# **A GLIMPSE OF REALITY: THE CHALLENGES OF EXPECTATIONS ON FIRST-BORN**

# **OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS**

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# **ENDORSEMENT**

This research paper entitled "A GLIMPSE OF REALITY: THE CHALLENGES OF EXPECTATIONS ON FIRST-BORN OVERSEAS FILIPINO WORKERS" is prepared by **Jm Pauline C. Olea, Cloie September S. Lang-ay, Cleo Angela M. Vergara, and Japheth Rae B. Fernandez**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Practical Research 2 of 12 HUMSS has been examined and recommended for acceptance and approval for oral defense.

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# **DEDICATION**

This paper is dedicated to the hundreds and millions of first-borns and Overseas Filipino Workers who experienced all hardships, epitomized resilience, braved through barriers, and adapted to unfamiliar environments for the sake of their dreams and family. We honor your sacrifices and salute your determination to find your passions and hopes for a brighter future.

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# **ABSTRACT**

This study determined the challenges of expectations faced by first-borns and described their coping mechanisms of its implications. Data were collected through a video interview of 12 first-born Overseas Filipino Workers ages 24-35 years old from La Union. This captured emotions and unfolded life experiences that explored the factors of parental expectations and stereotypes. Results showed portraying good image to siblings, burdens of financial support, and inner dilemma of family beholdenness has allowed adherence to perceptions such as being breadwinners, overwhelmed of the adaptability processes, and posed difficulties to their current situations. However, such struggles urged established motivational trust and independence that led to role fulfillment,  discovered passion, and gained life satisfaction. Peer influence with means of familial sacrifice drove their persistence in hopes of better opportunities and life growth. First-borns amidst hardships and societal perceptions stood amidst hurdles, manifesting resilience , and embodying accountability even to the their future generations.

**Keywords:** First-born, OFW, Challenges , Expectations, Experiences

**Chapter I**

**INTRODUCTION**

## **Background of the Study**

  Combs-Draughn (2016) interpreted that birth order is the placement of a child into which he was born and was commonly determined through first-born, the middle child, last-born, or only child. Through frequent psychological discussions, Adler suggested that an individual's personality traits are predominantly drawn from the order of birth. In Filipino, first-borns, or "Panganay," are perfectionists and overachievers. These perceptions or stereotypes towards them are overall based upon the significant outcomes of their academic or work environment as they are consciously and unconsciously pressured to comply with the imposed roles that society expects (Consten, 2017).

Perceptions are defined as ways or means of how one suppose and idealize something or someone. These are unconscious or conscious biases that were selectively chosen based on what one intends to perceive or is interpreted with similar insights, experiences, and behaviors (Qiong, 2017). The roots of these idealized versions of people stemmed from perceiving or generalizations that influenced one's insight towards others and themselves. Hence, the creation of concepts or impressions regarding the oldest sibling implied on their roles. Stereotypes, or generalized representations of attributes, has influenced people to conform to or perceive others that can distort one's image (Freeman, 2016)

Keenly pushed by expectations, perceptions arised as stereotypes and were highly endorsed by society. Common stereotypes includes academic achievements and satisfactory intellectual performance (Esposito et al., 2019). At the same time, adult first-borns are expected to accomplish complete educational attainment with respectable occupations and job opportunities (Hertler, 2017). Psychologists such as Adler and Sulloway investigated the interrelationship of birth order and personality traits, wherein it was concluded that each offspring had been designated a specific intelligence on the emotional or cognitive aspect. Sultan & Malik (2020) stated that first-born children are observed to build up flexible and resilient demeanor, yet they tend to be less forgiving when compared to second and last children. Aside from societal demands, parental figures are included in the firstborn.

Parental involvement in a child's life is considered a crucial variable as it affects the flow of development, whether in aspects of cognitive, emotional, psychological, or social growth. An investigation similar to Tan 2018's *Approach on Chinese Siblings* by Ahuja (2018) highlights a typical Indian parenting strategy that exercised an authoritarian approach from both mother and father figures, particularly on their first-born female offspring that experienced early stages of adolescence. This study demonstrated that treatment within the household resulted in the firstborn's goal-oriented behavior as it cultivates the *'breadwinner'* role established by the Asian culture.

Furthermore, there was an emphasis on how the distribution of parental investment towards each child matched the measurement of responsibility designated to an offspring. For example, the eldest child in a family generally received a more outstanding obligation because the parents relied on the firstborn as a future parent surrogate to his siblings (Consten,2017). Additionally, there was an explanation that varied parental investment according to each child were widely labeled as "favoritism" by the siblings and promoted rivalry and competition. Younger siblings were more likely to be pampered by parental attention,which allowed the first child to face insecurity due to deprivation of attention (Ahuja,2018).

A recent analysis by Tan (2018) regarding Asian culture justified that the evident disparity of parental engagement has shaped their children's characteristic traits as a child's identity was primarily formed inside a domestic setting. This perception allowed the oldest child to continuously depend on validation from parental figures to develop confidence, self-esteem, and a strong sense of dominance among peers. It is where their social relationships are varied. Amidst expectations, first-borns aimed to maintain their leading and achievement-oriented personality. They were less inclined to accept lies and least likely to relate to their peers as their equals (Sultan & Malik, 2020).

Bertoni & Brunello (2016) also concluded that social circles are viewed as threats rather than peers, especially when an eldest child's developed superiority is threatened. Therefore, these circumstances were notably significant for a firstborn's development as they felt obliged to become a role model while havin gained validation from the adults around them (Hertwig et al., 2019). The academic roles among first-borns was also rampant, being seen as leaders and successors. They were driven by imposing rules, giving them a sense of authority and a higher intelligence level (Stiel, 2019). Their parents' high support propped this insight to them. Educational resources achievements are not promised to be given equally to siblings. However, the oldest had the upper hand because they can be around for a more extended period than their younger siblings. Hence, they are attentively seen (Combs, 2016).

Despite being deemed perfectionists, achievers, and authoritative, the local context stated otherwise and described how firstborns are empathetic and sacrificial. In a Filipino setting, an investigation by Hall, Garabiles & Latkin (2019) Filipinos are globally known to possess strong family ties. This trait is observed through the continuous financial provision of employed children for the whole family's benefit (Garabiles, Ofreneo & Hall, 2017). This setting profoundly indicated why a percentage of 46.9% of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are "panganays'' aged 25 to 34 years old are primarily motivated to seek job opportunities abroad to raise the family from poverty as well as cover educational expenses for the younger siblings (Garabiles et al., 2019). In addition, according to a study wherein it addresses a first child's tolerance or "pagpaparaya" in a Filipino family, a lot of these "panganays'' opted to sacrifice for work abroad due to financial crisis as it is what is expected from them (Carillo, 2016). According to a study, wherein it addressed a first child's tolerance or "pagpaparaya" in a Filipino family, a lot of these "panganays" opted to sacrifice for work abroad due to financial crisis. In addition, their sense of responsibility towards their sibling has been highlighted in a study about OFW seafarers, with indication that as the eldest, they have helped in providing for their family and supported the education of their siblings (Bendicio, 2019). The influences of their life circumstances were more significant than their ambitions, as they readily gave up the latter for family (Carillo, 2016).

For these reasons, this research aimed to broaden the Filipino context and recognized the common perceptions, specifically on first-born Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) ages 24-35 years old, and depicted how these perceptions led to expectations. The effects of these expectations were described through their coping mechanisms that helped gain insights into their realities. Specific researches had addressed expectations such as being overachievers, perfectionists, and anticipated breadwinners. However, there were limited data on how such expectations posed challenges to first-borns and if they are even considered challenges or just social constructs. The element of its primary decisive key to further understanding remained unseen amidst common perceptions. Families differ in dynamics, and relationships varied from one another. The study determined the essential causes of personalities and such perception that posed significant challenges to first-born. This research have not only contributed to local data but factors in recognizing relationships and struggles which was reflected by the oldest child's life in the family.

## **Framework of the Study**

*The Stereotype Theory*

As stated by Walter Lipmann, stereotypes reflect perceptions, interpretation of facts while acknowledging them through past experiences. It is stated that these can be one-sided judgments that affect perceptions and categorize them in a variety of principles (Salevskaya, 2020). Today, stereotypes are known to percept systematic ideas involving one's nature and are shaped by their environment. However, it is deemed incomplete and relative if individuals are flexible enough to contradict their perceptions of other people and the world (Palchevska, 2021).

*Personality Of Child Theory*

In theory by CG Jung, he emphasized that a child's personality relatively conforms to their parents' attitudes. It has been systematic and persistent since their early childhood days. He also included how each has their collective unconscious that affects how they evolve through time. These were fondly called "archetypes" (Singh, 2020). This theory was used as a basis in the Myer Briggs Personality Test, which emphasized how genes and conditions affect one's identity. However, Jung sets its definition apart by focusing on how the rest of the world sees the circumstances of the child and their perceptions which can be impacted by their birth orders (Ooi & Putri, 2019).

*Adlerian Theory*

Alfred Adler, a modern psychologist, theorized about the birth order personality of a child. According to him, birth orders affect one's work options, obligations, and self-esteem. It was also specified that first-borns are more noticed, even as students, and have been getting more care from their parents than their other siblings. This theory also supports that as the oldest, they are less prone to risky behaviors and spontaneous experiences than their later-born siblings (Pasqualini, 2020). In further studies, Parental treatment towards the oldest tends to guide and build personalities. This behavior results in them being more dedicated, maintaining high standards, and establishing their integrity (Nhandi, 2017).

*Family Niche Theory*

Sulloway supposed the connections between the difference in personalities and siblingship by differentiating each of the niches in a family. "Niche" describes the distinct roles of a member in a family wherein one adapts to their varying roles such as gender, body traits, and nature. Society, in general, also has its niches where different traits grow relative to the environment they grew up in (Betzig, 2020). Specifically, first-borns tend to go on the straight path in their rights, which enables them to step forward on tasks and is more conscious of their and other authority. While their later siblings are more a follower and are less experienced, leading them to be set apart from the oldest is (Hertler, 2016).

## **Statement of the Objectives**

This research acknowledges the following objectives:

1. To determine the challenges of expectations experienced by a first-born OFW.
2. To describe the coping mechanisms, in terms of expectations, of a first-born OFW.

## **Research Paradigm**



*Figure 1: Input-Process-Output*

**Chapter II**

**METHODOLOGY**

## **Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative research method that delved into an individual's underlying experiences on a phenomenon by answering formulated "why" and "how" questions (Busetto, 2020). This research used a Qualitative research design with a descriptive approach that determined the challenges of expectations experienced by 24-35 years old first-born Overseas Filipino Workers and described how they cope with them. This design was selected to understand each behavior, describe their causes, and apprehend their motives, thoughts, and personality (Watson, 2019).

Furthermore, this method allowed the researchers to examine the relationship between different factors and how it contributed to the challenges experienced by a first-born OFW. Through the interviews conducted via video call, the researchers explored and described the participants' experiences to make sense of their ways and how they dealt with occurrences in their lives. This method helped capture emotions and open discussions to comprehend their life experiences and coping mechanisms. It depicted the participants in a way that it recounted their experiences and provided various insights as the descriptive approach gave a natural representation of reality (Seixas, 2018).

## **Participants and Locale of the Study**

According to Garabiles (2019) research, 46.9% of 24-35 years old OFWs opted to work abroad to provide for their families and are first-borns. The researchers collected more localized data that enabled a more recent result regarding their experiences and challenges. Derived from a strategic migration plan in La Union, it summarized that the province tops the list with most OFWs; in fact, remittance rates generate 50 percent from their shares in each household. The study's interconnection of the participants and locale implicated further on as both emphasize a high percentage of OFWs that helped consolidate the needed responses to attain the study's objectives.  The essence of being a "panganay" was tackled as more details and descriptions was derived from the data gathered concerning other studies, such as the addressing of the sacrifices of the first-born in terms of presumption and family crisis as well as its process (Carillo, 2016).

On this basis, the research participants include **first-born Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) ages 24-35 years old** who were born and has resided in La Union. Criteria includes that the particpants have one or more siblings in the family, regardless of their gender or status in life. Those who do not fall under this criteria were disregarded. There was a total of 12 respondents in the study. This was made possible through purposive sampling, which is a non-probability sampling tool that sorted -out and picked participants based on characteristics or criteria set. It is selective and subjective relative to the objective of the study which has helped develop trust and confirmable results of the data (Campbell & Crossman, 2020).

## **Data Gathering Tool**

For the instrument utilized for the study, the researchers carried out video call interviews using Zoom or Messenger applications. In a recent study conducted by Springer (2019), the virtual approach is more appropriate in cost, time, and privacy, especially with the recent outbreak. A semi-structured interview was used to gather data. It is a valuable strategy for data gathering when the researcher aimed to accumulate qualitative, open-ended data to better understand the participant's ideas, emotions, and beliefs regarding topics and other specific matters (DeJonchkree & Vaugn, 2019). As prepared beforehand, questions associated with the study's objectives was asked to the participants. However, before proceeding with the interview correctly, the researchers first asked their permission to document the online conversation which assured confidentiality and the purpose of the documentation.

## **Data Gathering Procedure and Ethical Considerations**

The data gathering began with the researchers who sought the LORMA Research Committee's approval, with the school director's approval and the endorsement of their designated LORMA Senior High School Panelists. Interview questions were also reviewed by their research adviser and was consented for use by the Research Committee.

After the preliminary approvals, the researchers sent consent forms to the particpants and scheduled a video call interview at the same time. The consent form contained information regarding the study and a confidentiality notice that specified the proper usage of the responses and honors the participants' request regarding their anonymity and privacy. After getting their consent and scheduled time, the researchers proceeded with the interviews. Two researchers were present in each video call, one being the interviewer and the other took note of the responses. The student interviewer started the interview with a short introduction regarding the study's authors, reiterate the contents of the consent form, and mention the purpose of the study. The particpants were also asked prior to the introduction about their approval of recording the interview. Participants who chose and refused recording were respected by the researchers, and further transcribe the interview through word document or pen and paper form. Screenshots or photo documentation were also prohibited whenever the participants voice their refusal of such file types. Recordings and documentation that were agreed upon are used for educational purposes and accessed only by the researchers themselves.

In the interview proper, interview questions were arranged based on the objectives and focused on the matters to be covered. The interviewer asked follow-up questions that further strengthened the participant responses. However, whenevr the particpant refused to answer such questions, they were granted and accepted by the interviewer. After the interviews, the responses were transcribed and compiled. They were categorized based on the study's objectives, which determined the challenges of expectations experienced by a first-born child and to described the coping mechanisms, in terms of expectations, of a first-born child. There were no requests of haling or withdrawal of resonses, however in any case, the researchers did respect and considered those who would opt to do so, such as surrendering or deleting documentations or remnants of information. Gurtunately, there was no need to search for another partipant to fulfill the criteria with ethical processes being done again. Further assessment was fulfilled using the thematization process that prevented biases and ensured reliable data for the gathered response.

## **Data Management**

The type of research data presented in the study were video recordings and interview transcripts. The responses obtained were organized and analyzed through the utilization of thematization. This process enabled proper interpretation of data and examines the responses to help obtain the study's objectives (Dawadi, 2020). The data was managed step-by-step, primarily, the researchers are oriented with the data through translating and copying the responses in a separate document. Annotations and critical observations on movements or body language were also noted in this stage.

In the first stage, the researchers hadtheir designated particpants to observe their recorded interview individually. In a study of body language, the facial expressions, gestures, and tone would widely impacted the comprehension of the participants' actions. For example, good posture gives a confident stance, or showing facial expressions can come beyond their control (Hassan, 2020). This guide helped analyze the participants' movements throughout and connected them coherently with their responses.

Second, points of interest were identified. For example, responses that generated sub-themes or open conversations regarding first-borns that lacked coherence or information prior to the study. In connection to Adler's theory on first-borns tending to be perfectionists or overachievers, there is a possibility that this were not the case for the participants. Assumingly, they could be opposites or possess other personalities. Such findings were connected to the objectives because they linked to being determinants or were supplemental to their coping mechanisms.

Third, themes and subthemes were created to correspond with the study and helped create conclusions. Descriptive Analysis recognized various factors that addressed points of interest or features, relevance to objectives, and access to additional information (Loeb, 2017). These factors were encountered in the first two procedures of Thematization in the former texts.

Finally, findings were recorded, proofread, and finalized which ensured their comprehension and reached the study's objectives. To backup data, recorded files were available on a single drive, multiple copies of transcripts were also available on the final manuscript, and both digital and printed copies will be available for the researchers and the research consultant or panels. The researchers enbaled a confidential and ethical manner in handling data, wherein the files like recordings were delted after the data analysis and backed up the essential information needed. This way can prevent leaks or imperil the privacy of the participants.

Ultimately, the study is accessible and available in appropriate research platforms in which the researchers applied and aimed for acceptance to publishing through various legitimate publications. The approval of the LORMA Research Committee would also be a detrimental addition to publicizing the study.

**Chapter III**

# **Results and Discussions**

Results

The figure provides an overview of the outcomes of the analysis using the responses gathered. Various factors during the interview emerged and are categorized through major themes, and further explained by sub-themes. This discussed important nuances of the challenges, both good and bad, such as the stimulants and outcomes of expectations as well as varying mechanisms to cope in accordance to the experiences mentioned by the participants.

Table 1

Excerpts from the narration of the participants

| Major Themes | Sub  Themes | Participant  Code | Sample  Significant Statements |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
| The Challenges of  Expectations  Molding Values  People from here  and there | Role Model to  Siblings  Money Matters  Debt from the  inner self  The Power of  Motivation  Found Independence  Peer Influence  No Child Left  Behind | 4,7,8,9  3, 5,11, 12  1, 2,7,12  4, 6, 9,  1, 2,8  2,4, 11,12  3,11, 9 | * As an eldest, you are expected to look after and know better for your siblings * When my younger siblings came, they expected me to look after them because they work all the time. At a younger age, I was forced to think and act maturely. * You always have to send them money. When you go abroad, they expect you to make tons of money. * My family expects me to send them money every month and then they also want to renovate our house, my salary in one day is just small. My siblings wanted branded things and I am the one who pays the kids tuition in school. * Graduating on time and finding a job because that's  a way of paying back favor to my parents. * I was playful yet I had to excel in Med school for my parents so afterwards so I can provide for them * I took it as a responsibility that I will be the one to take care of our parents  when they get old. * My dad worked overseas almost my whole childhood and that itself is a motivation. I am happy to make my parents proud, especially my father. * I am always motivated by the fact that my family is, and will always be the most important people in my life. * There is a whole lot of future to uphold and surpass. But the fact that Family is the basic society, one can never do everything without the other. * I grew up independent that’s why at age 25, I already worked Overseas. * It's up to you as a person when you want to take it as light responsibility then your making your own choices * I was just enjoying myself and independence. * When your friends are smart or good at academics then it influences to do good as well * I have a strong support system through friends who gets me through everything. * There’s strong verbal support from friends * When it comes to personal wants, we don’t even think about it. You just think of the kids * I think about my child first. There are times that I really wanted to give up but how about my child? I really want to give him a good life, that's why I really need to work for my child. * Time can never turn back whenever I feel “I should have listened…”, I can only move forward & pay it forward through my children. |
|  |  |  |  |

*Figure 2: Table 1-Excerpts from the narration of participants*

Discussion

Three major themes were created from the narrative of the participants: a.) The Challenges of Expectations, b.) Rooted Asian Values, c.) People from here and there. Their particular sub-themes and supporting statements according to the responses gathered are, therefore, mentioned.

**a.) The Challenges of Expectations**

The first major theme deeply connect to the idea of the study which is the challenges of first-born expectations. Local conext infers that specific outcomes from their growing environment inevitably push imposed roles stemming from societal expectations (Consten, 2017). Aside from behavioral roles, there’s a significant outcome in the responses wherein urged monetary or financial help covers the reasons on choosing their paths and struggling to comply due to overburdenness. Another would be explorations or unique constructs rooted in one-self, especially as Filipinos (Jusay, 2021), features a concept of sharing inner, intangible means to connect with others, sometimes as means of giving or portraying accomodative value to one’s actions.

**Role Models to Siblings.** A prominent challenge to our respondents would be the established notion of being a great example to their younger siblings. The reason is based on idealized and generalized versions that first-borns are perceived to portray which makes them conform to these versions of themselves (Freeman, 2016). The perceptions include taking bigger responsibility especially on taking jobs, being academically inclined, and maturing better than the rest of their siblings. These expectations challenged first-borns to step -up and make bigger choices, in terms of their decisions in working abroad, and fully accepting the fact that they cannot pass on their responsibilities. This heavy parental investment towards striving for greatness designates first-borns into more obligation and higher regards from their parents (Consten, 2017).

There are a few notable responses from the respondents but the most prominent ones are academic pressure and finding financially stable jobs. From the anticipation of graduating on time on top of showing excellence despite pressure from various factors such as curriculums, deadlines, and their parents assumption that they rise triumphantly.  Studies include that such resilient and flexible response to situations comes naturally to first-borns (Sultan, 2020). Hence, their responses to how they felt to these expectations lead to thinking that it is only normal and they have nothing else to do but to strive for their best. A few responses state that these left them feeling like they have to think and act maturely which leads them to becoming old souls or losing a part of their childhood in some ways. There’s a feeling of being overwhelmed and they tend to question themselves on why people have to be dependent or look up to them, however, it took time to finally feel delighted for such responsibilities and see it as stepping out of their comfort zones. This is further proven as there is an increased percentage of 46.9% of OFWs who opt to work abroad to sacrifice and account for their family needs (Carillo, 2016).

**Money Matters.** Commonly anchored on the idea of funds, responses regarding financial support have been the most significant expectation especially on the conditions set as the second parent. In a 2016 study by Carillo, covering siblings's educational expenses and compensating family needs in a financial crisis proved to be one of the reasons for choosing the OFW path.

This is reflected in the responses that depict expectations as a drive in monthly sending of money to pay for sibling tuition, household expenses especially on basic necessities, and side costs like house renovations or family wants. It is noted that despite monthly compensation of money to their family back home, a number of  respondents express the difficulty in dividing expenses for their own family and another back at home. Interconnectedly with such reasons like being a breadwinner, they're still impelled to send back some money to which admittedly they thought was sometimes overwhelming and difficult to manage due to the huge amount of money to be expensed. Such financial issues to OFWs can cause deep dissatisfaction and decrease in their quality of life (Espiritu, 2020). Effective financial management and good budgeting such as having fixed variables of needs and wants realistically reflects priorities that can even give room to savings and investments (Golosino, 2020). Overtime, the respondents learned the ways to overcome the burden and continuously thought that having no work means no pay. Their experiences gave them the utmost advantage to feel less overwhelmed and more on being emotionally  accomplished, thus, enjoying the work and providing for their family.

**Debt from the Inner Self (Utang na loob).** There is a deeply practiced value by Filipinos over the course of time, a debt commitment or a seemingly “contractual” obligation that means to reciprocate one’s actions and set standards of expectations to a person. This is called “utang na loob” or beholdenness. From the word “utang” which translates to debt in English, and “loob”, rooting from “kalooban” or the inner being of a person that characterizes his or her truths whether it is on their ideas or beliefs in life. This navigates the intangible factors that build up a Filipino’s sense of humanity, therefore, creating the idea of utang na loob (Agaton, 2017) .

Responses show that certain challenges stem from their “utang na loob” to their parents, the ones who have bathed, clothed, and made sure they had something to eat or consume for the day. They felt the need to comply and conform to what their parents have done for them in order to feel a sense of being or satisfaction. The way they had to accentuate their ability to respond to means and proving that they can do the same thing as well.  Despite the act of extending help to family, in the case of first-born children or in general, parents are indeed obligated to take responsibility for taking care of their offspring. However, factors that support the act of utang na loob involve deep gratefulness and consideration. It is already an embedded value to return what is given and acknowledge sacrifices despite not expecting anything in return (Gundran, Manalo, et. al, 2021) . The capacity to be challenged, portray the act of gratefulness as well as reflection of past actions and have all resources to fulfill that sense of obligation- or paying back have accustomed them to continue the path of being an OFW.

**b.) Molding Values**

The second major theme emphasizes on the inner stimulants and built fortitude within the participants. It commonly recognzies their struggles as well but enlightens acquired principles to abide with along the way. Each upbringing stems from the Philippines being tangled from its ever-changing environment yet is filled with embedded traditions and familial cultures(Noda, 2018), that cracks the shells of children and forces them to explore and open towards realities, while keeping themselves grounded in their home-grown family centric nature.

**The Power of Motivation.** Over the years, the respondents were able to clearly develop an intrinsic motivation that is deeply–rooted in their love for their family. Thus, emphasizing the intention of giving back to their parents’ sacrifices during their striving years. In addition, some participants highlighted their gender roles and specified that they were the first-born only son or only daughter among their siblings which allowed them to understand and at the same time fulfill the overall role of panganays in a Filipino household. As a result of being the second provider, participants stated that they appreciated the trust that was given to them by their parents– another factor that fuelled their passion to supply. Based on a study by Egloff 2015, he stated that first-borns are more likely to become more conscientious as they age and enjoy the accountability that they have.

**Found Independence.** This sub-theme adds to the molded values found in some responses. Independence or the act of being independent inclines a person to decide for themselves with tendency to discover then express  their inner potentials as well as skills (Moza, 2021). This implies growing out of comfort zones and thinking out of the box ideas to create life decisions which can aid them when it comes to standing on their own. It wil involve series of challenges and barriers to broaden their horizons and come to terms with their own growth. This independence further involves call for life-satisfactions and enhances pursuit to mirror the success by the individual’s perception (Gavreliuc, 2021). Such statements are narrated by the participants expressing their actions fo being independent and doing means to step up with present occurrences in their lives.

**c.) People from here and there**

The last major theme comes from the similar responses of participants regarding their motivations despite challenges faced throughout their lives. Peer influence frontruns factors for motivations and reflections on their past as means to pay forward to their future children elevates the sense of their actions, decisions, and stimulants to carry on with chosen paths.

**Peer Influence.** Aside from family, this study’s respondents indicated that their close circle of friends primarily impacted their outlook on life through emotional support especially when undergoing similar life experiences. This kind of mental reinforcement has been proven to remarkably imprint a positive mindset towards many in moving forward through difficult situations (Sweeney, 2018). Even through prior years before being employed in a foreign country, peers have provided a refreshing guide particularly on those who have a large age gap with their siblings. A respondent also mentioned seeing her friends as a part of the family because of their assistance in making viable decisions, exploring identity roles, as well as creating pathways for personal growth. In creating opportunities and discovering vulnerabilities, peer influence can greatly impact a maturing individual particularly on seeking new connections and prosocial behavior (Erreygers, 2018).

**No Child Left Behind.** Among one of the ultimate motivations mentioned by the respondents, their own children who were left behind in the Philippines became one of the driving forces in pursuing better job opportunities abroad. According to a recent study by Bernardo (2018), a parent’s sacrifice to migrate opens opportunities for their children to have preferable access to higher education, inheriting material possessions as well as having the liberty to engage in leisure and recreation with peers. However, an analysis by Richins & Chaplin (2015) suggested the opposing idea that financial support from parents has often been interpreted as an act of payment to fill in the years of their absence rather than granting accessible resources for their offspring’s  future which later on nurtured materialism and commodified parental love.

**Chapter 4**

# **Findings and Recommendations**

Findings

As Filipino first-born children, this study concluded that particular challenges and unexpected struggle of events throughout the years shaped the personal views and upbringing of first-borns with their family that became major driving forces for hard work to emerge and evolve to resilience and accomplishments. Dominant expectations on employing a proper example for their siblings, for reasons of validation and perceptions (Hetwig, 2019),  allowed them to conform to heavy expectations voiced by their family specifically on monetary support, mature thinking, and to be academically outstanding. Financial provision and acts of “utang na loob” created a cycle of adherence and accustomation to ideas spoken or ingrained by society and its people. It also creates a culture of paying back, whether in money or inner debts to parental involvement in fostering for their homes as well as providing for their siblings, which showcases simple acknowledgement towards one’e good will to its benefactors (Jusay, 2021). As difficult as it seems, these experiences enabled them to enhance their sense of responsibility, unity and generosity for them to seek higher paying opportunities in a foreign land.

Previous analysis by Tan was proven in this findings, as demonstrated by the evident development of confidence, self-esteem, and validation from parents, participants showed essential growth throughout their experiences.  Despite the challenges faced as breadwinners, responses were able to portray a Filipinos’ resilience in the face of adversity with the developed intrinsic motivation and embodiment of independence. In addition, emotional support from fellow peers debunked the perceptions of first-borns viewing social circles as threats and grounds for seeing other as unequals (Bertoni & Brunello, 2016). In fact, stronger encouragement and sympathetic relationships motivate them to a positive resolve and good character development. Lastly, to confirm strong familial ties rooted in the Filipino culture, that allows first-born to meet the standard obligations and strengthen conenctions to family (Latkin, 2019), the desire to let them achieve success and a far different future to engage in leisurely means or abundance of privilege is implicated and observed in all aspects.

Recommendations

Based on the recent findings as well as the effects of the on-going pandemic, this study is subject to two limitations: a.) a small sample size convenient to the researchers’ range and b.) an inadequate time frame. Therefore, to achieve the maximum potential of the topic as well as provide necessary adjustments, the researchers would equip recommendations that can be executed by future researchers, community, parents and first-born children themselves. It is considered crucial to implement recommended interventions due to the problem that the society continues to face until this present day.

To further strengthen the study, the researchers recommend:

1. Expanding the geographical localities targeted throughout the study to identify other possible determinants associated with the participants’ location which involves cultural and traditional factors. In addition, this also enables future researchers to compare and contrast the following data garnered in various regions.
2. Extending the allotted time frame to 1-2 years allows the study to recognize if passing years from now produces an ever-changing effect on the challenges of expectations encountered by first-born OFWS.
3. Examine deeply-rooted influencers that may lead to a chain of events from the participants’ history. Further investigation on their cultural or spiritual environment and on familial attachment can encourage separate sources of findings contributing to their involvement.

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