



COMMUNITY PANTRY: A FRAMEWORK FOR (Re) INTERPRETING IBANAG YOUTH'S CONCEPT ON *KAPWA* AND *PAKIKIPAGKAPWA*

Leah Lyn B. Fiesta, Albert G. Lasam, Alea Marie D. Madolin, Marlon M. Ramos, Alleonor Kathleen C. Saclag, Antonio I. Tamayao

Cagayan State University, Tuguegarao City, Cagayan Province, Philippines

Abstract

This study unraveled the modern interpretation of the Ibanag Youth's concept on *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* through the formation of the community pantry. Specifically, it explored the Ibanag Youth's experiences, views, and values using the community pantry as a framework. Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis research design was used. Nine Ibanag youths who have been involved in the conduct of the community pantry were interviewed. Thematic analysis was employed which include steps such as familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up. The results uncovered the Ibanag concepts of *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay*. The *kasittolay* has an unknown identity while *makikasittolay* is the act of partaking into the lives of others in a positive light. The underlying motives of the Ibanag youths in establishing the community pantries were both intrinsic and extrinsic and these have led to the promotion of *pammacappianan na magaru* (common good). The community pantries played a significant role in promoting and developing the Ibanag concepts and values (*pabboluntaryu*, *minagiyawa*, *mapammakatalakkan*, *vuka ta ngamin*, *mappanono ta adalam*, and *makidaddam*), which were unveiled to be inward or outward-looking. The study affirmed that the Ibanag concepts and values were consistent with the mainstream Filipino values. Thus, the community pantry is a good framework in interpreting the Ibanag concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. The community pantry served as a good paradigm in unraveling and defining the Ibanag concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. It is a fertile ground to nourish the Ibanags' concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* allowing the inward and outward-looking values to flourish. The indigenous values of the Ibanags were proven to be consistent with the existing Filipino values and concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. Hence, the Ibanags' age-old culture and values still live on in the 21st century as the Ibanag youths have used the community pantry as a modern way to preserve and aggrandize them for the next generations. In light of the findings, it is recommended that the community pantry shall be continued in different localities as it is a powerful catalyst not only for socio-economic purposes but also for cultural preservation. It is also recommended that the LGUs, NGOs, and private organizations should collaborate to support existing community pantries. More Ibanag youths should also be encouraged to participate in socio-civic activities through existing school and civic organizations. The findings of this study may be incorporated in subjects such as *Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao*, *Araling Panlipunan*, and *Understanding the Self* to delve deeper into the Ibanag mind and soul.

Keywords: Ibanag, Youths, Community Pantry, Filipino Values, *Kapwa*, *Pakikipagkapwa*



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The Filipino culture is a rich story that tells of the nation's journey through the centuries. It developed through influences from Chinese traders, Spanish conquistadors, and American rulers. Thus, it is said to be a mix of the western and eastern cultures that make it distinct from cultures of the neighboring countries. It partakes of both Asian traditions and Western practices but curiously is neither Asian nor Western (Mulder, 2013). There were multiple studies that have asserted that because of this confluence of cultures, it has resulted in the adulteration of Philippine management culture (Mendoza, 2001). Worse is that it has always been misinterpreted and misjudged as non-Filipinos were scrutinizing it in their own perspectives. This frequent misinterpretation of the culture has led various researchers to advocate for a more Filipino way of studying not only of the general Filipino culture but also of indigenous cultures as well (Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000).

One of the advocates of this movement was Virgilio Enriquez who has published his groundbreaking work, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* which was the psychology born out of the experience, thought, and orientation of the Filipinos, based on the full use of Filipino culture and language (Pe-Pua & Marcelino, 2000). He has constructed a Filipino value system whereby *Kapwa* was regarded as core value. It is identified as a shared identity that involves the “self” in unity with the “others”. This concept of *kapwa* was further perpetrated in other studies such as “Loob and *Kapwa*” by Jeremiah Reyes. According to him, *Loób*, which can easily be misunderstood when literally translated into English as ‘inside’ but which is better translated as ‘relational will’, and the second is *kapwa*, which is literally translated as ‘other person’ but is better understood as ‘together with the person’. These concepts of *kapwa* does not apply to some ethnic groups in the Philippines, rather it applies to each one of them.

The Philippines is seen as one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, being home to hundreds of ethnic groups, each with its own cultural splendor. One of these ethnic groups living in Cagayan Valley are the Ibanags. According to the NCCA, The Ibanag (Ibannag) are concentrated in the provinces of Cagayan and Isabela. In historic times, the Ibanags moved up river and gradually influenced the cultures of older ethnic elements in the south like the Itawit, Isinay, and Ga’dang. Later, Ilocano cultural influences were incorporated as tobacco growers also affected the cultures of these groups. The Ibanags boast of their precious heritage and a repertoire of, although not so extensive, pieces of literature ranging from their Unonis, folk songs, poems, riddles, to their stories. These pieces of literature serve as an avenue in providing a deeper insight into the cultures and values of the Ibanags. Through different generations, the culture is passed down from generation to generation. Thus, it now poses a challenge for the youth as the caretakers of the Ibanag culture. This challenge sparked hope among Ibanag youths in the pursuit of cultivating the Ibanag culture especially amidst a crisis like a pandemic.



The whole world has come to a standstill in 2020 as an airborne virus, dubbed as Covid-19, rapidly spread across the globe, changing life as we know it. The Philippines is no exception; as early as March, the country has succumbed to the pandemic's challenges: the country going on lockdown, home quarantines, and limited mobility. These problems brought about by the virus have greatly affected the economy as several businesses were forced to close, leading to low GDP, the rise of unemployment, and an increase in the hunger rate (Rasul et al., 2021). Nonetheless, being a Filipino entails the virtues of resourcefulness and solidarity. Through these values, one Filipino named Patricia Non, a resident of Quezon City, began a small gesture for others who are also coping with the pandemic, which has now become known as community pantries. According to Capulong et al. (2022), the primary concept of these pantries is to encourage people to give whatever they can. This social endeavor has attracted volunteers to take part in this undertaking—especially the youth from different ethnic groups, even the Ibanag youths. The popularity of the community pantry did not just serve as a socio-civic endeavor; however, it also served as a hint to a possible reinterpretation of the concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*.

In light of this, the researchers aimed to unravel the modern interpretation of the Ibanag youth's concept of *Kapwa* and *Pakikipagkapwa* in the form of the Community Pantries during the Coronavirus-19 pandemic.

1.2.Statement of the Problem

This study unraveled the Ibanag concepts of *Kapwa* and *Pakikipagkapwa* as manifested in the formation of the Community Pantries during the Coronavirus-19 pandemic. Specifically, it addressed the following questions:

1. What is the concept of the Ibanag Youth regarding *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*?
2. What are the motives of the participants in forming the community pantries?
3. How does the community pantry promote the Ibanag Youth's Concept on *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*?
4. What Ibanag values are explicated among the Ibanag Youths in the formation of the community pantry?
5. What are the Ibanag Youth's concept on *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* that are consistent with Filipino values?
6. What framework can be constructed in interpreting and re-interpreting Ibanag Youth's concept on *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*?

1.3.Conceptual Framework

Ibanag culture is passed down from generation to generation challenging each one to find ways in preserving and developing it. The contemporary Ibanag youths face the same challenge to accomplish this responsibility especially in difficult times. During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ibanag youths played a significant role by actively engaging in the community pantry activity. The activity has urged volunteers to set up pantries in several

communities which provide basic goods for the people in the community. It revolved around the idea of “take what you need and give what you can”. The Ibanag youth’s participation did not only bring about an immediate response to the needs of their communities but it also helped to uncover and elucidate important Ibanag concepts on *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. This will ultimately lead to the identification of Ibanag values.

Finally, an Ibanag framework has been conceptualized where the center was the community pantry which served as the key in unlocking the core concepts of Ibanags. It has impelled the Ibanag youths to act on the problem the community was facing at the time of the pandemic. Their act of helping through voluntarism has given way to the flourishing of transcendental values from within the Ibanag youths and reflected to their *kasittolay*. These transcendental values of the Ibanag youths are going beyond the limitations of physical and superficial experience while citing that the Ibanag youths are part of a community and nature altogether (Allison, 1971). These concepts are illustrated in the figure below:

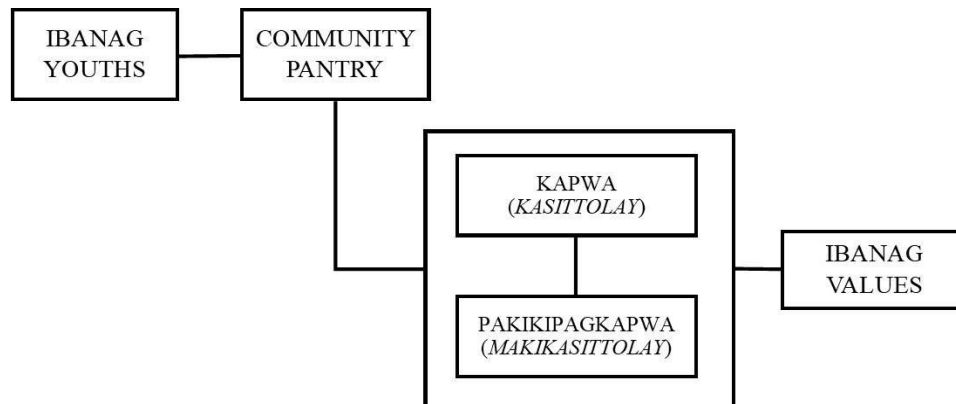


Figure 1. Research Paradigm

1.4. Significance of the Study

The study is significant to the Ibanags and their culture as the researchers hope for its enrichment and development. Also, this will benefit the Ibanag youths for it opens an opportunity to acknowledge, understand, and promote their heritage and culture while also encouraging them to actively participate in socio-civic engagements that foster the value of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. It will also contribute to the Filipiniana studies in enriching the concepts in Filipino psychology and ethnography. This paper can also serve as a foundation for future researchers who plan to explore related topics. It will also serve as a cross-reference to have a background and an overview in unlocking related findings.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

2.1. Filipino Concepts on Kapwa and Values System

The Philippines is a very diverse country, perhaps as a product of geography, giving birth to the hundreds of unique ethnic groups scattered all over the archipelago. Each of these ethnic



groups boast extraordinary flavors of culture. However, there is something that binds Ilocanos, Visayans, Igorots, Ivatans, Maranaos, and all others together as one Filipino nation: our unique Filipino values. Unfortunately, these values have always been misinterpreted and misjudged as non-Filipinos were scrutinizing our values. This frequent misinterpretation of our values has led Virgilio Enriquez to create his groundbreaking work: *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*. According to R. Pe-Pua & E. Marcelino (2000), Enriquez' *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* aimed to identify an existing, meaningful, and lexicalized concept in the Filipino national language, which might provide the key to understanding Filipino psychology. A fascinating aspect of his work was his findings of the reconceptualization of the Filipino behavior patterns and value structure. He characterized *hiya*, *utang na loob*, and *pakikisama* as colonial surface values; *bahala na*, *sama/lakas ng loob*, and *pakikibaka* as confrontative surface values. On the other hand, he identified the concept of *Kapwa* as a core of the Filipino social psychology, *pakikiramdam* as pivotal interpersonal value, and *kagandahang-loob* as linking socio-personal value. Societal values include *karangalan*, *katarungan*, *kalayaan*. Enriquez posits that there are two categories of *kapwa*: the *Ibang Tao* (outsider) and the *Hindi-Ibang-Tao* (one of us). In Filipino social interaction, one is immediately placed into one of these two categories; and how one is placed determines the level of interaction one is shown.

This led to another significant Filipino-centered discourse, the *Pantayong Pananaw* by Salazar (1997). It is a descriptive concept that can pertain to any social collectivity which possesses a relatively unified and internally articulated linguistic-cultural structure of communication and interaction and/or a sense of oneness of purpose and existence. It posits that to understand a group or a nation, it is proper and appropriate to look at it from an insider's point-of-view (Ramon, 2003).

On the other hand, according to Reyes (2015), the dissertation aims to articulate and organize a "Filipino virtue ethics." It is a project that's both constructive and descriptive. It is constructive in that it constructs Filipino virtue ethics based on Aquinas' metaphysics, psychology, and ethics. He discovered that the identification of *loób* as a "holistic and relational will" and a "power of the soul," *kapwa* as the second-person perspective of this *loób*, and Filipino ethical notions as this *loób*'s "habits" and "virtues" sharpens the knowledge of Filipino concepts beyond what has previously been conceivable.

2.2. Ibanag Values

The Ibanags are one of the many indigenous ethnic groups in the Philippines who are living in the parts of Northern Luzon's provinces of Cagayan and Isabela. History tells that the Ibanags flourished near the mighty Cagayan River, hence the name, *Y bannag* (from the river). The culture of the Ibanags, as with other Filipino ethnic groups, has their own unique culture that has been carefully transmitted through generations through time. The Ibanags boast of their precious heritage and a repertoire of, although not so extensive, pieces of literature ranging from their *Unonis*, folk songs, poems, riddles, and stories.



These pieces of literature became an avenue not only for the overall appreciation for the culture and the ethnic group itself, but it also provides an insight into a deeper understanding of the Ibanags for who they truly are. Ibanags according to their literature revealed some of the Ibanags' values such as faith in God, family solidarity, humility and simplicity, industry, love of knowledge and wisdom, patience and perseverance, reciprocity and justice, unity and cooperation, and love, courtship and marriage (Cagurangan, 2014).

Further, there were two studies that focused on the Ibanag Unonis attempting to discover the Ibanag values embedded within their lines. Unonis are sayings, adages, or proverbs originating among ordinary people (Romero, 2019). The value systems and virtues of a culture are usually reflected in the traditional literature which was handed down to the people of the present generation through memory and practice rather than through the printed page; hence, making it oral in nature (Melad, 2014). According to Romero (2019), from her ethnolinguistic analysis of Cagayan ethnic proverbs, she identified some of the themes that came about: faith in God; sharing, charity, and reciprocity; humility and simplicity; family, friendship, and social commitment, industry and indolence; patience, perseverance, and endurance; unity and cooperation; just among others. Similarly, a study by Melad (2014), the unonis he has examined revealed the consonance of the values—i.e., trustworthiness, spirituality, respect, and industry—between those values taught by the Department of Education.

Other than the Unonis, the Ibanag values of unity, cooperation, and community are majorly explicated in their festivals. For example, the city of Tuguegarao's festival, before its change of name to Afi, was called the Pavvurulun Festival which literally means 'coming together' in Ibanag. Although a religious festival for the city's patron, St. Hyacinth, it is also a way of developing or enriching their culture and values. According to Bayani (2020), there were direct and indirect socio-cultural impacts on the community through the opportunities they provide for such as participation, skills development and volunteering.

Historically speaking, the Ibanags were also regarded as a very hospitable people, welcoming even those who are not of the same ethnicity. In a study by Tamayao (2009) about the interprovincial mobility of Ilocanos when they migrated to Cagayan, he found out that one of the reasons of the successful settlement of the Ilocanos was because of the native Ibanags, Itawes, and Aetas were perceived to be generally good, amiable and hospitable. A proof that the aborigines of Cagayan were good people was seen in the easy acquisition of land by the migrating Ilocanos.

2.3. Community Pantry

The modern world has rarely seen a pandemic of the magnitude and contagiousness of the 2019 coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak (Velavan et al. 2020). Within seven months of its inception, the COVID-19 crippled the world, impairing international borders, the economy, civilizational movement, and everyday life for everyone.



The Philippines is one of several countries that have been infected with the coronavirus. Governments were forced to impose lockdowns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This has resulted in the suspension of several human operations, forcing people to remain at home. This mandatory safety protocol of staying at home has resulted in some workers being placed on a no-work-no-pay basis and small businesses struggling financially.

Based on the SWS survey in July 2020, the hunger rate in the Philippines has deteriorated, with at least one out of every five Filipinos experiencing voluntary hunger from May to July 2020. However, according to the Global Hunger Index (2021), the Philippines ranked 68th out of the 116 countries with sufficient data to calculate 2021 GHI scores. With a score of 16.8, the Philippines have a moderate level of hunger.

Nonetheless, being a Filipino entails the virtues of resourcefulness and solidarity. Through these values, one Filipino named Patricia Non, a resident of Quezon City, began a small gesture for others who are also coping with the pandemic, which has now become known as community pantries. According to Capulong et al. (2022), the primary concept of these pantries is to encourage people to give whatever they can. The Maginhawa Community Pantry has been posted online in different Social Media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, etc. The posts have gathered thousands upon thousands of reactions and shares with all positive comments. In just a matter of days, the idea of the Community Pantry has been replicated and posts about different versions of the community pantry have popped up, still racking up thousands of shares and reactions.

The Bayanihan spirit is spreading and has been replicated in various cities and barangays throughout the Philippines. The movement has inspired the establishment of additional community pantries. With the mass replication of the Community Pantry, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and even just concerned citizens have taken to the streets their versions of community pantry. Many of these pantries does not only include adults but also include the participation of the youth ages ranging from early 20s to as young as 14 years old. Some are those officials in their Barangay Sangguniang Kabataan (SK) and some are members of various socio-civic organizations.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

The study employed descriptive phenomenological analysis research design as it concerned for the underlying meaning of the participants' experience and point of view in putting up a Community Pantry. Through this approach, the researchers have unraveled the personal lived experiences of the study participants as a reflection of higher social reality which may include poverty, financial instability, and scarcity in supply of basic commodities as a way of interpreting the Ibanag concept of *Kapwa* and *Pakikipagkapwa* in the form of Community Pantries during the Coronavirus-19 Pandemic that were put up by select Ibanag youths.

3.2. Participants of the Study



Nine participants, aged 19-24, whose parents are either one or both Ibanags and currently live in an Ibanag Community were involved in the study. Two of them are female and the rest are male. Only two are college graduates while six of them are still studying college and the other one is undergraduate. All participants are Roman Catholics and have been engaged in the formation of community pantries. Some are members of civic and school organizations; while some do not have any organizational affiliations. Seven of our participants are from Cagayan and the remaining two are from Isabela.

3.3. Research Instruments

The researchers used an interview guide in obtaining the participants' perspective about their community pantry participation. The questions have been validated and approved by the research adviser, the panel, and experts in the field.

3.4. Research Procedure

Snowball technique was used in identifying the study participants. Each participant was contacted through Facebook messenger or cellphone number. Virtual interviews were conducted with every participant via video conference apps such as Google Meet and Zoom. Confidentiality was assured after the conduct and permission to record the proceedings of the interviews was sought. The transcribed narratives have been presented to the participants for validation.

3.5. Data Analysis

The participants' responses about their experiences in establishing community pantry have been analyzed using the Descriptive Phenomenological Analysis method (DPA) as this methodology is appropriate in exploring individuals' perspectives and experiences (Sousa, D. 2014). These steps include reading and re-reading, initial noting, developing emergent themes, searching for connections across emergent themes, moving to the next case, looking for patterns across cases, and taking interpretations to deeper levels. The interviews were thematically analyzed following the steps prescribed by Braun & Clarke (2006) such as familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

The ethical standards and protocols were adhered in conducting the study. Permission was sought from the dean of the college. The free and prior informed consent of the respondents was also obtained prior to the conduct of this study.

4. RESULTS

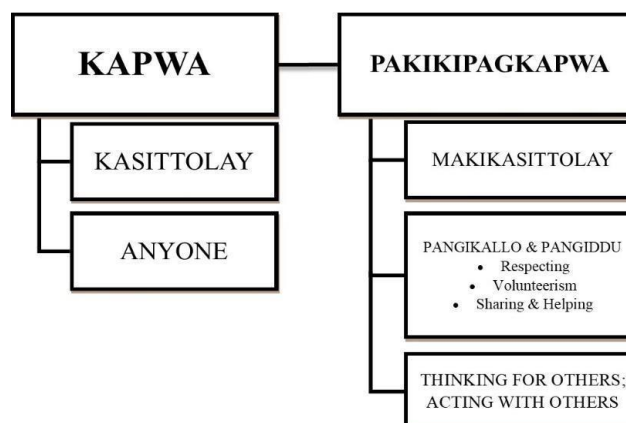
4.1. The Ibanag Youth's Concept of Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa

Figure 2. Ibanag Youth's Concept of Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa

Figure 2 reveals the Ibanag Youth's concept of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. Fundamentally, *kapwa* among the participants is *kasittolay* which is derived from the words *kasit-* (like) and *tolay* (human) thus, *kasittolay* means fellow human. *Kasittolay* for the participants is recognizing the humanity of others and how they see themselves in them. Seeing the other's humanity evokes responsibility to help them. This concept was reflected from one of the participants' responses: "During that time, I was actively reflecting on the people being helped. I see them as someone who has struggles in life as much as I do. It's like I'm helping myself too" (P5).

Among the Ibanag youth, the *kasittolay* is anyone with or without personal or familial relationship. The participants were unanimous in revealing that *kasittolay* is unknown with no specific identity, gender, economic status, religion, ethnicity, and any other personal circumstances. This concept is succinctly expressed by two participants in these words: "I consider everyone from family, friends, fellow students, even those I don't know personally as *kapwa* whoever they may be" (P5); "All people are considered *kapwa*. Rich or poor, I still consider them as my *kapwa*" (P1).

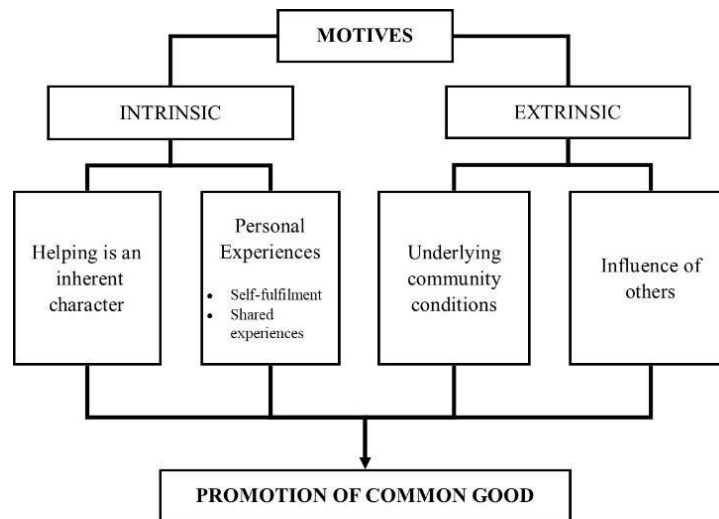
On the other hand, *pakikipagkapwa* (involvement or participation) is derived from the word *makikasittolay* (being part of) and *kasittolay* (human). Thus, the *makikasittolay* as concerns and humans. A participant captured this concept in the following statement: "Pakikipagkapwa is something to do with considering other people; their feelings and their story" (P9).



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“*pangikallo*” is now part of my definition of *pakikipagkapwa*” (P1); “[the community pantry] lasted that long because of “*pakikipagkapwa*”, our love and care for our fellow men” (P2).



makikasittolay life of others, consider it as compassion) love). The the lives of intruding into lives but it is compassion One of the this to say: now are those help; those The term

In being compassionate and loving, the participants respected the humanity of others as they shared and helped them in times of crisis. Thus, this ignites voluntarism or willingness to serve others. Significantly, the participants claimed that *makikasittolay* is thinking for and acting with others. Thinking for others is showing conscious and deliberate effort to respond to the needs of others especially during trying times. It is something planned and well-thought of with a noble purpose. On the other hand, acting with others means that *makikasittolay* is a communal effort wherein people collaborate to realize a common goal – that is putting all resources and efforts to help those in need. Some of the participants’ responses show these concepts. “It’s when thinking of others before you, I had that experience. There were so many things I could have been doing that time but I chose to stay and think of others. Helping them is more important than anything” (P5).

4.2. Motives of the Ibanag Youths in the formation of the Community Pantry

Figure 3. Motives of the Ibanag Youths in the formation of the Community Pantry

Figure 3 shows the motives of the Ibanag youths in the formation of their community pantries. The participants have identified four factors that have willed them to participate and establish their own community pantries which are categorized into intrinsic and extrinsic motives. The intrinsic motive comes from within them basically emanating from their concept of *kasittolay*, where helping is an innate responsibility that stems from the recognition of others' humanity. One participant has this to say: *"The community pantry as an example was put up into actuality because we know people around us need help and that inspired us to render the service that we could possibly let people see and feel"* (P6).

Another intrinsic factor motivating the participants to engage in the community pantry is their own personal experiences. Prior to the formation of community pantry, the participants have already engaged in several socio-civic endeavors which fostered in them the value of helping. Through these undertakings, they were able to realize self-fulfillment that entails feelings of happiness, pride, and satisfaction. In addition, the past personal experiences of the participants have bridged them closer to others as they mirror themselves to them. Their past experience of having nothing or living in poverty makes them relate with the feelings and stories of those they helped. These ideas were explicated in two of the participants' responses: *"You know that feeling of fulfillment seeing the smiles of the people you helped and them saying "thank you" makes my heart flutter. I felt it again during the community pantry"* (P8); *"Yes, because back in the days I also experienced not being able to afford some of our basic needs and wants. That's why I promised to myself that someday if I have the means to help other people, I would certainly do so"* (P7).

On the other hand, there were also extrinsic motivations that proved to be vital in identifying, planning for, and addressing underlying problems in the community. The areas, where the participants have operated their community pantries, have experienced challenges during the course of the pandemic as they also lived in the same locality. These include unemployment, financial instability, and limited mobility, among others. Two of the participants narrated their observations.

"At that moment, when the lockdowns were imposed, many people were not allowed to go outside, many people lost their jobs, so they couldn't support their families. Therefore, we wanted to help them with their basic needs since they said the ayuda from the government is not really enough to sustain their needs as the pandemic goes on" (P7).

“Because of the sudden lockdown that lasted for a couple of months, people lost their jobs and became unemployed. It’s hard to imagine especially that those wage earners individuals are the most affected by the pandemic. Because of that, hunger and scarcity of needs follows” (P8).

Another extrinsic motivation is the influence of the community pantries proponents which is replicable in their respective communities. The sudden popularity of community pantries over social media platforms has attracted a lot of volunteers—all types of people from all walks of life, especially the youths with or without organizational affiliations. This endeavor has ultimately led to a noble purpose that is the promotion of common good, which is *pammacappianan na magaru*. One participant recounted: *“I remember my sister sharing me the pictures by Angel Locsin with her community pantry. She told me how great it would be if we do it too...I invited my classmates to join too” (P5).*

4.3. The Promotion of the Ibanag Youth’s Concept on Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa through the Community Pantry

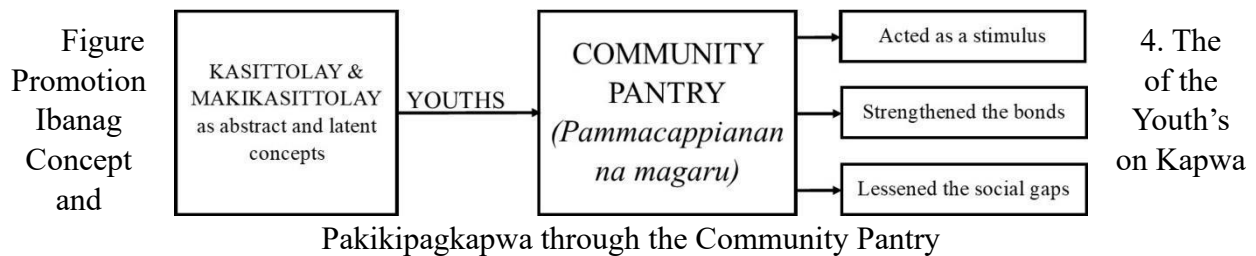


Figure 4 presents the *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay* as abstract and latent concepts among the participants. They are embedded constructs in the minds of the Ibanag youth waiting to be concretized and be acted upon. They are hidden constructs among Ibanag youths who are bearers of the age-old treasured cultures and values of Ibanags of which they have to preserve and carry out from one generation to the next. To unfold this latent concept, the youths have actively participated in the community pantry. Primarily, the main objective was helping the kapwa. However, it has resulted in a grander purpose: the promotion of the common good or *pammacappianan na magaru*. One participant clearly articulated this concept in these words: *“The only objective why we put up that pantry is to help other people...” (P9).*

The community pantry has promoted the concepts of *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay* through the participants’ actions in three ways, by acting as a stimulus; by strengthening the bonds; and by “lessening” social gaps. The community pantry was regarded as a stimulus that has urged the participants to apply the aforementioned concepts to their lives. This made them into a

beacon of inspiration for others and to manifest the concepts in their lives as well. One participant has this to share: *“As an Ibanag, I was able to encourage a lot of youths in our community to be part of the conduct of the community pantry” (P4).*

The community pantry activity has also strengthened the bonds between the participants and the people they have helped in the community. The concept of *kasittolay* being anyone was reaffirmed as the participants felt a deep connection with others even without knowing who they are. This was reflected in one of the participant’s responses: *“In doing the community pantry, I was able to comfortably speak in Ibanag with my fellow Ibanags and there was something so comfortable and nostalgic about it. I felt a connection with others. We were laughing, sharing stories, and understanding” (P5).*

Lastly, the community pantry has also “lessened” the social gaps in their communities. People from all walks of life have actively participated in the undertaking with those who are fortunate by donating goods and intermingling with the unfortunate. They claimed that there was a sense of community among all participants of the community pantry. Two of the participants narrated: *“During the conduct of our community pantry, we helped other people whether they are poor or rich. We gave them anything from our pantry because helping for us must be equal” (P1); “The community pantry shows the unity of people to meet each other’s needs particularly during crises irrespective of socio-economic status” (P7).*

4.4. Ibanag Youth’s Values explicated in the formation of the Community Pantry

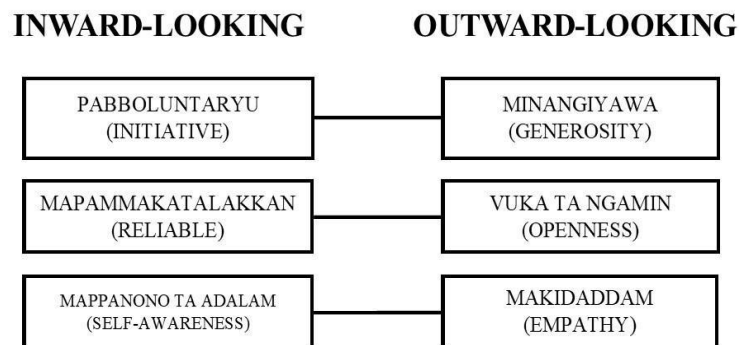


Figure 5.

Values Explicated in the Formation of the Community Pantry

Ibanag Youth’s

Figure 5 illustrates that the values explicated in the formation of the community pantry are categorized into inward-looking and outward-looking values. Inward-looking values refer to those that are directed to the self which help realize personal goals. These values include *pabboluntaryu* (initiative), *mapammakatalakkan* (reliable), and *mappanono ta adalam* (self-awareness).

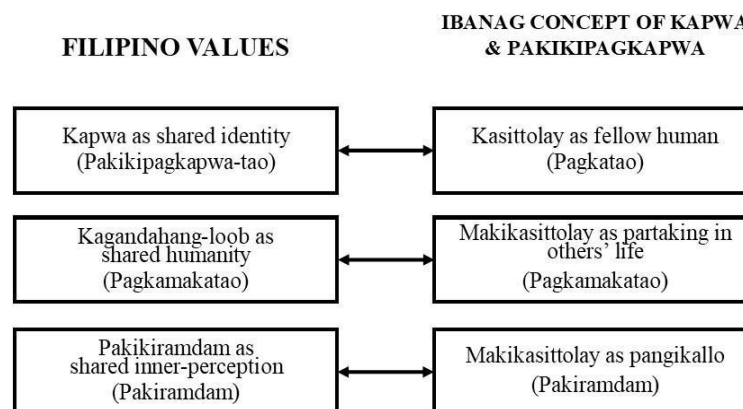
On the other hand, the outward-looking values (or interpersonal values) are those that are directed towards others which help them in realizing their goals. These values include: *minangiyawa* (generosity), *vuka ta ngamin* (openness), and *makidaddam* (empathy).

Significantly, each of these inward-looking values relates to the outward-looking value. The first set of values that are related are *pabboluntaryu* and *minangiyawa*. The participants define *pabboluntaryu* as a personal will to act on a problem that their *kasittolay* faces. It urges them to demonstrate the value of *minangiyawa*, which is a feeling of responsibility to extend help to others. One of the participants' statements reflected this idea: “*Giving is voluntary and at the same time it is my responsibility as a young public servant*” (P4).

The second set of values that are connected are *mapammakatalakkan* and *vuka ta ngamin*. *Mapammakatalakkan* for the participants is the value of being reliable and available for others. It is shown by being present in tough situations and being ready to listen to others' needs. Manifesting this value helps them show *vuka ta ngamin*—the value of being open to others. It is defined as being indiscriminate or non-selective when helping. In the following statements, a participant expressed this idea: “*Nevertheless, we are still trying our best to reach out to people and help them. Yes, it shows our willingness to help other people knowing that everyone is experiencing a crisis and no one is exempted from being affected in this pandemic*” (P8).

The last set values that are relational are *mappanono ta adalam* to *makidaddam*. *Mappanono ta adalam* literally means deep-thinking in Ibanag. For the participants, it is the value of being self-aware or self-reflective of who they are as a person. When they know or reflect who they are, they can know what and how much they can do for others. It is then connected with the value of *makidaddam*, which means relating with the feeling with others. They have the ability to feel with others and understand their feelings once they have deeply self-assessed who they are and what they can do. It is acknowledging both their feelings and the feelings of others relate with one another. As per to one participant: “*I have experienced the feeling of not being helped. Since then, I promised not to let anyone experience the same. The conduct of the community pantry opened a door of opportunity for me to address that concern*” (P6).

4.5. Filipino values consistent with the Ibanag Youths' Concept on Kapwa and



Pakikipagkapwa

Figure 6. Filipino Values consistent with the Ibanag Youth's Concept on Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa

Figure 6 shows that the Ibanag concept of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* are consistent with some Filipino values. The concepts of *kapwa* and *kasittolay* among the mainstream Filipinos and Ibanags are the same which refer to the sameness of everyone. There is a shared identity among Ibanags and Filipinos asserting that "one sees oneself in others." This concept is shown in one of the participants' statements: *"Helping and taking care of the community is like helping myself too. I mirrored myself in them even before the process which made me feel comfortable to connect and talk with them. Also, that alone, is one way to show how you love your country or your countrymen"* (P7).

Meanwhile, *kagandahang-loob* is associated to the Ibanag concept of *makikasittolay* as they both show a feeling of oneness with other humans in partaking into the lives of others, thus a shared humanity. It is about being *makatao* which centers around the values of respect, humility, and fairness. One participant stated that, *"I consider everyone as my kapwa. It might be a family member, friends, foreigners and even strangers, even the beggar on the streets still consider them as my kapwa tao"* (P9).

Finally, *pakikiramdam* as shared inner-perception is related to the Ibanag concept of *pangikallo* which shows compassion and sensitivity to others. These concepts revolve around the idea of *pakiramdam* or *daddam* in Ibanag which means feeling what others are feeling; acknowledging others' emotions; and seeing life through the others' lenses. A participant has this to say, *"I felt the hardship that the people in the community were experiencing, that is why I thought of ways on how to help them"* (P4).

4.6. Ibanag Framework on the concept of Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa

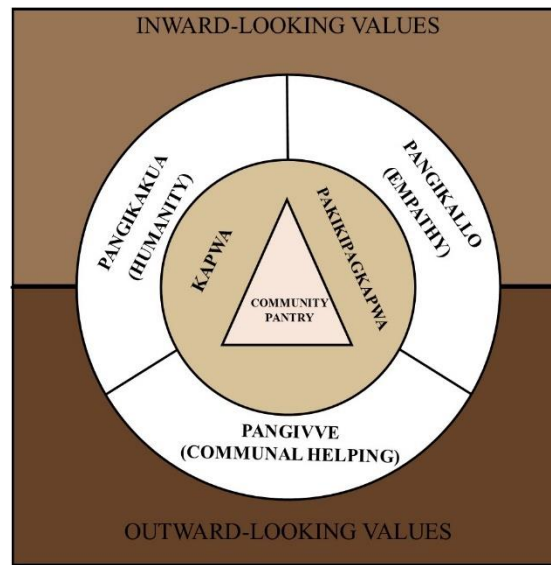


Figure 7. Ibanag Framework on the concept of Kapwa and Pakikipagkapwa

Figure 7 presents the Ibanag framework interpreting the Ibanag concept of *Kapwa* and *Pakikipagkapwa*. The center of the inner most circle is the community pantry where the concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* emanate. This core has three elements namely, *pangikakua*, *pangikallo*, and *pangivve* which define the Ibanagness of *kasittolay*. The manifestation of the Ibanagness of *kapwa* are both inward and outward-looking as they seek to achieve personal goals in harmony with the goals, they have for their *kasittolay*.

Pangikakua (humanity) comes from the Ibanag word *ikakua* which means respect. The participants' concept of humanity stems from self-respect which extends to showing respect to others. According to one of the participants, "*Initiative, generosity, act of kindness and humanity are observed with my colleagues. Since we've been there before, that is why we already know the feeling of being in need*" (P4).

Similarly, *pangikallo* is a sense of connection with others which puts the Ibanags in the shoes of others. It is living in the world of others emanating from their innate humanity without any external stimulation. This concept is reflected in one of the participants' statements, "*I felt happy because seeing the people we helped appreciate the little help that we give, it also gives us happiness and it's very 'nakakagaan ng loob' and from that you will continue helping people*" (P8).

Lastly, *pangivve* (communal helping) is the engagement of everyone in the community by reaching out to their *kasittolay* especially in times of need. It entails a feeling of belongingness and oneness with the community which drives them to perform communal activities with a noble purpose. Two participants shared their observations: "*The teamwork of everyone in our community made the set-up of the pantry visible to the recipients. It only shows the concern of everyone that surrounds them, especially those who are in need of help*" (P6); "...the



willingness to help other people in carrying their burdens and that is what we have seen in the conduct of the community pantry. The act of kindness, the willingness to share what you have just to help other people solve their problems” (P9).

5. DISCUSSION

This study unraveled the Ibanag concepts of *Kapwa* and *Pakikipagkapwa* manifested in the form of the Community Pantries during the Coronavirus-19 pandemic. It was revealed that the Ibanag youth has ushered in an interpretation of the concepts of *Kasittolay* and *Makikasittolay* through their actions in their community pantry engagement. The Ibanags view *kasittolay* as their fellow humans who bear similitude to them beyond physical likeness. This literal view of others brings about an urge to bear responsibility for others' welfare (Levinas & Nemo, 1985). When Ibanags help others, they help themselves as well. Further, this *kasittolay* has an unknown identity, and yet they still recognize their reality. The *kasittolay* is non-discriminating showing no prejudice to personal and social circumstances. This finding affirms the Filipino sociological view of a horizontal society where hierarchical system is relegated; instead, everyone is in equal footing in the society. According to Friedman (2008) in modern society, identity and authority have become much more horizontal where people feel freer to choose who they are and to form relationships on a plane of equality. Further, the Confucian teaching of the Golden Rule is reflected in this perspective which is vividly expressed in the Ibanag's Unoni. “*Ta kunna ikuam, Kunne y kakuam.*” (Do unto others as you want others do unto you)

On the other hand, the concept of *pakikipagkapwa* is the engagement into the life of others which is not a form of intrusion or prying, rather it is a form of demonstrating *pangikallo* (show compassion) and *pangiddu* (to love). Such is reflected in the Ibanag identity and worldview centered around the expressions of love as reflected through their folk songs (Alonzo, 2019). With the compassion and love that the Ibanags show to others, the virtues of thinking for others and acting with others follow—which are used in the formation of altruistic endeavors. These concepts of *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay* adhere to the overall oriental philosophy which focuses in collectivism rather than individualism; unity and interrelatedness with others (Kawamura, 2008). As geographically and culturally oriental people, the Ibanags' sense of community surfaces where they recognize the others through caring and helping especially in times of crisis.

The Ibanag youth's concept of *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay* were demonstrated in the formation of the community pantry. Their motives were both intrinsic and extrinsic leading to the main objective which is the promotion of common good and *pammacappianan na magaru*. The intrinsic motive springs from an inherent character, not just a trait but an indispensable responsibility to others. Such inherent character is deepened through their past personal experiences of poverty and nothingness. These experiences serve as a foundation and reflection to seek for a profound personal connection with others—even to those who they have never met before (Cheong et al. 2020). Meanwhile, the extrinsic motives emanate from external



conditions in the community especially during the onset of the pandemic (social, health, and economic problems). Since the *kasittolay* is seeing oneself in others, the participants saw the people suffering which was enough for them to act upon it. The influence of volunteers who started to form their community pantries was also an extrinsic motive because they saw the community pantry as a replicable course of action in their respective places. Their community pantries have lasted from a few weeks to several months because their neighbors actively participated and supported them. The participants unanimously stated in retrospect that the community pantry did not just become a means to help but it became a catalyst for the common good or *pammacappianan na magaru* to thrive. It affirmed the study of Etzioni (2014) who asserted that no society can flourish without a shared obligation to the “common good”, and it is possible to balance individual rights with uncoerced civic responsibility.

The community pantry has also served as a link for the participants to connect with something within them—something left by generations of their Ibanag ancestors. The abstract and latent ideas of *kasittolay* and *makikasittolay* lying dormant in the minds of the Ibanag youths were finally concretized and recognized. These concepts were fully alive during the conduct of the community pantry, and there were three ways that it promoted them, by acting as a stimulus for everyone to act, by strengthening the bonds of the residents after being in lockdown for months, and by “lessening” the social gaps that were prevailing before in their communities. Through these ways, everyone in the community felt a sense of community which is a feeling of belongingness, a feeling that they matter to one another and to the community, and a shared faith that everyone's needs will be met through commitment to be together (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).

Furthermore, the community pantry has also championed the Ibanag youth's values which are categorized into inward-looking and outward-looking values. The value of *pabboluntaryu* (initiative) compels the Ibanag youths to act when their *kasittolay* is in need which brings out the value of *minangyiwa* (generosity). The Ibanag youths have demonstrated the value of *mapammakatalakkan* (reliable) by being present in tough situations and being ready to listen to others' needs which then paves the way for them to exhibit the value of *vuka ta ngamin* (openness), defined as being indiscriminate or non-selective when helping—a value that had always been within the Ibanags (Tamayao, 2009). They have also exhibited the value of *mappanono ta adalam* (self-reflective) where they reflect who they are so they can know what and how much they can do for others. The value of *makidaddam* (empathy) proceeds which is the ability to feel with others and understand their feelings (Rungduin et al., 2013).

These concepts and values are consistent with the Filipino values systematized and conceptualized by Enriquez (1995). It is claimed by both Filipino and Ibanag concepts that *kapwa* and *kasittolay* refer to the sameness of everyone; a shared identity (Ivanhoe et al., 2018). The concepts of *kagandahang-loob* and *makikasittolay* which revolve around the idea of a shared humanity or *pagkamakatao* that entails with it the values of respect, humility, and fairness when socializing with others. A shared inner-perception is also seen in both the



Filipino and Ibanag concepts, which is a special kind of sensitivity to others' feeling, thoughts, and emotions without verbal cues (PePua & Marcelino, 2000).

6. CONCLUSION

The community pantry served as a good paradigm in unraveling and defining the Ibanag concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. It is a fertile ground to nourish the Ibanags' concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa* allowing the inward and outward-looking values to flourish. The indigenous values of the Ibanags were proven to be consistent with the existing Filipino values and concepts of *kapwa* and *pakikipagkapwa*. Hence, the Ibanags' age-old culture and values still live on in the 21st century as the Ibanag youths have used the community pantry as a modern way to preserve and aggrandize them for the next generations.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the findings, it is recommended that the community pantry shall be continued in different localities as it is a powerful catalyst not only for socio-economic purposes but also for cultural preservation. It is also recommended that the LGUs, NGOs, and private organizations should collaborate to support existing community pantries. More Ibanag youths should also be encouraged to participate in socio-civic activities through existing school and civic organizations. The findings of this study may be incorporated in subjects such as Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao, Araling Panlipunan, and Understanding the Self to delve deeper into the Ibanag mind and soul.

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