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Reunified Filipino Family Immigrants with children in Lisbon, Portugal: Coping Strategies and Its Challenges.

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ABSTRACT

Title: Reunified Filipino Family Immigrants with children in Lisbon, Portugal: Coping Strategies and Its Challenges.

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Key Words: Coping Strategies, Challenges, Reunification, Filipino Families, Immigration

This research aimed to contribute to the limited understanding of the challenges and coping strategies experienced by reunified family immigrants. Previous studies have predominantly focused on the problems and difficulties associated with separation and reunification. Guided by the values of social work, which emphasize the importance of valuing family relationships and adopting a strength-based approach, this study explored the strengths essential for achieving family reunification among Filipino immigrants in Lisbon, Portugal. With a significant influx of Filipino immigrants due to family reunification in Portugal, there is a need to gain insight into this phenomenon and understand the challenges and coping strategies they encounter during the process. Through interviews with ten respondents, the study revealed several challenges experienced by reunified immigrants during family reunification, including language barriers, stereotypes and discrimination, cultural differences and culture shock, the impact of migration on family relationships, financial problems, and a lack of knowledge about the family reunification process. In response to these challenges, the study identified various coping strategies employed by the immigrants. These strategies encompassed the development of positive parent-child relationships, physical and emotional preparedness, and the adaptation to the new cultural environment. Furthermore, the research highlighted the importance of family and community support, as well as specific forms of ideal support for family reunification. These included pre-departure orientations focusing on the host culture, seminars dedicated to family reunification, and the provision of free Portuguese language classes. These support mechanisms are vital for facilitating the family reunification process. The implications of this research extend to future studies, social work practice, and the personal vision of individuals involved. It underscores the need for further research to deepen our understanding of family reunification experiences, informs social work interventions, and promotes the well-being of reunified immigrant families.

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INTRODUCTION

Immigration and interculturality are major transforming forces on children, parents, and families around the world. According to Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). The family is widely accepted as a basic unit of cultural, social and economic production and reproduction which plays a fundamental role in the successful integration of its members, and functions as a support network for them. Many immigrants arriving in Portugal are at first deprived of this support structure, having left their families behind in their country of origin. While some will return to their families and countries of origin after temporarily living abroad, others will reunite with their families in Portugal and still others will start new ones. He added that as a consequence of the legal restrictions imposed by EU member states following the 1973 oil crisis, family reunification and asylum-seeking became the main immigration gateways into the EU-15 for third-country nationals. By contrast, according to *Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) 2016, in Portugal, in 2016, only 22.2 per cent of non-EU citizens applied for a residence permit in Portugal via the official family reunification route and Portugal immigration statistics for 2015 was 837,257.00, 9.76% increase from 2010. Clearly, reuniting with one's family through official family reunification provisions is but one of many ways to bring family members together in Portugal. Yet the question remains, why is the percentage of immigrants entering the country via official family reunification provisions so low?

Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008) added that qualitative and quantitative data gathered in the scope of the 2005 'Family Reunification and Immigration in Portugal' research project commissioned by the Portuguese High Commissariat for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME) has been used to suggest a response to this question by highlighting the relatively recent character of immigration to Portugal, the significance of uncontrolled irregular migration, the way in which the concept of 'family' has been defined and put into practice by authorities, the fluid nature of contemporary families, and the barriers that must be surpassed in order for sponsors and their family members to qualify for official family reunification in the country. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008).

Indeed, migration and adjustment have been facts of the human condition ever since people of the Philippines began moving to another country. Immigration and interculturality are also contemporary global concerns in the sense that there are challenges of the reunified children when they come to the country. Children of Filipino overseas workers who are left home experiences moderately average attention.

Some research suggests that economic challenges and benefits accounts largely to this matter (Dillon, Mona, and Christine A. Walsh, 2012), and as parents migrate, children left home are affected due to modest attention received. As Parreñas (2001) claims, studies about children left home show to be retrospective. For this reason, the attempt to discover and improve our understanding on the Coping Strategies of Reunified Filipino Immigrants and their Children in Lisbon, Portugal with their Intercultural Challenges. As the present study commences, the challenges, faced by the reunified children and their ability to cope in this situation will be delved through their own perception of life using their experiences before and after reunification.

Given the dearth of research concerning family reunification trajectories of Filipino immigrant in Portugal, this study is purposively undertaken to understand how separation to reunification of Filipino Family immigrants with their children are challenge through Interculturality. Specifically, it sought to identify what factors that helped them in achieving reunification with their children, maintain the reunion despite the intercultural challenges. This study will highlight coping strategies and interculturality challenges faced by these families during the reunification process. It highlights attachment disruptions and acculturative stress in the context of social integration thus implying weak perspectives of families (see for example Black, 2005; Lopes, 2010; Arnold, 1997; Agyeman, 2004). Despite of the challenges of migration, there are still a lot of Filipinos who tried to migrate abroad and bring their children thru reunification. Problems before, during and after reunifications arises and cause some conflict between the parent and the children along the reunification process. In this study, it will highlight the different Coping Strategies of Reunified Filipino Immigrants and their Children in Lisbon, Portugal with their Interculturality Challenges.

Key words: Coping Strategies, Interculturality Challenges, Reunification, Filipino Families, Immigration

CHAPTER I

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter comprises the literature review. This gives an overview of what family reunification is all about. Its meaning and entitlement as to why family reunification is part of immigration policy. An overview on European context and Portugal is given. Relevant studies concerning family reunification, Family Concepts, Immigration, coping strategies and interculturality Challenges are also explored with their key findings and how these studies contributed to the significance of understanding the phenomenon and the gap of the existing literature to give justification with regards to the relevance of this research.

A. Family

There is no one definition or description of a typical or normal family. Broadly speaking, the family is a group of people related by blood or by law, living together or associating with one another to a common purpose, that purpose being the provision of food, shelter, and the rearing of children. Adrian Wilson. (2010). The institution of the family keeps changing, and sociologists could describe a number of types of family that exist in a society at any one time. Historical changes the use of historical social science has shown that the family changes over time. Demographic factors have a key role in this process. Snapshot studies of the family at different points in history will show marked changes in such key indicators as age of marriage, fertility rates, and life expectancy. Authority patterns within the family, and an individual's expectation of family life, will obviously reflect the period. Adrian Wilson. (2010).

1. What is Family?

According to the author Miller, the definitions of family typically differ considerably among researchers and the general public alike. Indeed, most family scholars have been unable to come to a consensus on a definition today. Many authors and views about family, cultures and beliefs debates about how family would best be defined. One common myth is that the nuclear family has existed across all historical periods and cultural contexts but many scholars now maintain that this familial form is not universal. Miller, L. R. (2016). Even if there is no affirmation that nuclear family has existed across all historical periods and cultures, we can

argue that nuclear family has been the most prevalent family type in many societies throughout history, particularly in Western cultures. Although some family scholars advocate for a working definition of family for research and policy purposes, the conceptualizations now offered are typically broader in nature than traditional definitions of family. Definitions of family adopted by researchers and the general public alike have increasingly become more inclusive over time. Miller, L. R. (2016).

A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together; all such related persons are considered as members of one family. For instance, if an older married couple, their daughter and her husband and two children, and the older couple's nephew all lived in the same house or apartment; they would all be considered members of a single family. Miller, L. R. (2016).

Family structures come in various shapes and sizes, but each one is just as valid as the next. Understanding family structure can better help to figure out the dynamics of relatives and how to make relationships developmentally appropriate. Family types have changed over the years in accordance with shifts in modern cultures' acceptance of structural changes. Miller, L. R. (2016). According to the numerous authors, there are different type of Families which are; Nuclear Family, Single Parent and Extended Families. Adorno, T. W. (2018) The nuclear family is considered the “traditional” family and consists of a mother, father, and the children. The two-parent nuclear family has become less prevalent, and alternative family forms such as, homosexual relationships, single-parent households, and adopting individuals are more common. Adorno, T. W. (2018) A single parent is a parent who cares for one or more children without the assistance of the other biological parent. Historically, single-parent families often resulted from death of a spouse, for instance during childbirth. Single-parent homes are increasing as married couples divorce, or as unmarried couples have children. Adorno, T. W. (2018) The extended family consists of grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. In some circumstances, the extended family comes to live either with or in place of a member of the nuclear family. Adorno, T. W. (2018)

2. Background of Filipino Family Identity

Family is the basic unit of society. Filipinos are family oriented by nature. Filipinos are known for having strong and close family ties. They place high regard and put importance on their family before anything else. They work all day and do all they can to feed and provide for their family. In other countries, when a person turned 18, he/she can live away from his/her family. In the Philippines, they value their family so much that they keep them intact through the years. In a Filipino household, it is common to find three generations

living together. Often, grandparents play a large role in raising their grandchildren. Extended family will often live relatively close to one another and will come together during large celebrations. It is common to find families in the Philippines that have some members who return to their family home during weekends after spending a week in major cities for work or study.

Nye (1967) in Morillo et.al (2013) made mention that it is important to understand the value system of a family to understand individual's intrinsic values that also serves as a grounding understanding of groups of people. Despite the influence of western culture brought by the country's history, Filipino families embrace its distinctive characteristics. Amongst those are family centeredness, having large family size with close family ties, sense of reciprocity (Medina, 2001; Miralao, 1994 all in Murillo et.al., 2013). A child centered means keeping the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and working in partnership with them and their families. The distinctive characteristics of familism of the Filipino families even extends to the relational kinship structure, the way social relationships between individuals related by blood, marriage or other socially defined connection are organized. This structure is normatively regulated and this varies due to a number of sociocultural factors. (Medina, 2001; Miralao, 1994 all in Murillo et.al., 2013).

The distinctive characteristics of familism of the Filipino families even extends to the relational extended family. Members of the family usually attribute familial name as a gesture of respect and a description that one belongs to a family by a common regard of naming for respect for elders as, *tatang* (father), *nanay* (mother), *kuya* (older brother), *manang* (older sister), *lola* (grandmother), *lolo* (grandfather), *tita* (aunt). Considering the importance of godmother/father, they regarded as *ninang*. *ninong*, while in laws are being termed as *bilas*, *bayaw* or *manugang*.

According to Medina, 2001 (in Morillo et.al., 2013.), in the Philippines, extended family is very common with living arrangement consisting on parents, child or in laws, cousins and grandparents living in one house. The Filipino family is said to be a patriarchal model. The father is expected to be the bread winner of the family, although there are emerging sociological studies which state that Filipino families are moving from patriarchal to egalitarian concept of family where the mother has also vested authority and even encouraged to augment the income of the family (Morillo et.al., 2013).

The normativity of the institutional definition of family in the Philippines still lies in embracing heteronormativity. Having said that, a debate about what the family is and what the family ought to be became emerging. Traditionally in the Philippines, family is composed and should be heterosexual in nature founded on marriage and residing in a domicile, as LGBTQ marriage nor union are not yet recognized in the Philippines.

different perspectives. Morgan (1999) for instance states that family means what they 'do', rather than heavily relying on the institutional definition on the Family.

In the field of Social Work, it has been relatively slow to examine transnational family dynamics (Furman et al., 2010). Other disciplines such as sociology and clinical psychology have explored this phenomenon more robustly over the past decade (Mazzucato and Schans, 2011). Researches in regards to family separation and reunification has revealed that the separation and reunification phases of migration-related separations disrupt family relations and often result in conflict. Moreover, research has found that children and youth who experience migration-related separations experience a range of psychosocial outcomes, impacting their overall well-being, educational outcomes, and social relations (Levitt, 2005; Portes and Rumbaut, 2001; Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001). With respect to family adjustments, the literature points to a significant amount of family conflict during the reunification phase of migration (Glasgow and Gouse-Sheese, 1995; Sciarra, 1999; Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). Children and parents report feeling like strangers and often have little to share as a family (Suárez-Orozco et al., 2011). Dreby (2010) found that family reunifications can be stressful due to unrealistic expectations or hurt feelings that parents and children have of each other. Parrenas (2005) examined transnational separations among Filipino families and noted that children often reproach their mothers for having left them 'neglected'. Children have also been found to experience secondary loss from their surrogate caregiver from whom they separated from (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco, 2001).

Some transnational family members form new partnerships in the United States and create blended families. Suárez-Orozco et al. (2011) found that immigrant youth experienced difficulties integrating into a blended home and felt tension toward their new siblings, which can create ambivalent family relations. Similarly, Arnold (2006) found that the presence of siblings born to parents in the new country or of new spouses may complicate reunions. Strained relations between the child and new family members may contribute to a difficult reunion.

In addition to issues related to familial adjustments, youth acculturate to the US context vis-avis continual interactions at school and with peers. Factors such as educational preparation Rumbaut. (2005), parental involvement, and social support have profound effects on performance and adaption to school culture Henderson and Mapp. (2002). Scholars have also argued that young adults who experienced separation during their childhood tend to be at higher risk of academic and behavioral problems in school (Dreby, 2007; Lashley, 2000; Smith, 2006). Social support in educational settings plays a major role in the academic adaptation of students in general and immigrant students in particular (Levitt, 2005; Suárez-Orozco,

2001). These relationships offer emotional support, tangible assistance and information, cognitive guidance, and positive feedback (Fuligni, 2006; Sarason et al., 1990). According to Berry (1997, 2005), the process of interculturality may lead to acculturative stress. He argues that learning a new language and culture may be stressful and impact immigrant youths' sense of self-worth and their adjustment process. In addition, reconciling the norms and values of the new and old culture may be difficult for one's adjustment process particularly when they conflict (Berry, 1997, 2005; Lazarus, 2008). Youths' adjustment to family separations may vary by gender. In the Harvard LISA study, Suárez-Orozco and Qin-Hilliard (2004) noted that boys from various backgrounds including Central America, Puerto Rico, China, Haiti, and Mexico had poorer educational outcomes upon reunification than girls who were more able to connect to helpful peers and school personnel making their transition to a new school easier. Similarly, in a retrospective study of Caribbean youths, young adult women showed higher self-esteem, lower rates of deviant behavior such as truancy, and more conformity to parental wishes than young men upon reunification (Liu et al., 2009). Suárez-Orozco et al. (2002) and Pribilsky (2001) argue that Latino males may be at higher risk than Latinas during the reunification process due to pressures to work and their decreased propensity to seek and receive helpful mentoring. Given the scant qualitative research that explores the influence of gender on transnational youths' adjustment experience, more exploration is warranted.

B. Immigration

The intensive change of social and cultural life, development of information society is leading to rapid changes in political, educational, cultural, economic and other sectors of the society. In the light of globalisation, integration of foreigners and intercultural interaction becomes inevitable. At the same time, society has to deal with social issues and seek for the positive outcomes of integration. More and more people live in a multicultural environment Radzevičienė, Kantauskaitė, (2008). Integration of foreigners and intercultural interaction, intercultural dialogue becomes inevitable in relation to new international co-operation and interaction – personal and professional acquaintances and relations with people from different cultures. In order to create positive and democratic relationships, the need to understand people from different ethnical background appears. This leads to the formation of the need for intercultural and skilled professionals who can work anywhere and are able to collaborate with foreign workforce Virgailaitė-Mečkauskaitė, (2011).

The migration phenomenon was always going in line with the history of humanity. It's like a historical force which formed the world to what it is now, and is associated with a natural part of human behaviour Mannig, (2005).

The term of migration was used to describe the movement of people in very different contexts and situations, for example, migration due to natural disasters, war, colonial segregation or even slavery. However, the general term of migration includes human behaviour that may not fully comply with the concept of migration. General term 'migration' is most commonly associated with permanent relocation of groups of people. This term is perfectly represented by the nomads who migrate into some area in search for favourable conditions. According to Sipavičienė (2004), migration includes relocation of different groups of people, which may take place within and outside the country and across administrative boundaries. The author notes that migration can be long-term and short-term, forced and voluntary, legal or illegal; it can also be based on the search for the new job or in order to change the resulting social, cultural or political environments.

Nowadays, the migration concept is understood as the movement of people from one residence to another in order to reside in a new location for quite a long time Maslauskaitė, Stankūnienė. (2007). It is also related to the intention to reside permanently in a new place for at least 12 months. In fact, modern "immigration" is a term used in the context of industrialisation and urbanisation Scott, Marshal. (2012).

The understanding of the term "migration" is much more complex than it seems and entails many different aspects, so it would be a mistake to think that the nowadays migration is the same as it was in the past. Migration processes are influenced by many factors that are changing the concept of migration. One of such factors is globalisation, which has resulted in different types and forms of migration. IT technologies have opened new opportunities for population mobility and development of migration (Maslauskaitė, Stankūnienė, 2007). The new immigration, according to Sipavičienė (2004), became a long-term process, which has not been characteristic to earlier migration. The extreme forms of migration have also evolved; these include such phenomena as human trafficking and illegal transportation of people across the border, as well as increasingly spreading migration of family members resulting in family structure changes.

The importance of migration is evident – it changes ordinary people and states Aušrotas *et al.* (2006). Račius *et al.* (2013) note that "the ongoing migration of people, combination of cultures and traditions – are the few outcomes of the unstoppable globalisation process. For example, Lithuania has long been a nearly homogeneous country and did not have a population of different color, race or religion, or intercultural differences, as this is a new phenomenon in the country. Therefore, it is very important to help people from different cultures learn about each other and understand the peculiarities of different cultures. Račius *et al.* (2013)

Migration as the powerful force changing societies is one of the results of global changes. Direct impact of migration can be felt on the economy, but migration has also affected social relations, cultures, social policies, international relations Kasnauskienė. (2006).

Aleksėjūnė *et al.* (2010) emphasise that integration is one of the key concepts of theories focusing on immigration. In a broad sense, it can be defined as a process by which immigrants become involved and participate fully in the new society. Integration is the process that requires personal efforts in order to maintain its ethnical identity on one hand, and proves having enough skills to be able to participate in the cultural and social life of majority on the other Aleksėjūnas *et al* (2010).

Bartkevičienė, Raudeliūnaitė. (2012) emphasise that integration of immigrants in different countries is problematic and becomes a permanent object of political and scientific discourse. This process involves both the immigrants' willingness to take responsibility for integration in the host society, and a host society's willingness to accept and integrate immigrants.

Integration of immigrants is a two-way process, it is therefore important to understand that both sides should be responsible for successful integration. Cultural differences between Lithuanian labour migrants and other working professionals very often negatively affect their interaction. It should also be noted that integration into the new culture is not possible without a successful psychological adaptation process Račius *et al.* (2013).

Račius *et al.* (2013) distinguish a number of psychological and social factors that aggravate the psychological adaptation of the person arriving to Lithuania and affecting the successful collaboration between immigrants and professionals:

- psychological stress experienced by the migrants
- the language barrier
- the impact of migration on to family relations
- the absence of social networks
- financial changes and social status
- host community attitudes: stereotypes and discrimination
- cultural differences Račius *et al.* (2013).

Aleksėjūnė and others (2010) highlight that migrating to another country for economic and (or) political reasons, migrants are often not conscious of the challenges they might face in a new country. They may be ready to face economic and social difficulties, but not necessarily are capable to assess the negative impact of cultural differences during the adaptation process. The author points out that, while working with immigrant

populations (children, their parents), it is necessary to take into account not only the formal criteria (civil and political rights, employment), but also the subjective aspects (well-being, participation in community life). To maintain complete, dialogue rather than confrontation-based presence, it is important to understand the multicultural coexistence assumptions, learn to recognise cultural and social exclusion and to develop intercultural competencies and values that enable respect, understanding and expression of individuality Aleksėjūnė *et al.* (2010).

1. Immigration: An Overview in Portugal

In contexts where there is no single and exhaustive register of the resident population, as is the case in Portugal, the observation and analysis of international migration flows requires the use of different sources and the reconciliation of data in order to ensure the comparability of concepts and results. Estatísticas Demográficas, (2020). Thus, and using the information produced within the framework of the National Statistical System - Employment Survey and Survey of Exit Migratory Movements (IMMS) -, as well as the administrative information produced in 2020 by external entities, the Foreigners and Borders Service (SEF) and the Directorate-General for Consular Affairs and the Portuguese Communities (DGACCP), the INE has been releasing, since 2008 the INE also began to release a set of indicators on temporary immigrants. It should be noted that "temporary immigrant" is considered to be the "person (national or foreign) who, in the reference period, having remained in the country for a continuous period of at least one year, left it, with the intention of staying in another country for a period of less than one year". Estatísticas Demográficas (2020).

According to the National Institute of Statistics in Portugal, population estimates show an increase of the resident population in Portugal, because of positive net migration, which in 2020 was enough to overcome a negative natural balance. At the same time, the demographic aging trend observed in the last few years persists, because of a decrease of both young and working age population, and an increase of the elderly population. Estatísticas Demográficas (2020). On the 31st December 2020, the resident population in Portugal was estimated to be 10,298,252 persons, resulting in a positive population growth rate (0.02%). The natural growth rate is negative (-0.38%) and the migration growth rate is positive (0.40%). Between 2015 and 2020, the proportion of young people (0 to 14 years) decreased from 14.1% to 13.4%; the working age population (15 to 64 years) reduced from 65.2% to 64.1%; and the percentage of elderly population (65 years and older) increased from 20.7% to 22.4%. Estatísticas Demográficas.(2020). Consequently, the ageing index changed from 146.5 to 167.0 elderly people per 100 young people. In 2020, and for the fourth year running, the number of permanent immigrants (67,160) overcame the number of permanent immigrants (25,886), resulting in a positive net migration of 41,274 persons (44,506 in 2019). As for temporary immigration, 2020 estimates

indicate that 42,323 individuals left the country with the intention to remain abroad for a period shorter than one year (48,821 in 2019). Estatísticas Demográficas .(2020).

National Institute of Statistics in Portugal added that in 2020, 12.4% of people living in Portugal, between 16 and 74 years old, had an immigrant background: 7.6% were first-generation immigrants and 4.8% were descendants of immigrants. The composition of the first-generation immigrant population reflects the historical ties with other countries. Angola, France, Brazil, Mozambique, and Venezuela were the main countries of birth, and more than one-third were born in one of the Portuguese-speaking African countries (PALOP), and so the Portuguese was the mother tongue of most first-generation immigrants (70.4%). The relevance of past migratory flows is also noteworthy: approximately one-third came to Portugal more than 40 years ago. Concerning the second-generation immigrants, the vast majority had origins in the European Union (86.6%), because it was in the EU, mainly in Portugal, that at least one parent was born. Estatísticas Demográficas.(2020).

The immigrant population as a whole, including first and second-generation immigrants, was younger (49.3% were aged between 16 and 39 years old) and better educated (32.6% had tertiary education) than people without an immigrant background (33.8% and 23.8%, respectively), with a greater concentration in predominantly urban areas (79.7% compared to 72.8%). In what concerns the situation in the labour market, the population between aged 25 and 64 with an immigrant background does not differ substantially from people without an immigrant background. However, the second-generation of immigrants, compared with the first-generation, showed a more unfavourable situation, with lower activity and employment rates, a higher unemployment rate and more fragile employment contracts. Estatísticas Demográficas.(2020).

Most of the resident population, regardless of their immigrant background, were satisfied with their job and did not feel discriminated at work. Nevertheless, around 10% indicated that they had had felt discriminated against in their job, being this proportion slightly higher for first-generation immigrants (11.3%). At last, 28.9% of first-generation immigrants indicated that their current job requires fewer skills than the one they had before come to Portugal. Estatísticas Demográficas.(2020).

2. An Overview of Filipino's Migration flows

For the Philippines, labor export is an important feature of the country's political economy. Worldwide, the country is recognized as an archetype for would-be labor exporting countries. In fact, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), the state's bureaucratic arm, has proclaimed itself to be the "manager of a model migration program" (POEA, 2003). Currently, the Philippines is the largest exporter of labor in Asia and one of the largest in the world Martin, Abella and Kuptsch, (2006). Beginning with the Philippine Labor Code, enacted in 1974, the state institutionalized labor export as its official "overseas employment program." In the years that followed, the state's explicit role evolved from one of monopoly to "high profile regulation," managing the migration of nationals and the corresponding private recruitment sector Ball. (1997). Despite the shifts in strategy and ideology, however, the Philippine government has implemented policies principally aimed at promoting overseas employment. At present, the Philippines supplies the global labor market with a diversified pool of migrant workers, ranging from computer engineers to domestic workers. Officially, over 2,500 overseas contract workers (OCWs)² are deployed to 194 countries each day (POEA, 2002). As a result, the country's overseas employment program has become a multi-billion dollar industry. In 2005, for example, remittances from OCW salaries totalled nearly \$10.7 billion U.S. dollars (Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas, 2006).³ With continued devaluation of the Philippine peso, this hard source of foreign exchange currency is critical to the country's economic stability (Alburo, 1993; Battistella, 1999). Having such a vested interest in increasing the supply of migrant labor abroad, the Philippines provide us with an important site for investigating the potential role developing states play in influencing emigrant movements. In this paper, I analyze the role of the state in two main ways. First, I discuss the major policy interventions the Philippine state has implemented in order to manage labor migration flows. Second, I use a simple regression model to show the structural relationship between Philippine state policy and the annual outflow of legally processed OCWs, using data compiled by the Philippine government from 1969-2000. Multivariate regression results show that state policy does have a statistically significant effect on the rate of OCWs processed each year, net of two economic factors: per-capita GDP and unemployment. Interestingly, these two economic indicators do not have a statistically significant effect on the dependent variable: the number of legally processed OCWs (as a rate per 10,000 in the total labor force) each year. However, not all of the major state policies included in the regression models yield statistically significant results or expected coefficients. The state policies that impact migration are those formulated to (1) coordinate the activities of the private recruitment sector under state supervision, an (2) reorganize the state bureaucracy that processes OCWs. These results push us to examine

more closely the role of the Philippine state in contemporary international migration and to consider the effect of different types of state intervention on annual migration flows.

There are approximately 11.5 million migrant domestic workers, the majority — 8.45 million being women (ILO 2015). The largest share of them, 27.4 percent, work in the Middle East, followed by 20 percent in Europe and 19.4 percent in Southeast Asia and the Pacific (ILO 2015). Two of the largest groups of migrant domestic workers are Filipinos, estimated at 1.4 million (Parreñas 2015), and Indonesians, estimated at 2.1 million (Suhaimi, Farid, and Ruslam 2013). According to the Philippine government, there are approximately 10 million Filipinos residing abroad, 41 percent of whom are temporary labor migrant workers.³ Indonesian government figures report 8 million residing abroad and 45 percent registered as temporary labor migrant workers.⁴ For both countries, those deployed as domestic workers represent the largest group of temporary labor migrant workers (Peng 2017). Between 2009 and 2013, 631,056 individuals formally departed the Philippines as newly hired domestic workers; this figure is exceptionally high compared to 74,391 nurses, the second largest group of newly hired workers leaving the Philippines. A majority (73.4%) of global migrant domestic workers are women (ILO 2015), and the ratio of female to male migrants has risen in source countries in recent years. For instance, Indonesian women comprised 56 percent of labor migrants in 1996, 68 percent in 2000, and 78 percent in 2004 and 2007 (IOM 2010, 9). Women from the Philippines likewise outnumber their male counterparts, comprising approximately 55 to 60 percent of annual flows of labor migrants Scalabrini Migration Center.(2013). Concentrated in the Middle East, specifically KSA and UAE, most migrants from Indonesia and the Philippines are employed in countries where they do not qualify for permanent residency. This article accordingly focuses on Filipino and Indonesian migrant domestic workers in the Middle East, specifically in the UAE, as they represent the largest group of migrant workers from their origin countries and the two largest groups of migrant domestic workers globally.

3. Filipinos in Portugal

In spite of the growing population of Filipino immigrants in Portugal, around 1,072 Filipinos as 2020 according to Resident Foreign Population in Portugal, little is known about their lives as immigrants. Philippine Embassy, (2020). As per data of Resident Foreign Population in Portugal there are 292 men and 780 women registered as legal immigrants of Portugal. There are 19 in Aveiro, 12 in Beja, 9 in Braga, 1 in Braganca,6 in C. Branco, 16 in Coimbra, 5 in Evora, 75 in Faro, 20 in Leiria, 746 in Lisbon, 2 in Portalegre, 56 in Porto, 38 in Santarem, 38 in Setubal, 16 in V. Castelo, 2 in Villa Real, 1 in Viseu, 15 in Acores and 8 in Madeira. In 2021, Philippines ranked 45 in the Ranking in the Immigrant Community in Portugal.

Filipino Community is arising in Portugal, families are trying to get their families to reunified with them. Most of the Filipinos are working in Portugal as a Domestic Helper, working in the restaurants and other works. Despite of the challenges in reunification, they still doing their best to get their family member and hoping that their lives will get more better in Portugal. Philippine Embassy. (2020).

4. Family Reunification

Family reunification is always an integral part of a permanency plan and is a preferable outcome for children in care. However, reunification is not straightforward, involving many subsequent negotiations between parents, children, and social workers, sparking various emotions and struggles among the involved parties. According to Wong , Current research on parental experiences of family reunification is predominantly of a cross-sectional nature, and rarely reflects the parents' experience throughout the process. Wong, M. M. C. (2016).

Family reunification is one of the most important areas of the migration policy in the European Union. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009) Historically, the State retained the sovereign power to decide who could enter its territory. However, the power of the State to set its immigration policy has shifted with the involvement of the European Union. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009) The State is no longer solely competent in matters of immigration. The exact division of powers between European and national bodies is complex. For example, the right of the migrant to bring their family members into the European Union varies depending on whether the migrant is a European citizen exercising his or her free movement rights, or a third-country national. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009) There are different scenarios which must be distinguished. The first category pertains to cases in which a European citizen is residing in her own country. In such circumstances, the European citizen cannot access family rights which are available at European Union level. The situation is considered internal to the member state and national law applies fully. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009) Hence the right to family reunification of Union citizens residing in their own member states is not generally subject to Community law. This produces a phenomenon known as reverse discrimination. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009) Secondly, one must consider the category of cases in which a European citizen resides in another member state. In these cases, Community law applies by virtue of Directive 2004/38.4. A European citizen has the right to apply to be reunited with his or her family members regardless of their nationality. This is also the case when a European citizen returns to his or her own member state after having stayed for a period of time in another member state. Arcarazo, D. A. (2009)

The family is widely accepted as a basic unit of cultural, social and economic production and reproduction which plays a fundamental role in the successful integration of its members, and functions as a support network for them. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Many immigrants arriving in Portugal are at first deprived of this support structure, having left their families behind in their country of origin. While some will return to their families and countries of origin after temporarily living abroad, others will reunite with their families in Portugal and still others will start new ones. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). As a consequence of the legal restrictions imposed by EU member states following the 1973 oil crisis, family reunification and asylum-seeking became the main immigration gateways into the EU-15 for third-country nationals. By contrast, in Portugal, in 2004, only 22.2 per cent of non-EU citizens applied for a residence permit in Portugal via the official family reunification route. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Clearly, reuniting with one's family through official family reunification provisions is but one of many ways to bring family members together in Portugal. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Yet the question remains, why is the percentage of immigrants entering the country via official family reunification provisions so low? Qualitative and quantitative data gathered in the scope of the 2005 'Family Reunification and Immigration in Portugal' research project commissioned by the Portuguese High Commissariat for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities (ACIME) has been used to suggest a response to this question by highlighting the relatively recent character of immigration to Portugal, the significance of uncontrolled irregular migration, the way in which the concept of 'family' has been defined and put into practice by authorities, the fluid nature of contemporary families, and the barriers that must be surpassed in order for sponsors and their family members to qualify for official family reunification in the country. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008).

A. Family Reunification Provisions

Though more than three-quarters of the EU's annual inflow is based on family reunification for labour migrants and asylum seekers, policies on the right to family reunification have been created in a more or less ad hoc manner by receiving countries, sometimes with the input of the more important countries of origin by means of bilateral agreements drawn up between them. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). In the more heavily industrialized Western European countries, family reunification initially played an important role in maintaining the health and well-being of labour migrants who arrived in these countries in the wake of the Second World War. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). While labour migration was initially meant to be

temporary, in order to resolve post-war labour shortages and rebuild the countries, it eventually became more permanent as immigration policies favoring settlement and integration were developed in the face of recognition that immigrants were a 'structural necessity' (IGC 1997: 15) for the economies of the more heavily industrialized Western European countries. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Foreign labourers who had been living in these countries – sometimes for decades – had already started to establish their lives and start families there. The new policies allowed spouses and children remaining in the countries of origin to join their families legally. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Massive family reunification evolved out of new labour migration restrictions that were brought into force as a response to the industrial decline and consequent global economic crisis of the 1970s. These restrictions, in effect, barred most types of legal immigration, resulting in rising numbers of family reunification immigrants² and illegal and clandestine immigrants – a reality that continues today throughout Europe due to increasingly tight immigration controls. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). Regularization campaigns throughout the 1980s and 1990s in Western European countries – both those with a longer immigration history and newcomers (like Portugal and other Southern European countries) – show that migration has not only continued but, in fact, grown increasingly clandestine and diversified. In these countries, non-Western European immigration accounts for a highly significant percentage of the population of foreign origin. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). At the same time, as birth rates have fallen for the autochthonous populations and the replacement rate has significantly declined, migration into Western Europe has come to play a central role in the region's demographic and economic stability. Since the 1990s, more attention has been paid to the issue of family reunification in Western Europe as social and political stakeholders have examined it as a possible way to replace high rates of clandestine immigration with a legal way to enter for family members of already legalised and sometimes naturalised workers of immigrant origin. While immigration via family reunification provisions may not be the solution to receiving countries' labour market problems and for rejuvenating their ageing populations and social security schemes, it may provide greater stability among already present immigrant populations and serve to help mitigate the abovementioned socio-economic issues. In fact, the traditional immigration countries have usually favoured family reunification on the grounds that it benefits receiving countries' societies in the medium- and long-term (IGC 1997), given immigrant families' 'inherent geographical and social stability' (Inglis 2003) once they are united. Against this, however, there is currently renewed interest in controlling family reunification more strictly in Western European countries, such as France, given renewed interest also in temporary labour migration programmes and greater concerns about managing and integrating the 'second generation', or children of migrants born in the receiving countries. France's June 2006 approval of the Entry

and Stay of Foreigners and Right of Asylum Code (Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile) (CESEDA) made it more difficult to be eligible for family reunification. Migrants now must be legally residing in the country for eighteen months (up from twelve) before they can sponsor their families, though migrants with 'Skill and Talent' stay permits can sponsor relatives after just six months. Currently, of the EU-27, only Denmark, Greece and Cyprus have less favourable eligibility provisions. The CESEDA also made families less secure under the law, by giving the state new grounds to refuse their applications or later withdraw their status Niessen et al. (2007). Marriage or a recognised legal partnership is the centre of the traditional nuclear family unit enshrined in family reunification provisions. It is therefore the fundamental manner in which spouses and partners may join immigrants in a receiving country via family reunification. The EU Directive on the Right to Family Reunification (Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003) recognizes the principle of the reunification of spouses. However, member states may require the sponsor and his/her spouse to be of a minimum age, and at maximum 21 years, before the spouse is able to join him/her. In the UK, the joining spouse must be eighteen years of age or older; in Belgium, under certain circumstances, the spouse must be 21 or older; and in Denmark, both the applicant and the joining spouse must be 24 or older (Ensor & Shah 2005; Niessen et al. 2007; Stenum 2005). Some countries, like Portugal, may define family reunification more as a 'right', while others, like Denmark, refer to it simply as an 'opportunity'. Spouses and partners arriving under family reunification provisions are subject to a variety of restrictions and sometimes direct surveillance in certain countries during probationary periods lasting between several months and years during which time receiving countries may restrict their access to the labour market, social benefits, permanent residency permits, etc., in order to prevent marriage/partnership fraud. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008). As a result, because non-European immigrants' countries of origin allow for marriage and partnership situations different from those sanctioned within Europe, conflict may arise between immigration authorities responsible for family reunification and immigrants (including those who have been naturalised) trying to bring their spouses and partners to the country in which they live. Immigrant marriages are often considered from the very start to be suspect and prone to take advantage of the receiving country's resources and its openness to foreigners. Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008).

B. Micro Level – Problem Focused Studies on Interpersonal or Familial Context

In this micro level, we will see the different problem focused studies on Interpersonal or Familial context that the family are experiencing during the reunification such as; Adjustment difficulties, parental authority, conflicts and parent-child relationship.

Adjustment difficulties, parental authority and conflicts were identified Lashley. (2000) as cited in Black, (2004). Agyeman (2004) described that most of the single immigrant mothers in Canada lack physical and psychological preparations for the child reunification. Hence, it leads to parenting problem. Suarez-Orozco, Bang & Kim (2011) made mentioned that during the onset of reunification, the feeling of meeting a stranger was commonly felt by the children. The feeling of being disoriented also emerged in their findings. Withstanding to these are the problems on reestablishing authority and coming to terms with new family members. Parenting becomes a problem, the case of single mothers in Canada during reunification with their children had dilemma in disciplining their children as their normative way of using stick to spank a child in not permissible in Canadian society which may permit to the involvement of child protective services Agyeman. (2004). The author elucidated that mostly adolescents have more difficulty to adapt entirely to the new family constellation Suarez- Orozco et. al (2011). Both parents and youth as participants in the study frequently noted of the discomfort living with step parent or new or step siblings as a matter of adjustment Suarez-Orozco et. Al. (2011). Competition with the siblings being born in the destination country for the attention of the mother was documented amongst reunified children Arnold. (2006). This kind of blended families' experience was also documented in the study of Mexican and Central American families, that any family members' i.e. children born out of unions played complexity in the reunification Lopez.(2010). Moreover, because of the relatively long separation, parents often have problems in the reunified relationship (Arnold, 2006; Sewell-Coker, Hamilton-Collins, & Fein, 1985 all in Suarez-Orozco et. al., 2011). In the correlational analyses found in the study of Hernandez (2013), it was found out that age of reunification and length of separation have something to do with the perceived difficulties in the relationship. With so much frustration, parents reported that their financial and emotional sacrifices are not compensated by their children (Abrego, 2009; Dreby, 2009). The same sentiments by the parents of unrequited sacrifice were noted in the study Suarez- Orozco, Bang & Kim (2011). Hence, long years of separation means threat to unwilling confirmation to the parental rules (Smith, Lalonde, & Johnson, 2004; Hernandez, 2013). And the portrayal of parental authority is felt with guilt that may result in being inconsistent and overindulged, (Arnold, 1991; Burke, 1980 cited in SuarezOrozco et.al, 2011). When the reunited adolescent become unruly, he/she is being

sent and reunited back to the homeland to be taken care by relatives (Foner, 2009; Smith, 2006 cited in Suarez-Orozco et.al 2011). This holds true to younger children, they are being sent back to be cared for by extended family while parents work (Bohr, Whitfield, & Chan, 2009; Gaytan, Xue, & Yoshikawa, 2006 all in Suarez-Orozco et.al, 2011).

C. Macro Level – Problem Focused Studies on Structural Levels

In this macro level, we will see the different problem focused studies on structural levels that the family are experiencing during the reunification such as acculturation and social integration that includes culture shock, weather, food adjustment and communication barrier.

Much of the studies cited have a twang on problems regarding acculturation/integration. On process of reunification, immigration policies and the time of the process take that is related to immigration contribute to the long separation of the family members Bonizzoni. (2009). Agyeman (2004) found that most social integration challenges identified were culture shock, weather and food adjustment. In the United States of America, evidence consistent with the premise that laws of immigration affect the formation, composition and structure of immigrant families with consequences in development growth of the child that was left in their country (Enchautegui & Menjívar, 2015). Bonizzoni (2009) states that the affidavit of support also hinders smooth reunification. The length of separation of the immigrants in the USA and their loved ones in the pursuit of family reunification could be related in the long waiting of visa allocations Enchautegui & Menjívar (2015). It is attributed to the lack of staff to process the application in the immigration Landale, Thomas & Hook. (2011) and the set annual caps which determine as to how many are allowed to be given residence permit per year as part of the immigration policy which contributes to the long separation of children and parents. This is designed to prevent domination of immigration flows from single countries to USA Landale et. Al. (2011). Landale, Thomas and Hook (2011), for example, stated that in the case of Mexican immigrants in USA, residency status of parents impacts their children. Due to being unauthorized parents to stay, they have low wage jobs that have no health benefits. They do so because of the fear of being recognized as undocumented immigrants Landale et. Al. (2011). It is said that Mexican children of unauthorized parents are poorer in comparison to other Mexican migrants. Sometimes women had to lie about their status that they are single mothers or marital status per se for the purpose of obtaining residence permit with the end view of declaring it once they have a work contract and the subjective feeling of being secure that can give them the opportunity to live in the host country and reunify with their children (Arat Koc and Giles, 1994 as cited in Agyeman,

2004). But that is not always the case, as there was an incident with a Jamaican women in Canada that were deported for applying sponsorship of previously undeclared children (Bakan and Stasilius, 1997 as cited in Agyeman, 2004). Pareñas (2001) states that many Filipina migrants' domestic helpers in USA, Canada and Italy have problems in the sponsorship for their children as their domestic work seems to be difficult to balance. She explained in her study that Filipina immigrants decided to send back or leave their children to Philippines due to structural forces of globalization and unequal level of economy between the country of origin and destination. Stemming from the previous studies mentioned, awareness of the risks, challenges, problems and stress factors in the separation and reunification of immigrant families should not only be the focus of researches concerning family reunification. Hence, a more balanced approach should lead researchers to seek understanding of the factors that help families reunified.

D. Coping Strategies

Coping strategies are discussed by Lazarus and Folkman, (1984) who refer to coping strategies as cognitive and behavioral effort that allow individuals to tolerate, escape, or minimize the effects of stress Kingston Lee Marley. (2017).

Coping can be defined as abilities used by people to face problematical and stressful situations. Coping is basically a process that changes over time in accord with situational contexts in which it occurs Alessandro Cucchetti. (2018). Strategies for coping with stress include a wide range of methods that are either constructive or of limited value. The aim is to master, reduce and/or tolerate the demands caused by stress Karyn Krawford. (2015).

Once you are employed, finding ways to help cope with work related stress and family and cultural pressures can help improve mood, decrease depression and improve health and overall well-being. Some of these coping mechanisms include positive psychology, savoring, self-care, and boundary management. Positive psychology focuses on positive development and positive functioning. Research of positive psychology has shown to improve job satisfaction, enhance work related functions, as well as improving overall well-being Stephanie Torres. (2016). Coping is the management of these demands. Coping has to do with the way people manage life conditions that are stressful. To some extent, stress and coping could be said to be reciprocal of each other. When coping is ineffective, the level of stress is high; however, when coping is effective, the level of stress is apt to be low.

Scientific interest in coping was, at first, slow to develop, but this began to change in the 1970s, and coping research and theory expanded rapidly thereafter. Although the term coping was not much used before 1970s, the basic idea is certainly not new, as is evident in the modern history of clinical psychology and psychiatry, which emphasized the psychoanalytic concept of ego defense Lediana Xhakollari. (2016).

E.Coping Strategies of Separation and Reunification Studies of Immigrants: Strengths in Their Key Findings

Coping is the process of using behavioral and cognitive approaches to manage difficult or threatening situations, and plays an integral role in maintaining the physical and mental well-being of an individual. Coping strategies or mechanisms include any conscious or unconscious decision which causes relief or consolation in stressful situations. Lediana Xhakollari. (2016). In this section we will see the different coping strategies of separation and reunification studies of immigrants as follows; positive relationship, social support, physical and emotional preparedness, adapting to the new culture.

In contrast to a focus on risks and deficits, the strengths perspective seeks to uncover and mobilize the protective factors, assets, and capabilities a family possesses to improve functioning (DeFrain & Asay, 2007; Dunst & Trivette, 2009; Early & GlenMaye, 2000; Saleebey, 2006 in Raffaelli & Wiley, 2012). Individual's ability to rebound from difficulty or challenges has been studied as factors of resilience and the notion of resilience is explored in a context of family system by way of understanding their ways of managing challenges and/or difficulties and maintain functioning (Allison et al., 2003; Lietz, 2006, 2007; Patterson, 2002; Thomas et al., 2005; Walsh, 2002 in Raffaelli & Wiley, 2012). In the study made amongst Latino adolescents in United State of America, it was found out that it was normative in the adaptation for them to feel and see their parents as strangers at first but eventually as time went on, they began to adapt and acknowledged their mothers (Hernandez, 2013). The social support of extended family may bring confidence of the immigrant parents about leaving the children. In such society, where kinship care or the so-called extended family is practiced, it is but culturally appropriate (Zayas & Solari, 1994 cited in Hernandez, 2013). When children are accustomed towards this kind of arrangement, they are expected to understand that the sacrifices made by their parents are geared for themselves and the family at large (Artico, 2003 cited in Hernandez 2013). Making the children understood that separation is temporary would basically ease the impact to the children and help them cope (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010: Lopez, 2010). Hence, to be taken cared of surrogate parents by means of kinship care may be viewed as normal (Lashley, 2000; Pottinger, 2005 as cited in Hernandez, 2013). Lopez (2010) critiqued that attachment theory is narrowly focused on a mother and child dyad and has not addressed the role of extended

families in the provision of needs of the children left by immigrant parents. She added that the availability of an extended family network may buffer against the effect to the children due to maternal deprivation. Immigrant families have many strengths. Bonizzoni (2009) highlighted that the extended ties are a form of concrete support for immigrant couples, single mother/father in the separation and reunification of the family members/relatives. Family relatives then became one of the means of support in the whole procedural process of family separation and reunification in the form of managing care and money transnationally. When both parents migrate, often the children are in care of the extended families such as grandmothers, aunts, uncles or even the father when only the mother goes abroad. (Bernhard, Landolt, & Goldring, 2006; Foner, 2009; Scalabrini Migration Center, 2003 cited in SuarezOrozco, 2011). In reunification, there are factors that are challenging; however, the immigrant parents can adapt positively by preparing the reunification. Parents must know the difficulty it may bring to children in the reunification when they are being separated from the care giver so that these immigrant parents can be sensitive to the difficulty (Sciarra, 1999 in Lopez, 2010). By remaining physically and emotionally available, it can help the reunification adjustment. When children know that their parents are present, feelings of abandonment can be waned Lopez. (2010). Perceived family support was also helpful in the reunification experience of young Chinese immigrants in Hong Kong. Accordingly, with family support, they were able to overcome difficulties, became mature and more independent Lam, Chan & Tsoi, (2005). It was mentioned in the narratives of these young Chinese immigrants that the support during reunification was not only in material provision but also emotional ones Lam et.al, (2005). Another equally important strengths found helpful in the relative success of family reunification is the sense of gratitude towards parents by these young Chinese immigrants. With a grateful heart for the sacrifices made by their parents, these reunified young Chinese immigrants felt the obligation to behave well Lam et.al, (2005)

Kim, Y. Y., & Gudykunst, W. (2005) argued that in many ways, entering a new culture is like starting an enculturation process all over again. Only this time, strangers are faced with situations that deviate from the familiar and internalized original cultural script. They become more aware of the previously taken-for-granted habits of mind because, as Boulding (1956/1977) notes, the human nervous system is structured in such a way that "the patterns that govern behavior and perception come into consciousness only when there is a deviation from the familiar" (p. 13). Now, strangers discover that they lack a level of understanding of the new communication system of the host society, and must learn and acquire many of its symbols and patterns of activities. They may be forced to suspend or even abandon their identification with the cultural patterns that have symbolized who they are and what they are. Kim, Y. Y., & Gudykunst, W. (2005). Berry, J. W. (1992) added that adaptation is the term used to refer to both the strategies used during acculturation, and to its

outcome. It is proposed that different strategies lead to different varieties of adaptation. For the individual, three such strategies have been identified: adjustment, reaction, and withdrawal.

CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

1. Ecological framework

The overarching Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological framework is used in this study. This framework has been used for risk and resilience by numerous researchers. As emphasized in this study, this is used to describe resilience and family strengths in the course of their transnational reunification. Such framework invites to understand the socio-ecological milieu of family, school, neighborhood, community services, and dynamics of culture as influential source of strengths Walsh. (2012).

Following Bronfenbrenner Johnson. (2008), he states that human development follows a progression throughout the life course as active, dynamics with changing properties in the context where the person lives. Its basic premise, Bronfenbrenner, (1979) in Berk, (2000) explained about the interconnected systems namely, microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, chronosystem. The first one concerns about the interactions of the immediate surroundings of the focal system or the relationship interpersonally in a particular setting. Mesosystem, concerns about the structures and linkages of microsystems. The exosystem covers the broader structure like policies within the context that affect the interplay with other system, example in this case, immigration policies. The macro system speaks about the values, customs, social resources that may directly affect the focal system as an entity of explanation. Finally, is the chronosystem. It explains how socio-historical context, affected by time dimension, affects the interrelationship.

In order to give an as distinct description of Bronfenbrenner's ecological development theory as possible, I will rely on the theory criticisms of his own. The description of the microsystem has been complemented in comparison to the original, the descriptions of the two following ones have remained the same, while that of the macrosystem has changed. In this representation the importance of the microsystem is salient, since its understanding carries the clues for the understanding of other systems as well.

A. The Microsystem: Family Context

Bronfenbrenner (1989), in order to underline the possible meaning for development of the personal qualities of the significant people in the immediate environment, has added to the original definition of the microsystem an italicized later clause. According to the author a microsystem is a pattern of activities, roles, and interpersonal relations experienced by developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical and material features, and containing other persons with distinctive characteristics of temperament, personality, and systems of belief. Berk (2000) says that the microsystem is closest environment for a child and includes the structures with which the child maintains direct contacts. Paquette and Ryan (2001) interpret Bronfenbrenner's ideas and maintain that at this level the relations between persons are happen in two ways – from the child and towards the child. For example, a child's parents have an influence of his/her beliefs and behavior, but the child can as well influence the parents' beliefs and behavior. Bronfenbrenner calls this bi-directional influence and he points out how such relationships exist on the levels of all environments. The interaction within the layers of the structures and the interaction of the structures between the layers is the key to this theory. In a microsystem the bi-directional interactions are at their strongest and they have a most powerful influence on the child. Still, the interactions on the outer levels can nevertheless have an influence on inner structures. At first the child's relation to other people is dyadic and later on the child can handle several simultaneous 8 interaction relationships.

B.The Macro System: Sociocultural Context

As a consequence of Bronfenbrenner's own critique (1989, 228; 2002, 265) of his own theory the definition of the macrosystem changed the most. In the first place it was influenced by Vygotski's theory about the psyche's sociohistorical evolution that led to see the macrosystem as a sociocultural context. Another source was the concept of personal properties that accelerate development, foremostly the concept of conceptual systems. The corrected definition (Bronfenbrenner 1989, 228) runs as follows and the addition is italicized: The macrosystem consists of the overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture, subculture, or other broader social context, with particular reference to the developmentally-investigative belief systems, resources, hazards, life styles, opportunity structures, life course options, and patterns of social interchange that are embedded in each of these systems. The macrosystem can be thought of as a societal blueprint for a particular culture, subculture, or other broader social context. In the case of the microsystem a reference was made of the conceptual system. Bronfenbrenner (2002, 266) reiterates that the behavioral and conceptual models that are characteristic of the macrosystem are transferred from one

generation to another by the means of different cultural 13 institutions like family, school, congregation, workplace and administration that intermediate the processes of socialization. Berk (2000) writes that the macrosystem is the outmost layer for the child. It has no distinct framework but it holds inside it the cultural values, traditions and laws. The macrosystem influence penetrates through all other layers. For example, if in a culture it is believed that bringing up children is the parents' task then evidently this culture will not offer much help to the parents in their educational efforts. This in its turn has its effects on the parents' educational environment and their chances to cope with the task of education. (Paquette & Ryan 2001.) Saarinen et.al. (1994, 90) say that the impact of the macrosystem will often be noticed only after making comparison between children and young people, growing up in different societies. Bronfenbrenner (1974) has pointed out the influence of macrosystems by comparing children's socialization in the Soviet Union and the USA. (Bronfenbrenner 2002, 264-265.) Puroila and Karila (2001, 224) have concluded that under the notion of macrosystem Bronfenbrenner might have meant not only the society but cultures and subcultures as well. It must be noted that the social and the culture aspects of the macrosystem are well evident in Bronfenbrenner's new definition. This allows focusing study topics onto these new areas.

2. Strength Perspective

In this study, strength-based approach is conceptualized in two ways. Firstly, is to identify protective factors assets, resources and abilities which were helpful in the family that could be enhanced. And secondly, is to describe strengths by means of service provision.

Over the past three decades, researchers have studied families from a strengths-based perspective. The emphasis on family strengths brings balance on how family overcome life's challenges. By giving emphasis on the problems families are facing, society tends to ignore the positivity of the positive outcome families went through in any life's adversities. The strength perspective was coined by the forerunner to give due recognition to strengths of people. This becomes an approach to social work practice began in the early 1980s at the University of Kansas' School of Social Welfare Saleeby. (2008). This perspective is an attempt to put an equal footing as response to the traditional deficit-focused social work approach.

Saleeby (2008) has described several principles in strengths perspective, the following are : 1) Every individual, group, family and community has its strength, 2) Trauma and abuse, illness and struggle may be injurious but they may also be sources of challenge and opportunity, 3) Assume that you do not know the upper limits of the capacity to grow and change and take individual, group, and community aspirations seriously, 4) We best serve clients by collaborating with them, 5) Every environment is full of resources.

Saleebey (2008) defines client's strengths through three interlinked aspects, called "CPR". C represents competence, capacities and courage; P stands for promise, possibility, and positive expectations; and R means resilience, reserves, and resources. It becomes an orientation that magnifies resources, capabilities, support systems in overcoming adversities and challenges. It enables the practitioner approach clients with a positive attitude aims to enhance motivation and hope. By this, the role of language is extremely important in the strengths-approach. Language and words have power. Words can lift and inspire or frighten and constrain. It is with the language that a researcher also can uncover strengths.

Departing from the traditional deficit approaches, the strength perspective comes in detour to emphasize the resources, capacities, energies and survival skills of people rather than of highlighting pathologies and problems (Saleebey, 2006; Payne, 2014). Therefore, it captures the premise that all people have inherent strengths in the transformation of their lives from its adversities.

Berg & Kelly (2000) emphasized that strength perspective is in accordance with social work values of human rights, inclusion and social justice, participation, equality, non-discrimination and respect for diversity. The strength perspective serves as an overarching piece in the emerging professional backgrounds such as in psychology, social work, anthropology, sociology, etc. Saleebey (1996) often refers this to the concept of health and wholeness, resilience, empowerment, narratives and the like.

3. The Integration of Family, Community and Cultural Strengths

A. Family Strengths

Family strengths researches tend to be descriptive in nature (Ponzetti & Long, 1989 as cited in VanBreda, 2001). It tries to give us characteristics of a functional and what constitutes a strong families. Family strengths are defined in various ways:

- Families strengths are those relationship patterns, interpersonal skill and competencies, and social and psychological characteristics which create a sense of positive family identity, promote satisfying and fulfilling interaction among family members, encourage the development of the potential of the family group and individual family members, and contribute to the family's ability to deal effectively with stress and crisis (Williams et.al 1985 in Trivette; Dunst, Deal, Hamer, & Propst, 1990, p.17 all in VanBreda, 2001).

- These are forces and dynamic factors in the relationship which encourage the development of the personal resources and potential of members of the family and which make family life deeply satisfying and fulfilling to family members (Otto, 1975, in Sawin, 1979, p.167 all in VanBreda, 2001).

- Family strengths are the competences and capabilities of both various individual family members and the family unit that are used in response to crises and stress, to meet needs, and to promote, enhance and strengthen the functioning of the family system (Trivette et al., 1990, p. 18 in VanBreda, 2001).

With the profound interest to study family from a strength perspective, DeFrain and Asay (2007) identify characteristics of what constitute a strong family stemming from the researchers concerning families all over the world. Hence, they call it as "Strengths Based Conceptual Framework for Understanding Families Worldwide". The model aims to identify factors that contribute to family wellbeing across diverse cultural settings.

Accordingly, the following are the characteristics of families worldwide characterizing their strengths, to wit:

1.) Appreciation and affection means caring for each other, friendship, respect, playfulness and humor, 2.) Positive communication would mean giving compliments, sharing feelings, avoiding blame, being able to compromise and agreeing to disagree, 3.) Commitment to the family comprises of trust, honesty, dependability, faithfulness and sharing, 4.) Enjoyable time together covers quality time in great quantity, enjoying each other's company, sharing simple good things and the like, 5.) A sense of spiritual well-being implies the sense of spiritual being within the family 6.) The ability to manage stress and crisis effectively.

In the context of family reunification in the child protection services between and amongst the separation and reunification of parents and families brought about by some challenges, Lietz and Strength (2007, p. 205) identified the following strengths essential to the success of reunification, to wit namely:

- Appraisal – Finding meaning in the difficulties families face
- Boundary Setting – Ability and willingness to separate the family system from influence that are unhealthy
- Communication – Verbal and non-verbal expression of thoughts and feelings regarding the crisis.
- Commitment – A strong desire to keep the family together and strong
- Creativity /flexibility – ability to find multiple solutions to a problem and the willingness to try new things
- Humor – Ability to be light –hearted despite the challenges a family face.

- Insight – Ability to gain understanding into a family’s difficulty
- Initiative – Ability and willingness to take action in meeting needs
- Spirituality – A belief system that provides direction and strength to family
- Social Support – Giving and receiving emotional and practical help in the context of relationship with family, friends, and service providers.

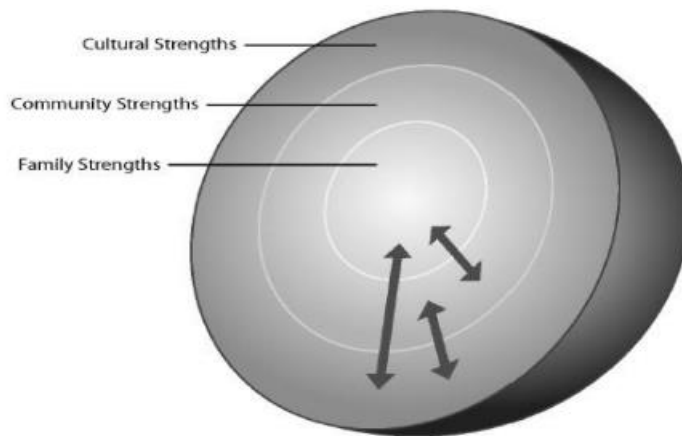
Stemming from the various authors of researchers on family strengths, it is important to note that family strengths have generated many list of what constitute family strengths. Thus, in many cases, these may overlap from one to another. Common to their findings are cohesion, communication, problem solving, spirituality and values, family identity and rituals, affective responses, boundaries, flexibility and adaptability, social support, autonomy and coherence.

B. Community Strengths

DeFrain & Asay (2007) states that strong families contribute to the well-being of communities, and strong communities enhance the development of strong families. Community strengths are characterized as follows; 1.) A supportive environment that genuinely values families, and a general willingness and natural generosity infused in the culture to help when families are in need 2.) An effective educational delivery system 3.) Religious communities for families seeking this kind of support 4.) Family-service programs developed by government and nongovernmental organizations for families who cannot find the help they need from their own extended family, friends and neighbors and 5.) A safe, secure and healthful environment.

C. Cultural Strengths

The third level of dimension is cultural strengths. Rich cultural history, shared cultural meaning, a stable political process, a viable economy and understanding the global society. With relevance to the rich cultural history, knowing the history of these families would be helpful to uncover strengths DeFrain & Asay. (2007). Withstanding to this, the shared cultural meaning is also paramount. Another factor is a stable political process and a viable economy. In this sense, we will understand how this stability of politics and economy shaped the perception of strengths amongst these families of single mothers and their children. An understanding of global society will also be contributory as how globalization gives sense of the human inter-connectedness with people around the globe.



Adapted from: DeFrain, J., & Asay, A. M. (2007). A strengths-based conceptual framework for understanding families world-wide. *Marriage & Family Review*, 41, 447-466.

The framework acknowledges that families possess existing resources that can be used to manage difficulties. Hence using this conceptual framework, the main difference to the traditional problem-solving approach to researches is that they put emphasis in trying to understand what caused the problem and trying to name it. Although important, but it is also equally essential for the researcher to use strength-based approach that shifts the emphasis from what went wrong to what can be done to enhance family strengths, by building on what the family has already. Hence, the researcher would focus on identifying or uncovering strengths.

4. Attachment Theory

John Bowlby, working alongside James Robertson (1952) observed that children experienced intense distress when separated from their mothers. Even when such children were fed by other caregivers, this did not diminish the child's anxiety. These findings contradicted the dominant behavioral theory of attachment (Dollard and Miller, 1950) which was shown to underestimate the child's bond with their mother. The behavioral theory of attachment stated that the child becomes attached to the mother because she fed the infant. Attachment is a deep and enduring emotional bond that connects one person to another across time and space (Ainsworth, 1973; Bowlby, 1969). Attachment does not have to be reciprocal. One person may have an attachment to an individual which is not shared. Attachment is characterized by specific behaviors in children, such as seeking proximity with the attachment figure when upset or threatened (Bowlby, 1969). Attachment

behavior in adults towards the child includes responding sensitively and appropriately to the child's needs. Such behavior appears universal across cultures. Attachment theory provides an explanation of how the parent-child relationship emerges and influences subsequent development. McLeod, S. (2009).

According to the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), interpersonal experiences—particularly with caregivers (usually parents or other family members)—shape children's beliefs about themselves and close others. Over time, early experiences with primary caregivers—called attachment figures—consolidate into a generalized relational schema (i.e., beliefs and expectations about relationships), which are called internal working models of attachment (Bowlby, 1969; Fariborz et al., 1996). These internal working models influence how children and adults interact with the world, experience themselves in relation to others, and regulate affect. Thus, internal working models have a direct effect on adult functioning (Sroufe, 2005; Sroufe et al., 2005a, 2005b). Although attachment orientations develop in the first year of life, they have been found to be somewhat stable over the lifespan—which has implications for long-term developmental outcomes (Fraley, 2002). In sum, adult attachment is thought to be based on the beliefs, expectations, and feelings that individuals learned as infants via experiences with their caregiver (Shaver & Hazan, 1987; Tasca & Balfour, 2014). Although adult attachment was initially conceptualized as a categorical phenomenon (i.e., people fell into one of four attachment categories; Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991), numerous studies have provided indisputable evidence that adult attachment orientations are, in fact, best characterized as two continuous dimensions (Fraley & Spieker, 2003; Fraley et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2018). Specifically, the two dimensions underlying adult attachment are (a) attachment anxiety and (b) attachment avoidance (Brennan et al., 1998). Attachment anxiety refers to fear of abandonment by partners, excessive need for approval, and distress at perceived rejection. In contrast, attachment avoidance refers to fear of dependence and intimacy, and excessive need for self-reliance, and avoidance of self-disclosure. Prototypically “secure” individuals have low levels of both attachment anxiety and avoidance. Consequently, secure individuals tend to less worry about rejection or abandonment, and they tend to be comfortable with both being dependent on others and having others depend on them (Bartholomew & Horowitz, 1991). In general, attachment theory provides a developmental and contextual perspective on adult functioning (Tasca & Balfour, 2014) and has the potential to impact individuals' mental health (Akdoğan, 2017; Besser et al., 2012; Chow & Ruhl, 2014). Indeed, as mentioned above, both anxiety and avoidance have been found to robustly predict mental health across a variety of studies (Huang et al., 2019; Kidd et al., 2016; Neumann, 2017).

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This research will use the qualitative research method in gathering the answer through semi-structured type of interview. This type of research method is the most appropriate for the research topic, “*Reunified Filipino Family Immigrants with children in Lisbon Portugal: Interculturality Challenges and Coping Strategies.*” because it will obtain an in-depth response from the participants form semi-structured type of interview . In this type of research interest, the researcher will be able to acquire a rich data because the participants will answer the research Interview Guide Questions thoroughly and respondents will be able to express and narrate their story. Thus, by using the qualitative research and through semi-structured type of interview the researcher will be given a chance to explore the topic further and have gather adequate data.

Problem Statements and Research Questions

In spite of the growing population of Filipino immigrants in Portugal, around 1,072 Filipinos as 2020 according to Resident Foreign Population in Portugal. little is known about their lives as immigrants. Hence, the rationale of the study is driven by the following aspects:

- 1) The effect of the separation of the children and parents before reunification.
- 2) Interculturality challenges among Filipino Families with their children during the reunification.
- 3) And the existing Coping Strategies with regards to reunified children thus undermining strengths and resilience perspective

The focus of this study is to find out the different challenges of reunification and what are the coping strategies of reunified children in dealing with these challenges. As such, this study is guided by the research questions on “How do reunified Filipino Parent immigrants with their Children in Lisbon Portugal describe their separation and reunification experiences with their children?”

Specific sub-questions were explored hereunder:

1. What are the challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment?
2. What internal resources, self-management, and self-help strategies did the parents of reunified Filipino families use to overcome the challenges during the reunification in the new country or environment?
3. How do their family and the community contribute in achieving reunification?

General Objectives

To explore parent's lived experiences of reunified Filipino families in Lisbon, Portugal, examining the strengths and challenges encountered throughout the separation and family reunification phases.

And the specific objectives were:

- To know what found helpful in achieving reunification after years of separation amongst reunified children and their parents in Lisbon Portugal.
- To understand how these the experiences interplayed to achieve reunification despite interculturality challenges.
- To identify coping strategies that are essential in keeping their family reunion.

Scope of the Study

The scope covered the perception of the reunified Filipino Children and their Filipino Parents immigrants with regards to factors found helpful in achieving family reunification. Hence, this study focused on the aspects of reunified Filipino Families Interculturality challenges and their Coping Strategies that represents strengths perspectives.

Research Respondents

In selecting the participants of this research study, the sampling procedure/technique of purposive sampling is use. Purposive sampling will be used in determining the respondents. This will be used in this qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases related to the phenomenon of interest.

There are 10 participants for this study. As for qualitative research methods , to start with 5 participants and then scale up by a further 5 to see if the data saturate. Crouch, M., & McKenzie, H. (2006).

The following criteria are use in selecting the participants:

- The participant can either be male or female.
- The participant should be a Parent of Reunified Filipino Children in Lisbon
- To be part of a Filipino Family
- The Family should be reunified in Lisbon Portugal

Research Locale

This research will be conducted in Lisbon, Portugal.

Semi-structured interviews

Bryman (2012) describes semi-structured interviews to entail the interviewer not limiting the frame of questions but asking a series of general questions about specific topics. The semi-structured interviews used made this study flexible in the way that data was collected; by responding to the direction in which the participants took the interview. Considering that the study topic touches on a sensitive issue, the flexibility in semi-structured interviewing made participants feel relaxed and were able to address different issues. The participants were able to reflect and give wide-ranging answers about their experiences of support without deviating from the main topic.

Data Collection

In-person interviews with each respondent lasted from 30 minutes to 1 hour. During the interviews the respondent discussed their challenges and coping strategies experiences, their relationship with their family, and the ideal family and community reunification support. Successful Family Reunification. Each interview was conducted, audio-recorded, and transcribed verbatim by this researcher. Transcripts and coding were reviewed by the dissertation chair. Using an “analysis of themes” method Creswell. (2007) provided a way to understand the complexity of how child welfare practitioners use the theoretical lens in practice. Thematic analysis was used in this study to identify, analyze and report themes as emerged in the data collected. According to Riessman (2008), thematic narrative analysis is the one often used. It focuses on the content, of “what” has been said. Themes from the corpus emerged. Hereunder are the followed steps for thematic analysis, to wit:

First, familiarizing with data. This means transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas. A revised transcripts was then made from the original transcripts. Expression such as “uhmmm”, “ahhh”, “yeah”, “hahahaha” and the like were removed as these did not mean any significance in the story being shared. It is also important to take note that unnecessary discussion, repetition and information which was irrelevant were deleted in the transcripts. However the portraying of events were preserved.

Secondly, generating initial codes. It means coding interesting features of the data systematically across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code. Third, is searching for themes, which entails collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. Fourth, reviewing themes, it was made through checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set. Fifth, defining and naming themes. It went with ongoing analysis for refining the specifics of each theme and the overall story that the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme. And lastly producing the report, it came by selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a report of the analysis. The choice of thematic analysis as tool to analyze was concerned in the content of the narrative given. By doing thematic analysis, the researcher drew themes and categories across cases. Hence, data are interpreted in the purview of thematic analysis developed by the interviewer stemming from an existing theory, the purpose of investigation and the like Riesman. (2008).

Thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that thematic analysis involves “identifying, analyzing and reporting themes”, in line with the research topic. The researcher choice of thematic analysis was because it ensures flexibility by not essentially depending on theory or epistemology, rather, it can be deployed in different theoretical and epistemological approaches Braun & Clarke (2006). Moreover, since the objective was to explore the experiences of support in the life transitions adolescent mothers living in care, it suited more in the essentialist/realist epistemology of thematic analysis – which focuses more on reporting participants’ experiences, meanings and realities (ibid.). After transcribing and translating the data the researcher immersed into the data. Immersion here means that the researcher read the data severally and thoroughly and became familiar with it. As the researcher read the data, he made some notes of common patterns seen in the data set. After getting grips on the data, the researcher uploaded it into the MAXQDA software for coding to begin. MAXQDA is a software that provides a platform for the organization and analysis of qualitative research data. Thus, I entered the coding phase with a general idea of what the data say. Using MAXQDA, the researcher

was able to highlight and categorize common patterns into nodes. Once the researcher uploaded the data into MAXQDA, the researcher was able to re-read the transcripts in the software, thus, going back and forth with the data and coding was flexible.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter discusses the results and their meanings as to what the data entailed fitting to the problem statement delineated in the first chapter. The study presents the results from the interviews and analysis of the findings. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. Data were analyzed to deliver comprehensive information about the coping strategies and its challenges of reunified Filipino family immigrants with children in Lisbon, Portugal: The study found three (3) main themes, nine (9) sub-themes and three (3) emerging themes were generated under the main themes. With the findings, an attempt was made to answer the research questions posed in the study: a) What are the challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment? b) What internal resources, self-management, and self-help strategies did the parents of reunified Filipino families use to overcome the challenges during the reunification in the new country or environment?; and, c) How do their family and the community contribute in achieving reunification?

The transcripts referenced in the analysis were elaborated to support the findings because they capture a detailed description of participants' accounts. The chapter is structured following the main categories of the research objectives, that were: a) challenges; b) coping strategies; and c) Supports in achieving family reunification. An effort was made to show the most significant knowledge and understandings necessary for drawing conclusions and recommendations according to established research objectives.

The analysis reflects the challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment, and the different self-management, and self-help strategies did the parents of reunified Filipino families use to overcome the challenges during the reunification, and the support of family and the community to contribute in achieving reunification. From the analysis, there are three (3) main themes – Challenges, Coping Strategies and Supports in Achieving Family Reunification. Table 1 a representation of the themes, subthemes, and emerging themes.

Table 1: Presentation of analyzed data

Main Themes	Sub-Themes	Emerging Themes
<p>1. Challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language Barrier • Stereotypes and Discrimination • Cross-Cultural Adjustment • The impact of migration on to family relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Problem • Lack of Knowledge about Family Reunification Process
<p>2. Coping Strategies used by reunified Filipino families during the Reunification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Parent-Children relationship • Physical and emotional preparedness. • Adapting the culture of the New Environment 	
<p>3. The contribution of family and the community in achieving reunification</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Support • Community Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideal Family and Community Reunification Support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Pre-Departure Orientation (About the Culture) 2.Seminar about Family Reunification 3.Free Portuguese Language Class

4.1 CHALLENGES

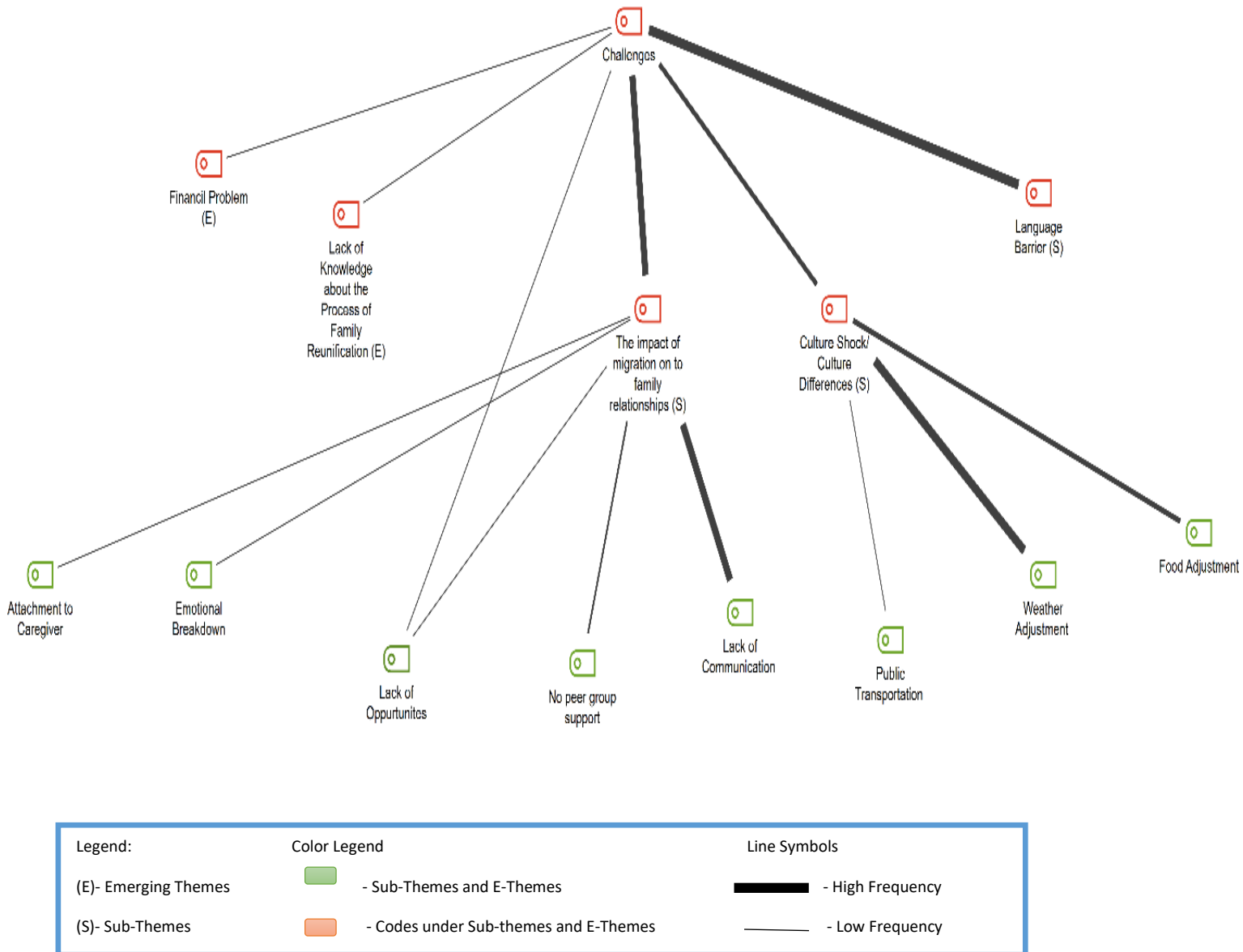
Among the themes that found from the analysis, this theme presents the challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment. The study found four (4) Sub-themes: Language Barrier, Stereotypes and Discrimination, Cultural differences /Culture Shock and the impact of migration on family relationships; and two (2) emerging themes: Financial Problem and Lack of Knowledge about Family Reunification Process.

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Bartkevičienė, Raudeliūnaitė (2012) emphasize that integration of immigrants in different countries is problematic and becomes a permanent object of political and scientific discourse. This process involves both the immigrants' willingness to take responsibility for integration in the host society, and a host society's willingness to accept and integrate immigrants. Račius *et al.* (2013) added that base on his study he also distinguishes a number of psychological and social factors that aggravate the psychological adaptation of the person arriving to European Union and affecting the successful collaboration between immigrants and professionals such as ; psychological stress experienced by the migrants , the language barrier , the impact of migration on to family relations , the absence of social networks , financial changes and social status , host community attitudes: stereotypes and discrimination and cultural differences.

Explicit in the findings that the phenomenon of separation and family reunification of Filipino immigrants in Lisbon Portugal the researcher will discuss the different challenges that that they experienced during the family reunification.

Graph 1 gives a representation of the themes base on the challenges that Filipino immigrants experienced during the family reunification.



Graph 1: Challenges during the Family Reunification

4.1.1 Language Barrier

According Rani, K. U. (2016). a communication barrier is anything that prevents us from receiving and understanding the messages others use to convey their information, ideas, and thoughts. The understanding of a language is intrinsically connected to the understanding of the culture it mirrors (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990; Rubel & Rosman, 2003; Everett, 2005). (Bohannan, 1966; Tymoczko, 1990; Saler, 2003) argued that for a

language to have meaning, the conventions, customs and value systems underpinning it must be either shared or understood by those who use it. In fact, (Wittgenstein, 2001; Winch, 1990 Gordon, 2004; Schleiermacher, 2004) added that by the same token, the understanding of a culture calls for apprehending the language in which its participants' ways of thinking and expressing themselves are (at least initially) molded and bounded. This comprises not only learning the existing codes of the language, but also the meanings, concepts and ideas that underpin them, or are attributed to them, by the members of the specific culture. It also requires the individual to grasp the historically and culturally marked style(s) of 'saying' something in that language. Language and culture are, therefore, both product and producer of each other – and from here onward I treat them as a single concept, in the sense that language divides are connected to cultural divides and vice versa. Moreover, all the participants express that language barriers are one of their challenges in the new country.

Respondent 1 indicated that when he arrived here in Portugal, he struggled in communicating with the locals and how communication barriers affect her living as an immigrant.

...As you know that we Filipino only speak our own language and English. I don't know how to speak Portuguese Language and it's hard for me to communicate with the locals especially when I buy foods in the Supermarket before. (Respondent 1)

The above findings indicate 2 main reasons why language barrier affect the adjustment of both parents and children during the Family Reunification. First, the struggle of the parents in doing their jobs for the lack of understanding of the language. Second, the adjustment of the children in the school setting. In fact, Cassar, J., & Tonna, M. A. (2018) argued that the positioning of migrant students within schools of the host country is considerably determined by issues related to the language of instruction adopted in these schools. In the research of Cassar, J., & Tonna, M. A. (2018) they found that migrant students' use of language functioned as a source of power, which seemed instrumental in developing a sense of belonging at school.

4.1.2 Stereotypes/Discrimination

According to Esses, V. M. (2021). Prejudice and discrimination toward immigrants, and the consequences of these negative attitudes and behavior, are key determinants of the economic, sociocultural, and civic-political future of receiving societies and of the individuals who seek to make these societies their new home. Reyna et al. (2013) added that attitudes toward immigrants among members of a receiving society may influence the absolute number of immigrants who are allowed entry each year, the stringency and punitive nature of immigration policies, and the types of supports offered to new arrivals. Some of these findings can

be found within the results base on the experiences on to how they experienced discrimination during the Family Reunification. In fact, Esses, V. M. (2021) mentioned that being an immigrant is potentially associated with a variety of other characteristics, such as race/ethnicity, religion. Thus, whether it is immigrant status per se that is driving differential treatment or these other characteristics is often unclear.

Respondent 3 discussed how her children experienced discrimination in the new environment;

...He even had a culture shock in his first 3 months. He doesn't want to go outside because he felt like he will be discriminated because of his skin color and he looks like Chinese. He even shared that in his school some kids bullied him that he is a Chinese and he was even tag as "Great Wall of China". (Respondent 3)

The above findings reflect a turning point that most of the children during the family reunification experienced discrimination based on their skin color, their race and not knowing how to speak Portuguese Language. Documenting discrimination based on immigrant status per se can be difficult because it is often not clear whether immigrant status is indeed the source of the differential treatment. Similarly, if immigrants have poorer language fluency, this could influence their social life in school or in the new environment and discrimination is not based on dislike of a group but rather on expectations about the surroundings of the immigrants. Nonetheless, I would argue that discrimination is based on prejudice and more likely to be based on stereotypes.

4.1.3 Cross- Cultural Adjustment

Rui and Wang (2015) defined cross-cultural adjustment as culture shock generated in the process of an individual adjusting to a different culture in a foreign country. Collie et al. (2015) regarded cross-cultural adjustment as individual psychological stress relief, when encountering cross-culture shock in different environments, to reduce conflict and stress at work or outside of work and achieve psychological comfort and ease Stilianos et al. (2017). Abdullah et al. (2015) revealed that from one specific culture to another culture, an individual had to readjust to cultural differences and change the accustomed lifestyles and thinking principles; in the cross-cultural experience, an individual would acquire distinct perception changes and physical and mental changes. This process was referred to as cross-cultural adjustment. Krishnan and Kirubamoorthy (2017) regarded cross-cultural adjustment as the interaction among people with a distinct culture. Such interaction behaviors were communicated through languages. Immigrants come from many nations, religions, and ethnicities. They bring with them many complex and

diverse values in relation to gender, parenting, and religious practices that provide crucial psychological and practical resources. Values may also pose constraints in their original cultures or in contact with the new culture. Falicov, C. J. (2007)

Thus, the findings shows that the immigrants have difficulties in integrating with the new environment. Apparently, most of the respondents talks about culture shocks and difficulties of integrating with the new culture during the family reunification. In fact, Agyeman (2004) found that most social integration challenges identified were culture shock, weather and food adjustment. Thus, the results of the interviewed shows that most of the respondent's experience; *adjusting to the public transportation, food adjustment and weather adjustment.*

These are some quotations that were coded about cross- cultural adjustment.

...First, the Public Transportation, in the Philippines we have our own car, so we don't have any problem but here in Portugal we don't have a car and we need to do the public transportation. (Respondent 3)

... Also, the food, we are not familiar with the food cause when I started working with Portuguese family, the chef always cook Portuguese cuisine and I don't understand the taste.. (Respondent 6)

... Weather also is a challenge for my wife and child though me I am used to it but them they always feel cold since they arrived around winter. It's so funny cause they don't want to go out because it is so cold which is understandable. (Respondent 7)

The findings of the research highlight the interconnectedness between cross-cultural adjustment and place differences during the process of family reunification. Immigrants face numerous challenges in adapting to a new country and environment, including adjusting to different foods, weather conditions, public transportation systems, and overall cultural norms. These factors contribute to the difficulties experienced by both children and parents during the family reunification process. Cross-cultural adjustment refers to the ability of individuals to adapt and integrate into a new culture. When families undergo reunification in a foreign country, they are confronted with the task of navigating and assimilating into a different cultural context. This adjustment process involves learning and understanding new cultural practices, traditions, and social norms. It can be a significant challenge for both children and parents, as they may feel unfamiliar and out of place in the new environment. Place differences encompass the various aspects that distinguish the home country from the host country. This includes differences in climate, geography, infrastructure, and overall lifestyle. The place differences experienced by reunified families can further contribute to their difficulties in adjusting during

family reunification. For example, if the home country had a tropical climate and the host country has a colder climate, the family members may struggle to adapt to the new weather conditions. Similarly, differences in transportation systems, housing, and overall infrastructure can pose challenges in navigating and feeling at ease in the new environment. The challenges related to cross-cultural adjustment and place differences can impact the family's overall well-being and their ability to successfully navigate the family reunification process.

4.1.4 The impact of migration on to family relationships

According to Suarez- Orozco et. al, (2011), elucidated that mostly adolescents have more difficulty to adapt entirely to the new family constellation. Both parents and youth as participants in the study frequently noted of the discomfort living with stepparent or new or step siblings as a matter of adjustment (Suarez-Orozco et. al, 2011). Arnold, (2006), added that competition with the siblings being born in the destination country for the attention of the mother was documented amongst reunified children. Adjustment difficulties, parental authority and conflicts were identified (Lashley 2000 as cited in Black, 2004). Agyeman (2004) described that most of the single immigrant mothers in Canada lack physical and psychological preparations for the child reunification. In fact, lack of communication, no peer group support, lack of opportunities and longing for their caregiver way back on the home country were one of the impacts of migration on to family relationships. The results shows that it leads to parenting problem. Suarez- Orozco, Bang & Kim (2011) made mentioned that during the onset of reunification, the feeling of meeting a stranger was commonly felt by the children. The feeling of being disoriented also emerged in their findings. Withstanding to these are the problems on reestablishing authority and coming to terms with new family members. Lopez (2010) critiqued that attachment theory is narrowly focused on a parents and child dyad that has not addressed the role of extended families in the provision of needs of the children left by immigrant parents. She added that the availability of an extended family network may buffer against the effect to the children due to maternal deprivation.

Thus, most of the participants discuss the different impact of the family reunification to family relationships such as; Lack of Communication, No peer group support, Lack of Opportunities and longing for their caregiver way back on the home country.

Most of the respondents mentioned of having a lack of Communication during the Family Reunification;

... When my son arrived here in Portugal, I did my best to build our relationship strong as he is already 18 years old. At first, we are so shy to each other. We always had conflict like household chores, his assignments

and requirements in school. Sometimes we don't talk to each other because we don't have this bond in the Philippines. My son opts to not to share his problem to me because he is used to share it with his grandmother. It's difficult at first, knowing that your son doesn't trust you. I think this is the effect of living separately with your children, (Respondent 3)

The above narrative from the respondents shows that during family reunification, lack of communication from their children is one of the impacts of the migration to family reunification.

Additionally, some of the respondents express that their children were experienced no peer group support from the new environment;

... Because they don't have a group of friends and they don't understand the language. They felt discriminated because children don't want to be with them maybe because they are Asians. (Respondent 8)

The above narratives from the respondents shows that during family reunification, children are struggling in the new environment as they don't have a peer group support from the new environment. According to the Ecological System Theory, the first one concerns about the interactions of the immediate surroundings of the focal system or the relationship interpersonally in a particular setting are the peer group and family. The microsystem is the system of influences in the most immediate proximity to the child, these include institutions such as the family, the school, religion, and groups such as the child's immediate peer group. Thus, the researcher agreed that this is one of the impacts of the migration to family reunification.

Apparently, Lack of Opportunities from the reunified partners also expresses that they also struggle in finding job when they reunified here in Lisbon Portugal;

...Different culture with different cuisine struggles me a lot cause the work that I can do is in the kitchen only. They keep on telling me that they want a chef that knows how to speak Portuguese. Because here you have a huge advantage if you have the skills and you know how to speak their local language. (Respondent 7)

The above narratives show that during the family reunification, job opportunities were also experienced by the family. In fact, according to Valero-Matas et al., (2014), since the global economic crisis in 2007, the economic insecurity and the lack of job opportunities have led to an increase in international migration to countries with

higher income levels resulting in countries from the European Union having received a large number of immigrants.

Moreover, some of the respondents shared that their children experienced emotional breakdown during the family reunification as they do adjustment to the new environment

... I leave my family with a heartbroken heart, thinking that my son will grow without my guidance and care but I know my mom is there to take care with him and I am confident that my son will grow with love and respect. (Respondent 5)

The findings of the study indicate that emotional stake is a significant factor in the family reunification process. The experiences of children during the reunification phase, particularly in adjusting to a new environment and school, highlight the emotional challenges they face. It is common for immigrant children to struggle with adapting to a new culture, language, and social dynamics, which can have a negative impact on their emotional well-being. The emotional stake in family reunification arises from several factors. First, the separation and subsequent reunion can create a sense of uncertainty and unpredictability for children. The process of being separated from their caregivers and then reuniting in a new country introduces significant changes and disruptions in their lives. This disruption can lead to feelings of anxiety, confusion, and even a sense of loss. Moreover, the cultural and social differences between the origin country and the destination country can further exacerbate the emotional stake. Immigrant children may encounter difficulties in understanding and adapting to the new cultural norms, traditions, and expectations. These challenges can create a sense of isolation, frustration, and even discrimination, which can impact their emotional well-being. Thus, the researcher agree that emotional stake is one of the impacts of family reunification to family relationship.

4.1.5 Financial Problem (Emerging Theme #1)

According to Osili & Paulson, (2008). Immigrants face unique barriers to accessing financial institutions and products. First, immigrants whose native countries have weak or corrupt financial institutions may distrust banks. Immigrants from countries with weak financial institutions (those that do not effectively protect private property or offer incentives for investment) are less likely to participate in United States financial markets They argued that immigrants may face language and cultural barriers in accessing financial products. Banks may not have employees who speak the immigrant's native language or who are familiar with

specific cultural customs surrounding finances Osili & Paulson, (2008). One participant express about struggling financial during his application for the Family Reunification. He said;

...When I process the family reunification of my whole family, I encountered a problem because my salary is not enough to get 2 children and a wife. In that time my salary is just the minimum one like around 575 Euro but SEF told me that I need a salary more than 1000 Euro so I can get my 2 children and wife cause my wife is pregnant on our 3rd child in that time. (Respondent 7)

The finding further shows that financial problem is one of the few problems that encountered by Filipino immigrants that process the family reunification. In fact, previous studies demonstrated that loss of economic resources was another stressful event for the immigrants. Koh & Bell (1987) reported that about 1 million immigrants in the United States were living below the poverty level in 1999. Financial problems have been reported to be even more serious among immigrants than in the general population. Minority elderly groups had three times the poverty rate of elderly whites. Koh & Bell (1987) argued that financial difficulties experienced by the immigrant's population as a whole were also problems identified by immigrants. Thus, preparation of financial is a consideration in applying each member of the family to be considered and approved under family reunification. May not all respondents express this problem but it is very important include this as one of the emerging themes.

4.1.6 Lack of knowledge about Family Reunification (Emerging Theme #2)

According to the readers blog times of India, Times, H. (2021), insufficient knowledge refers to the lack of a certain information. For example, those who extensively study science and engineering might generally lack humanities and arts knowledge, those who learn humanities lack natural science knowledge, and most people lack nutrition knowledge and medical knowledge. Thus, knowing the process of Family Reunification in Portugal might be a help to any Filipinos that are processing the family reunification. One of the participants expresses that one of the problems why the family reunification is so slow is because there is no guidance from the government and they are processing it by themselves. Thus, the result of shows that even if only one participant expresses this problem of having a lack of knowledge about Family Reunification process, the researcher considered as one of a challenge in Family Reunification.

Below is the quotation of the respondent talking about lacking of knowledge and information in regards to family reunification;

...Our struggle is the requirements since we don't have any idea on the process of the family reunification and it struggles me a lot but with help of Filipino Community, we were able to understand the process. (Respondent 6)

The literature suggests that being knowledgeable about the process of family reunification plays a vital role in facilitating a smooth and timely reunification. Individuals who possess a thorough understanding of the reunification process are better equipped to navigate the necessary legal requirements, gather the required documentation, communicate effectively with relevant authorities, and submit information in a timely manner. Conversely, a lack of knowledge regarding the process may lead to delays and hinder the achievement of successful reunification.

The findings of this study highlight the challenges faced by reunified Filipino families in adapting to a new country or environment. The analysis revealed several key themes, including Language Barrier, Stereotypes and Discrimination, Cultural differences/Culture Shock, and the impact of migration on family relationships. Additionally, two emerging themes, namely Financial Problem and Lack of Knowledge about the Family Reunification Process, were identified. These themes resonate with Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Framework, which emphasizes the influence of multiple systems on individuals and families. The challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families can be understood within this framework. The Language Barrier and Cultural differences/Culture Shock sub-themes reflect the influence of the sociocultural system, highlighting the impact of language proficiency and cultural adaptation on family well-being. The Stereotypes and Discrimination sub-theme aligns with the macrosystem, illustrating how societal attitudes and prejudices can create obstacles for reunified families. Furthermore, the impact of migration on family relationships connects to the microsystem, underscoring the changes and disruptions within the immediate family unit due to the migration experience. The emerging themes of Financial Problem and Lack of Knowledge about the Family Reunification Process highlight the significance of the exosystem, which encompasses institutions and structures indirectly influencing individuals and families. These factors, such as financial resources and access to information, can shape the experiences and outcomes of reunified Filipino families during the reunification process. By incorporating the Ecological Framework, this study's findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by reunified Filipino families in the context of their new environment. It underscores the importance of considering the multiple systems and levels of influence when developing interventions and support services to address the identified challenges. A holistic approach that addresses

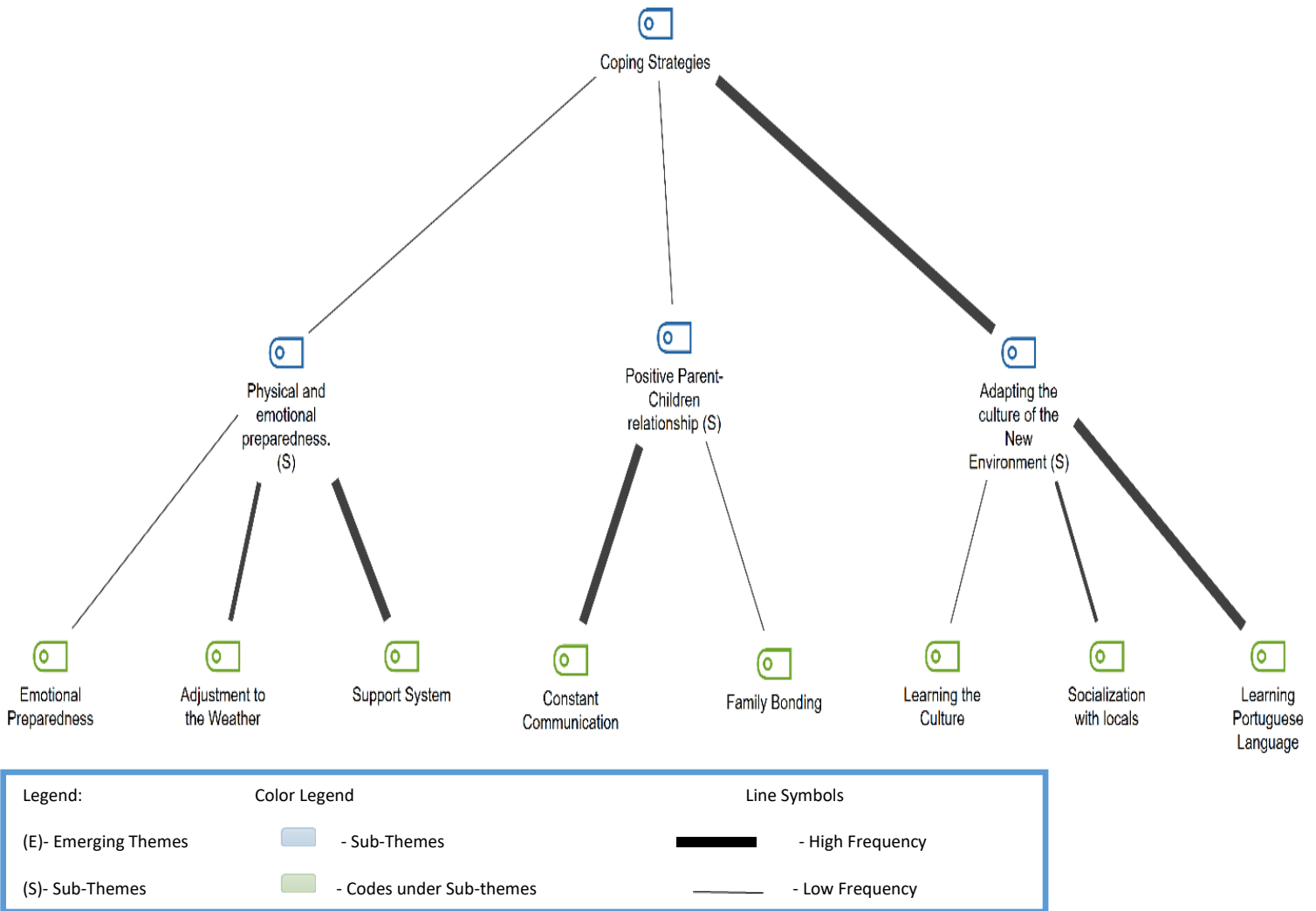
language barriers, cultural adaptation, discrimination, financial support, and knowledge gaps can promote the well-being and successful adaptation of reunified Filipino families in their new country.

4.2 COPING STRATEGIES

Among the themes that emerged from the analysis, this theme presents the coping strategies used by reunified Filipino families in the new country or environment. The study found three (3) Sub-themes: positive parent-children relationship, physical and emotional preparedness, and adapting the culture of the new environment.

Lediana Xhakollari, (2016) argued that coping strategies is the process of using behavioral and cognitive approaches to manage difficult or threatening situations and plays an integral role in maintaining the physical and mental well-being of an individual. Coping strategies or mechanisms include any conscious or unconscious decision which causes relief or consolation in stressful situations. In this section we will see the different coping strategies of separation and reunification studies of immigrants as follows; positive relationship, social support, physical and emotional preparedness. In fact, several identified factors helpful in achieving the family reunification after years of separation and in keeping the reunion of the immigrant families despite acculturative challenges are also mentioned but not highlighted in the previous literature. The results are well connected with the strength perspective that Saleeby, (2008) discussed in the literature review. He emphasizes, that on family strengths brings balance on how family overcome life's challenges. By giving emphasis on the problems families are facing, society tends to ignore the positivity of the positive outcome families went through in any life's adversities. In fact, that the strength perspective was coined by the forerunner to give due recognition to strengths of people. In connection, Filipino immigrants used a different coping strategy to overcome the different challenges that they experienced during the family reunification.

Graph 2 gives a representation of the different coping strategies that were used by the Filipino immigrants during the family reunification



Graph 2: Coping Strategies

4.2.1 Positive Parent-Children relationship

In the aforementioned literature, researchers have examined the concept of resilience, focusing on an individual's ability to bounce back from challenges or difficulties. Within the context of family systems, resilience is explored as a means of understanding how families manage and maintain functioning in the face of adversity (Allison et al., 2003; Lietz, 2006, 2007; Patterson, 2002; Thomas et al., 2005; Walsh, 2002, as cited in Raffaelli & Wiley, 2012).

In Hernandez's study (2013), the author discussed the process of adaptation among children who initially perceive their parents as strangers but eventually come to accept and recognize them over time (Hernandez, 2013). Hernandez supports the notion that when children become accustomed to this type of arrangement, they are more likely to understand that their parents' sacrifices are made for the benefit of the entire family. Assuring children that the separation is temporary can help alleviate the impact on them and assist in their coping process (Suarez-Orozco et al., 2010; Lopez, 2010).

Thus, based on the interviews, respondents shared that along the way their relationship with their children is somehow getting better time to time. They discussed two things; Constant Communication and Family Bonding.

4.2.1.1 Constant Communication

In today's interconnected world, constant communication has become an integral part of our personal and professional lives. With the rapid advancement of technology and the widespread availability of communication tools, individuals, families, and organizations are able to stay connected like never before. Constant communication refers to the practice of maintaining regular and ongoing contact with others, regardless of geographical distance or time constraints. This communication can take various forms, including face-to-face interactions, phone calls, text messages, emails, video conferencing, and social media platforms. The ability to communicate continuously has transformed the way we interact, collaborate, and build relationships. In fact according to Stein, A., Dalton, L., Rapa, E., Bluebond-Langner, M., Hanington, L., Stein, K. F., ... & Yousafzai, A. (2019). Studies have identified benefits of communication for children and adolescents across a range of outcomes, although this is not universal. Hence, constant communication can give an emotional support to the children who are still adjusting to the environment. Most of the participants mentioned that constant communication is very important and very helpful. One of the respondents stated that;

... Constant Communication is very important. What I do is that I always talk to them, we are open to each other like what they don't like about may parenting skills and also, I will tell them what I don't like about their attitudes. (Respondent 2)

4.2.1.2 Family Bonding

Family is the foundation of our lives, providing us with love, support, and a sense of belonging. Within the family unit, one of the key elements that contribute to its strength and harmony is family bonding. Family

bonding refers to the emotional connection, shared experiences, and quality time spent together that strengthens the relationships among family members. It encompasses activities such as engaging in conversations, participating in recreational pursuits, celebrating milestones, and offering support during challenging times. The significance of family bonding extends beyond creating pleasant memories; it plays a crucial role in promoting individual well-being, fostering positive communication, and cultivating a sense of security and identity within each family member. In this introduction, we will explore the importance of family bonding and its profound impact on the overall health and happiness of individuals and the family unit as a whole. In fact, in the Attachment Theory of Bowlby, (1969), he said that attachment behavior in adults towards the child includes responding sensitively and appropriately to the child's needs. It was supported by McLeod, S. (2009) that such behavior appears universal across cultures. Attachment theory provides an explanation of how the parent-child relationship emerges and influences subsequent development. Apparently, most of the respondents mentioned about Family Bonding. One of the respondents mentioned that;

... We always make sure that we have a quality time together. We eat outside, we traveled and we even do cinema every Saturday so we can have a family bonding together. (Respondent 6)

The findings suggest that constant communication and family bonding serve as important coping strategies used by parents during the process of family reunification. The researcher concludes that the explanation of how and why these strategies are effective: (1) Constant communication refers to maintaining regular and ongoing contact with family members, especially during the family reunification process. This form of communication allows parents and children to stay connected, share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, and provide support to one another. By engaging in constant communication, parents can reassure their children, address any concerns or anxieties they may have, and keep them updated on the progress of the reunification process. This open and continuous flow of communication helps to strengthen the parent-child relationship, build trust, and create a sense of security for the children, making them feel valued and cared for.

(2) Family bonding involves engaging in activities and experiences that promote a sense of togetherness and strengthen the emotional connection among family members. During the family reunification process, engaging in family bonding activities can help parents and children establish and nurture their relationships. Participating in shared activities, such as family outings, meals, or recreational pursuits, allows parents and children to spend quality time together, create positive memories, and develop a sense of belonging. These bonding experiences foster a sense of unity, love, and support within the family, making the children feel more comfortable and secure in their new family environment.

4.2.2 Physical and emotional preparedness

According to Lopez (2010), parents must know the difficulty it may bring to children in the reunification when they are being separated from the care giver so that these immigrant parents can be sensitive to the difficulty. By remaining physically and emotionally available, it can help the reunification adjustment. When children know that their parents are present, feelings of abandonment can be waned. Thus, physical, and emotional preparedness is one of a way in helping the children in adjusting to the new environment. Most of the parents use these as a coping strategy in managing the challenges of their children in adjusting to the attachment and relationship as a family.

Thus, based on the interviews, respondents express physical and emotional preparedness are very helpful in making sure that their children are somehow prepared during the family reunification process. They discussed three things: emotional preparedness, adjustment to the weather and support system. Below are some of the responses of the respondents;

4.2.2.1 Emotional preparedness

According to the World Health Organization, emotional preparedness refers to the proactive cultivation and development of emotional resilience, awareness, and coping skills to effectively navigate and respond to various life challenges and stressors. The researcher agreed that in an ever-changing and unpredictable world, being emotionally prepared plays a crucial role in promoting mental well-being, adaptability, and personal growth. This concept encompasses understanding and managing one's own emotions, developing healthy coping mechanisms, and building a strong support system. Emotional preparedness equips individuals with the tools and mindset necessary to face adversity, maintain psychological balance, and thrive in the face of uncertainty. In this introduction, we will explore the importance of emotional preparedness, its components, and its impact on individual resilience and overall mental health. Study shows that emotional preparedness is somehow helps the immigrants to at least adjust on their living in the new environment. One of the respondents mentioned that;

... I prepare them emotionally because I know that they will experience separation anxiety from their friends and love ones in the Philippines. (Respondent 8)

4.2.2.2 Weather Adjustment

Weather adjustment refers to the process of adapting and acclimating to changes in weather conditions, particularly when transitioning from one climate or season to another. Weather patterns can vary significantly, posing challenges and opportunities for individuals, communities, and ecosystems. Successful weather adjustment involves the ability to cope with and effectively respond to shifts in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other meteorological factors. This process encompasses both physical and psychological adaptations, as individuals and communities must adjust their clothing, activities, infrastructure, and lifestyles to accommodate the new weather conditions. In this theme, the researcher found out that the importance of weather adjustment, its impact on various aspects of life, and strategies for successfully navigating and adapting to changing weather pattern. In fact, Agyeman (2004) found that most social integration challenges identified were culture shock, weather and food adjustment but adjusting to the weather used as one of the coping strategies during the family reunification, thus one of the respondents says;

... In terms of the weather, it is so hard for her most especially during winter. She always hates the cold weather because in the Philippines we are a tropical county. But she always makes sure to wear a winter clothes so she can be warmed. (Respondent 1)

4.2.2.3 Support system

Support system plays a crucial role in the process of family reunification, providing essential assistance and resources to reunified families as they navigate the challenges of reestablishing their lives together. Family reunification involves the reunion of separated family members, often due to migration or other circumstances, and it can bring about a range of emotional, practical, and social adjustments. The support system, consisting of both formal and informal networks, serves as a vital source of guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance to help families successfully navigate the complexities of the reunification process. This introduction explores the importance of a robust support system in facilitating the smooth transition and integration of reunified families, highlighting the benefits and components of an effective support network. By examining the role of support in family reunification, we can gain a deeper understanding of the significance of a strong support system in promoting the well-being and successful reunification of families. It was supported by Fonseca, M. L., & Ormond, M. (2008), that family is widely accepted as a basic unit of cultural, social and economic production and reproduction which plays a fundamental role in the successful integration of its members, and functions as a support network for them. Thus, one of the respondents says;

...Preparation is my highly priority during the reunification process. When I decided to get my eldest son, I asked a lot of information from the Filipino Community especially to those family whom successfully get their children. (Respondent 3)

The above finding reflects that Physical and emotional preparedness are one of the coping strategies that were used during the family reunification. Physical and emotional preparedness play a crucial role in coping during the family reunification process. For children, the transition to a new country can be accompanied by anxiety, homesickness, and a longing for their caregiver in the Philippines. Emotional preparedness involves equipping children with coping mechanisms to manage these emotions effectively. This may include providing emotional support, reassurance, and creating a sense of security by maintaining constant communication with their caregiver back in the Philippines. Physical preparedness, on the other hand, involves adapting to the practical aspects of the new environment. Weather adjustment, in particular, becomes significant when the origin country, such as the Philippines, is a tropical country. The change in climate upon arriving in a different country, like Portugal, requires individuals to prepare and adjust their clothing, daily routines, and activities accordingly. By being physically prepared for the weather conditions, individuals can mitigate discomfort and potential health issues, allowing for a smoother transition and adaptation to the new environment. Having a support system from both the immediate family and the Filipino community significantly contributes to coping during family reunification. The reunified family can rely on their direct family members for emotional support, practical guidance, and assistance in navigating the challenges they encounter. This support provides a sense of belonging, strengthens relationships, and helps individuals feel understood and cared for during the reunification process. The Filipino community, particularly in a foreign country like Portugal, plays a vital role in providing a support network. Being surrounded by individuals who share a similar cultural background and experiences can help ease the feelings of isolation and provide a sense of community. The community can offer guidance, advice, and resources specific to the challenges of family reunification, creating a supportive environment where individuals can seek assistance and share their experiences. Overall, physical and emotional preparedness, weather adjustment, and support systems contribute to coping during family reunification by addressing the practical, emotional, and social aspects of the process. These coping strategies help individuals adapt to the new environment, manage their emotions, and establish a sense of stability and support, ultimately facilitating a smoother transition and successful reunification.

4.2.3 Adapting the culture of the New Environment

Chen, M. (2019), discussed that cross-cultural adjustment problems caused by differences in life and social culture also influence an expatriate's environmental stress. With an increasing number of expatriates, expatriation expenses are rather high for an enterprise and individuals. Kim, Y. Y. (2017). Added that underpinning the cross-cultural adaptation process are the two interrelated experiences of deculturation of some of the original cultural habits, on the one hand, and acculturation of new ones, on the other. The cumulative outcome of the acculturation and deculturation experiences is an internal transformation in the direction of assimilation into the mainstream culture.

Moreover, adapting the new culture is one of the themes that explored during the analysis. All the respondents express different style on how they adapt to the new environment to fit in. Thus, all of them mentioned the following; Learning the culture, socialization with locals and learning the Portuguese language.

4.2.3.1 Learning the culture

Learning the culture of a new country is a crucial aspect of the immigration and family reunification process. As individuals and families move to a different cultural context, understanding and assimilating into the local culture become essential for their integration and successful adaptation. Learning the culture involves acquiring knowledge about the customs, traditions, social norms, and values prevalent in the host country. The process of learning the culture during family reunification holds significant importance for immigrants, particularly in promoting a sense of belonging and facilitating positive interactions within the community. By immersing themselves in the local culture, immigrants can effectively navigate daily life, establish relationships, and participate in various aspects of society. In fact, according to Berry (2005), that the process of interculturality may lead to acculturative stress. He argues that learning a new language and culture may be stressful and impact immigrant youths 'sense of self-worth and their adjustment process. In addition, reconciling the norms and values of the new and old culture may be difficult for one's adjustment but it is helpful to adjust and adopt the new environment Lazarus, (2008). Thus, one of the respondents says;

... In terms of the culture, my 2 daughters are very open and tried their best to adopt and accept the new culture by respecting it and even following it. (Respondent 8)

4.2.3.2 Socialization with locals

Socialization with locals plays a pivotal role in the adjustment process for families undergoing reunification. When families are reunited after a period of separation, particularly in a new cultural and social environment, the ability to establish connections and engage with the local community becomes crucial for successful integration. Socialization serves as a bridge between the reunified family and the broader society, enabling them to build meaningful relationships, gain cultural understanding, and navigate the challenges of adapting to a new environment. This theme explores the significance of socialization with locals in facilitating the adjustment and integration of reunified families, highlighting the benefits and outcomes of engaging with the local community. By understanding the importance of socialization in family reunification, we can appreciate its role in fostering a sense of belonging, promoting cultural exchange, and facilitating the overall well-being and successful adjustment of reunified families. Thus, Račius *et al.* (2013) mentioned that it is very important that immigrants from different cultures learn about the culture by socializing with the locals and understand the peculiarities of different cultures. Thus, one of the respondents says;

... He even asked his Portuguese classmates to help him to learn the language by helping him to pronounce the words correctly. He now embracing the culture from being conservative to respecting others especially the culture itself. (Respondent 3)

4.2.3.3 Learning the Portuguese language

Learning the local language plays a vital role in the process of family reunification, enabling effective communication, cultural integration, and overall adjustment in the new environment. When families are reunited in a foreign country or community, language barriers can present significant challenges to their ability to navigate daily life, access resources, and establish meaningful connections. By actively engaging in language learning, reunified families enhance their communication skills, bridge cultural gaps, and facilitate their integration into the local community. This theme highlights the importance of learning the local language in the context of family reunification, emphasizing the benefits and outcomes associated with language acquisition. By recognizing the significance of language proficiency in family reunification, we can better understand its role in facilitating social interaction, promoting cultural understanding, and ultimately supporting the successful adaptation and well-being of reunified families. In fact Dovchin, (2019) stated in his research that, immigrants may experience a vast number of challenging situations at some point during their pre/post settlement, such as cultural and linguistic shock, trying to fit into a new environment including schools

and workplaces, learning new or different languages, unemployment or survival jobs, lack of access to academic/health opportunities, homesickness, separation, loneliness, and other discrimination-based exclusions in the various contexts of the host society . Nevertheless, to overcome this, all of the participants overcome these challenges by learning the local language as their coping strategies; Here are the some responses from the interviews.

... When they arrived here, I enrolled my both daughters in University of Lisbon – Language Class for 3 months so they can learn the language and so they can talk with their Classmates. (Respondent 6)

...At first, I enrolled him in the Portuguese School but after 1 week he told me he doesn't want to go to school anymore because he doesn't understand his teachers and classmates, the food is different and the culture is so different (Respondent 10)

The above findings show 3 things; (1) Learning the culture of the new country becomes a priority for Filipino immigrants during family reunification as they integrate and adapt to the local culture. Culture assimilation is a coping strategy whereby immigrants absorb the dominant culture of the society they are now a part of. By learning the local customs, traditions, social norms, and values, Filipino immigrants can better navigate their daily lives, interact with locals, and build relationships within the community. Understanding and respecting the local culture fosters a sense of belonging, reduces cultural misunderstandings, and facilitates integration into the new society. (2) Socializing with locals is an essential aspect of coping during family reunification. Both parents and children engage in social activities and interact with people from the local community to facilitate their adjustment and adaptation. By actively participating in community events, joining local clubs or organizations, and establishing connections with neighbors and colleagues, Filipino immigrants can create a support network, expand their social circle, and develop friendships. Socializing with locals helps in building relationships, acquiring social support, and gaining a deeper understanding of the local customs and way of life, further enhancing the process of integration and belonging. (3) Communication barriers often pose a significant challenge for immigrants during family reunification. Learning the local language, in this case, Portuguese, is considered a coping strategy used by immigrants to overcome this obstacle. By acquiring proficiency in the local language, Filipino immigrants can effectively communicate with locals, access essential services, seek employment opportunities, and actively participate in various aspects of daily life. Learning the local language facilitates meaningful interactions, reduces feelings of isolation, and promotes integration within the community. It also demonstrates respect for the host culture and fosters a sense of empowerment and independence.

In summary, the study found out that learning the culture, socializing with locals, and learning the local language are important coping strategies employed by Filipino immigrants during family reunification. These strategies facilitate integration, enhance social connections, and overcome communication barriers. By actively engaging with the new environment, immigrants can navigate the challenges of reunification more effectively, foster a sense of belonging, and create a foundation for a successful transition to their new home.

4.2.4 Results through the lens of the theoretical framework

The findings of this study shed light on the coping strategies employed by reunified Filipino families in adapting to a new country or environment. The analysis revealed three significant sub-themes: positive parent-children relationship, physical and emotional preparedness, and adapting to the culture of the new environment. These themes align with the Strength Perspective Theory, which emphasizes the identification and utilization of individual and family strengths to promote well-being. The positive parent-children relationship sub-theme reflects the inherent strength within the family unit, highlighting the importance of supportive and nurturing interactions in navigating the challenges of reunification. The physical and emotional preparedness sub-theme resonates with the concept of family strengths, emphasizing the resilience and adaptability of reunified Filipino families. By proactively preparing themselves physically and emotionally, families can better cope with the demands and transitions associated with the new environment.

The sub-theme of adapting to the culture of the new environment connects to both the Strength Perspective Theory and the Ecological Systems Theory. It emphasizes the role of community strengths and the broader sociocultural context. Reunified Filipino families draw upon their existing cultural resources and community support to navigate and assimilate into the new culture successfully. This aligns with the Strength Perspective Theory's focus on leveraging external resources and supports. Furthermore, the Ecological Systems Theory provides a framework to understand the interplay between reunified families and their environments. The coping strategies identified in this study reflect the interactions between the microsystem (family unit), mesosystem (interactions between family and community), and macrosystem (cultural context). The positive parent-children relationship, physical and emotional preparedness, and adapting to the new culture demonstrate how strengths at these different ecological levels contribute to successful adaptation.

Overall, the findings of this study underscore the importance of recognizing and leveraging the strengths within reunified Filipino families. By building on positive parent-child relationships, preparing

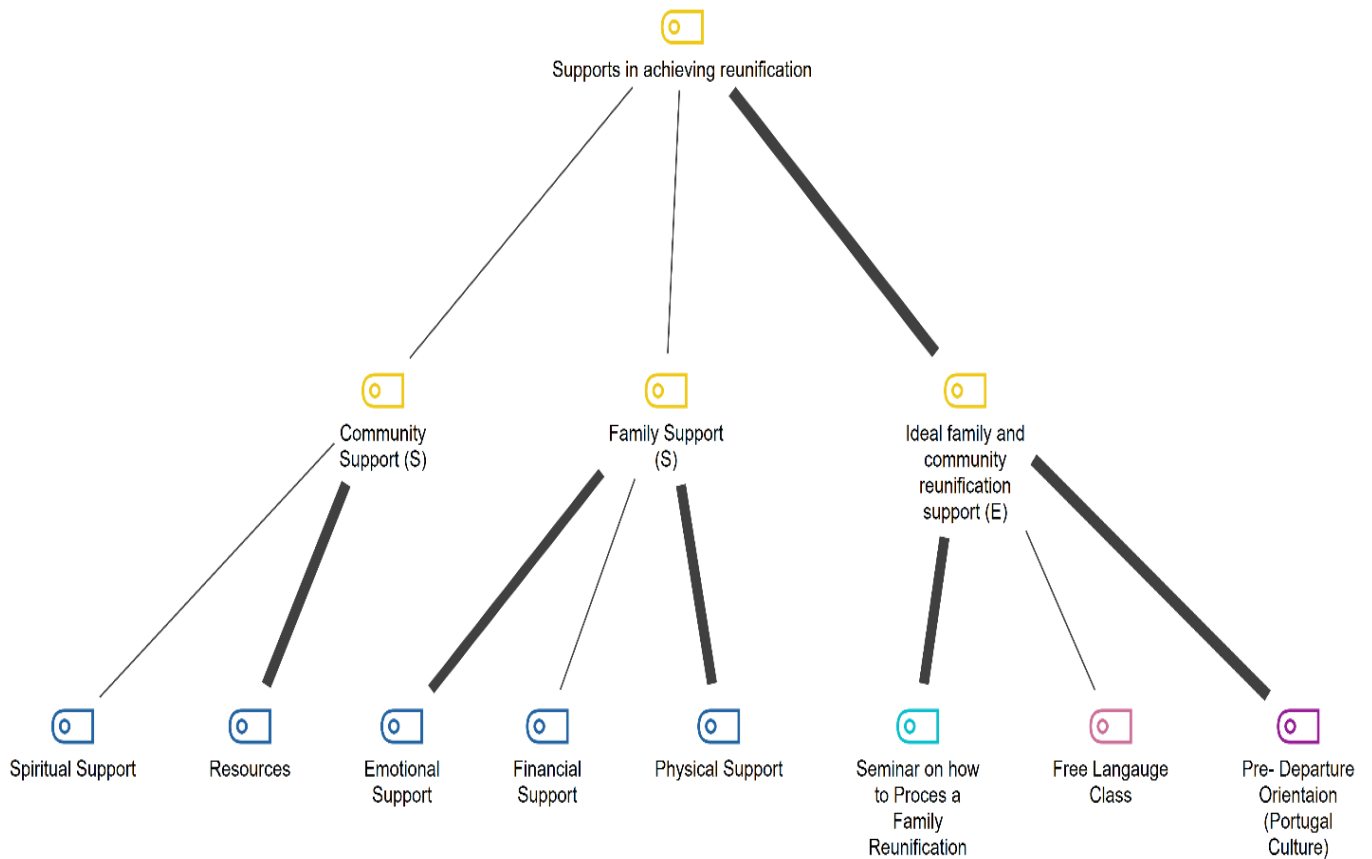
physically and emotionally, and adapting to the new culture, families can effectively cope with the challenges of reunification. The Strength Perspective Theory, Family Strength, Community Strength, and Ecological Systems Theory provide valuable frameworks for understanding and promoting the well-being of reunified Filipino families in their new country or environment.

4.3 The contribution of family and the community in achieving reunification

Over the past three decades, researchers have studied families from a strengths-based perspective. The emphasis on family strengths brings balance on how family overcome life's challenges. By giving emphasis on the problems families are facing, society tends to ignore the positivity of the positive outcome families went through in any life's adversities. The strength perspective was coined by the forerunner to give due recognition to strengths of people. In addition, DeFrain & Asay (2007) states that strong families contribute to the well-being of communities, and strong communities enhance the development of strong families. Community strengths are characterized as follows; 1.) A supportive environment that genuinely values families, and a general willingness and natural generosity infused in the culture to help when families are in need 2.) An effective educational delivery system 3.) Religious communities for families seeking this kind of support 4.) Family-service programs developed by government and nongovernmental organizations for families who cannot find the help they need from their own extended family, friends and neighbors and 5.) A safe, secure and healthful environment. DeFrain & Asay (2007).

In this analysis, the researcher found out that family and community have a big impact on success of the family reunification. Among the themes that emerged from the analysis, this theme presents the contribution of family and the community in achieving reunification. The study found two (2) Sub-themes: family support and community support and one (1) emerging theme: Ideal Family and Community Reunification Support.

Graph 3 gives a representation of the different supports in achieving family reunification



Legend:	Color Legend	Line Symbols
(E)- Emerging Themes	 - Sub-Themes and E-Themes	 - High Frequency
(S)- Sub-Themes	 - Codes under Sub-themes and E-Themes	 - Low Frequency

Graph 3 : Supports in Achieving Family Reunifications

4.3.1 Family Support

According to Raffaelli & Wiley, (2012) that in contrast to a focus on risks and deficits, the family support and strength seeks to uncover and mobilize the protective factors, assets, and capabilities a family possesses to improve functioning. Individual's ability to rebound from difficulty or challenges has been studied as factors of resilience and the notion of resilience is explored in a context of family system by way of

understanding their ways of managing challenges and/or difficulties and maintain functioning. Hence results shows that family support has a huge impact in achieving reunification. It shows that there are two support that came from the family; emotional support, physical support and financial Support.

4.3.1.1 Emotional Support

Emotional support plays a crucial role in the process of family reunification, providing comfort, understanding, and stability to individuals and families navigating the challenges of reuniting after a period of separation. The experience of family reunification can evoke a range of emotions, including excitement, anxiety, and adjustment difficulties, as families work to rebuild their relationships and adapt to new circumstances. Emotional support, both within the family and from external sources such as friends, community members, or professional networks, plays a critical role in helping individuals and families cope with these emotional challenges and foster a sense of well-being. This theme explores the significance of emotional support in the context of family reunification, highlighting its impact on the psychological well-being, relationship dynamics, and overall adjustment of reunified families. By recognizing the importance of emotional support, we can better understand the role it plays in facilitating the successful reunification and long-term well-being of families as they embark on their journey of rebuilding and strengthening their relationships. Thus, (Williams et.al 1985 in Trivette; Dunst, Deal, Hamer, & Propst, 1990, p.17 all in VanBreda, 2001) argued that families strengths are those relationship patterns, interpersonal skill and competencies, social and emotional support that characteristics which create a sense of positive family identity and strong bond by supporting each other and making sure that the family extend the emotional support and to promote satisfying and fulfilling interaction among family members, encourage the development of the potential of the family group and individual family members, and contribute to the family's ability to deal effectively with stress and crisis. In fact, most of the respondents received an emotional support from their family member and to the community also. Below are some of the responses based on the interview;

*... My son was so eager to learn so he followed my instructions. I asked my parents to remind my son that we are doing this for him, for his future. Emotional Support is something that is very important during that day.
(Respondent 3)*

... My parents are so supportive to me, especially my mom, she always gives me strength by always encouraging me that I can do it. That they are always there for me that they will support me. Emotional support is enough for me. (Respondent 4)

4.3.1.2 Physical Support

Physical support plays a vital role in the process of family reunification, providing practical assistance and resources that contribute to the well-being and successful adjustment of reunited families. When families come together after a period of separation, they often face various challenges related to establishing a new household, managing daily responsibilities, and adapting to a different environment. Physical support, in the form of helping in processing the different documents for family reunification and other tangible resources, helps alleviate the immediate burdens and provides a foundation for stability and progress. This theme explores the significance of physical support in the context of family reunification, highlighting its impact on the practical aspects of rebuilding and establishing a new life together. By recognizing the importance of physical support, we can better understand its role in facilitating the smooth transition, reducing stress, and creating a supportive environment for reunified families to thrive. This statement was supported by the research of VanBreda, (2001), he said that these are forces and dynamic factors in the relationship which encourage the development of the personal resources and potential of members of the family and which make family life deeply satisfying and fulfilling to family members by helping the family member through physical support. Thus, some of the respondents shared during the interview that their family are full support with them during the family reunification. Below are some of the responses based on the interview;

... The support that I get from my immediate family before, during and after reunification is through physical support and even on processing the papers/documents of my daughter way back in the Philippines. (Respondent 7)

... Mostly I process all the documents here in Portugal that I need to submit in SEF. In the Philippines my mom and my dad help me to process the documents of my 2 daughters. (Respondent 4)

4.3.1.3 Financial Support

Financial support plays a crucial role in the process of family reunification, providing the necessary resources and stability for successful reunification and integration into a new country. When families reunite after a period of separation, they often encounter various financial challenges, including the costs associated with visa applications, travel expenses, legal procedures, and establishing a new household. This theme explores the significance of financial support in the context of family reunification, highlighting its impact on alleviating financial burdens, facilitating necessary procedures, and ensuring a smooth transition for reunified families. By recognizing the importance of financial support, we can better understand its role in enabling families to navigate the complexities of the reunification process and build a secure foundation for their future together. Thus, the researcher found out that some of the respondents get some financial support from their families when they started the family reunification. One of the response from the interview said that ;

... When I informed my family that I will process family reunification, my mom and my dad offer a financial help for us since they working abroad too. (Respondent 7)

The three types of support mentioned, namely emotional support, financial support, and physical support, play essential roles in facilitating the reunification process for Filipino immigrants. (1) Emotional support is crucial as it provides encouragement and motivation for individuals to navigate the challenges that arise before, during, and after the reunification process. Reuniting with family members in a new country can be emotionally overwhelming, and having a supportive network of immediate family members who understand and empathize with the struggles can provide the necessary emotional strength to persevere. (2) Financial support is also instrumental in achieving family reunification. The process often requires various documentation, fees, and expenses, such as visa applications, travel costs, and legal procedures. Having the financial means to cover these expenses significantly reduces barriers and facilitates the reunification process. The support from immediate family members in providing financial assistance enables the immigrant family to navigate the bureaucratic requirements and fulfill the necessary obligations for reunification. (3) Furthermore, physical support from immediate family members in the home country is vital for a smooth reunification process. This support can involve assisting with gathering and submitting required documents, liaising with relevant authorities, and handling logistical arrangements. The physical presence and assistance of immediate family members in the home country alleviate the burden on the immigrating family, streamlining the process and ensuring that all necessary steps are completed accurately and efficiently.

Overall, emotional, financial, and physical support from immediate family members significantly contribute to the achievement of family reunification for Filipino immigrants. These forms of support help alleviate emotional challenges, overcome financial barriers, and provide practical assistance throughout the reunification process, ultimately fostering a smoother and more successful transition for the immigrant family.

4.3.2 Community Support

DeFrain & Asay (2007) states that strong families contribute to the well-being of communities, and strong communities enhance the development of strong families. Community strengths are characterized as follows; 1.) A supportive environment that genuinely values families, and a general willingness and natural generosity infused in the culture to help when families are in need 2.) An effective educational delivery system 3.) Religious communities for families seeking this kind of support 4.) Family-service programs developed by government and nongovernmental organizations for families who cannot find the help they need from their own extended family, friends and neighbors and 5.) A safe, secure and healthful environment. During the interview Filipino Immigrants expresses that they received a different community support such as spiritual support and resources to use during the family reunification. Thus, the data shows base on the response of the respondents they get; spiritual support and community resources from the community. Below it will elaborate more.

4.3.2.1 Spiritual Support

Spiritual support is a vital aspect of the family reunification process, offering a unique source of strength, comfort, and guidance to individuals and families navigating the challenges of being separated and eventually reunited. While family reunification primarily involves practical, logistical, and emotional considerations, the role of spiritual support should not be overlooked. This theme explores the significance of spiritual support in the context of family reunification, highlighting how it can provide solace, foster resilience, and contribute to the overall well-being of reunified families. By acknowledging the importance of spiritual support, we can better understand its potential to enhance the reunification experience, promote inner healing, and support the holistic development of individuals and their relationships within the family unit. In fact, DeFrain and Asay (2007), mentioned in their research that a sense of spiritual well-being within the family refers to the recognition and cultivation of spiritual values, beliefs, and practices that contribute to the overall strength and cohesion of the family unit. It encompasses the shared understanding and expression of spirituality

among family members, which may include religious beliefs, rituals, moral values, and a connection to something greater than oneself.

In the context of family strength perspective, spiritual well-being plays a significant role in fostering resilience, promoting harmony, and providing a sense of purpose and meaning to family life. It goes beyond the individual level and recognizes the collective spiritual experiences and expressions within the family system. Thus, based on the finding most of the respondents expresses that they found home at church and strengthen their spiritual well-being and they consider this as their coping strategies to cope up with the new environment. One of the responses from the interview said that;

... Spiritual Support from our Christian Community both Philippines and here in Portugal. From Filipino-Portuguese Community, I received some guidance on to how I can process the family reunification. (R5, 34)

4.3.2.2 Community Resources

Community resources play a crucial role in supporting families during the process of reunification. When families are going through the complex and often challenging experience of reuniting after a period of separation, having access to community resources can greatly facilitate their transition and adjustment. These resources encompass a wide range of support services, information, and networks that are available within the local community. They serve as a valuable source of assistance, guidance, and practical help for families navigating the family reunification. In fact, DeFrain & Asay (2007) state that the availability of community resources offers families a safety net during their reunification journey. It ensures that they have access to the necessary tools and information to overcome obstacles and make informed decisions. Additionally, community resources provide a sense of belonging and connection, as families can connect with others who have gone through similar experiences or seek guidance from professionals who specialize in supporting reunifying families. Based on the results, some of the respondents acquired and got some resources from the community that helps them to process the family reunification. One of the responses from the interview said that;

... We are so active in the Church and we are also with other Filipinos here in Portugal, I had this friend in church whom she gets her son a year ago during that time through family reunification. I asked her what did they do in preparing their children. She told me that there is this app called “Dua Lingo” where my children

can practice their basic Portuguese language. She gives me some resources that helps me a lot during my application for family reunification. (Respondent 6)

The finding shows that community support plays a crucial role in facilitating the adjustment and sense of belonging for Filipino immigrants during the family reunification process. The findings highlight the significance of two key aspects of community support: spiritual support and community resources. Spiritual support provided by the community offers a sense of connection and belonging for Filipino immigrants. It allows them to connect with others who share similar beliefs and religious practices, creating a support network that understands and values their spiritual identity. Through spiritual gatherings, religious services, or participation in community events, immigrants can find solace, guidance, and a sense of community as they navigate the challenges of family reunification. Furthermore, the community serves as a valuable resource for Filipino immigrants by providing information and guidance on the process of family reunification. Immigrants can draw upon the experiences and knowledge of others who have undergone similar journeys, gaining insights into the legal procedures, documentation requirements, and potential challenges they may encounter. By sharing resources and information, the community helps to demystify the family reunification process and empowers immigrants to navigate it more effectively. The community's role in providing spiritual support and resources during family reunification is essential for several reasons. Firstly, it addresses the immigrants' need for connection and a sense of belonging in the new environment. Moving to a different country can be isolating, and having a community that shares their cultural and spiritual background helps immigrants feel understood and supported. Secondly, spiritual support fosters a sense of identity and continuity amidst the changes and uncertainties of family reunification. It allows immigrants to maintain and express their cultural and spiritual traditions, reinforcing their sense of self and strengthening family bonds. Lastly, community resources offer practical assistance and guidance, enabling immigrants to navigate the complex process of family reunification with greater confidence and knowledge. By accessing the experiences and expertise of the community, immigrants can make informed decisions, access relevant services, and overcome potential hurdles more effectively. Overall, community support, including spiritual support and resources, plays a vital role in assisting Filipino immigrants during family reunification. It provides them with a sense of belonging, a platform for cultural and spiritual expression, and valuable knowledge and guidance. By connecting with their community, immigrants can find the support they need to navigate the challenges of family reunification and establish a sense of stability and well-being in their new environment

4.3.3 Ideal Family and Community Reunification Support (Emerging Theme)

Aside from the sub-theme that was found during the analysis, only 1 important emerging theme under the reunification support arise based on the answers of the respondents. Thus, there are 3 suggested support that needs by the Filipino Immigrants who will process the Family Reunification: Pre-Departure Orientation (About the Culture), Seminar about Family Reunification and Free Portuguese Language Class. Respondents believed that these supports were lacking during their time when they process the family reunification. The researcher believed that this is very important to discuss. In fact , DeFrain & Asay (2007) states that strong families contribute to the well-being of communities, and strong communities enhance the development of strong families. Community strengths were used in this, he added that family-service programs developed by government and nongovernmental organizations for families who cannot find the help they need from their own extended family, friends and neighbors can be helpful.

Most of the respondents believed that Pre-Departure Orientation about the Culture of Portugal is very important for them to be able to at least prepare themselves in the new environment. Below are some of the quotations of the respondents;

4.3.3.1 Pre-Departure Orientation

Pre-departure orientation programs play a crucial role in providing essential information and guidance to individuals and families who are embarking on the journey of family reunification in a new environment. These programs specifically focus on familiarizing immigrants with the culture of their destination country, equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to navigate the challenges they may encounter during the reunification process. The importance of pre-departure orientation about the culture of the new environment cannot be overstated, as it serves as a vital support system for families undergoing the transition of family reunification. This theme explores the significance of pre-departure orientation in facilitating a smoother and more successful family reunification process.

f... Both Philippine Government and Portugal Government should have this orientation like a pre-orientation seminar also what is Portugal, what should we or our children expect. Also, in processing the documents, I hope that the government should make it easy to process as well. (Respondent 5)

4.3.3.2 Seminar about Family Reunification

The process of family reunification can be complex and challenging for immigrants seeking to bring their families together in a new country. Recognizing the need for guidance and support during this crucial phase, seminars about family reunification have emerged as valuable resources for immigrants navigating the intricacies of the reunification process. These seminars provide a structured platform for immigrants to gain in-depth knowledge about the legal, logistical, and emotional aspects of family reunification, ensuring that they are well-prepared to embark on this significant journey. This theme delves into the importance of seminars about family reunification, highlighting how they address the specific needs and concerns of immigrants and facilitate a smoother and more informed reunification process.

Finding shows that most of the respondents also suggested to conduct a seminar about family reunification process, as the researcher found out that most of the family who undergo family reunification don't have any idea on to how to process the Family Reunification in Portugal.

... I believed that the ideal family and community reunification support for reunification is somehow people like us who is processing a family reunification needs a guidance on to how to process it. (Respondent 5)

... If I get back to the day that we started to process the family reunification, I will make sure to understand well the process and make sure that we are prepared to all the documents that we had. Because lacking of documents are the reason why our eldest child won't able to come here. So that's the thing that I want to face and change. (Respondent 6)

4.3.3.3 Free Portuguese Language Class

Language plays a vital role in the successful integration and adaptation of immigrants into their new host country. When it comes to family reunification, acquiring proficiency in the local language becomes even more crucial for effective communication and social interaction. Recognizing the significance of language in facilitating the reunification process, governments have taken a proactive approach by offering free language classes to immigrants, including the specific provision of Free Portuguese Language Classes. This theme explores the importance of Free Portuguese Language Classes for immigrants seeking family reunification, highlighting how these classes empower individuals with the linguistic skills necessary to navigate their new environment, engage with the local community, and foster a sense of belonging. By investing in language

education, governments enable immigrants to overcome communication barriers, enhance their social integration, and ultimately contribute positively to their new society. Moreover, the researcher found out that most of the respondents wanted to have a free language class as this is important to start living in the new environment. To support this finding, below are some of the responses of the respondents stating that they wanted the government to provide a free language class to all immigrants especially to those who will process Family Reunification.

... Maybe the Portugal Government can give us Language Class and Portugal Culture class to all immigrants. (Respondent 6)

... Free Language Class for immigrants also is very helpful because it is so expensive to enroll a language class. (Respondent 8)

4.3.4 Results through the lens of the theoretical framework

The finding suggests that there are several ideal family and community reunification supports that can greatly benefit individuals and families undergoing the process of reunification. These supports are designed to provide guidance, knowledge, and resources to ensure a smoother and more successful transition into the new environment. Firstly, a pre-departure orientation about the culture of the destination country is an essential support for families preparing for reunification. This orientation equips individuals with valuable information about the customs, traditions, and social norms of the new culture they will be entering. By understanding and familiarizing themselves with the cultural aspects of the destination country, families can better navigate social interactions, adapt to the local environment, and minimize potential culture shock or misunderstandings. Secondly, seminars specifically focused on family reunification can be immensely beneficial. These seminars can provide comprehensive information about the process, requirements, and legal aspects of family reunification. They can address common challenges and provide practical guidance on how to overcome them. Such seminars can also serve as platforms for sharing experiences and stories, allowing families to connect with others going through similar journeys and build a support network. Lastly, offering free Portuguese language classes or language support services is another important form of support. Language barrier is often a significant challenge for individuals and families during reunification. Providing language classes or resources can help facilitate effective communication, integration, and social interaction within the new community. Learning the local language not only enables individuals to navigate their daily lives more easily but also enhances their sense of belonging and integration into the local culture. These ideal family and community reunification supports are crucial because they address key aspects of the reunification process.

They empower individuals and families with knowledge, skills, and resources needed to adapt and thrive in their new environment. By providing pre-departure cultural orientation, reunification seminars, and language support, communities and organizations can actively contribute to the successful integration and well-being of reunifying families. Overall, these supports aim to minimize potential challenges, enhance cultural understanding, and promote a smoother transition for individuals and families during the reunification process. By implementing these ideal family and community reunification supports, stakeholders can play a significant role in facilitating a positive and supportive environment for families as they embark on their reunification journey.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to explore the strengths and challenges experienced by reunified Filipino families with children during the separation and family reunification process in Lisbon, Portugal. The general objectives were to understand the lived experiences of Filipino parent immigrants and their children and to examine the strengths and challenges faced by parents during both the separation and reunification phases. Specifically, the study sought to identify the factors that contributed to successful reunification after years of separation, as perceived by both the reunified children and their parents in Lisbon, Portugal. It also aimed to gain insights into how these experiences interplayed with the challenges of interculturality, highlighting the complexities of reunification. Furthermore, the study aimed to identify coping strategies that were essential in facilitating and maintaining the family reunion. By understanding these coping strategies, professionals and policymakers can provide appropriate support and resources to assist families in their reunification journey. By achieving these objectives, the study contributes to the understanding of the reunification process for Filipino families and provides valuable insights into the strengths, challenges, and coping mechanisms employed by parents and children during this journey. The findings of this study shed light on the challenges, coping strategies, and ideal support for family reunification experienced by the Reunified Filipino Family in Lisbon, Portugal. Through semi-structured interviews, the research identified various challenges faced by the families, including language barriers, stereotypes and discrimination, cross-cultural adjustment, the impact of migration on family relationships, financial problems, and a lack of knowledge about the family reunification process. To cope with these challenges, the reunified Filipino families employed positive parent-child relationships, physical and emotional preparedness, and adaptation to the new culture as coping strategies. These strategies helped alleviate the difficulties they encountered during the reunification process. Furthermore, the study highlighted the significant contribution of both family and the community in achieving successful reunification. Family support, community support, and the ideal concept of family and community reunification support emerged as important factors in facilitating the reunification process. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that families have inherent strengths that enable them to adapt despite the separation and acculturative stress associated with family reunification. The study emphasizes the importance of understanding resilience and leveraging the strengths of families and their social networks to promote well-being and minimize risks.

This research contributes to the existing literature by identifying and understanding protective factors for successful family reunification, particularly within the cultural context of Filipino families. It underscores

the need for policymakers and support services to assess and improve their policies and services related to family reunification. Based on these findings, several recommendations can be made for future research, as well as for the countries of origin (Philippines) and destination (Portugal) and social work practice and profession.

For future research, it is recommended to explore the experiences of reunified Filipino families on a larger scale, including a more diverse sample of immigrant groups. This would provide a deeper understanding of the transnational context of separation and family reunification and contribute to the development of immigration policies and services. In addition, future research should consider incorporating the perspectives of children and other family members, as their voices and experiences are crucial in understanding family strengths during reunification. Furthermore, recognizing the nested ecological strengths of different immigrant families and studying the variations in their life course experiences would contribute to a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Recommendations for the countries of origin and destination include proactive measures to support reunified families. The Philippine government can conduct pre-departure orientation seminars to familiarize children with the culture of the destination country. Local social welfare and development offices should assess reunified children before reunification to identify potential risks and provide necessary support. Information drives about the risks and positive outcomes of family reunification should be provided to strengthen adaptability. In Portugal, creating parent groups to facilitate informal support among parents undergoing similar experiences is recommended. These groups can provide insights and support for achieving successful family reunification. Schools, seen as protective factors, should continue their programs for immigrant children to aid their social integration. The government should also provide free language classes for reunified families, as language barriers can be a significant challenge for immigrants. Lastly, recommendations for social work practice and the profession emphasize the importance of culturally competent interventions and awareness. Professionals in social work and allied fields should continue enhancing their understanding of the experiences of immigrant families and the impact on children and the family as a whole. The findings from this study can also be applied to the context of reunifying separated refugee families, contributing to more effective support and intervention.

The findings of this study can be linked to social work theory and practice, particularly in the context of working with reunified Filipino families and immigrant populations. (1) Ecological Systems Theory: This theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner, emphasizes the importance of understanding individuals within the context of their environments. The study's focus on the narratives of Filipino family immigrants undergoing

Family Reunification aligns with this theory by examining the experiences of individuals within the broader social, cultural, and familial contexts. It recognizes that individuals are influenced by multiple systems, including microsystems (individuals' immediate environments), mesosystems (interactions between different microsystems), exosystems (external environments indirectly affecting individuals), and macrosystems (larger cultural and societal factors). The study highlights the influence of various systems on the challenges and strengths faced by reunified Filipino families, such as immigration policies, social support networks, and cultural factors. Social workers can apply this theory by considering the diverse systems that impact families and by advocating for changes in systems that negatively affect their well-being. They can also collaborate with other professionals and organizations within these systems to provide comprehensive support to reunified families.

(2) Strengths Perspective: Strengths Perspective: The study's emphasis on providing thick description and capturing the strengths and resources within reunified Filipino families aligns with the strengths perspective in social work. The strengths perspective focuses on identifying and building upon the inherent strengths and resources of individuals and families to promote resilience and well-being. By recognizing and leveraging family strengths, practitioners can empower families to overcome challenges and facilitate their adaptation process. The study's findings highlight the importance of adopting a strength-based approach in social work practice with reunified Filipino families. Instead of solely focusing on deficits and problems, practitioners can collaborate with families to identify their capabilities, assets, and support networks. This approach fosters a sense of empowerment and optimism, helping families to navigate the challenges of family reunification more effectively. Social workers can also advocate for policies and services that promote the well-being and integration of immigrant populations, based on a strengths perspective.

(3) Cultural Competence: The study's acknowledgment of the unique experiences and challenges faced by Filipino family immigrants highlights the significance of cultural competence in social work practice. Cultural competence involves understanding and respecting the cultural values, beliefs, and practices of diverse populations. The study underscores the need for social workers to have a deep understanding of the cultural context of reunified Filipino families to provide effective and culturally sensitive interventions. It reinforces the importance of tailoring interventions to meet the specific needs of these families, taking into account their cultural values, language preferences, and migration experiences.

Thus, this study contributes to social work theory and practice by deepening the understanding of the challenges and strengths experienced by reunified Filipino families. It emphasizes the importance of ecological systems theory, strengths perspective, and cultural competence in working with immigrant populations. The study's findings reinforce the need for social workers to adopt a strength-based and culturally competent

approach, empowering families and supporting their successful adaptation during the family reunification process.

In any research study, it is important to acknowledge the limitations that may affect the generalizability of the findings. In this particular study, one limitation is that it focused on a small population, meaning that the sample size was relatively small. As a result, the conclusions drawn from this study cannot be applied to the entire population of Filipino family immigrants who have gone through the process of Family Reunification. Due to the limited sample size, the findings and results of the study should be interpreted with caution and cannot be considered conclusive or representative of the broader Filipino immigrant population. The experiences and narratives collected in this study may be unique to the individuals who participated, and it would be inappropriate to make sweeping generalizations based solely on their accounts. However, despite this limitation, the study still holds value. It provided a detailed and in-depth description of the experiences and perspectives of the participants, offering what is known as "thick description." Thick description refers to a rich, detailed account of social phenomena, capturing the nuances, complexities, and context of the participants' experiences. Reeves, S., Peller, J., Goldman, J., & Kitto, S. (2013). In this study, the aim was to provide a comprehensive understanding of the specific group of Filipino family immigrants who underwent the process of Family Reunification, rather than making broad generalizations. By acknowledging the limitations and recognizing the value of the study's thick description, researchers and readers can appreciate the insights gained from this research while also recognizing the need for further studies with larger and more diverse samples to establish more robust conclusions.

In summary, this study provides valuable insights into the experiences of reunified Filipino families during the family reunification process. By recognizing and harnessing the inherent strengths of families and providing appropriate support, professionals and policymakers can contribute to more positive outcomes for immigrant families, particularly children, during the separation and reunification journey.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT

The present study arises in the context of a *“Reunified Filipino Family Immigrants with children in Lisbon, Portugal: Coping Strategies and Its Challenges.”* underway at ISCTE – Instituto Universitário de Lisboa, funded by ERASMUS MUNDUS – ESWOCHY European Joint Masters in Social Work with Children and Youth. This study concerns the coping strategies and challenges of Reunified Filipino Family before, during and after reunification and aims to explore reunified Filipino Families with Child/Children strengths and challenges in the separation and family reunification lived experiences amongst Filipino Parent immigrants with their children in Lisbon Portugal.

The study is carried out by the researcher **Jeffrey P. Razonabe** who can be contacted through email: jeffrazonabe143@gmail.com in case of any questions or should you wish to share comments. Your participation, which is highly valued, consists of answering the semi-structured type of interview and sharing your experiences. There are no expected significant risks associated to participation in the study. Although you may not benefit directly from your participation in the study, your answers will contribute to the future immigrants and the family who are planning to reunified their children here in Lisbon Portugal and future researches about Immigration and Reunification. Participation in this study is strictly voluntary: you can choose to participate or not to participate. If you choose to participate, you can stop your participation at any time without having to provide any justification. In addition to being voluntary, your participation is also anonymous and confidential. The data are intended merely for statistical processing and no answer will be analyzed or reported individually. You will never be asked to identify yourself at any time during the study. In view of this information, please indicate if you accept participating in the study:

I ACCEPT I DO NOT ACCEPT

Name: _____ Date: _____ Signature: _____

APPENDIX B



Funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

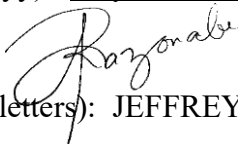
NON-PLAGIARISM DECLARATION

Submitted to the Erasmus Mundus Master's Programme in Social Work with Child and Youth:

- Has not been submitted to any other Institute/University/College
- Contains proper references and citations for other scholarly work
- Contains proper citation and references from my own prior scholarly work
- Has listed all citations in a list of references.

I am aware that violation of this code of conduct is regarded as an attempt to plagiarize and will result in a failing grade in the programme.

Date (dd/mm/yyyy): May 30,2023

Signature: 

Name (in block letters): JEFFREY PAGCU RAZONABE

APPENDIX C



Funded by the
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European Joint Masters in Social Work with Children and Youth (ESWOCHY) **Interview Guide Question** **Qualitative Research**

“Reunified Filipino Family Immigrants with children in Lisbon, Portugal: Coping Strategies and Its Challenges.”

Greetings

Tagalog : Hi, Magandang umaga/hapon. Kumusta?

English : Hi, Good morning/afternoon,. How are you?

Briefing: N.B. Briefing and the in-depth interview were done in either Tagalog or in English which may comfortable to the respondents. Once again, I would like to thank you for your positive response. As slated in the letter, this interview will take only one hour and half. In the course of the interview, you do not have to answer any questions that you feel not comfortable in doing so, thus you may end our talk anytime you want. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions that will be given. The interview is not a test. However, your honest narratives or story will be paramount to achieve the objective of this research. As this is voluntary, you may withdraw at any time. After transcribing the interview, I will let you read the transcriptions to affirm or make corrections with reference to the accuracy of what you might say. Further, real names will not reflect, as pseudonyms will be used in the research output to value utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Audio recorded interview and field notes will be crashed and destroyed after processing it. Before we start? Do you have any questions?

Part I.

Background of the respondents:

- 1.) I would like to know some basic information about what you do now in Lisbon Portugal
 - 2.) What type of family composition do you have in the Philippines?
 - How many family members do you have in the Philippines?
 - Can you tell me what kind of relationship that your family have? (Close, not that close)
 - How old when you left Philippines?
 - Age?
 - Educational status?
 - Civil status?
 - Currently living with? •
- How many child/children do you have?
- How long have you been in Lisbon Portugal?

Part II.

1. Challenges

- 1.1 Can you talk about the adjustment experiences that you and your children encountered to the new environment? For instance, Language, Cultural Differences, Family Adjustment (ex; reorganization of roles and tasks) and School Adjustment?
- 1.2 Can you describe has was (and is) your relationship with your child/children before, during, and after the reunification? By relationship we understand your parental role and adjustments done in terms of attachment, impact of migration on family relationship, etc.?

2. Coping Strategies

- 2.1 How did you prepare your child/children for the new environment before, during, and after the reunification?

Follow Up Questions:

- a. How were your children prepared for the new environment before, during and after reunification?
- b. Who and how the preparation took place?

2.2 What are the practical/ concrete strategies you used to maintain your relationship with your child/children before, during, and after reunification?

2.3 Can you share how you and your children managed to adapt to the new country/ environment (e.g., language, food)?

3. Reunification

3.1 What are the types of support did you receive from your immediate family and from the Filipino-Portuguese community before, during, and after the reunification?

3.2 What are the other types of support did you get from other groups and institutions (e.g., Philippine government, Filipino community in Portugal, friends, and extended family)?

Follow up Questions:

- a. How did you know that these resources existed? Do you think this is helpful? Why or why not?

3.3 Knowing what you know after passing through this process, if you get to go back, what will you change about:

- A. How to face the challenges?
- B. What resources (internal and external) they would you potentially use (existing or non-existing)?
- C. What do you think would be the ideal family and community reunification support for reunification?