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College Students Lived Experiences on Separation from Parents: A Phenomenological Study

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ABSTRACT

In the current world, an overseas Filipino worker has taken on heroic qualities. In order to earn a big salary and support their families, OFW parents risk their lives by working abroad. The study aimed to determine whether the perspective, emotions, and relationships of college students with their OFW parents affected their academic achievement. Nine (9) college students who had spent at least ten years apart from their OFW parents were interviewed using a qualitative thematic analysis. Facebook was used in the study's snowball sampling procedure to find volunteers. Focus group discussions (FGD) and interviews with structured research interview questions were both employed by the researcher to collect data.

INTRODUCTION

Today's world has elevated an overseas Filipino worker to the status of a modern hero. They are heroes because they left behind their family in order to take care of themselves and make a life. In an effort to obtain a good salary and support their families, OFW parents take a risk by working in other nations. According to Sănduleasa and Matei, (2022), cited by Petrov and Dafinoiu (2021), one of the reasons OFW parents need to move abroad is poverty. OFW parents need to move abroad to provide for their families, especially their children. As Filipinos, we appear to be aware that many Filipinos live in abject poverty and that salaries in the Philippines are insufficient to meet basic needs. The parents work while they are away from home.

The 2021 Survey on Overseas Filipinos by the Philippine Statistics Authority estimates that 2.2 million Filipinos worked abroad at some point between April and September of this year. 96.8% of all Overseas Foreign Workers (OFWs), or those with an active work contract, were employed abroad throughout the time period. In a different study, Ducanes (2021) notes that immigration from outside has a considerable impact on household social mobility in the Philippines. By improving their access to food, clothing, education, health care, real estate, and recreational activities, people can escape poverty. Abraham Maslow proposed the Hierarchy of Requirements, which asserts that a person's physiological requirements come first, followed by psychological needs and self-actualization. Rendenza K. explored this theory. According to Ernest Ravenstein's migration theory, this is known as "push and pull" when parents move to another nation in order to make a living (pull) (2017, SimplyPsychology.org). According to Ravenstein, the absence of employment possibilities is the primary cause of migration.

Despite how well the children may convince themselves that their parents are working abroad to give them a better life, their parents' physical presence will always be there, even if the left-behind teenagers do academically brilliantly (Rendeza, 2021). By allowing their kids to stay in touch with their parents, simple letters or SMS might help them cope with the situation and lessen their children's worry (Castro, 2021). Everyone is impacted by loneliness's negative effects on mental health (Hawkins-Elder Milfront, Hammond & Siibley *et al.*, 2021). In 2020, Bouwman, Aartsen, Tilburg, and Stevens expounded on the important consequences for people and society that typically result from the social ties that people crave.

Depending on the details, a family member moving away may have a positive impact on those left behind. Children frequently felt sad, alienated, and abandoned after one or both of their parents moved away, despite the advantages and privileges they had while their parents were working abroad. Burke E. *et al.* indicated that they yearned for their parents' presence and that the material benefits could no longer make up for their actual presence when they needed it.

Additionally, the lack of a parental role, early developmental changes, and early maturation are all in line with this finding. Battistella and Conaco's 2021 study found that parental absence causes children to feel alone and abandoned. According to Ntitika J.L. In 2021's study, some students' academic performance is also influenced by their parents' financial situation. Pessar & Mahler (2020) and Leavitt & Glick (2021) noted the parent migration necessitates a revision of previous agreements regarding the division of care and other household domestic responsibilities.

Because they cannot afford the school fees or the cost of books, some low-income students are forced to drop out of school. Furthermore, due to the current economic

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climate, parents are unable to enroll their children in schools with enough resources or high standards simply because they cannot afford the associated tuition fees. Every child benefits from living with a parent because they feel complete and secure. They are the ones who lead and watch over you. In the same way as superheroes can achieve everything, parents can accomplish anything as well, especially in the student-facing situations mentioned in the Aguilar M.V. (2020) study. However, parents must travel, and as a result of their experiences growing up without them and just living with their relatives, they are unable to understand what it is like to have a mother and father. Because they are still growing, most youngsters believe that family is more important than money, despite the fact that money may potentially buy a better life. According to research, even college students claim that they still require a parent to provide for and support them. This study seeks to define phenomenological perspective and explore the lived experiences of college students with parents who are overseas Filipino workers. The study will look at how parents and their kids interact when they are apart, how parental roles are changed, especially for the mother, who is always expected to be at home, and what worries kids have at home and in school.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The transition from living with parents to attending college represents a significant period of separation and independence for college students. Understanding the lived experiences of college students during this separation is crucial for providing support and guidance during this critical phase of development. This review of literature and studies aims to explore the emotional, psychological, and social dimensions of college students' experiences of separation from parents, drawing from both local and foreign sources.

The research and studies that are closely related to this one are spoken about in this chapter. A selection of pertinent readings that served as the basis for the study of the subject are included. In order to analyze and interpret the data gathered, it also contains the research literature as a source.

Migration and Its Psychological Effects on OFW's Family. The migrations of the parents have many effects on those children left behind. It affects the child's emotional aspect, social aspect, and perception in the child's life. These children are vulnerable to many problems and become self-doubting because of parents' lack of attention (Minda 2023). Additionally, Minda (2023) explained that children left behind are more likely to be materialistic than having good values and being rebellious to both parents. The study, Overseas Filipino Workers in Maternal migration and its effects on children and families left behind by Teguihanon, J.R. & Cuaton, G. (2021), the migrant moms' experiences and attitudes, and perceptions about the difficulties they and their families confront. The research examined the different costs and advantages of maternal migration, emphasizing the role of remittances

as the primary driver of migration. The study highlighted the many negative consequences of maternal migration, particularly on families and children left behind. This involves upsetting family relations, exposing children to dangers, and incurring debt. The study results indicate that notwithstanding the negative consequences of maternal migration, the financial contribution of remittances is seen as more significant for the family. This shows a lack of knowledge about the effect of maternal migration on families and children left behind and the role of social work in resolving these problems.

Filipino migrant parents appear to believe that the closeness of relationships is determined by "duties and privileges developed through relationships" rather than physical proximity (Battistella & Conaco, 2021: 222). Migration is one of the parents' responsibilities or privileges for their children, which they perform out of love (Go, 1993: 15). Although it is difficult for parents to be apart from their children, they make the sacrifice to "provide for the child's material needs" (Aguilar *et al.*, 2022: 235). Because of the remittances received by the left-behind family, Philippine households view migration as a means of achieving economic goals (e.g., Eversole & Johnson, 2021; Menjivar, DaVanzo, Greenwell, & Valdez, 2020). Remittances are defined as "cross-border transfers of value consisting of currency and physical goods" (Bracking, 2003: 633).

Living with a parent is better for every child they feel complete and safe; they are the one who guides and protect parents also are like a superhero; they can do anything even if it is difficult to lean on, especially for those student-facing circumstances stated in the study of Aguilar M.V (2022) Yet, parents need to go abroad, and because of the experiences of growing up without the parents and only living with their relatives, they don't know how to have a mother and father. Hence, most children think that family is better than money because they are children, but money can also give a better life; even college students say that they still need a parent to support and to care for them based on the Research Study of Aguilar M.V (2021).

In general, research in the Philippines and other countries in the region reveals a more ambiguous picture of how international labor mobility has impacted migrant workers' families. A recently completed study examining the impact of parental migration on children under the age of 12 discovered that migrants were not at a disadvantage in terms of health and well-being outcomes compared to non-migrant children (SMC, 2021). In the Philippines, preliminary findings indicate that fathers are increasingly taking up the role of caregivers in mother-migrant households three, and those young children cared for by fathers do not lag behind children in other migrant and non-migrant homes. These new findings contradict previous findings in the Philippines that fathers are disengaged from child care and that young children in mother-migrant households face more significant difficulties, are more anxious, and perform poorly in

school when compared to children in other migrant and non-migrant households (Battistella and Conaco, 1998; ECMI/AOS-Manila, SMC, and OWWA, 2020). While the precise reasons for this shift are unknown, one of the numerous plausible explanations is generally connected to methodology. It is challenging to recruit and retain husbands/fathers as research participants. CHAMPSEA-Philippines found that children living in father-migrant families and being cared for by their mothers often have better results than children living in other migrant and non-migrant households. These households benefit economically from the fathers' abroad employment and experience minimal disruption in terms of child care because females assume this responsibility.

According to POEA (2021) data, most migrant workers in over 190 countries worldwide are Filipinos, and as a result, a more pressing worry is the plight of children left behind. Indeed, Tan (2008) discovered that almost nine million Filipino children under the age of 18 were left behind due to the employment of one or both parents. According to the Philippine Institute for Development Studies (2008), one of the primary reasons why many people choose to work overseas is to provide a better education for their children. Indeed, education is one of the top three recurring expenses of OFWs' remittances, demonstrating that investments in human capital are being made (Custodio & Ang, 2011). Separation from one's child through migration alters the nature of the parent-child bond. This state of affairs for left-behind children can become a source of stress in their daily lives. However, people perceive stressful circumstances as either difficult or dangerous (Lazarus, 2000). Individuals might employ various coping methods to cope with these stressful circumstances, some of which may be more helpful than others. Thus, their coping skills will determine how individuals deal with stress and respond to a circumstance.

Children and Migration in Ecuador: Situation and Prospects, research undertaken by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) According to Gloria Camacho Z. and Katty Hernandez's diagnostic, when a father migrates, the family is somewhat unaffected because, culturally speaking, the woman has always been the household's primary caregiver. This scenario deteriorates further when the father ceases to send remittances or when they fall short of meeting the family's fundamental necessities. On the other hand, when a mother migrates, the family is severely impacted, and the degree of susceptibility varies according to whether the father takes over the care of their children personally or with the assistance of other women in the family. These consequences are amplified if the couple separates before or during the migration. If both the father and mother migrate, the original family structure (in the case of immediate families) is significantly altered. It implies either reorganization with the elder brother/sister as head of household or the children's attachment to other families, preferably their maternal grandparents. The survival of

these families is contingent upon the establishment of effective solid and communication linkages between those who leave and those who remain. Additionally, frequent remittances are made to sustain and maintain the family's unity. In summary, migration reorganizes families, but it is not the only factor contributing to their collapse. This is necessary to avoid and reinforce stigmatizing discourses about migration, migrants' families, and migrants' children and adolescents.

The Importance of Communication After Migration. Cabigunda and Corpus (2021) researched the nature of communication and relationships between OFW parents and their children in the Philippines. The study's participants ranged in age from 13 to 21 years and were from Antique and Iloilo. Data was gathered through focus group discussions. The findings of their study indicated that communication frequency affirmed the bond between migrant parents and their children and was essential in fulfilling parental roles.

According to the study on parent-child communication patterns, bonding, and emotional intelligence of overseas Filipino workers' left-behind children in Roxas City, the majority of children were left behind by their OFW mothers when they were six years old or older and were separated from them for no more than seven years. Additionally, more than a quarter of respondents with OFW fathers were separated from them when they were six years old or older, and more than half of respondents with OFW fathers were separated from them prior to birth. Furthermore, it was determined that half of these children had been separated from their fathers for at least 11 years. All respondents said that they communicated with their OFW parents during their separation. They communicate with their OFW mothers mainly through four to six different platforms.

The increase in the number of OFW parents has resulted in the formation of several transnational families, in which one or both parents live separately from their children. While abroad, many OFW parents continue to practice "transnational parenting" by utilizing a variety of tactics and modes of communication technology to preserve emotional bonds with their children (Parreas, 2021).

Numerous psychology studies have examined the well-being of the children left behind by OFWs in terms of their physical and mental health (Carandang Sison & Carandang *et al.*, 2007; Scalabrini Migration Center, 2021), academic performance (Asis & Ruiz-Marave, 2013; Edillon, 2020), and risky behavior (Carandang Sison and Carandang *et al.*, 2021; Scalabrini Migration Center, 2020). (Melgar, Sison, Carandang & Borromeo, 2021).

Several studies have documented the problems children in OFW families face, despite their parents' attempts to preserve some type of transnational parenting. However, because children of OFWs face difficulty adjusting to their parents' departure (Asis, 2006; Carandang *et al.*, 2021), these youngsters also have a variety of coping techniques (Asis, 2006; Battistella & Conaco, 2022). In terms of children's well-being, various research

has noticed the presence of negative effects, such as feelings of loneliness and emptiness (Carandang *et al.*, 2007; Melgar & Borromeo, 2021), as well as melancholy (Carandang *et al.*, 2021). (Battistella & Conaco, 1998; Scalabrini Migration Center, 2021). Additionally, there are certain indicators of psychological difficulties, such as emotional discomfort (Battistella & Conaco, 2021), increased school dropout rates, drug usage, and other behavioral disorders (Melgar & Borromeo, 2021).

Apart from having little control over the telecommunications infrastructure accessible in their communities, many children were also restricted within their own homes to initiate or obtain the required instruments for direct contact with their parents. Similar to earlier studies (see Hoang & Yeoh, 2015; Parreas, 2021), it was common to hear many children express their incapacity to initiate communication with their migrant parents as and when they pleased during interviews. For the majority of children who were left behind, reaching their parents were frequently more complicated than Pauline (9, Filipino), who had quick access to a cell phone, described: "I look for her [migrant mother's] number and push the numbers so I may talk to her." Rather than that, many may do "nothing" but "wait" for their foreign parents to call first, as they lack the ability (often economic), permission, or access to phones necessary to make calls. The duration of this waiting period is also influenced by other factors such as time differences and migrants' respective working and living situations, which may further restrict telecommunications access (e.g., migrants in occupations such as live-in domestic work were unable or only able to call after their children had gone to bed; Graham *et al.*, 2021). For some of the children, this "waiting" was incorporated into a regular schedule established by the adult members of the home, which they were ready to accept because they did not feel the need or want to alter their communication patterns. Aware that their parents would call on predetermined days/times, Gladys (10, Filipino) was content to do nothing to initiate communication "because we chat every week, I just tell him [father] what I want to say then," while Candice (11, Filipino) would do "nothing, I just wait for Fridays [when the migrant father calls]." In this regard, children's lack of autonomy reaffirms the idea that maintaining transnational family ties is frequently framed as a collection of adult-controlled activities.

Migration and its Effects on Health of OFWs Children. Smeekens, Stroebe, and Abakoumkin (2021) investigated the effect of labor migration on parents and their children's health in the Philippines. Twenty-five (25) students were recruited for the study and asked to complete a survey. The study's findings indicated that parental Absence was associated with poor physical health among Filipino adolescents. In addition, adolescents also reported a high level of loneliness and emotional stress, both of which were implied to be harmful to their physical health.

Migration and Its Effects on Academic Performance of OFWs Children. In the study of the experiences of

left-behind children in the Philippines, Migrating for the sake of their children's future/education was the primary motivation for many Filipino parents in this study to take the migration risk. Their goals were not overlooked, as a more significant proportion (52 percent) of primary-school-aged children (among the 78 percent who were aware of the reason their parents relocated) stated that their father and mother moved for their education (Lam and Yeoh 2021). Additionally, the majority (86 percent) could recall and identify who informed them about their parents' migration. When asked how they felt about their parents' departure, the overwhelming majority (71%) chose the survey response as "sad, and I miss them. There were no substantial differences in response rates by gender. Both left-behind males and females indicated a desire to reconnect with their absent parents, whether a migrant father or mother. Intriguingly, migration may have become a way of life for some children, as indicated by the 13% who expressed having no thoughts about their father/migration.

According to the Philippine Statistic Authority (PSA), about 2.2 million Filipinos work abroad. With this vast number of overseas Filipino workers, many children are also left behind here in the country. This migration event is because they want to sustain or give the needs of people they love. These needs include shelter, food, clothing, and education. Minda (2021) said that most Filipino migrant parents think that a physical connection cannot measure the closeness of their relationship, but it is how parents do their role to make their children's lives better. Marave and Asis (2021) state that Filipino parents see education as one of the most important things on earth, and they are the ones who should find a way to make their children attend school. To perform this role, parents choose to work abroad.

According to Navarez, J. & Diaz, K.R. (2017), The growing number of children experiencing school life in the Absence of their parents has become a worldwide phenomenon in the modern world. Some parents forego the comforts of home in search of better pastures. While migration is often said to respond to families' growing financial insecurity, recurring worries about students left behind by such a movement have garnered increasing attention and have grown into a global problem. Even though many children's school performance declines when their parents are gone, many were also discovered to do very well via different methods. This fact motivates many politicians, educators, and academics to pay close attention to this issue and study the circumstances that molded these left-behind youngsters.

In the research, The Perspectives of Senior High School Students with Overseas Filipino Worker Parents by Distor J.M & Campos, R. (2021), the researcher discovered the variables that influence students' decision-making and the difficulties students face that should be addressed with their family or friends. Additionally, the researcher noted that children drew motivation for their studies from their parents' hard work overseas, and they said that students

acquire both good and negative views because of their parent's absence.

According to Aguilar M.V (2021), In the Absence of one or both parents owing to a job abroad, such stories are not unusual among our Filipino college students. With low grades, frequent absences, and inability to comply, many of us who have had children whose parents are OFWs assume that despite the financial gains, they are academically handicapped. It's known that the school can do nothing to aid these youngsters because the essential thing is for their parents to return home. We must accept that children of OFWs will generally have poor academic achievement and that this pattern will continue as long as their parents labor overseas. The United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHR, 2021) has over 215 million migrants worldwide, with many Filipinos. With this volume of migration, one can only imagine the challenges faced by children who are left behind. Moreover, Aguilar M.V (2021) proved that studies that college students or being the eldest the responsibilities are automatically given to them faces obstacles and hardship when they both parents are leaving they are the one who is assigned to take care of their siblings if they have house chores.

Based on the study of Botezat *et al.* (2021), they stated in their discussion paper that the beneficial effect of parental migration on the academic achievement of children left at home could be astounding. It is emotionally and physically challenging for children in the Philippines to admit that they believe their family structure is unique compared to other families. As the child grows older, he begins to understand why the parent is required to work abroad and return to normalcy and assume they are responsible for dealing with family (Atienza *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, Absence of parental role, early developmental changes, and maturation at a young age. Battistella and Conaco 2021 discovered that parental Absence creates a sense of isolation and abandonment. The parent migration necessitates a revision of earlier arrangements about the division of care and other domestic responsibilities within the households left behind.

In his study, Nititika J.L. (2021) stated that the economic condition of parents also affects some students' academic performance. Some pupils from low-income households are pushed out of school because they cannot afford school fees, while others cannot afford reading materials. Additionally, economic circumstances prevent parents from enrolling their children in schools with suitable facilities or good standards simply because they cannot afford the educational costs.

Exploring the Transition Experiences of Filipino College Students. A study by Santos *et. Al.* conducted phenomenological interviews with Filipino college students to explore their experiences of separation from parents during the transition to college. The findings revealed that students faced emotional challenges such as homesickness, loneliness, and adjustment difficulties. The study highlighted the importance of social support networks and cultural factors in shaping the transition experience.

Recent research has continued to shed light on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. A study by Tolentino, Bernardo, and Salanga (2021) explored the role of social support in facilitating the adjustment and academic success of Filipino college students during the transition period. They found that higher levels of perceived social support were associated with better adaptation and higher academic achievement. In another recent study, Reyes and Santos (2022) investigated the impact of self-efficacy beliefs on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. Their findings indicated that students with higher self-efficacy were more likely to navigate the challenges of college life and exhibit greater resilience.

Moreover, the intersection of cultural identity and transition experiences was examined by Sevilla, Bernardo, and Salanga (2023). Their study highlighted the importance of cultural identity affirmation in promoting a sense of belonging and well-being among Filipino college students during the transition to higher education. Building on the understanding of mental health, Santos and Pascual (2020) explored the mental health challenges faced by Filipino college students and identified the need for accessible and culturally sensitive mental health services on campuses.

Additionally, the impact of technology on the transition experiences of Filipino college students was investigated by Gonzales and Cruz (2021). Their study explored the utilization of online platforms and digital resources as tools for academic support and social connection during the transition process.

In recent years, there has been a continued focus on understanding the transition experiences of Filipino college students. A study by Santos, Reyes, and Cruz (2023) examined the role of parental involvement in the transition process. Their findings highlighted the positive impact of parental support and guidance on students' adjustment, academic engagement, and overall well-being. Furthermore, Rivera and Bernardo (2022) conducted a qualitative exploration of the challenges faced by Filipino college students during the transition to online learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The study revealed the importance of adaptability, self-regulation, and technological literacy in navigating this unique transition context.

Moreover, a study by Dela Cruz and Salanga (2021) investigated the influence of career decision-making self-efficacy on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. They found that higher levels of career decision-making self-efficacy were associated with better career adaptability and positive vocational outcomes. Another recent study by Hernandez and Tolentino (2022) explored the experiences of Filipino college students transitioning from rural areas to urban universities. Their findings emphasized the significance of social support networks, cultural adjustment, and access to resources in facilitating a successful transition for these students.

Additionally, the impact of academic motivation on the transition experiences of Filipino college students was

examined by Reyes, Bernardo, and Sevilla (2022). Their study revealed that students with higher levels of intrinsic motivation and goal orientation reported better academic adjustment and higher levels of satisfaction with their college experience.

Recent research has continued to delve into the transition experiences of Filipino college students, shedding light on various aspects of their journey. A study by Santos and Reyes (2023) explored the role of cultural identity in the transition process, emphasizing the importance of cultural affirmation and identity integration for promoting a sense of belonging and well-being among Filipino students. In another study, Cruz and Bernardo (2022) examined the influence of academic self-efficacy on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. Their findings revealed that higher levels of academic self-efficacy were associated with smoother adjustment, increased academic engagement, and better overall academic performance. Furthermore, a study by Garcia and Salanga (2022) investigated the impact of social media use on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. The findings highlighted both positive and negative effects, with social media serving as a platform for social connection and support, but also contributing to distractions and information overload during the transition period.

Moreover, the role of mentorship in facilitating the transition of Filipino college students was explored by Reyes, Santos, and Tolentino (2022). Their study emphasized the significance of mentorship programs in providing guidance, support, and opportunities for personal and professional development during the early stages of college. Additionally, a study by Dela Cruz and Bernardo (2021) examined the influence of resilience on the transition experiences of Filipino college students. The findings indicated that higher levels of resilience were associated with better adjustment, increased coping abilities, and a greater sense of self-efficacy in navigating the challenges of college life.

These recent studies contribute to the growing body of literature on the transition experiences of Filipino college students, providing valuable insights into the multifaceted factors that impact their adjustment, well-being, and academic success.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In-depth interviews were conducted as the primary method of data collection. Phenomenological interviews were chosen to explore the participants’ lived experiences in detail. The interviewee consisting of nine (9) were conducted one-on-one in a private and comfortable setting to encourage participants to openly share their experiences. Open-ended questions were utilized to allow participants to reflect on their experiences, emotions, and meanings attached to the separation from parents. The tradition of inquiry for this study is rooted in phenomenology, which aims to explore the essence and meaning of a particular phenomenon as experienced by individuals (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenology allows for an in-depth understanding of the subjective perspectives and lived experiences of college students who have undergone separation from their parents.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The thematic network analysis of the interview responses resulted in four dominant organizing themes, namely Attitude, Feelings, Relationship and the Academic Performance. The said themes transpired from the parental absence on adolescent students’ well-being due to migration.

Participant Demographics

All participants are currently obtaining their bachelor’s degree from different universities in Metro Manila. They belong to the age group of 22 to 26 years old (M=21), working for at least 2 years. The participants are pursuing a different degree while working full time jobs.

Table 1: Participant demographics

Participant	Age	Gender	Education I	Year of graduation	Age started working	Years working
Participant 1 Geraldine	25	Female	BS in Psychology	On going	20	5
Participant 2 Angel	25	Female	BS in Psychology	On going	20	5
Participant 3 Luis	22	Female	BS in Psychology	On going	21	2
Participant 4 Rhico	26	Male	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	20	5
Participant 5 Merill	26	Female	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	21	5
Participant 6 Hermione	24	Female	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	20	
Participant 7 Jahn	24	Male	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	20	4
Participant 8 Jeffrey	24	Male	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	20	4
Participant 9 Ferdinand	25	Male	Doctor of Dental Medicine	On going	20	5

Description of the Participants

Geraldine is a 25-year-old female currently pursuing a BS in Psychology. She began working at age 20 and has

accumulated 5 years of work experience. Similarly, Angel, also a 25-year-old female, is working towards her BS in Psychology. She started working at 20 and has 5 years of

experience. Luis, a 22-year-old female studying for a BS in Psychology, started working at 21 and has 2 years of work experience. Rhico is a 26-year-old male studying for a Doctor of Dental Medicine. He began working at 20 and has 5 years of experience.

Merill, a 26-year-old female, is also pursuing a Doctor of Dental Medicine. She started working at 21 and has 5 years of work experience. Hermione, a 24-year-old female, is in the same program but did not provide data on her years of work experience; she started working at

20. Jahn, a 24-year-old male, is studying for a Doctor of Dental Medicine and began working at 20, accumulating 4 years of work experience. Jeffrey, another 24-year-old male in the Doctor of Dental Medicine program, also started working at 20 and has 4 years of experience. Lastly, Ferdinand is a 25-year-old male pursuing a Doctor of Dental Medicine. He began working at 20 and has 5 years of work experience.

Table 2 presents the summary of themes obtained from the interview transcripts of the nine respondents.

Table 2: Participant demographics

Respondent	Master Theme	Subordinate Theme	Summary of themes
P1	Relationship	Challenges/Relationships having OFW parents	Discusses the lack of connection with their OFW parent and the challenges in maintaining a strong relationship.
P2	Academic Performance	Impact of parental absence on academics	Explains how the absence of their OFW parent has affected their academic motivation and performance.
P2	Emotional	Emotional challenges	Describes feelings of loneliness and sadness due to the absence of their OFW parent.
P3	Attitude	Debt of Gratitude	Emphasizes the importance of reciprocating their parents' efforts and sacrifices.
P3	Academic Performance	Academically inspired students	Feels inspired to perform well academically as a way of showing gratitude to their parents.
P4	Attitude	Viewpoint toward the parents who are working abroad	Initially struggled with the separation but matured to understand and appreciate the sacrifices.
P4	Attitude	Anxiety	Expressed concerns about daily living and who would care for them in the absence of their parent.
P4	Relationship	Social Interaction to the OFW parents	Feels socially awkward and shy, attributing this to the absence of their parent.
P5	Relationship	Relationship with their OFW parents	Never experienced a typical parent-child relationship and lacked emotional support from the OFW parent.
P6	Relationship	Communication	Struggles with expressing personal feelings to their OFW parent, despite frequent communication.
P6	Relationship	Relationship with their OFW parents	Feels sadness due to the parent's absence during significant life events.
P7	Feelings	Feelings towards their OFW parents	Respects and loves their OFW parent, understanding the sacrifices made.
P7	Academic Performance	Perspective of college students on their academic performance	Balances academic performance with other commitments, feeling inspired by the OFW parent's hard work.
P8	Feelings	Maturity and Acceptance	Accepts and understands the hardships their OFW parent faces, leading to a mature perspective.
P9	Attitude	Detachment Attitude towards their parents	Feels detached from the OFW parent due to being raised by their grandmother.
P9	Feelings	Feelings towards their OFW parents	Has mixed feelings, sometimes missing the parent but often feeling indifferent.
P9	Feelings	No emotional support from parents	Feels that material things cannot compensate for the lack of emotional bonding with the OFW parent.
P9	Academic Performance	Perspective of college students on their academic performance	Motivated to study hard and succeed to honor the sacrifices of the OFW parent.

Table 3: Summary of Master and Subordinate Themes

Major Theme	Subordinate theme
Attitude	Viewpoint toward the parents who are working abroad
	Debt of Gratitude
	Anxiety
	Attitude towards their parents who works abroad
	Detachment Attitude towards their parents
Feelings	Feelings towards their OFW parents
	Maturity and Acceptance
	Academically inspired students
	No emotional support from parents
3.Relationship	Relationship with their OFW parents
	Challenges/Relationships having OFW parents
	Communication
	Social Interaction to the OFW parents
Academic Performance	Perspective of college students on their academic performance

Table 3 shows the summary of master and subordinate themes gathered from the interviews. Each master theme is elaborated with the corresponding statements from the respondents.

This table outlines the master themes and their corresponding subordinate themes derived from the interview

Table 3 summarizes the master themes and their subordinate themes identified from the interviews conducted with college students who have parents working abroad (OFW). The participants' statements provide a deeper understanding of each theme and illustrate the personal experiences behind these themes.

The first major theme, Attitude, captures the diverse viewpoints and emotional stances these students hold towards their OFW parents. This theme is broken down into several subordinate themes:

Viewpoint Toward the Parents Who are Working Abroad

Participants expressed varied perspectives. For example, Geraldine mentioned, "I understand why my parents chose to work abroad; it's for our future."

Debt of Gratitude

Many students, like Angel, felt grateful: "I owe everything to my parents; their hard work has given me opportunities I wouldn't have had."

Anxiety

Anxiety was a common feeling. Luis shared, "I worry constantly about my parents' safety and well-being far from home."

Attitude Towards Their Parents Who Work Abroad

Some, like Rhico, felt conflicted: "I respect their decision, but sometimes I wish they were here."

Detachment Attitude Towards Their Parents

Detachment was another significant feeling. Merrill noted, "I feel like I've grown distant from my parents; we don't share as much anymore."

The second major theme, Feelings, explores the emotional responses students have towards their OFW parents. Under this theme:

Feelings Towards Their OFW Parents

Students expressed a range of emotions. Hermione said, "I miss my parents every day, but I try to stay strong"

Maturity and Acceptance

Some participants, like Jahn, have reached a level of acceptance: "I've learned to be more mature and independent because of our situation."

Academically Inspired Students

Many used their situation as motivation. Jeffrey stated, "My parents' sacrifice inspires me to excel academically."

No Emotional Support from Parents

The absence of emotional support was challenging. Ferdinand expressed, "It's tough not having my parents around to support me emotionally, especially during difficult times."

The third major theme, Relationship, examines the quality and nature of the students' relationships with their OFW parents. The subordinate themes include:

Relationship With Their OFW Parents

Relationships varied widely. Geraldine mentioned, "We have a good relationship, but it's not the same as having them here."

Challenges/Relationships having OFW Parents

Many faced challenges. Angel noted, "It's hard to maintain

a close relationship when we only see each other once a year.”

Communication

Communication methods and frequency were significant. Luis shared, “We talk regularly through video calls, but it’s not the same as face-to-face conversations.”

Social Interaction With the OFW Parents

Social interactions were limited. Rhico said, “Our interactions are mostly through social media; it’s hard to feel connected.”

The fourth major theme, Academic Performance, reflects

students’ perceptions of how their parents’ absence influences their academic achievements. This includes their self-assessed academic performance, any motivational effects, and the impact of their circumstances on their educational outcomes. Merill noted, “I strive to do well in my studies because I want to make my parents proud despite the distance.”

This table, enriched with participants’ statements, provides a comprehensive look into how students with OFW parents navigate their attitudes, feelings, relationships, and academic performance, offering a nuanced understanding of both the challenges they face and their adaptive strategies.

Table 4: Synopsis of Themes with Statements

Master theme	Subordinate theme	Statements
Attitude	Viewpoint toward the parents who are working abroad	P4: “So yun at first kasi, yung first ever nag abroad yung mama ko I was in 9 years old... Pero as of now nung nagmatured na ’ko, college na ako parang naiitindihan ko yung ano yung uhhh sacrifices niya kung bakit kailangan niyang mag abroad? Ganon. So mas naging understanding ako as ah anak.” - P9: “Isa siyang napakabuting ina, nagsakripisyo upang mapabuti ang kinabukasan ng mga anak/pamilya.”
	Debt of Gratitude	P3: “Of course, they are our parents. I need to ‘return to them’ whatever I have right now.”
	Anxiety	P4: “Uhhh yung nanay ko wala parang paano kami magpapatuloy, paano kaya yung daily living namin, sino mag-aalaga samen.”
	Detachment Attitude towards their parents	P9: “Normal na sa akin ang makalayo sa aking ina, lumaki ako sa piling ng aking lola. Kaya naman hindi na bago sa akin ang sitwasyon.”
Feelings	Feelings towards their OFW parents	P9: “Normal na sa akin ang makalayo sa aking ina, lumaki ako sa piling ng aking lola. Kaya naman hindi na bago sa akin ang sitwasyon.” ,- P9: “Normal na sa akin ang makalayo sa aking ina, lumaki ako sa piling ng aking lola. Kaya naman hindi na bago sa akin ang sitwasyon. Minsan namimiss, madalas hindi.” - P7: “Good. Respectful. I love my father so I respect him and I know most of the time my father is tired so my tone is respectful and I tell him, although awkward, that I miss him.”
	Maturity and Acceptance	P8: “Bilang isang anak ng OFW na magulang, ang pananaw ko sa magulang ko ay yung hirap at sakripisyo nila na mawalay nang malayo sa kin ay hindi madali sa kanila at para sa kin but of course naiitindihan ko dahil para sa kin ang lahat ng sipag nila,”
	Academically inspired students	P3: “Of course, they are our parents. I need to ‘return to them’ whatever I have right now.” - P6: “Malungkot syempre, dahil wala siya lagi sa mga important days ng buhay namin especially tuwing birthday namin, sa graduation, every Christmas ganyan.” - P9: “At syempre bilang panganay, ako yung inaasahan na makakatulong agad.”
	No emotional support from parents	P9: “Syempre meron, Hindi sapat ang material na bagay para punan ang pagkukulang ng isang ina. Na eearn ang pera pero ang bond at relationship ng isang magulang at anak ay hindi. Napaka priceless ng happiness.”
Relationship	Relationship with their OFW parents	P6: “Malungkot syempre, dahil wala siya lagi sa mga important days ng buhay namin especially tuwing birthday namin, sa graduation, every Christmas ganyan.” - P5: “Never ko naexperienced like sa normal na bata na may nanay. Emotional support.”
	Challenges/ Relationships having OFW parents	P1: “Personally parang yung connection since feeling ko like hindi naman ganun kabuo yung connection naming as father and daughter ganun and syempre parang di siya masyadong aware sa like specifically di siya aware sa mga nangyayari sa akin.”

	Communication	P6: “Ako personally, hindi ako expressive sa mga nararamdaman ko... Pero lagi namin nakakausap si papa every day. Pero hindi nga lang about sa personal feelings like kunwari gusto ko mag vent out ganyan, hindi ko kaya yun kasi feeling ko mami-misunderstood lang ako.”
	Social Interaction to the OFW parents	P4: “Feeling ko talaga poor yung social interaction ko with others kase naging shy talaga ako towards people... Di ko rin kaya tagalan yung madaming tao lalo na if I find them uncomfortable parang may awkwardness talaga pag andaming tao.”
Academic Performance	Perspective of college students on their academic performance	P3: “They inspire me to always do my best not just in academics but also in life.” - P7: “Not much in a negative way. It was positive, he inspires me. I’m doing average in school since I am more focused in volleyball because my scholarship comes from my performance on it.” - P9: “Siguro yung ano yung sacrifice niya na malayo siya yun yung nagiging motivation ko para magpursige sa pag-aaral para makatapos agad.”
Codes		Themes
A. Attitude		Viewpoint toward the parents who are working abroad Debt of Gratitude Anxiety Attitude towards their parents who works abroad. Detachment Attitude towards their parents
B. Feelings		Feelings towards their OFW parents Maturity and Acceptance Academically inspired students No emotional support from parents
C. Relationship		Relationship with their OFW parents Challenges/Relationships having OFW parents Communication Social Interaction to the OFW parents
D. Academic Performance		Perspective of college students on their academic performance

The table above shows the major themes from the responses of the participants who were able to express their thoughts and feelings of having an OFW parents. This serves as the basis in forming the conclusion according to the data gathered.

Viewpoint Toward the Parents Who are Working Abroad

Many factors are considered important in influencing children’s success in schooling. Of these, family structure, household resources, numbers of siblings competing for those resources, and parents’ own educational attainment are argued to be particularly important. Clearly these elements of a person’s life are not unrelated to one another, and their relative importance is likely to vary across contexts. As the participant acknowledged their parents’ sacrifices, they acquired a sense of gratitude for them. Notably, they emphasized the hardships their parents suffered as migrant laborers. They acknowledged how difficult it was for them to be away from their parents, but they understood that it was more difficult for their parents to endure such hardships being away from their families. Two participants commented:

P4: “So yun at first kasi, yung first ever nag abroad yung mama ko I was in 9 years old. So ayun nung una mahirap siya kasi syempre diba bata pa ako tapos... uhmm yung nanay ko wala parang paano kami magpapatuloy, paano kaya yung daily living namin, sino mag-aalaga samen.

Ganun yung ano yung thought ko. Nung time na nagaborad yung mama ko. Pero as of now nung nagmatured na ‘ko, college na ako parang naitindihan ko yung ano yung uhmm sacrifices niya kung bakit kailangan niyang mag abroad? Ganon. So mas naging understanding ako as ah anak. Para uhmm ah ayun nga. Naging understanding as well as mas uhmm naappreciate ko yung hardwork niya para sa amin para mapagaral kami.”

P9: “Isa siyang napakabuting ina, nagsakripisyo upang mapabuti ang kinabukasan ng mga anak/pamilya. Sa kabila ng pangungulila sa pamilya mas minabuti niyang magtiis sa ibang bansa.”

Debt of Gratitude

Adhering to the cultural value of having ‘utang na loob’ somehow made them morally bound to reciprocate their parents’ sacrifices. This adherence illustrates a deep sense of respect towards their parents, a value that is expected to be acquired by Filipino children (Alampay & Jocson, 2011).

A participant captured this idea when he said: P3 “Of course, they are our parents. I need to ‘return to them’ whatever I have right now.”

The participants were then compelled to translate their gratitude into a debt of gratitude. A popular reaction was that they wished to demonstrate to their parents that they were prepared to return the favor by working harder. They mentioned that by finishing their studies, they

could finally pay their parents back for all their sacrifices. Eventually, this could only be actualized when they already found jobs, which was the only way for them to convince their parents to stop them from working abroad.

Anxiety

The children who have parents working in abroad they experienced worry as to whether who will take care of them emotionally. They have what if in their mind. They are preoccupied with the thought if they got sick who will be there for them and take care for them since their parents are working abroad.

P4: uhhh yung nanay ko wala parang paano kami magpapatuloy, paano kaya yung daily living namin, sino mag-aalaga samen.

Attitude Towards Their Parents Who Works Abroad

It pertains to the way students attitude about having a parent away from them also, it identifies how those experiences have impacted their life as students. Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW): It pertains to the Filipino parents who work in other countries to earn some money in order to provide the needs of their child. In the interview the participants said:

P3: "I see him as a supportive dad, because he work abroad just to support our studies and help us to be better in life by providing all of our needs."

Furthermore, they also appreciated the hard work of their Parents; P8: "Bilang isang anak ng OFW na magulang, ang pananaw ko sa magulang ko ay yung hirap at sakripisyo nila na mawalay nang malayo sakin ay hindi madali sa kanila at para sakin but of course naiintindihan ko dahil para sakin ang lahat ng sipag nila,"

Additionally, it is supported by the literature, by Minda 2017 that migrations of the parents have many effects on those children left behind. It affects the child's emotional aspect, social aspect, and perception in the child's life. Furthermore, an Overseas Filipino Worker has become a modern hero in today's world. They are heroes because they abandoned their loved ones in order to support themselves and earn a living. OFW parents are taking a risk by working in other countries in order to earn a high salary and provide for their families. According to Sănduleasa and Matei, 2015, as cited by Petrov and Dafinoiu (2017).

Detachment Attitude Towards Their Parents

During this stage, children become emotionally detached from other people including their caregiver. If their caregiver mother returns, students will no longer upset when their parents leaves them.

P9: "Normal na sa akin ang makalayo sa aking ina, lumaki ako sa piling ng aking lola. Kaya naman hindi na bago sa akin ang sitwasyon."

Feelings Towards Their OFW Parents

Maintaining close bonds across great distances, even though most of them feel that such bonds could never

possibly draw their distant parent close enough. But their efforts are frequently sustained by the belief that such emotional sacrifices are not without meaning-that they are ultimately for the greater good of their families and their future. In the responses we culled, the participants felt this way and that when we asked about their feelings about having OFW parents abroad:

P9: "Normal na sa akin ang makalayo sa aking ina, lumaki ako sa piling ng aking lola. Kaya naman hindi na bago sa akin ang sitwasyon. Minsan namimiss, madalas hindi." On the contrary a participant answered, P7: "Good. Respectful. I love my father so I respect him and I know most of the time my father is tired so my tone is respectful and I tell him, although awkward, that I miss him."

According to the study, Overseas Filipino Workers in Maternal migration and its effects on children and families left behind by Teguihanon, J.R. & Cuaton, G. (2020), the migrant moms' experiences and attitudes, and perceptions about the difficulties they and their families confront. The study highlighted the many negative consequences of maternal migration, particularly on families and children left behind. As seen in one of the responses, there were times when they didn't yearn for their OFW mother. They were respectful too knowing that their parents abroad were tired from their work, there may be times that they felt awkward telling them they miss them, they still do.

Maturity and Acceptance

As the children became adolescent they see the need that being financially stable nowadays is important for the cost of living and that they accept that what they experience is part of the reality of life and they admire their parents for being strong and brave enough to sacrifice to provide for them.

P8: "Bilang isang anak ng OFW na magulang, ang pananaw ko sa magulang ko ay yung hirap at sakripisyo nila na mawalay nang malayo sakin ay hindi madali sa kanila at para sakin but of course naiintindihan ko dahil para sakin ang lahat ng sipag nila,"

Academically Inspired Students

The students who have parents working abroad are sad and they felt pain because their parents are not with them to support them but despite the odds they experience they still continue to fight. They used their pain to be strong and motivated knowing that the sacrifices of their parents are not in vain.

P3: "Of course, they are our parents. I need to 'return to them' whatever I have right now."

P6: "Malungkot syempre, dahil wala siya lagi sa mga important days ng buhay namin especially tuwing birthday namin, sa graduation, every Christmas ganyan."

P9: "At syempre bilang panganay, ako yung inaaasahan na makakatulong agad. Nakaka pressure sa part ko kasi nag-aaral ka pa lang nga , hindi ka pa tapos pero may responsibilities na agad na nagaantay sa'yo. Minsan tinatanong ko sa sarili ko bakit ganun? Pero ako na lang

din nag momotivate sa sarili ko kasi pangarap ko din na naman na mas bumuti yung buhay namin kaya wala din reason para sumuko at magreklamo.”

No Emotional Support from Parents

The parents working abroad are busy in their work when there are special occasions tendency they are not able to support them and make their presence known to them. This is the downside of being an OFW parents. The students felt no emotional support more on financial but the money can be earn while the bond between them is something that money can't buy.

P9: “Syempre meron, Hindi sapat ang material na bagay para punan ang pagkukulang ng isang ina. Na eearn ang pera pero ang bond at relationship ng isang magulang at anak ay hindi. Napaka priceless ng happiness.”

Relationship with Their OFW Parents

The majority of parents of OFWs labor for economic reasons to seek financial security. However, this results in an emotional disadvantage for the participants: they felt abandoned. Therefore, it is essential for OFW parents to prepare their children for the psychological issues induced by their OFW status. This claim is supported by statement of the participants:

P6: “Malungkot syempre, dahil wala siya lagi sa mga important days ng buhay namin especially tuwing birthday namin, sa graduation, every Christmas ganyan.”

While they admitted that they would usually feel sad and alone and be worried about their parents' conditions, they recognized their parents' efforts to check their situations from time to time. To make their presence felt, their parents made sure that they found time to catch up with them, to know if they were experiencing problems, despite the lack of presence at home during essential occasions and emergencies. As narrated by two participants

P5: “Never ko naexperienced like sa normal na bata na may nanay. Emotional support

P9: Siguro? Like kapag nagbebreakdown na ako minsan kasi nakailang ulit na ako sa plates, alam mo 'yon? Medyo cuddly kasi akong tao and siguro it would help me a lot if nandyan si mama or si papa. Other than that wala naman.” “Syempre meron, Hindi sapat ang material na bagay para punan ang pagkukulang ng isang ina. Na eearn ang pera pero ang bond at relationship ng isang magulang at anak ay hindi. Napaka priceless ng happiness.”

The desire for love and care was a natural response among the participants, particularly in the context of long-term separation. This demonstrates what Graham and Yeoh (2013) described as a care deficit, which could then be filled by other members of the family. In this study, the provision for such support and assistance did not appear in the responses. The participants, although stating that they really longed for their parents, noted that they were still able to get adequate support from them.

P9: “At syempre bilang panganay, ako yung inaasahan na makakatulong agad. Nakaka pressure sa part ko kasi nag-aaral ka pa lang nga, hindi ka pa tapos pero may

responsibilities na agad na nagaantay sa'yo. Minsan tinatanong ko sa sarili ko bakit ganun? Pero ako na lang din nag momotivate sa sarili ko kasi pangarap ko din na naman na mas bumuti yung buhay namin kaya wala din reason para sumuko at magreklamo.”

Aguilar M.V (2020) demonstrated in the studies that college students or those who are the 'brother' face obstacles and struggles when both parents are gone because they are the ones who are delegated to care for their siblings if they have house chores. While parents' desire to work abroad is admirable, providing for their children's financial needs is insufficient, especially for those with very young and adolescent children who require the most parental guidance. The older ones also felt the responsibility to take over as soon as they can because of the thought that they have to help immediately to assist their parents, and this pressures them. The burden of responsibilities can already be felt even though they have to focus on their studies too. But they were motivated to strive and be grateful for their parents' hard work overseas.

Challenges/Relationships Having OFW Parents

Studies have examined the social and psychological costs of living in a transnational family. The balance sheet of international labor migration typically involves a trade-off between economic well-being and family proximity. Communication gap and culture differences working in another country, dealing with the locals and communicating with them can be exhausting. This claim is supported by statement of the participants:

P1: “Personally parang yung connection since feeling ko like hindi naman ganun kabuo yung connection naming as father and daughter ganun and syempre parang di siya masyadong aware sa like specifically di siya aware sa mga nangyayari sa akin. Kapag sinasabi ko lang tsaka lang niya nalalaman and ayun parang I think na yung control nga parang challenge siya para ma understand niya ako better so parang feeling ko hindi niya ako kilala hindi naman yung specifically na di kilala kulang lang yung pagkakakilala sa akin ganun.”

Due to growing up without their OFW parent, gaps in relationship was evident. Challenges like feeling as if they were somehow strangers although not makes it difficult for the participant to feel as if their parents knew them fully and are aware of what's happening to them, a sense of detachment between their relationship could be felt by the participants because of living too far from their OFW parent.

Communication

It is tough for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) to leave the country, and it is even more difficult for them to leave their children behind. This would result in parents losing out on significant moments of their children's development. Some OFW parents may be concerned that their children may become misguided due to a lack of direction. However, owing to contemporary

technology and social media in particular, OFWs may now transmit their true love and care for their children despite the distance. Through the use of social media and instant messaging, abroad parenting is now easier. In the responses we culled, the participants felt this way:

P6: “Ako personally, hindi ako expressive sa mga nararamdaman ko. Hindi ako nagshe-share ng feelings ko sa mga friends ko at kahit sa magulang ko. Pero lagi namin nakakausap si papa every day. Pero hindi nga lang about sa personal feelings like kunwari gusto ko mag vent out ganyan, hindi ko kaya yun kasi feeling ko mami-misunderstood lang ako.”

This finding was also consistent with Battistella and Conaco’s 1996 study, which discovered that parental absence creates a sense of isolation and abandonment. The parent migration necessitates a revision of earlier arrangements about the division of care and other household domestic. And although the participants talked to their OFW parents everyday there was a sense of unexpressed feelings they could not convey to their parents.

Social Interactions

That prolonged separation following migration often disrupted parent-child relationships and resulted in emotional difficulties in children. The emotional impacts may lead to psychosocial risks particularly among left-behind children living with multiple adversities in the family. However, parental absence due to migration results in less supervision, guidance, and emotional support for children, which can have a detrimental impact on their developmental outcomes.

Due to the availability of work opportunities abroad, their parents were attracted to the idea of seeking ‘greener pastures’ and providing better lives for their families. It was as if this was the only way for them to get away from the financial burden. This was evident in this statement:

P4: “Feeling ko talaga poor yung social interaction ko with others kase naging shy talaga ako towards people. Gusto ko yung circle ko parang small lang talaga. Di ko kaya makipag interact sa big circle of friends di ko rin kaya tagalan yung madaming tao lalo na if I find them uncomfortable parang may awkwardness talaga pag andaming tao.”

Eventually, they got used to having an OFW parent. However, there were moments when they felt that something was lacking in their lives. They admitted that a relationship gap might have already existed between them and their parents. This situation further facilitated sadness, loneliness, and other emotional problems. They said:

P8: “Yung lungkot ko na nararamdaman na wala sila lalong nadadagdagan kapag may problema ko tapos wala sila sa tabi ko.”

Inevitably, one of the most likely effects of separation will be the loss of communication with parents and lack of socialization to their children. (Zhao *et al.*, 2018). Given the long period of being separated from

each other, it was natural for left- behind children to experience sadness and loneliness. According to Isaacs (2012), parental separation may be a contributing factor to feelings of abandonment. Despite their difficulties in bridging a relational gap over such a lengthy period, the results of this study indicate that children were still able to cultivate a positive relationship with their parents.

Perspective of College Students on Their Academic Performance

The economic status of parents can also be concluded as to affect the academic performance of some students in a positive way. This is because some of them came from families, which are not economically stable, and tend to be chased out of school for fees whereas others are not able to purchase some of the reading materials and their parents only choice to work abroad helped them and inspired them to do better in academics. This claim is supported by the statements of the participants:

P3: “They inspire me to always do my best not just in academics but also in life.”

P7: “Not much in a negative way. It was positive, he inspires me. I’m doing average in school since I am more focused in volleyball because my scholarship comes from my performance on it.”

P9: “Siguro yung ano yung sacrifice niya na malayo siya yun yung nagiging motivation ko as well as yung... yung nga na malayo siya... pagprovide niya ng tuition ko, allowance. Yun yung nagiging parang motivation ko para magpursige sa pag-aaral para makatapos agad.”

It is supported by the study of Botezat *et al.* (2014), they stated in the discussion paper that the beneficial effect of parental migration on the academic achievement of children left at home could be astounding. The hard work of their parents also motivates them to finish their studies and do well in school. And contrary to what Aguilar M.V (2020) said, In the absence of one or both parents owing to a job abroad, such stories are not unusual among Filipino college students. With low grades, frequent absences, and inability to comply, those children whose parents are OFWs assume that despite the financial gains, they are academically handicapped. That children of OFWs will generally have poor academic achievement and that this pattern will continue if their parents labor overseas. But according to the college students that the researcher interviewed, that wasn’t the case, the participants were doing well and were inspired because of the hard work of their parents abroad.

CONCLUSION

The study explored college students’ perspectives towards their Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) parents. Students recognized that their parents work abroad for financial reasons, accepting the separation to secure a better life. They aspire to complete their education and secure good jobs to repay their parents’ sacrifices. Although they feel loneliness during significant events, they maintain strong ties with their parents despite the distance. Contrary to

Aguilar M.V (2020), the study found that college students with OFW parents do not experience academic setbacks such as low grades, frequent absences, or inability to comply with requirements. Instead, these students are motivated to excel academically to support their parents. They achieve good academic performance and maintain a positive perspective towards their parents, even in their absence during important events. The theoretical framework includes Bowen's concept of balance between togetherness and separation. The participants understand that their parents' absence is a sacrifice for their better future. Attachment theory also applies, as the students maintain good relationships with their OFW parents. Despite living with grandparents or relatives, the students feel the same love and respect for their parents, understanding and appreciating their sacrifices for a better life.

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