

LIVED EXPERIENCES OF PARTICIPANTS AND PROSPECTS ON FDS-ERPAT PROGRAM TOWARDS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract: This research aimed to explore the lived experiences of participants and prospects on ERPAT implemented in 2017 and 2018 for program enhancement. This is a qualitative research utilizing Husserlian Phenomenology theory. It also used interview, data analysis, observation as triangulation technique to add rigor in the research process. The research found out that if the fathers were given opportunity to be capacitated, they will become empowered and reaffirms their paternal roles in the family and community in general. As a solution; a training was designed for enhancement of ERPAT implementation at the Local Government Unit.

Keywords: Public Administration, lived experiences of participants and prospects on FDS-ERPAT program towards continuous improvement, qualitative research, Cebu Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

Rationale

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program focuses primarily on the family as its name suggests. A family is defined as the oldest social institution and the smallest political unit and so it is where the cure for all social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual ills in our society could be found. The father, as the head of the family, must fulfill his role in uniting his household. The purpose of the family is to secure the society as well as the sanctity of marriage which are fulfilled when the father, as the head of the family, truly acts, unites, and fulfills the role of a good father of the family in the lives of his children, his wife, and family as a whole (Dr. Myles Munroe, 2010). According to the book of Numbers 14:18, “The LORD is slow to anger and is filled with unfailing love, forgiving every kind of sin and rebellion. But He does not excuse the guilty. He lays the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected--even children in the third and fourth generations. The male in the family affects up to the 4th generations – Suffering from forefathers. The power of the family –needed to be broken and turn to be righteous”.

The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) is one of the Philippine government’s programs spearheaded by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD). The program is now commonly known as 4Ps and was formerly known as Ahon Pamilyang Pilipino. The Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (Bridging Program for the Filipino Family) is a conditional cash transfer (CCT) program which primarily aims to eliminate extreme poverty in the Philippines by investing in health and education particularly of its children beneficiaries. The program aims to do this by breaking the cycle of poverty by keeping children healthy and in school, so they can have a better future. Despite its many criticisms, 4 Ps has been assessed favorably by World Bank, AusAID, and ADB. The World Bank (WB) on March 1, 2019 even gave a thumbs up on this program and said that the Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) or *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program* is on track with its goal of keeping the children healthy and in school. (<https://www.rappler.com/move-ph/22887-world-bank-gives-cct-thumbs-up>).

The CCT program, also known as Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), started with only 6,000 household beneficiaries in 2007 under the administration of President Gloria Arroyo. It was later during the administration of President Benigno Aquino Jr. in 2016 that it had been expanded to already benefit a total of 4.4 million households. Poor households with children aged 18 years old and below (prior to 2013, it was 14 years old and below) are given cash grants for them to spend it solely on education and health. The National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and World Bank widely credited the 4Ps program for its contribution in reducing poverty. Poverty incidence in the country was rising at the start of the program from 24.9% in 2003 to 26.9% in 2009 but the numbers started to decline to 25.2% in 2012 and 21.6% in 2015. Both agencies also cited the targeting system of the program for its effectiveness in identifying the real poorest of the poor with 15% margin of error. (<https://www.rappler.com/views/imho/203920-philippines-conditional-cash-transfer-4ps-poverty-reduction>).

Specifically, the program has the following objectives: a) Social development: the program invests in capability building of beneficiaries so they will be able to break intergenerational poverty cycle; b) Social assistance: the program provides cash assistance to beneficiaries to address their short-term financial needs.

In the implementation of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, young members of the beneficiary households are deemed as the primary stakeholders through education and health cash assistance. The children are the direct recipients of this human capital development intervention. Since children are under the protection of the adults in the family, there is a need to strengthen the capacities of the family adults or particularly the parents so they could become more responsive to the needs of their family especially their children. With this, the program also endeavors to strengthen such capacities.

One of the interventions to strengthen the capacities of adults or the parents in the family is the Family Development Session (FDS). FDS is a values-oriented component of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program that intends to promote and inculcate positive change in the beneficiaries' character and outlook in life amid their current situation. In the implementation of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, the values development of the family is deemed crucial in giving protection and nurturance, promotion of growth, as well as educational development of young members of the household. FDS became one of the essential interventions done by the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program in strengthening the capacities of the adults or parents in the family in taking care of the needs of the whole household more particularly that of their children.

Attendance to the Family Development Sessions (FDS) is one of the conditions to be complied with by Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program beneficiaries. The sessions conduct community-based family psycho-educational activities that are designed to empower, nurture, and strengthen beneficiary families to meet familial and parental responsibilities. The sessions focus on nurturing the values, skills and knowledge of household grantees and parents with topics about health and nutrition, education and psychological needs of children, positive family values, and marital relationships. The sessions also promote involvement, participation, volunteerism, and leadership for strengthened community empowerment.

Generally speaking, in families, work and time with children often compete with one another, with parents spending more time in the workplace than they are able to spend at home. Family Development Session was developed to capacitate the household beneficiaries to become more productive and responsive to meet family needs and enable them to perform their parental roles and responsibilities in particular to the health, nutrition and education needs of their children. The sessions enhance the skills and knowledge of household grantees and parents in responding to parental roles and responsibilities; promote positive familial values through strengthen marital relationships; promote social awareness, participation and involvement in community development efforts.

The Pantawid Pamilya Program sees a father's responsibilities at home to extend beyond providing the needs of the family into the duties of a father and husband and is therefore acknowledged by the program as a very significant role in the family. The father's involvement together with the mother had been deemed important and has been given emphasis over the years to help a child develop emotionally, psychologically and physically. (<http://communityconnectionsjax.org/role-of-a-father-in-the-family/>).

A child's relationship with his/her father is a powerful bond that has been rarely closely examined until recent years. It was overlooked as a major influence on a child's development and quality of life. This relationship has an enormous and long-lasting influence on a child, which continues throughout his/her adult life. The recognition that fathers play such an important role is a recent development. The focus for many years has mainly been on mothers

and how they affect their children's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. The parental role of a father was omitted from this equation for a long time, because his responsibility was not to nurture but to earn or going way back, hunt. Fathers could be aloof or supportive, harsh in judgement or fair, affectionate or uncommunicative. Regardless, little thought or attention was given to the effect these differences would have on the children. (<https://www.elisabettafranzoso.com/articles/types-of-damaging-fathers-how-they-influence-who-we-are>).

Filipino families are strongly rooted or "Matatag." Filipino families live together and there is work-life balance so that there is still time to spend with family even for those family members who work. On weekends, it is a usual custom for families and friends enjoy time being together in parks and other recreational centers. It is a high-trust society with a strong sense of community. To preserve this trait, the government made the following initiatives focusing on families:

a) AmBisyon Natin 2040 – a program that highlights in collectiong the Filipino people's long-term vision and aspirations for themselves and for the country for the next 25 years. It describes the kind of life that people want to live, as well as how the country will look like by 2040. Given such, it is a reliable basis for development planning across at least four administrations. Ambisyon Natin 2040 could be summarized as a picture of the future, a set of life goals and goals for the country. Unlike a plan which is defined as ways or strategies to achieve a certain goal or destination, AmBisyon Natin 2040 is the destination (goal) itself that answers the question "Where do we want to be?" A plan describes the way to get to the destination; AmBisyon Natin 2040 is the destination - vision that guides the future and is the anchor of the country's plans. (<http://2040.neda.gov.ph/about-ambisyon-natin-2040/>).

b) PDP 2017-2022 – focuses on Accelerating Human Capital Development and Reducing Vulnerability of Individuals and Families. These are the same areas that provide the additional context of what the 4Ps is trying to address, i.e., poverty reduction.

c) The Department envisions all Filipinos free from hunger and poverty, have equal access to opportunities, enabled by a fair, just, and peaceful society with the strategies to lead in the formulation, implementation, and coordination of social welfare and development policies and programs for and with the poor, vulnerable, and disadvantaged.

d) DSWD Strategic Plan 2018-2022 – describes the vision of the Department, followed by the DSWD Organizational Outcomes focusing on Outcome 1: Well-being of families improved which is where the Pantawid Pamilya is situated.

In the Filipino culture, fathers are usually the 'hardest-to-reach' - both inside and outside the home especially in the aspect of childcare and development and they don't even know how it came to be like that. Society pre-defines the roles of fathers as someone who brings food in the family's table or the breadwinner and so beyond that, most fathers are left clueless as to what to do to be more effective and responsive parents. Effective and responsive fathering refers to how a father performs his parental roles and responsibilities to his family, most especially to his children. It is also how he is able to encourage the family to perform each one's roles and functions through the kind of relationships he maintains with each member of his family. (ERPAT Enhanced Manual, 2012).

To give due emphasis to the critical role that a father plays in the family, the Pantawid Pamilya program adopted the Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training (ERPAT) as a major intervention that focuses on the fathers only. ERPAT strongly believes that fathers DO need help to be able to perform their roles and responsibilities. Further, ERPAT sees the need to strengthen and maximize the fathers' capacities to become effective and efficient advocates in the elimination of violence against women and children.

Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training (ERPAT) is a program for fathers that gives importance and emphasis in equipping them with proper knowledge, attitude and skills that would be vital in performing their paternal roles and responsibilities. It conducts community-based sessions for fathers, seeking to train and organize father-leaders and volunteers in the community for them to be able to facilitate collective action and participation in promoting the important role of fathers to the family. The Parent Effectiveness Services (PES) also made ERPAT one of their interventions because it sees the significant roles of fathers in all aspects of child nurturing and caring. ERPAT in general, aims to develop and strengthen parenting capabilities of Filipino fathers in performing their role and responsibilities. Furthermore, ERPAT believes that doing so could make fathers more capable in being effective and efficient advocates in eliminating violence against women and children. (ERPAT Enhanced Manual, 2012).

On the other hand, the National Committee on Filipino Family was first directed to implement the decade plan for the Filipino family that would aim to strengthen family relationship and values for strong and God-centered families. The

ERPAT Enhanced Manual (2012), emphasizes the parental role of the father - to take care of his family more especially to his children and maintaining good relationship with each members of the family. The Manual also focuses on how he will be able to encourage the member of the family to perform their roles and functions.

ERPAT was first conceptualized in 1995 which initially benefited the DSWD employees. Since then, ERPAT has become widely accepted and appreciated by the local government units, LGU implementers, and the father-leaders which made the father-leaders and volunteers become actively involved and committed in the implementation of this intervention service. With the successful experience, ERPAT was replicated in their respective barangays which gave led to the formation of ERPAT Associations and Federations from the barangay, municipal/city, provincial, and regional levels, particularly in Region V and VI. Recognizing this significant outcome, DSWD pursued the plan to bring ERPAT to other regions nationwide which gave birth to the development of the ERPAT Manual. The development of the Manual underwent several processes which included the review of the documents and activities by the Regional Specialist, LGU workers, and father-leaders in pilot regions.

Some non-government organizations and other government line agencies also took part in the review process of ERPAT. The modules and sessions (content and format) were modified based on their inputs and recommendations, giving more focus on the important roles of fathers not only as providers of care but as well as in giving nurturing environment to his children. Of the 17 regions nationwide, 11 regions implemented the ERPAT service to 36% of the provinces in the country composed of 66 cities and municipalities. A total of 363 ERPAT trainings were conducted in 475 barangays benefitting a total of 8,401 fathers. More than half of the fathers trained came from Region VI equivalent to 56% of the participants, followed by Region IX and Region X at 19% and 15%, respectively. The ERPAT trainings conducted resulted to the organization of 359 ERPAT associations nationwide with a total of 8,777 individual members.

Unfortunately, Region VII was not included as one of the areas where ERPAT was first implemented. Even after the enhanced manual was approved, Region VII provided technical assistance only to partner LGUs through the office of Local Social Welfare Office in the four (4) provinces to implement the ERPAT. However, in 2017, the Pantawid Pamilya GAD focal person conducted ERPAT training with 132 participants (1 per LGU) in the 4 Provinces of Region VII. In 2018, another training was conducted with 80 participants covering 25 LGUs of Negros Oriental and 6 LGUs in Siquijor.

The researcher's interest in the study was sparked by the realization that in the Philippines, ERPAT is the only program implemented by a national government agency designed to empower and support fathers in their all-important role of parenting their children. Considering the many problems besetting the family today, it is immensely advantageous to the society in general and to the family in particular to get fathers on board as far as parenting is concerned. This task is bound to be difficult because Filipino fathers have never been known to be hands-on in rearing children, preferring to delegate the task to the mothers.

This study aims to capture the participants' lived experiences, practices, and opinions on parenting with the view of using the findings to establish the importance of the roles of fathers in their children's lives while setting aside biases and preconceived assumptions about their experiences, feelings, and responses to a particular situation. The study also aims to speak into the Local Government Units' program planning to ensure that interventions for the family will include ERPAT specifically for the fathers in their locality. Additionally, the study aims to inform the DSWD Field Office Annual Regional Sector Plan for the Filipino Family on highlighting the crucial role of fathers in sharing parenting roles in the family which will serve as basis for technical assistance to other regional government agencies and non-government organizations (NGOs) on plans development and regional level social policy enhancement.

DSWD personnel as the Focal Person on Family and a program implementer of ERPAT, the researcher of this study is aware of the issues and concerns that prevent fathers from being more caring and engaged in parenting their children. Thus, it able her to focus on the common experiences of the selected respondents using intuition, logic, and authority to arrive at a more universal understanding of these lived experiences vis-à-vis what professional literature says about these experiences.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This study is anchored on the Husserlian Phenomenological Theory advanced by Edmund Husserl as a research process in an attempt to define a philosophical method, in contrast to the natural sciences, which would provide insight into the experiences of conscious objects. Phenomenological philosophy emphasizes the attempt to get to the truth of the matter, to describe an experience in the manner in which it appears (<http://www.sciedu.ca/journal/index.php/jnep/article/>

view/11004/6917). This study explores the lived experiences of selected participants of the ERPAT as phenomenology is one of the many types of qualitative study that reviews the lived experiences of humans (Byne, 2001). This theory also involved studying consciousness structures as experienced from the first person point of view (Smith, 2008).

Husserlian phenomenology is different from naturalism, for which the nature of an object is simply a given and conscious life itself is part of nature, to be approached with natural-scientific methods focused on toward empirical evidences and underlying reasons.

The basic idea of phenomenological theory is that it allows the researcher to delve into the perceptions, perspectives, understandings, and feelings of those people who have actually experienced or lived the phenomenon or situation of interest, in this particular study, the fathers. On the other hand, the phenomenological method acknowledges various sources of knowledge, such as: Intuitive Knowledge – in the usage of one’s belief, faith, intuitions and on feelings instead of hard facts; Authoritative Knowledge – based on the information received from other people, books, and belief on supreme being upon which its strength depends on the one’s hard core belief; Logical Knowledge - which concentrates on the power of reasoning; and Empirical Knowledge - which can be demonstrated according to its understanding, obvious evidences that are determined through observation and experimentation (Abdelhamid, 2008).

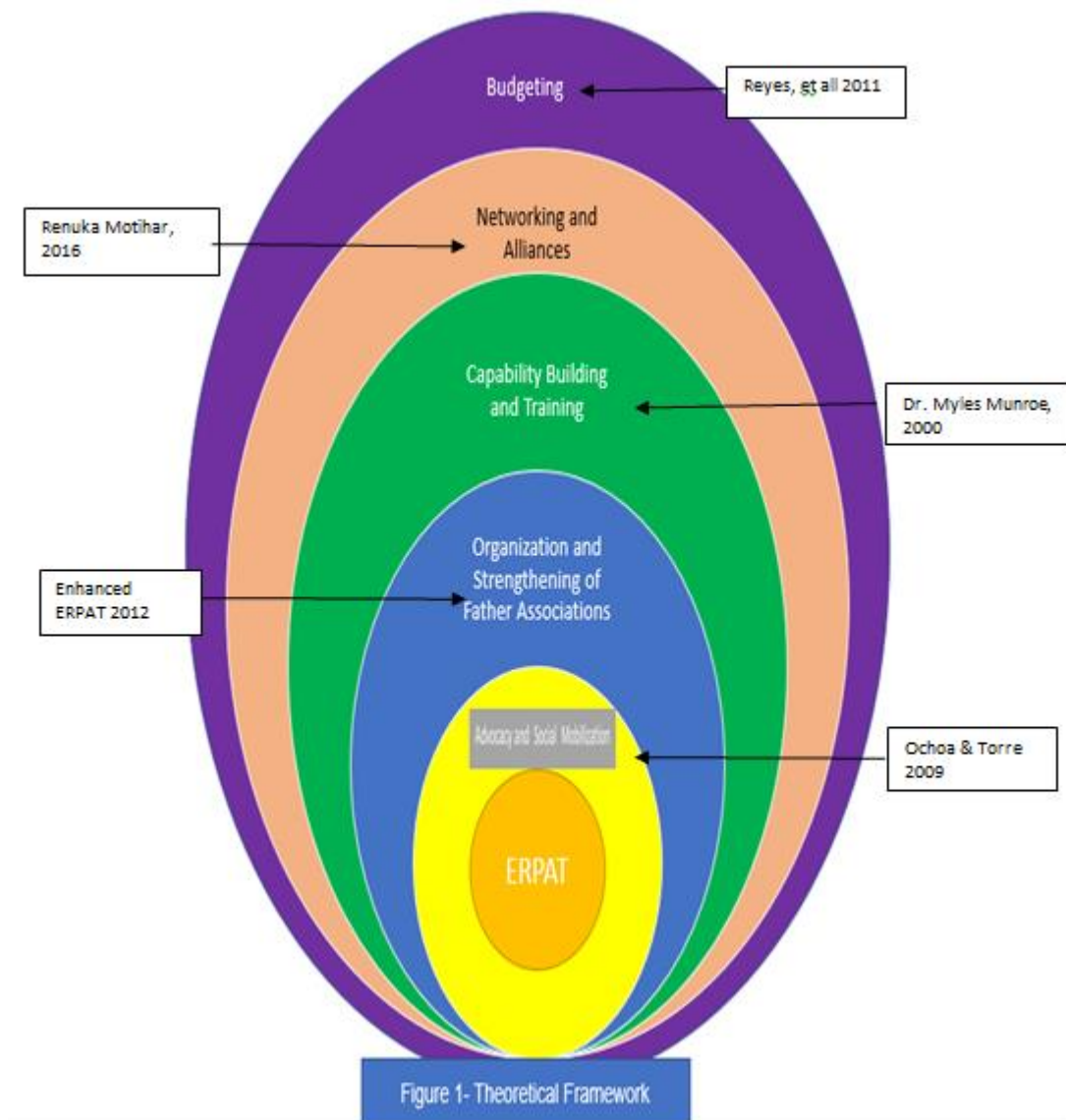


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

To provide a coherent and logical framework for analyzing and correlating the results of the interview, data analysis, and observation as triangulation techniques to add rigor in the research process, the researcher considers it important to look at the Family Systems Theory which was first espoused by The Family Systems Theory is a concept that suggests that even though each family is different, each family has the same emotional model. It also states that a family functions as a system where each family member has a specific role to play while abiding certain family rules. The people in the household are expected to interact with and respond to each other in a certain way based on their roles within the system. Along the way, patterns begin to develop within the system, and each member's behaviors become predictable. These behavioral patterns can either balance or dysfunction the family system or both at different instances in time. According to Dr. Bowen's theory, even when people may feel they are disconnected from members of their family, the family still has intense emotional connection and have a profound positive or negative impact on their emotions and actions. A single person's change in his pattern also triggers a change in how other members of the family would act and feel. Still this interdependence among family members could differ from one family to another because all families have different levels of it.

Another theory which is closely associated with the Family Systems Theory is the Role Theory. In their theory of *Role Balance*, Stephen Marks and Shelley MacDermid (1996) found that people who are able to fully participate in and perform a number of different roles had less role strain, lower rates of depression and has higher self-esteem and innovation. *Role sharing* is a means through which the positive aspects of multiple roles can prevail over potential negative consequences. The same role can be shared by Individuals even when they have different social statuses and social positions, or even across different social institutions. Taking care of children, for example, is often considered to be the role of mothers only but fathers, employers, and the government can also do the same caregiving role (Drew, Emerek, and Mahon 1998). When they share the role, women experience less role strain, overload, and conflict and are more able to proficiently fill and benefit from roles as both workers and mothers.

Fatherhood has no manual. Becoming a father is something that has to be learned by incorporating how fatherhood is ideally defined, in the way that it was acted out by actual fathers. Munroe (2001) expounded on the role of men through his book "Understanding the Purpose and Power of Men". In his book, Munroe posits that men are struggling to find their place in a fast-changing world, in every culture and social system. In many societies, women empowerment in status, workplace, and traditional cultural roles, had in turn had negative effect on significant number of men where some became confused, disillusioned, angry, frustrated and traumatized. This dramatic change had made men lost in this new pattern, where the social and cultural convergence are unfamiliar. The male of this internet driven and post-modern world are trapped in a worldwide web of confusion. Men are in trouble but are afraid to admit it. Change is often the cause of doubt, the measure of fear, and anxiety.

Furthermore, Munroe cited that for many, this type of fear is difficult to manage, and it causes different kinds of reactions. The environment where change is happening could have some negative reactions like denial, ignorance, isolation, anger, resistance, and resentment. These reactions can cause serious effects on the environment the result can be oppression, suppression, violence, and the spirit of control. The male is the key to building strong, enduring social infrastructures, stable families, sane societies, and secure nations. It is vital that the subject of the male's crisis be addressed and prioritized for men, women, and national governments, to achieve progressive social developments within countries worldwide. The purpose and power of the real male must be embarked and rediscovered in the land of cultural confusion.

Given these observations, it is critical that these issues are understood from the experiences and point of view of the participants in this study so that their "purpose", their reason for existence can be harnessed in a positive way.

Various researches and articles have cited the crucial roles that fathers play in their children's lives. Studies show that fathers have the tendency to **push achievement and intellectual development** in their children and have great influence over their children's academic success. Given that the respondents are Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino beneficiaries and have the responsibility to ensure their children do well in school as a condition of the program, this gives support to the assumption that fathers have to be more involved in their children's lives. This has been proven in the history of PMA valedictorians and topnotchers. For example, in 2013, Jestony Lanaja from Davao del Sur graduated valedictorian from the premier military academy. His father, Antonio, was a coconut farmer and tuba gatherer and Jestony expressed in his interview that seeing his father work hard for their family inspires him to work just as hard. His parents are his greatest inspiration and he dreams of lifting their family out of poverty. Another example is Cadet Billy Casibi Codiam, from a

tribe in a remote village in Kalinga, from the highland village of Pangol-Lubo in Tanudan town. In 2014, he became the first beneficiary of the government's conditional cash transfer (CCT) program to graduate in 3rd place among the PMA's top 10.

Another research showed that fathers who are more involved have children who are more social and popular (Pruett, K. 2000). Further, studies also showed that fathers who treat their wives respectfully, were able to raise boys who respect women and their daughters are also respected. This made them far from having violent relationships. More importantly, involved fathers provide an all-important spiritual leadership role that their children follow.

On the other hand, studies also show that abusive, absent, critical, emotionally distant, and neglectful fathers have long lasting negative impact on their children's lives. In her study of child offenders, Antipala (2008) showed that children who became offenders cited family factors as the most significant cause of their offending behavior.

In another article, a sociologist Paul Amato (2007) who studies parent-child relationships at Pennsylvania State University states that children with involved dads are less likely to break the law and drop out of school. These children grow up to pursue healthy relationship, avoid risky sex, and have high paying jobs when guided by close relationships with father figures. "When fathers are actively involved with their children, children do better."

Fathers play an important role in a child's development from birth through adulthood. In fact, numerous studies have reached the same conclusion: Children with involved fathers have an advantage -- socially and academically -- over children with distant or no relationships with their dads. A researcher and professor of pediatrics at the University of Maryland School Of Medicine, Maureen Black, PhD (2005) said that they found out the fathers who are involved with their children have children who are less likely to be problematic.

On the other hand, young men who grew up fatherless have twice the tendency to end up behind bars compared to those who have both two parents in the family with them (Cynthia Harper of the University of Pennsylvania, and Sara S., Aug 21, 1998). The possibility that a young male will involve in criminal activity and drug abuse is twice higher if he grew up without a father, and triples if he belongs to a community with a high concentration of single-parent families (A. Anne Hill, June O'Neill, Underclass Behaviors, CUNY, Baruch College. (1993).

A study from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services concluded that children who are fatherless are intensely of greater risk of drug and alcohol dependence (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Center for Health Statistics. Survey on Child Health. Washington, DC, (1993). Some 23.6% of US children (17.4 million) lived in father-absent homes in 2014. In 2011, fatherless children living in a home headed by a female (mothers) had a poverty rate of 47.6% which is over four times the rate for children who have both parents present (Source: U.S. Department of Health & Human Services (2012), Information on poverty and income statistics: A summary of 2012 current population survey data.

A lack of father involvement was linked to earlier births as well as lower birth weights based on a study of 1,397,801 infants evaluated in Florida. Researchers found out that father absence increases the risk of infant mortality, and they further found out that the mortality rate for infants within the first 28 days of life is four times higher for those without fathers present compared to those with involved fathers. Infant mortality is four times higher with paternal absence regardless if the baby is white or black. A study of 26,313 adolescent 18-year-old women seeking psychological services found out that the adolescents from father-absent homes were 3.5 times more likely to experience pregnancy than were adolescents from father-present homes. Moreover, adolescent without fathers are at 17.4 % rate chances of pregnancy compared to a four (4) percent rate in the general adolescent population.

A study of 1,618 Latina high school students found that when they perceive minimal support from their fathers the likely they are to have suicidal ideation and behavior. Children who show negative attitudes about school and their teachers experienced avoidance and ambivalence with their fathers. (Source: Newland, L., Chen, H., & Coyl-Shepherd, D. (2013). Associations among father beliefs, perceptions, life context, involvement, child attachment and school outcomes in the U.S. and Taiwan).

Advocacy and Social Mobilization. Ochoa and Torre (2009), observed that a person involved in the conduct of advocacy and social mobilization activities in securing support and awareness in the implementation of ERPAT in the community are more aware and observant, therefore they can easily adjust to other people's behavior and reactions, as well as the community at large. Public awareness and information campaigns convey basic messages that promote the important role

of Filipino fathers in instilling and fostering love, respect, discipline, industry, and care for the family. Indigenous form of media can be utilized to advocate support in the promotion and implementation of ERPAT at the community using local talents and resource

On the other hand, children with a secure attachment to their father and whose father was involved had a higher academic self-concept. The father-child attachment was more associated with the child's social-emotional school outcomes than their academic achievement.

Parenting is significant in the Philippine society because family is seen as the center of one's social world. But, social settings in which Filipino families are embedded have changed rapidly over the past decade. In a 2012 survey, a total of 14 million Filipinos are solo parents. The Listahanan or the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) is an information management system that identifies who and where the poor are in the country. In Region VII, the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) identified 68,667 (55,885 females and 17,782 male) poor solo parents covering 4 provinces and 132 Local Government Units. These solo parents can avail of services under Republic Act 8972 or Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, or An Act providing for the Benefits and Privileges to Solo Parents and their Children, Appropriating Funds therefore and for other purposes.

Organization and Strengthening of Father Associations

Involvement in the formation of ERPAT core groups composed of leaders at the barangay level will facilitate the organization of ERPAT. The organized structures shall serve as venues for collective action and participation founded on the principles of cooperation, trust, and good communication and commitment to the promotion of the important roles of fathers in the family and in promoting the social well-being of families as a whole. Parental abilities are acquired skills of the father and concretely observed into practice through actions as person, family, peers, and in the community. Parenting, particularly care-giving, is perceived more as a feminine activity and fathers are rarely given basic information and are never trained to perform a caring role in the family.

Organizations that assist fathers with child support are vital to a child's well-being. Fathers who pay child support provide money for the care, support and education of their children. It generally involves a monthly payment that is either court ordered or in line with a written agreement between the parents. For the most part, fathers with child support responsibilities do not understand how the law works and often face difficult problems in the judicial system. A number of organizations assist dads in providing support to their children with less anxiety. Increasing fathers' involvement and strengthening relationships between parents have emerged as central national policy strategies to improve the lives of low-income families and enhance the well-being of children. Studies have been conducted to increase understanding about how to engage fathers more fully, help low-income couples solidify their relationships, and create the best environments in which to raise children.

Strengthening and stabilizing the relationships of couples with low-income has emerged as a focus of national policy development and testing. There could be important benefits to the well-being of a child if unmarried parents also receive support to fulfill their aspirations for stable, healthy lives together. The Building Strong Families (BSF) project tested whether well-designed interventions can help interested couples fulfill their aspirations for a stable, healthy relationship, and whether success in achieving that goal can enhance child well-being, increase fathers' involvement with their children, and lead to healthier and sustained relationships among unmarried parents.

The Building Strong Families (BSF) project is sponsored by the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the first stage of the BSF project focused on the development of curricula to help unmarried parents strengthen their relationships. Researchers then used a random assignment research design to test eight voluntary programs that offered relationship skills education and other support services to unwed couples who were expecting or had just had a baby. The programs provided instruction and support to improve relationship skills, communication, and commitment. Focusing on couples undergoing the stresses of the transition to parenthood, BSF aimed to help them strengthen their relationships and act constructively in their joint roles as parents, and thus enhance their children's development. The programs associated couples to services that address employment, health, substance abuse, and other problems that can wear away relationships and reduce prospects for stability in living life together. All of the programs developed procedures, in consultation with domestic violence coalitions, to screen out couples who were experiencing domestic violence and for whom participation in the BSF programs could increase risk.

Capability Building and Training

Fathers' involvement in training and capability-building activities includes two (2) sets of implementers: 1) The ERPAT members or members of the ERPAT associations or groups, father leaders, and volunteers who are directly trained primarily to enhance their paternal roles and responsibilities, and to sustain the ERPAT service in the community; 2) LGU Workers/Implementers – or the service providers and implementers who are trained to ensure effective and efficient service implementation and management.

“One father is more than a hundred schoolmasters.” George Herbert (2006) says that a Father's involvement to their children is linked to positive mental, developmental, and how the child behaves in the society. Positive effects include improved weight gains in pre-term infants, improved breastfeeding rates, higher receptive language skills, and higher academic achievement (Garfield, C. F., & Isacco, A. 2006).

All men are fathers since this is how God designed them to be – to fulfill the role of father in the lives of those around them. It doesn't matter if he is married or single, or if he has children or not, but still the inherent purpose of all men is fatherhood. Men are called to reflect the creative and cultivating nature of God. In *The Fatherhood Principle*, Dr. Myles Munroe (2001) explains that although every man is called to be a father, knowing how to live in this purpose does not necessarily follow. The characteristics of fatherhood and the skills needed to master it must first be understood. Fulfilling the position and role men were created for, means exhibiting qualities of leadership, integrity, responsibility, and obedience to the ultimate Father of fathers, our Father God in heaven (Dr. Myles Munroe, 2000).

In their book, “*The Importance of Fathers and Their Involvement with Children*”, Sean E. Brotherson and Joseph M. White (2015) explains the importance of doing the most important work men ever do – being totally involved in the lives of their children and families. The Men's strengths, capacity to care and protect and give, are what's needed by children, women, and men themselves. In a culture that questions the value of men in the life of their families, we need a convincing viewpoint on what men can contribute to their families and communities, and understandings on the ways in which fathers and father figures make a meaningful difference. “*Why Fathers Count*”, a book written by Brotherson and White (2015) offers that awareness, giving a new and powerful viewpoint that the contributions of fathers and father figures to the lives of children and families are important. (Sean E. Brotherson, Joseph M. White, 2007).

Networking and Alliance Building

This involves resource generation and mobilization to achieve the thrusts of networking and alliance building among agencies and father groups as the most important indicators of successful community organization. Networking facilitates sharing of knowledge, skills and resources among people and organizations in the community. Father-leaders and volunteers and/or father associations are mobilized to generate resources to sustain implementation of ERPAT in the community.

Alliance, networks, and coalitions, are terms used continuously today in the social sector, sometimes interchangeably. They show coming together, partnerships and the collective voice of organizations and individuals. Alliances are seen to be most effective for advocacy. Like the ERPAT, alliances build self-confidence and adjust to the behavior of a person around them. It can even create more efficiency by combining resources and skills. They influence the relative advantage of each member, be it an individual or organization, by bringing together multiple stakeholders, such as civil society, academics, professionals, donor agencies and governments, on the same platform to work towards a common purpose or goal.

It is imperative for an alliance to have a common purpose or goal that brings its members together. There is a need for a realistic and clear vision, as well as goals and objectives that make the alliance stand out in the larger environment. It is likewise critical to build agreement on the agenda. The agenda of an alliance should be autonomous and not driven by any donor. Each member of the alliance should feel a sense of ownership about the purpose and what they are setting out to do to make the alliance viable and sustainable. Trust should also be built among members which could be developed over repeated cycles of collaboration. Alliances and networks are deemed good and credible mechanisms for peer learning and accountability and it is therefore vital that members meet on a regular basis to be updated of the progress they are making and plan for further ways to keep their alliances relevant and effective in the future ahead. (Motihar, 2016)

Budgeting

Creating this spending plan allows members to determine in advance whether they will have enough money to do the things they need to do or would like to do. **It ensures the members that they always have enough money for the things they need** and the things that are important to them as long as the finances involved is in accord with their spending plan.

More importantly, the main deliberation of this program is how to identify and prioritize the extremely poor and problematic fathers so that government budgets will not be put to waste. Targeting the aforementioned chronic poor would need a better focus on the applicants of the program for evaluation. Moreover, to properly identify the extremely poor, it is important to utilize more than one reference period to account for their movements in and out of poverty because data shows that majority are from the chronic poor. In her research, Reyes, et al, (2011) explained that during the year 2009 most beneficiaries listed were transient poor or people who came from other places and temporarily resides in a certain place for comfort. Only 47 percent are considered chronic or long lasting poor. This information was extracted using the longitudinal data obtained from tracking the same households for several years. It is therefore imperative that program implementers must carefully scrutinize who are who in that certain area for proper utilization of the budget.

Statement of the Problem

The main purpose of this research was to explore the Lived Experiences of the beneficiaries who had already attended and the incoming participants on the Empowerment and Re-affirmation of Paternal Abilities (ERPAT)-Family Development Session of Cluster 2 cities in Cebu for Calendar Year 2017 towards continuous improvement.

Specifically, it answered the following questions:

1. What are the lived experiences of the fathers who had already attended the ERPAT seminar in views of the prospective participants as regards the following themes:
 - 1.1 Advocacy and Social Mobilization;
 - 1.2 Organization and Strengthening of Father Association
 - 1.3 Capability Building and Training
 - 1.4 Networking and Alliance Building; and
 - 1.5 Budgeting
2. What are the challenges and barriers relative to ERPAT implementation?
3. Based on findings, what further improvement program can be designed?

3. METHODOLOGY

Design

This study mainly utilized the descriptive qualitative research design based on Husserlain Phenomenology. Husserl conceptualized phenomenology in three important ways. First, it was conceived as the “science of sciences”, which gave deeper discovery on the basis of consciousness. Second, phenomenology was conceived as the first and old philosophy therefore it does not go against the traditional philosophy. Third, it is the most important one, the conception of phenomenology, where it conceived the inspirational or transcendental idealism. It initiates the conception of the transcendental “ego” as the source of all meanings. Phenomenology is one of the most prominent way of thinking and philosophical movement in the western philosophy of the 20th century and it is also stirred by the rise of many other movements of philosophies, like: Existentialism and Hermeneutics (Cerbone, 2014).

Therefore, the aim of phenomenology is to gain a deeper grasp of what a person’s everyday experiences mean. (Polit and Beck, 2008). Van Manen, (1990), as cited on Shosha Ghada Abu (2012) explains the understanding of phenomenon which was consciously experienced by the person themselves. Max Van Manen (2007) further said that *Phenomenological Research does not develop theory as it provides insight into reality and makes us closer to the living world.*

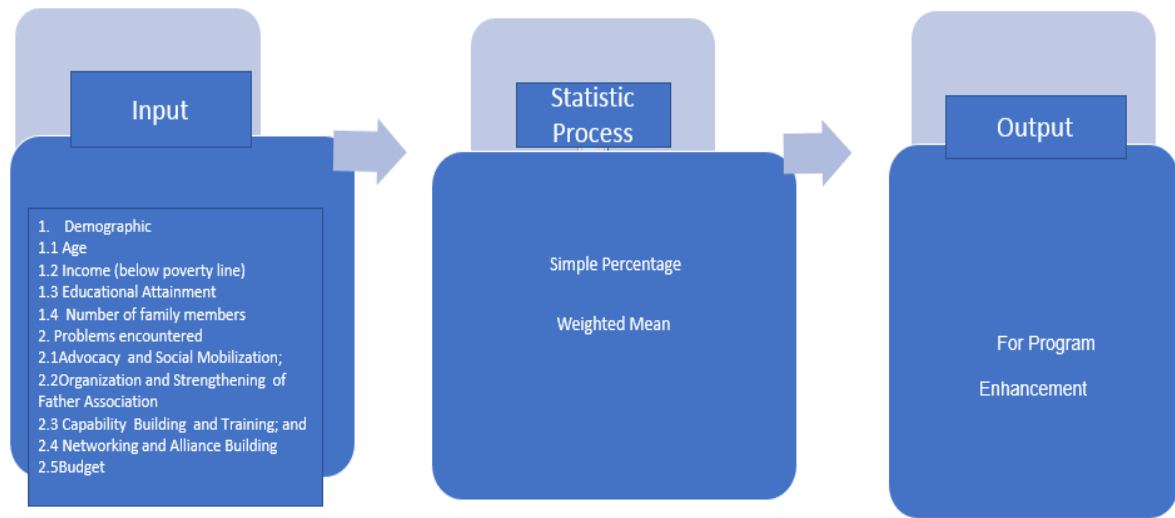


Figure 2
Flow of the Study

Environment

The study covers three cities of Cebu, namely: Lapu Lapu City, Mandaue City and Danao City where the participants of this study came from. There are many beneficiaries coming from the different areas of Cebu but the researcher focused only on the three cities mentioned above.

Participants

The participants of the study came from the three cities of Cebu (2 highly urbanized and 1 component city). The respondents included male spouses who have already attended the ERPAT Training, selected female spouses, male spouses who were qualified for the next scheduled seminar, peers, Pantawid City Links, and community leaders. ERPAT has more or less a hundred members but only those who were willing to be interviewed were selected. They are:

For the ten husbands, only two were from the incoming participants, actually, the researcher had asked 5 for the incoming but only two are willing to be interviewed. It is implied therefore that eight came from those who already attended the seminar. Five wives were taken in at random who were present during the seminar graduation together with the three community leaders and the four DSWD workers

Table I: Distribution of Respondents

Participants	Number of Respondents
Male (husband)	10
Female (Wife)	5
Community leaders	3
DSWD Worker	4
Total	22

Instruments

Interview guide was the main instrument of the study guided by a semi-structured interview (Alison Doyle, October 29, 2018). The interview guide was used to ask the participants about how their role as a father was before attending ERPAT seminar and how their role changed after attending the ERPAT seminar. This study observed two data sources: the participant's interview and data mining under the legal basis of which the ERPAT was founded (page 24-25, RLL).

There were some persuasive reasons for using interview as the primary data source for this study. First, in qualitative research, interview “is used when studying people’s understanding on the meaning of their lived world”. Second, the interview provided an avenue to find out what was in someone else’s mind, and what things they have observed which others could have not observe. Third, qualitative interviews allows evaluators to come up with their own decisions about transferability of the study outcomes based on the results of qualitative interview which comes in bulk descriptions of the subject matter being studied. Lastly, interviews increases the credibility of the findings of the study since it is first hand information obtained from participants (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995)

The study used the individual interview using audio recording and field notes in conceptualizing the plan or design basing on the data collected. The results were triangulated through appropriate and keen observations of the researcher.

Data Gathering and Procedures

To gather the data, the researcher asked permission first from the Dean of the Graduate School, Cebu Technological University, who allowed the researcher to conduct the study outside of university campus. The researcher then sent a letter request addressed to DSWD officers concerned to allow the researcher to interview those who were identified and listed as participants to the incoming seminars as well as the fathers who have already attended the ERPAT seminars.

As soon as the request was approved, the interviews were conducted by a third party to avoid bias, because the researcher is one of the focal persons of ERPAT. However, the researcher stayed in the area only to observe at a distance. The third party was hired subject to the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School of CTU and her adviser.

The interview was done with audio recording while the face to face interview was on going. Questions were based on the self-made interview questionnaire and were interpreted by the researcher. A hypothetical number of 10-20 participants were utilized, until such time when the saturation point was reached. When that point was reached, it was time to decide that there was no need to interview more participants. The researcher prepared open ended questions to guide the interviewers in leading the participants to discuss in detail all information that the researcher needed to know. Audio records of the audio interview were transcribed and translated by the researcher.

Sampling Design and Technique

The researcher used the purposive, convenient sampling technique where only those participants who have attended ERPAT training, spiritual seminars, and those who signed up for the next scheduled seminar were chosen. Since the study used the phenomenological research method, only 8-10 participants were required, according to Wambaleka, (2016).

Ethical Considerations. The study of ethical premise on research included protection of human rights and evaluation of the benefits to ensure that the benefits outweigh the risks if there are any; that in the documentation of informed consent, the participants must be explained of the contents as well as to have an understanding of the activities in the process of recording. The informed consent forms were signed by the participants signifying agreement to participate in the research activities. Prior to the data gathering process, formal authorization to access private information was ensured. After the data gathering, as deemed appropriate, debriefing must be considered in constant communication every now and then. Conflict of interest must also be evaluated, if there are any, as the researcher was involved in the monitoring of the program.

Protection of Human Rights. The right to privacy of the participants must be respected and their consent’s documentation must be considered, as this study focused on participants’ experiences as well as their unique challenges.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

After a thorough gathering of qualitative data through one on one interview somehow, during the exit meeting of the participants a focus group discussions were gathered to make used of the time wherein all the participants were present.

Data analysis using qualitative approach is a design of academic workmanship. Thus, it cannot be done without the information that the researcher uses as the bases of his/her analysis by segregating significant statements and attaching the meaning of it. The process involved identifying similar data together and different data together, looking for patterns and interpreting those that emerged from final themes. This study utilized interview, collected data, then converted them by transcripts formation.

Methodologically, as suggested by Estenberg (2002), qualitative research involved getting intimate with data and described the process as “the main objective of immersing oneself”.

Confidentiality Procedures

It is very important to follow the confidentiality measures of all the information to guarantee that privacy and secrecy of information will be strictly protected. Also the participants was informed that no names will be stated or given to any instruments in order to uphold strict confidentiality.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The profiles of participants were presented first followed by the themes that were identified based on the lived experiences of the participants as evaluated and validated by their spouses who were Pantawid Pamilya Filipino Program beneficiaries.

The lived experiences were discussed with the intention of protecting the personalities involved in the interview. The themes that surfaced were gathered from the noteworthy statement of the participants and segregated based on the researcher’s information.

There were five themes that emerged from the study:

- a.** Advocacy and Social Mobilization; **“Walk the Talk”**
- b.** Organization and Strengthening of Father Association **“ My father My idol”**
- c.** Capability Building and Training **“ Knowledge is Power”**
- d.** Networking and Alliance Building;and **“My Friend My Guiding star”**
- e.** Budget **“My father My provider”**

Participants’ Description:

There were two categories of the participants interviewed:

1. Those who attended and completed the three-day training on ERPAT
2. The half-day orientation on ERPAT with spiritual input on fatherhood; and who those who have no idea what ERPAT is all about, represented by the incoming participants.

Description of the participants who attended the three-day training on ERPAT:

Respondent 1 - is thirty-six years (36) old, married, with 2 children. His wife is a production worker in a local factory. He stays at home and takes care of his children, sends them to school, and does the household chores in the absence of his wife. He has a part time job as “Latu (seaweed) Harvester” in their locality.

Respondent 2 - is fifty-five (55) years old, married, with 4 children and 2 grandchildren. His wife is a housewife. He helps take care of their grandchildren.

Participant 3 - is forty-two (42) years old, married, with 4 children. He is a barangay tanod. His wife is a housewife.

Participant 4 - is forty-six (46) years old, married with 7 children. His wife is a utility worker. He works in his own radiator shop. He does the household chores in the absence of his wife.

Participant 5 - is a fifty- three (53) years old, married with five children his wife is a vendor.

Participant 6 – is a thirty -nine (39) years old with three children. His wife is a house wife.

Participant 7 – is a forty-two (42) years old with 4 children. His wife is a factory worker.

Participant 8- is a fifty-one (52) years old with 4 children. His wife is a laundry woman.

Participant 9- is a fifty-eight (58) years old with 5 children. His wife is a housewife

Participant 10 is a fifty-three (53) years old with 6 children. His wife is a community leader.

Description of the participants who attended the half day orientation of ERPAT with input on spiritual values on fatherhood:

Participant 1 - is fifty (50) years old, married, with 4 children. His wife is a vendor in a small business. He is connected in the local government unit as job order.

Participant 2- is forty -four (44) years old, married with three children all in elementary. His wife is a housewife.

Description of the participants who have no idea of what ERPAT is all about:

Participant 3 - is fifty- four (54) years old, married, with 4 children. He is a habal-habal driver and his wife is a barangay health worker.

Discussion of Findings and Results

ERPAT or Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities aims to engage fathers to become effective and responsive. It gives importance and emphasis on fathers' paternal roles, responsibilities and abilities. It aims to achieve shared parenting tasks in the performance of familial responsibilities. The interview was noted while the interview was on going.

THE THEMES

As the interviewer was collecting data, the researcher observed that there were dramatical changes of the participants' perspective as fathers which they verbally expressed with joy that the seminar or orientation provided them an opportunity to become a better father in their own family.

The main function of the Department of Social Welfare and Development is to provide technical assistance to the Local Government Units. As stated in the Enhanced Guidelines, ERPAT is one of the devolved programs of DSWD, hence, the LGUs are the main implementers. After the three-day training, follow up activities and regular meeting are conducted for monitoring.

The findings of this study were the detailed presentation of the analysis of the lived experiences of the participants.

The interview of participants revealed 5 themes discussed in this chapter. The following discussion details the expressed comments of the participants who attended the three-day ERPAT training: extracted from the significant statements in the ERPAT Enhanced Manual:

Theme # 1: Advocacy and Social Mobilization - This involves the conduct of advocacy and social mobilization activities in securing support and awareness in the implementation of ERPAT in the community. Public awareness and information campaigns shall convey basic messages that promote the important role of Filipino fathers in instilling and fostering love, respect, discipline, industry and care for the family. Indigenous form of media can be utilized to advocate support in the promotion and implementation of ERPAT at the community using local talents and resources.

One time ERPAT training is not enough to capacitate the individual fathers to be mobilized as advocates to peer and community as a whole. There will be a follow through activities to provide an opportunity to become effective influential leaders.

“Walk the Talk”.

All participants recognized their common experiences as individual fathers in dealing with their children.

Participant 1 expressed that *“nindot ang training sa ERPAT kay nakabalo ko nga sayup diay akong pagdala sa akong pamilya sa una”*. He also added that there was a need to change his parental style in order to have peaceful living.

Participant 2 stated that *“sa una sigi lang mi ug away sa akong asawa... sa pagka karon wala na” kay nasabot na ko ug nakaadjust na ug unsa ang kalisod sa kinabuhi sa mga bata nga walay papa.”*

Participant 5 said he was grateful for the orientation because it made him aware that he must change to a better person/father for the sake of his family. He further said *“sa una magsigi ko ug inum unya human sa in depth lecture on spiritual values on fatherhood nausab akong panlantaw sa akong pagkaamahan isip LIG-ON nga FOUNDATION sa paminalay”*.

Participant 6 commented that when it came to household chores, *“nagtuho ko nga para ra na sa babaye sa asawa”*. He said that he needs to attend a seminar on *ERPAT para ma improve iyang kahibalo sa maayong relasyon sa bana ug asawa diha sa pamilya para sa kaugmaon sa mga anak”*.

Participant 7 –said *“Lahi ra ko sa una, love na nako ang akong asawa ug mahadlok sa organization nga magkahibalo sila nga nagbuhat ug bati dili na sila maminaw nako”*

Participant 8 *Pagdisiplina gitarong niya pagdala sa una dako ug tingog aron makasabot og mga bata. Naningkamot siya ipagtunhay ang pagpuyo.*

Theme # 2: Organization and Strengthening of Father Association - This involves the formation of ERPAT core groups composed of leaders at the barangay level who will facilitate the organization of ERPAT. The organized structures shall serve as venues for collective action and participation founded on the principles of cooperation, trust, good communication, and commitment to the promotion of the important roles of fathers in the family and in promoting the social well-being of families as a whole.

Among the areas with ERPAT program in Cebu province, it is only in Lapu-Lapu City where ERPAT is organized in 27 barangays with elected sets of officers. During the interview, the ERPAT federation president expressed that they need to undergo the 3 days training with all barangay presidents. In the interview, he has envision to the group to have legal identity that they will be eligible to venture livelihood for economic empowerment.

My mentor, my idol

Participant 1 stated that, “nagbantay ko nga dili masayup kay para sa akong mga anak ug sa akong reputation sa komunidad”.

Participant 2 commented that, “kabalo ko sa need sa akong mga anak ug importante ang ilang values ug relasyon sa usag usa sa pamilya”.

Participant 4 said that he developed a sense of responsibility in the community by saying, “motabang ko kon dunay clean up drive, ganahan ko motabang kon dunay nanginahanglan”.

Participant 5 affirmed that he established a close relationship with God and with his family by saying, *“mahadlok na ko makasala kay nahimo nako nga good example ug nahimo ko model kay dili nako mosugal”*.

Participant 6 stated that he became a God fearing and God loving person by being a member of Couples for Christ and by being a security guard of the church in their locality. He shared that *“nadapatan niya iyang asawa ug nagkinahanglan siya makatambong ug seminar kabahin sa pamilya.”*

Participants 10 – *“Kanang pangpanarbaho sa balay gisunod sa mga bata. Unsay trabaho sa bata maglung.ag ug hugas plato ug limpyo ug higdaanan”*.

Theme # 3: Capability Building and Training - This involves training and capability-building activities for two (2) sets of implementers:

(1) The ERPAT members or members of the ERPAT associations/groups,

father leaders, and volunteers who are directly trained primarily to enhance their paternal roles and responsibilities; and to sustain the ERPAT service in the community.

Self -awareness is crucial in this stage knowing that a father, like God, sustains, nourishes, and protects, and is an unshakable foundation God purposed from the beginning when He created man.

God gave fathers the responsibility to train and equip everything under their care and when fathers teach their children, they must teach by example, so their children could also learn from the example they see.

Men must physically be with their children so they can father them since it would be hard for them to train or teach children who are not by their side. A child must be able to observe what his father does, what his father says, and what or how his father decides on the real world, so the father could effectively train his child.

Fathers need to disciple their households by allowing their families to observe them behave in a godly manner and in the power of the Holy Spirit guiding them. (*Dr. Myles Munroe, Father as One Whop Disciplines*)

(2) LGU Workers/Implementers or the service providers and implementers who are trained to ensure effective and efficient service implementation and management. The basic courses include community volunteers' development, participatory leadership, peer counseling, organization building and project development and sustainability. Experiential learning activities are also conducted to put substance and deepen the formal training provided to the ERPAT implementers and volunteers.

The Father as Leader in the Home and Community

Being the head has to do with responsibility. A father is the boss of his house; a father is a head. A father doesn't rule the house; he leads his house. So as the leader in the community has a passion and desire to bring out the best in all those under his care: his wife, children and any other family members in the community.

A true leader does not suppress, oppress, or depress the potential and talents of others; he releases them and cultivates them.

Knowledge is Power

Participant 4 said, *"nilambo na ang akong pakig relasyon sa akong kasilinganan. Kon dunay mangayo ug tabang, akong tabangan bisan mangayo ug bugas". Kay kabalo nako unsaon pagadjust nila labi na jud kadtong naglisodlisod.*

Participant 5 said *he displayed positive behaviors as a role model in the community and was active in community activities as ERPAT president and barangay tanud for 9 years".*

Participants 7-said *"Giset up na nako ang tanan aron ang mga anak matarong sa ilang pageswela. Akoy magluto sa pamahaw, trabahanti man sad ang akong asawa"*

Participant 8 said *that after the half day orientation, "nahimo ko nga president sa ERPAT sa tibuok syudad ug nagpatawag ko ug meeting kada quarter sa tabang sa City Social Welfare Office". He also added that "mabinantayon na ko sa akong mga gawi kay daghan nag look up nako as model sa komunidad".*

Theme # 4: Networking and Alliance Building - This involves resource generation and mobilization to achieve the thrusts of networking and alliance building among agencies and father groups as the most important indicators of successful community organization. Networking facilitates sharing of knowledge, skills, and resources among people and organizations in the community. Father-leaders and volunteers and/or father associations are mobilized to generate resources to sustain implementation of ERPAT in the community. This includes family welfare serving agencies and child caring/placing agencies as well as the LGUs and POs in the target areas. Efforts to converge the resources and services of different welfare agencies operating within the area are pursued to ensure optimal use of resources for ERPAT.

My friend my guiding star

Participant 1 commented that *"Kinahanglan pa gyud ko magkat-on ug dili na mobalik sa una nga kasaypanan kay aron dili na masinati ang akong naagian sa batan-on pa ko". He also added that he acted as role model in household chores and shared responsibilities to other members of the family.*

Participant 2 expressed his role as father that, *"nagtan-aw sa kalambuan sa panimalay, pagdisiplina sa mga bata, ug pag giya sa sako nga dalan".*

Participant 6 said *"wala pa gyud koy idea anang ERPAT, naa koy natambongan sa Couples for Christ nga nakatabang sad nako sa akong pagkaamahan". Perso diri nako sa ERPAT naka tugkad sa akong pagkatawo ug unsa gyud ning tinoud nga foundation sa pamilya.*

Participant 7 said, *"mutambag ko sa uban nga Pantawid Pamilya members kon naa silay problema". Ug motudlo ko nila bahin sa akong nakat-onan sa pagattend nako sa ERPAT ug sa uban pa nga ako nabasahan*

Participants 8 said *"Dako jud nig epekto kanila kay sauna maluya ko kay ug remind ang mga anak, pero karon kay naay mag guide para mahimong mapahinumduman kanako unsay maayong buhaton".*

Theme # 5: Budgeting is the allocation intended for the implementation of the ERPAT as devolved program at the Local Government Unit as implementer.

My father, my provider

Participant 1 understood the value of positive development of his children through providing quality education, proper nutrition, peaceful living, and monitoring their day to day whereabouts. This was supported by the wife’s statements which affirmed that, *“all around na siya bisan unsa iyang sudlan, nanahi ug sapatos, nisulod ug construction, kon walay harvest nga latu”*. She also added, *“sa una bati ug batasan, maldito, ug barkadista, pero karon modelo na sa komunidad”*.

Participant 2 revealed that, *“sa una mo majong ko but karon nahunong na kay dili maayo kana nga bisyo. Minus na sad ang sugal diri sa barangay.”*

Participant 4 said, *“niubos ang pang-abuso sa panimalay ug nagmalinawon na ang pagpuyo, wala nay sugal kay kulang gani ang kita”*.

Participant 5 After the spiritual input on God fearing and God loving fatherhood, *“adunay kabag-uhan nako sa akong pagkatawo as a father, mahadlok na ko makasala”*. Grabe gyud ang akong pagpugong sa mga tintasyon.

Participant 6 said that *“akong isiguro nga maka drive ko as habal habal driver, maka-abag ko sa akong asawa nga BHW para sa panginahanglanon sa mga anak nako”*.

Participant 10 said - *Madasig sa pagpaningakamot para kanila ug unsa ka importante ang kalig-on ang relasyon sa Ginoo ug pagsalig nga matuman ang pangandoy sa mga anak sa papaskwela*

Observation

In the separate interviews, the evaluators, consisting of the wives of the participants, discussed their own experiences on how their husbands portrayed their experiences as an individual and father within the family and the community. The table below presents their responses as evaluators.

Evaluators	Lived Experiences
Participant Wife 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taas taas na gyud siya ug pasensya sa mga bata. • Nihatag ug oras ug importansya sa pag-eskwela sa mga bata ug pag giya sa ilang pagdaku • Mapinanggaon ug moatiman sa mga bata ug mohimo sa bulahaton sa balay.
Participant Wife 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sa una permi lang away pero human sa seminar dili na • Sultian nga dili magsigi ug tambay sa computeran ug mopauli sa saktong oras masuko, pero karon mananghid na moadto sa computeran unya mosayo sayo na ug uli. • Mogahin na ug oras pagbantay sa mga anak ug apo
Participant Wife 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Iyang gilantaw ang future sa mga bata sa pag high school ug pag college nila mao nga nag drive na siya ug motor para habal habal. • Mosuporta sa family planning. • Moluto, molaba, ug manglimpyo sa panimalay, motabang sa mga assignment sa mga bata
Participant Wife 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nakaangkon ug respect sa mga anak ug sa kumonidad • Motabang sa bulahaton sa kumonidad, pagluto, clean up drive, brigada eskwela, FDS, assembly, tree planting
Participant Wife 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makapadayag sa maayong idea sa asawa ug mga tawo • Sa una magsugal pero karon dili na, kong moadto man gali sa madjongan motan aw na lang nya kadiyot ra kaayo

DSWD Worker 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Need pa gyud mo attend ug more seminars para ma develop ang self esteem ug good manners.</i> • <i>Mo attend ug assembly ug coastal clean up</i> • <i>Talagsa ra mosimba usahay kung birthday ug uban pang special occasions</i> • <i>Adunay incident on physical abuse</i> • <i>Maglisod sa pag conduct ug peer counseling ug isip resource person</i> • <i>Nay kalambo-an sa ilang pagpuyo ug pagsuport sa 7 ka anak</i> • <i>Naay paggiya sa mga bata ug pagrespeto sa tibouk pamilya</i> • <i>Willing motambong ug training para sa kalambuan sa kaugalingon</i> • <i>Adunay consultation kon maghimo ug desisyon ang panimalay</i> • <i>Talagsa ra mosimba kay naay trabaho ug Domingo</i>
DSWD Worker 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adunay plano nga makahuman ang mga anak</i> • <i>Tagaan ug trabaho ang tanang membro sa panimalay</i> • <i>Adumay moinum pa pero dili mo smoke</i> • <i>Niubos ang pang-abuso sa panimalay</i> • <i>Mo share sa nakat-onan gikan sa training ngadto sa uban</i> • <i>Manggihatagon sa panginahanglan sa mga silingan</i> • <i>Aktibo nga leader isip presidente</i> • <i>Adunay tinguha nga ma train ang mga new sets of officers</i>
DSWD Worker 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Adunay plano nga makahuman ang mga anak</i> • <i>Tagaan ug trabaho ang tanang membro sa panimalay</i> • <i>Adumay moinum pa pero dili mo smoke</i> • <i>Niubos ang pang-abuso sa panimalay</i> • <i>Mo share sa nakat-onan gikan sa training ngadto sa uban</i> • <i>Manggihatagon sa panginahanglan sa mga silingan</i> • <i>Aktibo nga leader isip presidente</i> • <i>Adunay tinguha nga ma train ang mga new sets of officers</i>
Local Social Welfare Officer 1 commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affirmation of the need to capacitate the officers and other male spouses in the locality. • Active and responsible officers • Committed to provide budget allocation for three-day ERPAT training after the election • Appreciative of the lived experiences of the trained participants • We recognized the importance of ERPAT in organizing ERPAT officers in barangay level. • There are impacts in the group of fathers in the community and in their family. • We are planning to request DSWD Region VII to provide technical assistance in the conduct of ERPAT training to all elected presidents in 27 barangays with the barangay officials for the institutionalization of ERPAT in every barangay. After election we be will pursue the plan using the supplemental budget.
Local Social Welfare Officer 2 commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For 2019 WFP, we will integrate ERPAT in our Annual investment plan in the city. • Here in our city, there are existing groups of KATROPA organized by POPCOM We will be calling their leaders and integrate ERAPT in their training incorporating spirituality module. We will write DSWD to be the trainer of the training.

The Research Output

The ERPAT general objectives is to enhance and strengthen parenting capabilities of Filipino fathers in performing their tasks and responsibilities. The specific objectives are: 1) To empower fathers by developing a positive concept of self; 2) To develop and enhance the father's attitudes, knowledge, and skills on Early Childhood Care and Development, preparing and equipping adolescent children in handling and meeting adult roles and responsibilities, and raising children

with spiritual values; 3) To help fathers develop gender sensitivity and appreciation of partnership with their spouses in promoting and enhancing family life by: a) Enhancing and strengthening a positive and satisfying marital relationship; b) Preventing violence in the home; c) Promoting shared parenthood and planned family size; and 4) To establish support networks among fathers in the community and enhance their active participation and involvement especially in establishing a drug-free family, understanding and preventing HIV-AIDS and all forms of violence in the family.

The ERPAT's Target Beneficiaries are males who need better knowledge, attitudes, and skills on fathering, who are unable to cope with familial responsibilities and who fall under the following categories:

- 1) The Local Social Welfare and Development Office (LSWDO) are the direct implementers of ERPAT. Meanwhile, the DSWD through its field offices provide technical support to the LSWDO.
- 2) Lastly, father-leaders are the main actors in community level ERPAT implementation. The Local Government Units (LGUs) fund the implementation of ERPAT. However, private institutions with funding support can be tapped from other agencies like NGO's and LGUs. The DSWD Field Office shall provide technical assistance and resource augmentation and monitor the service implementation.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the lived experiences of the participants, the results reflected that there were commendable changes in the participants who underwent the nine (9) modules of the three-day Enhanced ERPAT Training, specifically with impact on self-awareness, self-empowerment, and impact to family relationship. For the prospect participants who attended the half day orientation with spiritual input on fatherhood and for those who have no idea of what ERPAT is, the results differed in terms of self-awareness as husband and wife relationship as well as displaying God fearing and God loving.

Furthermore, these approaches are observed to be interdependent with one another. Additionally, the study had provided the researcher how dynamic the participants were in selecting leaders who have high level of impact to the community. One of the prospects was elected as president with engagement already in the community as federated president in the locality.

Thus, through the phenomenology theory, it had been shown that self-awareness as to the role of a good father of the family and involvement in the community have been converted into personal commitment anchored on personal values. These changes of mind set need to be supported through responsive strategies or action and enhancement of the program.

Further, the results provided a clear picture on how the quality of the way families interact with one another in the community can be used to direct the fight against societal issues against the destabilization of the family. On the other hand, new approaches of providing spiritual input or family value integrated in every activities can influence the behavior of the father wherein they are either enabled or constrained in their actions as to purpose of their existence.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

After studying and examining the experiences of the fathers attending Empowerment and Reaffirmation of Paternal Abilities Training (ERPAT) and the experiences of the Prospects in terms of impact to them as individual father and member of the family and community, the researcher was able to formulate the following recommendations for further enhancement for Sustainability plan:

1. Multi-faceted approaches should be sustained and enhanced by the agency in fighting social ills that starts in the family. This is due to the fact that family is the basic unit of the society and that in every community, the problem/s can be traced back to the quality/morality of the family in the society. The family is the cure of all social, psychological, emotional, and spiritual ills in our society. The family is the key to have a stable, productive, sensitive, and healthy nation. If we cannot get our family right, we cannot get our nation right. Provision of subsidy to fathers who will attend the three-day seminar in sustaining their daily subsistence while on training is recommended for enhancement.
2. Further study should be conducted in the formulation of mechanisms to address family issues on domestic violence, HIV/AIDS, illegal drugs, child abuse, human trafficking, and broken families/Solo Parents. Because family issues can happen within and outside the family, these mechanisms must be versatile so as to become timely and efficient.
3. Provision of separate funding for the operations of Family and Community Sector from all NGAs from the National Interagency Committee of Filipino Family (NICFF) that are responsive to strengthening of ERPAT implementation incorporating spiritual values of fatherhood as foundation in family.

4. For the Local Government units:

a) Reconstitution of family structure to all Provincial, City and Municipality anchored from NICFF and RIAFF structure with appointment of Focal Person on Family who are specially designated to handle the massive ERPAT implementation and in order to monitor the family good practices.

b) Allocation of budget for ERPAT implementation (e.g., seminar, meetings) and monitoring of issuance of ordinance to all fathers to undergo ERPAT seminars for self-development that would preserve or save the family and community unto the next and unborn generation.

5. For the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) Central Office to review the following guidelines:

a) Creation of Regional Federation of ERPAT President from the federated president officers in the provinces/cities/municipalities to meet quarterly for coordination and collaboration of best practices for sustainability of the program.

b) Attendance to Family Development Session (FDS) to mandate fathers to attend special sessions on the value of fatherhood at least once in a quarter.

c) Allow the City/Municipal Link to take offset/Compensatory Time Day Off during Saturday/Sundays or Holidays in the conduct of ERPAT to respond to the availability of working fathers.

d) Review the Enhanced ERPAT manual to incorporate spiritual values and inputs in every topics or modules for deeper appreciation of the father's role/value based on the original plan of God for all men.

e.. Continuous Improvement through constant updating of the manual

6. Recommend that the subject Spiritual Values and Respect to the Dignity of Men be incorporated/injected to every topics/modules for a better and deeper understanding of the father's role/value based on the original plan of God for all humanity.

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