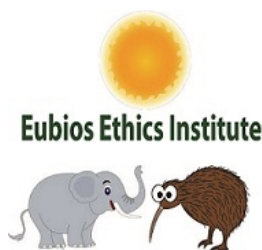


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## Editorial: Hans-Martin Sass

In my life I have been privileged to meet many wonderful souls, and people who have been part of my journey. In this issue we start with the obituary to a unique soul that I was blessed to meet, and a mutual friend and colleague, Michael Tai, wrote an obituary to Prof. Hans-Martin Sass. This is particularly poignant for *EJAIB*, as for all 33 years he was a devoted subscriber and supporter of *EJAIB*.

I had the pleasure to serve on the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee (IBC) as well as the Board of the International Association of Bioethics with Hans-Martin. We met in many conferences, and also he invited me to give lectures

in both Bochum and in Washington D.C., his two homes.

His work to translate and discuss the 1927-1928 papers of Fritz Jahr, the first person we know of to have used the term "Bioethics", are consistent with his genuine passion and support for Eubios Ethics Institute and the Asian Bioethics Association, with his particular support for bioethics in China. His influence was broad, and he was warmly respected in many academic fields beyond bioethics. Yet, he took the time to write personal recommendation letters for me as I made the move to the United States to found American University of Sovereign Nations (AUSN).

The fact that Hans-Martin spent his primary years during WWII in Germany, and spent his life working for cross-cultural understanding, provides a glimmer of hope for the future of all children who share that portion of their lives growing up in poverty and war.

The next paper in this issue follows on the theme of hope for children, as April Alcazar argues for the full Access, Equity and Quality of Education as fundamental parts of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to provide that in practice, the scheme used in Cor Jesu College in the Philippines, called "Adopt a Child" is analysed by Rogelio Bayod et al. AUSN also offers tuition support to promising scholars all around the world, and this enhances the quality and diversity of the approaches to education.

Osama Rajkhan provides his own testimony on how a violent attack in school, when he lost his spleen, provided him lessons for a life journey to fight for human rights and peace. Narrative Research on Child Labour in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro, Philippines is presented by Gavino Bituin II et al. The final paper in this issue is a discussion of moving from Ecological Crisis to Ecological Equilibrium: through the Lens of Martin Heidegger's Philosophy of Technology and Pope Francis' Laudato Si by Melchor L. Cuizon. As we reflect on the sort of world we would like to see, we have to be part of the change to effect that. Thank you to all who have shared their wisdom in these pages, both living and past souls. - Darryl Macer

## In memory of Prof. Dr. Phil. Hans-Martin Sass (1935-2023)

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On February 6, 2023, Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Sass, retired Professor of Philosophy at the Ruhr University in Bochum Germany, and Senior Research Scholar and Director of the European Professional Ethics Program of the Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University in Washington DC, passed away peacefully in his sleep to be with God and his beloved parents in Virginia, USA at the age of 87 years. Prof. Dr. Hans-Martin Sass was one of the major bioethicists of modern time and a co-founder of the International Society of Clinical Bioethics, and among many past and current positions he was also Professor of Medical Ethics at American University of Sovereign Nations.

Dr. Hans Martin Sass, born in Hagen, Germany to Pastor Hans Sass and his wife Else, was one of the most important bioethicists of modern time and a frequent contributor to the *Eubios Journal of Asian International Bioethics (EJAIB)* and *Journal of Formosan Medical Humanities* plus many renowned journals of the world.

One of Dr. Sass' key contributions to the history and understanding of bioethics was his discovery in 1997 of little known publications by Protestant German professor and pastor Fritz Jahr who coined the word "bioethik" in publications in 1926 and 1927 that was the first use of the word "bioethics". Jahr, a philosopher and educator in Halle an der Saale, asserted that we have moral obligations toward human and non-human forms of life in "Bio-Ethics: A Review of the Ethical Relationships of Humans to Animals and Plants" (1927). Dr. Sass published an article in the *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal* -- *Fritz Jahr's 1927 Concept of Bioethics* in 2007, and a short pamphlet, *Selected Essays in Bioethics 1927-1934 to introduce Dr. Jahr's global bioethics*. Dr. Sass also edited *the future of integrative bioethics* (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2012) and *1926-2016 Fritz Jahr's Bioethics: A global discourse* (2017). He was the first recipient of the Fritz Jahr Award which was established in 2016 in Rijeka, Croatia. This award was created through the collaboration of two well-known bioethics centers within two Universities, the University of Zagreb (Centre of Excellence for Integrative Bioethics of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences) and the University of Rijeka (Fritz Jahr Documentation and Research Centre for European Bioethics).

Dr. Sass developed the Bochum Protocol as a methodology in clinical ethics that was described as one that "incorporates clinical, ethical, and epistemological issues and, in addition, covers different clinical settings." He continued his work on

advance directives and end-of-life, edited an important comparative volume on *Advance Directives and Surrogate Decision Making in Health Care: United States, Germany, and Japan* (1998), with Robert M. Veatch and Rihito Kimura. He worked with Rita Kielstein to share their work "Using Stories to Assess Values and Establish Medical Directives" (1993) as a narrative alternative to determine wishes for end-of-life.

In 1991-1992 Dr. Sass was a member of the preparatory committee appointed by the Director-General of UNESCO for the establishment of the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee (IBC)/ Comité international de bioéthique (CIB) and subsequently participated as a member of the UNESCO International Bioethics Committee (IBC) in the development of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights in 1997.

He was a founder of the Bochum Center for Medical Ethics and the Academy for Ethics in Medicine in Goettingen, Germany and a Professor Emeritus of Philosophy at Ruhr-Universität, Bochum, Germany and Senior Research Scholar Emeritus at Kennedy Institute of Ethics at Georgetown University, Washington D.C. He also held academic positions at People's University of China and Peking Union Medical College in Beijing. He was editor of the *Ethik in der Praxis / Practical Ethics* series at Lit Publishers, Münster, London, New York, and the *Medizinethische Materialien*, Bochum. He authored more than 250 journal articles and 100+ books and 300+ invited lectures around the world..

Dr. Sass continually worked to share what he was learning and to bring people together lecturing in Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Brazil, Canada, China, Croatia, the Czech Republic, India, Iran, Israel, Italy, Japan, France, the Netherlands, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Switzerland and Taiwan, among other countries.

He was born in 1935 in Hagen, Germany and was preceded by his wife, Renate, in 2004. He is survived by his daughters, Gabriele Sass, Angelika Sass, his granddaughters, Elisabeth and Anna, his sister, Annemarie Clarke, and his brother, Klaus Sass.

Hans-Martin was a Knight of Justice of the Order of St. John (Johanniter). In 2015, he was awarded Germany's Federal Cross of Merit.

A few of his publications include:  
*"Health and Happiness of Political Bodies"* (2020 Lit) in *Cultures in Bioethics* (2016, Lit: Zuerich)  
*Bioethics and Biopolitics*. Beijing Lectures by a European Scholar (2007, Chin/Engl, Xian:press.fmmu.sn.cn)  
*"Differentialethik"* (2006, Lit: Muenster, includes Bibliography pp. 247-274)  
*"Emergency Management in Public Health Ethics"*. *EJAIB* 2005;15(5)161-166  
*"Ethical Dilemma in Stem Cell Research"*. *Formosan Journal of Medical Humanities* 2005; 6(3&4)  
*"E-Health: Health Promotion and Wellness Communities"*. *EJAIB* 2004;14:170-174

"Asian and Western Bioethics – Converging, Conflicting, Competing". *EJAIB* 2004; 14:13-22.

"Formulating Global Post-Hippocratic Health Care Virtues". *Europe Phil's of Medicine & Health Care* 2(1):6-10; also *J Intern Bioethique* 1995;6(1):5-7; *Kos* 1995; 118:46-51

"Bochum Working Paper on the Practice of Medical Ethics" (with Herbert Viefhues, transl by Stuart Spicker), Bochum: Zentrum fuer Medizinische Ethik, January 1988

Prof. Dr. Dr. Jochen Vollmann, director of the Institute for Medical Ethics and History of Medicine, Ruhr-University, Bochum Germany, wrote: "With the death of Hans-Martin Sass, medical ethics in Germany loses a formative, internationally accomplished and far-sighted founding father. Through his decades of personal commitment, which went far beyond his professional duties as a university professor of philosophy, he rendered great service to the fields of science, society, and international understanding. His kindness, reliability and optimism have encouraged and strengthened many younger medical ethicists. We will keep Hans-Martin Sass in honorable memory."

I first met Dr. Sass in Shanghai, China where we both were invited to present talks at the conference of international bioethics in 1999 and had become good friends since. I was in hospital for a surgical procedure early this year (2023) and he phoned me every day to see how I was recovering. I told him that I would be discharged on Feb 6 and on that night he went with the Lord. After returning home I was wondering his whereabouts as he did not phone me as usual on that day and a few days later I received the word that he had passed on peacefully in his sleep that night. Though he is dead, yet still speaking to us through his books and thought.

In his last book, *Health and Happiness of Political Bodies* published by Lit-verlag.ch wrote: "I submit a wider integrated biocultural, corporate and political 'Bio-cultural Imperative : Support direct human inter-action and common-sense as an end in itself and use hardware and software tools only in stabilizing healthy and happy cultures in the bodies of ecologies, corporations and politics'. In 1989 the Berlin Wall fell down, in 1993 the World Trade Center in New York fell down, in 2020 global Corona pandemic fell down on people and communities. Biological, political and corporate bodies chance, and we change with them and in them: 'tempora mutntur et nos mutamur in illis'. (*Times change and we change in them*).

The following picture was taken when he was invited to lecture in Taiwan in 2017 and had a personal chat with Dr. Huang Jong-tsun, the former Minister of Education, and now a Premier of the National Examination Yuan of Taiwan in 2017. Dr. Sass will always live in the hearts of those who met him.



From left: Dr. Michael Tai, Dr. Hans Martin Sass and Dr. Huang Jong-tsun (2017)

## Access, Equity and Quality of Education as Part of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals in Relation to the Educational Framework of the Philippines

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### Introduction

There is a need to provide a framework for access, equity and quality of education as a reflection of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides the parameters by which the State of every country with an educational system can be evaluated as being supportive of protecting the human right to education.

The research is responsive to the call of the times as many States around the world experienced invoking emergency powers or have taken extraordinary measures to meet the challenges of the COVID pandemic. Regardless of the difficult context encountered, there is an ethical imperative that the protection of human rights shall be paramount above all.

The conceptual framework proposed in the research can also be expanded to evaluate other human rights protected under different conventions. It then becomes a possibility that infringement of or violations of the provisions of conventions as recognized under public international law, as a basis for legal or extra-legal means for enforcement by nation States.

Based on Article 26 of the United Nations Convention on Human Rights, there are three elements towards the protection of the human right to education. The first paragraph defines the parameter of access to education and the minimum required level which should be accorded to all. It is provided that elementary education and fundamental stages, usually identified as early childhood development education, shall be made free and compulsory. Beyond such level, other types of education, including, but not limited to, technical, vocational and higher education, shall be made accessible depending on the condition of every nation State.

The second paragraph provides the rationale for education as a tool for the development of humankind. It provides the qualitative aspect of education to further the aspiration of the United Nations to promote world peace through the mutual understanding between people of different nations, ethnic and religious backgrounds.

The last paragraph states that since elementary education is extended to those of minority age, the parents have the prior right to determine the kind of education provided to their children. It defines the parameters by which parental authority is exercised over their children, indicating the content and manner by which they shall be educated.

The Sustainable Development Goals 2030 are the developmental aspirations which provide a time-bound international benchmark for countries articulated by the United Nations. This is the basis for the research framework according to the principles of access, equity and quality of education provided in the 4<sup>th</sup> Sustainable Development Goal.

Access is defined as the ability of all people to have equal opportunity in education, regardless of their social class, gender, race, sexuality, ethnic background and physical or mental disabilities.

Equity is the condition when personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family backgrounds are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (definition of fairness) and that all individuals reach at least a minimum level of skills (definition of inclusion).

Quality in education is achieved when it is delivered with outcomes that encompass knowledge, skills and attitudes that are linked to national goals for education and positive participation in society.

The research shall provide the framework to evaluate the laws of the country to be analyzed. The case study cited in the research is that of the Philippines and specifically takes into consideration the case of persons deprived of liberty (PDLs) and

children in conflict with the law (CICLs). Expansion of the research can be done in the future by including data from different countries to comparatively analyze the variance of each country based on the framework. Utilizing such framework provides the conclusion to determine whether a nation State supports the protection of the human right to education or on the contrary, possibly infringes or violates the right to education.

The study has a policy impact in supporting future legislation for countries to accord protection towards the human right to education. It is relevant as education is the major driving force for development prioritized in the Sustainable Development Goals 2030. It is an ethical concern when the human right to education is either infringed or violated. The research can be the basis for which a nation State can be enjoined to refrain from the infringement of the right to education or to restore the right when there is a violation.

#### **CASE STUDY: THE PHILIPPINES' LEGAL FRAMEWORK TO THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION**

In illustrating the use of this framework, the first inquiry would be the identification of the laws of a country that support the human right to education.

In the case of the Philippines, the first law which can be cited is the fundamental law of the land, the Constitution promulgated in 1987. According to Article XIV Section 1, the State shall support education at all levels and shall provide appropriate steps to provide access to such education.

Section 2 further qualifies the parameters by which support to education is extended by the State. It provides in the first paragraph, the mandate of the State to provide a complete, adequate and integrated educational system responsive to the needs of the Filipino society. In the second paragraph, it then provides that the State shall support free education in the elementary and secondary levels. Based on the parameters set in the U.N. Convention, this is already over and above that indicated as the minimum level considered as inclusive education. But every nation State in the exercise of its sovereign self-determination can provide for a higher level of support. This is what is indicated in the Philippine Constitution. The third paragraph goes on to provide that the State shall establish a system of support in the form of resources being allocated through scholarships, subsidies and other incentives, qualifying those who are deserving of such support.

The fourth paragraph is an option which can be adopted by the State, providing for the encouragement of non-formal and indigenous learning systems, as well as independent learning systems, if deemed feasible. The last paragraph states that the State shall provide its adult citizens education limited to the content of civics, vocational efficiency or other similar skills. Therefore, the whole section indicates the quality of education to be accorded to its citizens on the basis of content.

The next level of laws that can be evaluated are laws passed by the Congress of the Philippines, which are national in scope.

In Republic Act 9155, the governance system for basic education is strengthened by providing for principal empowerment based on the principles of transparency and local accountability. The law supports access to education by providing expanding principals decision-making authority in their schools.

The next illustration is a landmark law passed by Congress, Republic Act 10533, which provided for the adoption of the K-12 basic educational system in the Philippines. The country was only one of three remaining countries in the world that had not yet adopted the system when the law was passed in 2013. By joining the standard basic educational system adopted in the world, the country is better able to provide access to education, not only in the Philippines, but possibly for its nationals to access other countries' educational systems as well.

The following two laws provides for the differentiation of the basic education regulatory agency from the regulatory agencies with authority over higher education and technical education. It provides the support extended to higher education to have autonomy and exercise academic freedom. In the case of technical education, the law identifies the agencies' thrust towards middle-level human resource training and development.

By analyzing the laws, the data can indicate whether nation States are compliant with the parameters of access, equity and quality for the protection of the human right to education. Thereafter, by utilizing the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, the laws can indicate whether the time frame for achieving the goal can be accomplished. Lastly, the framework is able to determine whether the State infringes or violates the right to education. The differentiation between infringement is the gradual non-compliance with elements of the exercise of the right to education vis-à-vis outright denial of the right which is a violation.

In conclusion, there can be four possible conditions that can be identified as hampering the access to the right to education and which may require action to be undertaken to address the ethical concern of protecting human rights.

The first possible condition is that laws themselves need to be changed. For example, affirmative action is a law that promotes the admission of students in higher education belonging to a particular identified group. The law proved untenable and was eventually abolished as it was determined to be against equity of student applicants when the criterion of merit for admission should be the prime determining factor for admission, rather than ethnicity of the student applicants. This was articulated in the case of *Grutter vs. Bollinger* decided by the United States Supreme Court in 2013.

The second probable condition is that there might be environmental factors outside of the legal system that hamper the promotion of the right to education. Even if there are laws ensuring access to education, cultures of particular communities may prevent those belonging to the female gender to access education, such as early marriage, prioritization of familial obligations or physical immobility. The probable solution is to promote the protection of the right to such communities in order to eventually change the culture.

The third condition is resource allocation that requires prioritization to address the constraints due to limited resources. During the pandemic, many students experienced the phenomenon of education or learning loss. This was brought about by the imposition of lockdowns that prevented students from the conduct of face-to-face classes. Therefore, alternative means of delivering the academic programs were adopted. However, some of the means proved to be ineffectual to the point that it was tantamount to denial of the access to education. For example, in the Philippines, since 90% of the basic student population are students in the public educational system, the government may need to provide for budgets to enable students to have gadgets and connectivity to ensure delivery of academic programs virtually. If government does not prioritize such resources, it may be determined to be infringing the right to education because school children are unable to access the education due to their lack of means. After the pandemic was declared over by the government, the Department of Education determined the return of basic education students to full face-to-face classes. The government decided that it did not have the means by which to deliver technology-assisted education, despite the chronic problems of shortage of teachers, lack of classrooms and facilities and instructional materials.

The fourth condition is the State adoption of prohibition on the exercise of the right of education which can be considered as a violation to the right to education. When the Taliban first came into power in Afghanistan, the segment of the population belonging to the female gender were prohibited from access to education. Thus, the State policy can be considered as a human right violation. Pressure from the international community may be a measure which can be adopted to change the State policy. Recognition of advocates for the exercise of the right to education, such as the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize, can highlight the need to change the State policy.

#### **A STUDY OF THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION OF PERSONS DEPRIVED OF LIBERTY (PDLs) AND CHILDREN IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW (CICLS)**

In 1991, the Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160) established the system and defined the powers of provincial, city, municipal and *barangay* (translation by the author: smallest political subdivision) in the Philippines.

The case study is located in a highly urbanized city in the Metropolitan Manila area. Based on Section 452 of the Local Government Code, a highly urbanized city is characterized as having at minimum of 200,000 inhabitants and latest annual income of P/50,000,000 (50 million).

In Section 17, which provides for Basic Services and Facilities, it is deemed that services are provided:

“(4) For a city:

All the services and facilities of the municipality and provinces, and in addition thereto, the following:

(i) Adequate communication and transportation facilities;

(ii) Support for education, police and fire services and facilities

(2) For a municipality:

(IV) Social welfare programs which include programs and projects in child and youth welfare, family and community welfare, women’s welfare, welfare of the elderly and disabled persons; community based rehabilitation programs for vagrants, beggars, street children, scavengers, juvenile delinquents and victims of drug abuse; livelihood and other pro-poor projects; nutrition services; and family planning.”

In addition, it is also mandated in Section 309(a) that:

“*Special Education Fund (SEF)* shall consist of the respective shares of provinces, cities, *Barangays* in the proceeds of the additional tax or real property to be appropriated for purposes prescribed in Section 272 of this Code” (Section 272. *Application of Proceeds of the Additional One Percent SEF Tax*.)

The proceeds of the additional one percent (1%) tax on real property accruing to the Special Education Fund (SEF) shall be automatically released to the local school board: Provided, That, in case of provinces, the proceeds shall be divided equally between the provincial and municipal school boards; Provided, however that the proceeds shall be allocated for the operation and maintenance of public schools, construction and repair of school buildings, facilities and equipment, educational research, purchase of books and periodicals and sports development as determined and approved by the Local School Board.)

Therefore, on the local level, education is supported by policy providing for financial appropriation as well as support from the local government unit.

The subjects of this study comprise sixteen male persons deprived of liberty, currently in the facility of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology male dormitory, ranging in age from 18 to 24 years old. Their sentences are for a period of not more than (3) three years and their violations range from drug use, drug distribution and sales, theft, and actions resulting in physical injuries.

The other subjects comprise 27 children in conflict with the law, 25 males and 2 females, currently in the facility operated and maintained by the highly urbanized city’s social welfare department, ranging in age from 15 to 17 years old. Their sentences are suspended until they reach the age of 18 years, after which a judgment will be rendered in the case, depending on the gravity of the offense, leaving to transfer to a facility of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology or freedom.

In the case of the persons deprived of liberty, since the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology is directly under the Department of Interior and Local Government, the national agency through its regional office in the National Capital Region, was the authority granting permission.

For the children in conflict with the law, the facility is under the devolved social welfare and development office of the highly urbanized city, which granted the authority for the education program.

In both instances, the respective entities were supportive of the state policy to support the right to education of the subjects, despite their lack of personal liberty due to criminal activity and subsequent confinement.

The program is under the auspices of an international aid agency offering preparatory courses to enable out-of-school youth from 15 to 24 years old pursue any of three (3) opportunities for a second chance: first would be to pursue education in basic education or post-secondary education or undertake skills or technical training; the second is to apply for wage employment; and third is to become an entrepreneur or to become self-employed.

From the national government policy to the local government implementation, the case of the Philippines would show the support given to advocate the right to education, providing access, equity and quality based on the context and level appropriate for the students. The support is substantiated since it gives the opportunity to both persons deprived of liberty and children in conflict with the law despite the legal challenges they face when their personal liberties are restricted due to the sentences they are serving.

The institutions are supportive in providing for the opportunity to have both technology-assisted and face-to-face mode of delivery for the academic programs.

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## Beyond the Obvious: Adopt a Child Program as a Beacon of Hope and Inspiration for the Education of Indigent Children

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### Abstract

It is already well established that education is necessary for a person to increase his or her freedom and capabilities to live a flourishing lives. Education serves as one of the keys to success in the future of students and to take advantage of many opportunities that lie ahead of them. But due to many factors such as financial difficulties, geographical location, lack of opportunities and even lack of support, fulfilling children's right becomes complicated and very difficult to achieve. To mitigate these, governments have partnered with different institutions to provide support program for the education of children. Cor Jesu College has been implementing its Adopt-a-Child Program to its partner school for the last 8 years. This study aims to assess the benefits of the program and to see what needs to be improved. Results revealed that the program has been a source of hope and inspiration to the children beneficiaries as well as to their parents. This study reveals further that there was a significant change in the attitudes and behavior of students towards their studies. The children have

become motivated to go to school and do well in their academics because they consider themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College. Their parents also become very active in school activities as partners in the school for the education of their children. The teachers also witness the improvements in the attitudes and behaviors and eventually, the school performance of the beneficiaries of the program. Indeed, the program is a beacon hope and inspiration for the indigent children in Digos City.

**Keywords:** *Transformative Education. Adopt-A-Child Program. School Attitudes. School Performance. Qualitative Case Study. Philippines*

### Introduction

Education is necessary for persons to have freedom and to live flourishing lives. When people are educated, they can take advantage of life's opportunities. They can also use their knowledge and skills to navigate safely in an environment despite challenging circumstances that they are faced with. However, not all are fortunate enough to pursue their education because of so many hindrances, one of those, is poverty. Even in elementary level where education is free, there are still many challenges that confronted students and parents alike which may result in students dropping out of school.

There is no doubt that for a country to survive and thrive, citizens must be properly educated. Education serves as one of the keys to success in the future and to take advantage of many opportunities that the student life can offer (Al-Shuaibi, 2014). Seeing that educating the children means survival of the country, governments ensure that every student has the right to go to school and pursue their studies. But due to many factors such as financial difficulties, geographical location, lack of opportunities and even lack of support, fulfilling children's right becomes complicated and very difficult to achieve.

Among the many factors that hinder children to go to school, financial constraints had been the leading cause why students are forced to drop out from school. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization or UNESCO (2014) revealed that the lack of financial resources is a major factor that increases the number of out-of-school children. This finding is not only true to developing economies but even in some developed countries. As a matter of fact, students in Japan experienced financial hardships which has resulted to an increase of the number of dropouts for children are not motivated and interested to pursue their education due to their financial incapability (Suzuki, et. al., 2022). The same is true in China according to the study of Cao et. al. (2020) which revealed that students also experienced lacking of financial support which negatively affect their schooling.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also affected the education of students in many countries throughout the world. According to Adarkwah (2021) and Day et al. (2021), the pandemic somehow exposed the

many inequities in the educational systems within and across countries. In the case of a developing country, families from lower socioeconomic strata have limited learning space at home, access to quality internet service, and online learning resources. This is the reason that the learning environment and learning resources recorded the highest level of challenges. The socioeconomic profile of the students (i.e., low and middle-income group) is the same reason financial problems frequently surfaced from their responses (Day, et. Al, 2021). These students frequently linked the lack of financial resources to their access to the internet, educational materials, and equipment necessary for online learning.

Given the reality of the financial constraints that hamper the children's educational journey, various organizations and groups in the different societies have crafted and implemented different educational policies and programs to ensure that even the poor children can continue to study at least in the basic education level. For instance, in Myanmar and Thailand, Assisting Conflict-Affected Children Enroll and Stay in School (ACCESS) Project was created by Save the Children Program (Leelakitichok, 2015). The ACCESS project aims to provide quality education access to out of school children to enter basic education by stimulating education demands to increase education funds. In Ghana, the approach was to help the parents of children through the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP). This is a social cash transfer program which has been operating since 2008 under the auspices of the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The said program has provided direct cash to alleviate financial assistance to help poor households specially to aid children's proper education (Karakara & Ortsin, 2022).

In the Philippines, the government has recently shown its political will and has been doing its best to fulfill its commitment of alleviating poverty in the country through its many educational programs to help the poor. One of these government-initiated programs is the Universal Access to Quality Tertiary Education Act (Republic Act 10931) which institutionalizes free tuition and exemption from other fees in state universities and colleges (SUCs), and local universities and colleges (LUCs). The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) stipulated the implementing rules and regulations through its Unified Financial Assistance System for Tertiary Education Act (UniFAST). This ensures that the underprivileged students are given a chance to get a diploma (Alda, 2022). These students' financial aid motivate them to pursue their dreams of finishing college education despite financial constraints and poverty which they experienced in their households.

Additionally, there are many programs and services implemented to help alleviate the financial burden encountered by poor families in sending their children to school. One of these is the Conditional Cash Transfer Program (CCTP) and the

4-Ps program. The Philippine government gives cash subsidies to poor families for the education of their children. The cash allowance should be used to buy books, school supplies and other school requirements. However, in spite of this, there are still families who find it hard to provide for the education needs of their children. Wanting to fill-in the gap, the Department of Education (DepEd) launched its "Adopt-A-School Program" (ASP). This program is implemented based on the principle of volunteerism and multiple partnerships. In line with the government thrust to strengthen its Public-Private Partnership (PPP), ASP program gives the private sector an opportunity to become dynamic and strong partners towards the noble goal of educating all Filipinos (Llego, 2020). As a result, there had been numerous efforts from different organizations both from the public and the private sectors to support DepEd in their noble task of educating the children and young people. Moreover, the government has also implemented the Students Grants-in-Aid Program for Poverty Alleviation, commonly known as SGP-PA. This is instituted by the government through CHED in partnership with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). This scholarship provides for the students' educational expenses including living allowance if they are willing to take on a CHED-priority course (Alda, 2022).

Locally, College of Special Programs of Cor Jesu College has responded the call for the Adopt-A-Child Program of DepEd by also launching its own version of "Adopt-A-Child Program" even if most of the students enrolled in the CSP belong to financially challenged families. Guided by the core value of compassion instilled in them by the school, CSP started its Adopt-A-Child Program last SY 2015-2016. The main objective of this program is to provide financial and material support such as school supplies and school uniforms to indigent students. During the giving of goods, tutorial sessions were also given to the student beneficiaries. Some faculty members and students have contributed cash so that they can provide for the needs of the indigent students studying the Binaton Elementary School and Matti Elementary School, both of which are located in the far-flung area of Digos City. Majority of the sponsors are the College of Special Programs students who believed that despite their financial difficulties, they can still become blessings to other children who also dream of going to school. Up to the present, a total of two hundred forty-one (241) scholars are recipients of school supplies, uniform allowance, bags and subsidy for their school fees. The cash and in-kinds are channeled to the Cor Jesu College's Brother Polycarp Foundation, Inc. that facilitates the distribution of the donations coming from the students. The CSP students are giving Php10.00 per month for the whole semester as their contribution.



As of October 2022, a total of Php 409, 700.00 that is Php 1,700.00 per pupil per year.

This program has been running since 2015 up to the present but there is no formal study being conducted to assess the relevance of the program from the perspective of the student beneficiaries and their parents. Thus, this study aimed to determine the beneficiaries' assessment of the program. We hope that through this study, the CSP can be able to improve or modify the program if needed.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to determine the relevance of the Adopt-A-Child Program of Cor Jesu College, College of Special Programs from the perspective of the children beneficiaries and their parents.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What are reasons why they are enrolled in the program?
2. What are the assessments of the beneficiaries as well as their parents about the program?
3. What inspiring stories the recipients and their parents as well as teachers can share as regards to the program?
4. What are their suggestions/recommendations for the improvements of Adopt-A-Child Program?

### **Limitation and Limitation of the Study**

This study was focused on the beneficiaries and their parents' experiences including their assessment of the Adopt-A-Child Program of the Cor Jesu College, College of Special Programs. The experiences and assessment may include positive and negative. In this study, the selected participants were the recipients of the Adopt-A-Child program from different grade levels for at least one year. Since the study design is case study, the researchers also interviewed the parents of the recipients to know their experiences and assessment of the program as well as the perspective of the teachers and their observations to their students who are recipients of the program.

Excluded in this study are the non-recipients of the program and those that are new recipients of the program. By new, we mean, less than six months. Another limitation of the study was the data gathering tool. We relied heavily on the responses of our participants during interview and focus group discussion. While we interviewed teachers about their observations of the students who are recipients of the program, we did not employ participant observation as researchers. In our assessment, we relied on the narratives of our participants. We did not employ quantitative instrument using scale to rate the program.

### **Theoretical Lens**

This study can best be viewed through the lens of ARCS Attributes Model of Keller (2008) and Self-Determination Theory of Ryan and Deci (1985). According to ARCS Model, Students can be motivated

directly through the use of attractive, satisfying and stimulating learning material. The school supplies such as notebooks, crayons, drawing books, papers, pens and pencils as well as the school uniforms the recipients of the program received can be considered as attractive, satisfying and learning materials that stimulate their desire to learn. According to Keller (2008), ARCS model is a systematic way to determine and deal with learning motivation. ARCS model which stands Attention, Relevance, Confidence and Satisfaction attributes asserts the following: Firstly, to catch the attention of students is very crucial to gain and sustain the students' engagement in learning. Secondly, students' experiences and their needs are related and therefore, relevant in the learning process. Thirdly, confidence is related to the students' emotion and anticipation. Lastly, the positive feeling regarding the learning process and the gained knowledge leads to satisfaction as completing the whole learning process.

This study found out that the Adopt-A-Child Program of Cor Jesu College has stimulated the interest and motivation of the recipients to learn and continue learning. Since they believed that Cor Jesu College provided them scholarship through the program, they become more determined to learn, changed their bad behaviors and engaged in the learning process. During regular visitation of Cor Jesu College to them, they were given the chance to share their experiences and aspirations through the different activities given to them before the giving of school supplies. These activities, and the thought that they are chosen as scholars of Cor Jesu College, have boosted their self-esteem and self-confidence to study hard.

Self-determination theory, also known as SDT evolves from the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations. The intrinsic motivation illustrates the human's natural tendency to encompass several features in the learning process such as their desire to achieve and perform well in class because they considered themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College. Meanwhile extrinsic motivation depicts a different considerable in its relative sovereignty. It reflects either its external control or true self-regulation. In other words, autonomy is related to volition and liberty (Ryan and Deci, 2000). In the context of this study, the provision of school supplies has increased the freedom of the students to focus on studying the lesson and not to worry on school fees and requirements. Thus, their freedom to focus on their studies was enhanced which eventually resulted to an inspiration to study more to also enhance their capabilities. Similarly, on the part of the parents, the Adopt-A-Child Program has also increased the freedom and capability of the parents to show moral support to their children instead of focusing so much time on finding money to buy the school supplies and materials needed for their children.

### **Methods**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized the qualitative case study design to gather comprehensive information what it is in the program why students were so inspired and happy to be recipients of the program. Was it because of the material things such as school supplies they received or there was really something about the program that really inspired them. Qualitative case study design is deemed appropriate in this study since the study sought to gather information on the peculiarities of the program coming from the multiple sources (Yin, 2003; Baxter & Jack, 2008) such as the children beneficiaries, their parents and also the teachers.

### **Research Participants**

The main participants of the study were the children beneficiaries of the Adopt-A-Child Program for at least one year and are currently enrolled in Matti Binaton, Elementary School, a far-flung community in Digos City, Davao del Sur, Philippines. We also included as participants the parents of the children beneficiaries since they can give us valuable information about their experiences as well their assessment of the program. Other participants who provided us with information of this study were the teachers who also witnessed the implementation of the program and its effect to the learning attitudes and behaviors of the students. The teachers must be at least three years as teachers in the school and they must be actively involved in the implementation of the program.

### **Sampling Procedure**

In selecting the participants of this study, we employed purposive sampling as well as convenience sampling techniques. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method (Saunders, 2012) and one of the most common sampling strategies used in qualitative study. Purposive sampling technique selects participants according to preselected criteria relevant to a particular research question (Mack et al., 2005). We aimed to focus on information provided by the selected participants of the study who are willing and able to answer the research questions. We were able to interview six children beneficiaries, six parents and five teachers including the principal of the school. All in all we have interviewed 17 people who have firsthand knowledge and experiences of the program. The number of people who have been interviewed have reached more than the adequate number of people for data saturation and for the purpose of this study. Creswell, (2014) and Roy, et, al. (2015) argued that small samples are more relevant when employing in-depth interviews in qualitative research. Small samples are ideal because of its facilitation of a deeper comprehension of the experiences, views and perceptions of the participants (Rosenthal, 2016).

### **Data Collection**

In gathering the data, we have conducted individual in-depth interviews for children beneficiaries and teachers and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) for the parents. According to Sutton & Austin (2015) whatever the researcher's philosophical point of view, in-depth interviews are important source of information for qualitative study. The format for the interview was semi-structured and conversational in nature. A semi-structured interview takes a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions, often followed by a follow-up of why or how questions (Adams, 2015). With this kind of interview, conversations had given comfort for the participants to respond to the research questions. Furthermore, participants have given deeper insights and detailed statements as their answers to the probing questions.

Guided on how the collection of data were done, here are the steps or procedures that we have taken. First, we wrote a letter to the dean, asking permission to conduct the study. Then, we also asked permission to the principal as well as the participants to conduct the study. We conducted the In-depth interview and Focus Group Discussion guided by the validated guide questions. The participants were given information sheet of the study and consent form before the interview started.

According to Maxwell (2009), qualitative studies must rely on the integration of data from a variety of methods and sources of information, a general principle known as triangulation. This strategy would reduce the risk that conclusions would reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific method. Triangulation is a marker for validity in qualitative research (Creswell, 2012; Liamputtong & Ezzy, 2009). Triangulation in qualitative research is not and does not only happen in data collection, it must be attended to constantly even in interpretation and analysis as the study progresses through the intentionality of the researchers of the study (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, Di Censo, Blythe, & Neville, 2014).

We were very careful that our task in data collection as well as in analysis that the interpretations of the participants are influenced by their gender or socio-economic backgrounds. This helped us in framing our analysis. During the data collection as well as in analysis, we were very careful to observe reflexivity by capturing the meanings and interpretations of those we have interviewed (Creswell, 2012; Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Merriam 2009).

### **Data Analysis**

The participants' responses were transcribed, summarized, and verified to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of the information we have gathered. Following the verification, the data were coded, analyzed, interpreted and confirmed. The codes were the words which were highlighted in different colors. They were then used as our basis to

categorize or organize texts that are considered as essential parts of qualitative research.

After the initial coding, the coded data were analyzed and organized into themes. We have followed the techniques of Colaizzi (1978) in looking for the emerging themes in our data. Interpreting the data was done by distinguishing any reoccurring themes during the interview and highlighting any similarities and differences of the stories, experiences and suggestions of our participants as regards to the Adopt--Child program of Cor Jesu College.

Lastly, horizontalization and cross-case analysis was done to determine patterns and generalizations from the different sources of information. This is important to establish generalization of findings and conclusions which is a key feature in a qualitative case study.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Mack et.al (2005) defines research ethics as dealing primarily with the interaction between researchers and the people they interviewed. During the conduct of the study, we have closely monitored the ethics in research and practice to preserve the privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent of the participants of the study. We have considered each of these issues in the planning stage of the project: maintaining anonymity and confidentiality while using the direct works of the participants to tell the story; recognizing the potential intensity and friendship that could be generated from a face to face relationship; and writing with balance and fairness. These aspects were posited by Guillemin and Gillam (2004), as cited by Anyansi-Archibong (2015), as the crucial aspects of ethical considerations in any qualitative research design.

**Privacy, Anonymity and Confidentiality.** We were able to maintain the anonymity of the participants by refraining from identifying their responses by name but instead by assigning the participants with codes. In this manner, the participants were assured that they will remain anonymous in terms of their statements regarding their experiences and views with the Adopt-A-Child Program of the Cor Jesu College.

As researchers, we were prudent in establishing and guarding the invisible boundaries of our capacity as researchers and the capacity of the learners and their parents as our participants. We were cautious in maintaining the boundaries between us as researchers and our participants in this study by not getting so involved in their personal lives and not asking questions which are too personal and irrelevant to our study.

**Balance and Fairness.** We have established and guarded the invisible boundaries of our capacity as researchers by writing the study with balance and fairness. We achieved this by minimizing the inclusion of any of our personal bias as initiators and implementers of the program. We have relied on the information shared by our participants. We were

actively alert in reading and sensing if our interpretation of the statements of the participants was not from the perspective of the participants but based on our own assumptions. We were vigilant in placing the perspective of the participants at the forefront in order that we will not put in jeopardy the honesty and impartiality of the results of our study.

**Voluntariness and Informed Consent.** Last but not the least, we have ensured that the participants were not forced but are willing to participate in this study through the informed consent that they have signed. Informed consent is a method for ensuring that participants understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so that they can make an informed, voluntary and deliberate decision as to whether to participate or not. Informed consent is one of the most important ways to ensure respect for people during research. They understood very well that they are free to withdraw their participation if they feel any discomfort on their part without fear that they will not be included in the lists of beneficiaries of the program anymore. In short, there was no pressure on their part to really participate so that they will continue their status as beneficiaries of the program.

### **Results and Discussion**

#### **Reasons of Beneficiaries in Joining the Program**

Based on our interview with the children beneficiaries and their parents, there were two reasons why our children and parent participants have been included as beneficiaries of the program – First *they were identified by the teachers* and their names were submitted to the CJC- Br. Polycarp Foundation as qualified recipients of the program because *they belong to poor and indigent families*. Second, *they also expressed their desire to be part of the program because they belong to poor and indigent families*.

A grade four student was happy when his name was included in the lists by his teacher, *"I am not supposed to be included in the lists of beneficiaries if not because of my teacher who included me in the lists of beneficiaries of the Adopt-A Child Program that is why I am so happy"* (KII 2). A grade 5 students also shares their difficult home situation before she was included in the lists of beneficiaries of the program, *"Our situation was really difficult because my parents cannot really afford to shoulder the expenses especially in my school needs plus our food. Good that I was included to be in the list in the adopt-a-child program by my teacher"* (KII2). A parent who was a former PTA officer also shares her experiences during the FGD we have conducted, *"Good afternoon sir and to all of us here...for me before when there was no adopt-a-child program yet, our situation was really difficult especially when it comes to funding the schooling of our children but we continued to struggle and do our part because we want that our students will really have education but*

*because of our economic condition, sometimes there are school needs of our children that we were not able to buy. However, we continued to support our children in whatever ways we can.*" (FGD, June 17, 2022)

This was also supported by another participant of the FGD, a grandmother who was teary eyed when she shares these words, *"For me sir I am very much thankful to Cor Jesu College because of this Adopt-a-Child program because it has provided big help for the grandson. He is staying with me because he has no mother and father anymore so I am the one who takes care of him and I'm already too old that is why I find it so difficult to look for money and so sometimes I really cannot provide his school needs. But I really send him to school so that he will have a degree even if I find it so hard."* (FGD, June 17, 2022)

A widower who travels by foot for two hours just to join the FGD has these words, *"Good morning sir and to your companions, I'm sorry because I'm shy and I'm not really used to talk in front of people but because I'm so thankful because of your program I will speak now. Before when there was no program yet, it was very difficult for me especially because I'm the only one who takes good care of my children because their mother left us for somebody else. Even if it was very difficult for me I really send my kids to school"* (FGD, June 17, 2022).

A widow who has resonated with the experiences of her companion also shares that she was left by her husband and that makes her situation even more difficult, *"If kuya's family was left by her wife, we were also left by my husband that is why it is very difficult if you do not have partner in raising your family. However, I really worked hard to send my kids to school but it was really difficult that is why sometimes even their food is not enough, so much so with buying school needs always"* (FGD, June 17, 2022)

Some teachers whom we interviewed also shared that they really selected the recipients who are in dire need. *"We make it sure sir that those who are really in dire need we will include in the lists especially those that came from broken family like they do not have father or mother anymore and they are really facing economic difficulty but they are really willing to go to school"* (KII8). Another teacher adds, *"We also interviewed them sir including their parents and we also visit their homes to verify if they are really in dire need."* (KII9).

Whether the reason why they are included in the lists of recipients of the program is because they were identified by the teachers as beneficiaries or they expressed their desire, the fact of the matter is that, it is because they belong to poor and indigent families and that they experienced economic difficulties and challenges. However, despite hardship the parents have exerted efforts to send their kids to school even if it was very difficult for them to provide the school needs of their children such as bags, notebooks, shoes, school uniforms and even food. Thus, the Adopt-a-Child program which was implemented in their school is a blessing for them. The program is not only a blessing for the

indigent children and their families but it is also an opportunity for the private sector to be generous and channel of blessings for others as what Llego, (2020) has asserted. It is important to note that in developing countries such as the Philippines, low income students' desires to finish higher education because they believe that a college degree improves their employment conditions. This is significant because higher education leads to a social transformation that is guided by individual development and equality of opportunity, as well as shared prosperity (e Silva, 2023). These children are driven to participate in the educational assistance program because they are excited about the opportunities that it brings to their challenging lives.

It is a reality even in some other countries that financial difficulties of parents are one of the reason why parents find it difficult to provide the other financial needs of their children in school. Some children were forced to quit school because of these realities. Even in Japan and China which are more developed than the Philippines, students faced financial difficulties which resulted to an increase number of students dropping out from schools (Suzuki, et. al., 2022) and other negative consequences according to the study of Cao et. al. (2020). The good news, however, is that these students can be prioritized when it comes to government support such as Adopt-A-Child program which has been implemented in partnership with private sector such as Cor Jesu College in the case of Digos City and Davao del Sur. The provision of financial and material assistance, such as school supplies and uniforms, to children who are unable to financially support themselves is the primary goal of Adopt-A-Child Program. In addition to the provision of material things, the student beneficiaries were also offered the opportunity to participate in instructional sessions. A number of the students and members of the teaching staff have made financial contributions to enable the school to meet the requirements of the needy students. These children attend either the Binaton Elementary School or the Matti Elementary School, both of which are found in a more remote part of Digos City. The majority of the sponsors are students at College of Special Programs. These students think that in spite of the challenges they face with their own finances, they are still able to provide a blessing to other children who share their desire to be able to attend school. To this day, a total of two hundred forty-one (241) students have benefited from financial assistance in the form of subsidies for their school fees, uniform allowances, bag subsidies, and school supply allowances.

### **Assessments of the Beneficiaries as well as their Parents about the Program**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the assessment of the recipients and their parents about the Adopt-a-Child Program of the school. The assessments of both the parents and the children as

well as the teachers were centered on the following themes: **Happy and Grateful as well as Source of Relief and Inspiration.**

**Happy and Grateful.** All participants – the children beneficiaries, their parents as well the teachers happily expressed their gratitude for being chosen as beneficiaries of the program. The school principal himself shares his sincere appreciation to Cor Jesu College for the different assistance the school extended to their children and their parents especially, the adopt-a-child program and its activities which had been existing consistently for the past 8 years: *“I am very thankful to Cor Jesu College for all the help and assistance you gave to our children and their parents. I am deeply happy to see our children who have become so happy and motivated to go to school because of your support. The parents also become very active in our school every time we call them to come to school for some activities especially when they knew that Cor Jesu College will also come to school during that activity”* (KII, 10).

The statement of the principal was confirmed by a grade 6 student who cannot contain his happiness: *“I am deeply happy and thankful when you gave us something. I am happy because I can bring rice because we do not have rice in the house that is why even if our house is far, we will really go to school if we are told that you called us because I am expecting that I will receive rice and other school supplies that are very much helpful to us”* (KII,2).

The same is true to all other children beneficiaries who are so happy and grateful of the program because it was very helpful to them in easing their economic burdens. Some of them say that instead of buying school supplies, their parents used the little money that they have in buying food and medicine (KII, 4, KII, 5, KII, 7).

During the FGD, all the parents also shared their gratitude and happiness of the program because it has helped them a lot in easing their financial burdens. For instance, a father emphatically shares his appreciation to Cor Jesu College: *“For me sir Cor Jesu College has given us big help because you have many programs so that our children will go to school. It is true that as a father I really work hard to send my kids to school but it was really difficult sir. That is why in terms of priority, our food should be the number one instead of buying school supplies but I really send them to school. But when your program has arrived, I was so happy because there will be somebody who can provide the school needs of my kids”* (FGD, June 17, 2022)

While it is a normal thing for a recipient of aid to be grateful for the giver, the gratitude that the participants of this study especially the children were translated into improving their social and study attitudes and behavior. *“I am so happy that I was part of a scholar of Cor Jesu. I really tried to study very well”* (KII, 1) narrates a grade four student who was happy being recipient of the program and became motivated to focus on her studies.

In addition, another child recipient proudly shares that the program has a big impact into his social behavior. *“Before I was naughty but now I am not naughty anymore because I am a member of Cor Jesu Scholar”* (KII, 2). Because they were so happy and grateful that they are included in the program implemented by Cor Jesu College, there were changes in their social and academic lives and they become motivated to focus on their studies. The external reward has improved their inner desire to continue their studies. The experiences helped them in improving their self-determination.

According to the self-determination theory, intrinsic as well extrinsic motivation help in improving social behavior (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Ross, et al., 2016). According to Morato, (2022), Scholarships have a significant effect on the lives of students because they lessen the financial burden that comes with obtaining an education and make it possible for them to exercise a fundamental human right. Education is a worthwhile investment since it is the stepping stone to self-determination and successful work. When we look at the ways in which education benefits our students, we need to keep in mind that education is a service department whose primary mission is to generate educated men and women who will make significant contributions to the economy. This is because education is primarily responsible for the growth of our nation's human resources. Because of this, the fact that both the public and private sectors actively participate in the granting of scholarships for Filipino students should not come as a surprise. Without a doubt, both of these groups are aware of the contribution that a capable and educated student can make to the expansion of skilled human capital.

**Source of Relief and Inspiration.** Aside from being happy and grateful, the parents also share that the program is a source of relief and inspiration to them as well as to their children. The program helped in easing the financial burden they have experienced. In addition, the program also provided inspiration to their children to continue their studies. A widow emphatically shares that the program not only helped in easing her financial burden but also provided inspiration to her children. *“When the program was implemented, I felt a sense of relief because I do not have to worry on the school needs of my kids because Cor Jesu College has provided them. Then, my kids were very happy and they were so motivated to go to school especially because they have new shoes and bag and plenty of school supplies. They were given hope and I am also so happy that I see my kids who are so motivated to go to school”* (FGD, June 17, 2022).

A grade four student whom we interviewed also shares that when the program was implemented her worry about school supplies and other materials has slowly vanished and she was inspired to focus on her studies. *“When the Adopt-a- Child Program was implemented, my worry on how to buy school supplies,*

*bags, shoes and others was lessened because were so poor. Now that Cor Jesu is here to help us, our money will be used on buying for your food. I also become focused on my studies and I am so motivated to go to school and I do not skip schooling anymore”* (KII, 1).

The same is true with the grade 3 student who is also a beneficiary of the program he says that the program really provided relief to their situation. He even considers himself as a scholar of Cor Jesu College which really inspires him to go to school “Before when I was not yet a scholar of Cor Jesu, it was really difficult for us but now that I am already a scholar, we felt a little better because I received plenty from Cor Jesu. I am so motivated to go to school this time” (KII, 6)

We found out that the program has really provided inspiration and motivation of the students to go to school and their parents to support their children through their active participation in school activities as what the principal of the school reported. The teachers also confirmed that the children beneficiaries were motivated to go to school and study their lessons well. Their parents became so active also in school activities. According to a grade 5 teacher, “*The program provided huge help sir because our students have been so motivated to go to school. They do not skip schooling anymore and they are so focused on studying their lesson well. Their parents have been so active also in school activities”* (KII, 9).

The program has provided relief and inspiration. Relief not only in the financial aspect of their lives but also on giving motivation to the students to continue their studies and perform well on school on the part of the teachers as well as their parents. Some educational programs provided by other institutions to the students have provided relief and inspiration to the parents (Bayod, C. and Bayod, R., 2020). Furthermore, in the study of Jurada and Balaoro, (2022), it was found out that because recipients of scholarships and grants are required to participate in a variety of extracurricular activities and clubs at their individual institutions, students develop a sense of gratitude and modesty regarding the accomplishments they have attained. This is one of the positive effects that scholarships and grants have on students. Students develop a sense of responsibility in all aspects of their lives, which is especially true if they are afforded the opportunity to continue their education through the receipt of a scholarship grant from one of a variety of governmental organizations or institutions. In addition, students have the option of repaying their Alma Mater for all of the opportunities and privileges they have been afforded through their status as a scholar grantee at that institution.

### **Inspiring stories the recipients and their parents as well as teachers about the program**

While it is already evident from the sharing of our participants that the program has really provided big help for the children and their parents, we would like to present some inspiring stories of the

beneficiaries of the program as well as their parents. Hearing from their sharing, we discovered that the program really provided *hope and inspiration* for the children as well as their *improvement of their self-esteem* because they consider themselves as scholar of Cor Jesu College.

**Hope and Inspiration.** The widow during the FGD shares that the program has provided hope and inspiration to her children. “*My kids were very happy and they were so motivated to go to school especially because they have new shoes and bag and plenty of school supplies. They were given hope and I am also so happy that I see my kids who are so motivated to go to school”* (FGD, June 17, 2022).

A student who is a recipient of the program also shares that before he was so naughty and he does not care about going to school but because of the program, his behavior was changed. “*Before I was naughty and I do not like going to school because we were really poor. I do not even have enough food but now I am taking my studies seriously and I am doing good because I am already a scholar of Cor Jesu College”* (KII, 2).

A grandmother who is the one who takes care of her grandchildren because their parents are both dead already was teary eyed when she shares her appreciation and experiences with the program. “*That is why I am so thankful to Cor Jesu College because of your program and that my grandchildren were included in your program, they have already school supplies, uniform and shoes. And because of the program, they were so inspired to go to school. They do not want to skip classes. They are really given big hope because of Cor Jesu College.”* (FGD, June 17, 2022)

As emphasized by Giva Authorship Team (2015), the fact that scholarships reduce one's educational costs is, perhaps, the most evident advantage they offer. Many more benefits can be derived from this larger, more comprehensive advantage. The ever-increasing price tag associated with receiving an education is a significant barrier to entry for potential students. Scholarship grants can provide students with the financial boost necessary to take the plunge and enroll in school. In addition, they can provide a boost to a student's morale and confidence in their abilities to work toward a brighter future. The provision of school supplies is greatly appreciated by parents and guardians because it helps minimize the overall cost of raising their children. They now have optimism that they will be able to complete their studies because they are aware that they will be provided with the support that they require, particularly in these trying times.

**Improvement of Self-Esteem.** The program also boosted the self-esteem of the children beneficiaries to the delight of their parents or guardians. For instance, a guardian of a beneficiary expresses her gratitude and appreciation to Cor Jesu College during the FGD. “*As for me sir as a guardian to one*

child because we are the ones who sent this child to school, the program has is a big help for us. Aside from the fact that it helped us financially and materially, the program really helped in boosting the self-esteem of my child. She is much motivated to go to school and she is so proud because she considers herself as scholar of Cor Jesu College that is why she is eager to go to school and she does not skip classes." (FGD, June 17, 2022)

The same with the other parent who is an officer of the Parents-Teachers Association (PTA), the program does not only provided material things but also hope and encouragement and self-confidence to the children because they consider themselves as scholar of Cor Jesu College. "It has provided huge help to us not because of the free school supplies, uniform and other gifts that you have provided for us but because the program has provided encouragement to our children to go to school and their confidence was boosted because they are scholars of Cor Jesu College. They do not want to skip schooling because as scholars they do not want to disappoint Cor Jesu College who gave them scholarship. They are so motivated to go to school because they consider themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College." (FGD, June 17, 2022)

The feeling of encouragement and motivation to study and not skip classes were also shared by the children themselves. For instance, one student shares, "Even if our house is far from the school, I do not want to skip classes because I want that Cor Jesu will be proud of me as their scholar" (KII, 4). According to the teachers there were significant improvement in the attendance of the students as well as in their school performance the moment they were enrolled in the program (KII, 8, KII, 9).

According to Usher (2013), pupils who are not motivated only by a love of learning may have a higher chance of succeeding in school if they can perceive studying as a gateway to something else that they value. Setting objectives for oneself might be an effective way to drive oneself to work harder, if certain requirements are met. The objective ought to be reasonable, attainable, and contingent upon receiving an education.

The goal ought to have been proposed by the student, or at the very least accepted by the student, and the student need to have been able to perceive a distinct way to get to the goal. It is also beneficial for the student if the aim is backed by persons who are significant to them. A number of scholarship programs have been created with the goal of boosting the academic drive of students in elementary and secondary school by inspiring them to pursue more advanced kinds of education. For instance, certain philanthropists have pledged to cover the cost of higher education for each student in a specific class who satisfies the requirements for entrance.

Other initiatives have taken a more holistic approach by offering children who are at risk with a variety of assistance to establish a "college-bound

climate" in elementary and secondary schools. This "climate" is intended to encourage students to continue their education beyond high school. These aids might vary but may include professional college counseling, tutoring, and encouragement to complete the appropriate coursework. They can also include tours to college campuses, assistance with applications, and funding to cover the costs of college admission examinations. This only shows that scholarship grants and programs, most especially those provided for by Cor Jesu College, add to the motivation of the student beneficiaries to strive even more to be deserving of the opportunities given to them. Furthermore, even if they experience discomfort and difficulties, they are still motivated to move forward because of the privilege they have been given.

### **Suggestions and recommendations for the improvements of Adopt-A-Child Program**

Another aim of this study why we need to know the assessment of our recipients is for us to know their suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of our program. The children beneficiaries said that they do not have suggestion to improve the program because they are already satisfied with the program. They just hope that the program will continue. For the parents, they have one suggestion which is to expand the program so that others will also benefit. Some of them shared the blessing that they received from Cor Jesu College to their neighbors who are not beneficiaries of the project especially during the pandemic that is why they pray and wish that Cor Jesu College will be blessed with more so that they can continue with the program and even expand it to many students. This is emphatically expressed by one parent who is an officer in the PTA;

"The program has really provided huge help sir. Then during the pandemic, we were given food packs and other gifts by Cor Jesu, we were able to share to others especially our neighbors who are not beneficiaries of the program. Because we received more than enough that time so we also shared the food packs and the school supplies. I hope that Cor Jesu College will be given more blessings so that they can continue to implement this program and hopefully, it will expand so that other children here will be included because sometimes they told us why is it that they were not included knowing that they are also poor, why only you? But I cannot answer them; I just only say that it is the teachers who chose us. So, I hope that more blessings will be given to Cor Jesu College for the next years to come." (FGD, June 17, 2022)

This was also supported by the guardian when she shares, "I hope you will be blessed with many graces sir so you can continue to help others. We also share what you have shared for us to our neighbors who are not beneficiaries of the program". (FGD, June 17, 2022).

**Table 1: Cross-Case Analysis on the Participants' Assessment of the Program**

Study Components	Children Beneficiaries	Parents of the Beneficiaries	Teachers	Implications
Reasons they were enrolled in the program	They were listed by their teachers to be included as recipients of the program because for them they are poor	They were included because they are poor	They list names of children who are poor and deserving	The answers of participants have common theme: They were enrolled in the program because they belong to <b>poor and indigent families</b>
Assessment of the program	Happy and grateful	Happy and grateful	Students became motivated to go to school and study their lesson because they consider themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College	For the children beneficiaries and their parents, they were so <b>happy and grateful</b> that they were included in the program
	Program as source of inspiration and motivation to study	Program as source of relief and inspiration	Parents became supportive of their children and active in school activities	The program is a <b>source of inspiration and motivation</b> for the children to focus on their studies and for the parents to be more involved in the school activities of their children
Inspiring Stories about the Program	The program is a source of inspiration to continue studying and do best in school  There is also change in the behavior and attitudes of students. They prioritized their studies and they also became generous to their classmates.	The program is not only a source of inspiration for the children to continue their studies and do best in school but also enhances their self-esteem and self-confidence because they considered themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College	Children who are recipients of the program are inspired to go to schools and their school performance has improved.  Parents became supportive of their children and active in school activities	The program does not only provide support to the material needs of students and parents but it also provides sense of hope and inspiration to the children as well as their parents. As a result, self-esteem of children has improved and there was a change in their academic and social lives.
Suggestions for the Improvement of the Program	They are already satisfied with the program. They just want the program to continue.	Parents are hoping that the program will continue that that CJC will be blessed with more graces so that the program will also expand and cater to many students	Teachers also hope that the program will continue and expand.	The program has provided help to the recipients that their only hope is that the program will not only continue but also expand to other beneficiaries as schools.



For the school to be able to continue running the Adopt-a-Child program, the alumni association needs to be strengthened. One way to do this would be to create an online group page for the alumni association on which information regarding activities, events, and other pertinent topics may be posted to encourage financial support. It is the goal of the program to grow the number of students who benefit from it, and thus, the funding becomes a challenge in order to provide ongoing assistance to these disadvantaged students who are nonetheless qualified. It is also possible that the group page may motivate other civic organizations to raise further cash and be able to accommodate a greater number of scholars in the not too distant future. It has been maintained for a very long time that education is the single most important factor in creating equality, and scholarships provide students with the assistance they require to achieve their goals and eventually enter the profession. According to Morato (2022), receiving a good education is every Filipino's goal, as well as their best chance to lift themselves and their families out of poverty. Scholarships for students can have a life-altering impact on their ability to receive a quality education, which is one of the primary reasons that children in the Philippines do not have access to a sufficient level of education.

#### **Cross-Case Analysis on the Participants' Assessment of the Program**

Cross-case analysis (See Table 1) reveals that the students were enrolled in the program because they belong to the poor and indigent families. The teachers were also instrumental in their admission to the program because it was them who determine who deserves to be included in the program. Cor Jesu College relies so much on the assessment of the teachers in terms of who will be admitted to the program. After assessing the children, the teachers submit the lists of beneficiaries to the staff of Cor Jesu College Br. Polycarp Foundation.

As regards to the assessment of the main participants of this study, the children beneficiaries as well as their parents said that they are happy and grateful for the program because it helps them financially. Instead of spending money for school supplies and other school stuff, they can focus on the most basic need of the family which is food. They are even more happy because during the pandemic, they were also given food packs aside from school supplies. They also said that the program has been a source of inspiration to their children to go to school and do their best in the academics which was also attested and confirmed by the teachers. According to Zulli and Clayton (2018), the replies that parents gave when asked about their perceptions of scholarship programs suggested that the parents believed that participation in the program significantly and positively benefited the lives of their children and that the program was of great value. Their replies also suggested that they had a high degree of involvement in the program and that

positive parental outcomes were associated to program participation. Additionally, their involvement in the program was related to positive results for their children. The scholarship program has been successful in making both students and their parents happy, which has encouraged the parents and students to participate actively by providing financial support. They have a lighter financial load as a result, and they eagerly anticipate the upcoming events and activities that are associated with the program.

There were inspiring stories that we also gathered from the participants of this study. We found out that students are inspired and motivated to go to school and do well in their academics not only because of the material things and also sessions that they have received from Cor Jesu College but more so because they consider themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College. This thought and feeling of being a scholar is influential in boosting their self-esteem and self-confidence and in changing their attitudes and behaviors for the betterment of their lives. This was also confirmed by the teachers and even the principal of the school. They said that after they were included in the program, the children became active in school and performed well in their academics. The parents also became very active in school activities as partners of the school in the education of their children. Vargas et al. (2020) emphasized that the reasoning behind a scholarship program is to contribute to the scholastic permanence of individuals receiving the scholarship, consequently impacting their academic success. This was underlined as being the primary objective of a scholarship program. The first scenario is a distinct possibility. Because of this, there is a larger incentive for parents and guardians to keep their children enrolled in school so that they may invest in their children's health, education, and food because the resources that are accessible to the families have increased and they are now able to do so. These are the primary reasons why parents and children have been motivated and bursting with enthusiasm as a result of actively engaging in a variety of activities related to school.

Lastly, the participants are hoping that Cor Jesu College will be blessed with more graces so that the program will continue and will even expand to be able to cater many students. However, in the meantime, another good thing that happened as a result of their enrollment to the program is the fact that the participants as well as their parents also share what they have received from Cor Jesu College to their neighbors who are not included in the program.

According to the research conducted by the Bukas Team (2021), despite the fact that the digital learning environment may encourage flexibility, habitual learning, and adaptability, a significant number of students are still unable to attend school because of financial restrictions. Students learn the importance of community service by participating in

scholarship programs. Students are afforded the opportunity to pursue and succeed in higher education thanks to the assistance that is made available by educational institutions in the form of financial aid. At the same time, giving aid to students can also be a means to encourage them to develop philanthropic tendencies once they have established themselves as successful professionals. Due to the fact that students are familiar with the sensation of receiving assistance, particularly in terms of funds, their positive experience may drive them to give back to the school or possibly sponsor the education of another student.

Students and educational institutions alike emerge victorious from this virtuous cycle of gratitude. A population of high-achieving students can be encouraged to enroll in schools that offer scholarships. The Philippines is home to a large number of young people who possess impressive levels of talent. However, the fact that many young individuals are unable to fulfill their potential because of financial constraints is disheartening to learn. Many students are unable to improve their skills because they lack the appropriate supervision and educational background to do so, which prevents them from constructing the future that they want for themselves. Having said that, universities and colleges that provide ample financial aid in the form of scholarships and grants have the ability to close this gap. In addition to the financial aid that is made available, schools give young people the opportunity to mature and develop into knowledgeable professionals. In the end, this makes it possible for the institution to develop a pool of talented students, which in turn contributes to the institution's increased credibility. That would be a natural by-product, to clarify.

The scholarship program has the potential to build a more robust alumni network. When a school is generous with its resources, it makes the atmosphere at the institution more warm and inviting for the students. Because of the established trust that is gradually formed with the student community via the utilization of these scholarship programs and grant opportunities, the formation of an alumni network occurs organically.

When a student feels highly supported and linked by their school, it is common for them to have a positive attitude toward the upcoming activities and programs that the school will be hosting. In addition to making financial contributions or participating in alumni-sponsored events, such as awarding academic scholarships to the following generation of students, it is essential to emphasize the fact that the memories they make while they are affiliated with the school will remain with them for the rest of their lives

### **Implications of the Study**

The results of this study provided relevant data for Cor Jesus College to continue to be grounded on its core value of compassion. While the school spend

time, talents and resources in going to the far flung areas to reach out to students and their parents, the school also received many blessings like increase of enrollment, accreditation of programs and many other achievements. This study provided additional impetus for the college to continue the program and to encourage more students and faculty to share their human and material resources for the program because it has contributed a lot not only in easing the financial burdens of students and their families but also in boosting the confidence of the students and providing them hope and inspiration to change their attitudes and behaviors and to focus more on their studies.

Likewise, the study provided data for some other institutions to consider doing the same program to other communities and to craft mechanism to sustain the program. They may look into fostering partnership and linkages with other institutions both in the public and private sector to ensure sustainability of the program.

The study also provided data for our partner school to continue to reach out to other private institutions who can provide them with different forms of assistance. The current leadership and atmosphere of the school are conducive enough for private sectors to implement their community outreach activities. Thus, other schools may learn from them on how to entice private sectors to foster partnership with them.

### **Conclusions**

While it is really an established fact that provision of material goods like school supplies, uniforms and other school needs provide help for the poor students, what we have discovered in this study go beyond those realities. Students found hope and inspiration because Cor Jesu College has reached out to them. The material provision as well as the different sessions conducted to the students have given them strong motivation to continue their studies and perform very well so that Cor Jesu College will be proud of them. They consider themselves as scholars of Cor Jesu College and this has boosted their self-esteem and self-confidence. They were so inspired to go to school even if some of them need to walk many kilometers in muddy and difficult terrain. They do not want to skip classes. Their parents also show support to them through encouraging them and reminding them to really do their best and not to stop schooling because for their beautiful and flourishing life in the future. The teachers also witness the change in the attitudes and behaviors and eventually, the school performance of the beneficiaries of the program. Indeed, the program is a beacon hope and inspiration for the indigent children in Digos City.

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## Loosing a spleen

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During COVID19 lockdown in 2020, I noticed my risk of infection remained high in spite of everything I've done to stay healthy since the traumatic loss of my spleen back on 8 October 1973 - a uniquely challenging experience during a school visit from Sweden to Saudi Arabia at a time when emotions were high due to the war in Palestine with Israel.

The Middle East had been caught in frequent conflicts, tension, and economic challenges that not only hurt social and health budgets that threatened the wellbeing of regular citizens, it also heightened private emotional intensity between individuals, including young school students, as I found out.

Avenging humiliation had trapped belligerent rivals in a repeat cycle of violence, a time loop probably dating to the 14th century BC, that spilled during the visit that day when a Palestinian student, a recent refugee, learned by chance that my best friend at the Anglo-American school in Stockholm was from Israel - hate, and maybe fear, must have welled up and drove him to attack me with a blow while unguarded that ruptured my spleen, stomach, appendix and part of the pancreas.

I was only 13 yrs. at the time and experiencing such a violent act at that age has been extremely difficult to heal from and the event had a lasting impact on my family's emotions and my well-being.

I survived the medical emergency and as time marched on, I took health precautions and kept my vaccines current, which I maintained vigilantly since my splenectomy.

Like most people during lockdown, it became important to take extra precautions to protect myself from the virus, especially since my risk of infection remained high.

At the time the *World Emergency COVID19 Pandemic Ethics (WeCope) Committee*, developed general recommendations to lower the risk of contracting COVID-19 and I adhered to them. These include:

1. "Following the guidelines provided by health authorities: Stay updated on the latest guidelines and recommendations provided by local health authorities, such as wearing masks, practicing social distancing, and washing hands frequently.
2. Maintaining good hygiene practices: Wash my hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, I used hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content. I also avoided touching your face, especially my eyes, nose, and mouth.
3. Practicing social distancing: I stayed at least 6 feet away from others, especially in public places. I avoided crowded places and gatherings where maintaining physical distance may be challenging.
4. Wearing masks: I wore a mask that covered my nose and mouth when in public settings where social distancing measures were difficult to maintain.
5. Boosting my immunity system: I maintained a healthy lifestyle by eating nutritious food, exercising regularly, getting enough sleep, and managing stress. These practices helped support my immune system."

It was crucial to remember that no preventive measures are 100% guaranteed to prevent infection. However, following the above recommendations significantly reduce the risk. As I teach bioethics with medical doctors, I consulted with colleagues about any specific concerns or questions about my health for personalized advice.

The degree of risk of infection, as my doctors told me, depended on the number of people I mixed with, or encountered socially, especially in closed environments, and the emerging and seasonal diseases that expand their range in society (like SARS and flus related to coronavirus family that caused diseases like Covid19).

The advice from my surgeon in Jedda about watching out for flu-like symptoms and addressing them immediately was crucial, especially

considering the risks associated with infections for individuals without a spleen.

My doctor also mentioned the potential health risks involved in terms of hygiene, travel stress, and viral infections through bodily fluid exchange. Over time, various viral diseases and pandemics have emerged, emphasizing the importance of practices such as hygiene, vaccination, and keeping up with annual vaccines to protect against changing viruses.

I have managed to stay physically fit and disease-free throughout your life. Indeed, regular vaccines and antibiotics played a significant role in preventing and managing infections. It was also important to prioritize protein, phosphorus, and potassium for strength and immunity.

These nutrients are essential for overall health and can be obtained from various food sources. I learned that it was important to include a variety of protein-rich foods such as lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, legumes, and tofu. Foods rich in phosphorus include dairy products, meat, fish, nuts, and whole grains. Potassium-rich foods include bananas, potatoes, citrus fruits, leafy green vegetables, and beans. This was my staple diet.

In addition to a medical diet, participatory sports also became important for building my immunity and protecting against infectious diseases – knowledge that I shared while hearing the many inspiring medical advice from colleagues at AUSN and partner universities during the many COVID19 conferences we organized around the world.

Among other things, we paid particular attention to underlying conditions and symptoms like fever, diarrhea, chills, achy feeling, stomach pain, cough, vomiting, skin rash or infection, all of which required immediate health care attention to avoid the risk of death.

Over time, various viral diseases and pandemics have emerged, emphasizing the importance of practices such as hygiene, vaccination, and keeping up with annual vaccines to protect against changing viruses, but this time, due to factors like deforestation, environmental degradation, and urban crowding, these measures were crucial.

Diseases like HIV/AIDS, Bird and Swine Flus, and chronic diseases, like Diabetes 2 and hypertension, increased our infection risks, especially after 50 years of age, and as such, we advised everyone to take booster and seasonal flu shot due to virus mutation and viral reassortment (gene swapping between related viruses that infect a person at the same time, and which can be deadly) every winter.

I was well aware of the idea that without a spleen, a small infection can become very serious, which is why my doctors always prescribed antibiotics and gave me Pneumococcal vaccine conjugates to prevent Pneumonia, Influenza, and Meningitis. And also recommended daily exercise to help boost my immunity.

Subjective experience confirmed these valuable medical insights and taught me that my life was a medical experimental trial, a feeling that challenged

me to “leave a mark on the road” so to speak, an experience that motivated me to create a positive impact on the world. So after careful reflection and focus, I wrote a book about COVID19.

My aim was to help educate and raise awareness about the pandemic, its impact, and preventive measures.

The fears and concerns associated with infectious diseases have resurfaced during the lockdown in 2020. Writing the book helped me take precautions, receive multiple antibiotic treatments when necessary, and take the recommended COVID-19 vaccinations.

To further protect yourself, I plan to take the 2023 Influenza shot before resuming visits with family and friends or traveling. This is a proactive approach; as seasonal influenza can also pose a risk.

Social gatherings during the Christmas season can be lengthy, and I have learned that vaccines' efficacy is generally effective for meetings with up to 10 people for about 30 minutes in a well-ventilated room. Spending more time with more people increases the risk of infection, potentially leading to illness for several days.

To stay safe during this new medical era, I have adopted certain habits such as sleeping alone, avoiding crowded rooms, and spending more time outdoors in natural settings, away from sources of pollution and noise.

These precautions align with the current understanding of reducing exposure to infectious diseases, including viral infections like COVID-19 and influenza. Now I feel that it's essential to continue following public health guidelines and recommendations, such as maintaining good hygiene practices, wearing masks when necessary, and staying updated with the latest vaccination recommendations.

That's the thing about pain. Here are a few key points to keep in mind:

1. **Influenza Vaccine:** Taking the annual influenza shot is a good step to reduce our risk of getting the flu. The vaccine can help protect us from the influenza virus and its potentially severe symptoms. We need to consult with our healthcare provider about the most appropriate time to get the vaccine.
2. **Social Gatherings:** Limiting the size of social gatherings and the duration of close contact can help reduce the risk of infection. Following the guideline of meeting with up to 10 people for about 30 minutes in a well-ventilated room is a good practice.
3. **Outdoor Activities:** Spending time outdoors, especially in natural settings away from crowded areas and pollution, can reduce the risk of viral transmission. Fresh air and open spaces can help disperse respiratory droplets and decrease the chances of coming in contact with infected individuals.
4. **Precautions in Hospitals:** When visiting hospitals, it's important to follow the

necessary precautions. Wearing a mask inside the hospital can help prevent the transmission of viruses between patients and visitors. Taking antibiotics as prescribed by your doctor before visiting a loved one or friend in the hospital may help reduce the risk of bacterial infection, but they are not effective against viral infections like the flu.

It's the dawn of a new medical era. We must remember to stay updated with the latest guidelines from local health authorities and consult with our healthcare providers for personalized advice based on our medical history and current situation.

In some way, I feel sorry about this traumatic experience I went through at such a young age. Experiencing violence and its lasting impact can be extremely challenging. It was important to acknowledge and address the emotions and effects it has had on me and my family.

Seeking support from professionals such as therapists or counselors was helpful in processing and healing from the trauma. The advice provided, guidance, and techniques to cope with the emotions helped me regain a sense of wellbeing. Additionally, talking with trusted friends or family members about my feelings and seeking their support was also beneficial and for which I am grateful.

I also know that healing takes time, and it's important to be patient and kind to myself. I believe that it's okay to have ups and downs as I navigate my healing journey.

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## **The Impetus of a Job: Narrative Research on Child Labour in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro, the Philippines**

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### **Abstract**

This narrative research study aims to explore the impetus behind child labor in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro, the Philippines, shedding light on the driving forces that contribute to children engagement in various forms of works. By employing a qualitative approach rooted in narrative inquiry, this research endeavors to amplify the voices and experiences of child laborers, enabling a deeper understanding of their socio-economic circumstances. In-depth interviews and participant observations are utilized as primary data collection methods to capture the perspectives and narratives of individuals directly impacted by child labor. Thematic analysis is employed to identify recurring

themes, patterns, and meanings derived from the collected data. The findings revealed that the impetus for child labor in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro, can be attributed to a complex interplay of factors, including family status, poverty, and peer influence. Economic hardships and the need to supplement family income emerge as primary motivators, compelling children to engage in various jobs while they were also studying. Based on the result of the study, the local policymakers, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders may develop interventions and evidence-based strategies to eliminate child labor, safeguard children's rights, and promote their overall well-being. Overall, this research highlights the urgent need for comprehensive policies and programs that address the root causes of child labor and ensure the protection and well-being of children.

**Keywords:** *child labor, impetus, experiences, challenges*

### Introduction

One of the global issues affecting millions of children in the world is child labor. While much progress has been made in recent years to combat child labor, it remains a complex issue that requires the continued attention and concerted efforts of governments, organizations and individuals.

According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), about 152 million children are involved in child labor worldwide. Of these, approximately 73 million are engaged in hazardous work that risks their health, safety and general welfare. Child labor is prevalent in various regions, with higher rates recorded in sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific. In these regions, poverty, lack of access to education, weak enforcement of child labor laws and cultural practices contribute to the persistence of child labor.

Child labor can take many forms, including hazardous work in agriculture, mining, construction, manufacturing, home services and the informal sector. Children are also vulnerable to forced labour, trafficking and exploitation in some areas. It often deprives children of their right to education. Many working children are unable to attend school regularly, affecting their academic performance and future prospects. It puts children at risk to their physical and mental health. Unsafe working conditions can lead to injury, illness and long-term health problems.

The Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 calls for the abolition of child labor in all its forms by 2025. Government and stakeholders are working to align efforts to this goal. Addressing child labor requires a multi-faceted approach that includes a legal framework, social protection, access to quality education, poverty alleviation and awareness campaigns. Sustainable solutions must prioritize children's rights, education and general welfare to break the cycle of poverty and exploitation and

create a safer and more equitable future for all the world's children.

According to the Philippine Statistic Authority (PSA), in the Philippines the total population of the children 5 to 17 years old was estimated at 31.17 million in 2020. This was higher than the total number of Filipino children 5 to 17 years of age registered in 2019 at 30.50 million. Majority of the working children belonged to the age group of 15 to 17 years of age accounting for 68.9% of the total working children in 2020 and 67.4% in 2019. The total number of working children considered engaged in child labor was estimated at 597 thousand in 2020.

Furthermore, the data of the Department of Labor and Employment in 2021 reveals that the province of Oriental Mindoro has 2,904 cases with its 15 municipalities. In the Municipality of Roxas there are 278 child laborers in a 2021 survey from 20 barangays. This means that in the locality, the child labor exists, which need to be assessed and given attention, thus, the conduct of this study.

### Conceptual Framework

An Input-Process-Output paradigm was utilized in this study. The input section includes the reasons in engaging child labor, the experiences and challenges of the study participants and the lessons gained. The process box indicates the methods by which the data were collected such as in-depth interview, and non-participatory observation. The output box is the expected outcome of the study which is a proposed Intervention Program.

### Objectives of the Study

This research aims to determine the impetus of child labor in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

1. What are the reasons in engaging child labor?
2. What are the experiences and challenges engaging in child labor?
3. What life lesson gained from the experiences and challenges?

### Methods

This study is qualitative research rooted in a narrative approach. Narrative research is designed to focus on studying individual people. It is about collecting and telling stories about individual experiences, describing life experiences and discussing the meaning of the experiences with the individual. This study endeavors to amplify the voices and experiences of child laborers, enabling a deeper understanding of their socio-economic circumstances. In-depth interviews and participant observations are utilized as primary data collection methods to capture the perspectives and narratives of individuals directly impacted by child labor.

Thematic analysis is employed to identify recurring themes, patterns, and meanings derived from the collected data. The participants of the study are two

children who are working and at the same time studying. The research was conducted in Barangay Paclasan, Roxas, Oriental Mindoro.

Thematic analysis was employed in this study to identify recurring themes, patterns, and meanings derived from the collected data. Transcription and analysis of data were used. After the transcription of the data collected, the researchers of the study came back to the study participants discuss with them the transcription of their answers to assure the reliability of the study.

The study participants were also informed of their rights and assured of their privacy and confidentiality.

## **Results and Discussion**

Study participant 1 was 17 years old, living with his mother and his nephew. He is a child from a broken family. He considered his father dead as the latter failed to support them since he left. He lives in a small hut with his mother as his other siblings have their own family, thus, he is the only provider.

At the age of 15, he experienced a day nothing to eat as his mother remains unemployed. This serves as his eye opener to find a job that his age can endure. His job helped them survived each day. He made some adjustments with his studies and this undeniably affects his academic performance. His dreams keep him moving, it serves as his driving force to move forward each day despite uncertainties of life. For him, there will always be sun after every storm, after every challenge and difficulty in life.

Study participant 2 was 16 years old, the fourth child of the eight children in the family. His father was a farmer and his mother was a vendor. As they were 10 in the family, their parents' income is not enough to support their daily needs specially education expenses. The study participant remembered when he was asked to make a school contribution and his parents had nothing to give. This is the turning point in his life that he needs to help his parents for their family expenses. He joined his brother in operating tri bike in the municipality of Roxas. He often experienced fatigue but has no other choice as he needs to provide additional income for his family and study.

### *The driving force of the children in engaging child labor*

#### **Family Condition**

Poverty is one of the main factors that push children into child labor. Families with many family members often lived in extreme poverty. Most of the time, parents also rely on the income of their children to meet the family basic needs. In such circumstances, children were compelled to work to contribute to the family's survival.

Study participant 1 lived in a small hut. His mother is old and could hardly work. This is the reason why he needs to work while studying. Study participant 2 was living together with his seven siblings and parents. He and all his siblings are studying, thus, his

parent's income is not enough to sustain their daily needs. Sometimes when he had no classes or after his class he joined his brother operating tri bike to provide for the daily needs of his family.

#### **Peer Influence**

Peer influence is also one of the factors in engaging to child labor.

#### **Academic Expenses**

There are times that the participant 1 opted not to attend school classes to provide for his and his siblings academic needs. For him, academic expenses are a big struggle for his family as they were all studying, and his parents could not provide all their needs.

## **The experiences of the children in engaging child labor**

### **Hunger**

Study participant no. 1 is the breadwinner in his family. He solely provide for the needs of his mother and nephew. Being the only one working, he was pushed to work almost everyday after school and sometimes he needs to absent just to work and provide for his mother. There were times when they suffered hunger and go to sleep with an empty stomach.

### **School activities participation**

For both study participants, their academic life is different. Unlike other students, they need to prioritize first their work to provide the needs of their family. There were times when they were not able to attend school activities.

### **Physical hazards**

Children who work at early age mostly experience physical, mental and emotional stress. Undeniably, working at a very young age in a construction job impacts the child's physical and emotional development.

### **Limited Recreational Activities**

## **The challenges of the children in engaging child labor**

### **Poor time management**

Both participants were working while studying. They both struggled in school, the reason for poor academic performance. Most of the time, they got low grades as they cannot follow and comply with the activities given by their teachers. They usually get tired after working which sometimes lead to school absences.

### **Financially unstable**

The study participants assumed responsibility of parents in supplementing home finances and meeting their families' needs.



### The life lessons gained in experiences and challenges of the children in engaging child labor

One study participant values the essence of family. He offers his everyday struggles to his family. For him, they are the reasons for his hardships. The other study participant realized that one should focus first in achieving his dreams. Both valued the importance of formal education. Despite all the hardships, study participants emphasized their desire to finish their studies. For them, it is just a matter of mind set.

### Conclusions

Based in the above findings, this study concludes that:

1. There are different driving forces that pushed the children to work at a very young age. The socio-economic status and strong determination of the study participants in continuing their studies greatly influenced them in working at a very young age.

2. The experiences and challenges faced by the study participants affect their health condition and lead to poor academic performance in school.

3. The experiences and challenges faced by the participants made them realized the value of family, the importance of formal education, and respect to parents and co-workers.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The Municipal Government of Roxas, through its Municipal Social Welfare and Development Office (MSWDO), may strongly coordinate with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD, to consider an intervention plan to address the issue of child labor.

2. The Department of Labor and Employment may consider providing a livelihood program that would help the community in improving their status.

3. The Municipal Public Employment Service Office may disseminate the result of the study to MSWDO for fund allocation and inclusion in the Annual Investment Program of the Municipality.

4. The Sangguniang Kabataan may consider offering scholarship to those less fortunate children

5. The academic institutions may prioritize giving scholarships to working students through Assistantship Program.

6. The Political Science Students Association may consider the result of this study as basis for an extension programs for the children who work at a very young age.

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## Martin Heidegger and Pope Francis on Ecological Crisis

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### Abstract

Martin Heidegger and Pope Francis both argue that the present ecological crisis is brought about by humanity's excessive and exploitative attitude towards the environment. Thus, the kind of enframing that Heidegger saw that modern humans have is closely related to Pope Francis' idea of the globalization of a technocratic paradigm and excessive anthropocentrism. Both argue that humans play a central role in controlling and dominating the environment. However, an escape is possible from the lure of the technological paradigm through poiesis and responsible stewardship. The outcome of poiesis and responsible stewardship may ensure the subsistence of both humans and the environment for future generations. This paper aims (1) to argue that ecological crisis is grounded on the revealing of modern technology and (2) to offer a possibility of saving the environment through *poiesis* and responsible stewardship.

**Keywords:** Martin Heidegger, Pope Francis, technology, stewardship, poiesis, enframing, environmental crisis, environmental equilibrium.

### 1. Introduction

Environmental issues are part of the top concerns today. Environmental experts are pushing for more environmentally inclusive technologies and discussions. For example, the 1972 Stockholm Declaration, calls the attention of the international community to participate in the restoration and preservation of the environment (Laudato Si 2015, 123). In a television program "G Diaries" hosted by Ms. Gina Lopez, updates viewers on the massive grey cloud that hovers in the Philippine environment (G Diaries, 2019). This environmental crisis threatens humanity daily according to White (2008) in the forms of water pollution, toxic and chemical residues, the stripping of mountains and lands due to mining, forest denudation, landslides, and many others that jeopardize the well-being of nature, and the planet as well.

The above environmental crisis can be discussed using Martin Heidegger's philosophical reflection "The Questions Concerning Technology and Other Essays" (1977). Here, Heidegger explicates that the root of the problem is the driving force of presenting reality which he calls *enframing*, the prevalent ruling of "modern technology". In this view, nature or the environment is placed or considered a "standing reserve for the disposal and manipulation of a thinking being (Heidegger, 1977).

Pope Francis, on the other hand in his encyclical letter *Laudato Si* (2015), discusses his great concern

for the environment. In this letter addressed to all Roman Catholic bishops worldwide, the Pope reiterates the lousy condition of the typical home, the earth. He traces this back to the way humanity has taken technology and its development according to "an undifferentiated and one-dimensional paradigm" (Laudato Si, 2015). For him, this paradigm is subject-centered which, puts human beings and the environment in a confrontational relationship. This contentious relationship with nature can be premised on the human person's notions of technocratic paradigm and contemporary anthropocentrism (Laudato Si, 2015) as Handy (2015), argues drives a person to the domineering power of technology. Likewise, the discussion of Heidegger on the root cause of ecological crisis revolves around the concept of *enframing* that modern humans have in their use of technology. Both argue that this technological thinking about the environment causes damage, contributes to environmental problems the decline of the quality of human life, and the breakdown of the environment. The risk of this *enframing* is considered by Heidegger as high because this is gestured by the predominance of human subjectivity (Carino, 2009). Pope Francis, on his part, realizes that to see everything as reserves waiting to be harnessed in the name of technological advancements is to see all things as devoid of meaning and role according to the wisdom of the Creator who willed for all things to exist according to his plan and wisdom. Both suggest thinking that can help humans be freed from the questionable *enframing* and the technocratic paradigm.

This paper aims (1) to argue that ecological crisis is grounded on the revealing of modern technology and (2) to offer a possibility of saving the environment through *poiesis* and responsible stewardship.

### 2. Excessive anthropocentrism and technocratic paradigm as the revealing of modern technology

The story of humanity also entails the history of both life and the transition of technology from ancient man-made tools to the most complicated and high-tech powered machines and computers. The word technology is derived from the Greek word *techne*, from the Heideggerian perspective means an understanding of Being, that is theoretical rather than practical (Rojcewicz 2006, 57). In a more inclusive understanding, "*techne* is *episteme*, put it this way technology is understanding Being, what we think of Being, and how we respond to the revealing of Being" (Rojcewicz 2006, 56). On the other hand, the practical side of technology is reducible to its instrumental value such that the benefits and comfort it offers in life are immeasurable and overwhelming (Wrathall 2019, 13). However, despite the technological progress it offers, people are still frightened and anxious about the adverse effects of technology on life as well as in the environment.

Such struggle continues to persist as the world gets more engrossed in technology.

In the first paragraph of "The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays" (1977), Heidegger, remarks on the importance of questioning and build a way of thinking (Heidegger, 1977). These two work hand in hand to transform the consciousness of humanity from a dualistic and human-centric understanding of the external world or nature to an understanding that "let things be" not as a means to an end (Zimmerman 1993, 156). This statement suggests ways to approach environmental issues that have been neglected and forgotten. This path of thinking offered by Heidegger is possible when one decides to "reflect and have the courage to make the truth of our presuppositions and the realm of our own goals into the things that most deserve to be called into question" (De Luca 2005, 71). The primary motivation of such questioning, as Heidegger argues, is to enter a free relationship with technology that allows humans to perceive the environment not merely as an object of utility but as an inclusive reality in the overall existence of humanity. However, the domineering attitude brought about by the revealing of modern technology results in a possessive and submissive disposition of humans towards the environment (Rojciewicz, 2006).

This concerned Heidegger and was given philosophical emphasis in his essay on technology by arguing that the modern period is destined to a mode of revealing, which he calls *Ge-stell* often translated by scholars as *enframing* or positionality. This revealing of modern technology is understood as a "setting – upon that challenge the potential of nature or environment to give beyond its limits" (De Luca 2005, 79). This is illustrated by Heidegger using the mechanized agriculture of the time: "The work of the peasant does not challenge the soil of the field. In the sowing of the grain, it places the seed in the keeping of the forces of growth and watches over its increase. But meanwhile, even the cultivation of the field has come under the grip of another kind of setting-in-order, which sets upon [stellt] nature It sets upon it in the sense of challenging it" (Heidegger 1977, 15).

This way of revealing may direct humans to perceive nature as a potential source of unlimited resources the way technology presents itself and which for some reason is uncontrollable nevertheless, humans can discern what is appropriate or not, useful or destructive (Tabachnick 2007, 491). This is the reason why Heidegger seeks to understand the essence or being of technology not so much from a metaphysical description or human activity but how this being is revealed and the way humans respond to this revealing (Blok 2014, 311). Blok (2014) continues that "human existence is primarily responsive to the demand of being, that turns out to be challenging the resources of nature as a "fundamental piece of inventory of the

technological world, and nothing else" (Blok 2014, 312).

In the Philippines, for example, mining industries are rampant in that the majority of the land or mountainous areas are transformed into mining sites, where the land is challenged through the hauling of gold or other minerals. By challenging the vast area of land, the land becomes an object that merely yields gold for the miners and the mining company. Another example is the recent innovation in agriculture, where both the field and the crops are fueled by mechanization and hybridization. The field and the crops which are naturally cultivated by the farmers leaving the harvest to the forces of nature, are challenged by modern technology to produce the maximum amount of harvest. Even the beautiful places and tourist spots of the Philippines are challenged to be tourist destinations. Goudie (2006), in his book entitled *The Human Impact of the Natural Environment*, explicitly illustrates the present condition of the world as the human person is immersed in the dominating power of technology. The human person's absorption into the technocratic paradigm creates several ways in which humans affect the environment (Goudie, 2006). For instance, deforestation, as Williams (2003) argues, is one of the most incredible landscape transformations in the world and here in the Philippines. The human person's deliberate removal of the forest is one of the most longstanding and significant ways humans have modified the environment, whether achieved by fire or cutting. For whatever purposes deforestation is pursued, the ultimate goal is utility and profit for the few. Poor people are suffering from the devastating effect of deforestation, which endangers not only their property but, most especially, their very lives (Williams, 2003).

This imposing attitude can be articulated in the *Laudato Si* (2015) of Pope Francis, who argues that the irrational assumption that the earth supplies unlimited or infinite resources can be completely manipulated, extracted, and subject to one's disposal. This relationship, as pointed out by Pope becomes one-dimensional and, at the same time, confrontational, which results in ecological crises such as pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, and the decline in the quality of life, which in turn causes the breakdown of society and global inequality.

In explaining the root cause of this ecological breakdown, Pope Francis relies on religion as a rational justification for the crisis. The Pope argues that the human person's exploitative and manipulative disposition is rooted in the "violence present in the heart which is wounded by sin" (Laudato Si, 2015). He further argues that the root cause of this ecological crisis is spiritual blindness. The human hearts are darkened by obsessions and the desire to possess whatever nature offers. The interior disposition of humanity towards technology creates a paradigm that places the human being at the apex of creation. Having been exalted as the

superior of all entities and absorbed by the allurements of technology, he/she then subjects the external reality under his/her control and manipulation (Laudato Si 2015, 79). This "one – dimensional and confrontational" relationship between human beings and the material world is grounded on a false belief that the external world yields an "infinite quantity of material resources" that can be extracted and demanded by the human beings themselves (Laudato Si 2015, 79). This imposing technocratic paradigm not only creates tension rather than an adulterated relationship between humanity and nature. Waterman (2017) highlights this tension from the encyclical in the following passages: "What Is Happening to Our Common Home," deals with pollution and climate change (20–25), the availability of water (27–31), loss of biodiversity (32–42), decline in the quality of human life and the breakdown of society (43–47), global inequality (48–52), "weak responses" to these challenges (53–59), and a variety of options (60–61) (Waterman 2017, 376).

This ungrateful disposition of the human person toward the environment causes several destructions such as uncontrolled floods and landslides, which eventually destroy not only properties but also human lives. The enactment of the Mining Act of 1995 (Republic Act 7942), encourages most foreign investors to invest in the country. For instance, the Swiss-based Xstrata, one of the largest copper mining companies, is said to have mined a considerable amount of gold and copper from the provinces of Mindanao. This mining activity not only endangers the environment by destroying the watersheds, water resources, and the forest but also disrupts the indigenous cultural aspiration (Wetzmaier, 2012.). Deforestation and mining are just a few examples of how human beings are destroying the environment. The dominating effect of this technocratic paradigm imposed on nature is motivated by profit and, in the most radical sense, as the Pope argues, power and lordship, thus, undermining the potential negative impact on human beings (Laudato Si, 2015). In the absence of rational and reasonable policy towards the environment and by ignoring the undesirable impact of humanity's amusement with the revealing of technology, it is only sensible to anticipate a possible detrimental effect of the environment on humanity (Olaganathan, & K. Quigley, 2017).

### 3. Ecological Equilibrium through *poiesis* and responsible stewardship

In the *Discourse on Thinking*, Heidegger does not advocate the denial of technology nor perceive it as something demonic (Heidegger, 1977) instead Heidegger is pessimistic about its instrumental value. The pessimistic view of Heidegger on technology lies in the effectiveness and efficiency of technology in helping the human person do their work. Technology enables humanity to overcome material limitations and has remedied countless

evils (Laudato Si 2015, 76). It is undeniable that the advances in technology are instrumental in improving the quality of life and providing means to sustainable development. The Pope even acknowledges it as "wonderful products of a God-given human creativity" However, when these advances in technology overlap with human responsibilities and values, this technical prowess becomes a threat to humanity and the environment as well (Laudato Si 2015, 75, 76 & 78).

The Pope observes that the environment is facing a global deterioration because of this exalted technocratic paradigm and excessive anthropocentrism grounded in a Promethean vision of mastery over nature or reality. This dominating disposition of the human person over nature must be transformed into a culture of care for the environment. This culture of care, as pointed out by the Pope, includes a distinctive way of thinking, integrating responsible stewardship in every policy and program of the government, as well as a radical change of lifestyle. Furthermore, the culture of care as the Pope proposes requires a bold cultural revolution from a technocratic paradigm and excessive anthropocentrism, which exalts the purely physical and consumerist value of the environment.

The Pope challenges humanity to devise means and ways of protecting, preserving, and nurturing nature acknowledging it as a gift entrusted by God to the care of humanity (Laudato Si, 2015). The call for a habitable abode is a call not only locally but to the entire world. For instance, the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro reiterated the 1972 Stockholm Declaration encouraging people worldwide to take care of the environment (Laudato Si, 2015), and instill awareness and consciousness in the public through the created laws and policies (Handl, 2012). The summit encourages all nations to limit the greenhouse effects in the atmosphere and incorporate plans and policies related to the preservation of ecosystems. Other conventions, such as the Basel Convention on Hazardous Wastes and the Vienna Convention on the protection of the ozone layer, are just a few steps toward responsible stewardship, as the Pope commented (Laudato Si, 2015). In the Philippines, the Writ of *Kalikasan* was granted by the Supreme Court to protect, preserve, restore, and rehabilitate the Philippine water, especially the *Kalayaan* group of islands (Supreme Court of the Philippines, 2019). In addition, the 1987 Constitution of the Philippines Article II, Section 16 explicitly expresses this environmental concern that the State shall protect and advance people's right to a balanced and healthful ecology by the rhythm and harmony of nature.

Auza (2016) calls this collaborative action of humanity towards the care of the environment and empathy, which is modeled after St. Francis of Assisi. This empathy is rooted in the realization that irresponsible and egoistic use of natural resources is always unjust and inhumane, especially for the poor and the indigenous people who are the primary

victims of environmental degradation (Auza, 2016). By the dignity and intelligence endowed by God, the human person is called to cultivate, protect, oversee, and recognize the inherent goodness and perfection of each creature. Progress and development happen when the human person realizes that the environment is not only an object of exploitation but rather a gift to be nourished and nurtured (Scheid, 2014).

This notion of the Pope on responsible stewardship is closely related to Heidegger's *poiesis* that considers the environment as alive, natural, and self-emergent. Nature as self-emergent means that nature has inherent potential to yield and produce resources. Rojcewicz (2006) describes this succinctly: "For Heidegger the ancient understanding is that Being in general is nature; all things that have come to be have been self-emergent, self-disconcealing. Thus the ancient names for Being are *physis* ("nature," "self-emergence") and *aletheia* ("truth," "disconcealment"). The ancient understanding of producing things is nurture, respect for nature, and gearing into nature, i.e., abetting what is self-emergent to be fully self-emergent, and fully visible. The Greek word for making, understood in this way as a producing or leading forth by the hand, as an abetting, is *poiesis*. Ancient technology in practice is *poiesis*" (Rojcewicz 2006, 65).

This role of humans therefore is that of a midwife or human artisan responsible for releasing or abetting what is inherent in nature. The human hand is used to bring into the light the hidden potential of nature. Humans are someone who "stands there" in an abetting way (Rojcewicz 2006, 66). Heidegger illustrates this in an example of traditional farming that does not challenge the imposing character of the agricultural land. The farmer acts as a midwife of the field entrusting the forces of nature and the inherent potential of the grains to produce and yield crops (Heidegger 1977, 15). In another example, Heidegger further illustrates by comparing the mode of revealing between a hydroelectric dam and a waterwheel. In a waterwheel, the river remains what it is, a natural thing in which waters flow naturally. The water is not blocked nor transformed into something else. In a word, it remains a natural thing, a part of nature that radiates the beauty and simplicity of the Rhine River. On the other hand, transforming the river into an electric dam changes the very essence of the river into a source of water supply which turned out to be exhausting on the part of the river. From a respectful attitude revealed by the waterwheel into a hubristic attitude of imposition in which the natural beauty of the Rhine River is obstructed and commandeered in either power plants or tourist destinations (Rojcewicz, 2006).

Hubert Dreyfus (1995) clarifies this in an example describing the sensitivity of the Japanese culture. Dealing with people and with things is part of man's existence, and sometimes man uses people

and things as mere resources and when the purpose is achieved, man usually disposes them. In an analogy, Dreyfus uses the example of the plastic cup and the Japanese teacup to understand better the mode of revealing both the human persons and things. Generally, at a party or special gatherings plastic cups or disposable cups are used for hot or cold drinks, and after being used, they are thrown away. This differs from the Japanese understanding of using a delicate teacup. After being used, this Japanese teacup is preserved and protected for other social events. This analogy suggests the Japanese understanding of being human, which is passive, gentle, and contented which corresponds to the Japanese understanding of things which is also delicate, beautiful, and traditional (Dreyfus, 1995). This analogy constitutes what Heidegger calls clearing when the human person and things freely show themselves without compulsion and imposition. It is a mode of openness, learning the value of nature beyond its purely technological conception. This clearing further removes the technological mindset of the person who sees the environment as totally different and foreign.

Both the *poiesis* of Heidegger and the responsible stewardship of Pope Francis share a common principle of not reducing the environment as a mere stockpile of energy and resources solely in the service and utility of man. Heidegger's and Pope Francis' ideas suggest that nature must be restored by adjusting human perspectives and by changing one's lifestyle from the Promethean vision of mastery over nature, a domineering attitude, into a renewal of humanity that restores both the dignity of persons and the natural world. Both concepts are motivated by the sole purpose of preserving the simplicity and beauty of nature. Nature has to be preserved not only for this generation but also for the future generation. Thus, the practice of *poiesis* in Heidegger and the responsible stewardship of Pope Francis is leading humanity to value the non-human world and conceive them as an essential part of the overall existence.

#### 4. Conclusion

Martin Heidegger and Pope Francis both argue that the present ecological crisis is brought about by humans' excessive and exploitative attitude towards the environment. Thus, the enframing that Heidegger saw that modern humans have is closely related to Pope Francis' idea of the globalization of a technocratic paradigm and excessive anthropocentrism. Both notions exalt the one-dimensional paradigm of humanity as the beings with the power and the capacity to control and dominate the non-human world or the natural world.

Heidegger's notion of enframing challenges nature to give beyond its limits. Minerals and resources are taken drastically and unreasonably without consideration. We challenge nature, for instance, the mountains are merely considered as

potential sources of gold and other mineral resources. On the other hand, forests and rivers are challenged to give resources for human consumption and disposal. In a word, apart from the perceived utility of nature, it is considered meaningless and valueless.

This paradigm of thinking is not far from what Pope Francis sees. The Pope argues that nature suffered much because humanity has inflicted too much destruction on the environment. This ecological crisis is grounded on the continued acceleration of progress and development brought about by the human person's absorption of technocratic paradigm and excessive anthropocentrism. These paradigms or models of reality exalt the human person as the only being worthy of living and existing. By placing the human person in a paradigm of a subject, life surrenders to a situation conditioned by technology (Laudato Si, 2015).

Both Heidegger and Pope Francis share the same sentiment in explaining the root cause of the ecological crisis. This similarity stems from their analyses on the revealing of modern technology that dominated and transformed the human being's attitude to perceive the environment merely as raw material. Both the enframing of Heidegger and the technocratic paradigm, and the excessive anthropocentrism of Pope Francis, point to a paradigm that exalts the human beings as the only logical, and rational subject of the world while all else are just standing reserve for humans to use. Pope Francis' idea of responsible stewardship is influenced by the tragic effect of the human person's unchecked and exploitative activity on nature grounded on man's irresponsible attitude and disposition. Responsible stewardship, as the Pope argues, is approaching nature with awe and wonder and, at the same time, an acknowledgment that humans and nature are essentially connected.

Both ideas of Heidegger and Pope Francis culminate in the attempt to save the environment from its recent crisis. The combined notions of Heidegger's *poiesis* and Pope Francis's stewardship are geared toward critical ecology. It is critical ecology because the setting of the environment requires reasoning and determination. Restoring and recovering what has been destroyed requires disclosive looking, which presupposes reflective thinking and even contemplation which gives priority to the theoretical understanding of nature rather than its practical value. Both notions share a common understanding that nature has to be protected and preserved not only for today's generation but, most importantly, for the future generation.

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