FAMILY INFLUENCES ON THE LIFESTYLE OF THE FILIPINO YOUTH

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The Philippines, like the rest of the world, is experiencing pervasive socio-economic and cultural transitions brought about by globalization. Continuing modernization, increasing levels of urbanization and industrialization, and the worsening level of poverty in the face of a ballooning debt burden have drastically changed the face of the Filipino society. The impact of such trends cannot be more dramatic than in terms of its effect on the Filipino family. Lack of economic opportunities has led to massive movements resulting in some adjustments in the family structure. Newly emerging forms of living arrangements have compromised the interest of many particularly the younger members of the family as evident in the marked increase in the number of children who are growing up under the care of either solo or surrogate parents. Moreover, the generally urbanward movement among the young has spelled greater independence for them and the resulting diminished parental control and influence may pose undesirable consequences on their behavior. Such changes along with the rapid development in information technology and the spread of mass media provide a special context for the Filipino adolescents.

As various factors compete to impinge on these young people's lives, to what extent has the family remain meaningful to them? A consideration of the family's influence on young people's behavior is important particularly as there are strong indications that it is undergoing some stresses. Addressing this question is also essential in a culture that continues to depend on the family as the primary agency that prepares the child for life in the bigger society. Towards this end, this paper examines the effect of rapid environmental changes on adolescents' lifestyle by examining the association between family variables and adolescent behavior. As the main link between

the society and the individual, the family is assumed to capture societal transitions that will eventually influence the lifestyle of young people.

Particularly, the paper attempts to do the following: (1) describe the nature of Filipino adolescent lifestyle in terms of mass media consumption, and engagement in social behaviors and risk behaviors; (2) describe the familial context of the adolescent as a possible determinant of adolescent lifestyle; (3) determine the correlates of distal, proximal and risk behaviors of the adolescents particularly focusing on the role of family structure, family control variables and parent-adolescent interaction process; and (4) identify the precursor variables to adolescent risk behavior.

This paper makes use of the data provided by the 1994 Young Adult Fertility Study (YAFS II), the first nationally representative sample of adolescents ages 15-24 for both males and females, single and married. This data set provides a rich source of information allowing the scientific study of several dimensions of adolescent social behavior. By identifying some of the possible protective and predisposing factors to risk behaviors, this study hopes to contribute to the furtherance of existing efforts to improve the welfare of the Philippines' adolescent population.
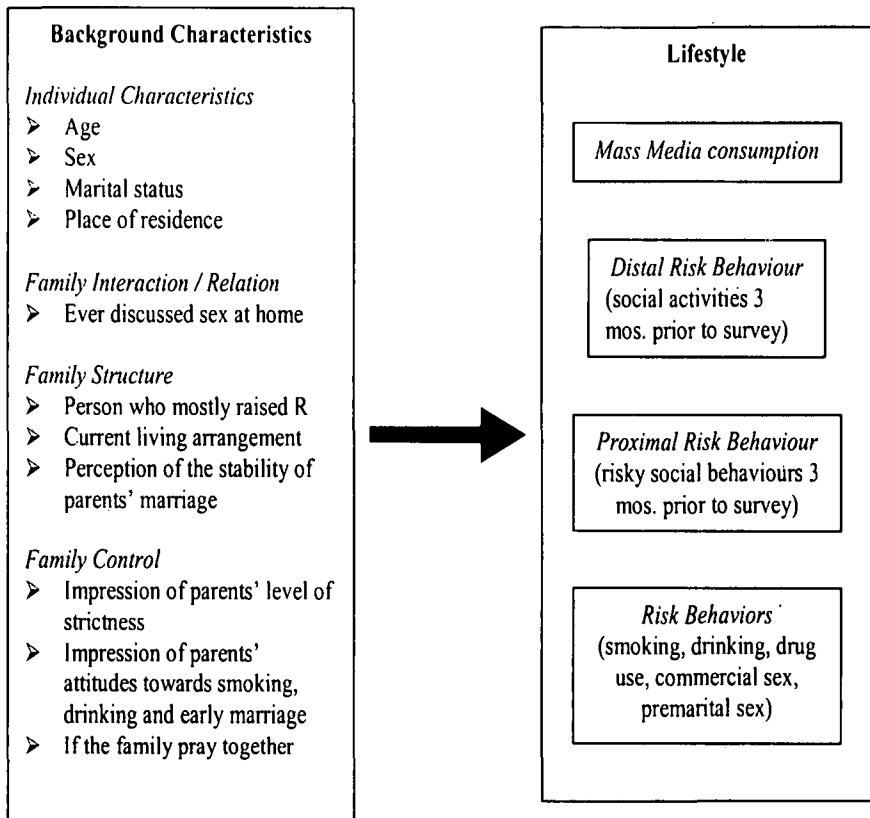
FRAMEWORK OF ANALYSIS

This paper subscribes to the view that adolescent personality is the result of the interplay of various forces including biological, social groups and experiences. As such, it identifies individual characteristics as well as the bigger structure particularly the family as possible influences on adolescent lifestyle. For this study, lifestyle is defined in terms of the activities which the adolescents do during their leisure time such as mass media consumption, and social and risk behaviors. It looks at four areas of possible determinants of adolescent lifestyle namely: individual characteristics of adolescent, family interaction, and family control, and family structure variables (Figure 1).

Individual characteristics is measured in terms of age; gender; marital status, and place of residence.

Family relationship/interaction. The family is an intimate social setting where the child first experiences love, care, and attention that eventually helps in launching him/her to the bigger environment. Unfortunately, YAFS II does not provide sufficient measures of the nature and extent of family

Figure 1.

Background Characteristics	Lifestyle
Individual Characteristics ➤ Age ➤ Sex ➤ Marital status ➤ Place of residence *Family Interaction / Relation* ➤ Ever discussed sex at home *Family Structure* ➤ Person who mostly raised R ➤ Current living arrangement ➤ Perception of the stability of parents' marriage *Family Control* ➤ Impression of parents' level of strictness ➤ Impression of parents' attitudes towards smoking, drinking and early marriage ➤ If the family pray together	*Mass Media consumption* *Distal Risk Behaviour* (social activities 3 mos. prior to survey) *Proximal Risk Behaviour* (risky social behaviours 3 mos. prior to survey) *Risk Behaviors* (smoking, drinking, drug use, commercial sex, premarital sex)

interaction, which makes operationalization of this variable difficult. To provide a glimpse of this process, however, the study used the question on whether sex is discussed at home. Although it ignores specific areas of discussion, the breadth and depth of discussions that took place, the timing of discussion, person the adolescent is most likely to discuss sex and sexual matters with, etc., it is nevertheless an important indicator of family dynamics and integration. It is a measure of the parent-adolescent as well as sibling-to- sibling interaction that centers on an area that is very critical to the adolescent's stage of development. In Philippine culture, where topics such as sex remain to be a taboo, an affirmative response to this question can mean a more open, dynamic, and progressive interaction process within the family.

Family control variables is a measure of the pervasiveness of parental influence on adolescent behavior. Parents, especially mothers, exert a great influence on the child's attitude, norms, values, and standards of right or wrong. Performance of socially accepted behavior is rewarded while

performance of socially undesirable behavior is punished (Panopio and Rolda, 2000). In this study, parenting style is measured in terms of the youth's perception of their parents' level of strictness; perceived parental attitude towards smoking, drinking, and early marriage; and whether the family prays together. It is safe to assume that adolescents who see their parents to hold conservative attitudes regarding these matters are more likely to have been reared in a more conservative family setting and thus are expected to refrain from engaging in risk behaviors. On the other hand, those who view their parents to be more permissive are expected to eventually adopt a more liberal attitude and thus are more likely to engage in risk behaviors.

The variable *parents' level of strictness* was created using the adolescent's responses to some questions which reflect perceived parents' attitude towards some social behaviors/activities. In the study, the respondents were asked if they think their father and mother will approve or disapprove of certain social activities including: going to parties at short notice; going out on a date unchaperoned; smoking; drinking beer or alcoholic beverages; living away from home; getting married at an early age; and overnight study groups. Those who claimed that their parents approved of at least 3 of the seven activities were classified to have "liberal" parents; those who say their parents approved of any two activities were classified to have "moderately strict" parents; while those who identified only one activity were classified to have "strict" parents. Adolescents who claimed their mother or father did not approve any of the said activities were categorized to have "very strict" parents. Such categorization assumes that all seven activities have equal weight. In the study, fathers and mothers on the average, approved 1.7 and 1.5 of the aforementioned activities, respectively.

Another indicator of family control variable is the *adolescent's perception of the father's and mother's attitude toward risk behaviors such as smoking, drinking and early marriage*. This measure provides a glimpse on the defining influence of parents. Following the line of symbolic interactionism, agents of socialization are the ones who set the expectations on certain behaviors (Starrels & Holm, 2000). Adolescents who perceive their parents to frown upon such practices are more likely to restrain from engaging in such behaviors. This is particularly true in the Filipino context where children are socialized to respect and obey the older members of the family, particularly parents. The child's unquestioning obedience is perceived as an expression of gratitude for having been given life by their parents (Go, 1993). Young members of the family are also expected to adhere to family norms due to their economic dependence on their parents.

Family control is likewise indicated by *family religiosity, particularly if the family prays together*. In a highly Catholic setting, the act of praying together is a strong indicator of a conservative family setting which presumably shields the adolescent from venturing into risky activities.

Family structure defines whether the adolescent grew up or is currently residing in a two-parent or alternative family setting. It also includes the youth's perception of the stability of their parents' relationship. Theoretically, adolescents who spend most of their growing years in an intact family structure are expected to have received more adequate guidance and attention which protect them from engaging in risk behaviors. On the other hand, alternative set-ups including disintegrated families either due to parental separation, death or overseas work are expected to predispose adolescents to engage in risk behaviors.

However, since the presence of both parents is not a sufficient indicator of family structure, the adolescent's impression of the stability of parental union was also considered as a qualitative indicator of family structure. It is assumed that a poor spousal relationship is more likely be associated with poorer parent-child interaction, which leads to lower self-esteem among the young making them more vulnerable to risk behaviors.

In terms of lifestyle, two aspects were considered in the study. One is mass media consumption and the other one is social activities adolescents engaged in. In this study, regular exposure to TV, radio, newspaper, comics/magazines/pocketbooks and videos serves as indicator of mass media use.

Another aspect of lifestyle is the social activities that take up most of the adolescents' leisure time. A distinction was made between *distal* and *proximal social risk behaviors*, both considered possible precursor conditions to the practice of risk behaviors (smoking, drinking, drug use, commercial sex and premarital sex). These variables, which represent adolescent activities with peers, serve as indicators of the extent of peer influence on the adolescents. Correlating these with individual and family indicators hopes to reveal the possible tensions between peer and family which will also provide an understanding as to whether family factors can help undermine some of the negative peer influences.

Distal risk behaviors refer to certain social activities that adolescents normally engaged in, usually with their peers and are generally conducive to their social growth and development. While these activities may appear healthy social outlets for the young, they likewise present opportunities for socialization and interaction and serve as a fertile ground from which certain

proximate and risk behaviors may eventuate. In the study, an index for distal risk behavior was computed using information on the respondent's attendance in six selected social activities three months prior to the survey. These activities include: going to parties; disco; excursion/picnics; sports activities; movie houses; fraternity/sorority activities. Adolescents who reported having done any of the activities at least five times for the said duration were given a score of five; those who reported having done these activities 3-4 times were given a score of 3.5; those who said one to two times, 1.0; those who claimed they never participated in any of the said activities, zero. The total score of each respondent was computed. Those who scored zero in all activities were categorized to have 'no distal risk behavior'. Those who scored between 1 to 9.5 were considered to have 'moderate distal risk behavior' while those who scored 10 points or higher were categorized to have 'highly distal risk behaviors'. Registered distal risk behavior scores ranged from 0 to 30 with a mean of 6.9.

Proximal risk behaviors on the other hand, involve social behaviors which present greater risks to the adolescent compared to the distal risk behaviors. In the study, these have been defined to include visiting massage parlors; spending night out with friends; going to strip shows/night clubs; and going to beer houses three months prior to the survey. Just like the index for distal risk behavior, proximal risk behavior index was created using responses for the four activities. Weights were assigned so that those who reported to have engaged in the activity for five or more times in the three months prior to the survey were given a score of five; those who did it 3-4 times were scored 3.5; those who did it at least one to two times, 1.5; and for those who claimed they never undertook the social activity, zero.

A respondent's proximal risk behavior score is derived by adding all his/her scores for all four activities. Responses were classified into three groups namely: 'no proximal/distal behavior' for those who scored zero or those who never joined any of the aforementioned activities three months prior to survey; 'moderate proximal risk behavior' for those who scored 1 to 9.5 and 'high proximal risk behavior' for those whose score was higher than 9.5. In the study, proximal risk behavior scores ranged from 0 to 18.5 with an average of 2.0.

Finally, adolescent *risky social behavior* is measured in terms of five risk behaviors including smoking, drinking, drug use, commercial sex (percent of adolescent male respondents who ever paid a girl for sexual intercourse in the year prior to the survey) and premarital sex (proportion who ever experienced premarital sex).

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A. Context of the Filipino youth

Family interaction: *Interaction on sensitive issues like sex is limited.*

The results of YAFS II indicate a low level of discussion about sex in the family. Only about 14.8 percent of adolescents reported they ever-discussed sex at home. More females, single adolescents and those in the older age cohort (20-24) reported some amount of discussion at home compared with their counterparts (Appendix Table 1). No significant urban-rural differential was noted.

What emerges in the study is a clear gender differential in sex discussion at home, and the limited involvement of parents in such intimate discussions. The latter suggests adolescents' preference to discuss such sensitive issues with somebody within their age bracket. Generally, women, particularly mothers (28.6 percent) and sisters (23.5 percent) are the most preferred discussion partners while fathers are least approached (7.1 percent). Findings also showed that adolescents are more likely to open up with a family member of similar gender. Females are more likely to approach their mothers and sisters while the males warm up more to their brothers (3.9 percent). Thus, discussion levels are not only low, but are also largely between the adolescent and his/her own brothers/sisters, who may not be quite authoritative in terms of providing adequate information that will help these young ones cope with their concerns about sex.

Such low level of family dynamics has some ramifications specifically in sending the adolescents to alternative sources outside the home for sex information. Results of the study revealed that adolescents find their peers, particularly their friends of the same sex (53.5 percent), to be most helpful in providing them with information on sex. Another 16 percent of them obtain their information from either their boyfriends or friends of the opposite sex. More authoritative sources including teachers and mothers are considered secondary sources regarding sex information.

Family structure: *A substantial proportion of young people are predisposed to risk behaviors because of the absence of parental supervision while growing up.*

The family is society's primary agent in the transmission of cultural values, beliefs, and customs; in the molding of personality and character of its members; and in ensuring conformity to norms (Medina, 2001). However,

a confluence of factors associated with the modernization and urbanization process has contributed to the weakening of the family structure. Economic and social opportunities have pulled family members away from home. In addition, the increasing dominance of western technology and media are feared to break the traditional norms and values that used to glue the Filipino family together.

Filipino family configuration is projected to change with the decline in proportion of intact family households from 83 per cent in 1970 to 78 per cent in 2030 (Racelis and Cabegin, 1998). Female single headed households are likewise to rise from nine to 12 per cent for the same period. Consistent with this projection, the present study found that 84 per cent of adolescents have been raised under intact family structure leaving a substantial 16 per cent reared under alternative family set-ups. Similarly, the stronger presence of mothers manifests in the higher proportion claiming to have been raised by mother alone (6.4 percent) or mother and another person (1.7 percent) in contrast with those raised by father only (1.4 percent) or father with another person (0.5 percent) (Appendix Table 1). Although intact families will continue to predominate, the considerable proportion of alternative family types suggests a growing number of our youth who will not be reared under the guidance of both parents.

As children grow older, leaving the parental home becomes a natural occurrence. In the case of the Philippines, however, cultural norms which stress the primacy of the family may delay the departure of children from their parental home. In fact, it is very common to see married couples who continue to live with their parents long after they have started to bear children. The economies of scale of living together also provide incentive for children to continue living with their parents particularly in cases where the cost of housing or the general cost of living is high. However, among families that subscribe to more modern, western views, nest-leaving may occur earlier. Results of the study show that three out of 10 of our adolescents no longer live with their parents at the time of the interview with such arrangement more likely to happen among the older cohort, urban residents, married respondents and the females. This finding tends to agree with the predominant urbanward migration pattern in the country which is selective of young, female migrants. As more and more employment opportunities suited for females in the service sector are made available in urban areas, early nest leaving is expected to prevail in the future. Among those married, about 30 percent continue to live with parents.

A cross classification between the person who raised the adolescent (from birth to age 15) and current living arrangement sheds more light on the extent to which these adolescents have lived with their biological parents

all throughout their childhood and adolescence. It would seem that only about two thirds (63.9 percent) of our youth have so far been living with their parents during childhood and their adolescence. A lower but significant proportion lived with their parents only at some points in their life. Similarly, a small proportion (4.4 percent) had absentee parents throughout this critical period of their life. The latter presents an interesting subgroup in terms of exploring the possible effect of this kind of family set up on risk taking behavior (Table 1).

Table 1. Cross classification between person who mostly raised 'R' and current living arrangement

Type of current living arrangement/sex/place of residence	PERSON WHO MOSTLY RAISED 'R'					
	Father only	Mother only	Both parents	Father &other person	Mother &other person	Others
TOTAL						
Not living with both parents	0.6	2.6	20.6	0.3	0.9	4.4
Living with both parents	0.8	4.0	63.9	0.2	0.2	0.7
MALES						
Not living with both parents	0.5	2.2	16.0	0.2	0.6	3.8
Living with both parents	0.9	4.0	70.0	0.2	0.7	1.1
FEMALES						
Not living with both parents	0.8	3.0	24.8	0.4	1.1	5.1
Living with both parents	0.7	3.9	58.1	0.3	0.7	1.0
URBAN						
Not living with both parents	0.7	3.1	22.9	0.4	1.1	4.9
Living with both parents	0.6	4.2	59.8	0.2	0.8	1.2
RURAL						
Not living with both parents	0.5	2.0	17.6	0.2	0.6	3.8
Living with both parents	1.0	3.7	68.8	0.3	0.6	0.9

Another indicator of family structure considered in the study is the adolescents' perception of the stability of their parents' relationship. It is theorized that adolescents who view their parents' relationship to be more stable are more likely to experience a supportive and intimate interaction with their parents. This link between the quality of spousal relationship and parenting style stems from the fact that parents who are more secure in their adult relationships are more likely to adopt a more supportive parenting approach with their own children. If parents are unable to manage their own adult concerns, this is likely to impinge on the kind of relationship they have with their children. Parent-child relationship is likely to be disrupted and impaired when there is spousal conflict. YAFS II reveals that only three quarters of adolescents claimed their parents' relationship to be stable (Appendix Table 1). Thirteen percent are faced with harsher home environment as indicated by their view that their parents' marriage is somewhat stable, unstable or are separated at the time of the survey. This not-so-rosy picture of the Filipino family finds support in the 2000 McCann Youth Study which shows about a fifth of the youth saying that one of their parents is hurting the other.

Family control variables: *Fathers are more restrictive than mothers and greater restraints are applied on daughters than sons.*

Filipino parents instill norms and values in their children that are consistent with the expectations of society. They do this by direct supervision and control of their children's activities and associations. Children, on the other hand, are expected to be obedient to their parents. Information gathered on the type of parental socialization shows that adolescents generally view their fathers to be more strict compared to their mothers. Moreover, female adolescents are more likely than their male counterparts to claim that their parents are strict (Appendix Table 1). This mirrors the gender differentials in the upbringing of Filipino children where females are generally more protected than the males. Parents are generally more lenient with their adolescent boys than their girls in giving permission for participation in social activities. Such behavior finds support in a culture which continues to give a premium on feminine virtues like virginity implying the need to protect girls more. Philippine society also continues to uphold the value of 'hiya' or shame which impinges more on the women than men. An experience of premarital pregnancy for instance, is more likely to bring shame and loss of face to the woman than to the man .

The act of praying together was also considered as another indicator of family control given the dominant role of religion in shaping the values and

norms in our society. The Philippines prides itself as the only Catholic country in Asia and claims adherence among some 85 per cent of the entire population. But such figure may prove to be a superficial measure if outcome of the religiosity indicators are to be believed. Data show that almost a third (32.1 per cent) of adolescents reported that they do not pray together as a family although this can be explained in part by certain circumstances such as the adolescence's physical distance from their family. Another third either prayed regularly (36.1 per cent) while the rest reportedly did so at least sometimes (31.8 percent).

B. Adolescent lifestyle

Mass media consumption: *Adolescents are major consumers of mass media, with patterns of preference vary across mass media types.*

In our modern age, mass media like television or TV, radio, newspapers, and the like have become very powerful agents of socialization. Although, results are not yet quite conclusive, some studies point to the significant effect of media forms, particularly of TV on the behaviors and attitudes of children (Panopio and Rolda, 2000). The prominence of the mass media among the youth is confirmed by McCann Erickson study of Metro Manila youth done in 1992 which notes that teenagers spends an average of 30 hours of broadcast media weekly.

Findings on mass media exposure show that at least half of the adolescents claimed to have been regularly exposed to the radio a month prior to the survey. TV registered as the second most popular medium reaching about a third of them. This can be explained by higher level of radio ownership compared to TV ownership in the country.

Results also indicate a low regular exposure rate (15 per cent) to reading materials such as newspapers, comic, magazines, pocketbooks and the like. This figure is even lower than that of the general population (age 10 years and over) for the same period, where 23.2 per cent reported reading newspapers for recreation (Central Bureau of statistics, Welfare Indicators, 1994).

A modest proportion (12.1 per cent) of adolescents showed interest in watching videos regularly while a small number (1.7 per cent) claimed to have watched x-rated films regularly and this is more likely to be associated with older, male and urban adolescents.

From a composite index taking into account the five more popular forms of media (radio, TV, newspapers, comics/magazines/pocketbooks and video) the adolescents' relatively low level of regular media exposure seems apparent with about 30 per cent of them claiming to have absolutely no regular exposure to all five forms at least three months prior to the survey. The majority (54.9 per cent) among them had been regularly exposed to just one to two forms of mass media while the rest (15.8 per cent), three or more.

Generally, it is the teenagers (15-19 years old), females, single and urban residents who appear to be bigger consumers of different forms of mass media compared with their counterparts. Significant urban–rural differential is particularly evident in TV (45 vs. 26 percent) and newspaper exposure (21.7 vs. 7.7 percent). Teenagers are also clearly more hooked with the TV compared with their older (20-24 years of age) counterpart. This finding, along with the findings of the McCann Erickson Metro Manila study of adolescents seems to suggest that media exposure, particularly TV, is more of an urban phenomenon.

Among the varying TV shows, most appealing to the youth are sitcoms, news, variety shows, and romance/drama programs. Least interesting to them are talk shows (which usually deal with political and other current issues prevailing in the country) as well as educational and documentary shows. Except for 'sports' shows, females generally dominate viewership of all types of TV programs, which may indicate not only interest but availability to attend to such kind of leisure activity.

Adolescents listen to radio mainly for music and to a lesser extent, news. Unlike TV viewership which wanes with age, the reverse is noted for radio listenership, which increases with age. Readership is not only low particularly among the males, married and rural residents but is more focused towards less substantive materials such as 'romance', 'love story' and 'variety' comics. Newspapers are less widely read particularly in the rural areas. This implies that the wide circulation of national broadsheets hardly reach the adolescent sector of the population.

Interestingly, parents' level of strictness show some protective association with the propensity toward exposure to certain forms of mass media such as movies, video and x-rated films. Although videos and movies are generally wholesome, the proliferation of bold and violent films which are accessible to the young makes them a potential source of negative influence. In fact, juvenile rapes perpetuated by those who claimed to have been stimulated

by bold video films they watched has been reported in the country. It is thus refreshing to note that parental intervention can influence the adolescents' mass media consumption, with those who perceive their parents to be strict less likely to be exposed to such negative media forms compared to those who think their parents are liberal.

Results also indicate the strong linkages between certain risk behaviors and subscription to some negative forms of mass media. Data presented in Appendix Table 2 show how undesirable social behaviors of the young are mutually reinforcing with those who regularly watch X-rated films and other video shows more regularly also more likely to adopt vices such as smoking, drinking, drug use, commercial sex, and engage in premarital sex. Adolescents' regular exposure to such forms of media are also associated with some distal and proximal risk behaviors such as going to night clubs and strip shows. While the causality chain among these variables may be difficult to establish, it nevertheless proves their contaminating effects and connectedness.

Distal risk behaviors: *An average Filipino adolescent is socially restrained*

Appendix Table 3 shows that more than half of the respondents (51.1 per cent) said that they do not engage in any of the six social activities (parties, discos, sports activities, excursions and picnics, fraternity/sorority activities, movies) three months prior to the survey. Older cohort (20-24), males, single, and the urban adolescents were more likely to engage in the distal risk behaviors compared with their counterparts. Results also reveal that one's main activity has a bearing on one's participation in social activities. Males were least likely to say they did not engage in any of the said social activities, while housebound and idle (not working) females were on the other extreme, with about two thirds of them not participating in any of the social activities. Significantly, both working and idle males were most socially active which may be explained by the availability of economic resources for the former and time for the latter to afford such activities. Societal norms which tend to be more tolerant to such male social participation compared to females also explain such outcomes.

Adolescents who view their parents to be more restrictive are more likely to also show restrain in their social activities. Whereas 15.2 per cent of those who claimed their mother is strict did not join any social activity in the period considered, the corresponding figure for those who thought their mother to be liberal is 10.1 per cent.

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Proximal risk behavior: *A sizeable proportion of Filipino adolescents had engaged in social behaviors that have risky influences.*

Engagement in proximal risk behavior which in this study includes visiting massage parlors; spending night out with friends; going to strip shows/night clubs and beer houses three months prior to the survey is more likely among the teen-agers, males, single, and urban adolescents. Although family interaction variables do not lend a definitive result, family structure manifests clearly the possible risks presented by unstable unions on the young members of the family. Adolescents whose parents are separated exhibited the greatest proportion engaging in risky social activities. In like manner, the protective effect of parental values is shown in the strong association between perceived mother or father level of strictness and the lesser likelihood to engage in negative social activities (Appendix Table 4).

C. Risk behaviors: patterns and determinants

In this study, risk behaviors include smoking, drinking, drug use, commercial sex, and premarital sex. Generally, results show the Filipino youth to be more prone to drinking rather than smoking. More than one out of every two adolescent (54.4 per cent) have ever tried alcoholic beverage. However, attrition rate is high, with only less than a tenth (8.2 per cent) claiming to be currently drinking regularly at the time of the study. While only a third have ever tried smoking, they are less likely to overcome the vice, with about a quarter (24.2 per cent) claiming to be currently smoking regularly at the time of the survey (data not shown). Riskier behavior such as drug use (5.7 per cent), commercial sex (7.6 per cent) and premarital sex (17.9 per cent) are less preponderant among the young people. For those who ever experienced commercial sex, this was a relatively recent experience with 39.1 per cent of them claiming to have engaged in it the year prior to the survey (Appendix Table 5). These risk behaviors are more likely to be associated with the older cohort, males, married and urban adolescents. For the urbanites, the behavior may be explained in part by environmental factors, considering the greater proliferation of establishments supporting the practice of such risk behaviors in urban areas.

The extent to which certain family structure, control and interaction variables correlate with the risk behaviors of the adolescents is indicated in the study. Particularly, the protective impact of family prayer (as an index of family control) is shown by the lesser likelihood of engaging in four of the five risk behaviors (except commercial sex which has a low rate of occurrence among all groups of respondents) among those who claimed their family

prays together. Other family control indicators also exhibit well defined association with the adolescents' propensity to engage in harmful social behavior. Having parents who are perceived to hold a liberal attitude increases the odds for the adolescents to engage in risky social behaviors. Family interaction effect is positive, with discussion of sex at home associated with higher odds of drinking and having premarital sex. This positive effect of sex discussion is presumably due to the nature of the discussion which are largely done with their brothers/sisters and thus are less likely to be helpful in terms of providing the necessary sex information that will help them deal with their sexuality and other sex-related concerns (Appendix Table 6).

Family structure indices also indicate that those who grew up under the supervision of their father alone or their father with another partner is associated with greater propensity towards some risk behaviors particularly drug use, commercial sex, and premarital sex. For instance, the proportion who claimed to be currently drinking alcoholic beverages regularly is lesser among those who grew up with both parents (8.3 per cent) as compared to those who were raised single handedly either by their father (10.3 per cent) or mother (9.1 per cent). Adolescents not currently living with their parents are also generally more prone to engage in negative health habits compared to their counterparts who are still living within their parental fold.

Results of the logistic regression show that a stable parental union (as an indicator of family structure) is a strong predictor of risk behavior (Appendix Table 6). Adolescents who view their parents to have a stable marital union are less likely to engage in the four of the five risk behaviors (except commercial sex). Results also show that those raised by both parents were least likely to have ever tried drinking alcoholic beverages compared with their counterparts who were in alternative family arrangements. The foregoing outcomes strongly indicate that family factors expressed in terms of receiving support and positive feedback from parents during growing up years are central sources of positive self-image for the adolescents, which may serve to protect them from engaging in risk behaviors.

The significant role that the family plays in the lives of the adolescents is buttressed by the other findings suggesting the possible intergenerational influences (i.e., parental risk behaviors) on the adolescents risk behaviors. Unfortunately, the YAFS II failed to gather information on the parents' smoking and drinking behaviors. At any rate, information on the adolescents' perception of their parents' attitude towards these vices are available. It can be hypothesized that parents who smoke or drink are more likely to be viewed by their adolescent children to endorse such behaviors. Given this

assumption, one can test the possible intergeneration transmission of health risk behaviors (i.e., from parents to adolescent children) given that parents are very strong role models for their children. This assumption is limited by the fact that some adolescents may suggest a parental behavior similar with their own to justify their own practice of risky social behavior.

Results presented in Table 2 indicate a close association between parental risk behaviors and that of the adolescents'. Adolescents who perceive their parents to favor smoking and drinking are more likely to adopt the vice/s themselves. About nine out of 10 adolescents who thought either their father or mother approved of smoking have ever tried smoking as compared with three out of 10 among those who thought their parents disapproved. While generally, a significant proportion of these young people eventually dropped the vice (probably after a period of experimentation), significantly more of those who thought their parents to be more tolerant tended to retain the habit.

Table 2. Adolescents' perception of their parents' attitude towards smoking, drinking and early marriage, by adolescents' smoking, drinking and nuptiality behavior and attitude

Adolescent risk behaviors	Perceived parents' attitudes towards smoking, drinking and early marriage			
	Father approve	Father disapprove	Mother approve	Mother disapprove
Smoking				
% Ever-smoked	91.2**	30.4	89.6**	31.0
% Currently smoking regularly	51.8**	13.0	54.0**	13.5
Drinking				
% Ever-drank	95.1**	43.6	94.8**	45.0
%Currently drinking regularly	14.8**	4.4	14.8**	4.4
Early Marriage				
% Married	45.6**	12.3	45.6**	12.6
R's expected age at marriage (for unmarried)	24.7**	25.2	24.8	25.2
R's age at marriage	19.1	19.4	19.0	19.4
R's husband's/wife's age at marriage	21.7	22.3	21.7	22.2

* p< 0.05
** p < 0.01
*** p < .001

The intergenerational transmission of attitudes and behaviors likewise finds support in the adolescents' marriage pattern and attitudes. Parents viewed to be more accommodating of early marriage practice are not only associated with married adolescents but also with those who married earlier than their counterparts. For the single adolescents, perception of parental approval of early marriage is also associated with a younger expected age at marriage.

Mass media exposure is also significantly associated with adolescent risk behavior. Results of the study indicate those who admitted regular exposure to x-rated films are more than twice as likely to have ever smoked compared to those who did not get such exposure. Regular exposure to newspapers and videos are also associated with greater propensity towards commercial sex and premarital sex, which tends to suggest the possible liberating effect of mass media (Appendix Table 6).

DISTAL, PROXIMATE AND RISK BEHAVIORS: ARE THEY LINKED?

The interconnectedness of the three clusters of social behaviors including distal, proximal, and risky social behaviors is noted in the study. Those who are more likely to engage in distal behaviors are also more likely to engage in proximate risk behaviors. In like manner, those who scored high in distal and risk behaviors are also more likely to report higher levels of risk behaviors. Significantly higher levels of risk behaviors are manifested among those who engaged in the proximal compared with the distal behaviors. This is quite expected given the more compromising nature of the former, which are more likely to lead to the practice of more risky social behaviors (Table 3).

The apparent linkages among these variables are consistent with the finding showing very significant bearing of the distal and proximal risk behaviors on all five indicators of risk behaviors. Results of the logistic regression analysis reveal that the more adolescents engage in these social activities, the more likely they are to manifest all five risk behaviors. The positive effect of distal and proximal risk behaviors is probably because activities like hanging out in night clubs, strip shows, and the like, are obviously the kinds of environments where other risk activities are likewise acquired. Social outing of men for instance, eventually lead to drinking then smoking, and eventually to brothels.

Table 3. Relationship between distal, proximal and risk behaviors

| Adolescent risk behaviors | Social Activities (3 months prior to survey) | | | | | |
| | Distal | | | Proximal | | |
	None	Moderate	High	None	Moderate	High
Smoking						
• % Ever-smoked	23.8**	32.8	54.0	25.6**	50.8	78.0
• % Currently smoking regularly	19.6**	23.2	26.4	16.5**	24.5	43.0
Drinking						
• % Ever-drank	36.2**	49.8	71.6	41.7**	68.8	89.6
• % Currently drinking regularly	4.4**	6.5	11.8	3.8**	10.1	29.2
% ever-used drugs	1.2**	4.0	11.2	2.1**	8.2	36.5
% ever-paid for sex	2.1**	5.3	11.0	3.2**	8.0	38.4
% ever had premarital sex	20.4**	13.7	26.0	7.0**	19.0	59.2

* p< 0.05
** p < 0.01
*** p < .001

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study highlights the following findings:

- The Filipino family, which serves as the primary social group of the adolescents, is showing initial traces of stress, marked by substantial levels of absentee parenting and unstable marital unions. This is largely the result of options taken by parents (such as overseas migration) as they deal with the pressures of a changing environment. Such change coupled by the increasing levels of migration by the adolescents have given rise to new forms of living arrangements which have taken the youth away from their family environment—a condition that makes them vulnerable to risk behaviors.

- As the family control over the young people recedes in importance, alternative influences particularly the peers and mass media gain prominence. With the increasing westernization of mass media, which threatens traditional values inculcated by the family, its increasing appeal to the young poses serious implications for the development of the younger sector of the Philippines society.

- It is worth noting however, that family values and parental guidance continue to show significant influence in trying to neutralize the influence of media and peers.

- Strong, stable, and intact family environment tend to diminish the impact of outside influences on the adolescent. In the face of the growing environment threats on the adolescents, it is thus important to further strengthen the family as a primary refuge for the adolescent.

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App. table 1. Discussion of sex at home, by selected background characteristics

| | TOTAL | BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS | | | | | | | |
| | | Sex | | Age | | Place of Residence | | Marital Status | |
		Male	Female	15-19	20-24	Urban	Rural	Single	Married
Family interaction									
1. % ever discussed sex at home	14.8	11.9	17.6	14.3	15.5	15.4	14.0	15.0	13.9
2. Proportion who discussed sex at home with:									
• both parents	21.8	22.2	21.6	22.4	21.0	20.3	24.7	22.5	17.9
• father only	7.1	16.6	1.0	7.6	6.5	7.8	5.9	7.9	3.2
• mother only	28.6	11.3	39.8	31.9	24.6	29.6	26.8	28.9	27.5
• both brothers & sisters	18.8	20.3	17.8	17.6	20.3	18.9	18.5	18.8	18.7
• brother only	14.4	31.6	3.4	12.7	16.7	14.0	15.3	15.7	8.0
• sister only	23.5	4.3	35.8	22.8	24.3	22.9	24.5	23.4	23.9
• other relatives	8.3	5.9	9.3	8.2	7.6	8.3	7.3	7.1	12.7
Family structure									
1. Person who mostly raised 'R'									
• father only	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.4	1.5	1.3	1.6	1.3	2.2
• mother only	6.4	6.0	6.8	6.3	6.6	6.9	5.5	6.3	7.0
• both father & mother	84.1	85.6	82.7	84.2	83.9	82.8	86.2	85.1	79.4
• father & another person	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.4	1.0
• mother & another person	1.7	1.4	1.9	1.7	1.6	1.9	1.3	1.6	1.9
• others	5.9	5.3	6.4	5.9	5.9	6.4	4.9	5.3	8.4
2. % currently living with parents	69.7	76.3	63.4	76.0	61.0	66.7	74.7	77.7	29.8
3. % who view their parents' union as stable	74.5	74.2	74.7	76.6	71.6	72.2	77.4	76.1	66.4
Family control variables									
1. Perception of father as									
• very strict	26.3	24.2	28.2	29.6	21.7	27.5	24.4	26.3	26.1
• strict	27.5	29.0	26.1	31.4	22.2	28.1	26.6	28.4	23.0
• moderately strict	23.3	23.2	23.3	23.6	22.9	22.9	24.0	23.7	21.2
• liberal	22.9	23.5	22.3	15.4	33.3	21.6	25.1	21.5	29.7
2. Percption of mother as									
• very strict	19.1	18.8	19.5	22.8	14.0	19.3	18.9	19.4	17.9
• strict	30.0	32.4	27.8	34.0	24.5	30.6	29.0	30.9	25.7
• moderately strict	25.6	25.0	26.1	25.8	25.2	25.7	25.3	26.0	23.4
• liberal	25.3	23.9	26.6	17.4	36.3	24.4	26.8	23.7	33.0
3. % who do not pray together	32.1	32.6	31.6	32.0	32.3	33.2	30.4	31.9	33.2

App. table 2. Distal, proximal and risk behaviors and R's media exposure

	MEDIA EXPOSURE		
	% who watch movies regularly	% who watch video regularly	% who watch x-rated films regularly
A. Distal risk behaviors			
None	2.2**	6.4**	-**
Moderate	5.0	10.1	1.4
High	13.5	19.3	3.1
B.Proximal risk behaviors			
None	5.6**	11.1	1.5**
Moderate	9.7	15.3	2.2
High	21.6	31.9	7.9
C. Risk behaviors			
Ever smoked	9.5**	15.4**	2.9**
Never smoked	5.7	10.3	1.1
Currently smoking regularly	12.2**	17.6**	3.2**
Not currently smoking	9.2	13.4	2.7
Ever tried alcoholic beverage	8.7**	14.3**	2.3**
Never tried alcoholic beverage	5.2	9.9	1.1
Currently drinking alcoholic beverage regularly	12.5**	23.0**	5.1**
Not currently drinking alcoholic beverage regularly	7.4	11.2	1.9
Ever paid girls for sex	13.9**	22.5**	3.0**
Never paid girls for sex	8.0	15.4	2.3
Ever had premarital sex	10.1**	17.0	2.7
Never had premarital sex	6.5	11.3	1.6

*p<0.05   **p<0.01

App. table 3. Correlates of distal risk behaviors

	DISTAL RISK BEHAVIOR			
	(Social Activities 3 months prior to survey)			
	None	Moderate	High	(N)
TOTAL	51.1	46.5	2.4	8463
I. Individual Characteristics				
Age**				
15-19	54.8	43.6	1.6	5590
20-24	43.8	52.6	3.6	104
Gender**				
Female	65.1	34.2	0.7	3746
Male	39.9	56.6	3.5	4701
Marital Status**				
Single	50.9	46.8	2.3	8395
Married	78.4	19.6	-	51
Place of Residence**				
Urban	49.7	47.2	3.0	4789
Rural	53.0	45.7	1.4	3656
II. Parent-Youth Interaction				
Ever discussed sex at home**				
Yes	7.3	60.5	32.2	1636
No	12.2	60.2	27.6	8921
III. Family Structure				
Person who mostly raised R				
Father only	15.6	56.5	27.9	154
Mother only	10.1	59.5	30.4	691
Both father and mother	11.1	60.6	28.3	8907
Father and another person	24.1	57.4	18.5	54
Mother and another person	14.6	57.3	28.1	171
Others	15.0	57.2	27.8	594
R's perception of the stability of parent's marriage				
Stable	10.6	60.5	28.9	7761
Somewhat stable	9.5	61.4	29.1	674
Not stable	17.3	61.7	20.9	196
Parents separated	9.9	60.7	29.4	466
One parent dead	16.6	57.2	26.2	1370
Current living arrangement**				
Not living with both parents	18.8	58.8	22.4	2935
Living with both parents	8.4	60.7	30.9	7107
IV. Family Control Variables				
Father's level of strictness				
Very strict	13.7	62.4	23.8	2729
Strict	12.1	58.9	29.0	29.7
Moderately strict	9.9	61.6	28.5	2490
Liberal	9.8	57.9	32.4	2445
Mother's level of strictness				
Very strict	15.2	62.5	22.3	1981
Strict	11.8	59.6	28.5	3193
Moderately strict	9.7	61.3	29.0	2723
Liberal	10.1	58.1	31.8	2674

*p<0.05   **p<0.01

App. table 4. Correlates of proximal risk behaviors

| | Proximal RISK BEHAVIOR | | | |
| | (Risky social behavior 3 months prior to survey) | | | |
	None	Moderate	High	(N)
I. Individual Characteristics				
Age**				
15-19	9.0	61.1	29.9	6151
20-24	14.9	58.9	26.1	6365
Gender**				
Female	18.1	66.8	15.1	5401
Male	4.6	53.3	42.1	5170
Marital Status**				
Single	7.1	60.8	32.1	8766
Married	32.7	57.3	10.0	1806
Place of Residence**				
Urban	10.0	59.8	30.2	5797
Rural	13.3	60.7	26.1	4775
II. Parent-Youth Interaction				
Ever discussed sex at home**				
Yes	46.0	50.7	3.2	1297
No	52.0	45.9	2.1	7131
III. Family Structure				
Person who mostly raised R				
Father only	51.8	44.5	3.6	110
Mother only	52.6	45.1	2.4	546
Both father and mother	51.4	46.4	2.2	7185
Father and another person	45.7	43.3	-	35
Mother and another person	42.9	54.9	-	133
Others	46.5	49.7	3.9	437
R's perception of the stability of parent's marriage				
Stable	51.3	46.5	2.2	6330
Somewhat stable	50.3	47.1	2.6	535
Not stable	60.3	37.7	-	151
Parents separated	45.0	51.1	3.9	362
One parent dead	50.6	47.3	2.1	1993
Current living arrangement**				
Not living with both parents	52.7	44.1	3.3	1713
Living with both parents	50.5	47.5	2.0	6337
IV. Family Control Variables				
Father's level of strictness				
Very strict	59.3	39.0	1.7	2193
Strict	54.7	43.7	1.6	2378
Moderately strict	48.7	48.9	2.5	50
Liberal	39.4	57.0	3.6	1839
Mother's level of strictness				
Very strict	62.6	36.1	1.3	1603
Strict	54.3	44.0	1.7	2606
Moderately strict	48.9	48.9	2.2	2226
Liberal	40.1	56.0	3.8	2010

*p<0.05   **p<0.01

App. table 5. Correlates of risk behaviors

	RISK BEHAVIOR				
	% ever smoked	% ever drank alcohol	% ever used drugs	% ever paid for sex	% ever had PMS
Total	37.6	54.4	5.7	7.6	17.9
I. Individual Characteristics					
Age**					
15-19	29.4*	44.8**	3.2**	2.8**	8.1**
20-24	49.0	67.7	9.2	14.4	31.5
Gender**					
Female	16.5**	36.5**	1.0**	-	26.2**
Male	60.1	73.6	10.9	7.6	10.2
Marital Status**					
Single	36.8**	53.7**	5.5**	7.2**	12.9**
Married	41.2	57.6	7.1	11.8	42.0
Place of Residence**					
Urban	39.8**	56.8**	6.5**	9.0**	19.3*
Rural	34.9	51.5	4.8	5.9	16.2
II. Parent-Youth Interaction					
Ever discussed sex at home**					
Yes	35.9	56.2	5.7	11.5**	19.0
No	37.9	54.1	5.8	7.1	17.7
III. Family Structure					
Person who mostly raised R					
Father only	42.9	51.3	10.3**	5.4	21.9
Mother only	37.3	54.8	6.1	8.8	18.5
Both father and mother	37.5	54.2	5.4	7.6	17.5
Father and another person	37.3	58.6	-	12.5	20.3
Mother and another person	40.0	57.8	6.1	5.4	14.5
Others	37.0	55.6	9.0	7.6	23.0
R's perception of the stability of parent's marriage					
Stable	35.9**	53.1**	5.0**	7.2	16.7**
Somewhat stable	42.6	58.1	8.0	7.4	21.6
Not stable	51.3	60.2	6.2	6.6	21.8
Parents separated	42.7	59.8	10.6	10.9	22.7
One parent dead	41.3	57.2	7.4	8.9	20.9
Current living arrangement**					
Not living with both parents	37.8	55.7*	6.6**	9.7**	24.6**
Living with both parents	37.7	53.9	5.6	7.0	15.1
IV. Family Control Variables					
Father's level of strictness					
Very strict	30.8**	43.6**	4.3**	5.3	14.6**
Strict	32.7	46.9	4.3	5.1	14.2
Moderately strict	36.4	57.0	5.5	7.5	16.5
Liberal	52.1	72.5	9.3	13.2	27.5
Mother's level of strictness					
Very strict	27.7**	38.8	3.6	3.3**	12.6**
Strict	33.6	48.3	4.0	5.5	14.3
Moderately strict	37.5	36.9	5.9	7.1	17.0
Liberal	49.7	70.5	9.3	14.3	27.0
N	(4086)	(5914)	(623)	(399)	(1940)

*p<0.05   **p<0.01

App. table 6. Logistic regression estimates predicting the likelihood of selected risk behaviors (odds ratio/statistical significance

	% ever smoked	% ever drank alcohol	% ever used drugs	% ever paid for sex	% ever had PMS
I. Individual Characteristics					
• age (20-24)	2.246**	2.632**	2.344**	4.090**	4.351**
• residence (urban)	1.146*	1.272**			1.346**
• marital status (single)					0.122**
• sex (female)	0.132**	0.219**	0.099**		0.093**
II. Parent-Youth Interaction					
• (discuss sex at home)		1.237**			1.246*
III. Family Structure					
• Person who mostly raised 'R' from birth to age 15 (both parents)		0.727**			
• Current living arrangement (with both parents)					
• Perceived stability of parents marital union (stable)	0.708**	0.796**	0.658*		0.789**
IV. Family Control Variables					
• Father's level of strictness	1.111**	1.272**	1.088**		1.112*
• Mother's level of strictness	1.270**	1.262**	1.216**	1.284**	1.111*
• Religiosity (family prays together)	0.689**	0.714**	0.683**		0.835*
V. Mass Media Exposure					
• TV (watch regularly)		0.885*		1.359**	
• Radio (listen regularly)		1.242**			1.174*
• Newspaper (read regularly)	1.228**			1.804**	1.398**
• Comics (read regularly)					
• Movies (watch regularly)					
• Video (watch regularly)				1.461*	1.548**
• X-rated films (watch regularly)	2.162**				
VI. Distal Risk Behavior	1.030**	1.056**	1.045**	1.035**	1.057**
VII. Proximal Risk Behavior	1.152**	1.142**	1.198**	1.179**	1.146**

Omitted categories are as follows: age (15-19), residence (rural); marital status (married); sex (male); family interaction (do not discuss sex at home); person who mostly raised 'R' from birth to age 15 (not both parents); current living arrangement (not living with both parents); perceived stability of parent's marital union (not stable/separated/dead); father and mother's level of strictness are continuous variables with values ranging from 0 to 7 (o very strict, 7 very liberal); religiosity (family does not pray together)' TV (does not watch TV regularly); radio (does not listen to radio regularly); newspaper (does not read regularly); comics (does not read regularly); movies (does not watch regularly); video (does not watch regularly); x-rated (does not watch regularly); distal and proximal risk behaviors are continuous variables ranging from 0 to 30 and 0 to 18.5, respectively (0 being least risky and highest values being most risky behavior).
*p<0.05
**p<0.01