

SDRC Talking Points

Issue No. 1 | October 2015



Maiden Issue

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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



This year marks SDRC's 36th year as a research center of De La Salle University. In the last 36 years, SDRC through its directors and research fellows has pioneered social science research in the university. The Center, with the continuous support of the University, has served and partnered with different government, non-government and international organizations in providing quality research and output. Likewise, lectures, fora, roundtable discussions and other forms of research dissemination have been initiated to reach out to the academic community, including the students.

This year, alongside the review of the center's vision and mission, SDRC ventures into a medium where research output and findings can be popularized and made accessible to a bigger audience. Hence, SDRC is launching the first issue of *Talking Points*, a magazine type of paper, where SDRC researchers can share findings in a less technical manner. The articles in this issue aptly capture this year's anniversary theme, "Observing Another Year: Steps Toward Easing the Margins", and the Center's revised vision, "To be a leading social development research center in Southeast Asia for the attainment of humane, inclusive, just, and sustainable communities through the production of transformative knowledge and social policy advocacy."

The theme on inclusivity can be seen across all the different papers, looking into the experiences of different people in different contexts, mothers, children, differently abled individuals, and peri-urban persons given the climate change. Further, Dr. Exaltacion Lamberte's paper on lessons learned and insights on the 30 years of research at DLSU-SDRC enables us to walk through to the years of doing social science research in DLSU.

As we launch this maiden issue of the Center's latest publication, we hope that *Talking Points* will bring greater participation and engagement to the on-going and expanding discourse on research issues.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "mch tarroja". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

MARIA CARIDAD H. TARROJA, PhD

Director, Social Development Research Center



THREE DECADES OF RESEARCH AT DLSU-SDRC

Lessons Learned and Insights

Exaltacion Ellevera-Lamberte, PhD

Retired Professor of Sociology
and former SDRC Director



The search for quality is indispensable for a policy based on merit. But quality must be linked in a given context to relevance and to the solution of problems of the community, and assessments of quality should embrace all functions and activities of higher education. In this, the role of research is especially essential... Research must be enhanced in all disciplines as an instrument for the advancement of knowledge ... and innovation (UNESCO, 1998, p.9)



In an interview, the late Br. Andrew Gonzalez FSC, a highly renowned leader in education, scholar and educator in the country, opined that “The University (i.e.

DLSU-Manila) exists for research. The three main functions of a university are teaching, research and extension services. What is lacking in higher education in the Philippines is research...except in a few institutions, we don’t really take research very seriously. As part of policy decisions, if we are going to become a good institution of higher learning, we have to engage in research” (Excerpt from an interview of SDRC research assistant, 2003).

My tasks in this essay are: (1) to share my more than three decades of involvement as an institutionally-based researcher at SDRC; (2) to draw out lessons learned; and (3) to present some insights that will likely be useful in sustaining and in enhancing SDRC’s capacity as an Institutional Research Center at the College of Liberal Arts. I wish to dwell on this matter for certain reasons. **First**, in my mind, the sharing will give some ideas and pointers to a new generation of social science faculty researchers and graduate students on campus about the imperatives of continued engagement in research. It will stimulate them to pursue the enterprise, unmindful of the challenges and constraints emanating from internal and

external forces. **Second**, it will inculcate among the researchers the importance of an entrenched research culture on campus and the researchers’ personal choice. To be a researcher is a matter of choice-decision and not a context-decision. By this I mean the choice is based on personal volition, professional commitment, interest and passion, and not on the job satisfiers stemming from the university environment, like the need for promotion, cash or non-cash benefits accruing from doing research, recognition and others. The latter may be true at the beginning of the engagements, but this has to be transcended as the years come to be sustained. **Third** would be for the present crop of social science researchers to know and understand the efforts exerted by previous SDRC researchers as well as the champions to sustain the Center for many years. Suffice it to say that the Center is a by-product of people’s passion for research—of compassion and commitment.

The nagging questions are: What is there to learn from the three decades of SDRC research experience? What enabling factors contribute to the sustained engagements in the Center? What benefits does continued engagement offer to researchers? What more can be done to further enhance a consistent research and to do so in a sustainable manner?

Being a well-established Center on campus, SDRC has sustained its institutional life and operations for more than three decades, tracing its beginnings to as early as 1975 in a small “Center for Urban Studies.” Since the 1990s, SDRC has been designated as the institutionally recognized social science

research arm of the College of Liberal Arts. It prides itself in being the result of DLSU's long-lasting efforts toward integrating research into the University's academic system. SDRC was born at the time when DLSU started to implement and concretize its vision of making research one of the institution's primary functions. At the same time, the University also worked on its mandate to be a resource of church and nation through its research engagements along the thrusts on poverty alleviation, social development and people empowerment. The emphasis has always been people-centered and involved in people-oriented social transformation efforts.

The frequently asked question raised by my friends and colleagues/educators from other higher educational institutions both here and abroad is: What pushed you to consistently engage in research in SDRC and DLSU in general? Reflecting on this question, I also asked myself what made me stay so long at DLSU-Manila and in SDRC? My personal answer has been: My character, formation, interest and personal mission confluence with the thrusts and vision-mission of DLSU. I found joy in doing research, especially if it involved people and social development. This is perhaps brought about by my being a sociologist with particular interest in social change and development. In my college days and in the earlier years of graduate study in the early 80s (during the Marcos dictatorial regime and First Quarter



Storm years), I found myself urged to do something to address the social inequities in the country and the growing number of poor people as the years progress, simple acts as these may be. Thus, when I started working as a faculty member and researcher, my first involvement was in the area of formulating a modal social services delivery system in informal settlement areas within the neighborhood, and in the search for better ways toward a smooth transition in the lives of informal settlers who transferred to the resettlement area in the province of Cavite.

What makes research involvement easy and free from hitches is the choice and decision of DLSU's top management to transform the University into a research university. The principle is that the quality of education would be improved further through research and with the accompanying nurturance of a research culture on campus. In the beginning, the vision-mission for research as a function of the University was clearly articulated, followed by policies and strategic directions, especially when De La Salle College was transformed into

a University. This was done through the school's leaders and scholars, beginning with Br. H. Gabriel Connon, FSC, and followed by Br. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC. The strategic directions were adopted and pursued further by the succeeding Presidents of the University, from Br. Rolando Dizon to Br. Rafael Donato, Br. Armin Luistro, Br. Narciso Erguiza, Jr. and Br. Ricky Laguda, although with varying levels of emphases. Like me, the academic community shared the vision-mission—hence, engagements in research cum teaching were made possible. This paved the way for making research part of the academic culture and life on campus. With top management support, policies and systems were put in place to support the research culture. This is demonstrated in the promotion and incentive systems, making research engagements a primordial criterion.

Initially, the research enterprise seemed to have been undertaken by us in terms of improving the quality of teaching and of addressing the extension functions, rather than primarily in terms of producing knowledge, increasing publications and coming up with social and

technological innovations. The discourses of the academic community during those times were centered on forming a community of researchers with adequate knowledge and competencies in doing research, creating a research culture and ensuring research activities and initiatives in the University and in the community. Thus, the happy moments of those years involved the practice of going out of town to do strategic planning, and identify research thrusts and topics. Such gatherings were enhanced by good food and bonding activities. Meetings with funding agencies were accompanied by a nice meal in a decent restaurant—this was done especially when the project proposal submitted was approved and funds were committed by the funding organizations. Indeed, those were glorious days in research at the Center.

Incentives were articulated and these were directed toward making people do research and initially involving them in the development of classroom materials, including textbooks and laboratory manuals to attain effective teaching. Funding and its sources, though a concern, were

not a major problem for the researchers. Human capital was not a constraint, as the institution had an adequate number of faculty members who possessed expertise in their respective fields. This was made possible through pro-active recruitment by top management—no less than the University President—to entice masters and PhD holders from abroad: The US, Japan, and a few countries in Europe. Infrastructure as well as the institutional arrangements



required for research was provided, although these were not very sophisticated or complex at that time. Everyone among the full-time faculty was encouraged to engage in research or to produce publications or creative works. Everyone possessed a high level of motivation to do research and teaching at the same time. In the early years of promoting research in the University, the community was bound together by the common goal of making research and writing a way of life on campus, and of making DLSU-Manila a research university as well as an institution with a reputation of addressing society's and people's needs.

With pride, we also had a continuous flow of funds that were necessary to sustain operations. The projects mostly received grants from either external local/national or international organizations. The external funds made available to the faculty researchers and to the Center made a great difference in supporting SDRC's activities. Most of the faculty researchers at the Center, also called "Research Fellows," engaged in the activities with dynamism, not only in conducting research projects but also in searching for needed research funds. They also enjoyed professional fees and/or equivalent units in a deloading scheme, depending on the budget. This arrangement did not come without struggles. The advocacy and efforts to ensure compensation for time devoted to research were long and arduous, as these had to be negotiated with the top administration, whose general



concern was oftentimes "University funds sustainability." Negotiations resulting in a positive response to the researchers' requests were likewise challenging with the changing cycle of university leaders.

The project funds were sourced primarily through personal initiatives and efforts, although with some level of support from the Center's management. A strength common among the Center's faculty researchers was that they were well-linked with networks and organizations outside of the University. They had connections with persons as well as organizations in their specialized areas of advocacy. This was made possible because of the strong sense of collective ownership and of responsibility to ensure continuity of the Center's programs and operations. It is not surprising, therefore, that these passionate researchers have also been instrumental in putting well-developed policies, rules and norms needed for much better governance in place.

SDRC has thus been blessed with "passionate

champions of research” who headed its fully-funded research programs. Through their initiatives, these champions actively implemented research programs and personally negotiated with funding agencies to raise the funds needed for the continual implementation of their respective program’s initiatives. Among these pioneers were Rosemary Aquino, Ph.D, Robert Salazar, Ph.D, Pilar Ramos-Jimenez, Ph.D and Trinidad Osteria, Ph.D. Together with this writer, Dr. Ramos-Jimenez and Dr. Osteria contributed highly toward making SDRC visible in the field of social health and health systems. These directors and champions, however, enjoyed an administrative units-deloding scheme that made it possible to perform networking and project proposal development tasks, notwithstanding managerial responsibilities.

What are the challenges SDRC has faced? What more can be done? Like any other research center, SDRC has encountered myriad challenges, especially at this time when research grants are slowly dwindling. NGOs and private consulting firms and organizations are joining the bandwagon. In addition, the demands and the social forces that shaped the character of research in the University from the early 1980s till the end of the 1990s were different from contemporary 21st century challenges and forces. During that earlier period, what was clear was the call to meet society’s need for development in order to address poverty and social inequalities. The discourses on campus today revolve around



attaining DLSU’s vision of becoming a research university in the region. Issues involve searching for funds and identifying funding sources, reinforcing and strengthening the research capacities of the academic community, increasing publications in peer-reviewed reputable journals and scientific refereed international journals (particularly with those with high impact) and likewise increasing recognized creative outputs, discovering and trying out innovative research approaches and methods, and crossing disciplinary boundaries to address the complex problems facing individual and social life.

Interestingly, in the past as well as in the present, research endeavors rest on the shoulders of ardent researchers on campus who, in addition to doing research, take upon themselves the responsibility of finding research funds. There is a need to complete this exercise in order to address forces in the external environment. As mentioned earlier, the demands embedded in the changing concept of the quality of a university and its contemporary research engagements require rethinking the ways in which university functions are



performed. One such function is gaining recognition as a top private tertiary-level education institution in the region and in the world. In the same manner, the challenge of the declining availability of research funds from external public, private and multilateral organizations, and the changing landscapes in which research is funded, must be met head-on.

Moreover, the global forces shaping the University's role as an educational institution, together with the complex problems facing society, and the knowledge needed to appropriately address these problems, necessarily push researchers to be more creative and innovative in the search for various forms of human and social knowledge, and to ably address the challenges of the 21st century. In short, the demands of the present necessitate a new programme of action and shifts in the manner in which the University views the research enterprise on campus. This is a big challenge.

If we are to consider the 2000 Carnegie Classification, a research university is understood in terms of doctoral degrees awarded and level of research done, and not simply on the number of graduate students enrolled in the school. A research university requires more than what is considered basic or minimum research. Research is intensive and therefore involves a great degree of depth and power. SDRC may well serve to address this responsibility in the near future, especially in the recruitment of graduate students with potentials to be researchers and teachers.

Another challenge rests in creating a sustained community of researchers within the Center. Providing opportunities enhances research

interests, but this remains difficult. Some social science researchers remain satisfied with their present teaching responsibilities or, if not, feel secure with minimal research work funded by the University's Faculty Research Program. Some are content with doing research on their own, just to meet the University's requirements and to enjoy the benefits of doing research, small-scale as they are. As expected, engagement in research is a requirement for vertical movement in the provisions of the University's faculty manual. Thus, such endeavors at DLSU are highly prized and are recognized in the form of incentives, material and non-material. This organizational practice contributes to a certain extent to sustained research engagement on campus. It however brings about two possibilities: On the one hand, it is not surprising to find a faculty member who has not had any promotion despite long years of service, because of lack of research involvement or publications. On the other hand, some faculty researchers move up the ladder quickly because of their active research involvement and prolific publications. Research involvement is therefore a faculty researcher's choice.

Similar to other universities in the country, looking for funding is a common-thread challenge across research centers. It is frequently cited as a critical constraint to the research productivity of a university and to the research faculty himself/herself. This situation may be attributed to several practices and arrangements. **One**, current arrangements existing in the University constitute a primordial concern. Sourcing of funds is dependent on the individual initiative of the researcher and/or the center director. Research on campus is marked by individual market-driven arrangements. Thus,

researchers who are able to seek funding from various sources, be they internal University funds or external, can very well conduct research that matches their interest or area of specialization. A certain degree of commitment and hard work is important, including the work ethic required of researchers. Aside from being responsible for raising funds for their projects, they must find ways to have their works published, over and above all other teaching as well as school-related responsibilities. This is particularly true in cases of social science research, which involves field work as well as site visits, and in cases of projects in the sciences that require funds for equipment and laboratory materials.

Two, access to external research is primarily donor-driven. In most cases, research topics and themes are dovetailed to the thrusts and priorities of funding organizations. A remarkable fact in institutional centers like SDRC is that despite their dependency on external funding, the researchers remain independent with respect to the tenets and rigors of scientific research and publication. Ethics are observed and mechanisms for the exchange of views and scientific practices, including the review of proposals, are also in place. Outputs are subjected to peer review, unless the funding agency requires that it conduct the review itself.

Three, funds availed from external organizations are used to ensure that the project is implemented and completed; they must also support the procurement of needed infrastructure such as equipment, computers, laptops, internet access, and other digital equipment needed for conferences, round table

discussions, fora, workshops and capacity-building activities. Thus, project funds are fully used up when the project is completed and the report is submitted to the external organization concerned. Accumulating savings for the use of the center is difficult to achieve, especially when the cost of required publications is factored in. The challenge therefore is to provide time for faculty researchers to do publications without financial costs involved, particularly after the project is completed. The issue of availability of time as a constraint to increased publications—whether research articles, books or monographs—is a major hurdle to face. Faculty researchers have to contend with the fact that writing papers or producing publications is serious work and requires adequate time. Thus, if they are not given the time to write quality publications, increasing such outputs remains a problem. My idea pertinent to this matter is for the University to assign researchers with a good track record a status with commensurate units or a deloading equivalent. This is similar to the practice and scheme of other top universities in the country, where faculty with a research track are ascribed a rank of “scientist” (of course, at different levels). The giving of this status is based on merit and established track record in research and publications rather than by faculty rank. Thus, middle-level research faculty can enjoy this particular benefit. Senior vs. junior, new or old nomenclature is immaterial in the selection.

The practice of relying solely on individual initiative and hard work to solicit funds and thereby engage in research at a higher level, however, cannot continue as it is now, if the

University and SDRC are to aim for greater impact in the academic community and in the public sphere. This individual entrepreneurial practice tends to diffuse the efforts of the community of researchers. Furthermore, it is my observation that this kind of practice likely leads to self-centered, if not self-seeking/self-serving, research engagement. Such research activities are less directed and less programmed, spreading out to various areas or themes or topics. Consequently, a situation is likely to emerge wherein each one works on his or her own, without the needed alignment with institutionally-defined thrusts and programs, and without the guidance needed to produce quality work and outputs. As indicated in many research universities abroad, individually-directed and self-driven arrangements tend to bring about difficult interpersonal or professional dynamics, less meaningful and helpful competition, less transparent activities, and lack of convergence in research efforts. Research programs and projects need to be systematically coordinated and integrated for much better convergence, greater impact and much desired outside visibility as well as utility.

Social conflicts, world crises and other social forces affecting both global and local societies provide fertile ground for social science research. The lessons from the global financial crises in the Western world stemming from individual and corporate greed in the never-ending accumulation of resources, the necessity of cross-cultural understanding in promoting regional integration of Asian communities, the quest for peace and the mitigation of conflicts, the importance of due recognition of the dignity of the human being, the identity and rights of

peoples—all these affect social science research at SDRC and make it relevant, challenging and dynamic. Where funds are less, SDRC would have more opportunities to exercise creativity and imagination to undertake innovative research endeavors with a high level of intensity.

To end, it seems appropriate to quote the words of Pope John Paul II (cited by Andreas Widmer, 2011, p. 11) when he spoke of the “spirituality of work” as it relates to a sustained life and meaningful existence of SDRC:

Whatever is done for the sake of greater justice, wider fraternity and a more human ordering of social relationships counts for more than any progress in the technical fields.

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ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE in Peri-Urban Southeast Asia

Alexie E. Basileyo, Rpm
Research Associate

The city of Sta. Rosa is one of the many areas in the Philippines that experiences severe water problems. There are three climate-induced water stresses identified in this area, namely severe flooding, water pollution/contamination, and water shortage. At the same time, these problems coexist with the city's rapid demographic and socio-spatial transformation. The city of Sta. Rosa is experiencing the process called "Peri-Urbanization." It is said that Sta. Rosa has both the characteristics of being rural and urban, making it "Rurban" in nature. As a result, given the status of being named as a "Rurban" city, people, businesses and schools from NCR have started to move here. Examples are the DLSU Science and Technology Center, Ateneo de Manila University, and most recently, Miriam College. However, Dr. Antonio P. Contreras, project leader of the Philippine research team for the project "Adapting to Climate Change in Peri-Urban Southeast Asia," has a different eye on this issue. He says that

the aggressive industrialization and migration of people from nearby municipalities are unnoticed factors that could aggravate Sta. Rosa as a peri-urbanized and water-stressed area. Moreover, he adds that sluggish inter and intra policy-making between the LGU, national agencies and stakeholders could hamper services that would aid the city in dealing with future threats of climate-induced water stresses and other related problems.

The means of addressing these climate-induced water stresses and other related problems have inspired two social scientists—namely Dr. Bernadette P. Resurreccion and Dr. Edsel E. Sajor—to investigate the drivers, processes and contexts that make people in peri-urban areas vulnerable to climate-induced water stresses, as well as how the residents adapt to these stresses in socially differentiated and gendered ways. The "Adapting to Climate Change" project specifically aims to know the gendered, social,

political, economic and biophysical drivers of vulnerability of people to climate-induced water stresses in Sta. Rosa, and how they adapt to these stresses in order to better inform and address the needs for planning for climate adaptation, vulnerability and risk reduction. Second, the project aims to develop and launch a work-based professional master's program on development policy specializing on urban water, gender and climate change for development professionals in the public sector.

As a result, the DLSU special MA in Development Policy (MADePol) program now recruits students to help equip local government units to identify and analyze drivers of vulnerability to climate-induced water stresses and to plan more systematic ways of addressing these in Sta. Rosa. At present, there are nine scholars from different municipalities all over the Philippines who are enrolled in the program. One of them is Ms. Gina B. Madin, the “Adapting to Climate Change” project’s embedded scholar and focal person in the city of Sta. Rosa. She serves as Sta. Rosa’s current planning officer. Ms. Madin has been actively involved in the project’s research activities since its inception in 2012. She says that through the MADePol program, the



“Adapting to Climate Change” project has given her the opportunity to hone her professional skills. Since the project is in its last and final phase, scholars are now in the thought process of crafting individual project papers that will address related climate adaptation issues in their respective local government units. The project’s third objective will be fulfilled upon graduation of the scholars.

The MADePol program would not have been possible without the help of Mr. Allen Surla, CLA's Director for External Affairs; Dr. Ador Torneo, the Graduate Studies Coordinator for the Political Science Department; and Dr. Contreras, who also framed and designed the program.



Photo Credits: Stepping Stone Learning Resource and Therapy Center

FROM EXCEPTIONALITY TO EXCEPTIONAL: Working with the Differently Abled Toward Wellness and Wealth

Roberto E. Javier Jr., PhD.
Project Director

David's Salon, the hair and beauty specialist found in hundreds of branches all over the country, is a familiar sight to many who frequent shopping malls. Its website states that "total customer satisfaction" is the company's goal. This it provides by pampering clients with quality service and professional care—gestures that are now performed, through recent organizational partnerships, with the assistance of persons who are differently abled.

Every day, 300 towels are sent to Stepping Stone, a school that provides education for people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), DS, and William Syndrome, a cousin of Down Syndrome. Students at the school learn to pick up soiled towels, wash and press them, and then make a delivery to the David's Salon main office in Makati. Because not too many private companies are willing to employ such individuals—fear that they may cause harm, and thus become liabilities, is common—there remains a need to bring the differently abled into the workplace, where they can function in a proper environment, and gain access to wider opportunities.

Ways of addressing this need are the focus of the book *From Exceptionality to Exceptional: Inclusion of Differently Abled Persons in the Workplace*, which was developed from a study about autism and other persons with intellectual disability and their inclusion in the workplace. Conducted by a team of researchers from the DLSU-Social Development Research Center led by the book's authors Roberto E. Javier, Jr., Feorillo Petronilo A. Demeterio III, Raymund B. Habaradas, Melvin A. Jabar, and Ron R. Resurreccion, the study investigated not just the "what" and "why" of non-exclusion, but more so the "how" through which inclusion translates these persons' exceptionality into productivity. The team of specialists from different disciplines—psychology, business, behavioral sciences, and policy studies—constructed evidence to explain that moving differently abled persons from the margins of society brings about both wellness and wealth.

From Exceptionality to Exceptional expounds on the ideas of Unilab Foundation Executive Director Rhodora Palomar-Fresnedi, who

advocates for the inclusion of persons with exceptionality in doing good business through sound human resource management. She believes that institutions must adjust, and must keep making adjustments—a task that requires positive managerial skills and competence beyond the ordinary. Managers, she emphasizes, must ensure a conducive environment for the adoption of differently abled workers. The *Exceptionality* study team realized immediately that this is what is known in the University as *continuing learning*, and is what it should really be all about.

With regard to collaborating with Unilab Foundation and its partners and with the parents of the research study's participants, Dr. Javier feels that the book is borne out of *bayanihan*, the Filipino concept for teamwork. He points out that *bayanihan* is a value that the Foundation adopts and adheres to, particularly as a mover for inclusion. In the same spirit, the research team and its partners conducted the research and discovered that health promotion also needs to address social exclusion in the workplace. Everyone involved in this undertaking has been bound by a common purpose to understand human exceptionality in the workplace; the SDRC team thus pursued the research despite the difficult task of finding a sample for the study.

Ang bayanihan, stresses Dr. Javier, ay sama-samang pagkilos para ibahin ang kundisyon, lokasyon, at sitwasyon para mas mabuti,



maayos, at maganda. It involves working together not merely for the purpose of changing, but more importantly of innovating, the workplace for inclusion; and for acquiring a more adaptive set of behaviors that are required in an increasingly diverse society. The book presents key findings in the study that can be used as bases for business development, or a model for the design of a human resource program promoting productivity and health in the workplace. Such a model is premised on what are called the HOPE factors: H for Human qualities or attributes, O for Organizational or facilitative mechanisms (in terms of policy, structures, design), P for Processes (HR procedures and practices), and E for Environmental factors (stakeholders' support, i.e. parents' involvement, special schools training provisions, advocacies).

The book also presents lessons learned from similar case studies contributed by SDRC colleagues and those from Ateneo de Manila University, particularly from the Fr. Jaime Bulatao Psychological Services Center. Dr. Ron Resurreccion, for example, discovered the



(high functioning autism) are complex individuals that lead complicated lives, not because they have a disorder but because they are, first and foremost, persons with different kinds of minds.”

In addition, the team learned from the review of literature that high income countries’ businesses and industries have gainfully employed persons with exceptionality. They have been able to turn these individuals’ raw talents, and the differentness of their abilities, into exceptional work performances and economic

outcomes. Moreover, they have pursued the development of the differently abled’s human potential through work engagement. Local businesses and industries can thus draw lessons from these models for the inception of inclusion in our work organizations.

following from persons with ASD through their parents: If you want something, keep asking for it; if what you do makes you happy, keep doing it; if you don’t know where to go, just spin, stop and move forward; if you appreciate something, clap till your hands hurt; if people stare at you, let them have a second look, so they can judge accurately; and if a person can’t say “I love you,” it doesn’t mean he doesn’t. Love is better shown than said.

As the spirit of *bayanihan* was traditionally seen in the practice of literally moving houses, so too should Filipinos work together in moving those who have been kept in the margins to inclusive workplaces and living communities. The DLSU-SDRC book has helped to break down the stereotypes of working with the differently abled. Now it is time to enable companies to see the benefits of hiring these exceptional individuals.

Through his literature review, Mr. Mark Velasco learned why persons with ASD should be recruited to work in businesses. These individuals have attributes that are sought in the screening and selection of job applicants: They do not cheat, steal, or lie. Such characteristics are also possessed by persons with Down’s. These persons with exceptionality are honest because they take anything as being matter-of-fact. As Isabel Melgar writes at the end of her contribution to the book, “Persons with HFA

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From Exceptionality to Exceptional: Inclusion of Differently Abled Persons in the Workplace is published by the DLSU Publishing House in partnership with Unilab Foundation, Inc.

Fieldwork in Laguna, February 2015
(PSPi Project)

Services Offered

- Nipaginivasaak
- Condom
- Pap Smear
- Pre-Natal Check Up
- Pills
- Pregnancy Test
- Post-Natal Check Up
- Injectable
- Ear Piercing
- Ligation Referral
- IUD Insertion

M. C. V. MIDWIFERY SERVICES

MA. CRISTINA V. BANGAJON Member #2
Registered Midwife **BlueStar**



MOTIVATING MOTHERS, PERSUADING SPOUSES AND EMPOWERING MIDWIVES IN TASK SHARING

Leah Carissa A. Yogyog, MA
Research Associate

They arrived in groups—girls mostly claiming to be between 18-25 years old—at a clinic somewhere in a municipality of Nagcarlan in the Province of Laguna. This was where the Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital (DJFMH), our study partner, was supervising a Midwives practicum on Progestin Subdermal Implant Insertions. We later sought the girls' spouses/partners at their various places of work: one was a tricycle driver, another was a barbecue vendor, and another a *pahinante* or loading assistant (for construction materials). Most worked in the municipality of Calamba. Among the girls, there was evidently some awareness that they were adopting birth spacing—resulting perhaps from financial and birthing trauma—and thus opted to have contraceptive implants. Their respective spouses, on the other hand, while very much mindful of their responsibility to provide for their respective families, seemed to be left in a quandary by the team's research questions

regarding the kinds of contraceptives they used, their decision for their wives to acquire the implant, and maybe even thoughts they had about family planning. These differences in perspective left the team pondering on the study respondents' future: We could not help but feel certain empathy for them.

Meanwhile, a Focus Group Discussion held with the Provincial Health Office (PHO) of Rizal in line with our study, “Developing Competencies of Middle Level Health Workers and Maximizing Their Roles in Task Sharing in the Philippines,” revealed a rise in maternal deaths from 22 in 2013 to 29 in 2014. The discussion also touched on certain issues involved in the PHO's delivery of Family Planning Services to its constituents, such as the proximity of FP facilities, supplies, financial requirements, and the constant need to find innovative ways to sustain the campaign for Family Planning.

However, a caveat remains in ensuring the wide reach of these health services—particularly Family Planning services—to these constituents. Successive paradigm shifts, the byproduct of a prevalent social revolution, have however led to a successful and continuing partnership between academe and the private sector. The Middle Level Health Workers study involves one such partnership. Following a project it implemented entitled “Making the Choice Available: Task-Sharing Contraceptive Implants,” Population Services Pilipinas

Incorporated (PSPI), a non-profit organization that has been in the forefront of family planning, maternal care and reproductive health services invariably concentrated on the marginalized sectors of the country, tapped the services of the Social Development Research Center of De La Salle University for an action research study. Upon signing a Memorandum of Agreement on January 12, 2015, their current study seeks to determine if midwives could be competent providers of contraceptive implants is being pursued.

It was after Cory's EDSA that small non-government organizations (NGOs), private entities and the academe launched a new kind of revolution, which aimed to be responsive to



the needs of a nascent democracy. One of these NGOs is PSPI. Heeding the call of the Department of Health (DOH) to attain the Millennium Development Goal on Health, the organization hopes that the Middle Level Health Workers study will serve as a validation of the potential role midwives may assume in task sharing, and will reinforce government policy through this advocacy.

Complimentary to this is DLSU-SDRC, a research institution that views its role as being a bridge between the academic community and society. In doing so, it can create and enable a more interactive dialogue between two spheres in order to facilitate the transference of ideas,

plans and programs that could provide resolutions to society's dilemma.

Critical to the research study is the clinical training aspect, which is being managed by the DJFMH. The Family Planning Department of the Hospital in particular, has been tapped to gauge the midwives' competency. The research team finds Fabella's participation in the study timely, as it has also been working in support of the MDGs by focusing on the reduction of maternal deaths and on providing universal access to reproductive health services (5th MDG Progress Report, 2014), thus boosting its ongoing Family Planning Program and services.

Headed by Dr. Marlon DL Era as Project Director, the research team is composed of Dr. Robert E. Javier, Jr. Prof. Cristina A. Rodriguez, and researchers Annabelle B. Bonje, Leah Carissa A. Yogyog, Gelivic Bacalso and Karl Valdoria. They are looking into both the qualifications of 100 selected midwives, and the perception of clients and clients' spouses of the service they render.

In addition, the Focus Group Discussion with stakeholders is expected to produce another round of data, which will be subject to analysis and supplemental findings to the study. The approaches of the different disciplines in which the research team members specialize— Behavioral Sciences, Psychology, Demography, Development Studies and Communications—will help to provide a clear interpretation of

the data. The challenge lies in the task of accomplishing the research study and turning the data into reality.

The 100 midwives targeted for the study properly represent both the Private and Public sectors. The tripartite partnership study hopes to contribute to the improvement of existing and future policies that will empower middle level health workers, especially the midwives, in the Philippines.

“We thank the Population Services Pilipinas Incorporated (PSPPI) for choosing us to undertake this research study,” says Dr. Era. He adds that “The service being provided by the DLSU-SDRC to the study endeavor only affirms its role in the continuing process of an evolving democracy, a bridge between the academic community and society, translating these into viable plans of action- thereby, addressing the pressing needs of the country.”



FIRST THINGS FIRST: Parenting, Protecting, and Caring for the Children in 3 Cities in the NCR

Ma. Araceli B. Alcalá, MA
Co-Investigator

Teacher Anna is cleaning up her classroom at the end of a long day. She has just finished teaching three batches of Kindergarteners and is already thinking of the lessons she needs to teach the next day. She wonders about her student who has not come to school for three days, because his parents have been fighting non-stop. Previously, this child has also come to school with a bruise on his arm, and when asked about it, the child said that his mother gave him a whipping.

While cleaning up, Teacher Anna plans how to modify her lessons for her one student who is larger than her other children, but much slower to learn new things; he has language delays and tends to get into all sorts of behavior and social problems with peers. She recalls some parents of her other students objecting too to having this child mixed in with their children, and want him excluded. *“Baka mahawa ang anak namin sa ugali niya”* is their frequent complaint.

All these concerns challenge Teacher Anna's skills as a seasoned educator in Parañaque, with 25 years of experience tucked under her belt. *“Pasalamat talaga ako sa mga training ng Save the Children,”* she says, *“kasi ang dami kong natututunan, lalo na sa pag handle ng mga bata, lalo na yung mga 'special'.”* She admits however that she still faces many challenges, not just in teaching: She laughingly refers to herself as a teacher, counselor, social worker, and law enforcer, all rolled into one.

Teacher Anna's experience reflects the challenge that most others like her face in educating young children, where there seems to be a dire need for those who are well-trained and equipped to teach in an inclusive classroom. Likewise, issues surrounding child protection and parental relationships are part of her daily experience in working with very young children.

Various Philippine laws currently exist that pertain to early childhood care and development, child protection, and inclusive education for children with disability (CWD). It is not certain to what extent, though, stakeholders in the communities—parents, teachers, local government units, and the children themselves—demonstrate awareness of these laws, much less harbor the attitudes and perceptions that would make the implementation of these laws a reality.

Recently, Save the Children (STC) enlisted the help of the Social Development Research Center (SDRC) in answering these questions. To beef up the programs of STC for children in their communities in Parañaque, Taguig, and Pateros, the NGO worked hand-in-hand with SDRC starting in November 2014 to create a baseline of the status of awareness of ECCD and Child Protection policies and measures in the community. Likewise, in recognizing the need for adequate parenting in ensuring the welfare and wellbeing of children, a survey of the common parenting styles employed was conducted as well.

The goals of the research, led by SDRC Director, Maria Caridad Tarroja, PhD, were multifaceted, reflecting the vision of STC to ensure that children's rights toward survival, protection, development, and participation are attained: (1) to find out if stakeholders in the community were aware of existing ECCD laws and policies, (2) to

determine the perceptions and attitudes about CWD as well as child protection policies that are enforced in the community, and finally (3) to identify the parenting and disciplining styles that are predominant in the chosen barangays from these three cities.

Key informant interviews and focus group discussions were conducted with targeted audiences such as the city social workers from each locale, head teachers, representative members of the barangay council for the protection of children, and members of the Council for the Welfare of Children. Likewise, focus group discussions were conducted with teachers and parents of typically developing children and CWDs. The research team of SDRC further conducted surveys among stakeholders in the community, with a total of 590 parents and 655 elementary-aged children (Grades 2 to 5) participating. A unique feature of the study was the attempt to gather information from a sample of very young children aged 3 to 5 years old. Twenty (20) children who were currently enrolled in selected day care centers at the time



of the study were individually interviewed, using screening strategies adapted and developed by the team.

The results from the baseline study were quite interesting. Majority of the elementary aged children surveyed expressed positive attitudes. This means that many of them would be willing to assist, be friends, and play with CWDs. This inclusive attitude was even more apparent in girls compared to boys. On the other hand, younger children held more negative and less inclusive attitudes toward CWDs, possibly due to their limited experience in dealing with CWDs. Moreover, the concept of “disability” may still be too abstract for them to understand at this point, even when relevant terms were concretized during the study (e.g., “*pipi*”, “*bulag*”, “*nasa wheelchair*,” with accompanying pictures provided for them).

Similar to Teacher Anna's experience, the SDRC study showed that while parents generally have positive views of CWDs, when it came to having their children become part of inclusive classrooms, they had more mixed feelings. This is because a large number of the parents were on the fence about the capacity of CWDs (especially those with behavioral and emotional problems) to manage their own feelings and behaviors. During the FGDs, the parents also expressed wariness of their children being mixed with those who have behavior and emotional problems (as opposed to those who simply had physical

handicaps). Everyone believes that CWDs have equal rights to education and protection, but inclusive education remains a challenge not only because of the mixed attitudes of some, but also because teachers do not feel equipped to handle the needs of these children.

The implementation of early childhood care and development programs such as enhancing teacher training and provision of materials in the classroom tend to get bogged down with the delayed release of funds allotted for this purpose. Program monitoring and evaluation is also limited. Services such as free dental and



medical checkups in the barangay are frequently availed of by families living in the communities, although respondents from the different cities also report varying levels of satisfaction with the quality of services they are getting. Likewise, awareness of child protection laws and policies varied among different stakeholders in the community. Generally, people understand that child protection means protection of children from various forms of abuse. Social workers are obviously more knowledgeable about the different issues on child protection in the community; teachers are most aware of bullying as a salient issue in schools, often citing anti-bullying campaigns as a clear example of a child protection activity. While the three cities have their own mechanisms for child protection, all issues pertaining to abuse are initially dealt with at the barangay level. All respondents recognize the need to have good coordination among the DSWD, police, barangay, and families.

In a similar manner, parents recognize the importance of making the environment safe for their children. Many respondents report that they use an authoritative (similar to democratic, where there is a mix of just the right amount of structure and freedom meted to the children) parenting style, which is most ideal. However, some do admit to resorting to corporal punishment, and thus also include it in their repertoire of parenting behaviors, along with making sure that they have good connections with their children.

Just like Teacher Anna, various stakeholders clamor for more training and assistance in order to be able to perform their duties in the community. Despite their busy schedules,

parents admit that there is a need to be taught different and effective ways of disciplining their children. Teachers want to have continuing education about the different ways to manage children, to effectively teach those with special needs, and also to make sure they do not burn out in the process. As such, various recommendations were provided by the SDRC team, stemming from the findings: these included strategies for enhancing advocacy in inclusive education and child protection, training and capacity building activities, monitoring and evaluation activities, as well as coordination, resource management and prevention activities.

The baselining study has proven to be a valuable resource for STC because no program of development, regardless of how comprehensive it is, can be effective without a basis for beginning. SDRC hopes to be able to witness the progress in these three cities, for the mid- and end-line monitoring of programs that may be offshoots of this present study.

The project team is composed of Dr. Maria Caridad H. Tarroja, Project Director; Ms. Araceli B. Alcala, Co-Investigator; Ms. Marie Rose H. Morales, Research Associate; and Ms. Agnes Villegas, Research Assistant. The team would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Ms. Rigil Kate B. Leyva, Monitoring and Evaluation Officer-Early Childhood Care and Development-IKEA Project, Save the Children.

SDRC Current Research Projects

- 1. Qualitative Analysis on the Feasibility of a Universal Social Pension in the Philippines**
- Dr. Roberto E. Javier, Jr. / HelpAge International and Coalition of Services of the Elderly (COSE)
- 2. Development/Adaptation and Pilot Testing of Culturally Appropriate Content (SMS based text messages) that will be Utilized to Implement the mCessation Intervention in the Philippines**
- Dr. Maria Caridad H. Tarroja / World Health Organization (WHO)
- 3. Baseline Study and Formative Assessment of Holcim Philippines' Fostering A Child's Education (FACE) Project**
- Dr. Melvin A. Jabar / Holcim Philippines, Inc
- 4. Improving HIV Programme Access and Programme Coverage for Key Populations in the Philippines: Geographical and Programmatic Mapping Study in Quezon City, Philippines**
- Dr. Maria Caridad H. Tarroja / Family Planning Organization of the Philippines, Inc. (FPOP)
- 5. How DOH and Other Interventions Close the Gap in Health Outcome Disparities among LGUs**
- Dr. Romeo B. Lee / Delegation of the European Union to the Philippines
- 6. Developing Competencies of Middle Level Health Workers and Maximizing their Roles in Task-Sharing in the Philippines**
- Dr. Marlon DL. Era / Population Services Pilipinas, Inc. (PSPI)
- 7. Communication Analysis of Maternal and Neonatal Health with Emphasis on the Role of Community Health Teams in Facilitating the Adoption of Positive Behaviors in the Context of Conflict and Rapid Urbanization in Selected LGUs in Mindanao and Quezon City**
- Prof. Ma. Angeles G. Lapeña / United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
- 8. Reclaiming Filipino Indigenous Culture through Teaching and Learning**
- Dr. Hazel T. Biana / United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA)
- 9. Yolanda Aftermath: Disaster Risk Reduction Responses, Needs, Optimism and Sentiments of Economically Disadvantaged Families in Leyte**
- Dr. Exaltacion E. Lamberte / Philippine Council for Health Research and Development- Department of Science and Technology (PCHRD-DOST) /SDRC In-House Research Fund
- 10. Whose Health, Whose Vulnerability: A Stakeholder Approach in Assessing Health-Related Vulnerability and Adaptation in the Philippines**
- Dr. Dennis S. Erasga / The Oscar M. Lopez Center
- 11. Women with Disability taking Action on REproductive and sexual health (W-DARE)**
- Dr. Jesusa M. Marco / Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (formerly AusAID) through Nossal Institute for Global Health-The University of Melbourne and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- 12. Conservation Agriculture for Food Security in Cambodia and the Philippines**
- Dr. Ma. Elena Chiong-Javier / USAID through Virginia Polytechnic Institute and the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University
- 13. Adapting to Climate Change in Peri-Urban Southeast Asia**
- Dr. Antonio P. Contreras / Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand / IDRC Canada

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Cover Photo by: Cathy Domingo

Community Visit / Exposure
for the project Reclaiming Filipino Indigenous Culture
through Teaching and Learning (Funded by UBCHEA)

