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Aspirations of the Out-of-School Youth: Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar Perspective

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Abstract

Aspiration is an ingredient in achieving something in life. It makes or unmakes success. Aspirations differ among the youth. Rural youth aspire for education because through education they can fulfill their dreams in life (Tafere, 2015). The existence of the out-of-school youths, however, along the peripheries of educational institutions in Barangay Napara-an prompted this case study to explore the aspirations of these out-of-school youths of the rural barangay. Eight participants who were not enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program were selected through the assistance of ALS personnel. Data gathered from the participants through personal interview were compared with the researchers' notes and observation, theoretical views, and insights offered by other faculty-researchers for a triangulated result of the study. Lack of self-motivation and personal conviction camouflaged by low socio-economic condition comprised the reasons of the out-of-school youths for not achieving their aspirations.

Keywords

Aspiration, Out-of-School Youth, Qualitative Research, Education, Case Study, Eastern Samar, Philippines

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Aspirations of the Out-of-School Youth: Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar Perspective

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Aspiration is an ingredient in achieving something in life. It makes or unmakes success. Aspirations differ among the youth. Rural youth aspire for education because through education they can fulfill their dreams in life (Tafere, 2015). The existence of the out-of-school youths, however, along the peripheries of educational institutions in Barangay Napara-an prompted this case study to explore the aspirations of these out-of-school youths of the rural barangay. Eight participants who were not enrolled in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) Program were selected through the assistance of ALS personnel. Data gathered from the participants through personal interview were compared with the researchers' notes and observation, theoretical views, and insights offered by other faculty-researchers for a triangulated result of the study. Lack of self-motivation and personal conviction camouflaged by low socio-economic condition comprised the reasons of the out-of-school youths for not achieving their aspirations. Keywords: Aspiration, Out-of-School Youth, Qualitative Research, Education, Case Study, Eastern Samar, Philippines

Introduction

Aspirations play a significant role in life and in the life outcomes of an individual (Leavy & Smith, 2010). Aspiration is a strong desire to achieve something, such as success (Aspiration, n.d.). An out-of-school youth (OSY), like anybody else in the society, aspires to achieve something in life, the aspiration being within the reach of one's consciousness. However, there are those with aspirations that are not available within their circumstances (Byun, Meece, Irvin, & Hutchins, 2012). The youth possess the conviction that they can achieve what they have aspired for because aspiration can provide for them a strong source of motivation (Tafere, 2015), and the aspirations they have set have the profound impact on their well-being (Bajema, Miller, & Williams, 2002). Since aspiration is an important ingredient in achieving something, then a person will have to achieve to the limit of the aspiration, and should this person believe that nothing could be done to achieve it, then he or she could cede if not assisted (Concepcion, 2012).

Aspirations among the youth differ. Their educational aspiration could either be to finish basic education, take up technical course, or pursue college education. They also have other personal aspirations. In the Philippines, the youth aspire to be literate while out-of-school, help their parents perform chores either in the household or in the farm, or do extra jobs to earn a living for the family (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014). In Ethiopia, Beletech, a grade 5 pupil at age 17 said, "The most important thing in my life is my education because it is the only way that will help to fulfill my dreams" (Tafere, 2015, p. 8).

Youth living in the countryside make low, simple, and practical aspirations in life as a result of internal or external limitations of poverty (Tafere, 2015). When they settle with a certain aspiration, they also have decided for their future. Schaeffer (2000) said that persons define their life for years to come, perhaps forever. Their aspirations reflect their ideas of what they would like to become (Markus & Nurius, 1986, as cited in Haas, 1992) and their aspirations are affected by perceived future opportunities (Concepcion, 2012; St. Claire & Benjamin, 2011, as cited in Tafere, 2015).

The OSY of Barangay Napara-an are offered with the opportunity to get educated just within the place. The barangay has the schools intended to cater to the education needs of the inhabitants therein, from day care to graduate education. At the heart of the barangay is day care center. Close to the center is an elementary school. Nearly a kilometer southward is the Vocational High school and the Eastern Samar State University Salcedo Campus, just along the side of the National highway.

This case study explored the aspirations of the OSY of Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar. Findings of the study would add to the body of information concerning experiences of youth dropouts.

Review of Literature

The following literature mapped out the context of the OSY's aspirations and its connectivity with the theoretical perspective of the study, and from the same literatures the themes of the study had evolved.

Socio-Economic Condition and Aspiration

Dropping out from school continues to be a phenomenon in the Philippine education in spite of the fact that every year the government through school authorities dovetails efforts to drumbeat the importance of education in human life. Every school year, reports showed incidences of dropouts among students especially in rural areas, and these dropouts who are lacking in saleable skills end up as nonfunctional and unproductive manpower in the society. In Salcedo, Eastern Samar alone, the number of OSY reported by the Department of Social Welfare and Development as of 2015 has a total of 2,628 (Office of Student Affairs, 2016).

The OSY, usually 12-35 years old, are a neglected group receiving very thin support from the government and non-government organizations (F. O. Escala, personal communication, March 20, 2016; Leavy & Smith, 2010). Although neglected, this group of people requires the opportunity for better life (Concepcion, 2012). McCaul (as cited in Haas, 1992) described the rural dropouts as having low self-esteem and lacking with sense of control over their own lives. Caroline Burns, a trainer of OSY in the Philippines when interviewed by Concepcion (2012) described the OSYs as "depressed men and women who are desperately in need of inspiration" (p. 2). This situation emphasizes that the OSY is vulnerable to the low level of socio-economic condition (Concepcion, 2012). As could be observed in the peripheral barangays of the Eastern Samar State University and anywhere in the countryside, these OSY are always the successors of the throne of poverty bequeathed to them by their parents or guardians. They may be interested in finishing formal schooling yet poverty force them to leave out school (Tafere, 2015). More than 7,000 enrollees dropped from schools due to poverty and distance from the residence to the school (Buraga, 2008). The OSY possess the feeling that the school is not for them (McCaul, as cited in Haas, 1992). And while out of school, the rural youth do not just while away their time, instead they work to earn a living in blue-collar jobs such as farm labor, construction worker, household help, or stay at home to do routine chores and take care of younger siblings (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014), because they are not competitive and have nil employment opportunities (Concepcion, 2012).

Quitting from school before earning a high school diploma makes the disadvantaged young people unprepared for the world of work and makes them the subject of high risk of poverty. Some students quit because of problems with a certain subject, some because of pregnancy, and others because they must work to support their family (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014). These dropouts revealed that their parents have little schooling, thus revealing a

multigenerational cycle of disadvantaged people. Social class and socio-economic status define the decision of many young people to proceed to or leave the school (Macionis, 2007).

Poverty erodes the quality of life and reduces the force of democratic institutions. Access to productive assets such as land, water, credit, education, and public health services is the essence of public service. However, there are difficulties concerning the provision of these basic services. The poor which is less organized have more difficulties of access (Teodosio, 2010). In effect, the lack of power of the poor makes them easily ignored, and as a result they have little say in the decisions that affect them particularly in changing their lives for the better (Concepcion, 2012).

Fernandez and Abocejo (2014) discovered that poverty incidence is strongly associated with the number of working children not attending school. Poverty commands the children to leave the school early and force them to become laborers. School-age children are tempted to work because of short term income opportunities, and they have taken on the responsibility of augmenting the household income and of providing the needs of their households. The existence of the OSY in the community naturally co-exists and goes together with poverty. What makes the issue worse is the vulnerability of the OSY to further neglect (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014).

Gayo (1990) found the aggregate annual income of farmers, fishermen, and coconut planters to be lower than that of the professionals and he impaired that there is correlation between education and income. People who have obtained higher education have the capacity to earn more. Gayo (1990) concluded that education is necessary in order to improve one's economic status.

Concepcion (2012) stressed that poor socio-economic conditions hinder the youth in attaining aspiration being saddled with multi-lateral pressures such as poverty, child labor which is done in order to subsist, bad peer pressure and other similar factors which can paralyze the pursuit of aspiration.

According to Aldaba, Lanzona, and Tamangan's 2004 study (as cited in Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014), the cost of education is often the cause for the school children to leave from school. Even if education is free in public schools, parents would still have to source out considerable amount of money for their children's transportation, food, uniforms, school supplies, laboratory materials, and sundry school-related costs.

A big family size brings a negative impact in the overall welfare of the household. The study on the issue revealed that 57.3 percent of families with seven children were in poverty, and that a meager 23.8 percent of families with two children were living below the poverty threshold (Orbeta, 2003, as cited in Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014).

Aspirations are not exclusive for younger people like those with ages 12-35 years old (F. O. Escala, personal communication, March 20, 2016; Leavy & Smith, 2010). The aspiration of Petronio Del Rosario, fondly called Mang Totoy, is a case of an age-limitless passion and deep value for education. Despite economic and other personal limitations, the aged man had aggressively pursued his only ardent aspiration in life which was none other than to earn a high school diploma. At age 82 he did not give up from crossing the boundaries of time to be able to earn the diploma together with the functional education. Mang Totoy described aspiration as hope for the hopeless (Kingking, 2011).

Aspiration and Its Setting

Leavy and Smith (2010) disclosed that aspiration is formed through the shared responsibility between the individual, society, and environment. The environment includes socio-cultural factors and the social bonding among peers. Other factors such as economic, political, and religious likewise affect the formation of aspiration. Howley, as cited in Byun et

al. (2012) argued that the low aspirations of the youth may never be affected by low socio-economic condition but by close family ties or by available work opportunities which parallels with the skills availability of the rural workforce.

It is worthwhile to invest in human capital, or additional education, because an increase in additional education can increase the earning power of the person. To someone who is poor and consequently uneducated, this kind of investment will not be a wise decision. But with the support from a generous donor, the poor who has potentials can make a difference (Yuzon, 2009). It is important that the vision, objectives, and the values of the generous donor or institution should be compatible with those of the recipient community. Hence, there must be congruence in purpose between and among these entities, not to mention the interests of the stakeholders. This is the essence of corporate philanthropy or corporate social responsibility (Yuzon, 2009).

Education is investment of both the family and the government to capacitate the human resources. Through education, the youth learn cognitive skills, competencies, and knowledge, and can provide output of great economic value upon their participation in the work place. The earlier the youth quit from school, the lesser they acquire cognitive abilities, competencies, and knowledge. The impact of the development of human capital to the future of the Filipino labor force is often overlooked (Fernandez & Abocejo, 2014).

Will (2005) emphasized the necessity of attitude, understanding, decisiveness and values as factors in attaining something valuable in life as these factors govern and dictate accomplishment. Thus, fulfilling an aspiration shall be dependent upon aforesaid factors. Will (2005) emphasized further that the values a person possess such as physical values, social values, or ability to situate and associate, and psychological values like patience, honesty and humility are very important factors in attaining a goal or aspiration. Will (2005) encouraged the parents to let their children understand the true value of having a positive behavior and must properly mold their children so that they will be able to make the right choices when they grow up.

The formation of value as disclosed by Guilbert (2005) in his study conducted at the School of Engineering, University of Deusto, Bilbao, Spain is founded on a philosophy which establishes culture and consequently guides the ethical, moral, and rational conduct of a person according to human standards and heritage.

Bajema et al. (2002) noted that the level of aspirations of the youth in the rural society is so vulnerable to its existing social factors like community culture, population size and isolation. Pressure toward uniformity may be more prevalent in a rural setting, especially an agricultural community, than in an urban society. Bajema et al. (2002) further noted that the aspiration level of the individual is buoyed by the prevailing group standard, thus even those who possess the inner drive to achieve just limit their accomplishment to the level of the group. Similarly, Byun et al. (2012) noted that the influence of the environment on the aspirations of the youth is greater than the influence brought about by the family, school, and community.

Aspiration Guidance and Inspiration

The National Center for Vocational Education Research (NCVER, 2003) identified the individuals who are instrumental in shaping the aspirations and lives of others as the significant others, who may either be role-incumbent, and person-specific. The role-incumbent, (i.e., parents and teachers) possess the power and authority over the youth while the person-specific significant others are chosen by the youth, such as best friend, or role-model, and their relationship is strengthened because of the trust and because the role-model is worthy of emulation.

Gemici, Bednarz, Karmel, and Lim (2014) and NCVER (2003) found that parents and peers influence aspirations, but it is the parents that exert critical influence on their sons' and daughters' aspiration and achievement. Students whose parents want them to pursue tertiary education were 4 times more likely to succeed year 12, and 11 times more likely to plan to pursue tertiary education, compared to those whose parents expect them to choose non-tertiary education course. Relatedly, students whose friends plan to attend tertiary education were nearly four times more likely to plan to attend tertiary education. Others to whom the youth consult and recognize as model are peers, other adults, and counselors.

Options Toward Achieving Aspiration

The basic education needs of the school-age Filipino population who are out-of-school and all those who are beyond school age but who have not been to school or who have dropped out from school are catered by the Bureau of Alternative Learning System (BALS). It is through this bureau that the mandate on education for all out-of-school individuals through alternative learning interventions are promoted, improved, monitored, and evaluated. Its top priority is to provide functional literacy for both OSY and adults of the ethnic group or other vulnerable clients (Kingking, 2011).

The non-formal education programs cater the following services: (a) basic literacy, (b) livelihood skills development or enhancement of competencies, and (c) certification and equivalency program implementation. The purpose of non-formal education through Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) is to assist its needy clients develop and enhance literacy and skills acquisition via hands-on exposure through the offering of courses for 6 to 10 months. Graduates of non-formal education are expected to be employable and competitive in the labor arena (Philippines Institute for Development Studies, 2009).

Aspirations of the youth as described in the foregoing literatures focused on educational aspirations. This seems to emphasize that education is the foundation of other aspirations of human being. Same literatures mentioned economic, social, and cultural factors which defined the decision of the youth to either proceed or leave the school, such as poverty, distance from the residence to the school, problem with certain subject, pregnancy, work to support the family, bad vices and peer pressure, distant parents, poor teaching, laziness, high cost of transportation and school supplies, emotional attachment, attitude and values, and role models.

There was no mention however in the literature regarding availability of schools at the doorsteps of the youth which could have defined their decisions to either proceed or quit schooling. The place of the study has schools from day care to graduate studies to cater to the educational aspirations of its inhabitants, thus, the exploration of the topic seem fitting to fill this literature gap. It is important too that the result of this study be compared with similar studies in other countries.

Theoretical Framework

The study was anchored on seven theories: Maslow's hierarchy of needs; McClelland's learned need theory; expectancy value theory; scarcity of resources; self-determination theory, Preference theory and Filipino personal values.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which identifies priorities set by every person, considers human needs in ascending hierarchy based on importance starting from physiological or basic physical needs; then security and safety needs; belonging and social needs; esteem and status needs; and self-actualization and fulfillment needs (Lorenzana, 2003). Maslow's hierarchy of needs in essence reflects the prioritization of the goals of a person. Thus, the theory presupposes that an OSY has a goal or aspiration which is basically his/her need or priority.

His/her decision as regards schooling shall be influenced by the level of priority set for education. For those who consider education as top priority will always make it to the finish line amidst varied challenges.

McClelland (1961) in his learned needs theory had categorized the needs of a person into three which are the following: (a) need for achievement, (b) need for affiliation, (c) and need for power. These needs serve as basis for behavior and motivation. Deduced from the theory, it is from any of these needs that an OSY will take reference as motivators in setting and achieving his aspiration or goal in life.

A similar view is held by the expectancy value theory of Atkinson, Fishbein, Eccles, Wigfield, and Wigfield, and Tonks as cited in Chauncey (n.d.), which describes that a person is goal-oriented and the behavior that a person performs in response to his/her beliefs and values are undertaken to achieve a goal or purpose. Accordingly, an OSY orients himself or herself to the world according to expectations and evaluations. His/her behavior, behavioral intentions, or attitudes are seen as a function of expectancy (or belief) which is the perceived probability that a goal or object possesses a particular attribute or that a behavior will have a particular result; and evaluation, which is the degree of positive or negative effect toward an attribute or behavioral outcome.

The theory of scarcity of resources cited by Villegas (1991) holds that a person has multitude of desires and aspirations, but the resources required to attain the desire or aspiration are scarce and have alternative uses. These scarce resources have to be allocated among different needs and priorities. If an OSY has only one aspiration, say to be able to finish college education, then it would only necessitate funds availability for education and no need to worry about other attendant needs. However, since resources are scarce for conflicting uses, the problem of determining the optimum use of scarce resources to satisfy competing needs and priorities would arise. An OSY and his or her family must always consider the best use of available scarce resources to be able to settle the conflict between scarcity and the need or priority for greater satisfaction.

Attainment of aspirations of the OSY is likewise held in the theory of self-determination of Deci and Ryan (2008, as cited in Tran, 2014) when they said that a person must be in control of one's own life, interact effectively with the environment, and form connections and relationships, and the kind of motivation for the fulfillment of one's need or priority can either be internal or external to the self that initiates, presses, or coerces one's action. If the OSY has a high internal perceived locus of causality, he or she feels to be the initiator and sustainer of own actions and is self-determined because his or her behavior stems from his own choices or priority. On the other hand, when the OSY has an external perceived locus of causality, he or she considers behavior as being controlled by some external event, person, or force. It is thus interesting to discover this perceived locus of causality in relation to achieving the aspirations of the OSY.

The preference theory cited by Viray, Marcelino, Bato, and Bautista (2015) holds that people have various preferences which are determined by age, income, education, gender, occupation, customs and traditions, and culture. Accordingly, the aspiration set by an OSY is a matter of preference. The strength of one's preference will determine what aspiration or goal to pursue vis-a-vis resources limitations and other circumstances. Since OSY differ in preferences or choices, it can be generalized that no two of them could have exactly the same aspirations, whether simple or sophisticated (Viray et al., 2015).

The Filipino personal values like self-help and self-responsibility, which are positive; or passivity (*bahala-na*) which is negative, and other personal values represent the rules of a culture that govern a person's thoughts, feelings and actions (Mercado, 2009). An OSY will either fail or succeed in his or her aspiration depending on one's personal values.

Objectives of the Study

This case study explored the aspirations of the OSY of Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar, vis-a-vis the socio-economic condition of their family, as socio-economic situation may have impact on aspiration. Findings of the study could aid in developing recommendations or intervention strategies to help OSY realize their aspirations and be able to become productive citizens of the society.

There is a dearth of literature on the experiences of youth dropouts whose basic and tertiary education opportunities are just at their doorsteps, thus, this study was conducted to get a grasp of the first-hand data on the aspirations of these youth dropouts, and to reinforce the existing pieces of information about the research question in point.

Specifically, the study addressed the following research questions:

1. What aspirations do the out-of-school youth of Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar possess and what does aspiration mean to them?
2. What impact has the socio-economic situation of the family on the aspiration of the out-of-school youth of Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar?
3. What should the community do to help the out-of-school youth achieve their aspirations?

Methodology

To have an in-depth exploration of the problem, qualitative research was preferred using case study. Researchers' notes and observation, analysis of secondary data, theoretical views, and insights from senior faculty researchers were incorporated whenever appropriate, to provide a triangulated perspective of the problem and issues of the study.

The methodology included the research design, research instrument, sampling, and research setting. It likewise included data collection, ethical consideration, data analysis, and researchers' reflexivity.

Research Design

Case study was the research design used to explore the aspirations of the OSY. Case study is an approach to qualitative research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. It ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 544). It is an in-depth examination of a particular case or several cases (Lichtman, 2013, as cited in Wa-Mbaleka, 2016).

Research Instrument

The study utilized a researcher-made and expert-validated semi structured interview guide written in English, composed of 32 items; 22 were specific questions about demographics of the participants and their family, and 10 were open-ended questions related to aspiration. A senior faculty with wider research experience offered suggestions in improving the interview guide, in which items therein were based on literature topics connected to the study, and the same interview guide was utilized in generating information from the participants through personal interview. A test-run of the interview guide was done with an OSY from the town of Salcedo to ascertain whether or not the items in the interview guide were clearly understood

by the interviewee and likewise ascertain that the data generated from the interview were the needed data for the study. Reactions of the interviewee and other important observations endemic to personal interview were noted as inputs during the interview of the research participants.

Sampling and Research Setting

The selection of the participants was basically through consultation with both the Mobile teacher and the District Coordinator of the ALS of Salcedo, Eastern Samar. From the list of ALS students of Salcedo as reference, the researcher together with the ALS personnel were able to identify and pinpoint the most qualified eight participants for the study, based on the following norm: Firstly, only those OSY whose names do not appear in their list, or those who were listed but did not get interested with the ALS; and secondly, the OSY identified must only be from Barangay Napara-an. In effect, the selection of the participants was purposive, to ascertain appropriate information for the topic under exploration.

Considering the possibility that participants would be ashamed and consequently inhibit from a face to face interview, we involved the participation of the former Sanggunian Kabataan (SK) Chairman of the Barangay who is a friend of the participants, as we assumed that they have earlier acquaintances. Using a motorbike, this former SK Chairman fetched the five identified participants, who were available at the moment, to the front yard of the researchers' house. After a brief familiarization and get-to-know-each-other conversation, we interviewed the participants one after the other. The involvement of the former SK Chairman in the research process made the participants to be relaxed, and in effect they were freely expressive of their experiences and thoughts. The fact that the participants were interviewed in a distant place from the premises of their home, they were open with firsthand information and experiences. They seem to have expressed anything without inhibition since no single member from their family hears them during the interview. For the other three identified participants who were unable to participate in the interview together with the other five participants because they were not at their respective houses when the former SK Chairman invited and fetched them, we went to their respective houses and request their parents for the availability and participation of their children in the interview. The strategy was adopted because the former SK Chairman was not available, and that the researchers recognize that parents can exert influence over their children's participation in an activity (NCVER, 2003). We noted that the participants were not so expressive of their experiences because there were instances during the interview that other members of the family laugh at their answers. But despite this limitation, we made sure that all the data required for the study were collected from each of the participants, based on the interview guide.

Data Collection and Ethical Consideration

The fact that the participants were ambulant especially during the day time, for one reason or another, data collection from the first five participants took place at about 6:30 in the evening of Holy Thursday, March 2016 when these participants, relaxing within their household premises, were invited for personal interview. Maybe they have just finished their church obligation together with other members of the family. Data collection from the other three participants was done at almost same time, on Black Saturday, when they were available at their respective houses. Using the interview guide as basis, the personal interview was done in English and Waray languages. Waray, being the native tongue of the OSY preponderated throughout the data collection. The intentional use of Waray was done to be at level with the participants; to maintain rapport; and to enable the participants to pick up the questions clearly

so that they will not hesitate to express appropriate answers. Participants were also asked of probing questions. Data elicited from the interview were saved in a digital recorder, with due approval from the participants. Extra information gathered by the former SK Chairman from participants regarding their aspirations was jotted by the researchers. The purpose of the interview was made known to the participants, including its confidentiality. To maintain confidentiality, they were coded as either Participant 1, Participant 2, up to Participant 8. The number as suffix to each Participant represented the sequence of the interview with them. Conduct of the study was with due approval by the Barangay Captain.

Data Analysis

Analysis of data was immediately done after the transcription. Data were transcribed verbatim but were translated in English to fit with the need of the readers. Grouping of similar information was a primary consideration for data analysis. All data were analyzed in conjunction with the setting of the background of information significant in defining the conclusion and recommendations, and in conjunction with the themes that provided answers to the research questions.

Researchers' Reflexivity

While we, the researchers being residents of the barangay where the study was conducted possess a good personal appraisal of the general set-up of the barangay and its inhabitants, lack of existing aspiration-specific data or information from the barangay, municipality, or from the schools and the university around must have lessened our interpretation of the facts elicited from the participants, particularly on the aspect of personal values.

Results and Discussion

The following information preceding the themes comprised the description about the participants, their parents and their economic status which are important in defining the conclusion and recommendations of the study. Themes 1, 2, and 3 provided empathic information regarding the research questions, respectively.

Demographic Profile of the Participants.

The OSY-participants of the study were within the age expectation for OSY which is 12-35 years old (F. O. Escala, personal communication, March 20, 2016; Leavy & Smith, 2010). The eldest among them was 23 years old and the youngest, 16 years old. They were single, one was a female and the others were male. The average number of persons in their family (parents plus siblings) was seven and this number of members of the family had exceeded the reference total of five members identified for poverty threshold by the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB, 2013). The members of the family are expected to increase because their parents were still young at their age which falls within late 30s to early 40s for the mothers, and early to late 40s for the fathers.

These OSY-participants were former students of Basic education, except one who quit from tertiary education. Their education is high school level, but one reached the 1st semester of 1st year college at the Eastern Samar State University, Salcedo Campus. The male participants had a bit higher level of education compared to their fathers because almost all of them obtained high school level while majority of their fathers were Elementary graduate. The information about their age conveyed that they already stayed long in their barangay as OSY.

For instance, Participant 2 is already 23 years old while his educational attainment is Grade 5. This means that he has been an OSY for 12 years.

Educational Status of Parents of the Out of School Youth

The parents of the OSY obtained at least Basic education. Majority or six of the fathers were Elementary graduate; one graduated High School; and one has reached college level of education. Four of the mothers were High School graduate; three had education in the Elementary level, and one had College level of education. The male cohort obtained lower level of educational attainment compared to the female parent. These parents could be potential clientele of the BALS or TESDA, considering their low educational background, and further considering that they are still young at their age falling within late 30s to early 40s for the mothers, and early to late 40s for the fathers.

Out-of-School Youth's Family Resources Inventory

The resources available for the OSY and the other household members are only the most basic. One is the house, which measures at most 4m x 6m or 24 square meters in area. Almost all of the houses of the OSY were reconstructed out of temporary and semi-permanent materials as a result of the humanitarian aid after Super Typhoon Haiyan's devastation in November 8, 2013. This kind of housing facility can withstand for at least 10 years under normal weather condition. It has woven bamboo split wall; coco lumber floor, and galvanized iron roof. The house has no ceiling, and it is not painted. Inside the house, there is a wooden table, a wooden bench, and for other houses, a few plastic chairs, all of which were furnished by the OSY family. This housing facility seems not spacious to accommodate comfortably at least the seven-member family of the OSY, and does not possess the ambience required by the growing children.

The lot on which the house was erected is not of the household's ownership but of the government because Barangay Napara-an is still classified as timberland by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources. The land utilized by the household for farming is likewise owned by the government particularly by the Boy Scouts of the Philippines Youth Center and Camp (Municipal Environment and Natural Resources Office, 2016). Meanwhile, they can freely use the land for farming endeavors.

The means of communication being utilized by the OSY household is the cellular phone, as there were five of them who are in possession of this gadget, of the ordinary kind. Two households have the ordinary television; another two households have both the ordinary television and radio, and another two households have radio. It was found that two of the households do not have either cellular phone, radio, or television. Such resource may be significant as learning facility, and necessary for the social growth and development of the growing children in the family.

All households do not own even a bicycle as means of transportation, except one with a motorbike. Three of them have wooden push cart being used for fetching water and for hauling chores in the farm.

The households raise few native chickens, fighting cocks, and one household raises goat. When asked about the use of the fighting cocks, Participants 1, 2, 3, 6 and 8 answered "for sale," and when asked of other uses, they smilingly answered "for cockfighting hobby" of their father.

It can be deduced from the foregoing information that the resources of the family only comprise limited material resources of low quality and value and these material resources may have impact on aspirations.

Status of Living and Income of the Out-of-School Youth Family

The family of the OSYs lives in subsistence. Majority or five of the fathers of the OSY were farmers; one was a tricycle driver; one does timber cutting for making charcoal and firewood for sale, and one has no fixed source of living. Majority of the mothers do the chores at home; one was a barangay health worker; one was a sari-sari store keeper, and one kept busy with peddling of fancy jewelries and other fancy items in the city. However, almost all of them were helping their husband in the farm chores. Two of the fathers do seasonal or extra work such as carpentry and masonry, and another two do timber cutting for making charcoal and firewood for sale as their extra source of living. Their principal source of income is farming. Most of their farm products are sweet potato (*IpomeabatatasL.*), cassava (*Manihotesculenta C.*), gabi (*Colocasiaesculenta*), banana (*Musa sapientum*), and assorted vegetables. The Environmental Legal Assistance Center, Inc. (2006; <https://elac.wordpress.com/>) also recognizes that these are the most common crops grown by the farmers of the barangay. Extra harvest of crops and vegetables are sold in the community, sometimes in the plea market in the town of Salcedo.

The participants declared that the daily income of their family was more or less Php 100.00. Their responses were: "...daily income is Php 100.00, more or less" (Participant 1, 2, 3, 5, 7 & 8); "...no permanent income" (Participant 4); "Php 300.00 per day but not always" (Participant 6). This information suggests that the monthly cash income of their family is about Php 3,000.00. This monthly income is far below the food and poverty threshold of Php 5,513 which is required to sustain the monthly family needs for food for only 5 family members. The monthly income is likewise far below Php 7,890 poverty threshold which is required to maintain basic food, shelter, health, and education for 5 persons in the family (NSCB, 2013). The above financial information reflects that the family of the OSY belongs to the low level of socio-economic status (NSCB, 2013).

The following themes presents the answers of the research questions formulated for the study, respectively.

Theme 1. The Out-of-School Youth's Aspirations and Its Meaning

The OSY of Barangay Napara-an possessed both the educational and occupational aspirations. They aspired to get educated at the educational institutions just within the barangay with high hopes that after acquiring a degree they would get employment to support themselves and their family. However, their lack of self-motivation and personal conviction camouflaged by low socio-economic situation of their family hindered them to continue earning a degree. Having quitted from formal schooling and eager to get into an occupation, the OSY took their fall back opportunity to pursue their modest dream in life which is now to obtain training from the ALS or TESDA. To achieve their modest educational aspiration, they were highly expecting for the financial support of their parents. At the time of the interview, majority of them expressed their enthusiastic desire to take up short-term schooling with either ALS or TESDA. They were eager to acquire the necessary skills that they need to become employable and be able to support themselves and help their family. They declared their simple aspiration when they said:

"...with support from my parents...to continue schooling but at TESDA to take up Automotive Mechanic, to be able to help support our family" (Participant 1).

"...it depends but if encourage by ALS, I will first find it out. But I think I will go to school...support of parents" (Participant 2).

“To continue schooling, to help support my family ... support from parents” (Participant 3).

“Yes, I have plans to continue schooling but first to enroll in ALS as my priority. I know how to do electrical connection and I want ALS so I can go to study at TESDA, ...while there is still time I have to study, it’s not good to depend on others...support coming from grandmother” (Participant 4).

“I have the plan to finish High School and finish College education but first I will study at TESDA. I want to finish Automotive Mechanic to be able to repair automobiles and motorcycles...so I can help our family...to return back the kind of help that the family has given to me. Support of my parents is needed” (Participant 5).

“This coming school year I will continue with my basic education, I will finish my schooling, with parents’ support...to land a job after schooling but do not know yet what work...if ever I finished schooling and has work, I will support our family” (Participant 6).

“Has no more plan to go to school (was the first answer). But after presenting a scenario and mentioning about ALS the second answer was...has a plan to continue with studies...with support from my parents” (Participant 7).

“...to continue basic education and then to TESDA...with support of my parents. To study Automotive Mechanic...to be able to help our family” (Participant 8).

Not one of the OSY expressed eagerness and courage to fulfill their educational aspiration by themselves. They were just waiting for their parents to get them to proceed with their aspirations. In short, the OSYs of Barangay Naparaan lacks personal disposition and conviction. They failed to make personal resolutions to achieve what they want to become. They have not fully understood that the cause of their difficult socio-economic status quo is because of the lack of willingness to transform for the better. Thus, the fulfillment of their aspiration has to be initiated not by somebody else but by themselves. This finding is opposed to McClelland’s need theory, because in this finding the youth do not possess the strong drive, or else there was no strong power motivator in the family to drive them to pursue their aspiration. This finding is likewise contradicting to the finding of Tafere (2015) because he found that youth possess the conviction that they can achieved what they have aspired for because aspiration can provide for them a strong source of motivation.

On the part of the parents, while NCVER (2003) emphasized that they exert critical influence on their son’s or daughter’s aspirations and achievement, and while the theoretical assumptions of Maslow, McClelland and other need theorists suggest prioritization of needs as a mitigation of impinging economic resources scarcity and multiplicity of preferences, helping the son or daughter to achieve aspiration was not the preference, need, or priority of the parents. Had it been the priority of the parents, it would have been taken as the basis of their being motivator for their children to proceed schooling despite all odds; the basis for their strong motivation and encouragement in bringing into the family more economic resources to support the schooling of their children; it would have been the reason for the parents to do more sacrifices to the point of dropping from the “flying school” or cock fighting, in the case of the

fathers; and it would have been the concrete reason for never allowing or permitting their children to quit from earning a degree.

Nevertheless, as the OSYs expressed their aspirations, they are never hopeless in their desire to bring positive transformation into their life, as they bring within themselves the promise to be liberated from the crisis due to low socio-economic condition, and they initiated a resolve to get out from the poverty trap and live with their family a life that is more or less above the food and poverty threshold.

It can be deduced from the foregoing information that for the OSY of Barangay Naparaan, aspiration means possessing two significant virtues in life; one is the virtue of patience, for being able to wait for the right opportunity and not losing hope that someday they will be able to achieve their aspiration like their classmates and friends, who are now providing for them the inspiration, influence and perhaps pressure to move on. Another is the virtue of trust, for never being doubtful of the capacity of the parents to handle concerns in the family amidst socio-economic crisis. This virtue of trust means reminding the parents and would-be parents that educating their children, which is equivalent to shaping their bright future, is a serious responsibility which is entrusted to them by their children. It means giving the children the best opportunity to grow productively as an asset of the family and society. It means allowing them the enjoyment to live a better life. This virtue of trust could also mean trusting in someone else parental-like assistance toward achieving their aspiration.

Hopefully, should the OSY make their aspiration to the finish line, jobs would be available for them, unlike what unemployment brings to most of the degree holders of today, so that their ambition in life to serve themselves and their family shall be attained.

Theme 2. Socio-Economic Situation and Aspiration

Five out of eight or majority of the participants confessed that lack of financial support was the principal reason for quitting from formal school. This principal reason is documented in the responses of the participants, as follows:

“I quit from schooling because of lack of daily allowance” (Participant 1).

“My parents were hard up in supporting my schooling” (Participant 3).

“I got lazy to go to school because nobody supported regularly in my studies. It was my grandfather who gave regularly my daily allowance for my schooling. When he died, I got lazy to go to school for nobody provided me regular support in my studies” (Participant 4).

“Sometimes I do not have something to eat. It was better for me to work so I will be able to eat, and keep busy working in the motorcycle repair shop where I am now into as helper” (Participant 5).

“Due to lack of daily allowance, I seldom go to school, and because of that I finally quit from formal schooling” (Participant 8).

For the other three participants, the reasons for quitting from formal schooling were lack of personal interest and lack of personal commitment. The participants' remarks were as follows:

“I don't know what happened. It was my personal decision to quit. My parents wanted me to go to school always but I really don't like. I decided not to go to

school anymore. It was a personal choice. I did quit for reason of my own” (Participant 2).

“I had three back subjects, and I became lazy, and I no longer got interested to continue schooling” (Participant 6).

“I associated with friends who cut classes and who are not interested in going to school” (Participant 7).

It appears from the majority of the responses that low socio-economic condition has caused the youth to drop out from school. It was the culprit in closing their access to the doors of the formal school, and it brought them to the dawn of uncertain future. The low socio-economic condition of the family has failed them to achieve their aspiration. It has halted them to pursue the kind of education or training required to become the financial provider of their family. It likewise failed them to transform into a productive member of the society.

But taking a closer look at the responses, the researchers had the intuition that low socio-economic condition is not the culprit that halted the youth’s educational aspiration. Lack of daily allowance or lack of financial support is far different from absence of daily allowance or financial support. There is actually support to them by their parents. What bars the OSY to achieve aspiration is their lack of self-motivation and personal conviction which is induced by passivity or “bahalana” attitude. The researchers are firm in their belief that these OSY of Barangay Napara-an are just at par in terms of socio-economic condition with other youths in the nearby barangays whom the researchers constantly see walking to and from Eastern Samar State University to attend classes regularly. There are a lot of success stories featuring poverty stricken youth who meet with success through strong personal motivation and determination. Basically, it is a matter of setting high motivation and sacrifice to achieve an ambition or aspiration. This finding is opposed to the finding of Tafere (2015) and Macionis (2007) stating that low socio-economic status or poverty defines the decision of the youth to leave the school.

Theme 3. Community Support and Inspiration

The guide from whom the OSY took their aspirations were their friends, most of them were their classmates who have already obtained college degree. The OSY recognize the success that their classmates have attained, and so they are idolized for attaining success in life and also because of envy. Nobody of the OSY mentioned anyone of their parent as an idol, or any successful and financially established person in the community. As claimed in the NCVER (2003), the parents are expected to be their role-incumbent significant others, who have influence and authority over them. Instead, the OSY identified their friends as their inspiration guide. And while it is true that the parents have the influence on their son’s or daughter’s aspiration, as found in the study, the parents had offered nothing worth inspiring for their children, specifically on the aspect of educational attainment and socio-economic status. Perhaps, respect to parents and elderly, had this virtue been infused in their family culture.

The following were accounts stating that the participants got inspiration from or have idolized their friends, thus they said:

“I envy my former classmates who have now graduated from their College studies...but they still recognize me as their former classmate in the Elementary grades. Now I idolize them” (Participant 2).

“...my friends who have finished schooling” (Participant 3).

“...a friend and a barkada who has already finished schooling” (Participant 4).

“...my classmates who have finished their schooling” (Participant 6).

“I idolize my friends who have finished their studies” (Participant 8).

One OSY, however, was inspired by his brother and he is wishful that he be like him someday. When asked of his aspiration model, he responded “my elder brother, a driver of a delivery van of a private company in Tacloban City” (Participant 1). Another one idolize her teacher who understands her situation. She said “I idolize my teacher Mrs. Tyvitina de las Sankist (pseudo name). She understands my situation” (Participant 7). The other participant has no inspiration guide, and he said, “None, I have no ambition model. It is my own ambition” (Participant 5).

Despite being a school dropout, the OSY were not discouraged of their situation, as to them it is not yet the total eclipse of their life. They could still compare themselves with their classmates and friends and this means that they too can achieve their goal someday. Their classmates and friends are serving as their solar lights for their shaded aspiration path, and because of them, they are not hopeless to follow these inspiring lights in traversing their shaded road of aspiration, hopeful that there will always be inspiring solar lights throughout their journey to attain aspiration.

Aside from getting encouragement and inspiration from the role or aspiration models, the OSY can avail of existing community support in terms of the educational opportunities being offered by the BALS and TESDA. BALS takes care and promotes the basic education needs of the OSY. In the study area, the ALS Coordinator and the Mobile Teacher conduct classes with their student-clients in the barangay hall or at the clients’ home on agreed schedules and after the completion of some sort of modules, student-clients are evaluated and for those who pass are given certificate of completion.

As to the educational opportunity being offered by TESDA, OSY can avail of technical education and skills training to make them employable and competitive labor force. There are two TESDA schools in the province. The one near the study area offers skills training related to agriculture, vehicle driving and automotive mechanics. The other one at a further distance offers training on computer servicing and computer literacy. Student-clients of TESDA are free of tuition fee but they have to shoulder their board and lodging and miscellaneous expenses. Successful completion of the skills training enables the student-clients to earn certificate of completion.

In the study area, Local Government Units and NGOs or INGOs are not involving much the OSY in their capability trainings as these institutions are concerned more on livelihood development, sustainability and empowerment trainings for the heads of the household or family, and organization empowerment. However, their activities related to Disaster Risk Reduction and Management involves everyone in the community, including the OSY.

Conclusion

The OSY of Barangay Napara-an make a reflection on the kind of parents or on the family who took the responsibility to rare and nurture them. They possess the kind of education which is almost similar with their parents who were OSY, too. These OSY possess both educational and occupational aspiration; the former would prepare them to get employment or occupation. However, they lack self-motivation and personal conviction to pursue their aspiration. They are tied to passivity or “bahalana” attitude. While all of them have very high hope that they can achieve their aspirations with the financial support from their parents, it is

noted outright that due to the low level of socio-economic status of their family, this expectation of financial support from parents would not be possible. There must be positive transformation in their personal values and that of their parents, sufficient enough to achieve their aspiration.

Aspiration to the OSY means having patience and trust. Patience, for being able to wait for the right opportunity and not losing hope; and trust, for never being doubtful of the capacity of someone particularly the parents to handle concerns in the family amidst socio-economic crisis. This virtue of trust could also mean trusting in someone else's assistance toward achieving aspiration.

This study concludes that OSY or school dropouts in Barangay Napara-an is inter-generational, or much likened to ancestral inheritance due to lack of self-motivation and personal conviction of the youth. This personal limitation can paralyze even the rich to pursue aspiration in life. It stops them to find ways and means to achieve what they are aspiring for. A tolerable socio-economic condition is somehow needed to back up the pursuit of aspiration. With lack of self-motivation and personal conviction coupled with low socio-economic status, the same cycle of condition in the barangay is expected to continue to produce and produce a ballooning number of OSY, unless such situation is mitigated. Even if there will be schools and skills-training institutes within the OSY's doorsteps without a positive transformation in the OSY personal values coupled with value resetting and prioritization in the family, the OSY of Barangay Napara-an will persist and these OSY shall always be wrapped with aspirations that will forever remain to be a confused dream.

The persistence of OSY in Barangay Napara-an, Salcedo, Eastern Samar, could be the same phenomenon in other rural places of our country and in other developing countries of the world, beset with similar conditions and circumstances.

Recommendation

On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations are offered:

1. The need for an intervention from a public or private entity, to transform the mindset of the OSY and the parents to become a person with high self-motivation and with high personal conviction to attain self-help and self-responsibility to achieve self-abundance, or an intervention to transform the existing rural human capital and available material and economic resources into socio-economic abundance. Along with this context, the Extension Unit of the Eastern Samar State University Salcedo Campus can start to organize and conduct seminar or workshop on reorientation of life priorities and setting of higher life values for the OSY and their parents. Paradigm shifts in their life is necessary to prevent them from being permanently immersed to their existing way of life. This will require the participatory roles and support from ESSU administration, DepEd-ALS, TESDA, Local Government units, NGO or INGO and other stakeholders of the same advocacy.
2. Considering that the OSY came from an impoverish family as evidenced by the inventory of very scanty economic resources in the family and very low monthly income which is far below the food and poverty threshold, the Chairman of the Committee on Education of the study area or barangay must play active role for the welfare of the OSY. His committee output must be to raise funds to support the OSY in achieving their aspiration. The committee must fully utilize the authority of the Barangay Local Government Unit through the Local Government Code or R.A. 7160 to enact ordinances to raise sufficient funds for

the purpose. The barangay through the committee can also lobby for financial assistance from the education fund of the Municipal Local Government Unit. With funds availability, the OSY can be financially supported by the barangay in the form of scholarship grant. The barangay through the committee may likewise link with the earlier mentioned institutions for corroborated support tie-up particularly on identification, selection and educational concerns of the OSY-scholars. By this process, an OSY who is determined to achieve his or her aspiration could no longer declare that financial limitation failed him or her in fulfilling the desired ambition in life. Yuzon (2009) said that it is worthwhile to invest in human capital because it can increase the earning power of the person. Yuzon further said that to someone who is poor, the investment in human capital can be made possible with the support of a generous donor. It is important that the donor has a compatible purpose with that of the recipient. In the context of accountability, this kind of support is a social responsibility.

3. The need for an intervention from a public or private entity, to organize and register the OSY as a group or association. As an association, they can have a priority focus for the achievement of their aspirations and similar advocacy; will be clothed with bargaining authority, and will have the privilege of greater access for support from philanthropic organizations having parallel objectives with them. Initially, the association must strongly lobby for their advocacy and concerns with the Barangay Local Government Unit. It must serve as conduit in the realization of the various programs and activities of the barangay. It could even provide labor and services to cater a need for such in the community, or of a private entity in exchange of any support for their advocacy. Then, the association must expand its linkage with benefactors like their successful and financially-able classmates, friends, and NGOs, also to be able to raise support for their advocacy.
4. The need for an intervention from a public or private entity, to alleviate the socio-economic status of the family, and consequently the barangay. The parents who are still in their middle age must be empowered to be able to create a positive change in the socio-economic status of their family. They must be offered with technical support and seed money altogether with livelihood education and training to incubate them into self-sufficient, economically productive, and environmentally concerned citizens. Livelihood education and training must strengthen their self-discipline to become committed to uplift their family into economic prosperity; must focus on efficient cash flow management; thriftiness, savings and investment, and consumption decisions appropriate for low fixed-income earners. Values re-education as a substantial part of the livelihood education and training for parents is highly recommended because parents are the role models of the family and of the society; they can make or unmake self-abundant and progressive families in the society. Without this intervention of re-educating the parents, and without self-discipline and strong personal will of the parents for a genuine socio-economic reform in the family, any form of technical and financial assistance will have no significance, like what had happened with the numerous assistance given to them by the government and non-government foreign and local organizations after the onslaught of Super Typhoon Haiyan, wherein cash receipts of the family from the cash-for-work privileges intended for their socio-economic amelioration were more used up in the regular drinking and gambling sessions rather than its intended purpose.

5. The ALS and TESDA having been identified by the OSY to be their next learning destinations must be ready to motivate, hold and provide them with life-long education and employment opportunities as fulfillment of their simple aspiration in life.
6. A qualitative study may be conducted to explore the Success Accounts and Stories of OSY amidst low socio-economic condition, to be able to offer other OSY with flying inspiration.
7. A quantitative study on the same problem that will cover wider participants coming from the municipality may be conducted and come up with either synonymous or contrasting points of view with this research findings, thus be able to establish generalizations about the problem at hand. The participation of the socio-economic development stakeholders of the community may be an added focus of the study.

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