

Editor's Preface

THIS SPECIAL ISSUE of the *Philippine Sociological Review (PSR)* on the family puts together some of the more recent work done by social scientists on the Filipino family and which highlight the responses of Filipino families to contemporary social changes.

In the first article "What are Families For?", psychologist Elizabeth R. Ventura shows that like elsewhere, changing lifestyles and modernization processes are eroding traditional supports to the cohesion of the Filipino family. The emergence of alternative family forms other than the traditional nuclear family and increasing difficulties in the pursuit of material improvement by family members are challenging the Filipino family's ability to perform its affective and educative functions. She argues that compared to other family forms, the traditional nuclear family remains the more effective caregiver and socializing agent of children. The presence of both parents in the nuclear family enhances its ability to provide the core psychological elements necessary for normal growth and human development.

Sociologist Maruja M.B. Asis tackles family-related issues arising from ongoing international labor migrations in her

article "Family Ties in a World Without Borders." She attempts to re-examine the much debated consequences of overseas employment on Filipino families and finds that both the perceived economic benefits and social costs of the overseas contract workers (OCW) phenomenon may be overrated. Because the impact of overseas employment on families is neither unidirectional nor total for all affected groups and individuals, she proposes a change in perspectives for analyzing how families respond to the opportunities and challenges posed by overseas employment. Asis sees more useful a perspective which looks at the gains and losses of individual family members, and which views the survival of the migrant worker household as resulting from its ability to balance its gains and losses from overseas employment.

"Four Meanings of Fatherhood" by psychologist Allen L. Tan is a useful addition to the literature on the role of fathers, the role least explored in Filipino family research. Rating the parental role of fathers along an activity dimension (i.e., their degree of involvement with children) and an affective dimension (the emotional tone of their involvement with children), Tan puts forward four prototypes of fatherhood—the procreator-father

who equates fatherhood primarily with the raising of and providing for children; the dilettante-father who is often away from home but who maintains a warm relationship with his children; the determinative-father who sees fatherhood as a task and obligation and is obsessed with directing his children's lives; and the generative-father who spends much time with children and enjoys being with them such that fatherhood becomes an opportunity for his own growth and fulfillment. Given the limited involvement of Filipino fathers in childrearing to that of economic provider and disciplinarian, Tan assesses that Filipino fathers tend to fall into the procreator- and dilettante-father types. Relating the four father types to the psychohistorical evolution of the family, he further speculates that the generative-father represents the most adaptive type for dealing with the inexorable move of the Philippines towards change and development in the 21st century.

Drawing from the life-experiences of urban poor children living in the streets of the country's foremost metropolitan centers, sociologist Emma E. Porio, in her paper "Children of the Streets: Socialization and Formation of the Self in Rapidly Urbanizing Contexts," takes issue with the portrayal of Filipino socialization as entailing a smooth process where children gradually assume adult roles and responsibilities in accordance with their physical and emotional development. She notes that even among middle class families enjoying the privacy of a home and other amenities of family life, socialization is tension-filled and involves constant negotiations and contestations between parents and children. This is even more so among urban poor families, as attested to by the growing number of streetchildren in Metropolitan Manila and

Cebu. The stages of childhood, adolescence and adulthood blur in the experience of streetchildren and follow neither their age, emotional maturity nor social development. Porio concludes that among the urban poor, families are not the primary socializing agents as children are forced from early on to relate with various communities consisting of peer groups, neighborhoods, city-thugs, criminal elements, and other strangers and characters in city streets.

In his paper on "The Elderly in Filipino Households: Current Status and Future Prospects", sociologist-demographer Michael A. Costello presents a sociodemographic profile of the Filipino elderly and examines other data relating to their living arrangements, economic support, health status, and social involvements. He finds that currently available evidence do not lend clear support to the contention that urbanization and modernization present threats to the support and well-being of the Filipino elderly. While modernization may be eroding the ethos of familism, the Filipino elderly continue to live with families and be cared for by children and kin. Neither are the Filipino elderly shown to be living in extreme poverty. A sizable number of them are economically active and own houses, land and other assets. Compared to their counterparts in other Asian countries moreover, the Filipino elderly score highly in indicators of physical, mental and emotional health. They also maintain regular contacts with friends and kin and are all joiners of local church organizations. In general, traditional family values appear to have eased the Filipino's transition to old age in an otherwise rapidly modernizing context. The respect/deference shown by children to parents, for example, has ensured continuing family care for the elderly, while extended family ties help

channel assistance to the neediest of the elderly. Despite their favorable conditions, however, Costello calls for policy measures to deal with the marginalized poor among the elderly (particularly widows with no means of support) and to preserve those positive traditional family values before they are completely eroded by modernization.

Two articles on household decision-making are also included in this issue. These are "The Roles of Husbands and Wives in Household Decision-making" by sociologist Fely P. David and "Gender Roles, Fertility and the Status of Married Filipino Men and Women" by sociologist-demographer Adelamar N. Alcantara. Analyzing different data sets, David's and Alcantara's findings lend further support to the observation that household decision-making in the Philippines is largely egalitarian, although certain areas of decision-making exhibit either some female bias (i.e., household budget and management) or a male bias (household finances). Looking into the impact of the individual socioeconomic characteristics of wives and husbands on household decision-making, David's data show that increasing education among husbands contributes to egalitarian processes. Husbands with more education tend to relinquish some of their prerogatives in male-oriented decision areas and participate more in female-oriented ones. Likewise, the employment and education of wives tend to counterbalance male-dominance in areas involving major household financial outlays, but not in family-planning decision areas. However, the wife's increasing education appears to more effectively counteract the prevailing male bias in family planning decisions. David suggests that compared to poorly educated wives, those with more education can better communicate their fertility and family planning preferences to their husbands.

Alcantara's paper attempts to test the proposition that women's household income contributions and fertility status influence the balance of power between husbands and wives. Employing a series of multiple regression analysis that control for related variables, she finds that socioeconomic factors including the wife's (and the husband's) income do not significantly alter their roles in household decision-making. The increasing education of women by itself does not also improve their negotiating power in household decisions, although a comparative educational edge (i.e., where wives exhibit more education than their husbands) is shown to do so. Compared to socioeconomic factors, fertility emerges in Alcantara's analysis to be the more important correlate of women's power in the home. Childlessness leaves women with little influence in household decisions, but having a child empowers them. Beyond having one or two children, however, additional children do not necessarily make women even more influential in the home. Wives with many children in fact may end up with less say on household matters as their childless counterparts.

A related paper on household structures is "Filipino Families and Households in Three Selected Philippine Areas" jointly authored by sociologist Belen T.G. Medina and demographer Eliseo de Guzman. Using a sample of households drawn from Metro Manila, Cebu and Ilocos Sur, the authors examine variations in household/family sizes, composition and headship by rural-urban location and socioeconomic class. Their data show household sizes to be larger in urban than rural areas owing to the immigration of relatives in the cities and the depletion of rural households by out-migration. Household sizes are also larger among the rich than among the

poor due to the presence of other relatives and domestic helpers in rich households. Poor households exhibit larger family sizes, however, in view of higher fertility patterns among the poor. In terms of household composition, households in the Philippines remain predominantly nuclear, although given in-migration to the cities and the tendency of richer classes to lend support to poorer relatives, extended households are more characteristic of urban and rich households. Next to nuclear households, the most common household form consists of a three-generation family or a vertically extended household. Finally, the increasing incidence of female headship in the country is associated more with urban than rural areas, richer than poorer classes, and extended than nuclear household structures.

In his paper "The Life Cycle of the Household and Selected Characteristics: A Search and Discussion," anthropologist Wilfredo F. Arce uses a subset of the 1990 Census to explore life cycle stages among Filipino families and to look into some of the correlates of Filipino household structures. On the whole, his findings reveal two clearly delineated life stages—a beginning phase when the nuclear family establishes itself as an independent unit and which usually occurs when the household head is in his late 30s to early 40s, and an end phase when the family assumes a part-nuclear extended form at a time when the household head is in his late 50s and early 60s. Household size does not necessarily diminish in the transition of families from nuclear to extended since the reduction in the nuclear family's core members is often matched by the addition of other relatives. Nuclear families at the beginning of the life cycle exhibit high child dependency ratios and are headed by men. Extended household forms towards

the end of the life cycle have high adult dependency ratios (among elderly members and other adult relatives) and tend to be headed by women. The socioeconomic conditions of households are not shown to differ too much across the nuclear-extended life cycle dimension as they do by the rural-urban location of households.

Titled "Mobility, Family Formation and Fertility in a Transitional Society: Toward a Theoretical Synthesis," the final contribution to this issue is written by sociologist-demographer Lysander Padilla. In light of the increasing "feminization" of the Philippines' national and international migration streams including those of OCWs, Padilla revives discussion on the relationship between migration, family formation, and fertility. He presents a review of relevant literature and critiques the dominant selectivity and assimilation perspectives in migration-fertility studies which attribute the lower fertility of migrants to factors other than the act of migration itself. He proposes that the alternative "disruption hypothesis" is a better tool for examining the impact of increasing national and international migration on the country's fertility. Given the incompatibility between migration activities and family formation processes, the disruption hypothesis sees migration as a powerful depressant of fertility. Migration can interfere with fertility in various ways—by delaying the timing of marriage, reducing the frequency of sexual relations between spouses, and engaging the time and resources of women and married couples in pursuits and activities other than bearing and rearing children.

This issue also contains a tribute to the late Dr. Chester L. Hunt who helped in the establishment of Sociology as a

discipline in the Philippines, and in the founding of the Philippine Sociological Society and the *Philippine Sociological Review*.

Finally, the PSS and the *PSR* acknowledge the assistance provided by the

Population Council-Manila through its host-country advisor, Dr. Marilou Palabrica-Costello, for the preparation of this special issue on the family. UNFPA-NEDA also provided assistance for the popularization of the foregoing studies on the Filipino family.

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