

Familial Relationship of 4Ps Beneficiaries in Bay, Laguna, Philippines



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フィリピン政府の貧困層向け現金給付プログラム「4Ps」は健全な家族生活と児童教育の維持を目標の1つに掲げる。その成果が上がっているかどうかを、現地での聞き取り調査やフォーカス・グループ・ディスカッションで検証した。

Abstract

The preservation of the family lies not only with the relationship of husband and wife, but also with the relationship of parents to their children. The Family Development Session (FDS) of Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps) aims to promote positive family values, strengthen marital relationships and parental roles and responsibilities. Thus, the study aimed to analyze the changes on the familial relationship of 4Ps beneficiaries brought about by FDS. It utilized a descriptive design and both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used. Simple random sampling procedure was applied to select eighty-four respondents who were 4Ps parent beneficiaries in Bay, Laguna, Philippines. The use of questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion were employed to gather data on the respondent's attitude and practices on marital and parental relationship. Findings show that the parent beneficiaries were able to apply parental relationship lessons more than the marital relationship lessons. The parent beneficiaries improved their parental relationship, thus positively affecting the children's behavior. Likewise, they became more responsible and sensitive to the needs of their children. It is recommended that other interventions for parents such as marital relationship development might be needed. Family life educators are suggested to design curricula that focus more on relationship enrichment of the family.

Keywords

Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program, Family Development Session, marital relationship, parental relationship

Introduction

The family is a person's first social encounter. It is an environment where a person's attitude, character and dignity are molded. Basic human needs such as food, shelter, security and a sense of belongingness are obtained in the family. As the building block of society, the family must be solid and strong (Medina, 2001). Fostering harmonious family relationships will not only strengthen and increase unity in the family, but also enhance societal functioning.

A harmonious family involves couples with a high level of marital satisfaction. However, marital relationship between

couples is affected by various factors such as socioeconomic status, educational attainment, mental and physical health, values and beliefs (del Mar Sanchez-Fuentes, Santos-Iglesias, & Sierra, 2014). Thus, developing a satisfying marital relationship is a challenging task for them. On the other hand, the preservation of the family lies not only with the relationship of husband and wife, but also with the relationship of parents to their children. The parent-child relationship is a unique type of relationship because of its nature and the level of intimacy involved (Troll & Fingerman, 1996). The quality of parent-child relationship in the family may cause direct and indirect effects to

children (Easterbrooks & Emde, 1988). Parents, being the role model of the children, convey positive or negative messages which predict the behaviour and interaction of children (Bandura, 1978). The study of Erel and Burman (1995) states that the quality of parent-child relationship is affected by the quality of marital relationship. These two relationships will then affect the children's character and behaviour.

Patterned from the conditional cash transfer (CCT) programs in Latin American countries, the Philippine government launched the *Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino* Program, commonly known as 4Ps, in 2007. The Family Development Session (FDS) of 4Ps is being considered as an essential component of the program to capacitate and empower the human capital of families. This unique feature of 4Ps covers a wide range of topics to enhance the family life of the beneficiaries. It includes husband-wife relationship, child-parent relationship, financial and home management, and positive parenting. The objectives of FDS are the following: a) to empower the household beneficiaries to become more productive and responsible to meet family needs; b) to enhance the skills and knowledge of household beneficiaries, promote positive family values, strengthen marital relationships & parental roles and responsibilities, particularly on the health, nutrition and education needs of children; and c) to promote social awareness, participation and involvement in community development efforts (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2016). Specifically, the second module of FDS aims to educate parents to be responsible in meeting the family's needs on health, nutrition and education of children. Moreover, it promotes good family relationships and practical home management practices.

The study sought to investigate and examine the changes happened in the marital and parental relationship of the parent beneficiaries and its effect on children's behavior. Its objective is to examine the knowledge, attitude and practices of 4Ps parent beneficiaries on marital and parental relationship brought about by the FDS component of 4Ps.

The 4Ps has a dual objective: social assistance (financial support) and social development. The FDS helps in the attainment of the second objective of the program which aims to break the intergenerational poverty cycle through investments in human capital. Aside from providing trainings on financial literacy, life

skills, livelihood skills and community development activities, FDS has a strong approach on values formation emphasizing good husband-wife relationship and positive child discipline. Moreover, through FDS, the parents are expected to have a positive outlook in life, boost their children's morale, and uplift their living status. It is also foreseen that their dependence on the support from the government will soon lead to independence. However, the vision of 4Ps to produce empowered and independent families has yet to be determined. The effectiveness of FDS to household beneficiaries has not been further examined, thus, the study sought to answer the following questions:

- a) What are the respondents' attitude and practices on marital and parental relationships?
- b) Are there changes on attitudes and practices of 4Ps beneficiaries in terms of the marital and parental relationships before and after becoming a 4Ps member?
- c) Is there a relationship among marital relationship, parental relationship and children's behaviour as perceived by their parents?

Methodology

The study utilized a descriptive research design and a mixed method of both quantitative and qualitative analyses was used to examine the knowledge, attitude and practices of the parent beneficiaries. They were all recipients of the program starting from year 2010-2012, have at least two (2) children and were all active attendees of Family Development Session (FDS) of 4Ps. They were selected from the complete list of Set 3 (year 2010-2012) family beneficiaries of 4Ps provided by the municipal link of Bay Pantawid Pamilya Office. The respondents from the list were situated in six (6) towns of Bay: Bitin, Dila, Maitim, San Nicolas Poblacion, St. Domingo, and Sta. Cruz. A simple random sampling procedure was used to select the participants. A total of eighty-four (84) respondents were determined.

The study developed and used a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was based from the Family Development Session Module. The topics from the second module, *Preparing and Nurturing the Filipino Family*, were used to come up with statements in the questionnaire, specifically on Sub-Module 2.1: Preparing for Family Life: Topic 1 – Equal Treatment between

Husband and Wife and Topic 2 – Good Relationship of Parents and Children. Prior to the conduct of the survey interview, preliminary coordination was done through the respective chairmen of the six identified towns. Letters were sent to ask assistance in identifying the home address of the 4Ps beneficiaries from the list. Upon identifying the location of the households, survey interview was employed. After the household survey, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was conducted to collect more data on the changes, situations and issues that occurred in the family as a result of attending the FDS. Ten (10) participants were invited to join the discussion. The whole discussion was recorded to capture all the answers of the participants.

The statistical mean, percentage, and standard deviation were used to analyze the attitude and practices of marital and parental relationship of the respondents. Moreover, Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test was used to examine the difference on the scores of the respondents' attitude and practices between "Before 4Ps" and "Now in 4Ps".

Findings

Marital Relationship Attitude

Table 1 shows the marital attitude of the respondents Before 4Ps and After 4Ps and the result was positive. With the highest mean score of 4.96 (SD=0.52), the respondents proved that they desire to make their spouses happy by willingly serving them. Since majority of the respondents are wives, the typical Filipino attitude among women where the wife serves the husbands is observed. This attitude is a form of spousal support where the wife caters to the needs of the husband. According to Miller et.al (2003), spouses that express positive attitude and emotions to each other will likely display positive behaviour in the future which may increase marital satisfaction. Thus, high level of marital satisfaction positively affects the life satisfaction of an individual, as well as the attitude and behaviour of children (Erel & Burman, 1995).

Table 1. Marital Relationship Attitude

| | (B4P) Before 4Ps | | (A4P) After 4Ps | |
|---|------------------|-------------|-----------------|--------------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| 1. I like to respect my spouse's decision even I do not agree with it. | 3.54 | 1.61 | 3.83 | 1.520 |
| 2. I like listening to the stories of my spouse. | 4.58 | 0.84 | 4.74 | 0.696 |
| 3. I like to settle our disagreement/ misunderstanding/ conflict immediately. | 4.67 | 0.88 | 4.79 | 0.641 |
| 4. I like to make my spouse happy by simply serving him/her wholeheartedly. | 4.89 | 0.19 | 4.96 | 0.515 |
| 5. I like to understand my spouse every time he/she is tired and cannot fulfill his/her responsibilities. | 4.45 | 1.06 | 4.52 | 0.950 |

The results were also confirmed in the focus group discussion. The respondents expressed that they desire to attend to the needs of their spouses more and stated that conflicts between them lessened. Moreover, the assurance given by the cash grant for the health and education of the children prevented couple disagreements and negative confrontations due to financial limitations.

On the other hand, the respondents got the lowest mean score on AP4 of 3.54 (SD=1.61) with regards to giving respect to spouse's decision. According to the respondents' FGD, decision making in the family should be done mutually by husband and wife. They pointed out that decision making is crucial and making poor decisions in the family will affect the children. Mutual decision making between husband and wife is an essential part of marital communication. Supporting each other's decisions cultivate positive and intimate relationship. However, unsupportive attitude results to marital conflicts which will lead to marital dissatisfaction (Bagarozzi, 1990).

Parental Relationship Attitude

The statements on parental attitude in Table 2 show the mean scores and standard deviation on B4P and A4P. The respondents acknowledged the importance of a correct approach to their children's weaknesses and mistakes as they play the role of a discipline guide (M=4.81; SD=0.63). This means that the

respondents' attitude in guiding their children shows the level of involvement they have in their children's lives. This is important especially in the formative years of the children as well as the adolescent years. According to Gould & Mazzeo (1982), children in early adolescence become more concerned about themselves and their peers. They often seek comfort and advice from their friends rather than their parents. Thus, continuous parental guidance is vital to lead them to right choices and decisions.

Table 2. Parental Relationship Attitude

| | (B4P) Before 4Ps | | (A4P) After 4Ps | |
|---|------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| 1. I like to understand my children's weaknesses and mistakes and help them to correct it. | 4.81 | 0.63 | 4.90 | 0.37 |
| 2. When in an argument with my child, I like to think first the words I will use before I speak. | 4.27 | 1.17 | 4.52 | 0.95 |
| 3. I like to understand that each of my children has a unique way of expressing themselves. | 4.18 | 1.33 | 4.42 | 1.17 |
| 4. I like to give careful thought of my actions and speech because I recognize that my children look at me as a good example in speech and in action. | 4.58 | 0.99 | 4.70 | 0.94 |
| 5. I like listening to my children's stories. | 4.77 | 0.608 | 4.83 | 0.598 |

On the other hand, the respondents were challenged to understand their children's unique way of expressing themselves. During infancy to early childhood, parents-child relationship is characterized by high level of quality time with strong emotional and physical bond with the parents (Collins & Russel, 1991). However, in the early adolescent stage, children begin to spend more time with their peers. Parents are not the only source of influence to their children because they are more immersed with the influence of peers and other external factors in the family. These influences make it difficult for parents to reach out to their children because they adapt behaviours from their peers. Therefore, children are likely to distant themselves,

physically and emotionally, to their parents which affects the family cohesion and closeness (Larson & Richards, 1991).

Moreover, the high result of the knowledge test in parent-child relationship also confirms the positive attitude of parent beneficiaries' towards parent-child relationship. This may be also due to the knowledge gained not only from FDS but from other sources. The parent beneficiaries proved that they maintained a positive attitude towards parent-child relationship even before they became 4Ps beneficiaries.

Marital Relationship Practices

Table 3 below shows the statements on marital relationship practices that shows the respondents' highest mean score of 4.85 (SD=0.48) on Item no. 4 which means that the respondents were used to giving words of affirmation to their spouses.

Table 3. Marital Relationship Practices

| | Before 4Ps | | After 4Ps | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| 1. I often express my affection to my spouse by kissing and hugging him/her. | 4.46 | 1.01 | 4.08 | 1.45 |
| 2. I listen to my spouse with respect and not use hurtful words whenever we are in conflict. | 3.80 | 1.18 | 3.95 | 1.18 |
| 3. I often apologize to my spouse whenever I hurt him/her with my words or actions. | 4.07 | 1.35 | 4.25 | 1.36 |
| 4. I praise my spouse every time he/she is pleasant and did a good thing. | 4.85 | 0.48 | 4.77 | 0.78 |
| 5. I give ample time to my spouse to maintain our good relationship. | 4.50 | 0.98 | 4.43 | 1.12 |

The respondents, even in their poverty situation, still managed to praise their spouses for the good behaviour they show. This practice also reflects their positive and affectionate attitude towards their spouses. Marital satisfaction, according to Bohlander (1999), is the degree of how a spouse perceives their partner in meeting their needs and desires. It is the couple's ability to understand, accept and appreciate each other's actions, thoughts, feelings and emotions. Appreciation of spouse is a

form of positive marriage interaction because it builds positive interpersonal relationship between husband and wife. Gottman (1994) studied that in order to attain marital satisfaction, there must be five positive interaction in every one negative interaction. Thus, every appreciation and positive affirmation of the respondents to their spouse cultivates positive communication in their marital relationship.

However, the respondents got the lowest mean score of 3.80 (SD=1.18) on Item no.2 which means that at times, they used hurtful words and did not listen to their spouse when in conflict. This negative communication in marriage usually arises due to great criticism, defensiveness, contempt and stonewalling (Gottman, 1994). These behaviours, accompanied by blame, disappointments and frustrations, greatly affect the marital satisfaction, thus affect the overall functioning of the family. This is one of the struggles the respondents stated in the group discussion. The knowledge they gained from FDS were easy to apply to their children but difficult to apply to their spouses. According to the respondents, some of the factors that hindered them to compromise with their spouses when in conflict were pride and lack of self-control.

Due to the knowledge acquired by the women respondents from FDS, they became knowledgeable of their rights, rights of their children and the laws that protect them. This caused them to have a stronger character and lifted their self-worth as the house keeper of the family. These changes within the women respondents seemed to have an effect on their role performance in the family. They have become better nurturers and protectors of their children and they have become empowered as women and wives.

Parental Relationship Practices

Table 4 shows that the respondents got the highest mean score of 4.96 (SD=0.19) on Item no. 10 which shows that they were able to guide their children whenever they commit mistakes and encourage them whenever they have problem. The parent beneficiaries practice parental guidance to their children's emotional welfare by helping them cope up with their mistakes and explaining to them the pros and cons of their behaviours. This is a primary responsibility of parents to build up their children especially those who are in their teenage years.

The study of Simmons & Blyth (1987) stated that early adolescent children spend more time of unsupervised interactions with friends than in their early years, especially when they are in school. With that, proper guidance from parents is necessary to lead them on how to deal with life, make sound decisions and have right perspective on things.

Table 4. Parental Relationship Practices

| | Before 4Ps | | After 4Ps | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| | Mean | Std. Dev. | Mean | Std. Dev. |
| 6. I often express my affection to my children by kissing and hugging them. | 4.71 | 0.72 | 4.56 | 1.05 |
| 7. I calmly talk to my children and I do not use hurtful words whenever I reprimand them. | 3.98 | 1.14 | 4.23 | 1.13 |
| 8. In an argument, I listen carefully and respect my children's feelings/opinion. | 4.36 | 1.06 | 4.52 | 0.99 |
| 9. I often encourage my children whenever they are feeling down or have a problem. | 4.77 | 0.63 | 4.88 | 0.52 |
| 10. I explain consequences of my children's action properly whenever they commit mistakes. | 4.87 | 0.37 | 4.96 | 0.19 |

Moreover, the respondents always encourage their children whenever they are feeling down or have a problem (M=4.88; SD=0.52) as stated in Item no. 9. The respondents take the roles of cheerleader and mood-lifter which are forms of positive parent-child communication. This interaction provides foundation for children, specifically those who are in the early adolescent stage, to learn and be sensitive of their emotions, thus the parents help develop their children's skills to succeed in life (Dawson & Ashman, 2000). Children's emotional being must be guided well for the establishment of their coping abilities and problem-solving skills.

On the other hand, the respondents were challenged to talk to their children calmly and not use hurtful words whenever they reprimand them (M=3.98; SD=1.14). Yelling, as a form of both anger and discipline to children, are shown when parents are

highly stressed and experiencing difficulty in life. According to Ayoub et.al (2009), this a kind of negative parenting approach greatly affects children's language, cognitive, social and emotional well-being and development. This parental behaviour, if not changed, may lead long-term effects to children such as anxiety, self-pity, low self-esteem, and violence.

The result also confirms the obtained high scores in parental knowledge questions. The findings also proved that the parent-child relationship knowledge gained by the respondents from the FDS topics was applied to their children. According to the respondents' focus group discussion (FGD), they were able to apply the lessons from FDS to their children immediately. Applying the parental lessons made the respondents increase their sense of responsibility. In addition, having awareness of the rights of the children, the respondents became more sensitive with the needs of their children and in return, their children became more attached to them.

Attitude and Practices on Marital and Parental Relationship

The Wilcoxon Signed-Ranks Test on Table 5 indicates that the scores between B4P and A4P of marital relationship attitude and parental relationship practices were significantly different, while the scores between B4P and A4P of parental attitude and marital practices remained the same. This means that in terms of attitude, marital relationship was improved while parental relationship remained the same. However, in terms of practices, parental relationship was improved, while marital relationship remained the same. The findings show that even though the marital attitude of the respondents was improved, it doesn't follow that their marital practices will improve as well. Moreover, the parental attitude of the respondents remained the same but has improved their practices. This may due to the culture of Filipino which values the children greatly. Filipino parents are focused on parenthood and parenting skills, not only because the children bear the name of the family, but because it is expected for them to raise their children well and in return the children will take care of their parents when they get old (Go, 1993).

Table 5. Attitude and Practices on Marital and Parental Relationship

| | Attitude | | Interpretation | Practices | | Interpretation |
|-----------------------|----------|---------|------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|------------------------------------|
| | Z | P value | | Z | P value | |
| Marital Relationship | 324.5 | <0.020 | With significant difference | 48.5, | <0.829 | With no significant difference |
| Parental Relationship | 17 | <0.167 | With no significant difference | 28 | <0.011 | With significant difference |

Relationship between Children's Behaviour and Practices on Parental Relationship

Table 6 shows that children's common behaviour has a significant positive linear relationship with parental relationship practices ($r_s = -0.387, p = 0.000$). The results show that the more positive the common behaviour of children such as politeness, being affectionate, confident and knows how to listen, the more favourable the respondents' parental relationship practices. Parents, who experience affection from their children and observe improvement in their behaviour, lessen the stress they are experiencing (Odgers et. al, 2012). Through FDS, parent's improved their practices on parenting which positively affects the children's behaviour. The results confirm the study of Joussemet, Mageau, and Koestner (2014) which stated that parent education has been shown to increase positive parenting skill, while Gardner, Burton, and Klimes (2006) observed that parent education help reduce child conduct problems. As the parents changed for the better, the children also developed positively.

Table 6. Parental Practices and Children's Behavior

| Variable | Correlation Coefficient | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--|-------------------------|-----------------|
| Parental Relationship Practices & Children's common behavior | .387** | .000 |
| Parental Relationship Practices & Children's behavior (home mgt) | .347** | .001 |

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Children's common behaviour such as giving respect to elders, expressing themselves properly and accepting correction from parents are influenced by how their parents conduct themselves at home and how they relate to their children. Moreover, it also shows that there is a significant positive linear relationship on children's behaviour towards home management and

parental relationship practices, ($r_s = -0.347, p = 0.001$). The findings show that the more positive the behaviour of children towards home management, the higher the parental relationship practices. This supports the results on children's common behaviour wherein children's behaviour are affected by parental relationship practices. This means that a good relationship between parent and child will have an effect on child's behaviour. Children's behaviour on personal care, sibling care, household assignments, time management and wise decision making on money are greatly influenced on how the parent beneficiaries interact with their children. As the social learning theory suggests, children model the behaviour of their parents (Bandura, 1978). Witnessing positive attitude and behaviour towards home management may produce similar behaviour in children. Thus, positive home management of parents will result to positive behaviour of children towards home management.

Conclusion

The 4Ps parent beneficiaries' high scores in knowledge on parental relationship resulted to improved practices, while their attitude remained positive. The result is an indication that the respondents were able to apply the lessons of Family Development Session on those said topics. This means that parent beneficiaries were able to apply parental relationship lessons than the lessons on marital relationship. The result is an indication that the lessons on the latter are inadequate. Factors that hindered improvement of marital relationship were limited marital relationship lessons in FDS and empowerment of women causing them to assert their rights. Women respondents were educated and empowered through FDS, thus, making them more knowledgeable on children and household management. Most men were not able to attend FDS because they are the ones working for the family. As a result, it has become the housewives' role to decide for the family because as they stated, their husbands do not know much about how their family runs as they are already preoccupied with working.

Lastly, the parent beneficiaries have improved their parental relationship, thus affecting their children's behaviour. They have become more sensitive in communicating with their children such as avoiding the use of bad words and shouting. As a result, the children's interactions with their parents improved,

and good quality relationship between parent and child also developed. The parent beneficiaries became more responsible and sensitive to the needs of their children, especially to the needs of their children in school.

Recommendation

The researcher recommends for the development of additional lessons on husband-wife relationship topics. It is recognized that FDS highlights the importance of child caregiving to break the intergenerational poverty of the families. The 4Ps focuses more on meeting the needs of the children by educating the parent through FDS, however other interventions for parents such as marital relationship development by might be needed. Moreover, special FDS for working husbands would be helpful to educate and empower fathers as the leader of the family.

Based on the result of the study, it is further recommended that family life educators would design curricula that focus more on relationship enrichment of the family, specifically marital relationship. With the fast changing society and technology advancement, the family has evolved into different forms and functions, thus, quality relationships between couples and family members might be subtly left behind.

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