materials and tools for instruction	4.11	Highly Needed	1
10. Utilization of technology and multimedia in instruction	2.93	Moderately Needed	4
11. Appropriate hardware, software, and peripherals for the teaching and learning tasks	3.22	Moderately Needed	2
12. Basics of MS Word, MS Excel, and MS PowerPoint	2.30	Less Needed	9
13. Use of statistical software (e.g. SPSS)	3.04	Moderately Needed	3
Aggregate Mean	**2.66**	**Moderately Needed**	

On classroom management, all four indicators got a mean rating between 1.75 to 2.49 and were described as less needed. On the aspect of instruction, all four indicators got a mean rating between 2.50 to 3.24 and were described as moderately needed. Of the five aspects of technology competence, one of the indicators was rated as highly needed, three were rated as moderately needed, and one indicator was rated as less needed. This finding implies that the respondents' needs fall on technology competence. By combining all the indicators of the three aspects and ranking them accordingly, it was revealed that the top three needs of the respondents are as follows: development of teaching materials and tools for instruction got a mean rating of 4.11 and was interpreted as highly needed; appropriate hardware, software, and peripherals for the teaching and learning tasks got a mean rating of 3.22 and interpreted as moderately needed; and the use of statistical software *(e.g., SPSS)* got a mean rating of 3.04 and interpreted as moderately needed.

Table 3. Perceived Training Needs on Personal and Interpersonal Development

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
1. Stress Management	2.96	Moderately Needed	1
2. Teamwork and workplace conflict management	2.56	Moderately Needed	4
3. Time management	2.63	Moderately Needed	2
4. Financial management and budgeting	2.59	Moderately Needed	3
5. Decision-making	2.30	Less Needed	9
6. Problem-solving	2.41	Less Needed	7
7. Enhancement of positive self-image and spiritual growth	2.44	Less Needed	6
8. Increase of team spirit and positive working relationship	2.48	Less Needed	5
9. Development of assertiveness skills	2.37	Less Needed	8
Overall Mean:	2.53	Moderately Needed	

Of the nine (9) indicators on personal and interpersonal development needs, stress management was ranked number 1, got a mean rating of 2.96, and was described as moderately needed. For rank number 2, time management got a mean rating of 2.63 and was described as moderately needed. In the third rank, financial management and budgeting got a mean rating of 2.59 and were described as moderately needed. In the fourth rank, teamwork and workplace conflict management got a mean rating of 2.56 and was described as moderately needed. The rest of the indicators under this training need were rated as less needed.

Table 4. Perceived Training Needs on Research Capability Building

Indicators	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
Research Methods, Process, Application, and Techniques			
1. Identification of a good research problem	2.81	Moderately Needed	17
2. Correct research format which is most applicable to the problem	3.07	Moderately Needed	9
3. Various research design	3.15	Moderately Needed	7
4. Compliance of the accepted standards of technical writing	3.11	Moderately Needed	8
5. Usage of the primary and secondary data	3.00	Moderately Needed	10
6. Ethical standards/protocols in conducting research	3.00	Moderately Needed	10
7. Literature review	2.96	Moderately Needed	13
8. Acknowledgment of sources and authorities	2.81	Moderately Needed	17
9. Theoretical and conceptual framework	2.93	Moderately Needed	15
10. Appropriate data analysis to be used/statistical techniques to be applied	2.89	Moderately Needed	16
11. Focus group interview	3.00	Moderately Needed	10
12. Analyzing data	2.96	Moderately Needed	13
13. Collecting data	2.81	Moderately Needed	17
Research (General)			
14. Publication of Research Paper	3.52	Highly Needed	1
15. Writing a Publishable Article	3.52	Highly Needed	1
16. Research Advising and Paneling Techniques	3.19	Moderately Needed	6
17. Scientific Writing for Qualitative and Quantitative Research	3.44	Highly Needed	3
18. Conducting Field Interview and Focus Group Discussions and their Analysis	3.26	Highly Needed	4
19. Designing Action Research	3.22	Moderately Needed	5
Overall Mean:	3.09	Moderately Needed	

As shown in Table 4, four out of nineteen (191) indicators were rated as highly needed, and the rest were rated as moderately needed. The top four perceived training needed by the respondents is on publication of research paper with a mean rating of 3.53 (highly needed) and writing a publishable article with a mean rating of 3.53 (highly needed); followed by scientific writing for qualitative and qualitative research with a mean rating of 3.44 (highly needed), and conducting field interview and focus group discussion and their analysis with a mean rating of 3.26 (highly needed).

Table 5. The difference of the Perceived Training Needs of the Respondents

Variables	Mean	Description	F Stat	p-Value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Professional Skills	2.66	Moderately Needed	3.46	0.036	Reject Ho	significant
Personal & Interpersonal Development	2.53	Moderately Needed				
Research Related Skills	3.09	Moderately Needed				

As shown in Table 5, the test of the significance of the difference among the perceived training needs of the respondents yields a p-value of 0.036, which results in the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the perceived training needs of the respondents. In other words, the p-value indicates a significant difference in the perceived training needs of the respondents at a 0.05 level of significance. Using the Tukey method as a post-doc test revealed that the perceived training needs on research-related skills significantly differ from the others. It implies that the respondents' needs on this aspect are more prevalent than the other aspects.

CONCLUSION

Training related to skills in conducting research emerged as the most needed training among the study respondents. The Graduate School faculty members expressed d that they need to be trained on how to publish research papers, write a publishable article, write a scientific paper in qualitative and qualitative research, conduct field interviews and focus group discussion, and their analysis. Since research publication is highly needed in the academe to expand knowledge, faculty members need competence in writing and publishing scientific papers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In this regard, appropriate training may be considered to capacitate the faculty members, of the University of Cebu Graduate School, in writing and publishing scientific papers.

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MOBILE APPLICATION FOR ORAL COMMUNICATION

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the effectiveness of mobile application in oral communication for English 10 students at the Advance Institute of Technology (AIT). A quasi-experimental design was used with the control and experimental groups. There were forty-two (42) students who served as the research subjects. The students answered the twenty-five (25) item oral production questionnaire. The experimental group used the PRONOUNCE, a mobile pronunciation application, while the control group was taught using the lecture method. The control group had a very good performance during the pretest, while a more significant proportion of the experimental group also performed the same while there was one who performed excellently. Therefore, with today's young learners who are digital savvy, oral literary skills are best improved when English teachers apply the most utilized and enjoyed simulations for visual and auditory to enhance pronunciation skill development.

Keywords: Speech, oral communication, PRONOUNCE, mobile application, effectiveness, quasi-experimental, Cebu, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Being proficient in English is a fundamental prerequisite for people to accomplish invocation, studies, business and market, and state relations. In this age, we witness that printed materials have been supplanted with electronic devices, and the existence identified with paper, magazine, course material, and book perusing have experienced changes. Among the modernization of this era, students specifically who were born as digital-locals to the 21st century, these habits show significantly further change. One of the most significant concepts that emerged inside this setting has been mobile applications. The mobile phone and its ubiquitousness and mobility offer potential advantages in foreign language learning. First, accessibility, familiarity, and practicability of the device promise sustainable learning by allowing the learner to access learning content easily (Hsu, 2012). Also, it allows for self-paced learning, which can increase the degree of control, self-efficacy, motivation, and personally relevant learning (Oberg & Daniels, 2013).

The internet has become one of the most significant sources to give learning references to students to share and get data. Students today are considered "advanced locals," in other words, internet users who have grown up utilizing innovations. Examples are PCs, mobile phones, and the internet. In connection, E-learning is an idea that covers different applications, procedures, and learning techniques. E-learning is additionally alluded to the utilization of data and communication advancements to encourage access to web-based learning and offers a lot of devices and utilities that influence communication and acquiring new learning (Kumar, 2009).

The use of internet sources as the primary reference in getting new learning and skills has been slowly changing due to technology. In doing so, 21st-century learners have embraced the new way of acquiring skills through the combination of internet sources and mobile applications. The students' interest is enhanced through the use of technology since it stimulates one's senses. It gives freedom to students where access and updates are ubiquitous.

In doing so, the development of internet technological innovation has given the students an avenue to carry a ton of comfort to their intellectual life. Students can figure out how to adapt to such a large number of various things with the assistance of mobile applications. It helps overcome many limitations and obstacles that the face-to-face English as a foreign language (EFL) classroom confronts, such as a lack of language-use opportunities, individualized learning, feedback, and interactions (Ahn & Lee, 2015).

The researchers observed that grade 10 students have difficulty shifting their communication medium from Sinugbuanong-Bisaya to the English language. This reality has awakened the researcher's interest to direct proper research, keeping in mind the end goal of an answer to the issue. The researcher believes that the school assumes an imperative part in getting the students ready in a responsive and compelling individual from any institutions he or she assumes a massive part in. Moreover, pronunciation plays a role in the students to better bridge one's idea to the listener. Having good pronunciation can eradicate ambiguity in the communication process and better transition the topic. As a second language speaker, pronunciation is one of the many skills to be mastered to be understood and comprehended by the audience. By knowing this fact, one of the chances to have this study is to enhance the students' pronunciation as second language learners. Thus, this study determines the effectiveness of mobile applications for oral communication.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on the stages of the skill acquisition model by J.R. Anderson, which states that acquiring a skill is a function of the automaticity of operating processes. He divides the processes into three stages: the cognitive, the associative, and the autonomous. In the psychological stage, students remember a lot of realities pertinent to their abilities. He calls these actualities declarative learning. Students become familiar with these actualities on the first occasion when they play out the ability. In the affiliated stage, the associations among the components required for fruitful execution are fortified; mistakes are distinguished and dispensed with. In the independent stage, the students play out the aptitude better, more quickly, and more consequently. Students have changed over decisive information into procedural learning, which requires fewer handling limits. The procedural, not the revelatory, administers the gifted exhibition (Anderson, 1995).

Virginia Collier's language acquisition has four parts. These are: sociocultural, scholastic, cognitive, and phonetics. If one is created to disregard another, this might hinder an understudy's general development and future achievement. The scholarly, intellectual, and etymological segments must be seen as formative, and for the tyke, youthful and youthful grown-up as yet experiencing the procedure of formal tutoring. The advancement of these three parts depends basically on the synchronous improvement of the other two, through both first and second languages (Collier, 1995).

In sociocultural scholastic, the student's language acquisition is all of the surrounding social and cultural processes occurring through everyday life within the student's past, present, and future, in all contexts at home, school, community, and the broader society. In language development, linguistic processes, a second component of the model consist of the subconscious aspects of language development (an innate ability all humans possess for the acquisition of oral language), as well as the metalinguistic, conscious, formal teaching of language in school, and acquisition of the written system of language (Collier, 1995).

This includes the acquisition of the oral and written systems of the student's first and second languages across all language domains, such as phonology (the pronunciation system), vocabulary, morphology, and syntax (the grammar system), semantics (meaning), pragmatics (the context of language use), paralinguistics (nonverbal and other extralinguistic features), and discourse (formal thought patterns). To assure cognitive and academic success in a second language, a student's first language system, oral and written, must be developed to a high cognitive level at least through elementary school (Collier, 1995). The third component of the model, academic development, includes all school work in language arts, mathematics, the sciences, and social studies for each grade level. Grades K-12 and beyond. With each succeeding grade, academic work dramatically expands language vocabulary, sociolinguistic, and discourse dimensions to higher cognitive levels. Academic knowledge and conceptual development transfer from the first language to the second language; thus, it is most efficient to develop academic work through students' first language while teaching the second language during other periods of the school day through meaningful academic content.

The observational learning by Albert Bandura is central to several important issues relating to the extent to which people learn simply by watching the behavior of others and recognized three fundamental models of observational adapting to be specific: (1) a live model, which includes a genuine individual showing or showcasing a behavior; (2) a verbal instructional model, which includes depictions and clarifications of conduct; and (3) a symbolic model, which includes genuine or anecdotal characters showing practices in books, films, television programs, or online media (Bandura & Walter, 1977).

According to Stone (2017), the first condition for observational learning is attention. If a person is going to learn anything from a model, they must pay attention to it and the behavior it exhibits, and many conditions can affect the observer's attention. Thus, making motivation the most crucial aspect of observational learning.

Thus, this theory logically explains that students learn by looking and observing different illustrations and ways presented by the mobile application with the teacher's assistance. The strategy used gives accurate ways of pronouncing the given words to have a better oral context.

Hence, the cited theories are valid based on the formulation of the problem and implications of findings. With this premise, the mobile application as a teaching strategy in oral communication by the three theories cited above.

Warschauer and Healey (1998) utilized a personal computer (PC) for better learning media innovation to assist students with learning language independently.

Tan and Liu (2004) utilized a cellphone to assist the students with easing learning the articulation. There are a few highlights, for example, the revision, an intriguing user interface (UI), and the reasonable direction that causes the students to do their learning. The students need not bother with an educator to manage them. Learning the elocution utilizing a cell phone will help the students since it facilitates them to learn and rehearse the articulation all over the place and anyplace.

Woolfolk (2000) expressed that visual students are inclined toward guidance utilizing pictures while verbal students favor utilizing words in learning procurement. These are inclinations from the students' learning style where a blend of the two words and pictures from sight and sound training instruments is considered in making hypermedia conditions.

Sampath et al. (2001) reasoned that advanced innovation could be utilized to cultivate learning topics and cross-curricular themes where the general objectives of training outline the utilization of computerized innovation for instruction. The idea of learning how to learn intends to discover and apply explicit effective ways and techniques in each subject. One point is to build the students' information about learning in itself and about his or her memory. Although the idea of learning has been created since the old occasions, regardless, one does not entirely comprehend how information is procured and connected by people. Ideas like learning, abilities, and human potential speak to various endeavors to depict or clarify the procedure where people become subjects with a considerable assemblage of information.

Perez (2002) cites innovations, like the soundtrack, video, broadcast communications, and hypermedia, for instructional viability and effectiveness. These catch students' advantage, support cooperation, and continued consideration, hence, effective communication among students and instructors.

Mayer (2005) expressed that data is increasingly powerful when spoken to in words and pictures than words alone. A study demonstrated that the mind forms data utilizing two channels: visual and sound-related. The mind can suit more data when exhibited both outwardly and aurally. One can drastically upgrade understudy learning through interactive media guidance by exploiting this multimodal handling capacity.

Thornton and Houser (2005) revealed that getting data about their classes employing cell phones is significant potential use. When utilizing informational materials intended for cell phones, students assessed them decidedly, and test outcomes demonstrated that they could learn using this medium. One's examinations propose that cell phones can be compelling instruments for an expansive scope of instructive exercises.

Berk (2009) stated that computerized innovation could be seen as a learning apparatus and a method for correspondence. Inside learning circumstances, sight and sound items and online administrations can be utilized imaginatively and brilliantly.

Saran, Seferoglu, and Cagiltay (2009) expressed that students claim and now and again utilize cell phones in their lives. This study broadens the utilization of cell phones, which are now utilized for correspondence and stimulation, to instruction. This study suggests that using mobile phones in educational settings may help learners be more motivated and might make it possible to overcome the difficulties of a teacher's or parent's experience to make learners start studying. The investigation's discoveries propose that sending interactive media messages through cell phones utilizes the push part of portable innovation and supports normal examination. In this manner, the conveyance of unknown dialect jargon study materials as interactive media messages through cell phones may prompt better ways to express words.

Kim and Kwon (2012) utilized cell phone applications for English as a Secondary Language (ESL) classes. First, the more significant part of users manages short language information data, such as word records, elocutions, syntactic components, test discourse or papers, etc. In this way, a large portion of the applications present language learning of lexical level or encourage the clients with glossaries regularly, including one-sentence models or articulation sound records. The information examination of ESL applications over the aptitude territories demonstrates that most applications are structure-centered. Two overwhelming techniques are tough lingual and task (test) - based. This study demonstrates the extraordinary capability of versatile language learning and helps one to remember how quickly portable innovation changes. The successful plan and utilization of ESL versatile applications should be contemplated to propose the correct course to powerful mobile assisted language learning.

Kim (2013) stated that a large portion of the educators come up short on the capacity to adjust cell phones on showing materials or create easy-to-use-learning instruments or advanced mobile phone applications for educational purposes. In light of that, in this way, well-structured instructional devices and applications ought to be created. It is productive to stretch out to think about different aptitudes, for example, perusing, talking, and composing. At long last, rather than giving the applications by the educators, it is intriguing to perceive what sorts of applications understudies use for their learning and how it would impact English abilities.

Te (2014) expressed that advanced innovation in instruction like using mixed media devices in the classroom will enable educators to train the most intricate exercise effectively comprehended by the understudies. Thus, understudy learning is intelligent, individualized, and customized in an interactive media condition.

Bradley (2015) observed that cell phones have a bearing on instruction. Cavus (2016) expressed that the ongoing advances in innovation have improved intelligent cell phones. This has attracted the enthusiasm of scientists' studying in the field of education uniquely in showing unknown dialects. The intelligent portable application will give light to future scientists in this field. Also, the students who need to improve their pronunciation may find the intelligent portable application valuable and pleasant to utilize.

Mutqiyyah & Muhammad (2016) utilized a mobile application as a back-to-back work process, a tremendous lay-trip content situation, and it has an unmistakable direction to run the application. Students like to learn elocution through application rather than direct from the educator or site.

Gangaiamaran & Pasupathi (2017) discovered that cell phones, iPods, iPods, and PCs had improved self-managed learning. These gadgets are effective for their utilization in learning the language. Future research can incorporate how versatile applications can be considered with the point of view of self-get to learning. Students pick what they will realize, how they will learn, and choose how they will survey their learning. Through self-get to learning, the understudies can decide when and where to learn using online assets.

Fleming et al. (2000) added in their study that PC activity is very compelling in a show of procedure that cannot be seen typically or that is hard to exhibit in the homeroom or even in the research center. With these advancements, present-day educators acknowledge that it is critical to use and imbue instructive innovation in training to adapt to the detonating development of online interactive media.

The cited related studies give a conclusive idea that enhancing new skills is through incorporating innovation such as mobile phones, PC, tablets. In line with this, the results above confirm that adopting a new way of learning is beneficial in honing skills like pronunciation. Baleghizadeh & Oladrostam (2010) concluded that mobile phones could play a crucial part in improving the speaking quality of the students. Another aspect worth mentioning is an attempt to help practitioners, especially English teachers in developing countries who do not have enough opportunity to use sophisticated technologies in their classes. Another point to be considered is an effort to help those communicative-approach-oriented teachers who often face the problem of dealing with fluent but inaccurate students. Finally, this strategy could be used by teachers in large classes, where students do not get enough chances to speak, to record their voices on their mobile phones and hand in the devices to their teachers. This way, teachers would give feedback to their students and comment on their speaking problems outside the classroom.

Yang (2013) believed that stationary learning aid is transferred to mobile devices, which enable language learning to be independent of any location and time. Both PCs and mobile device applications will eventually happen simultaneously. As seen in the above examples of mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) applications, multi-functional mobile devices can contribute to a more comprehensive educational environment for language learners.

Ahn & Lee (2015) described a mobile-based English speaking application that expanded the opportunities for speaking beyond the classroom face-to-face speaking practice. The mobile application made the speaking practice more interactive, enjoyable, and motivating. The scenario-based tasks engaged the students by using contextualized language learning and offered more authentic opportunities for speaking.

Wang (2015) concluded in his study that it was evident that using mobile applications enabled learners to be actively involved in the learning process of constructing word knowledge and the review parts based on spaced encounters promoted learners' language enhancement both in pronunciation and vocabulary.

Hazaea & Alzubi (2016) stated that pedagogical uses of mobile phones make them available for unordinary language learning settings. Students are no longer confined to the traditional classroom; instead, they advantageously extended their learning thanks to mobile features; mobile online and offline dictionaries were used inside and outside the classroom for pronunciation, word meaning, parts of speech, synonyms, and others.

The cited related studies give a clinching idea of mobile applications in the teaching-learning process. This creates a significant impact on students' understanding and critical thinking skills. However, there are gaps in the body of literature, and the researcher wants to fill in these academic gaps. With this notion, the researcher wants to determine the effectiveness of pronunciation mobile application in enhancing students' oral communication among junior high school students. In doing so, the study further gives an insight in venturing on the "Mobile Application for Oral communication.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study determined the effectiveness of mobile application for oral communication, grade 10 students, Advance Institute of Technology (AIT), Lapu-Lapu City, S.Y. 2018-2019.. Specifically, this study aims to present the following: 1) pretest performances of the control and experimental groups; and 2) posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research respondents, and treatment of data.

Research Design

This study utilized a quasi-experimental method of research using mobile pronunciation application. Like a true experiment, a quasi-experimental design aims to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between an independent and dependent variable. However, unlike a true experiment, a quasi-experiment does not rely on random assignment. Instead, subjects are assigned to groups based on non-random criteria. A quasi-experimental design is helpful in situations where true experiments cannot be used for ethical or practical reasons (Thomas, 2021).

Research Environment

This study was conducted at the Advance Institute of Technology (AIT), Inc., Sangi New Road, Pajo, Lapu-Lapu City. At present, AIT offers complete basic education: Pre-School (Nursery, Kinder 1 and Kinder 2), Grade School (Grade 1 to Grade 6), Junior High School (Grade 7 to Grade 10), Senior High School (Grade 11 to 12) and College. The school has a total number of 1,326 students with 51 teachers. AIT joins academic competitions in the division, regional, and national levels and subsequently garnered numerous awards. As a result, AIT has become known in the City of Lapu-Lapu.

Research Subjects

The research subjects were forty-two (42) Grade 10 students of Advance Institute of Technology, Inc. The class was composed of 42 students and was divided equally into two groups. The two groups of subjects, control, and experimental groups, were grouped based on their age, gender, and grade 9 final English grade. All the subjects were enrolled in the same school last year. The groups of subjects had an average age of 15.143 and an average grade 9 final English grade of 84.

Research Instrument

This study utilized a researcher-made pronunciation test. Words were selected from a story entitled "A Letter to an Unborn Son" by an unknown Yugoslavian soldier. The instrument has only one part. The students read the given excerpts that contained specific vowel sounds. In order to determine the level of effectiveness of the use of pronunciation mobile applications in the English class, the researcher has asked other English faculty to validate the student's delivery. There were twenty-five (25) items in the test questionnaire. The three (3) inter- raters will accumulate the scores to seventy-five (75) as a perfect score.

Research Procedures

A letter requesting authorization to conduct this study was sent to the school registrar, junior high school coordinator, and high school principal. The endorsed correspondence was outfitted to the school head, English coordinator, and other English instructors to know about the progressing study and give substantial help to the researcher.

The teacher had a diagnostic examination about the fourteen vowel sounds. The weakest produced sounds were the focus as the study progressed before administering the pretest and posttest to the control and experimental groups. The teacher used the researcher-made questionnaire to measure the skill in identifying correct vowel sounds in pronunciation. After the above-mentioned process, the questionnaire was administered to the control and experimental groups in the same session in the afternoon, from 3:00 – 4:00 pm. The researcher, together with two English teachers, assessed the students. The one-week experimental teaching process began from January 10, 2019, to January 18, 2019. The teaching procedures and activities of the control group were performed employing the traditional method and discussion. The mobile application named PRONOUNCE was personally given to the experimental group and integrated within the students' regular English course for one week. The selected students in the experimental group had given a task to introduce the mobile pronunciation application to the students in the control groups. The words used in the teacher-made questionnaire are similar to the given mobile application. The skills emphasized in the conduct of the daily lessons were the built skills contained in the pretest and posttest questionnaires. A posttest using the same tool in the pretest was administered after one week of experimental study. The data gathered were treated for tabulation, statistical analyses, and interpretation. The result served as a basis for a proposed action plan. The integration of the mobile pronunciation application in the discussion of the experimental group included two points: point one, firming up individual learning, and point two, the actual integration of the mobile application. The experimental group was engaged in an oral production test in point one. Students produced the proper sound using their understanding of the fourteen vowel sounds with their schema on the difference of [i] from [I], [e] from [ɛ], [a] from [æ], [ɔ] from [O], [u] from [U], stressed schwa [ʌ] from unstressed schwa [Ə], and hooked stressed schwa [ɚ] from hooked unstressed schwa [ɝ].

Treatment of Data

The following statistical tools were used in the study: Frequency count, percent, and mean was used to summarize, analyze and interpret the posttest scores of the control and experimental groups. The t-test for the two independent samples was used to determine the significant differences between the control and experimental groups' pretest and posttest scores.
The t-test for paired samples for means was used to determine the significant difference between the pretest and posttest scores of the control and experimental groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents the summary of data, its interpretation, and analysis. The first section presents the entry performance of the participants in both control and experimental groups. The succeeding sections present the exit performance and analysis whether the increase is significant or not due to chance.

This section showed the performances of the two groups of subjects, control, and experimental groups, in the pretest of the oral communication. Prior to using the PRONOUNCE app, the participants were given a 25-item pretest, with each item worth three points as the perfect score. Scores were added in all the 25 items, and the table below showed their entry performances.

Table 1. Pretest Performance of the Control and Experimental Groups

Range of Scores	Control Group			Experimental Group		
	No. of Students	%	Level of Performance	No. of Students	%	Level of Performance
61-75				1	5	Excellent
46-60	13	62	Very Good	15	71	Very Good
31-45	6	29	Good	5	24	Good
16-30	2	9	Poor			
1-15						

A greater majority (62%) of the students in the control group had a very good performance on the pretest while a more significant proportion (71%) of the experimental group also performs the same while one (5%) performs excellently.

The results of pretest performances of control and experimental groups are supported by Anderson (1995), where the students have a schema of the lesson that applies real-life context situations. Also, in their learning, the teacher gives procedures on how to handle the given information.

Table 2 presents the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups.

Table 2. Posttest Performance of the Control and Experimental Groups

Range of Scores	Control Group			Experimental Group		
	No. of Students	%	Level of Performance	No. of Students	%	Level of Performance
61-75	5	24	Excellent	19	86	Excellent
46-60	12	57	Very Good	2	14	Very Good
31-45	4	19	Good			
16-30			Poor			
1-15						

The majority (57%) of the control group had a very good performance during the pretest, and a noticeable (24%) proportion performed excellently while 86% of the experimental group performed excellently and 14% had a very good performance.

Most of the students in the experimental group performed well because they were exposed to the aid of pronunciation mobile applications, where students are now engaged in new ways of acquiring and enhancing new learning. On the other hand, the students in the control group had independent learning, which is less teacher-student centered.

Perez (2002) opined that innovation in acquiring learning is one of the effective instructional viabilities. This caught students' advantage, supported cooperation, and continued consideration, leading to effective communication among students and instructors.

Hazaea and Alzubi (2016) firmly believed that it is advantageous for students to extend their learning outside the classroom through mobile applications.

This section shows the resuls of the test of significant difference between the pretest performances in the oral communication test of the control and experimental groups.

Table 3. Significant Difference between the Pretest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups

Pretest Scores	Computed t-test	p-Value	Decision of Ho	Interpretation
Control Group **Experimental Group**	-1.84	.07	Accept Ho	No significant difference

There is no significant difference in the performances of the control and experimental groups in the conducted pretest of oral communication. Thus, it was found that the pretest performances of subjects in control do not significantly differ from the pretest performances of the experimental group. Since their pretest performance does not significantly vary, the two groups are matched in terms of entry skills, and thus the quasi-experimental design – pre-post with the control group is appropriate.

The following table shows the t-test results of the pairing of the variables – pretest of the control and experimental groups, pretest and posttest of the control and experimental groups, and posttest of the control and experimental groups.

Table 4. *T* – test results of the Variable Pairing

Variables	Computed t	p-value	Decision on Ho	Interpretation
Pretest of the control and experimental groups	-1.84	$.07$	Accept	No significant difference
Pretest and posttest of the control group	-11.35	$3.63E-10$	Reject	Significant difference
Pretest and posttest of the experimental group	-16.51	$4.05E-13$	Reject	Significant difference
Posttest of the control and experimental groups	-5.80	$3.15E-06$	Reject	Significant difference

$\alpha = .05$ $df = 40$

The pretest performances of the control and experimental group do not significantly differ, as previously mentioned; it shows that the two groups are matched in terms of entry performance. This is done to check whether the matching is valid and that the design on having a control group is also applicable. In this case, it is applicable.

On the other hand, the control group's pretest and posttest performances significantly differ. So, despite not experiencing the PRONOUNCE mobile application, they could get better in the posttest. This result implies familiarity with the test.

Nevertheless, it is observed that there is a significant increase in the posttest scores of the experimental group. This result shows that the PRONOUNCE mobile application has helped improve the participant's scores in the experimental group.

Similarly, the posttest gains of the control and experimental groups significantly differ. Thus, the PRONOUNCE mobile application is effective in improving oral communication.

The results of the experimental group's pretest and posttest performances relate to the study of Mutqiyyah and Muhammad (2016), where the utilization of mobile application in the learning process creates an invitation to the students to learn and explore a teacher-centered discussion.

Also, Gangaiamaran & Pasupathi (2017) believed that using innovation such as mobile application in learning pronunciation is effective for students' utilization in learning correct pronunciation. Moreover, students can have access anytime and anywhere since smartphones are readily available. Thus, using the PRONOUNCE mobile application can impact improving the efficacy of oral communication.

This section presents the results on the test of significant difference between the posttest performances in the oral communication test of the control and experimental groups.

Table 5. Significant Difference between the Posttest Performances of the Control and Experimental Groups

Posttest Scores	Computed t-test	p-Value	Decision of Ho	Interpretation
Control Group **Experimental Group**	-5.80	-3.15E-10	Reject Ho	Significantly different

There is a significant difference between the posttest performances of the control and experimental groups. The decision of the hypotheses suggested that it should be rejected.

The significant difference of the two groups' performances would prove consistent with Yang (2013), in which he believed that stationary learning could be transferred to new innovation, the mobile application, which enables the students to have independent learning from any time and location.

Wang (2015) posits that mobile application enables the students to be actively involved in the learning process and enhances one of the English skills: pronunciation.

It is observed that there is a significant increase in the posttest scores of the experimental group. This result shows that the PRONOUNCE mobile application has helped improve the participant's scores in the experimental group.

Similarly, the posttest gains of the control and experimental groups significantly differ. Thus, this illustrates that the PRONOUNCE mobile application effectively increases the proficiency of oral communication of the students.

CONCLUSION

With today's young learners who are digital savvy, oral literary skills are best improved when English teachers use the most utilized and enjoyed simulations for visual and auditory to enhance pronunciation skill development of the learners in the basic education level.

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ASSESSMENT OF THE ALALAY PROGRAM IN BARANGAY TINAGO, CEBU CITY

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ABSTRACT

The study assessed the impact of the Assisting the Learners and Learning Activities that Yield (ALALAY)program to the learners tutored by their parents and mentored by the LGU pre-school teachers to come up with feasible and sound recommendations to improve its implementation for the betterment of the beneficiaries.

Specifically, the study draws out data into the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, number of children, occupation, and number of years as residents of BarangayTinago, Cebu City. This study utilized the descriptive design and survey method using the researcher-made questionnaire. The study used the frequency and percentage to summarize, analyze and interpret the profile of the respondents, while the weighted mean, frequency, and percentage were used to measure the level of impact of the program.

The study revealed that the ALALAY program had a moderate impact on the beneficiaries in the adopted community. There were also challenges encountered in its implementation, as the irregular conduct of the program activities. However, despite these challenges, the program achieved its goal to train parents, especially mothers, to become competent children's tutors. Thus, the ALALAY program should be continued and add more beneficiaries. Recommendations included incentives to motivate mothers to attend regularly for continuous involvement and that schedule should not conflict with the household working time of mothers.

Keywords- Community extension, teaching, learning activity, Cebu City, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

Higher education institutions are mandated to render extension service hand in hand with instruction, research, and production. This is in recognition of the vital role colleges, and universities play in developing communities, especially the underserved and the depressed. The academe is one of the main actors in the society, which could affect change by empowering the people in the community. An academic institution is socially responsible for bringing its expertise to the community, especially in teaching, research, and community extension (Gonzales, 2008). Community extension services respond not just to the needs of the community but the Vision-Mission of the University as well as the expectations to make education accessible to the poor and to pursue an excellent and socially relevant education centered on the young, poor, and the youth at risk; and promote the Filipino spirit of solidarity by upholding justice and human dignity.

Partnerships between Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and the community should be mutually beneficial. Research and technology-transfer activities by the academe should potentially improve curriculum and pedagogy. For students, extension programs help instill the value of citizenship in a manner that traditional classroom teaching cannot provide. Such engagements can also add new ideas and insights to the intellectual process and give broader meaning to the work and world of academics (Soska & Butterfield, 2013). Concomitantly, community stakeholders understand relevant issues and are empowered to make decisions to alleviate their present conditions.

The modalities of extension program delivery by HEIs vary. There are delivery methods that focus on involving students to assist local organizations and other methods that involve faculty and staff programs to address community development in the form of educational cohorts, social service, public health, and livelihood and technical training, consultations, and direct application of Research and Development output. The more common examples of extension activities are livelihood (Daquis, Flores, &Plandez, 2016), health promotions (Rocha & Soares, 2010), and literacy programs (Peprah et al., 2017).

Despite higher education community extension practices being available, there is inadequate literature on evaluating its impact or outcome. While there is no single assessment that gauges the social impact of community programs, most published studies focus on measuring the impact on student development (Wang & Rodgers, 2006).

Moreover, limited publications investigate the long-term gains and social impact of extension programs (Felicen et al., 2014). With the dearth of information on the broader social impact of higher education extension on communities and residents served, monitoring behavioral data can provide a helpful guide for extension workers in preparing cost-effective programs that would have the highest societal value.

Hence, this study is conducted to assess the impact of the Assisting the Learners and Learning Activities that Yield (ALALAY) program as spearheaded by the Graduate School of the University of Cebu Education program to its adopted community, Barangay Tinago, Cebu City, to provide a clear picture and get a view of its status on its implementation and its impact, particularly on the lives of its beneficiaries.

FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Epstein's school-family-partnership theory, which demonstrates and suggests that the stakeholders work cooperatively to influence the improvement and education of children. According to this theory, parents, schools, and society partake in a mutual awareness and commitment in instructing students (Epstein & Sheldon, 2016). Epstein alluded to this theory as an overlapping sphere of influence among the stakeholders in teaching children to make educational progress. It was added that the students are the focus behind the school, families, and community cooperating to build students' success. This theory is not intended to create effective students but rather to give them the tools to make progress independently. School and family partnerships do not 'produce' successful students. Instead, the partnership activities that include teachers, parents, and students engage, guide, energize, and motivate students to produce their success (Kumari, 2016).

This theory recommends the following: that educators offer family-like schools, families develop school-like homes, and communities support school-like opportunities and family-like services. Epstein's model encourages educators to offer family-like schools by perceiving students as people; thus, causing them to feel worthwhile. Parents and guardians should develop school-like families by perceiving the significance of school and school-related exercises while empowering their child's accomplishments. Communities should give school-like opportunities by strengthening and recognizing the endeavors and accomplishments of students. Communities likewise give family-like settings and occasions by empowering and helping families sustain their child's academic achievement. The development of the community is a dynamic process involving all segments of the locality. The critical component to this process is found in the creation and maintenance of channels of interaction and communication among diverse local groups that are otherwise directed toward their more individual interests (Kumari, 2016).

Gonzales and Maghamil (2009) noted that the extension service in the Philippines was implemented during the Spanish era, though it was organized into a national system in 1952. Israel, Harder, and Brodeur (2011) defined a community extension program as a comprehensive set of activities intended to bring about a sequence of outcomes among targeted clients. They clarify that a program is more than a single workshop or activity.

Community extension expresses a deep sense of commitment of the people involved in the academe. Academic people are more aware and more socially skilled than the other sectors in the community. The Community Extension Services (CES) is a component that conveys its commitment to service and is driven by humanitarian and Christian ideals. It provides service to people, groups, and communities inside and outside the academe. According to Martin (1984), academic people can recognize social problems and take effective steps to solve the problems. As a group, they are supposed to be trained and experienced in social criticism and thus, be able to cut through rhetoric and apologetics to the roots of problems. They are granted 'academic freedom,' enabling unfettered creative thinking and bold experimentation towards solving social problems. Finally, academics are supposed to be self-reflective and critically examine their ideas and actions.

Some community service activities are related to their environment. These programs are usually planting activities. Clean-up activities are also part of the environmental programs and the reduce, reuse, and recycling campaigns. Aside from environmental programs, helping those in need is also a big part of community services. This includes donations and feeding programs. Helping kids with school and teaching them is also part of this (Ludwig, 2009).

It is significant to look into the program's implemented characteristics and the beneficiaries of such a program. The program design or built can affect how the student will construct his experiences as well as the program's differences with other programs directed towards a similar goal of helping the community. Furthermore, community extension programs enhance various sectors of the non-academic community to deepen their concern for the needs of others and a strong desire to commit themselves to uplift the community's quality of life. In addition, this maintains harmonious relations with the community and establishes cooperative endeavors with the government and non-government groups and individuals; it helps harness community resources and share school resources to identify the needs and engage the community towards self-reliance.

Among other things, extension programs are characterized by: a focus on the needs of the target audience, the intent to affect participant learning and behavior outcomes, multiple activities that are comprehensive in nature, and the presence of a formal evaluation.

Generally, a community extension program is evaluated based on its outcome to beneficiaries and not on its impact on the implementer of the program. Determining the impact will significantly help improve the planning of a specific program. This study focuses on the Assisting the Learners and Learning Activities that Yield (ALALAY) program on the learners tutored by their parents and mentored by the LGU pre-school teachers.

Bornstein (2010) emphasized that impact assessment provides a framework for addressing community development. It is designed to assist local planners and decision-makers in understanding the impacts a particular program may have on a community.

Wilder (2014) reported that parental involvement was one of the factors affecting student achievement. The overwhelming studies indicate positive academic outcomes stemming from parental involvement with benefits beginning in early childhood throughout adolescence and beyond.

While it is highly recognized that parental involvement positively affects students' motivation and achievement, it is noted that social factors and socio-economic factors present a challenge to many parents. Those factors include increasing ethnic and cultural diversity, environment, changing values, family stress, equal rights, crime and violence, parents' level of education, occupation, income, and living conditions. All of these contribute to a dece in parental involvement (Pearce, 2006).

Jeynes (2017) found a meaningful difference in parental involvement rates between Latino pre-kindergarten and college-age children's academic achievement and school behavior. Parental involvement levels were significantly higher in upper and middle-class neighborhoods than in low-income communities.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study assessed the impact of Assisting the Learners and Learning Activities that Yield (ALALAY) program to the learners tutored by their parents and mentored by the local government unit (LGU) pre-school teachers. The findings served as the basis for recommendations to improve the program's implementation. Specifically, the study looked into the: 1) profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, number of children, occupation, and number of years as residents of the barangay; 2) impact of the ALALAY program; 3) the best things about the ALALAY program; 4) challenges encountered by the respondents while participating in the ALALAY program, and 5) the suggestions or recommendations of the respondents on how to improve the ALALAY program.

METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the research design, research environment, research respondents, and treatment of data.

Research Design

The study utilized the multi-research design using the researcher-made questionnaire to obtain data on the profile of the respondents, the impact of the ALALAY program on the adopted community, the best features of the program, and challenges encountered in its implementation, as well as the respondents' suggestions on how to improve the program.

Research Environment

The study was conducted in Barangay Tinago, the partner Barangay of the University of Cebu Graduate School. Barangay Tinago has thirteen (13) small villages (sitios) and is situated in Cebu City. It is surrounded by three barangays: San Roque, Tejero, and Parian. It has a population of 9,000 and has an annual budget of Php 5,662,960.00.

Research Respondents

Nine (9) respondents (mothers) of the study were randomly chosen.

Treatment of Data

The study used the percentage to summarize, analyze and interpret the profile of the respondents in terms of their age, gender, number of children, occupation, and number of years as residents of the barangay while the weighted mean, frequency, and percentage were used to determine the level of impact of the program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This part shows the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of data to answer the problems of the study. Table 1 shows the profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, occupation, number of children, and years of residence.

Table 1.Profile of the Respondents

Profile Indicators	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Age		
30 – 34 years old	3	38
35 – 39 years old	0	0
40 – 44 years old	3	38
45 – 50 years old	2	24
Gender		
Female	8	100
Occupation		

Housewife	8	100
No. of Children		
1 to 2	4	50
3 to 4	3	38
5 to 6	1	13
Years of Residence		
1 to 10	3	43
11 to 20	1	14
21 to 30	1	14
31 to 40	2	29

Most respondents were 30-34 and 40-44 years old. This data means that the beneficiaries of the ALALAy program were in the adulthood and midlife stages since they are already mothers.

Moreover, all of them, or 100%, were female and homemakers. The program focused on teaching the mothers to become effective tutors of their children since they have the primary responsibility of assisting their children's learning activities at home.

Further, four (4) respondents, or 50%, had 1 to 2 children. This result means that the predominant size of their family was small considering that their income is limited and living in the city is costly. Hence, they have to control the number of children.

The majority of the respondents were residents of the barangay for 1-10 years. This result further indicates that the respondents were familiar with the barangay activities since they had been part of the community for several years.

Table 2. Impact of the ALALAY Program

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
As a result of my participation in the ALALAY Program			
1. I am able to help improve my child's/children's grades in school.	3.50	Major Impact	1st
2. I am able to introduce learning to my child/children through play.	3.40	Moderate Impact	3.5th
3. I am able to enhance my child's/children's knowledge on shapes.	3.40	Moderate Impact	3.5th
4. I am able to teach my child/children basic concepts in mathematics appropriate totheir age.	3.40	Moderate Impact	3.5th
5. I learn how to teach my children how to deal with other children or with their playmates.	3.40	Moderate Impact	3.5th
6. I am able to enhance my child's/children's ability to recognize numbers and letters.	3.30	Moderate Impact	6.5th
7. I am able to help my child/children develop or become better in their communication skills.	3.30	Moderate Impact	6.5th
8. I am able to strengthen my child's/children's capability to draw.	3.20	Moderate Impact	8.5th
9. I am able to teach my child/children how to answer tricky questions after each storytellingsession.	3.20	Moderate Impact	8.5th

10. I learn how to develop the value of kindness in my child/children.	3.10	Moderate Impact	11th
11. I learn how to manage my children in such way that I will lead them to behavioral management.	3.10	Moderate Impact	11th
12. I am able to motivate my child/children to go to school on punctually and regularly.	3.10	Moderate Impact	11th
13. I am able to teach my child/children how to identify colors and objects.	3.00	Moderate Impact	14th
13.I learn how to develop my child's/children's value of being industrious.	3.00	Moderate Impact	14th
15.I improve my relationship with my child/children.	3.00	Moderate Impact	14th
19.I am able to help improve the study habits of my child/children?	2.90	Moderate Impact	16th
11.I learn how to develop the value of respect in my child/children.	2.80	Moderate Impact	18th
16.I develop my self-confidence and morale in teaching my child/children.	2.80	Moderate Impact	18th
17. I become more proactive in dealing with my child/children.	2.80	Moderate Impact	18th
18.I learn how to value the sense of responsibility.	2.50	Moderate Impact	20th
Composite Mean	3.11	Moderate Impact	10th

Table 2 shows the level of impact of the ALALAY program. The significant impact of the ALALAY program to its beneficiaries is that it can help improve the academic performance of their children, having a weighted mean of 3.50. The ALALAY program also helped them introduce learnings to their children through play, enhance their children's knowledge of shapes basic concepts in mathematics, and deal with other children or their playmates. The composite mean of 3.11 shows that the ALALAY program has an overall moderate impact on its beneficiaries.

The community recognizes the effects of the ALALAY program by stating that the said project has made significant impacts in their lives. Some students and faculty members' active participation and volunteer efforts could be assumed to be correlated with the positive feedback that the ALALAY project has received. People usually respond positively to intense action, and if the mothers see the graduate school representatives as active and enthusiastic in conducting the program, a positive result can be made.

Parents' involvement in a child's early education is consistently found to be positively associated with a child's academic performance (Hill & Craft, 2003). Specifically, children whose parents are more involved in their education have higher levels of academic performance than children whose parents are involved to a lesser degree. The influence of parent involvement on academic success has been noted among researchers and policymakers who have integrated efforts to increase parent involvement into broader educational policy initiatives.

The Best Things about the ALALAY Program

From the participants' responses, the ALALAY program helped improve the mother respondents' knowledge of how to tutor and assist their children in their school work, teaching them different teaching strategies and techniques and making effective instructional materials. Furthermore, the program provided them with insights into how to raise their children well, taught them to be more patient with their children, and enhanced their study habits.

The theoretical reasons and justification for educating and training parents in tutoring knowledge, skills, and instructional strategies go beyond matters of immediate expediency that parents want help, or that training helps to increase parents' tutoring effectiveness, to the universal notion that education and training confer benefits upon the self indirect ways and collaterally upon significant others (Schaefer, 1991). Thus, the benefits that accrue to parents due to the Parents as Tutors Program (PTP) intervention consisted of increased knowledge about tutoring, the acquisition of organizational skills, the development of tutoring expertise, and enhanced perceptions of self-worth and effectiveness. When tutored by their more competent and proficient parents, children benefit from increased motivation, learning, and achievement (Grolnick & Ryan, 1989). Therefore, it is thought that by training parents to enhance their tutoring knowledge and increase their tutoring proficiency, more constructive and productive alternative ways of interacting with their children, particularly within the context of academic tutoring, would be achieved.

Challenges Encountered while Participating in the ALALAY Program

The participants further disclosed that among the significant challenges brought about by the implementation of the ALALAY program as claimed by the respondents were: trainers did not come regularly for the extension activities and training time coincides with work at home.
Geronimo (2001) stressed that in affecting community development, many difficulties arise as these are inevitable. Therefore, teachers who get involved in this endeavor must equip themselves with knowledge, skills, attitudes, and technology and the values of being patient, understanding, and the sincere intention of sharing whatever resources they have to the constituents.

Respondents' Suggestions/Recommendations on How to Improve the ALALAY Program

As beneficiaries of the ALALAY program, the research participants suggested that the program be continued, encourage the participation of more parents, and give incentives to those who would regularly attend the program.

Deci et al. (2001) pointed out that incentives can motivate people to become interested in activities that they might not have been interested in initially and that incentives can also motivate them to continue their involvement in these activities.

CONCLUSIONS

The ALALAY Program moderately impacted the adopted community's mothers as the primary beneficiaries. The practical implementation of the program was hindered by the irregularity of the conduct of the training and the conflict of the schedule with the household activities and household chores. However, despite these challenges, the program achieved its goal to train parents to become competent home tutors to their children and become effective partners in educating their children.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Despite the positive effect of the ALALAY program, the following are the recommendations of the study: 1) exert more effort to encourage parents to participate in the ALALAY program; 2) at the end of the program, provide incentiveS to parents who have regularly attended the program; 3) observe the regular schedule of the program;
4) explore other times for the ALALAY program that will not conflict with the parents' work at home, and 5) the program should be carefully planned, organized, and systematically implemented to achieve better impact to the beneficiaries.

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