



Adolescent Identity in the Context of the Filipino Family

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Adolescence is when youth begin to contemplate about who they are, what they want to be, what values should guide their lives, and how they relate to people. During this developmental period, they undertake the developmental task of identity formation in order to understand themselves and their relation to others. Erikson (1963, 1968) maintained that identity provides an individual with a sense of continuity, a framework for organizing and integrating diverse experiences and influences, and a sense of direction. Through commitments to particular directions and a system of values, identity achievement, as opposed to identity confusion, will allow the individual to explore and achieve intimacy with others in adulthood.

Adolescent identity development is traditionally studied and understood in terms of the process of resolving an identity crisis and achieving identity commitments to specific goals, values, and beliefs (Erikson, 1968; Marcia, 1980). However, it is also important to identify and understand the influences and the contexts of the adolescent's identity formation. Family relationships and processes have been studied in relation to the identity exploration of adolescents (e.g., Grotevant & Cooper, 1986). An emerging theme in the study of adolescent identity development is person-context interactions, with an acknowledgement that parents continue to be a major source of socialization for adolescents (Beyers & Cok, 2008; Schachter & Ventura, 2008). This paper seeks to investigate the identity of Filipino adolescents in relation to the family.

Socialization of Adolescents

Among Filipino adolescents, the family is the major agent of socialization (Medina, 2001) as it shapes the adolescents' personality, values and attitudes (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez & Billedo, 2003; Natividad, Puyat, Page & Castro, 2004). The socialization of gender roles and values remains traditional and family-oriented (Cruz, Laguna & Raymundo, 2002; Liwag, de la Cruz & Macapagal, 1998). Children are raised

differently within the family; sons and daughters are assigned different roles and carry out different parental expectations. For example, daughters assist their mothers in household chores and in caring for their younger siblings, whereas sons are expected to help out in tasks that require physical strength such as farming, or carrying heavy buckets of water into the house (Liwag, de la Cruz & Macapagal, 1998).

The most important values adolescents claim to have learned from the family are trust in God, obedience to parents, success, honesty and justice, and harmonious relationships (Porio, Lynch, & Hollnsteiner, 1975). These values are consistent over time, with a few variations such as education, achievement, spirituality, and other virtues (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez, & Billedo, 2003). Adolescents continue to value the family, and other family-oriented values such as family solidarity, warm relationships, and the willingness to make sacrifices for the good of the family (Go, 1994). Consistent with the value ascribed by the family to education, the youth aspire to attain a high level of education for the purpose of financial security for themselves and their family (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez & Billedo, 2003; Medina, 2001).

The family is also a source of positive feelings among adolescents. They enjoy spending time with the family (Go, 1994; Salesian Society of Don Bosco, 2002). Apart from friends, the family is cited as the adolescents' primary source of life satisfaction and well-being (Ramos, 2005; Cristobal, Matibag, Ting & Resurreccion, 2007). Adolescents who experience warm relationships and open communication with their parents tend to show higher levels of both internal resources and well-being (Ben-Zur, 2003).

Changes in the Filipino Family Structure

Although the family remains central in the adolescent's life, the nuclear family structure may no longer be providing the adequate socialization and guidance needed by adolescents (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez, &

Billedo, 2003). Due to the changing family structure, the number of adolescents being raised in a single parent household is rising. Only 84% of adolescents have been raised under an intact family structure, whereas 16% have been under alternative set-ups (Cruz, Laguna, & Raymundo, 2002). This phenomenon of changing family structure and relationships in the last few decades is due to single parenting, marital separation, and the increase in overseas employment of Filipinos (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez & Billedo, 2003; Medina, 1995).

Generally, the absence of a parent in the household adversely affects the development of adolescents (Barrameda, 1989). To validate their social and emotional needs and interests, the adolescents tend to rely too much on their peers (Fulgini & Eccles, 1993). They try to find answers and solutions from their friends in dealing with adolescent concerns as well as problems within the family, such as lack of knowledge and embarrassment over certain topics of discussion, physical absence, psychological distance, and strong needs of control (Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez & Billedo, 2003). This widening gap between parents and adolescents is also observed in non-Asian countries where the perceived quality of the parent-child relationship tends to decline by mid-adolescence (McGue, Elkins, Walden, & Iacano, 2005). Adolescents perceive greater parent-child conflict, less parental involvement in their lives, and less positive regard for their parents. Furthermore, their need for autonomy sometimes leads them to explore risky behaviors (Cruz, Laguna, & Raymundo, 2002).

Positive Development of Adolescents

Although the changing family structure is a bleak reality to contend with, there are positive aspects and capacities of the adolescents that can help them to respond adaptively to challenges within the family and the larger environment. Filipino adolescents are able to cope with the strong, adequate support of an adjusted single parent and surrogate parents (Barrameda, 1989). Those with absent fathers were able to develop their

social skills (Du-Lagrosa, 1986). Their strength and resilience have been noted despite the social and emotional concerns they experience in the absence of a parent due to overseas labor migration (Carandang & Lee-Chua, 2008). Without trivializing the valid concerns and potential difficulties encountered in adolescent development, this study adopts the lens of positive youth development to explore adolescent identity in the family context, with the backdrop of broader societal concerns that affect the family. The aim of positive psychology is to study “the positive features that make life worth living” (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As such, the healthy and positive development of adolescents and the positive aspects of family relationships that contribute to identity formation are given emphasis here.

For positive youth development, Larson (2000) emphasizes the importance of the development of “initiative” because initiative is the “ability to be motivated from within to direct attention and effort towards a challenging goal”; such initiative is required for the development of other positive qualities such as “creativity, leadership, altruism, and civic engagement” (p. 170). Another aspect of positive youth development is the development of competence in specific contexts and various domains such as social, intellectual, and vocational competence (Huebner, 2003). Initiative and competence are important aspects of identity as these are related to concerns of autonomy, agency, and mastery in adolescent development.

In studying identity in adolescence, Waterman (1985) defines identity as “having a clearly delineated self-definition, a self-definition comprised of those goals, values, and beliefs which the person finds personally expressive, and to which he or she is unequivocally committed. Such commitments evolve over time and are made because the chosen goals, values, and beliefs are deemed worthy of giving direction, purpose, and meaning to life” (p.6). In this paper, this definition will be expanded by embedding the self-definition of the adolescents within the context of the family. The Filipino adolescent's identity will be studied by looking at the

perception of the adolescents about how they are defined by the family through roles, expectations and values, their definition of what family means to them, and their integration of these elements into their own self-definition.

METHOD

A qualitative approach was used to describe the perceptions, experiences, and self-definition of adolescents in the context of their families. The focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted with adolescent participants allowed for in-depth sharing of information, thoughts and feelings about their families and themselves.

Participants

Respondents aged 12 to 20 were recruited by obtaining permission from school authorities (i.e., the school's principal or head teacher). For the out-of-school youth participants, they were invited to participate in discussions through community leaders.

Four FGDs were conducted with different sociodemographic groups. Two groups were composed of adolescents from a rural area, while the other two groups were composed of respondents from an urban setting. Out-of-school youths made up one of the groups from the urban population. Each FGD group was composed of male and female adolescents, with an average of 7 participants. A total of 31 adolescents (16 females; 15 males, five of whom are homosexuals) participated in the FGDs.

Procedure

Prior to the start of the discussion, participants were informed about the purpose and scope of the study, confidentiality procedures, and their

rights as volunteers and respondents. All discussions, which lasted approximately an hour, were audio-taped, with the participants' knowledge and permission.

In each session, one member of the research team acted as moderator, asking questions from the FGD guide, directing the flow of the discussion, and making sure all participants had a chance to contribute to the discourse. Another member of the research team observed the interactions and took down notes regarding interjections and reactions of the participants.

The steps outlined by Flick (2002) in conducting FGDs were followed, namely: the discussion started with an introduction of the participants, including pertinent background information that they were willing to share, followed by an explanation of the process of turn-taking, listening and participation from all respondents. The moderator then eased into the topic by highlighting common ground for all the members of the group (i.e., everyone, including the researchers, grew up in and experienced the dynamics of a Filipino family) to promote the feeling of being a part of the group. The discussion followed the FGD guide, which contained the following topics: family composition and structure; roles, duties and responsibilities in the family, parental expectations, areas of decision making, family relationships, and values. Towards the end of the discussion, participants were given the opportunity to deliberate on the issues raised during the FGD, as well as to react to and comment on any concerns they might have regarding the process. Finally, respondents were thanked and given tokens of appreciation for their participation.

Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the FGD data. Codes and categories were generated from the transcribed discussions, which were then used to identify larger sets of recurring themes and key points. Each FGD session was transcribed verbatim, with segments checked randomly

for accuracy of the transcription. Coding was independently done by each member of the research team; after which the coding was checked, refined and operationally defined by the whole group. Codes were then grouped into categories, which were then finalized into overarching themes. Validity was established through an auditing process, which involved checking data-gathering and analytical procedures, conducted by the senior faculty researchers.

RESULTS

Adolescents' Definition of Family

The respondents' definition of the family includes both traditional and non-traditional compositions of family members. Majority of the respondents live with their nuclear family but most live near extended kin in a compound. A number of them grew up with grandparents or aunts and uncles, especially when their parents are working overseas, separated, unemployed, or deceased. In defining the family, the participants included their nuclear family and extended kin who share a household, live in the same compound, or reside abroad but provide financial support (“*May isa pa akong family sa Canada... siya yung sumusuporta sa kin ngayon lola ko*”). Sample responses include “*Yung father ko namatay na, yung mother ko nag-abroad kaya pinalaki ako ng grandparents ko,*” and “*I prefer to stay at my grandparents'... they send me to school because my parents cannot afford it...in turn I keep them company and help in household chores.*” Due to separation from parents, an out-of-school-youth participant regards her grandparents as her “real parents” because “*ang loob ko talaga nandun sa nagpalaki sa akin... pero ginagalang ko pa rin ang magulang ko.*”

For most of the out-of-school-youth participants, their definition of family goes beyond members of the family. Close friends are introduced to their nuclear family and treated by the rest of the family as members, not

guests. One friend is even regarded as a “father figure” (“*parang tatay*”) because he embodies the characteristics of what a father ought to be. A participant from the rural area also stated he has a friend who provides financial help as if he were a family member (“very close... *nauutangan na parang pamilya*”). Thus, whereas blood relations are still a primary consideration for determining inclusion in the family, non-blood “relatives” such as friends are considered family members when they assume familial roles and characteristics.

Adolescents' Perceived Roles in the Family

The respondents' perceived roles in their families are related to the duties and responsibilities that they perform for and are assigned to undertake by their families. The adolescents who participate in this study embrace the following roles: caregivers of younger siblings, helpers in housework, and providers of financial support. Some roles are connected to gender and birth position. The role of caregiver of younger siblings usually falls on the female respondents, who are the eldest. This is a consistent response from both rural and urban participants (e.g. “*Alagaan ang mga kapatid kasi ako ang panganay*”). Apart from caregiving, they also provide assistance and guidance needed by younger siblings (e.g. “*sabi ng mama ko, tulungan mo kapatid mo, napagdaanan mo yan...*”).

All of the respondents reported performing household chores such as “*mag-igib ng tubig, magluto, maglaba, maglinis ng bahay, mamalantsa at maghugas ng pinggan.*” The adolescents reported little or no difference based on gender when it came to parental expectations regarding these chores. Thus, both sons and daughters were expected to know how to cook for the family and clean the home. However, the firstborn child has an additional role of providing a good model to younger siblings (e.g., “*Dapat daw akong maging masipag at alagaan ang mga kapatid dahil ako ang panganay*”). In contrast, the youngest child is not expected to perform housework (e.g. “*Ayaw ni papa na utusan namin yung bunso naming babae na maghugas, maglinis*”).

The adolescent's role as provider of financial support to the family has a present and future time frame. Some respondents, particularly the working out-of-school-youth, help out in paying household expenses (e.g., *"Si ate pagka-sahod 500 ang binibigay namin, kasi nga sa ilaw."*). Many out-of-school-youth participants regret having failed to reach the goal of finishing a college education as set by their parents; but one claimed *"still ginagawa ko yung best ko para matulungan sila sa lahat ng makakaya ko... kahit mabaon ako sa utang hindi ko iniinda."* Another one thinks he should continue his studies but reasoned *"Hindi pa rin eh kasi hindi ko pa rin sila natutulungan habang nag-aaral,"* hence he opted to work. Another working participant shared how her parents were proud of her academic awards when she was still studying, but countered that *"pinaka-proud siguro sila siguro kung totally financially stable ako."* Only one respondent claimed he was not obliged to contribute financially *"Hindi nila ako inoobliga na ikaw magbayad ng ganito...pangsarili ko lang."*

Other non-working respondents, particularly from the older adolescents in the rural group, admitted feeling "pressured" about their future role of providing financial support to the family, but they are "willing to accept it" as shown in the following statements: *"Kapag panganay ka kailangan makapagtapos ka, kailangang breadwinner ka, kasi balang araw ikaw yung mag-papaaral sa mga kapatid na nakakabata sa yo."* And a respondent accepted the family's advice: *"Mag-aral ng mabuti...mapaunlad ang pamilya bago mag-asawa,"* and another even emphasized that "family first before anything else."

Parental Expectations of Adolescents

The roles that the adolescents reportedly portray in the family are generally based on the parents' expectations of them, such as academic achievement, assistance in household chores, and financial obligations. Nonetheless, there are also parental expectations of adolescents that pertain to their appearance, conduct, and peer relationships.

More than the expectation of assistance in household chores, the respondents' parents expect adolescents to strive for academic achievement (“*mag-aral ng mabuti*”), in order to prepare them for their future. A few said that their parents have very definite ideas regarding their college course (e.g., become a teacher), but in general, parents have no specific course in mind, providing instead advice that their children should do well and eventually assist in helping the family financially (i.e., “Graduate, get a job and give financial support to family.”)

Adolescents reported that they made most of the decisions regarding their clothing (i.e., what kind or style of clothing to wear), although their parents would sometimes voice their disapproval over some of their choices. The same is true when it comes to their choice of friends this is primarily the domain and decision of the adolescent. Nonetheless, they mentioned that they introduce their friends to their parents in order to show that the friends they have chosen are responsible and trustworthy, indicating some need for continued parental approval of these choices.

Because they are not in school, the out-of-school youth respondents' responsibilities include the following: a) helping with the day-to-day chores, b) contributing to the family economically, and c) not being a burden either emotionally or economically to their parents. The decision to discontinue schooling seemed to be both personal and practical; for most respondents, it was a combination of having academic difficulties as well as financial difficulties (e.g., not being able to afford tuition and books, or the desire to work and help the family). Most of the respondents aspire to go back to school, but only if certain conditions are reached, such as financial stability for the family. Most said that this may be difficult to do, as their current status as volunteers in the community and as wage-earners may be hard to give up, along with the continued instability of the family's economic status.

Whereas most of the homosexual adolescent respondents claimed that their parents have fully accepted them, the majority still experience very clear restrictions regarding their sexuality. Gender-appropriate behavior

and conduct are expected of them. Most were not allowed to bring dates or partners home, or to even mention them, particularly in the presence of fathers. Most were asked to “tone down” mannerisms and speech inflections that are stereotypically associated with the “parlor gay.” Clothing was also an issue (i.e., they are not allowed to wear feminine clothing). One respondent, however, presents an exception to parental issues about homosexuality as his parents accept his homosexuality (e.g., his mother expects to be privy to all of his relationships, and even allows his boyfriend to visit at home).

Values Transmitted by the Family

Adolescents reported that the primary message, which is consistently communicated by parents and other family members, is the importance of family. They cited the values of family warmth and cohesion (e.g. “*kapag may celebrations ang saya kasi buo kami, madami kami*”); mutual support (e.g. “*tinutulungan ko sila, tinutulungan din ako, exchange lang yan*”), respect and obedience to parents (e.g. “*huwag daw sumagot,*” “we should obey our parents, and we should study hard”), and peace and harmony in the family (e.g. “*hindi nag-aaway-away*”). They receive praise from family members when they behave according to these family values. They have learned from their family to prioritize one's own family despite occasional disagreements and misunderstanding (e.g., *kahit mali siya, incorrect pag nasa loob ng bahay, pero pagdating sa labas hindi mo siya puwedeng ilaglag dahil ikaw ang kakampi... mas importante ang family*”).

The values of education and hard work conveyed to the majority of participants are also related to upholding the family values and achieving the family goals. This is evident in the response: “*Yung kapatid ko na panganay, maaga nag-asawa kaya ako dapat magpatuloy sa pangarap ng magulang na makatapos at magkatrabaho para makatulong sa pamilya.*” The adolescents also learn to value religion because their parents teach them to “always keep in touch with God. *Lagi nilang sinasabi na you run to God pag may problema ka, saka siya yung unahin, at pag may achievement ka, siya yung unahin mo.*”

Social Concerns Affecting the Family

Some respondents expressed social concerns that are affecting their families, such as separation of parents and family members due to overseas work of a parent or marital infidelity, parental unemployment, and early pregnancy and marriage for the out-of-school-youth participants. These social concerns change the family structure, and adversely affect family relationships and the adolescents' emotional well-being. For instance, an out-of-school-youth respondent expressed concerns and difficulties associated with early pregnancy and marriage (“*Father ko galit sa akin simula ng mag- asawa ako na wala sa hustong gulang, hindi ko nasunod ang gusto nya na makapagtapos, ang hinanakit ko naman sa kanya hindi nagbibigay kapag walang job ang mister ko, walang panggastos.*”).

Nevertheless, the adolescents and their families dealt with these challenges through various adaptive strategies. For instance, a young adolescent from the rural area stated that frequent telephone calls from her mother, who works overseas, is a way of maintaining their family's closeness. An out-of-school-youth participant narrated how her mother's lengthy work stint in Singapore adversely affected her family relationships (“*nagkaproblema sila, nambabae si Papa..tumira ako sa Papa ko kaso hindi ko naman feel, kasi mama ko ang lagi kong kasama noon*”); but she eventually accepted the situation and forgave her father (“*tatay ko pa rin siya kaya tatanggapin ko. Ganon ko kamahal yung pamilya ko*”). A young adolescent from the urban area, who admitted to feeling envious of her cousins with intact families because “*sila isang pamilya tapos ako di ko makasama mga magulang ko*”), nonetheless reported that she learned to accept her family's situation. Another participant claimed that her family deals with family issues by talking about them (e.g. “*si papa may anak sa labas... habang kumakain pinag-uusapan namin na talagang minsan may ganun kaya okay lang*”).

Another concern raised by adolescents from both rural and urban areas is parental unemployment. Their families cope by seeking financial help from relatives and friends who are well off (e.g. “*umuutang sa grandparents or mga aunties o mga kaibigan*”) and in the case of one participant, from the church (“*umuutang sa Iglesia ni Cristo*). Parental unemployment is usually the reason why the out-of-school-youth participants chose to look for a job they needed work so that they could contribute financially to their families.

Adolescents' Identity in the Family Context

The themes of the participants' identity in the family revolve around connection, support, and autonomy. Their expanded definition of family (e.g., family and close friends who care, help and support), their roles in the family (e.g., caregiver of siblings, helpers in household chores, financial providers), parental expectations (e.g., study, work and help the family), values (e.g., family values) and responses to social concerns about the family (e.g., communication, acceptance, assistance) serve to define the adolescent self as connected to significant others through a mutuality of care and support. Being connected through family relationships emphasizes the supportive identity of the adolescent participant that is, a self that is not only a recipient of emotional and financial support from the family, but also a giver of support to the family's needs and goals. Despite the strong connection to the family, the adolescents exercise their autonomy through asserting their personal expression (i.e., clothes, personal appearance), and choice of friends.

DISCUSSION

Defining the Family, Defining the Self

The adolescents' definition of the family goes beyond a nuclear-extended dichotomy of kinship by considering living arrangement, emotional and

financial support, and close friendships. It is different from the traditional kinship definition of family where family is based on blood relations (Medina, 2001). Redefining the conventional meaning of family allows the adolescents to reconfigure their notion of family relationships to account for their psychosocial needs, expectations, and values.

By expanding what family means to them, adolescents reveal their own identity through what they value in family relationships, which are connection, intimacy, care and support. Gilligan (1982) has shown through her study and theory of women's identity development that defining one's self through relationships is as valid as forming identity through autonomy. Filipino adolescents, regardless of gender, can form their identity based on their connection to others, hence showing the self in relation to others, specifically the family. This relatedness is supported in a decontextualized portrayal of the Filipino adolescent self as having predominantly relational self-aspects, and being more interdependent in terms of self-construal (Pena-Alampay, 2003). Given the broader societal concerns that affect the family, this identity of connectedness allows the adolescents to address these challenges by meaningfully locating the self in a cluster of mutually supportive, caring relationships.

Family as a Continuing Source of Socialization

The adolescents' perceived roles in the family are similar to previous studies. However, apart from viewing these roles in terms of the process of socialization based on gender roles (Liwag, de la Cruz, & Macapagal, 1998), it can be seen as a portrayal of a supportive self that is integrated in the family. Family integration allows family members to have meaningful relationships by investing themselves in common goals (Rathunde & Csikszentmihalyi, 1991). When adolescents accept family goals (i.e., the parental expectations concerning educational attainment, work success, financial support) as legitimate goals for themselves, it also helps them to clarify their self-definition in terms of the commitments they want to make for the family.

Without reducing the agentic capacity of the adolescents, the family influences their identity formation through parental expectations of what they should do and what they should be in the present as well as in the future. This contextual basis of Filipino youth identity development can be understood through the concept of parents as “identity agents” (Schachter & Ventura, 2008), that is, individuals who interact with the youth in order to participate in their identity formation as well as mediate broader societal influences on the process of identity formation. The parental expectations influence the identity of the adolescents by allowing them to integrate the goals of the family into personal goals that they can project into the future, with the awareness that these goals serve both their own needs and the family's needs for security and support.

Despite the changing family structure, family socialization remains a major source of socialization of adolescents because of the inclusion of extended family (e.g., grandparents, aunts and uncles). The experiences of the adolescents in their families and their process of identity development show that the socialization goals of role preparation and performance, and cultivation of sources of meaning (Arnett, 1995), are met. The family prepares adolescents by socializing them to learn gender roles (e.g., Liwag, de la Cruz, & Macapagal, 1998), occupational roles, and roles in social institutions such as marriage (e.g., Sta. Maria, Resurreccion, Tan-Mansukhani & Yabut, 2007) and parenthood. The values of family relationships, academic achievement, and religious beliefs are sources of meaning that the Filipino family develops in the youth to provide structure and purpose to their lives.

Adolescents' Positive Identity in the Family Context

The values of family, education, hard work, and religion that are transmitted by the family to the adolescents are consistent with previous studies (Porio, Lynch & Hollnsteiner, 1975; Gastardo-Conaco, Jimenez & Billedo, 2003). These values, which are also consistent with parental expectations, family goals, and adolescents' roles, provide not only

guidance to the adolescents on what identity commitments to make, but also provide support and coherence to the definitions that the family contributes to the adolescent's process of identity formation. Hence, family integration is supported, as shown by the willingness of the adolescents to undertake the tasks, duties and responsibilities related to their assigned roles in the family and to explore adaptive strategies to respond to difficulties and problems encountered in the family. These tasks and strategies provide opportunities for them to learn and practice skills in order to develop competence in different areas, such as social and emotional competence, intellectual competence, and vocational competence (Huebner, 2003). These different domains of competence will contribute to their growth and development, and prepare them for adulthood.

Although the themes of connection and support in adolescents' identity highlight family integration, the theme of autonomy provides a space for the individuality of adolescents to emerge in the context of family. This is supported in the findings of Pena-Alampay (2003) showing that although the Filipino adolescents' self-construal is more interdependent, they nonetheless endorse independent attitudes and values (i.e., self-assertion, achievement and autonomy) to a moderate degree. In the present study, the areas in which self-assertion occurs pertain to choice of friends and personal expression (e.g., clothing), and are generally granted autonomy by parents. However, autonomy in choosing and expressing the adolescents' homosexual orientation may require a process of negotiation with Filipino parents.

The Filipino adolescents' identity fosters the development of initiative as Larson (2000) prescribed for positive development; however, their process of developing initiative partially stems from and interacts with the strong influences of the family. The identity portrayed in the context of the family shows a strong sense of initiative (e.g., taking their duties and responsibilities seriously, seeking productive ways to respond to problems in the family) that is guided by the values transmitted by the

family. The specific context of the family elicited the articulation of a positive, embedded identity of adolescents.

Findings of this study have implications on the role of family processes in the positive development of adolescents, such as family communication processes (Carandang & Lee-Chua, 2008; Grotevant & Cooper, 1986); parental autonomy granting to adolescents (Bumpus, Crouter & McHale, 2001); parents and grandparents as identity agents regarding specific areas of identity commitments (Schachter & Ventura, 2008). Training programs on parenting skills and communication with adolescents that facilitate positive adolescent development and positive family relationships may be offered to address conflictual parent-child relationships or families.

To conclude, Filipino adolescents form a positive identity in the family context based on connection, support, and autonomy. This family-embedded identity involves a synthesis of their redefinition of family and their family's definition of them through supporting roles in the family, parental expectations of fulfilling family goals at present and in the future, and guiding values. It allows the adolescents to balance family integration and individuality, and access resources and capacities to deal adaptively with adolescent developmental concerns and family difficulties in the midst of challenging societal concerns. The continuing process of developing a positive sense of self in different contexts will prepare the adolescents to engage in a widening circle of demands and opportunities for growth in adulthood.

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NOTES ON THE PAPER

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