

Their Contributions to Countryside Development

Rudjane C. Tunac¹, Cheryl C. Mendoza²

Pangasinan State University-Bayambang Campus

Pangasinan State University-Bayambang Campus

tunacrudjane@gmail.com, checalmendoza@gmail.com

Abstract –*The study primarily determined the significant contributions made by some empowered women from Pangasinan particularly along countryside development. More specifically, this study looked into their socio-demographic attributes, work profile, priority development programs/projects, and problems encountered in their respective fields of endeavors.*

The study found out that respondents are predominantly middle-aged, married, have big family, college graduates, belonging to middle class, and Roman Catholics; are able to finish college which guaranteed their financial stability; and are able to keep decent and respectable endeavors despite being a wife and a mother. Majority of them are in their respective works for more than 10 years, occupy top positions, attend international and national seminars and trainings, and are awardees or has been commended by notable award-giving institutions. The problems encountered revolved around political aspect, which later became their priority projects.

The study recommends to provide greater avenues for the promotion of roles of women in the society; to give equal representation in the organizational structure; to grant more recognitions and awards (be it local, provincial, regional or national); to provide government funding or support to the priority programs or projects; promotion of this research study as well as other related studies to inspire and encourage the younger generations to excel in their own chosen fields despite atrocities; to conduct benchmarking activities to discover women achievements in different gender and development (GAD) supported institutions, in which the information obtained will be used to identify gaps in the organization processes in order to achieve a competitive advantage.

Keywords – countryside development, empowered women

INTRODUCTION

In most patriarchic societies, females are regarded as the inferior of the species. Because of this, women are denied access to both honored and utilitarian role open only to males. Such roles as administration and disposal of property, leadership roles in societal affairs including religion and governance are exclusively belonging to males. Even the right of choice in respect to entry to conjugal union is denied to women. While it is known that such discriminatory practices exist in these countries, their prevalence and cultural value systems and norms that perpetuate them are not adequately understood.^[1]

Sustainable and all around developments of a society cannot be brought about without the full and unreserved participation of both woman and man in the development process, and such a balanced development should also call for the elimination of all forms of discrimination, and the protection against all forms of violence against women. According to World Bank (1998:137), although women constitutes two third of the world's working hours, produce half of the world's food and above all, bear and rear children, women continue to suffer from all forms of discrimination and from the absence of adequate protection against violence (WB,1998:137).

Republic Act 7192 (1991)^[1] is an act promoting the integration of women as full and equal partners of men in development and nation building. The law provides that a substantial portion of government resources be utilized to support programs and activities for women. The law also encourages the full participation and involvement of women in the development process and to remove gender bias in all government regulations and procedures. In relation to gender budgeting, the law specifically mandated all agencies to allocate a minimum of 5 percent, increasing to 30 percent, of all official development funds in mainstreaming gender concerns. Through executive directives this percent allocation is further expanded to cover the total budget appropriations, not only development funds, of all government agencies and local government units in the country. This is known as the Gender and Development (GAD) Budget.

The above stated policy formulated by the government is expected to play a significant role in facilitating conditions to speeding up of equality between men and women in order to let women participate in the social, economic and political life their country in equal terms with that of men. Women's roles and participation in decision making positions and their enjoyment of their fruits and benefits of development on equal basis with men were

emphasized in the content of the national policy. Therefore, all of the community (at least, civil servants) are required to be aware of the policy in order to bring stated objective in to reality.

It can be observed that the Philippine government advocates empowerment of women. Women are now given various opportunities for them to learn, work, and share in various aspects of national development. Nowadays, Filipino women have been extensively involving themselves in various activities of national concerns.

It is with the above premises that the researchers became interested in knowing the profile of empowered women in the fields of academe, politics and in the business/corporate world in the Province of Pangasinan as well as their essential contributions to countrywide development.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study sought to determine the profile and development contributions of women in the field of academe, politics and in the business/corporate world in the Province of Pangasinan. Specifically, it aimed to know the profile of empowered women in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, number of family members, occupation, monthly income, and religion; and their work profile in terms of position, term of office, duties and functions, seminars or trainings attended, and awards received. It also looked into their priority development programs or projects along social (health and welfare, environment), economic (tourism and business investments), political (legal issues, ordinances), and cultural (festivities, customs and traditions).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

The case study, one type of descriptive research) ^[3] was used in this study. Best (1998) defined case study as a way of organizing data for the purpose of viewing social reality. It examines a social unit as a whole. The unit may be a person, a family, a social group, a social institution, or a community. The purpose is to understand the life cycle or an important part of the life cycle of the unit.

Case study is the most appropriate method to be used since this study examined the empowered women, priority development programs or projects as well as the problems they encountered in their respective field of endeavors.

Subjects and Sampling Procedure

The subjects of the study were the empowered women from the different localities of Pangasinan who are from the fields of academe, politics, business/corporate world, and who made significant contributions to the countryside development.

Further, the respondents were categorized into three groups based on the nature of their work, namely, academe,

politics, and business/corporate world. There was at least one (1) person from each category because the researchers were basically interested in the most accomplished and established women. Additional consideration was the consent given by the respondents to become part of this study.

There is a large number of women who can be considered accomplished, well-established and well-known in their respective fields of endeavor in the Province of Pangasinan, but only those women who have met the researchers' criteria became the subjects of this case study. Thus, the purposive and quota sampling techniques was utilized. According to **Calderon (1993)** ^[5], purposive sampling, is determining the target population, those to be involved in the study. Quota sampling on the other hand, is to be used when various components of the population are included in the sample in the same proportion that they are represented in the population (Babbie, 1989).

Locale of the Study

Pangasinan is a province of the Republic of the Philippines. The provincial capital, Lingayen, is located on the west central area of the island of Luzon along the Lingayen Gulf, with the total land area being 5,368.82 square kilometres (2,104.65 sq mi) ^[6].

The province of Pangasinan is subdivided into six congressional districts, with 44 municipalities, four cities, and 1,364 *barangay* (which mean "villages"). The legislative districts of Pangasinan, are the representations of the Province of Pangasinan in the Philippine House of Representatives. Pangasinan was divided into five legislative districts from 1907 to 1972, it was redistricted into six legislative districts in 1986. It was part of the representation of Region I. ^[7]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents across the variable categories considered in this study.

Profile of Empowered Women

Age. The respondents' age shows that 3 of them, belong to the age bracket of 40 to 50, and another 3 belong to the age bracket of 62 and above. Meanwhile, 2 of them belong to the age bracket of 51-61.

Santrock (2002) ^[8], categorizes 30-60 years old as middle adulthood stage. The respondents in this study are mid adults (30-60 years). Middle adulthood as discussed by Papalia, et al. (2003) ^[9], has many markers, and they are not the same for everyone. The middle years are the central years of the adult life span, but their content varies greatly. Cognitively speaking, middle-aged people are in their prime. They have the ability to apply mental powers to novel problems that require little or no previous knowledge.

Civil Status. Six respondents are married; 1 is single and another 1 is widowed. It can be gleaned from the table that majority of the empowered women are married.

Medina (2003)^[10] identifies in her book, that, in most traditional societies, including that of the Philippines, wives are generally expected to do domestic management like housekeeping, cook, laundress, seamstress and nursemaid. It only shows that the most important role of Filipino women is being a mother and/or pure housewife. She stays at home most of the time and primarily responsible in taking care of the children. It should be noted, however, that the respondents do not only perform the traditional function and duties of being a wife and a mother, but are able to keep decent, worthy and respectable occupations, and are performing exceptional and remarkable feats in their respective endeavors.

Highest Educational Attainment. Five of the respondents are Doctoral Graduates; 2 are College Graduate; and 1 is a Master's Graduate.

The data shows that all of the respondents were able to finish college and were able to pursue higher level learning. This is indicative that finishing education guarantees a better opportunity for a person to find a greener pasture. As stated in NSCB (2008) ^[11], "Education is the great equalizer that will give all Filipinos, rich or poor, the chance to uplift their lives and face a secure future. Nobody can deny the fact of education are the most important thing or factor for some people to bring change in their lives. It has been recognized as the most prevailing gearing-up the socio-economic development of our government or our nation." This supports the results conducted that 47% of those surveyed says not having a diploma makes it hard to find a good job. Others say they would rather go back to school than to have a not stable job

(http://www.careerconnectionsct.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC=%7BED52E35D-26DB-4822-B7C7-74AB857D3BB5%7D) ^[12].

Nunnumber of Family Members. Three of the respondents have family members of 6 and above; 2 have family members of 2, while of them each belong to 2, 3 and 4 family members respectively.

It can be depicted in the table that most of the empowered women have big family size. However, despite their numbers, the empowered women were provided with their basic needs. This is a rare incident that contradicts the study of Virola (2011)[13], who found out in his study entitled "Population and Poverty Nexus: Does Family Size Matter?", that the bigger the family size, the less money there is available to buy basic needs.

Monthly Income. Five of the respondents have a monthly income of P100, 000 and above, while 2 have a monthly income of P71, 000-80,000 and 1 has a monthly income of

P81, 000-90,000. This clearly indicates that majority of the empowered women are financially stable and are productive in their respective careers.

Based on the NSCB (2008) computations, using the Family Income and Expenditure Surveys (FIES) and the Labor Force Survey (LFS), a family in the Philippines must earn at least PhP 2,393,126 a year or PhP 199,927 a month to be counted as part of the high-income class in 2010. The middle class, on the other hand, earns an average of P36,934 per month. This translates to around P500,000 per year. The low income class, meanwhile, earns an average of P9,061 per month or around P110,000 per year. Thus based on the NSCB computations, all of the respondents belong to the middle class.

Religion. All the respondents belong to the Roman Catholic Church. This is an affirmation that the Philippines is predominantly a Catholic Christian community, thus majority of the people are affiliates of the Catholic Religion. According to the International Religious Freedom Report (2004) ^[14], Philippines is deeply Roman Catholic country, with 81 percent of the people identifying themselves with the faith.

Majority of the respondents are in their respective works for more than 10 years. They are occupying the highest if not the top positions in their workplaces. They have attended numerous international and national seminars and trainings, and are awardees or have been commended by notable and distinguished award giving institutions.

Table 2. Socio-Demographic Profile of Empowered Women (Position, Term of Office, Duties and Functions, Seminar/Trainings and Awards)

Case 1	
Position	: Senior Adviser, President Emeritus and Trustees, Asian Institute of Journalism Communication (AIJC); Board Member, Cultural Center of the Philippines; Columnist, Manila Bulletin
Term of Office	: 2011 to date; 2011 to date; 2002 to date
Duties and Functions	: Provides policy research support and professional development programs to government, development agencies and communication institutions. Develops and implements communication strategies, policy studies, media research, open learning, nonformal education programs,

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and consultancy projects in managing change.		Administration Program, Lyceum Northwestern University Graduate School	
Seminars/ Trainings Attended	:	Term of Office	: 2008 to present
Awards Received	The Outstanding Filipino (TOFIL) Awardee for Literature and Journalism 2007	Duties and Functions	: Monitor & supervise program development
	Hildegard Awards for Women in Media and Communication, 2008	Seminars/ Trainings Attended	: <i>practically attended all aspects of Public Administration seminar. Most of them served as seminar/training director</i>
	AMIC Asian Communication Award for Outstanding contribution and leadership for Asian Communication Research, 2008 2009	Awards Received	: ASNA Awards 2015: Most Outstanding Pangasinenses (Public Administration)
	Most Outstanding Quezon City Citizen Award	Case 4	
	ASNA Awards: Most Outstanding Pangasinenses (Journalism and Development Communication Balitoc Award 2013)	Position	: Retired College Dean, Pangasinan State University-Binmaley, Pangasinan
Case 2		Term of Office	: 2004
Position	: President, Chalre Associates; President, Asia CEO Forum	Duties and Functions	: Chair in curriculum development in the College of Fisheries. Worked on becoming the first College of Fisheries in Region 1 that passed Level II Accreditation of BS Fisheries Program by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities of the Philippines (AACCUP).
Term of Office	: 2004 to date	Seminars/ Trainings Attended	
Duties and Functions	: Screen for senior managerial and directorial positions for multinational companies.	Awards Received	: ASNA Awards 2013: Most Outstanding Pangasinenses (Fisheries Education)
	Recognize Filipino business leaders across Asia.	Plaque of Recognition – for her outstanding contribution, commitment and dedicated service to the WCCI's vision, mission and goals "Response to 2002 Basic Education Curriculum", Holiday Inn Hotel, Manila. January 16, 2002.	
	Join charitable projects to give computers to selected public schools in low-income		
Seminars/ Trainings Attended	:	Millennium Gem Plaque of Recognition (2000)	
Awards Received	ASNA Awards 2015: Most Outstanding Pangasinenses (Entrepreneurship)		
Case 3			
Position	: Executive Director, Center for Pangasinan Studies; Program Head, Public		

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Case 5		Duties and Functions : Oversees the day-to-day flow of the local government as well as the planning and development of the municipality and supervises all administrative affairs concerning the local government. Serves as the municipality’s figurehead, interacting with dignitaries and the media. Oversees the planning and allocation of the municipality’s annual budget and ensures that the funds are utilized in accordance to the law.
Position	: Obstetrician-Gynecologist, Sanchez OB-Gyn Ultrasound Clinic	
Term of Office	: 2003 to date	
Duties and Functions	: Specializes in the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases and disorders that affect women	
Seminars/ Trainings Attended	: Attended conventions sponsored by the Philippine Obstetrics and Gynecological Society, Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology, Philippine Medical Association, and Pangasinan Medical Society	
Awards Received	: Passer, Qualifying Examination for Fellowship Training, Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology	Seminars/ Trainings Attended : 22 nd Win Annual Congress – Change is Coming: The Role of Women in the Present Administration (2016) Newly Elected Officials (NEO) Program: Basic Orientation for Local Chief Executives of Region 1 (2016) 3-Day Contingency Plan Formulation – Workshop for the Municipality of Rosales, Pangasinan (2015)
Case 6		Awards Received : Dangal ng Bayan (2016)
Position	: Public Attorney III	Case 8 Position : Professor VI, Pangasinan State University University Director, GAD Term of Office : 2008 to present 2015 to present Duties and Functions : Head the university in supporting GAD mainstreaming in the policies, plans, programs, projects and activities, budget, systems and procedures to strengthen the GFPS. Approve the GAD plan, program and budget, with the assistance of the TWG, and ensure its implementation.
Term of Office	: 2002 to date	
Duties and Functions	: Supervise the operation of the PAO San Carlos City District. Extend legal services to indigent clients in criminal, civil, administrative, and labor cases. Administer oaths	
Seminars/ Trainings Attended	: 6th MCLE Accredited National Convention of Public Attorneys	
Awards Received	: Most Number of Civil Cases with Favorable Dispositions in 2015	
Case 7		
Position	: Mayor, Municipality of Rosales, Pangasinan	
Term of Office	: 2013-2016 to present (2 nd term)	

Seminars/ Trainings Attended	: Workshop on Online Submission of FY 2016 GAD Plan & Budget and FY 2014 GAD Accomplishment Report (2015) Gender & Development (GAD) Budget Review (2015) Orientation-Forum on the submission of requirements and disbursement of CHED STUFAPs Financial Benefits to the Tulong- Dunong Beneficiaries (2014)
Awards Received	: Training Consultant/ Leader (Awarded by PSU Editor's Guild in 2014) Evaluator (awarded by Regional Development Council in 2013) Outstanding Administrator (awarded by 2011 Capital Town Festival Executive Committee and DepEd, Division of Pangasinan I

Case No. 1

The respondent is an ASNA-Balitok Awardee in 2013. She was granted the most prestigious and coveted award in the Province of Pangasinan because of her multitude contributions and the magnanimity of her works to the different fields, one of which was being one of the members of the 1986 Constitutional Commission. She authored provisions in Bill of Rights, Education, National Economy and Patrimony, and General Provisions on communication policies; science and technology; cooperatives and rural development; nongovernment organizations; education and contributed to provisions on human rights, environment and national economy.

Among the other awards received by the respondent include: UP Alumni Outstanding Professional Award in Mass Communication, Service Award, U.P. College of Education, Women of Distinction Award for Communication, the 2007 Outstanding Filipino (TOFIL) Awards for Literature and Journalism, the 2008 Hildegard Awards for Women in Media and Communication, the 2008 AMIC Asian Communication Outstanding Research Award, the 2009 Most Outstanding Quezon City Citizen Award and the Phils. Communication Society Award for Outstanding Achievements in the field.

The respondent is a definitive embodiment of a woman of greatness and empowerment. Her road to success is not easy. The life that she had before was simple and unsophisticated. Her childhood in Burgos St., Dagupan

City, Pangasinan begun during the Japanese era where survival is difficult and existence to an information-deprived environment is indeed a challenge. Like most of the households during those times, her family had to face the grim realities brought about by war. Despite the deprivations that her family experienced, they exerted efforts to survive it all. After the war, opportunity to education was given to all, including women. She just but one of the many who were given such opportunity thus completing her bachelor's degree in Education major in English from the University of the Philippines in 1951. Her first teaching job was at V. Mapa High School, Manila. It was the biggest high school during those times where she did a lot of play directing and acting. She played the lead role as Juliet in Romeo and Juliet and Jessica for Merchant of Venice. She even did plays for the National Council for Teachers. While she was working, she was offered a scholarship abroad thus she finished her M.S. and Ph. D. in Mass Communication from Syracuse University, New York.

After graduation, she sent her applications for work and many institutions responded positively. However, she chose to be an Assistant Professor in the East-West Population and Communication, East-West Center, University of Hawaii. She had an immersion and had four (4) years of multi-cultural experiences. What she loves most about her job is that she was rubbing elbows with different people of great names- the ones people read in newspapers and are considered as heroes in their respective countries. It was also during those times that she met her husband, Andrew Braid, who is a Scottish-Canadian who worked with Food Agriculture Organization of the UN and other organizations in the field of cooperatives and rural development.

The respondent was the chairman of the Philippine Social Science Council, attended summits on women, and worked at UNESCO. She made an invaluable contribution as author of several publications on values, psychology, human resource development and labor. One of them is *The Philippines at the Crossroads: Some Visions for the Nation*, and her membership to the MANINDIGAN! (Organization of Concerned Professionals) are just but some of the reasons why she was selected by Pres. Corazon C. Aquino to be a member of the Constitutional Convention to draft the 1987 Constitution.

The respondent further narrates that the composition of the members of the Constitutional Convention is dominated by men. However, regardless of the fact that women members are outnumbered, they made sure the inclusion on the provision on women in the Constitution. That women be acknowledged as co- equal in nation-building. The respondent states, "*Regardless of areas, women are more*

consistent and innovative. They know what they can within the limitations. Sustainable development can be attained through frugality and resourcefulness. Nation building really should be led by women who know the value of tenaciousness and patience.”

When asked about how she had done all her accomplishments, she said *“all that had happened in my life is due to some serious forces and I believe that an angel guides me. I do reflection. One must understand the inner and the outer self. One must understand oneself in order to understand the forces and the elements of spirituality to be able to fulfill one’s advocacy. Turning inward and outward to spread peace and joy from each and every one of us will make us collectively stronger and relevant in this present world environment.”*

Her advocacy is to help the poor and bridge the gap with the marginalized by helping them become productive. She further believes that, *“big and accomplished schools or institutions of learning should be training people not just to learn to rationalize. They must also touch the internal aspect, to have the heart to be able to uplift our people for development.*

Our respondent is now aged 86. But despite her age, she continues to write, and is a regular columnist of Manila Bulletin since 1997. On her free time, she attends painting class and paints images which depict more of empowered women and children. The paintings are representation of the many stories our respondent has experienced with all her travels and encounters with people of different walks of life through time.

Case No 2

The respondent had won many struggles when she did not quit the challenges of life; she had reached the pinnacle of success when every failure drove her to persevere even more because over and above anything, a woman's love for her family is the ultimate force that matters.

Love is the sweetest word tantamount to hardwork; as emphasized by the amazing respondent who turned the researchers’ invitation for interview into reality. Time was of valuable essence at the time of meeting with a wonderful woman of commanding vivacity. Wearing the most accommodating smile with a natural Pangasinan accent, the respondent initially broke the barrier of apprehension as she greets the researchers in the native tongue; an unexpected gesture for an extremely accomplished woman. With a very substantial moment, the researchers were able to establish this cozy conversation because she was, indeed, very humble and genuine at heart.

Living at the height of her career today is incomparable to the meager life she grew up with in Dasol, Pangasinan. At a young age, she already knew how bitter life was, as she worked like a Trojan to make both ends meet. Determined to survive with her family, she assisted her mother, who was a fish vendor, plus earning a little as a store saleslady, and house maid. She even tried selling pandesal, ice buko and ice candy. Since education was important to her, she was able to finish elementary at Dasol Central School, then at Don Marcelo Jimenez Memorial High School. At college, she enrolled at Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) while working in a factory in Bataan. However, due to her mother’s illness, she was forced to return to Dasol to look after her and the rest of her siblings because her father and older brothers were not as responsible as she was. She even managed to work as a janitor at the Rural Bank of Dasol. At the death of her mother, she made a vow to help her siblings to the best she can, and so that signaled the major turning point of her life.

She flew to Singapore in 1986 to work as a nanny for a target of four years which would be enough for her to earn and save for her father and siblings. Sleepless nights were spent as she brawls over all-around household tasks, “nannying”, tutoring, and completing her requirements as an Accounting student at the Open University of Singapore Institute of Management; even maximizing her one-day off to meet with her professors for a month of homeworks. Destiny somehow favored her, when an opportunity for Canada knocked at her door one day, thus, grabbed that very chance instantly. She used her money intended for her plane ticket back to the Philippines, to a one-way ticket to Canada. Life in Canada was tough, but it did not devastate her at all. She initially took a job as nanny for two years, while she was allowed by her employer to take part-time jobs. Two years was what she needed to become a permanent resident, or to have an open permit. As a hardworking Filipina abroad, she sold kitchen wares, and was able to get a job at a direct-selling cosmetics company, where she was consistently hailed as Top Seller. Her passion for education led her to finish graduate studies in Accounting and Marketing at the Ryerson University in Toronto, Canada. As a gutsy woman fighter, she was able to penetrate into the world of business in a foreign land by manning her own personnel recruitment firm, High-Q. She was the marketing executive and founder, with only the secretary as her loyal employee. Surprisingly, she found herself fulfilling her promise to her departed mother by securing better lives for her siblings here and in Canada. In the Philippines, a seven-room house in Dasol, Pangasinan that was built and dedicated to her family is a true reminder of her determination and fortitude, and once again, love.

The respondent is one believer of “love can be developed,” when she deal with love as arriving at the right

time and reason, and with the appropriate pacing. So that finally, at age thirty-one, she married Robert Mills, and were able to raise two sons, Alex and Chris. While she was in her native land, she welcomed her position as one of the Directors of Mary Kay Cosmetics Philippines in 2000.

Through God's intervention and confirmation with her husband, they competently unveiled the company Chalmre Associates in 2004, a multinational recruitment company for senior management executive positions. The respondent is the President and co-founder of Asia CEO Awards, which is the largest business awards event in the Philippines and Asia CEO Forum, the largest regular business events. Other major events she oversees include: Asia Digital Transformation Summit, Asia Women's Summit, Asia HR Summit, Asia BPM Summit, Asia Young Leaders Summit, Asia Real Estate Summit, Asia Logistics Summit, Asia Health Summit, and others across the country.

A woman inspiring women, the respondent hosts Self-Made, which is a regular TV program featuring many of the most successful people in Asia. Her dauntless achievements have been featured on numerous primetime television program like CNN Philippines, Bloomberg, GMA, TV5, UN-TV, ANC (ABS-CBN), gTV, SMNI, IBC-13, BiznewsAsia, to name a few. She has also been topped as either an inspirational or a keynote speaker for organizations and event include Proctor & Gamble (Singapore), Manulife (Philippines), ASKI Global (Singapore, Hong Kong), Jollibee (Japan), Women Extraordinaire (Malaysia), Sun Life Financial (Philippines), HOME.org (Singapore), AIG, Aboitiz Group, Kyani (Macau), Daiichi Properties, IOM, JLL, Dimension Data, Pag-Ibig, Philippine Marketing Association, Mega Balikbayan Expo, Cypress Semiconductor, Tagaytay Highlands, Edsa Shangri La, SGV (Ernst & Young), MegaWorld, De la Salle University, De la Salle Hospital, Planters Bank, and many more.

Standing in the limelight today as an entrepreneurship czar does not cease her passion to help low-income communities in dire need, and this has not spared the barangay schools in some towns in her beloved Pangasinan. The earnings from the sale of her book, "Rebecca Bustamante: Maid to Made" are all used to purchase computers and laptops that they donate to school in necessity.

All these deeds stole the attention of the highest award-giving body in Pangasinan, the ASNA Awards, and she was bestowed one of the Outstanding Pangasinenses in 2015; hers was an award in the field of Entrepreneurship. In 2017, she was witnessed as the Guest of Honor and Speaker for the 437th Agew na Pangasinan, and indeed, left every expectator in awe and pride as they personally beheld the woman in her own success story.

Defying all the odds of race and gender discrimination along her long and wide journey, she never really cared, nevertheless relied everything to the praiseworthy plans of God. It is God that she "pleases and serves," humbly uttered by the respondent. Her life after all, is a story is "Made in Heaven."

Case No 3

The respondent is a recipient of ASNA Awards in 2015 being an Outstanding Pangasinense, the highest accolade of success bestowed by the provincial government of Pangasinan, for her exceptional contribution in the field of Public Administration. Retiring from the University of the Philippines-Diliman turned out to be the commencement of a lifetime commitment for her homecoming to the grassroots.

Who would have thought that this empowered woman's seventy-five years of existence in this world would be as bright and elegant as the diamond that brings shine to the beholder? Owing her disposition in life to the orientation she was exposed to, is what molded her to become what she is today. Her simple life started in Mangatarem, Pangasinan; but now resides in Calasiao, Pangasinan with her retired military husband, Col. Guillermo D. Legaspi, and son, Victor Immanuel. Her education years were significantly spent at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, Quezon City. There she finished Bachelor of Arts in 1964, then continued at College of Public Administration of UP-Diliman for her Master of Public Administration in 1972, and finally Doctor of Public Administration in 1990. Loyal to her Alma Mater, she got employed there and served with extraordinary devotion all her duties and responsibilities. She has held numerous positions in the academe from Training Specialist to Professorial Lecturer at the Local Government Center of UP-College of Public Administration, to Director of the Local Government Center (now Center for Local and Regional Governance), National College of Public Administration and Governance (NCPAG) Professor, Director of the Human Resource Development Office (HRDO), to Vice Chancellor for Administration. Throughout her career in the prestigious university, she had been very active in different trainings as Seminar Director, Consultant, Module Manager, Course Director, Member to the Directing Staff, Project Director; in Research and Publications as Researcher, Project Director, Case Study Writer, Project Leader, Issue Editor, Chapter Writer, Team Leader; in Technical Assistance and Management Consultancy as Project Director, Coordinator, Consultant, and Member. She has published countless works emphasized on rural service impact, strategies and

approaches to quality service delivery, case study of farming community, urban development planning, to name a few.

When she retired from UP in 2008, her heart still longs for public service. She is now the Chair of Lyceum Northwestern University (LNU)-Graduate School in Dagupan City, Pangasinan, and the LNU Research Team Director, LNU Foundation on Local Governance, which held the key role in the implementation of the Citizen Satisfaction Index system (CSIS) program of the Department of Interior and Local Government of Dagupan City. The results were presented during the 4th International Conference on Magsaysay Awardees: Good Governance and Transformative Leadership in Asia in 2016 with the title, Citizen Satisfaction in LGUs: The Case of CSIS for Dagupan.

In line with the provincial government's thrust to preserve and promote cultural heritage, Pangasinan launched its history book titled, "Pinablin Dalin" during the commemorative program of the 435th Agew na Pangasinan (Pangasinan founding anniversary), a book which was prepared and edited by the Pangasinan Historical and Cultural Commission group of writers and researchers, based on the research study by a group headed by Dr. Perla Legaspi. She has been so inspiring in the quest of establishing the roots of Pangasinan, which makes her role as a woman in this product so instrumental and commendable.

Her bold and dynamic ideas translated by a subtle voice, are noticeable features of an empowered woman like her. Apparently, it was her way of embodying empowerment, which she believes a woman must possess: highly critical of what's going on, able to say and not afraid to say what she wants to say, and not intimidated by forces around. Because at the end, it is the shared understanding among people that becomes vital in the conversation.

Up until now, her integrity in public administration is highly sought after. In fact, she was tapped as the convenor of the 'I Love Pangasinan Movement' (ILPM), and the head of the I Love Pangasinan Foundation, Inc., which aims to strengthen the love for Pangasinan through a strategic direction that pursue five aspects: healthy body, healthy pocket, healthy environment, healthy government, and healthy heart and mind. This strategic direction of the province, she said, can be achieved with a community of strong, loving, and caring family; a family who produces virtuous members of the society and community. To date, being the Executive Director of the Center for Pangasinan Studies which is established by the provincial government with the technical assistance from the University of the

Philippines and the Pangasinan Historical and Cultural Commission (PHCC), and is supported by a consortium of private colleges and universities in the province to serve as a repository of documents, researchers, artifacts, oriented materials, and media materials on Pangasinan, the respondent leads in this development program and governance initiative with her trademark of unwavering work ethics and unquestionable wisdom

Case 4

The respondent is notable in the field of Fisheries Education. As a retired public servant from Pangasinan State University-Binmaley Campus, she has devoted her time to put her specialization in the pedestal, and magnify to the society the image of fisheries education as a contributory element for development.

The respondent was a native of San Carlos City, Pangasinan. She was born on April 10, 1940; marking her 78th year this 2018. She finished grade school at San Carlos Central School in 1952, moved to Francisco Balagtas Academy in Bocaue, Bulacan until she finished high school in 1956 and finished Diploma in Fisheries Technology at the University of the Philippines in 1959. In 1971, she completed her Bachelor of Science in Education at the Pangasinan Memorial College, Lingayen, Pangasinan. Her thirst for knowledge brought her to University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City to finish Bachelor of Science in Fisheries in 1976. She continuously embraced intellectual challenges and made her an alumna of University of Baguio, Baguio City, with her degrees in Master of Arts in Education, and Doctor of Education in 1980 and 1984, respectively.

Being a pure Pangasinense led her back to the grassroots, as she has witnessed her parents dedicate their services to the townspeople of San Carlos City. Her mother was a great teacher, as she describes; a Supervisor, to be exact, and her father a great politician of the city. As such, she spent her life serving the PSU Binmaley Campus as a researcher, extension worker, professor and administrator, until she retired as College Dean at the age of 63 in 2004. Her 42 years of professional leadership in Fishery resulted in her many and varied achievements.

Strong leadership of a woman showered the campus with laurels. The college became the first College of Fisheries in Region I that passed Level II Accreditation of BS Fisheries program by the Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities of the Philippines (AACCUP) Annex A. Moreover, Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has evaluated the college as the "Center of Excellence in Fisheries" in Luzon, for enhancing the curriculum of the college designed to modernize the fishery

industry into more productive and entrepreneurial activities for fish farmers and fishery educators.

Becoming a woman leader involves much more than being put in leadership role. Penetrating the World Council for Curriculum and Instructions (WCCI) as an active member elevated her vital role towards the global lane, which paved way for shared responsibility and unifying efforts in promoting education for peace through activities involving strengthening human relations, cultural exchange of ideas and expressions. She authored and presented a paper entitled “Environmental Education through Waste Management – Building a Culture of Peace Thru Fishery Education” which was chosen by the WCCI International Program Committee and was heard at the 10th Triennial WCCI World Conference in Madrid, Spain, thereby making the college and the country momentarily proud.

Her retirement is a fitting culmination of her successful career in the academe, but in no way has it ended her vocation as an educator. Because of her belief that women empowerment creating opportunities rather than waiting for them, feeling of power and risk-taking, and knowing how to create and get involved in a strategy of communication especially in a male-dominated world, she sustains her foremost advocacy on Adopt-A-Student concept. As explained, this concept is to tap resources from the network of fisheries alumni from PSU-College of Fisheries to provide for and help sustain the academic dreams of poor but very much deserving students; and has produced number of scholars, some of whom are already working in different organizations.

With the confirmation of the members of the selection board of the highest selective and prestigious ASNA Awards upon the nomination of Dr. Rosie S. Abalos, Dr. Arquillano was awarded in 2013, “Most Outstanding Pangasinense” in the field of Fisheries Education. She likewise received Millennium Gem Plaque of Recognition in 2000 in Binmaley, Pangasinan, as recognition of her exemplary professionalism and commitments, outstanding achievements, effective and efficient leadership, quality performance and excellent service extended and dedicated with love to the people of the community. In 2002, she was awarded Plaque of Recognition for her outstanding contribution, commitment and dedicated service to the World Council for Curriculum and Instructions’ (WCCI) vision, mission and goals “Response to 2002 Basic Education Curriculum.”

She was able to seek her value of womanhood when she tied knots with Elesito G. Arquillano, on September 5, 1962, and both cherished five sons and two daughters who are all professionals. The respondent is now living with one of her children in the United States.

Case No. 5

At an early age, the respondent who is mostly known by friends and love ones as “Echie”, already knew what she wanted as her career. She wanted to be a doctor. She took up BS Biology at De La Salle University as her pre-med and took up Medicine at FEU-NRMF. She passed the Physician Licensure Examination in August 1998. She also passed the Diplomate Examination, Part I given by the Philippine Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology in July 2003 and the Diplomate Examination, Part II also given by the Philippine Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology in August 2005. She likewise passed the Qualifying Examination for Fellowship Training given by Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and Gynecology in September 2017. Currently, she is the only holder of such license in the province.

Our respondent is married to Dr. Aureo Francis C. Sanchez whom she had met back in medical school. When they both graduated, they decided to go back in Pangasinan to settle and start their own family. They were blessed with three wonderful children. As a couple, their struggle includes their search for respective residency and most importantly the determination of their own field of specialization. They even travelled as far as the Province of La Union for their residency. Luckily for her husband, ophthalmology was available. In the case of the respondent, she would like to specialize in Radiology (reading the X-Ray, MRI sounds and CT scans) but facilities in Ilocos Training and Regional Medical Center of San Fernando, La Union seems not sufficient to be able to become an expert in the field. Thus, she was convinced to enter OB- Gyn. She made a resolve upon herself that she is to do great in the field. She recalls that during the start of her practice as an OB- Gyne in the province, it was difficult as she would only have one patient per month. But in due time as she was able to establish a good name for herself, she had acquired great number of patients. They would not mind the long queue nor the long hours of waiting just to be accommodated. Because they knew, that once accommodated, patients who are old and new will be compensated with the same specialized quality treatment and service they deserve.

She maintains her own OB Gyne clinic, the Sanchez OB-Gyn Clinic located at San Carlos, Pangasinan with regular clinic hours and is in 24/7 on call duty. She is likewise a visiting consultant, in the Department of OB-Gyn at Blessed Family Doctors General Hospital, Pangasinan Doctors Hospital and Virgen Milagrosa Medical Center since 2003 up to the present. She is a part time faculty member of VMUF- College of Medicine, a Board Member of POGS Region I Chapter and a Department Head of VMMC Department of OB-Gyn. She is a Fellow of Philippine Obstetrics and Gynecological Society as well as the Philippine Society of Ultrasound in Obstetrics and

Gynecology. She is a Member of the Philippine Medical Association and Pangasinan Medical Society

Despite her hectic schedule, she always finds a way to attend to her family. She is a hands-on mom who even helps in doing the assignments of her three children. As a family, they find time to travel here and in abroad just to bond, relax and enjoy a new environment. But at the end of each travel, the family would go home and enjoy the simple life that they have. Asked if they intend to settle abroad, the respondent immediately responded in the negative. Proudly saying she loves her country more and would love to give service to her own people.

As a wife, she is to be described by her husband as having a strong personality. She says what she feels. A trait she believes to be an influence she had acquired from her mother. A personality which sometimes served as a cause of conflict with her husband. But despite such personality, she is always willing to enter into a compromise when necessary. She is not a quitter despite atrocities that may come her way. Her main goal in life is to balance her time for work and family.

The respondent describes an empowered woman as being a woman who is independent in many aspects, financially and emotionally. A woman who can stand on her own and to be able to lead when necessary. A woman who will not lose self-respect even when confronted with some difficult situations. That she believes in equality between a man and a woman.

Case No. 6

Growing up as a female achiever in her family in Bayambang, Pangasinan reveals how prestigious it was to be consistently hailed an honor pupil, and an apple of the eye in the family, but it was tough along her journey to becoming a lady public servant today. Her socio-intellectual facility landed her valedictorian in elementary, salutatorian in high school, and consistently excelled in college to the law school.

Being a lawyer was not really her dream. She wanted to become a doctor before but when she lost consciousness due to fear of blood, her father did not support her anymore of her dream. But allowing her the liberty to choose her career was apparently a clear manifestation of respect and equality in the family.

The respondent has been a public attorney right after being admitted to the Philippine BAR in 2002. She became the Officer-in-Charge (the designation for a district head) of the Public Attorney's Office (PAO), San Carlos City District in 2009 to date.

Engrossed with work as she is, there are still numerous plans that are composed in her mind. She would want to pursue programs in ensuring more participation from the community and local governance in strengthening restorative justice. With regards to future plans and projects involving women empowerment, there is much to include. She would want to propose for the passage of a municipal ordinance creating a special lane for homemakers (those who primarily devote most of their time caring for the children) in securing services both in public and private institutions. As she explained, these women usually do errands after dropping their kids or before picking them up at school. Hence, a specific hour be allotted to a priority lane for these women in transacting with the aforesaid institutions without too much undermining the care of their family. The respondent, being a mother of four, empathizes much the necessities of motherhood that extends from the home, to the children's school, and to other more social institutions relating to her multifarious roles as a woman. She is, likewise, commended for magnificently managing her time as a working mom, without sacrificing her personal self-care.

In addition to her future projects intended for women empowerment, she would want to propose for an ordinance creating a special lane for women for both public and private institutions during the celebration of National Women's Month. This would allow a month of pampering and consideration for the needs of women in the society, not only to the elderly and pregnant, but to all women in general.

The respondent also looks forward to the creation of a small cottage industry for homemakers/housewives, located near pre-schools or elementary schools which will make them earn a living while spending their time waiting for their children at school. In this connection, she would want to see the passage of an ordinance giving financial assistance for at least, six months, to victims if incest rape, sexual assault or other forms of abuses or their family from the time the victims are rescued from the abusers.

Emanating from a brilliant empowered woman like her, these plans deserve a voice in the municipal or even provincial councils, for budget appropriations, information dissemination, and implementation.

Advantageous it is, indeed, to female clients when they find out the public attorney is a woman. The respondent finds herself a confidante every time she was confided with marital and family problems. Since she is the lone female lawyer in the district office, she ends up handling most of the marital and/or family-related legal problems referred to their office. With these blessings at her hands, she was able to receive countless awards since she assumed office; latest of which was the Most Number of Civil Cases with

Favorable Dispositions granted in the year 2015. Indeed, a very notable public servant of very contagious work ethics worth emulating.

Despite valuable breaks outside the province given to her as a sought-after lady attorney, she opts to stay in Pangasinan which is her home for 41 years. Given the opportunity to stay in Pangasinan for eternity is a choice; however, she would love to have an adventure together with her husband anywhere in a place called 'home' where their children could have both love and care from their mother and father. After all, equality of roles was never an issue. She believes a woman should only follow and conform what she decides jointly to her husband. In case a couple is unable to reach a common decision, the woman should always uphold the best interest of the family. Raising four children, Gwen Alexi, Alfonso Gabriel, Gillian Amaya, Galen Alodia, is a living proof of how love, dedication and compassion envelop their home, with her equally affectionate and supportive husband, Allan Joel Villanueva Basco from Lingayen, Pangasinan.

Case No 7

As the Local Chief Executive in the Municipality of Rosales, she oversees the day to day flow of the LGU, and acts as the chairman in the planning and development of the municipality. It is likewise the task of the Mayor to supervise all administrative affairs concerning the local government, to serve as the municipality's figurehead, to interact with dignitaries and the media, to oversee the planning and allocation of the municipality's annual budget, to ensure that the funds are utilized in accordance to the law; a task that is very taxing and strenuous. But despite such tediousness, some tough days and long nights in the office, she finds every time and every way to perform her duties and responsibilities in a manner beyond compare.

Her path to politics started at an early age. She was groomed and was taught the essentials and the rudiments of politics by her great mentor, Congressman Conrado Estrella III. She started climbing the ladder of public service by starting as SK Chairman in 1979 at the young age of 14. In 1985, she became the Sangguniang Kabataan President. Though young as she was, she was already exposed to an in-depth learning about some of the fundamental problems faced by society as well as the political and judicial machinery of the country. From 1987-2013, she became the Chief of Staff of Hon. Conrado M. Estrella III as well as a Consultant to the Office of the Governor and of the Vice Governor from July 2010- 2011. The jobs she held during those times are something concrete that demonstrate her interest in politics and bolstered her resolution to pursue her career in the field of politics. For such reasons, from the year 1995 up to the present, she holds elective positions from the

rank of Punong Barangay, to Municipal Councilor, and now as a second term Municipal Mayor of Rosales, Pangasinan.

The good mayor believes that education is important because it help one to make quick and good decisions. If the person is well educated, she will know about the current situation running every day. Without education is a car without fuel. She took up BS in Agricultural Education at Pangasinan State University, Sta. Maria Campus in 1987. She pursued higher education and finished Doctor of Public Administration at Alliance of Chaplains for Transformation Society in cooperation with Philippine Christian College, Inc. and ACTS in 2016. She is likewise a recipient of Doctor of Humanities (Honoris Causa) from International Academy for Leadership in consortium with Philippine Christian College, Inc. and ACTS in 2015. Through these various educational accomplishments, she obtained theoretical knowledge and various story of the laws and other things related to education, politics, technology, and its impact on the environment, and benefit for the society.

As a leader, she knew that she must have the skill to build a programme of policies that is linked to the constituent's values while appealing to the widest possible section of the electorate to be able to deliver public service for general welfare. For such reasons, her priority projects under social aspects includes the Emergency Philhealth to all Rosalenians, the establishment of the Municipal Infirmary Unit and the Gawad Kapaligiran: Search for the Cleanest, Greenest, and Safest Barangay in Rosales. Under economic aspect, she was able to boost tourism and business investments in the municipality through the conduct of the Annual Tinapa Festival, passage of the New Market Code and the Municipal Investment Incentive Code. Under political aspect, she supports the passage of various ordinances to secure the smooth flow of the municipality, such as the ordinance promulgating the Gender and Development Code of Rosales, the ordinance urging SM City Rosales Cinema to grant free admission to senior citizens who are residents of Rosales during screenings of all films shown in the establishment on any days of the week and the ordinance institutionalizing, promoting, and developing organic agriculture in Rosales. Under cultural, the municipality celebrates the Rosales Day and the Annual Christmas Lighting as well as the holding of the Mayor's Cup (basketball and volleyball) and a regular zumba session for all Rosalenians. This clearly shows that her administration is a balanced one because the policies and programs cater to all people, from all walks of life, regardless of age and status in life.

She attends to every event of the barangays in her municipality, staying in each event even in the wee hours of the morning when needed to. She also Civil supports all the

projects and advocacies of the DepEd schools in her municipality.

Numerous awards were bestowed and conferred upon the respondent. She was given Plaque of Appreciation by the Girl Scouts of the Philippines Pangasinan Council in December 2014; Luciano Milan Memorial School Arts and Trade in November 2014; by Bureau of Jail Management and Penology Regional Office 2014; DepEd Rosales II in March 2014; and by Rosales National High School in July 2013. She was given a Plaque of Appreciation by Li-Sheng Giap Elementary School in March 2014 and a Citation by the Department of Labor and Employment in October 2014. The most significant is the Civil Service Commission's Dangal ng Bayan which was given in November 19, 2016, in recognition of her outstanding performance as a public official.

She is married to Mr. Reynaldo Licudo Casareno and is a mother of four (4), John Francis, Reysanne, Rinalyn and Renald. For her, motherhood is a sacrifice as well as a joy and a privilege. She is happy because they have been supportive and grateful to her, pointing out that she has to raise them under the public view and busy political schedules. That, she could not imagine herself be tagged as an empowered woman without her family completing the picture.

Case No. 8

Among the students and her peers, the respondent is popularly known simply as "MQS". The three letters not just stand for her complete name but also for her Magnanimity, Quality and Scintillating personality. A name when heard indicates her reputation of being a competent woman with untarnished public service record, highly respected within and beyond the borders of the academe who have fulfilled her functions beyond public expectations.

Born and raised in Binmaley, Pangasinan, our respondent has stayed in the province for 62 years. She narrates that she loves to stay in Pangasinan because it was a nice and peaceful place to live in, with its beaches, commercial centers and sceneries. True enough, the respondent has reached the career that she currently has because of 37 years of handwork, patience, resourcefulness, integrity and capability. Her guiding principle is about to accommodate all people coming from different walks of life with love, respect and fairness.

She is a graduate of Bachelor in Secondary Education major in Economics (1980), Bachelor of Arts in Economics (1979), Bachelor of Arts in English (1978) and Bachelor of Laws (1992). She is a graduate of Master of Arts in

Education major in Communication Arts English (1984) and Doctor of Education major in Higher Education (1987). Her first job was a secondary school teacher at Binmaley Catholic High School. She became an Assistant Instructor at Pangasinan State University, Binmaley Campus in 1984. She was transferred to Pangasinan State University, Lingayen Campus as Instructor I. From a simple faculty member, she rose from the ranks. She is now a Professor VI who had worked hard and performed multiple tasks to be able to reach such position. She was usually given administrative positions and through her top level sponsorship, she uses the authority and power to effect new visions and directions as well as implement innovations.

The respondent does research, and attends seminars and conferences inside and even outside the country. She spearheads the conduct of international and national trainings of different fields, areas and subjects. She had served as Key Note as well as Resource Speaker and delivered talk on specialized topics of wide ranges. She is an Accreditor of Accrediting Agency of Chartered Colleges and Universities in the Philippines, Inc. (AACCUP). She even acts as adviser to multifarious theses and dissertations and had authorship on several books and prepared modules and course books. For her, these are her way of mentoring and paying forward for the many opportunities and countless blessings she has in her life.

Her many contributions were not left unnoticed. The respondent has received multiple recognitions for her substantial contributions. The most significant is being awarded as an Outstanding Administrator in 2011 by the Capital Town Festival Executive Committee (Lingayen, Pangasinan) and DepEd, Division of Pangasinan I.

Currently, she is the Executive Director for Gender and Development of Pangasinan State University. The respondent was able to rally the entire organization to support planned change, and become the symbol of the innovation itself. She serves as a front liner for gender-related consciousness-raising and seeks to overturn centuries-old habits and ideas concerning social relationship and status. She aims to modify attitudes towards the roles and responsibilities of men and women in society. She acted as the champion for gender concerns. Because of her, gender responsiveness has been the hallmark of development planning and programing in the entire university.

When asked what an empowered woman means to her, she states that "*an empowered woman is a woman who can make decision and stand by it. That women shall be accommodated fairly as men. And more importantly, women should be placed in equal footing with men. A woman who accepts challenge and is willing to take risks for the women.*" It is her belief that a woman should be treated and

considered as co-partner of her husband and not just a follower of her husbands.”

She narrates that there were times that her credibility or authority has been put into question simply because she was a woman. She was then the president of a certain civic organization. The men were not cooperative and remains stereotyped in their belief that women are inferior to men. She took it as a challenge. She proves her worth as a woman leader by leading the team into the proper perspective. Having this in mind, her future plans include the creation of an organization where women are leaders and prime movers of a project which is usually dominated by men.

Priority Development Programs or Projects of the Empowered Women

This part explains the various priority development programs/projects of the respondents.

Priority Development Programs or Projects	f
a) social (health and welfare, environmental)	2
b) economic (tourism and business investments)	1
c) political (legal issues, ordinances)	3
d) cultural (festivities, customs and traditions)	2
TOTAL	8

Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents across the priority development programs or projects of the empowered women. It shows that 3 respondents or 37 of the empowered women focus their priority programs or projects on political aspects; 2 or 25 percent of them are concentrated on social concerns while another 2 or 25 percent is on cultural concerns; 1 or 13 percent of the empowered women put her attentions into economic advancements.

Majority of our respondents focus their development program or projects on political aspects. This behavior coincides with the study of Pinto (2000) [15] where it states that research on politics and organizational life demonstrate an interesting paradox at work: the vast majority of managers hate engaging in political activities believing that they waste time and detract from the more important aspects of their jobs. On the other hand, these same managers acknowledge that, while they do not like politics,

“politicking” is an important requirement for business and personal success. The underlying point is important: we have to acknowledge politics as a fact of organizational and project life. Denying the political nature of organizations does not make that phenomenon less potent. This implication argues that before managers are able to learn to utilize politics in a manner that is supportive of project implementation, they must first acknowledge: 1) existence, and 2) its impact on project success.

Problems Encountered by Empowered Women in the Performance of their Functions

Problems encountered revolved mostly around political aspect. While numerous Filipino women took pride in the

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED	
SOCIAL	<i>f</i>
1. <i>Women do more household work than male family members.</i>	4
2. <i>Stereotyping on women as inferior to men.</i>	5
3. <i>Pervasion of media campaign on sexism.</i>	4
4. <i>Women are more prejudiced than men.</i>	2
5. <i>Medical access is limited.</i>	0
ECONOMIC	<i>f</i>
1. <i>More women pay all or in disproportionate amounts to provide for children's needs.</i>	1
2. <i>More women than men who work on low-wage, part-time jobs.</i>	0
3. <i>Women get unemployed first during a recession.</i>	0
4. <i>There is high wage gap between the sexes</i>	2
5. <i>Women lack financial literacy skills.</i>	
POLITICAL	<i>f</i>
1. <i>Character assassination to women candidates that limit their roles.</i>	7
2. <i>Women are not found adequate or proportional representation.</i>	2
3. <i>Limited access to law enforcement protection or justice system.</i>	4
4. <i>Preference to male public servants over female public servant</i>	6
5. <i>Absence of political will and commitment for women issues.</i>	1
CULTURAL	<i>f</i>
1. <i>People remain quiet about the disparities in culture that reinforce the dominance of toxic identity.</i>	5
2. <i>Women are icons of weakness and subordinations in most artworks and creations.</i>	3
3. <i>There is idealized masculinity, gender roles and stereotypes.</i>	4
4. <i>Women are believed to have evolved of sins in the world.</i>	0
5. <i>Gender diversity is not a priority.</i>	3

international front and played significant roles to advance women's global agenda, political problems ranked first, followed by social and cultural problems. MacPhail, (2015)[16] in her World Economic Forum (WEF) *Global Gender Gap Report 2014*, gender inequality persists in economic opportunities and political empowerment, due to a disparity participation rate between female and male labor force, favoring the latter of a high participation rate.

Majority of the respondents found that character assassination of women candidates limit their roles. The more challenging task is when the main opposition is not rival candidates, but discrimination and gender prejudice. Ng (2016) [17] mentioned character assassination by rival candidates as endured by a transgender congressional candidate, but has managed to block that out because the public had given the candidate a warm reception. This clearly indicates that the respondents are aware of this misogynistic attacks to women as one problem encountered. Even the alleged out-of-marriage relationship of government officials' gain highlight especially when the female officials are involved. The treatment of women may not get much air time in the media. Normalizing murder, police corruption and character assassination of political opponents as what frequents the headlines, which are issues that set incredibly poor standards for women.

Another political problem that respondents considered was that preference of male over female public servants. According to Vermonte (2014)[18], in 2001 civil society organizations worked for the adoption of the 30 percent quota for women in the executive and legislative branches but the bill has been 12 rejected. He also points out that the electoral politics of the Philippine constitutes of elite and upper or middle class interests, that witnesses the fact that the economic and political elite dominates in major institutions in national and local levels (2014:12). Teehanke (2002:195)[19] describes that the Philippine electoral politics "suffers from institutional and procedural defects that prevent it becoming meaningful to effective and efficient governance.". He also claims that only those candidates who are rich or popular can win elections, and unfortunately but poor farmers, laborers as well as women belongs to that social group that have little opportunity of winning elections in the Philippines (Teehanke 2002:195). Silvestre (2001:165)[20] argues that family ties have allowed women to enter politics and those women often have a father-daughter or husband-wife relationship with male politicians and that is how she explains the election of Corazon Aquino and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. The Philippines long history of oligarchy, patriarchy, subordination of women and the role of Catholic Church have positively affected women possibility to enter politics. According to Silvestre (2001:167), approval from the church benefits to increase the candidacy of women in

politics. Writer adds that support is also given for women candidates, because they have the symbolic role in the culture of the country. Female politicians with strong Catholic background have a positive image in society of the Philippines (Silvestre 2001:167).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The respondents are predominantly middle-aged, mostly are married, majority belonging to big family, all were able to finish college, belonging to the middle class and all are members of the Roman Catholic Church.
- The respondents despite belonging to big family were all able to finished college which guarantees their financial stability. The respondents' despite being married and performing the duties and responsibilities of being a wife and a mother, were still able to keep decent and respectable endeavors.
2. Majority of the respondents are in their respective works for more than 10 years, occupying the highest if not the top positions performing the principal task, have attended numerous international and national seminars and trainings, and are awardee or has been commended by notable and distinguished award giving institutions.
3. Majority of the respondents focused their priority programs or projects on political aspects.
4. Problems encountered by the respondents revolved mostly around political aspect while the least of their problem is on economic aspect, hence, explaining political aspects their priority projects as a heed to the call of needs.

Recommendations

The findings and conclusions made the researchers suggest that:

1. There is a need to provide greater avenues for promotion of roles of women in the society;
2. Women should be given equal representation in the organizational structure to better enhance their capability and skills;
3. More recognition on women empowerment must be given through recognition or awards (be it local, provincial, regional or national) acknowledging their contributions to country wide development;
4. The government should provide for funding or support to the priority programs or projects of the empowered women;
5. This research study as well as other related studies must be promoted to inspire and encourage the younger generations to excel in their own chosen fields despite atrocities.
6. There is a need to conduct benchmarking activities to discover the best performance being achieve in different GAD supported institutions. The information that will be

gathered will be used to identify gaps in an organization in order to achieve a competitive advantage.

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