

2021 APNTS Thesis and Dissertation Abstracts

Baldo, April Kenneth Joy Abenoja. “The Experiences of the Selected Children in the Northern Philippine Conference of the Free Methodist Churches in Light of Their Social Media Apps Usage.” Master of Arts in Christian Communication (Media Studies), 2021.

This study sought to answer the main question: what are the experiences of the selected children in the Northern Philippine Conference of the Free Methodist Church in light of their social media apps usage? This study looked at children's online experiences in using the internet and focused on social media apps such as Facebook and Messenger. In understanding children's online experiences, this study considered three categories: online skills, online risks, and well-being of children.

This study was guided by Sonia Livingstone's Framework, namely, the “Online Processes Mediating Child Well-being and Rights in the Digital Age.” The framework was used to help understand children's online experiences and how these may affect their well-being and rights.

This current research was conducted among selected children ages 11 to 17 in the NPC of FMC. The design of this research was descriptive using mixed methods: quantitative and qualitative. Nonprobability purposeful sampling (criterion-based selection) was used because criteria were set forth in choosing the respondents of this study. This study used two data-gathering instruments: survey and interview. Both the survey questionnaire and interview guide questions were adapted and used with permission from the Global Kids Online Research. The actual survey questionnaire (Tagalog version) was administered among 44 selected children in NPC of the FMC using Google Forms. From the 44, five participants were interviewed using semi-structured, open-ended questions via Zoom video calls. The data-gathering procedures were done from October to December 2020. This study used a nonparametric statistical Chi-square test in treating the gathered data.

Based on the gathered data, children had positive and negative experiences in using the internet. The respondents attested that the use of the internet (especially social media apps) helped them in their education, gave way to communicate with people (family, friends, classmates, etc.) online, caused them to learn new things, and allowed them to have leisure time. On the contrary, they themselves revealed that the use of the internet (especially social media apps) exposed them to hurtful online behavior such as cyberbullying and sexual grooming, sexual risks such as seeing and receiving explicit images and videos, and it negatively affected their well-being through bad eating habits (forgetting to eat) and by being addicted (high screen time) in using social media apps and online games. Hence, the use of the internet creates opportunities for children, but it also situates the children at risk. In this light, recommendations to the respondents (the children), to the parents, and the church were crafted based on the findings and conclusions of this study.

There are specific issues that came up in the current research but were not dealt with because of the focused design of the thesis. Thus, the following are some research topics that are recommended for further scrutiny: 1) impact study on the effects of online games on the well-being of children; 2) a phenomenological study on online sexual exploitation of children and its implications to family communication patterns and parental mediation; and 3) the perceived effects of COVID-19 on the frequency of online usage of children.

Fernandez, Ernesto Sebastian Lozano. “Rafael Palma and Transformational Learning in the Philippines: Paradigm Shift from the Spanish to the Americans.” Doctor of Philosophy in Transformational Learning, 2021.

The historical research focused on changes in education from the Spanish to the American colonial systems as a paradigm shift. The study was based on Rafael Palma’s writings between 1899 to 1933, extending to 1945, considering his posthumous publications. Palma, though relatively unknown today, was a significant Philippine educator. The writer took into careful consideration Palma’s Spanish language sources, especially those available at the University of the Philippines Archives. The research built

upon the primary source material, such as books, articles, speeches, essays, presidential reports, and other documents.

For over three hundred years, Filipinos were under the colonial power of the Spaniards. Education in the Philippines was under the control of the Roman Catholic Church. Though the Spanish brought primary education to the Philippines, higher education was for the elite and was oppressive. Although Spanish education demonstrated improvements over the years, education did not reach the whole country and never changed in its original intent of educating people to remain loyal to the church.

After more than three hundred years of Spanish rule, a new colonial power took over the Philippines. The Americans arrived in the Philippines in 1898. The Americans brought a less oppressive educational paradigm. Everyone deserved an education, and education for the masses would prepare Filipinos for independence.

Bridging these two periods was a name highly respected but now almost forgotten: Rafael Palma (1874 – 1939). By living in both periods, Palma himself experienced the changes and saw the improvements under the Americans but also criticized freely whatever he believed was not right. He was an agent of change.

The philosophies that Rafael Palma developed were closely related to aspects of transformational learning and, in particular, critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is a philosophy that was developed in the late nineteen-seventies by Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. His philosophies aimed toward the transformation of oppressive educational systems through developing a capacity for critical thinking, which included freedom from the preconceived notions of others.

What would later be called transformational learning and critical pedagogy were already in the mind of Palma. The philosophies that Palma developed were revolutionary in his time and still remain useful today. Palma advocated academic freedom and education for both service and national development. As well, he related education to hospitality, morality, and religion. All of these were discussed by later educators and philosophers of education.

Palma compared education under the church to education under the state. Each provided what the other did not. For instance, under the Spaniards, education enforced strict morality, whereas the Americans separated morality from education. Palma also compared methods of instruction based on his own experiences. He described the differences between oppressive and liberated educational systems. The Spanish wanted people to remain servants or, in other words, oppressed. Though the Americans ignored morality, they provided freedom in education.

Hkam, Merry Seng. “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children in Myanmar.” Master of Arts in Religious Education (Holistic Child Development), 2021.

This thesis aimed to explore whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center (KOC). The study was guided by the theoretical framework of John Westerhoff III on the core sectors for developing faith. Westerhoff articulates that there are three sectors for developing faith: rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment. This current study explored the impact of those three sectors in the faith development of the selected orphaned children in KOC.

The methodology used in the study was qualitative and was descriptive in design. To get the needed information, the researcher employed two data collection methods: interview and personal journals. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted through a Facebook Messenger video call. For the personal journal, the researcher requested the respondents to write at least one journal entry each week for a month. Ten children participated in the study. They were chosen using the purposive sampling method. The researcher used two approaches to do qualitative analysis: coding and condensation. All the interviews and personal journals were transcribed and imported into the MAXQDA software for analysis.

Based on the findings of this research, it appears that the rituals such as Christmas, Bible Sunday services, New Year services, and other services conducted in the KOC have had a huge impact on the faith development of

selected orphaned children. These rituals have facilitated the opportunities for children to seek God more, feel God's love, and become better Christians. The experiences that the center has provided have helped the children feel God's presence, love, and provision in times of need. Furthermore, the actions of the environment have allowed the children to emulate what the staff and teachers were doing. The people in KOC have proven to be good models before the children on how to live as members of the faith community. Based on the responses of the ten children, the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment have impacted their faith development in various ways.

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were offered to the Kachin Orphanage Center and the local church on how to enrich the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment in nurturing the faith of the children in their care. Additionally, the following are recommendations for further studies: (a) project thesis on creating a curriculum based on Westerhoff's model for the faith development for the orphaned children, (b) comparative study between orphans and children living with their parents on the effects of rituals, experiences and the actions of the environment, and (c) content analysis of Richard's five processes for faith nurturing among orphaned children.

Naw, Hkawng. "Self-Assessment of Children Living in the Dumare Camp for Internally Displaced Persons on Their Well-Being Based on the Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving." Master of Arts in Religious Education (Holistic Child Development), 2021.

The thesis explored how the selected children in the Dumare camp for Internally Displaced Persons in Kachin State, Myanmar assess their well-being based on the Comprehensive Inventory of Thriving for Children (CIT-Child). This approach is one of the ways where children's voices are heard to improve the ministry services in this camp.

The respondents of the study were 33 children who were between 8 and 18 years old and who have lived in the Dumare IDP camp for six years and above, five of whom participated in interviews via Zoom. The researcher employed mixed methodologies to treat the data gathered, namely, semi-

structured interviews and the survey using the CIT-Child questionnaire adapted from Andolfi, Tay, Confalonieri, and Traficante (2017). The data from the interviews were integrated with the related literature and studies as well as from the statistical treatment of the survey findings. T-Test was used to establish the relationships between demographic variables and the dimensions of Child Thriving.

The findings of the study revealed that there are no significant differences in the assessments of the selected children when they are grouped according to age and gender against the five dimensions of Child Thriving. The five dimensions are relationship, engagement, mastery, optimism, and subjective well-being. The qualitative responses of the selected children provided some understandings of how the children rated their agreement or disagreement with the statements for each dimension of child thriving. Some of the salient findings include: (1) Children need the support of the people around them. They have identified that God, the church, their family, their friends, the staff of the DIDP, the Non-Government Organizations, and their community are important to them. This reflected what Bronfenbrenner espoused in his Ecological Systems Theory, that is, that these systems have continuing impacts on an individual's development (Bronfenbrenner 1999); (2) the activities that they engage in at the camp provide them with mastery and help develop their self-worth; (3) some of these children feel lonely and have some "negative feelings," and they have identified the reasons behind these felt needs. Based on the findings of the research, recommendations were identified for the parents, for the staff of the DIDP camp, and for further studies. Listening to the children who have lived in this camp has led to some specific recommendations as to how the ministries in the camp and in the homes can be improved, so these children thrive in all the dimensions of their lived experiences. The following are some gaps this research study has identified for which there is still a need for further studies:

- a. mixed-methods evaluative study on the strengths and weaknesses of the Dumare IDP camp with parents as respondents;
- b. quantitative research on the knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) of the parents and staff of the Dumare IDP camp on children's spirituality;

- c. holistic analysis of the activities by the Baptist Convention in Myanmar based on the dimensions of child well-being; and
- d. phenomenological study on the impact of COVID-19 on the well-being of the children in Dumare IDP camp.

Ong, Blessed Charity. "Church Brand Book Development and Usage in Life Christian Ministries Manila." Master of Arts in Christian Communication, 2021.

This production thesis was intended to assist Reign in Life Christian Ministries Manila in their brand implementation as manifested in the development and usage of a Brand Book. Moreover, the project, along with the procedures and processes, can help community churches advance their creative communication strategy, as evidenced in the study.

The development and usage of Brand Book used the Shannon-Weaver model of communication as a framework for the flow of the study. The study proceeded with ordered sequences beginning from the processes of Brand Book Development, Church Guided Usage, and Evaluation. Further, the study required multiple methodologies. Hybrid Engagement, Online Ethnography, and FGD were utilized in the course of the study to execute the project with training, implementation, and evaluation to gather the needed data.

As assessed from the responses of the FGD with the Graphic Outputs posted on Facebook last December 2020 and evaluation of Expert Analyses, the resulting Brand Book was deemed efficient in assisting RIL on brand building and creative communication. It achieved the value proposition of informing, inspiring, and enforcing. Moreover, the fulfilling achievement for this production study through the processes and experience documented alongside will fill in the gap on the lack of resources, knowledge, skills, and guidance in branding among community churches and may help create visually appealing graphics and outputs that collectively represent the brand identity.

For future studies, this thesis can be replicated with a wider emphasis on empirical data gathering allowing comparative approaches. An audience

reception study can also be explored since varied responses of audiences were intended by a designed Brand Book. It is also recommended to include the making of modules for the Brand Book Development Usage consisting of the actual procedures from three sequential processes and the proprietary skills needed, such as basic graphic design for the church.

Park, Jungyeon. “Growing Up with an Absent Father and How Selected Korean Adolescents Perceive God as Father.” Master of Arts in Religious Education (Holistic Child Development), 2021.

The main objective of the study was to explore whether or not growing up with an absent father affects how selected Korean adolescents perceive God as Father. The primary finding of this study is that the children’s perception of God is affected when the father is absent in the child’s growing up years. There were five adolescent respondents between 13 to 19 years of age and five mothers who participated in the study.

This study was anchored in the tenets of Attachment Theory set forth by John Bowlby (1958) and Mary Ainsworth (1970). One of the most important concepts in this attachment theory is the Internal Working Model (IWM), that is, a child’s understanding of the world, self, and others. A child’s IWM is reflected in the degree of security or insecurity experienced within the parent-child bond. This study also considered the Father Presence Questionnaire (FPQ) set forth by Krampe and Newton, which examines a child’s relationship with the father and beliefs about the father.

The design principle for the research was based in the qualitative method. The methodology used in the study was a multiple-case study approach. Five case studies were conducted. The data for this study came from the responses of the research participants in the semi-structured interviews. The data from the mothers provided information to triangulate the responses of the adolescents. Data were analyzed using the MAXQDA software to produce Maxmaps for each case.

Based on the data analysis, the following conclusions were drawn. It appears that first, the attachment of adolescent respondents with their fathers is reflected in their attachment with God. This is true even when the

attachment is formed when the father and the adolescent live together. Second, fathers who are physically absent or separated from their children can still be involved in their child's life, but this needs commitment on the part of the father. This involvement also can affect how adolescents perceive God as Father because part of their perceptions of their own fathers is carried over into their ideas of God as Father. Third, it appears that even when the absent fathers are not involved in the child's spiritual life, all the fathers are involved in other facets of the child's life. With the influence of their mothers and other church members, adolescents who grow up with an absent father can still perceive "God as Father" or "Lord God." Fourth, based on this study, how the selected respondents perceived their earthly fathers "corresponded" with their perception of God as Father. An earthly father, even when absent, can affect the child's perception of God.

Finally, based on the findings of the study, the following specific recommendations were identified for the ministry of the local church: (1) invite subject matter experts who can teach the mothers how attachment with their father is important in children's spiritual life; (2) create mother-adolescent programs where mothers in the church plan activities with their adolescents; (3) form mothers' prayer groups; and (4) create a program to teach the mothers how to encourage their husbands to get involved in their child's life.

