




Support System of Transnational Families in Guinzadan Bauko Mountain Province Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative-descriptive research focusing on transnational families was conducted in Guinzadan, Bauko Mountain Province. Anchored on the Functionalist sociological theory and concepts on conflict theories, this study aims to describe the practices of the selected transnational families to establish what led to the new care regime in the structure of transnational family. Thus, this study looked into the conditions caused the moving out of the parent/s; the existing situations of transnational families; and the support system of these transnational families. Having identified the issues of transnational families, the researcher proposed a program to address the issues in the transnational families in this study. The findings show that the rise of transnational families in which the husbands or wives need to work in other countries modifies the structure of the family: households become fatherless or motherless while the grandparents, aunties, and uncles become the guardian or the head of the households. The condition of the households being left motherless or fatherless affirms the pervasiveness of transnational families, which in turn resulted in the new care roles, new parenting styles, and new support systems in the family structure. It is however interesting to note the patriarchal ideology as one of the enduring issues that run throughout the narratives of the informant; the kinship system as a push and pull factor of transnational families that strengthen their motivation to work abroad; and the functionalist theory that was manifested in the case of support system of these transnational families in maintaining the stability of the family as a primary institution. Consequently, an enrichment program for the community is needed to address the issues of transnational families, especially on the welfare of the children and the entire family.

RESUMO

Esta pesquisa qualitativa descritiva com foco em famílias transnacionais foi realizada em Guinzadan, na província de Bauko Mountain. Ancorado na teoria sociológica funcionalista e nos conceitos das teorias do conflito, este estudo visa descrever as práticas das famílias transnacionais selecionadas para estabelecer o que levou ao novo regime de cuidado na estrutura da família transnacional. Assim, este estudo investigou as condições que causaram a saída do(s) genitor(es); as situações existentes das famílias transnacionais; e o sistema de apoio dessas famílias transnacionais. Tendo identificado os problemas das famílias transnacionais, o pesquisador propôs um programa para abordar os problemas das famílias transnacionais neste estudo. Os resultados mostram que o surgimento de famílias transnacionais em que os maridos ou esposas precisam trabalhar em outros países modifica a estrutura da família: as famílias tornam-se órfãs de pai ou mãe enquanto os avós, tias e tios se tornam os guardiões ou chefes das famílias. A condição de as famílias ficarem sem mãe ou sem pai afirma a difusão das famílias transnacionais, o que, por sua vez, resultou em novos papéis de cuidado, novos estilos parentais e novos sistemas de apoio na estrutura familiar. No entanto, é interessante notar a ideologia patriarcal como uma das questões persistentes que percorrem as narrativas do informante; o sistema de parentesco como fator push and pull de famílias transnacionais que fortalecem sua motivação para trabalhar no exterior; e a teoria funcionalista que se manifestou no caso do sistema de apoio dessas famílias transnacionais na manutenção da estabilidade da família como instituição primária. Consequentemente, é necessário um programa de enriquecimento para a comunidade para abordar as questões das famílias transnacionais, especialmente sobre o bem-estar das crianças e de toda a família.

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Introduction

Families are necessarily caring institutions that vary across cultures and change over time. Their essential function, historically, has been to contribute to the underlying economic survival of family members; thus, the structure of families often adapts to the economy, and cultural ideologies and laws are created to reinforce that adaptation. The family is defined as a set of people related by blood, marriage, or some other agreed-on relationship, or adoption, who share the primary responsibility for reproduction and caring for the members of society. Considered as the oldest social institution in the world, the family is an institution which performs many vital functions and valuable tasks. It provides bedrock for its members (Seaman, 2015); thus, the family was seen to be an essential factor in general, social, and even political life. The Filipino family remains to be a vital and robust institution in molding the character of young members (Panopio & Rolda, 2007).

Families of today face a significant deal of challenges brought by changing social conditions and technological advancement (Centeno & San Juan, 2013). The history of the family is thus one of changing family forms, which result from the interplay of shifting social and economic conditions, diverse and contested ideas, and the attempts of ordinary people to build their lives amid the constraints of their particular time and place (Gerson & Torres, 2015).

According to Graham and Jordan (2011), transnational migration from the Philippines is creating new family forms. As populations in more developed countries, age, and demand for service workers grow, an increasing proportion of these migrant parents are mothers who leave their families and children behind to take up “temporary” employment providing domestic and care services to distant others (Edillon, 2008). This scenario is due to Filipinos’ experiencing poverty and poor employment opportunities. To alleviate poverty and provide sufficient resources for their families, numerous mothers leave the Philippines to become domestic workers. Others rush to work in industries than in agriculture. Family narratives begin with the sacrifice of separation, where mothers leave their families for a chance to solve economic problems needs (Garabiles, et al., 2016). More and more studies are finding that people of all ages are migrating as a part of a wider family livelihood strategy as opposed to a personal agenda. Moreover, elderly parents in the Philippines support the migration of their children as they hope it will enhance the economic prosperity of the family and act as a form of insurance policy for them if they become sick or need financial help. Beyond the material wellbeing of their own children, many migrants, both male, and female, consider the care of their elderly parents as essential and make efforts to send remittances to cover medical costs and pay for institutionalized care when necessary (Cabuyao & Tullao, 2011).

In the process, transnational families often make material sacrifices and contend with emotional tensions between migrant parents or spouses and their stay-behind family members (Shih, 2015). Families with migrant mothers are subjected to more external shocks compared to absentee fathers. The transnational families also show the gender role of left-alone mothers and fathers in the Philippines. When migrant husbands leave, they take care of the productive part, relegating the social reproductive role solely on their wives. Wives often withdraw from the formal labor market to become full-time mothers and to assume the gender role of fathers (Parreñas, 2005). As a result, family members often have to bear the provision of care to improve living conditions, which encompass well-being and affective states (Cabalquinto, 2018).

Other challenges include inadequate nutrition, shelter, clothing, proper adult supervision, and care (ACP, 2012). When a parent migrates to another country, a whole range of functions, from caregiving to managing the household budget, must be assumed by others

within the family often the other parent, but also frequently by older children, grandparents or other members of the extended family (Bryceson, 2019). This caregiver system may be unique to the culture, where other relatives are there to help. Likely, several children in the country are currently growing up in the absence of their mother or father, or both, and there is an urgent need for a better understanding of the support system and care exchange of transnational families (Tarroja, 2010). Hence, the support system and care exchange need to be researched to understand transnational families better. On the other hand, much research has been done on the provision of transnational care to elderly family members. While they have mostly been framed as recipients, they have also been widely documented as providers of care, especially for children who remain behind in the home country when their migrant parents leave (Tarroja, 2010). As suggested by Leinaweaver (2010), going forward, more studies may focus on how left-behind children and their grandparents take care of each other in the absence of migrant parents.

Although much research has focused on defining the needs of families and the family system, many questions remain. A comprehensive perspective is needed to identify the types of support families provided to the child in the absence of one or both and the impact of providing that support on family members, the support systems that are available to families, and the impact of support system to the role of parents (Abdelrahim & Vanegas, 2016).

Different sociological theories such as Functionalist Theory, Conflict Theory, Interactionism, and patriarchal theory were used to explain the themes that persist throughout the study. Affixing the different sociological theories in transnational families; the Functionalist Theory supports the presence of the support system in the case of transnational families who serve as the guardian and assumed the parenting obligation of the migrant parents in order for them to maintain the stability of the transnational families conforming with the norms of society by giving the necessary advice, care, support and discipline needed by the children; Conflict Theory, however, supports the situation of the transnational families that see their condition being deprived in life as compared to another family thus they need to work abroad and compete in order for them to have the things being enjoyed by the other member of the society, Interactionism theory also supports the situation of the transnational families that because of their situation the members learned and created symbolism in their communication that makes them understand and adjust to their situation; and patriarchal theory that supports the disengagement of the father to their parenting obligation as a left-behind member where they still view the parenting role borne to the women or the wife.

In light of the presented trends in the Filipino family, it is the hope of this study to expound and describe the transnational Families. Most researches presented are based on quantitative data collected via questionnaires. The researcher believes that this method may not capture the richness and complexity of the issues or the detailed perspectives of those involved in the research.

The objective of this study was to describe transnational families of Guinzadan Bauko as experienced by the members of the transnational families. Specifically it looked into the support system of the Transnational Family in the absence of one or both of the parents. This sought to answer the following specific problems: What conditions caused the moving out of the parent/s?, What are the existing situations of transnational family in Guinzadan? What are the existing support systems of transnational families in Guinzadan? How Kinship System affects the situation Transnational Families in Guinzadan ili? How Functionalist Perspective applies in the Transnational Families of Guinzadan ili? How Patriarchal Perspective applies in the Transnational Families of Guinzadan? What programs can be proposed to address the transnational families' issues?

Materials and Methods

This study made use of the qualitative-descriptive method of research, which involves describing, recording, analyzing, and interpreting conditions that were gathered during the course of the data gathering. The study was conducted in Guinzadan Bauko. Given the objective of looking into transnational families, the characteristics of the place and the situations therein proved interesting to study. According to the pre-interview conducted by the researcher with some locals of Guinzadan, many of the residents of Guinzadan are working overseas.

In the collection of data, an interview questionnaire guide was used to get the necessary information from the left-behind members of transnational families coupled with focus group discussion among the different members of a family belonging to transnational families. The Key informant interview composed of twelve (12) participants. Meanwhile, there were three sets of FGDs that were conducted. In each FGD, there were a total of eight participants, which were composed of representatives from the different transnational families such as Guardians parents, and children of legal age.

The participant in this study includes those who are members of transnational families. This includes the parents who were left to take care of the child or the relatives who are acting as a guardian to the child/children. The selection criterion of this study included members of families belonging to a transnational family where one or both parent/s has/have, or the child/children have/have been working overseas for at least one year. Some transnational family members who did not meet the criterion of having worked at least one year overseas were thus excluded.

The researcher went to the Municipal mayor to ask permission from the Mayor to conduct the study in Guinzadan. The Mayor then made an endorsement letter to the different Barangays to allow the researcher to gather data. The researcher then proceeded to the three Barangays of Guinzadan for to gather recommendations for the identification of families belonging to a transnational family.

The researcher used the Interview Guide questions, which were reviewed and critiqued by the tool validator assigned by the University of Baguio-Research and Development office. An interview with the different government agencies concerned was also initiated by the researcher to corroborate the findings of the study.

The data gathered through interviews and FGD were recorded through audio recording and video recording with the permission of the participants, and the data were then analyzed thematically.

The researcher followed the steps in a thematic analysis, which included a transcription of the recorded interview from the participants, coding of the data by hand, which involved coding every two or three lines of text with handles that identify keywords, concepts, images, and reflections. To validate the data coded, the researcher read and re-read the data and double-checked the codes for consistency.

The researcher also identified themes and sub-themes that emerged from the coded data. She then finalized the label of each theme, wrote its description, and supported the descriptions with quotations from the original text in order to communicate the meaning more clearly to the reader.

To maintain confidentiality and anonymity of the participants, the researcher used pseudonyms as codes for the participant in the KII.

Results and Discussions

This presents the analysis and interpretation of the findings on transnational families in Guinzadan Bauko, Mountain Province. The following discussions center on the conditions that caused the moving out of the parents, the existing situations among the transnational families, and the support system of these transnational families.

The section starts with presenting the socio-economic landscape of Guinzadan ili to serve as a guide in analyzing and understanding the case of transnational families.

Transnational Families of Guinzadan ili

Guinzadan ili is majority an agricultural place, and many areas are arable; thus, the primary source of livelihood among the residents is farming. Aside from farming, and through the years, many ventured into storekeeping, and other business-related undertakings, and many observers ascribe the modernization and advancement of the place to the benefits of education resulting in many professionals who are now gainfully employed, or to the entrepreneurs who now can support not only their families, and extended families, but also employ others, and to the much bigger salary that many of the residents receive as a result of their employment abroad.

Barangay officials said that in the early years Guinzadan residents (parents and grandparents) were among those who were not very supportive of allowing their family members to seek employment abroad. Many held on to the understanding that the farms/land must be tilled for a living, and many were not welcoming the idea of allowing family members to work abroad. The negative consequences of family members' living far from each other usually got heightened by the understanding that life elsewhere can be difficult, and uncertain. Eventually, however, when many from the neighboring barrios sought employment abroad, some from Guinzadan followed the trend. Soon points of view changed until the idea of allowing family members to work abroad became a normal option among many families.

Conditions that Caused the Moving Out of the Parent/s

From the responses obtained during the interview, four themes surfaced as the conditions that caused the moving out of the parent/s. These themes include lack of opportunities, the basic needs of the family, cannot be sustained, relationship struggles of the spouses, and the presence of the relatives abroad. These themes were identified from the personal stories or accounts and experiences of the left-behind parents, their children, and the support system of the children.

Lack of Opportunities

The participants said that the primary reason why the parent/s worked abroad is due to a lack of opportunities in the Philippines. These participants claimed that they tried their luck here in the Philippines, but are still unfortunate, so they decided to work abroad. One of the identified reasons that add to the difficulty of some of the transnational families' members' inability to compete for employment given the lack of opportunities in the country is they're not being able to finish a degree. The participants affirmed that the migrant parents experienced difficulty in looking for a job here in the Philippines.

From the responses, the researcher inferred that one of the primary motivations for people to migrate is to respond to a set of incentives that lead them to favorable outcomes, which is to seek better employment opportunities in other countries. As a result, they left their children in the care of other extended members.

In the situation of Linda, she revealed that her husband is a farmer, and he did not finish any degree. Apart from farming, the husband knows how to do carpentry works because it is one of his sidelines while gardening. Now, her husband is working in a construction company abroad.

The two left behind members participants believe that their family members' low educational attainment can be the reason why they cannot obtain a better job here in the Philippines. The respondents believe that these conditions of lack of job or better job opportunities, together with their inability to compete because of their educational attainment, pushed their family members to work abroad. Further, the parents' inability to find a decent job in the country was seen as a factor that forced them to work abroad.

It can be inferred that the participants believe that one's educational attainment is important if it is for one to land a good job. Seen in the context of their family members, the participants were not able to land a job here in the country because their family members who have to work abroad did not obtain a college degree. The participants further believe that their family members go abroad for the greener pasture that they can enjoy despite their low educational attainment. With their level of educational attainment, they work as laborers, but to them, that is a better lot because they are at least paid with a higher salary compared to the minimum wage earned here in the Philippines.

The lack of opportunities in the Philippines for college degree holders is strengthened by the revelation of three of the participants who claimed that the migrant members were able to finish a degree. However, they still find it difficult to look for a permanent job that suits their educational attainment. Because of the difficulty of finding a job that is aligned with their degree, and the difficulty of landing permanent jobs, family members turn to seeking employment abroad. Such is the case in this study where the spouses agreed to look for better employment abroad.

In the Focused Group Discussion conducted, the participants mentioned that the parents who are working abroad are employed as caregivers and nurses. They believe that their family members were able to get employment as caregivers because caregivers are in demand abroad; that is why most agencies are recruiting caregivers and nurses.

The understanding of the participants in the group discussion that their family members got employed as caregivers because care-giving is an in-demand work overseas corroborates the claim of Donnelly, Ledesma, and Straiton, (2017) that many Filipinos are moving overseas to help meet the shortage of skilled nurses in the high-income giving countries. More so, overseas recruitment has become a common strategy in filling nurse shortages within the health institutions abroad, sparking the proliferation of nursing programs in the Philippines (Ortiga, 2018).

These parents who were employed as caregivers were not given the opportunity to practice their profession here in the Philippines because of the lack of job opportunities for them. This lack of job opportunities here in the Philippines, thereby the inability of some professionals to work here in the country, is supported by what Zeni revealed. Her daughter is a registered nurse but cannot find a nursing job here in the Philippines, no matter how she tries. Zeni, however, believes that added to the lack of jobs, is the case where some with connections can more easily find work. Her statements imply that the difficulty is brought about by two factors: lack of opportunities and where there are opportunities, those with connections can have better chances.

Moreover, some of these migrant parents finished a degree, but they cannot practice here in the Philippines because most positions offered in the government are contractual or job order. For them, as revealed by their left-behind members, this job status does not suit their educational attainment. As Albert shared, her daughter is a caregiver; however, her previous work here is that of an administrative aid with a job-order status in their Municipal Hall. That, therefore, prompted her to look for work elsewhere.

Similarly, in the case of Maria and Jessa, they mentioned that it is the experienced difficulty of their family members to look for jobs that are aligned to their educational attainment that led them to consider working abroad.

Maria said that the spouses agreed that the wife has to work abroad so that she can earn higher salary than what she receives here in the Philippines. Moreso, Jessa said that even professionals work abroad because of difficulty of getting a permanent job here in the Philippines.

The aforementioned reasons mentioned by the participants show that the locals still opt to work abroad is given their educational attainment because they know that they are no better opportunities here in the Philippines. Connecting these responses with the educational profile of the participants, it is inferred that one of the motivations of those who worked abroad is the hope that they will be able to practice their profession abroad, and for the other migrants, it is for them to get a job despite their not finishing college because given their non-holding of a college degree, and with the little opportunities in the Philippines, landing a job will then be doubly difficult.

Inability to Sustain the Basic Needs of the Family

The low income offered here in the Philippines causes' financial instability. That is why the parents need to go out. The participants claimed that the money their migrant family members are earning from their work here is not enough to sustain the needs of the family.

The family of the participants are experiencing deprivation of needs and wants due to lack of finances. As a result, they tried their luck to look for other works in some places here in the country, but still, they are unlucky. With no work from where to get the finances needed for their families, spouses are led to misunderstanding. Money now becomes one of the issues that cause the argument and misunderstanding among the spouses. To settle arguments and misunderstandings that spring from the lack of finances as a result of their inability to land employment here, the husband/father sacrifices to leave his family and work abroad.

The left-behind mother revealed the pain they had to bear for their inability to provide for their children. She shared the feeling of pain, seeing her child envy other children whose parents are rich; therefore, she can buy the things that their children want. She mentioned the feeling of helplessness they had to go through every time their child requests and they cannot give the simple request of their child.

The migrant parents and the left-behind parents feel that somehow, there is the inequality of resources as they observed that other parents could provide the needs and wants of their children while they (the migrant and left-behind parents) cannot do the same to their children. In order, therefore, to be enabled to provide for their family, as is the case of other parents, and to improve their living conditions and sustain the needs of the family, the parents decide to work abroad.

The participants claimed that the parents need to work abroad so they could provide and sustain the financial needs of the family, especially the needs of the children. The participants also cited that the parents may have worked here, but the salary is not enough to sustain the needs of the family. This situation is supported by the response of Jessa on the reason why their family members went abroad "*Low income here, or no employment here or keg nu wada man kurang*" (People go abroad because of low income here, or no employment here or if there is, still it is not enough to sustain the financial needs of the family)

With the prevailing situations as revealed by the participants, this researcher inferred that the migration of parent/s is a decision that both parents agreed on. Further, it is a difficult decision, and a painful one since family members will not live together as a result of a family

member leaving to work abroad to provide for the family. If not for the need to sustain the basic needs of the family, the parents would not consider working abroad. It is apparent that sustaining the financial needs of the family is one of the reasons why the locals prefer to work abroad. The parents believe that working abroad will change the financial status of the family. Moreover, from the response of a participant, the researcher inferred that the parent's landing employment abroad results in the feeling of success and assurance of a good life for the family. This inference is accounted to the statement of the participant when he proudly said that when the parent/s worked abroad, they were able to send money to finance their expenses at home. As a result, the financial needs of the family are not anymore, their main problem.

The feeling of success was also manifested by Nene, who proudly answered that she is enrolled in a private school, the only private school in their municipality. She revealed that her needs are provided, and she is doing her best at school so that her mother will be proud of her. The feeling of assurance as a result of the provision of their needs results in the child's stronger motivation to be better in school. Additionally, the realization of the difficulty of looking for work if one has no college degree made her motivated all the more. The left-behind child recognizes that her mother needed to work abroad to sustain the needs of the family, and her having to work abroad results from her not finishing a degree. Her mother, who did not finish a degree, had to work as a domestic helper abroad.

The participants and their migrant members believe that working abroad can result in their being able to give a better future to their children, just like what other rich parents do to their children.

Participants further strengthened the belief that working abroad results in the provision of the family's basic needs. As can be supported by their statements, they claimed that if the parents stay here for work, they might not give the needs of their children. Aside from the plain reason of staining the needs of the family, it can be gleaned from the response of Herma that her husband decided to look for work abroad due to her (the wife's) pregnancy. The thought of having fathered a child or the thought of being a father motivated the husband in his eagerness to look for work abroad.

The parents also feared that they might not be able to send their children to a better school and might not be able to sustain their needs as they grow older if they remain here in the Philippines. Like in the case of Mark, he recognizes the difficulty of his wife's situation being alone to take care of their child, and the money he is earning is not enough for their needs, so he allowed her wife to work abroad so they could give their child a better future.

From the response of the participants, the researcher was also convinced that the children's happiness is the parents' happiness. If their children are unhappy, the sadder the parents are, that is why every parent would do anything to provide a good future for their children and to sustain the financial support that their children need. The easier solution to this is for the parents to sacrifice and work abroad.

It is inferred that the children of transnational families look at the positive side as to why their parents work abroad. They recognize that it is for their own welfare that prompted their parents to work abroad.

Relationship Struggles of the Spouses

The participants claim that the challenges experienced by the family in their marital status were the reason why one parent decided to work abroad. One of the husband's, according to the left-behind member, believes that giving the material needs of the wife is enough to prevent the unfaithfulness of the other.

It is inferred that the relationship problem is a condition that leads the parent/s to migrate. It, however, at times, is not an effective measure to settle the tensions of the spouse.

Despite of the husband's working abroad to provide the material needs of the wife, and hoping that the wife will remain loyal, the problem on the wife's infidelity persisted.

Shih (2015) explains that in the process of transnational families, the spouse makes material sacrifices and contends with emotional tensions between migrant spouses and their stay-behind family members. However, in the case of Nene, it results in a more complicated set-up in the relationship of the spouses. From the interview, this researcher learned that Nene's father is a drunkard and prioritized his vices rather than the needs of his family. As a result, the mother was the one who sacrificed and worked abroad.

This recognition of family issues has also been expressed by the child participant when she said that *"My father is sometimes engaged into a vice that is why. Instead of using the money to finance a house for us, he is using it to drink liquor, he is using it for other purpose).*

Apparently, based on the response of Nene, the wife (Nene's mother) has to work abroad due to the inability of the husband (Nene's father) to assume his obligation as a father to his child. In the case of Nene, it is the mother who sacrificed to work abroad because the father is not doing his role being the pillar of the home. Worst is that if the father has money, he is using it to finance his vices instead of saving it so they could build their own house.

The discussions above corroborate the claim of Parreñas (2005) that the children perceive that a migrant mother was being forced to work abroad because of poverty, and they need to sacrifice on things that the father cannot do for the benefit of the family.

Interestingly, this goes against the claim of Rendeza (2017) that *"ang tatay ay haligi ng tahanan* (the father is the pillar of the home)," whereas *"ang nanay ay ilaw ng tahanan* (mother is the light of the home." That is to say that the father builds a feeling of home for the family; whereas, the mother nurtures the home.

Above all, the conditions that caused the moving out of the parents are due to the experiences of these transnational families here in the Philippines. These are the factors that either forcefully push people into migration or attract them. A push factor is forceful, while the pull factor is something concerning the country to which a person migrates, which relates to the country from which a person migrates. Generally, the push factors are some problems that result to people wanting to migrate. These push factors are also a flaw or distress that drives a person away from a certain place. It is generally a benefit that attracts people to a certain place (Castelli, 2018).

In the Focus group discussion, one left behind mother shared that the condition which caused her husband to work abroad springs from the difficulty of parenting the children without the wife. At first, it was the wife working abroad. However, when the wife worked abroad, the father always complains about his situation of parenting the children that he does not know how to take care of the children whenever they are sick. So, when the mother finished her contract, she requested the husband to take her place and work abroad.

Presence of Relatives and or "Kailyan" abroad.

From the six migrant members who claimed that they have relatives abroad, four of them are now working as a domestic helper in Hong Kong, and the other two migrant members are working as a construction worker in South Korea. This is the case of Alicia; she said that the parent was asked by her sister to take her place in Hong Kong because the sister will be crossing over to Canada *"Wada gamin manang mi ed Hong Kong nangayag ken sisya ta sublatena amo na. tanu wada experience mo Hong Kong nalaka emey ka Canada,"* (We have a sister working in Hongkong who asked him to take her place so that our sister can go to Canada. It is easy to go to Canada if you have experience in Hong Kong).

The left-behind members added in the Focus Group Discussion that Filipinos usually do this in Hong Kong. They gain experience, and then they will cross countries like Canada

and/or South Korea. FGSS4 said that the migrant workers were motivated to work abroad so that they could go cross country to Canada “*San rigat di biag sina, isunga tinulungan da anti na ay man Hong Kong ta sipay abe mancross country*” (The difficulty of life here, that is why our aunt helped her to work in Hong Kong, then she will follow her in Canada if our aunt already established her residency there).

The migrant parent also decided to work in the country where his “kailyan” is working, and this decision was influenced by the improvement that he saw in this kailyan’s lives. This is captured in the statements of Linda. She said “*Wada han kailyan ay naila na nangapadas, way idi inila na ay mayat, enemy et abe nan-apply ta makikadwa*” (It is because, he saw the improvement of lives of our “kailyan” who tried working abroad, so he applied in the same agency to join them).

It is inferred that the majority of the Filipino migrants were motivated to work abroad because of the presence of a lot of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) there, especially in Hong Kong and South Korea.

The Existing Situations Experienced of Transnational Families

Different situations or conditions befalling the lives of transnational families are often heard of. This study was conducted to establish what the situations are among the transnational families in Guinzadan. From the interview, there were five themes that surfaced as the existing situations of transnational families in the locale of this study. These situations were deduced from the revelations through personal stories, experiences, and struggles in the life of the left-behind parents, their children, and the support system of the children. These situations include: the situations experienced by the father; the situations experienced by the mother; the situation experienced by the children; the communication of transnational members; and the improvement of the living conditions of the family.

The Situation Experienced by the Father

The discussions that follow present the existing situation experienced by the father as a guardian, husband and wife relationship, and the father and children relationship. The left-behind father conveyed the responses as a participant and the left-behind father who participated in the focus group discussion, but the data is a little limited due to the disagreement of the left-behind father to be subjected to interview, and his unwillingness to answer some questions from the researcher.

The unwilling left-behind fathers are the ones identified by the guardian as the father who left their children under the care of the grandparents and relatives when the wife worked abroad.

Table 1 shows that from the response of the participants, two fathers out of the 12 families are living with their children and relatives, while five fathers out of the 12 families say that the left-behind father does not live with their children.

Table 1.

Living Arrangement of the Children and the Left behind Father

Participants	Total N=7
Father living with their left-behind children and relatives	2
Left behind father who does not live with their children (P1, P2, P3, P9, P10)	5
Father living with their children only	0

It can be inferred from the data that the majority of the left-behind father leave their children in the care of the other left-behind members who serve as their support system.

This situation coincides with the claim of Orbeta and Zosa (2009) stated that when migrant wives leave, some husbands who are left behind reject the reproductive role of childcare, but instead pass them on to female relatives (eldest daughter, aunts, grandmother, cousins) or to their domestic helpers. As a result, the children of migrants prefer their father to work abroad rather than their mother since mothers can perform the dual role of father and mother more effectively.

Situations Experienced by the Left-Behind Father as a Guardian.

Five (5) out fathers of the twelve (12) families claimed that moving out of the mother affects not only the children but also the father. When the mother leaves, the father will either solely assume the parenting roles to their children or disengage himself from his family system.

According to the left behind extended members, the left-behind father disengages themselves in the parenting role and obligation to their child once the mother goes and works overseas. In the case of Albert, who serves as one of the guardians of his grandchildren, he narrated that when the mother his grandchildren left for work abroad, the father also went and looked for a job in Baguio City, so he left his children under the care of the other extended members.

Similarly, in the case of Zeni, who serves as a guardian to her “apo,” she disclosed that when the mother of her grandchildren worked abroad, the father left the child to her care and went to his province and worked there.

From the responses of the participants, the researcher also inferred a consequence of the mother’s going abroad is the shifting or the passing on of the parental responsibilities to the extended family members. It results in the father seemingly avoiding responsibilities; that is why he leaves to look for work, which he did not do when the mother did not go abroad. While it is true that the father also leaves and goes to other places to work and thereby give added financial assistance to the family, the parental role is abandoned. Since the wife left, the husband is expected to stay, but instead of becoming the sole guardian of their children, he also leaves. In such a case, there is the absence of demonstrating their willingness to perform caregiving tasks, which are necessary for the social reproduction of the family and the well-being of its members. This situation further manifests the fathers’ abandonment of their parenting role for the children.

One (1) father out of twelve (12) families tried to take care of their daughter. However, the father felt that he might not be able to assume the obligation of becoming a sole parent to the children in the absence of the wife, so he disengaged himself to his family system. This means that the father tried to assume the obligation of his wife to their daughter. In his experience, he tried to bathe their daughter; however, he mistakenly placed the hot water on a table within reach of his daughter. He left his daughter in the bathroom to get a towel when he heard her daughter crying. He rushed immediately to the bathroom and saw that the hot water he placed on the table fell, so the hot water poured over the arms of his daughter. He rushed his daughter to the doctor, but the incident left him with the feeling of inadequacy to be a good father to his daughter. He then developed a fear regarding his parenting role and thought that he might not be good enough to assume the role of the mother to their children that is why they moved to the house of his mother so he could have someone help him in rearing the child.

In the Focus Group Discussion, three left-behind fathers shared that they are having a hard time raising their daughter as compared to their son. As a father, they do not know the likes and dislikes of their daughter. Also, they shared that female children are not comfortable to share girly things with their father, especially during their adolescent stage.

The above situation was also observed by the support system of the children. In the group discussion, the support system said, “*Nu han saksakit karu nu han manpodotan di anak*

et, adi da mapunasan, ay mapunasan da iman karu nu balasang. Nu babae mataynan mayat ay maasikaso da” (If the children get sick, we do not know the exact care needed by the children, especially their daughter. Especially a lady, how can she be bathed well? It is rather awkward. It is better if it is the mother looking after a lady-child when sick). It is inferred that members of the transnational family see the caring role in the traditional way wherein they perceive that the mother is the ones who could effectively take care of the child as compared to them. On the other hand, the fathers see it awkward for them to be bathing or washing their lady-child when sick. Their revelation pictures the difficulty these fathers go through, especially when their female child gets sick.

One (1) father out of the twelve (12) families still lives with his children. However, according to the left-behind extended members, the left-behind father does not really do parenting duty to the children, and the extended members are the ones who look after these children. This is the case of Maria; Maria serves as a guardian to her grandchildren. She claims that the father is not always around to supervise his children because the father is always busy at work. As a result, they are still the ones serving as guardians to their grandchildren.

Moreover, for the left-behind father who chooses to take care of the children, he said that their relationship with their daughter is good to the extent that the daughter is now closer to their father than their mother, resulting in his being a Daddy’s girl.

From the response of participants, it is deduced that not all fathers who live with their children assume the parenting role to the children. Instead, they leave their child in the care of the other extended members. On the other hand, the researcher inferred that the children who were taken care of by the left-behind father would become emotionally attached to their father, resulting in their being closer or more attached to the father than they are to their mother.

However, the above situation is different from the stories of the left-behind children in the Focus group discussion. The children said that they are not comfortable asking a favor or request from their father, and they do not have a strong relationship with their father. These are the consolidated responses from four left-behind children experiencing discomfort in the caring role of their father.

“If you go home, it is like nothing happened. Sometimes you cannot tell him what you want because he might get angry if he fails to understand your needs. If you want to go swimming at the river, or picnic with friends, he does not want, if you ask him to buy something even if you really need it, he will say it is useless to buy it”

The father’s role and involvement in the child’s life are, therefore, very important in the different stages of children’s life cycle, and this should not be ignored not only by the father but both of the parents, and the support system. Hence, it is important that these members of the family understand that every child needs the support of his/her parents.

Migrant Father and Children Relationship

According to the left-behind members, the child does not feel many difficulties in their situation as a member of the transnational family if it is the father who worked abroad. It can, therefore, be inferred that there exist the difficulty and the challenge that the left-behind child goes through but that the difficulty is not that much if the children are with their mother instead.

The Situation Experienced by the mother

The responses were conveyed by the left-behind mothers as a participant and were corroborated by the left-behind mothers who participated in the Focus group discussion based on their personal experiences.

“Single Mother” Feeling.

In becoming a full-time mother while the husband is working abroad, five left behind mothers feel like a single mother because no matter how they want to ask help from the husband they need to accept the fact that their husband is away and they need to assume the obligation of being the father to their children. As a result, everyone needs to adjust to the set-up; the left-behind parent needs to accept that she/he really needs to become a sole parent to their children.

From the experiences of the left-behind mothers, it is inferred that there are big adjustments that the left-behind parent should do because the other spouse will not be physically present when you need him/her. This coincides with the claim of Garabiles, et al. (2016) that family resilience for transnational migrants is a collectivistic process, negotiated by each family member. Hence, the importance of and need for each member’s understanding and adapting to the situation of transnational families is a necessity.

Relationship of the Spouses

As a left-behind spouse, one should really show to his/her partner that he/she understands the need for the spouse to work abroad. This is manifested in the case of Linda, a mother who was left to take care of their children solely. She said that trust is very important in a long-distance relationship, especially if other people are spreading rumors about one’s partner. She reveals “*dapat wada talek mo ken asawam, nu way kanan di ipogaw et adi ud patpatiyen nu maid met madlaw mo si madi. Nu way kankanan da sipay ka patiyen maysa si ibaw, imbag ka nu tetewa nu ngay baken. Isunga uray way kanan da dankat igiginek tan egay mo met inila iman. Esa abe et importante communication mi ya din uubbing*” (You should trust each other. Do not readily believe what other people say so you could avoid misunderstanding with your spouse, good if it is true. What if it is not. Maintaining communication even if you are far apart is really important.)

Meanwhile, in the case of Mark, a left-behind father who takes care of his daughter with the help of extended members said that sacrifice is also important in a relationship because both of the spouses are sacrificing in the case of transnational families.

Also, in the case of Herma, a left-behind mother who takes care of her children with the help of the other extended members maintains that she is hearing a lot of stories from her workmates about separations and struggles in their relationship due to distance. These stories affect her, and she feared that it might happen to their family. However, because of her love and trust in her husband, she is very confident that their relationship is still strong, and her husband will not do anything to ruin their relationship.

The situation of the spouses having trust with each other supports the claim of Goldsmith (2004) that when yone knows he/she can totally trust his/her spouse, he/she will be saved from a large potential for worry. It also builds one’s internal security so that he/she not only feels good about the partner, but you also feel better about life. Having an honest relationship creates a kind of buffer against difficulties of the world. Having a thrustworthy and dependable spouse makes it easier to take the risks that help people grow.

Challenges and conflict in the relationship of the spouses cannot also be avoided, but with the love and trust that they have for each other, they will still reconcile at the end of the day. Such in the case of Jessa, who said that conflict, is normal in a relationship.

The left-behind extended families also observe the struggle of the spouses in their relationship that there were changes in the relationship of the spouse when one of them worked abroad. This is observed in the situation of Zeni, who serves as guardian to her grandchildren. She disclosed that based on her observation, her daughter working abroad is having a hard

time with her husband. According to Zeni, it is because the wife has been working abroad to support their children and the husband also wants to be supported by the wife.

Challenges and conflict in the relationship of the spouses cannot also be avoided, but with the love and trust that they have for each other, they will still reconcile at the end of the day. Such in the case of Jessa, who said that conflict, is normal in a relationship.

For the left-behind mother, mothering is a vital component of their identity, daily activity, and life plans. However, important part of motherhood is imposing discipline to the child so that they will learn how to respect other people. The need to impose discipline was reflected in the response of Linda. She said "*Mayat met, wada lang adi mangayamyaman ken daida ngem normal met di karo nu adi da denggen kali*" (Good, there are times when you need to scold them but that is normal especially if they do not listen to you).

The left-behind mother may not always be there for their child, but they still exert effort to strengthen their relationship. They see to it that they will always have time for their children, and this commitment is captured in the statements Herma "*Han set-up mi et sidi saken et sumas-saa every week-end or once or twice a month ay sumaak sina ay mangila ken B***. *Nu mamingsan kumurang sa time ko ay mangipapas iliw ko i-extend ko leave ko sick leave ko kegdey tapno makbonding ko anak ko. Idi nanbuntis a han second ay anak ko ken gatan, sya met lang*" (I am the one going home every week-end or once or twice a month to see our child. If the time spent with my son is not enough then I will extend my leave so I could have bonding with my child. This is also my set up with my second son).

From the responses of the participants, the researcher inferred that mothering is a definite source of joy for the left-behind mother. This corroborates the claim of McDaniel (2004) that mothering is one of the most powerful acts that one can perform. When one chooses the position of the mother, one chooses to give a large percentage of one's life to the process of producing, guiding, and managing others' lives.

Situations Experienced by the Children

From the interview, there were three themes that were identified as the existing conditions experienced by the children. These conditions were conveyed through the personal stories, experiences, and struggles in the life of the left-behind parents, their children, and the support system of the children. These include the struggle of the children being a member of the transnational family, the relationship of the children with their mother who left, existing situation of children with their relationship with their left-behind father.

Good Child

Six (6) families out of twelve (12) argued that the left-behind children are doing well despite the absence of their parents. The parents said that when the mother worked abroad, they gave up their farming activities. Such is the case of Alicia, who said that since the children are not doing anything, they assist their auntie in her bakery and work there part-time. They deliver pandesal early in the morning to the locals of Guinzadan. This was reflected in the response of Alicia when she said that "*Idi iman nawada bakery he manang p* daida, et inuknukana daida, idondon na ay man-isolsol si pandesal tan maga met ublaen da iman, maid met salolongan*" (When there is bakery being put up by P***, they worked there. They went house to house to sell pandesal because they are not doing anything. We do not have a farm.)

The children also do well at school and do everything to give back the hard work of their parents in sending them to school and in providing their needs.

Based from the interview, these are the children who understand the situation why one or both of their parents need to work abroad. In return and in recognition of their parents' sacrifice, these children do well at school.

From the responses, we can infer that while they are still largely financially dependent on their parents or older family members, they take the initiative to look for other means to help their parents financially and to do well at school so they could make their parents proud. Hence, these left-behind children also exert power and effort by manipulating the various expectations they have of their parents.

More so, the researcher inferred that as young children get older and become adolescents, they gain a deeper understanding of their social settings and their family's transnational set-up. Furthermore, the diligence of the children is a form of symbolic care, which they offer in exchange for the care they receive from their support system especially to their parent/s who are working abroad to provide their needs.

Unfortunately, one participant childh claims that she is a victim of experiences in bullying. Bullying refers to any severe repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that has the effect of actually causing or placing the latter in reasonable fear of physical or emotional harm or damage to his property; creating a hostile environment at school for the other student; infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school(Lawphil.com). Some children in a transnational family are victims of bullying.

More than the difficulty of dealing with the bullying the left-behind child receives in school on the reason that she is fat, a more difficult situation that the child had to deal with is the absence of someone whom she can truly confide her worries and discomfort. While her getting bullied is not caused by her mother's going abroad, the bullying persists because she does not know how to handle it properly. If only she has the mother around, she might as well be told what she can do to handle the situation. Adding to the difficulty that the child is going through is her having to consider the situation of her mother abroad. Being that she is far working, this bullied child does not want to add to whatever problems her mother has. As a result, she deals with bullying silently, not knowing what to do and whom to seek the help she needs.

Misbehaved Child.

In the case of the left-behind families, the support system claimed that the children misbehave because they seem to think that working and earning money abroad is very easy on the part of their parents, so they keep on asking their parents to buy things that they want. Hardly do these children realize that their parents went abroad in order to provide their needs, but on the part of the children, an opportunity for them to have all their wants bought.

It should be understood that these are the reasons why the children misbehave: the children might lack the attention and discipline coming from the support system that they have that is why they seek attention by misbehaving, the children might not really understand the reason why one or both of their parents need to work abroad, the inability of the child to understand their transnational family situation, and age gap wherein the children might not be comfortable to disclose their interest or stories to their support system.

The left-behind members disclosed the following:

Alicia: *“There is this incident when their child did bad thing, I do not know why he did it, and he is not drunk. He stabbed someone; his intention is to steal but it ended stabbing G**. His mother is not here to take care of them, when I asked why he did it; he replied that he just wants to steal from the computer shop. He did not open to us everything so the DSWD interferes).*

In the opinion of Alicia, her nephew thought of stealing so he could have money for him to play computer games, and maybe he is shy or uncomfortable to directly asked money from them. She added that their parents continuously support them financially, but unknown to them, the children might want something, but they cannot tell it directly.

Similar with the claim of Alicia, Maria though that the child became hard-headed because of money. They might think it is very easy to earn money.

María: *“The children became hard-headed, they are difficult to understand. They do not listen to me, maybe because they have money. They might think it is very easy to earn money that is why their mother is always sending money. They do not know what their mother is going through to send money to them. I do not know if they involved the children in their decision because if I talk to them, they do not even listen to me; they are hard headed. They are always playing with their phone and always stay in their rooms).*

Interestingly Jessa rose that the misguided/ misbehaved behavior of the child is because of their age gap with their guardians.

Jessa: *“one reason maybe is the age gap; they cannot open to their grandparents because the generations of today are different. Some do not listen; some break the rules. You see them like they lack the attention. They lack someone to lean on that is why you pity them. Some may become a delinquent child especially if their grandparent is very hardworking in their farms, they might not really supervise the child.*

Based on the statements of Maria and Jesa, the behavior of the left-behind children got affected by the absence of their parents. As a result, the migration of the parent/s can particularly negatively affect children staying behind, especially if the children are not properly guided.

Spoiled Child

Two (2) out of twelve (12) families claimed that the left-behind children were spoiled. The recognition of spoiled child was reflected in the response of Albert when she said that *“kasla ma-spoiled tan Mai-un-unod iman san iiyat di anti isunga sya laeng di. Nu pay si anti na anggay nu kaipapati et bay-an da ay sya manturay . wada pamaspaseg de muyang nu tataynan di parents da daida. ta nu he anti na et iun-unod da han paseg na et adi da et pateyen si anti na”* (Their auntie gives everthing to them and they might be spoiled. Their auntie just let them go on insisting what they want).

Moreso, the tendency of the children being spoiled in the care of the support system was evident. This is because the support system pities the situation of their grandchildren, so they give whatever the children wish for these left-behind children to be happy. Tina shared the tendency of the child being spoiled under the care of the support system. *“tano daita ay lola et uray wrong or right et yes”* (If the it is the lola who cares for them, even if it is wrong, it is still a yes.)

In the Focus Group Discussion of the support system, the participant acknowledged the tendency of the children to become spoiled under their care. It is because they do not want to see their grandchildren unhappy if the things that they want will not be given to them. Because of their desire to see their grandchildren happy, the support system opts to refrain from scolding or depriving them of their wants just so to ensure that their grandchildren will be happy. The support system feels that it is not good to make them suffer and be sad all the more,

considering that the absence of these children's parents is already a sad or even pitiful situation for the children to bear with.

On the contrary, one of the participants in the focus group discussion also said that the spoiled behavior of the children results from the way their guardian disciplines them.

The above situation certifies that the extended family as a source of support for the family of most Filipino families could be a strength and a weakness at the same time (Tarroja, 2010). In the situation of the participants, the support systems are strong. This is because, in the absence of the parents, the extended members take the roles of the parent to the child. However, the way on how these roles are being carried can be seen as a weakness due to the differences with regard to the way of imposing these parenting roles to the children. That is why Field (2003) said that they support or functions being assumed by the grandparents in providing certain types of discipline are no longer accurate and needs to be examined.

Struggle of the Children Being a Member of Transnational Family

Table 2.
Parent/s Who Works Abroad

Participants (P)	Total N=12
Migrant father (P4, P5,P8)	3
Migrant mother (P1, P2, P3, P9, P10, P11, P12)	8
Migrant parents (P6, P7)	1

The researcher inferred that the majority of the mothers in these transnational families are the ones who work abroad. These migrant mothers are the ones who were able to finish college and completed a degree, and the ones who work as a domestic helper abroad. Meanwhile, the migrant fathers are the ones who finished high school and work as a mason, construction, and diver abroad.

The Philippine Statistics Authority stated that there were more females than males among the OFWs, with the female OFWs comprising 55.8 percent of the total OFWs. Female OFWs were generally younger than male OFWs, with about half (47.5%) of the female OFWs belonging to the age group 25 to 34 years. In comparison, male OFWs in this age group made up 38.9 percent (Psa.gov, 2019).

Incomplete Family Feeling

The children claim that the absence of their parents make them feel that they belong to an incomplete family without both parents beside them. They even recognize the difference of growing up with the guidance of one's parents.

The left-behind children also envy other children having a complete family. These feelings or thoughts are contained in the statements of the participants, as presented in the paragraphs that follow.

Alicia: *"Ayeah deperensya udpay mu wda ladta di ama kn ina ay mangil-ila ken daita, narigat tanu antim ya lolo, lolam et adika maibaga met lang laydem"* (There is really a big difference if you have with you your parents who will guide you along the way. It is difficult if you are left with your lolo ar lola because you cannot tell them what you want).

The participant clearly recognizes the difference between living with one's parents and living with extended family members. The parents can more easily give the attention or the guidance needed. On the part of the children, they can be more open to their parents than to other members of their extended family. The statement of Ana reflects that the absence of the

parents is difficult. There are times that they have to deal with missing their parents, but despite the absence, Ana recognizes their needs are provided, and that is an advantage

Linda, Jessa and Mark further support the difficult situation that the left-behind children are going through. Likewise, they also observe the impact on the children especially in longing for their mother that their happiness seemed to be incomplete in the absence of their mother. Mark has particularly stated the pitiful condition of the left behind child who always looks for her mother.

In the Focus group Discussion, the left-behind children shared they always miss their parents. These are the consolidated responses of the children.

“It’s Good and happy because you have money to buy your need but it is sad because you always miss them, they do not appear at school meeting it will always be my lola or anti, you cannot see them when you got home from school).”

The left-behind children go through the difficult situation of being away from their parents. Added to that is the feeling of loneliness whenever they miss their parents. Additionally, the feeling of helplessness of not having a parent who will attend to school meetings called for them, and finally, the feeling of emptiness that when they go home, they do not have their parents to share their joys or frustrations.

Overall, from the responses of the participants, the researcher inferred that these children are also flexible in adjusting their mindset. They may feel that they are incomplete due to the absence of their parent/s, but they do understand that the provision of their needs is the main reasons why their parent/s had to work abroad.

In the improvement of the lives of these transnational families as a result of the migration of the parent/s, one left-behind child in the focus group discussion said that the parent/s should go home already so they could live as a family.

Children and Migrant Mother Relationship

The children and migrant mother relationships were described by the support system of the child based on their observation, which was affirmed by the left-behind children. The left-behind members claim that the children and mother relationship was changed due to the physical distance of the mother. However, some children felt grievance towards their mother because they do not see the physical presence of their mother during their special moments.

Stranger Mother

The children in the Focus group discussion disclosed that their relationship with their migrant parents is still okay because they always communicate with them. The participants, however, still believe that it is even better for their mother to come home.

The children in the Focus group discussion explained that their relationship with their parents is okay because they communicate; however, if their mother is already at home, it is awkward to discuss their personal life with their mother because they might not understand what they are going to through. The feeling is accounted for the length of time that they had been apart from each other. In effect, the children believe that their parents cannot fully understand the matter because they do not know of the surrounding circumstance. At the same time, they have used to the situation that their mother is not physically present, and they are used to the situation of talking to their mother through the phone. Such a manner of communication limits the topics to be discussed about. Since they have gotten used to it already, the face-to-face communication with their mothers when they come home becomes an awkward feeling and situation.

Another issue raised was that if their parents come back and show care to them, they feel uncomfortable because they are not used to having their parents beside them; they are shy to see their mother. It is like it is their first time again to see their mother, and they are seeing

a stranger in their mothers. Every time the parent comes home, they need to adjust to the situation and re-adjust to the life away from their mother if the mother leaves to go back abroad.

Children and Left Behind Father Relationship

The participants cannot precisely describe the father and children's relationship due to the prolonged absence of the father that results in children living separately with their left-behind father when their mother worked overseas. This was showcased in my discussion on the existing situation experienced by the father.

Some of these children also after being left by their father to the care of the extended members never initiate effort on visiting their children. Such is the case of Alicia, who serves as a guardian to his niece and nephews. He revealed that the father did not visit his children after the mother went abroad. The father preferred to live in Manila, and during his stay there, he never visited his children. It was only during the time that the children had grown up when they visited their father.

In the case of the left-behind father who left their children in the care of the extended members, it is the left-behind children who initiated the efforts of re-connecting with the left-behind parents who do not live with them. The guardian-participant claims that the father visits their children whenever the mother is in the Philippines, but in the prolonged absence of the mother, the father does not visit the children, and it is the children who visited him. Such in the case of Albert, it is the children who visited their left-behind father.

The conditions described in the preceding discussion gives a picture of the sad situation of the members of transnational families. The physical absence can lead to the members' becoming strangers to each other, of parents getting used to living away from their children, of children dealing with the sadness of being an incomplete family, but also of the assurance that even if family members live away from each other, the family bond still exists.

On the contrary, a left-behind member can end up being engaged in vices. Nene disclosed that her father engaged in vices after the mother migrated. For that reason, she started refusing to visit her father when her father started to become an alcoholic.

In the focus group discussion, the left-behind spouse explains that the husband engaged in vices like drinking liquor in the absence of the wife because the wife is not there to limit and control the behavior of the husband, especially on reminding them to do away with their vices. This reply implies that the left-behind husband tends to lose sight of his responsibility when left alone. Conversely, one of the left-behind fathers in the FGD explains that engaging in vices is their way to forget how they badly miss their wives.

Meanwhile, for the left behind father who does not stay with his children but always visits and communicate with them, still the relationship is tucked, and the children are still close with the father.

Communication of the Transnational Families

Interview data reveal that communication between spouses is very important to transnational families. The participants claimed that they use the modern means of communication that would enable them to communicate with the migrant parents and see them face to face. They also acknowledge the advantage of technology in helping them establish the connection of the migrant parents to the children, especially social media, because it allows them to have a video call with their migrant parent.

In the communication of the transnational members, money matters are seldom being discussed because it has always been the initiative of the migrant worker to send money. However, the participants disclosed that there are side effects of transnational families,

especially if the mother is not regularly communicating with their children. They observed that the children are not comfortable talking to their parents whenever they call.

Due to the discomfort of the children to communicate with their migrant parents, their support system interferes by requesting them to talk to their mother and talk about the things they have done or the things they are doing. These support systems also serve as the spokesperson of the children and an informant to the migrant parents on the status of the children.

Based on the responses, the researcher affirmed that technology is a great help in the communication of transnational families. However, the participants also cited some barriers in the communication of the left behind member and their migrant member/s. While the family members get to communicate, the absence of face-to-face communication results in the feeling of strangeness among them as a result of the physical distance. Gleaning from the response, one sees the importance of the support system in bridging and assisting the communication of the parents to their children.

Moreover, the uncomfortable feeling of the children to communicate to the parents working abroad was due to the inability of the children to understand their situation, and they were too young when their parent/s left. The support system of transnational families observed that their grandchildren may not really understand the reason why the parents worked abroad since they were not involved in the decision of the parents.

The researcher inferred that the parents are not given the time or opportunity to make their children understand the reason why they need to work abroad due to the tender age of their children. As a result, the support system finds ways to explain to the child their family set-up by way of telling stories of hardships and sacrifice of their parent/s for them to have a better life.

The left-behind children claimed that the parent/s who left find ways to discipline, remind, and guide their children in their life-course despite their absence. This is shown in the case of Nene, who was a left-behind child. She claims that her mother always reminds her to do well in everything she does.

From the response of participants, the researcher inferred that engaged parenting is being established by the parent who left with the use of such technology. The parents communicate to the child so that despite their absence in the life cycle of the child, they can monitor the activities and status of their child as they grow.

Improvement of the Living Conditions of the Family

As mentioned by the participants on the condition that caused the moving out of the parent/s, one of the reasons given is to improve their status so that they could provide the basic needs of the family and build their own house. Hence, as soon as the parents migrate for work, they started sending the money that they earned to their left-behind members to fulfill the promise of a good life when they left.

The left-behind member felt the improvement of their lives financially when their parent/s works abroad. Such is the case of Maria and Nene, who said that their lifestyle improved after the parent worked abroad. Similarly, in the case Ana, she said that their lives improved financially. They can already sustain the needs of the family because they have money.

The request of the children can already be provided. This was the claim of Linda. Linda said that when the father worked abroad, they can already buy what the children request as compared to the time where the father is not working abroad, wherein Linda would only end up feeling pity for her children whenever they request something and the parents cannot provide.

In the case of the transnational families, it is concluded that one of the main reasons why the parent/s need to work abroad is to sustain the needs of the family, and the participants positively affirmed that their lives improved, however sustaining the life-style of the left-behind members are also the reason why the members remain to work abroad despite having a dwelling on their own.

As cited in the conditions that caused the moving out of the parent/s, having your own dwelling was also seen as a priority among the transnational families for working abroad. After the migration of the parents, the left-behind members positively shares that they started constructing their own house.

The Support System of Transnational Family in Guinzadan

The section that follows presents the support system of transnational family, which includes the grandparents as a guardian and the shared responsibility of the extended members of transnational.

The extended members who are the support system and frequently are the grandparents, aunties, and uncles assume the whole range of functions, from caregiving to managing the household budget when a parent migrates to another country.

The role of caring for the children by the support system contributes to the development of a strong sense of duty, of an aptitude for heroic sacrifices, and of the love by future generations of the traditions and moral conquest of those who preceded them.

Grandparents as Guardian

Grandparents are usually the ones who act as the guardian to the child.

The guardian participants positively confer that they really act as a guardian to their grandchildren in the absence of the parents wherein they do everything for the welfare of the children left in their care.

The Grandparent acting as the guardian to the child was reflected in the story of Zeni. She said that *“keg ko adi natak place nan ney da ay role mama da ken daida. . saken amin han mangisagana nu emey da eskwela, problema da ed skwelaan saken, saken, manmarket, man-uto, mangayowan ken daida, mangabagbaga ken daida. Saken adi amin mangasikaso han... anya diyay...han role kuma si inada, han nay da serbisyon mama da keg ko adi nasublat han posisyon mama da.”* (It is like I take the place of their mother to them. I am the one who will prepare the things they need before they go to school, their problems at school, I am the one in charge going to the market, giving them advice or disciplinary actions.. I am the one in charge of everything. It is like I took the place of their mother).

It can be inferred from the responses of the grandparents that they are more than willing to assume the obligation of the parents in rearing the child, not only in the emotional and psychological well-being of the child but even in the financial aspect.

Also, from the response of participants, it is also concluded that the support system assumes every role of the parent to make the grandchildren feel that they still have parents in the person of their Grandparents and Aunties and Uncles.

The role of the guardian even extends to giving the financial needs of the children if they have earned money even if the migrant parents are sending them money. Still, the left-behind members look for other means to help in the financial expenses of their families aside from the remittances being sent by the migrant parent/s.

In the case of the support system, they understand the conditions that caused the moving out of the parents, but if given the opportunity, then they prefer that the children should not be separated from their parents so that they could properly guide their children.

Interestingly, the aforementioned claims of the support system of these transnational families go against of Cabuay and Tullao (2011) wherein they held that the elderly parents in

the Philippines support the migration of their children act as a form of insurance policy for them if they become sick or need financial help.

The support system of these transnational families perceives the situation negatively and positively. On the positive side, it is more of the material aspect of the family as discussed in the earlier part of this paper, however, on its negative side, there are some situations wherein new family roles, or regime is being created under this set-up. The children mistakenly thought that their uncle is their father. This is because their uncle is always there to assist them, play with them, carry them, and always give attention to them. As a result, the children do not show excitement if the migrant father comes home.

One of the effects of having a transnational family is that the children see the father/mother figure among the extended members left to care of the children while the parent/s migrate. Also, the researcher concludes that the children's incomplete family feeling is the reason why they see the father/mother figure in their extended members. Clearly, the children of migrant parents need the rearing and guidance of their parents. The nature of children of looking up for someone to be with them—particularly their parents is a need that must be satisfied. In the absence of their parents, they seek for the satisfaction of such a need to belong to a family. They, therefore, look for this sense of belongingness, and as a result, they have to find this in their extended family members or their support system. Their attachment to the members of the support system then results in their emotional detachment from their parents.

Sharing of Responsibilities of the Relatives as Guardian to their Children

The participants claim that the parent/s sacrifice and work abroad due to the condition experienced here in the Philippines. As a result, the migrant parents often reach out to an extensive kinship network to maintain familial stability in their physical absence; thus, a support system is created. This support system is a network of people who provide an individual with practical or emotional support. These are children's grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins that do the parenting of children while the migrant parent/s is/are working in another country.

Left-behind parents and children view discipline as a manifestation of parents' love and concern, given the culturally recognized responsibility and authority of adults in molding and shaping their children's characteristics and personalities.

The left-behind children live away from their parents, but a support system is there for them to look after their welfare. From the response of participants, the researcher inferred that the remaining members, especially the adult members, are the ones imposing discipline to the children in order for them to mold the character of the children left under their care.

The support system assumed the advisory role of parent/s by giving the necessary advice to the left-behind children so that they will still be guided through their lives.

The support system molds the child's character to become a good person and to excel in everything that they do. Such was the case of Ana. The grandparent reminding the children to do good for their future was mirrored in the response of Ana when she said "*iman-man mi kanu ay man-eskela tapno makaubla kami, Nu maid si mamak et daida guardian ko ed skul nu wada meeting...si lolok. Man-ited da si inspirasyon isunga kanayon ay bagbagaan da saken si mayat ay ugali*" (They always advise us to do good at school so we can have a better job in the future, if my mother is not here, my Lola serves as my guardian at school if there are meetings at school. My Lolo also serves as my inspiration because he always tells me to do good things and good attitudes).

Similarly, in the case of Nene, she shared that when she first experienced menstruation, she cried because she saw a blood spot on her underwear. She then rushed to her Lola to tell

what she saw. She felt relieved when her Lola explained that menstruation is felt by every woman and a sign of becoming more mature. She also added that the mother advised what to do and what not to do during the menstruation period, especially the importance of hygiene.

The revelations of the participants confirm the guidance that the left-behind children need. The statements further imply the role that the extended family members extend for the benefit of the children. Without such, the left-behind children may be lost along their way to the good path of life.

Children in transnational families found the parents' love in the support system that they have. The left-behind mothers affirm that overflowing love is what they observe on how their parents take care of their grandchildren.

Jessa and Herma who serves as guardian to the left-behind children recognized the support needed by the child, wherein they said that as a guardian to the children, one cannot just let them do things on their own because they are still young and they need the support from the guardian that they have. This was reflected in the response of Jessa. She said "*You cannot let them do the things that they want. You have to be always there to support them if they lack the emotional or financial support. Simple as being auntie is different, you spoil them if possible you give all the things that they want*".

Educational support is also extended by the grandparents as support system. This support includes being the major providers of childcare for preschool children, particularly for babies and toddlers, when both their parents are in the workforce. Grandparents also help parents with school-age children by picking them up from school, and by caring for them during school days and even vacations.

Aunties and Uncles

The members of these transnational families see the aunties and uncles an assistant to the left-behind children. These aunties and uncles are their primary guardian in the absence of the parents, the grandmother, or grandfather.

Such is the case of Jessa; she declared that she acts as an assistant in the care roles of the grandparents. She also maintains that she also imposes disciplinary actions to her nephews if she thinks that the parents are wrong in imposing discipline on their grandchildren.

Similarly, Herma, as a left-behind mother, said that the presence of the other extended families is beneficial because one can tap them anytime for help, especially if it is related to the welfare of the children.

Above all, the transnational family creates a communal nature of the childhood experience. In which relatives are involved in childrearing. An extended caregiver system will be created consisting of grandparents, aunts, uncles, neighbors, close family friends-well beyond just their mother and father.

Kinship System of Transnational Families in Guinzadan ili

Table 3 shows that six of the participants claimed that they have a "*Kailyan*" and/or relatives in the country they choose to work abroad. From the six migrant members who claimed that they have relatives abroad, four of them are now working as domestic helpers in Hong Kong. On the other hand, the other two migrant members are working as a construction worker in South Korea.

Table 3.**Migrant Members who have Relatives and/or Kailyan in the Country they Work**

Participants	Total N=12
Migrant members who have relatives and/or kailyan in the country they work	4
Migrant members who have kailyan in the country they work abroad	2
Migrant members who does not have any relatives and/or kailyan in the country they work	6

Guinzadan ili as Indigenous community has a strong kinship relationship. Kinship refers to the culturally defined relationships between individuals who are commonly thought of as having family ties. Because of the closeness of the immediate family, all familial ties are recognized. Anyone who is remotely related is known as a cousin.

In Guinzadan ili almost all of them are related to each other because they belong to the same roots. This kinship system shape and put in place their traditions and practices. This strong kinship system was also manifested in the case of transnational families. Kinship is one of the push and pull factor that strengthens the motivating factors of the locals to work abroad.

The left-behind members claimed that they have a relative abroad who asked the other left-behind members to replace them in their work. Such in the case of one participant, the eldest sister asked her younger sister to replace her in Hong Kong so she could go cross-country to Canada. After establishing a residence in Canada, then they will again be asked by the other member to go to Canada, and the job they left will again be passed by to another relative. The locals feel that they are secure to work abroad if they have relatives in that country.

The participants claim that they allow the migrant members to work abroad because they have relatives in the country where they intend to work. They prefer to work there because if they experience challenges, they have someone to ask for help with.

The kinship system of the local also was shown in the case of the extended family members who are willing to assume the obligation of the parents to the children. When mothers migrate, relatives, such as the grandparents, uncles, and aunties, provide childcare, especially in tasks like giving them the love, care, discipline, emotional support, and educational support that they need. Children, in turn, are expected to obey the relatives left to take care of them. The provision of care from extended kin networks are likely to influence whether a family is resilient during transnational migration.

The transnational families also view their kailyan abroad as their “kadwa” (kapwa in Tagalog) in recognition of a shared identity, an inner self, shared with others. This Filipino linguistic unity of the self and the other is unique and unlike in most modern languages. Because implied in such inclusiveness is the moral obligation to treat one another as equal fellow human beings (Reyes, 2015). Hence, the transnational families reconnect with their “*kailyan*” abroad because they know that they share the same cultural identity and sense of

community. That sense of having a common human identity, community, and destiny makes them secured in the country where they and feel that they feel at home because they bond with their “*kailyan*” abroad.

Functionalist Perspective in the Transnational Families of Guinzadan

Families in Guinzadan are usually members of an extended family. The Barangay officials maintained that these extended families are composed of three to four generations, the grandparents, the parents, grandchildren, and even children of their grandchildren. Thus, there is an assurance that there will be extended members who will take care of the children if their parent/s need to work abroad. In the experiences of the transnational families in Guinzadan ili, absent family members reconstitute the structure of the family, causing the remaining member to assume new family roles to take care of the children.

Structural functionalism supports the above situation. Structural functionalism is a framework that sees society as a complex system whose parts work together to promote solidarity and stability. In this way, society is like an organism, and each aspect of society (institutions, social constructs, etc.) is like an organ that works together to keep the whole functioning smoothly. This approach looks at society through a macro-level orientation, which is a broad focus on the social structures that shape society as a whole. Functionalism addresses society in terms of the function of its constituent elements: norms, customs, traditions, and institutions. Functionalists, in general, identify a number of functions families typically perform: reproduction, socialization, care, protection, and emotional support; assignment of status; and regulation of sexual behavior through the norm of legitimacy (Kendal, 2008).

Affixing the leading theory functionalism in the transnational family as an institution, it could be gleaned that even if the family members lived away with each other, they still perform varied activities to meet their diverse needs and to solve their common problems. Among the fundamental human needs and issues of the people are the provisions for begetting and rearing of children, sustenance and livelihood, maintenance of peace and order, the transmission of the cultural heritage, and the establishment of a bond between human beings and supernatural beings. When the different social norms, attitudes, values, beliefs, and material objects become stabilized, they develop into normative systems of institutions (Centeno & San Juan, 2013).

In Guinzadan ili, functionalism was reflected in the situation of the extended members who assume the obligation of the parent to the children, especially in rearing the child so they could maintain the stability of their family and see to it that the child act in accordance with the norms of the society.

Patriarchal Perspective in the Transnational Families of Guinzadan

The Table 4 shows that one Child is living with left-behind mother only because it was the father who works abroad; Three families out of the 12 claimed that the children is living

with left-behind mother and relatives because the left-behind mother recognizes the difficulty of raising the children alone thus she needs the help of the other extended member; One family claimed that the children are living with support system only because both parents work abroad.

Two families claimed that the children are living with left-behind father and relatives because according to the support system they may have a left-behind father but the support systems are the ones who still serve as the primary guardian of the children because the left-behind father cannot solely take care of the responsibility.

Table 4.
Living Arrangement of the Children and Left-Behind Parents

Participants	Total N=12
Children living with left-behind mother only	1
Children living with left-behind mother plus relatives	3
Children living with Support system only because both parents works abroad	1
Children living with left-behind father plus relatives	2
Children who have left-behind father due to disengagement of the father with the parenting obligation	5

Five (5) families out of the twelve (12) participants claimed that the moving out of the mother affects not only the children but also the father. When the mother leaves, the father will either solely assume the parenting roles to their children or disengaged himself from his family system.

From the responses of the participants, the researcher concludes that as a consequence of the mother's going abroad, the parenting obligation which is supposed to be assumed by the left-behind father was shifted or passed on to the extended family members. It results in the father seemingly avoiding responsibilities; that is why he leaves to look for work, which he did not do when the mother did not go abroad. While it is true that the father also leaves and goes to other places to work and thereby give added financial assistance to the family, the parental role is abandoned. Since the wife left, the husband is expected to stay, but instead of becoming the sole guardian of their children, he also leaves. In such a case, there is the absence of demonstrating their willingness to perform caregiving tasks, which are necessary for the social reproduction of the family and the well-being of its members. This situation further manifests the fathers' abandonment of their parenting role for the children, which is supposed to be a shared responsibility of the spouses that when one spouse went to work abroad, then the other should stay and take care of the children.

Moreover, the participants claim that the mother should be the parent left to take care of their children so that they could provide the proper discipline to the children, especially if the left-behind member is not caring to the children or does not know how to take care of the children.

Alicia and Albert shared the difficult challenge that children go through as a result of their parents' going abroad. The loving care may be deprived of the children, especially when the left-behind member is not that caring. Commonly, the participants believe that it is a better thing if the mother is around to care for the children, especially which they believe mothers can be firm in disciplining their children. In addition, Tina affirmed that it is far better that the mother should be the one to be left behind to look after the welfare of the children.

In the Focus Group Discussion, the support system also disclosed that the left-behind father could not really assume the obligation of the wife in parenting the children. These are the consolidated experiences of the support system.

“Mabay-bay-an anak da, dake-dake nga agpayso baey da ngem ilam et man-mumuteg, egay ka-am-ames, adi da makibasbasa, adi da imonitor anak da” (they just let their children be. True they have big house but they do not know how to keep their children clean, they do not bathe the children, they don’t check if they are attending school and they do not monitor their children).

The statement of the support system stems from their experience and observation that some left-behind fathers neglect the hygiene or grooming of their children. They seem to be contented in having the material needs provided, but the equally or more important thing of all, which is the welfare, the health, and the education of their children, are often neglected.

The support system noted the differences in how the husband-and-wife budget the financial need of the family. They said that the husband used the money remittances of the wife to sustain their vices, “barkada” and drinking liquor. As a result, the children will be unattended, as compared to the wife, who always thinks of the welfare of the child. There may be a father who really takes care of their children but in rare cases only.

To keep and sustain the family, it should be the shared responsibility of the couple to look after their finances. It is a common understanding and is often the case that the wife budgets the financial needs of the family. On the contrary, the husband does not have the financial needs as their priority, as supported by their spending on vices the remittances of their wife. As a result, children will be un-attended. These observations prompted the support system of the transnational families to believe that the wife should better stay to look after the children, while it is the husband to work abroad.

From the above situation, the researcher inferred that the support system also viewed that the caring role of children should be the primary responsibility of the mother. Thus, it should be the mother who will be left to care for the children so they could really look after the total growth and well-being of their children.

The gender role in caring for the children, as suggested by the support system, goes against the Feminists view of the family that has maintained and perpetuated sexual inequalities (Kreppner, 2000). From the perspective of the support system, they perceived that the role of the mother is distinct from the wife, and the father cannot take in their care. The children just live how mothers do. Thus, the second-wave of feminism in a step further is seeking equality in the family, employment, reproductive rights, and sexuality is not applicable if we are to measure the way how the mothers and father shows care to their children.

Proposed Programs to Address the Transnational Families’ Issues

This includes the proposed programs to address the transnational families’ issues. These programs on transnational families should not only focus on left-behind families but also in the broader community in order to eliminate tensions between different groups in society.

Enrichment Activities for the Transnational Families

Enrichment activities for the Transnational families that will cover the following activities:

1. Responsible parenting seminars for the parent/s. The responsible parenting seminar will address the issue on the experiences raised by the parents especially for the left-behind father who said that they have difficulty of parenting their daughters because they do not know their likes and dislikes and for the left-behind mother who is having difficulty of raising the children alone.

Counselling seminars for children. This is to address the issue in the case of the children who lack the attention and to make these children understand the reason why one or both of their parents needs to work abroad. Also, based on the results of the interview with a school principal, she said they lack seminars on bullying though they have posters against Anti-bullying. However, students still do not understand what bullying is and what constitutes bullying.

2. Seminars/mentorship on counselling for teachers. According to the school principal interviewed, counseling is being done by the Teacher or the Principal because they do not have a guidance counselor in their school. They have cases of misbehaved students or child-related issues at school. Considering that the teachers have multiple roles to perform like their role professionally, teachers need to be competent in their responsibilities towards their students inside and outside the classroom. One important teacher role inside and outside the classroom is to provide guidance and counseling to students. The training and workshop on advice for teachers will enable the teachers to be more resilient and more confident to better deal with cases of “difficult” students. This will better ensure that cases involving the students are properly handled until the child really reinstates to the normal behavior.

3. Responsible Parenting seminars for support system. This is to address the issue raised by the left-behind children who said that the support system fails to understand them sometimes and to bridge the gap of the support system with the children so that they will understand the needs of the children.

Seminars and mentoring programs for the wider community. The different social institutions like schools, health institutions, and local authorities should work together to respond to the needs of transnational families through seminars and mentoring programs for transnational families by emphasizing the policies relating to family as a primary social institution of the society. This will help raise the awareness of every member of the community with regard to the existence of these laws.

4. Community organization of Transnational Families. The left-behind parents and support systems will be the members of the organization, particularly the transnational families in Guinzadan ili. This organization will help build a family-supportive community and will continuously monitor activities/programs that help in developing left-behind parents’ and support system capacities to lead—to improve their lives, strengthen their families, better their communities and, ultimately, impact policy and system change through training/seminars and other activities that will be given to develop their capacities to respond to problems.

5. Lastly, the parents have the right and the capacity to participate in the decisions that directly affect them, including public policy decisions.

Conclusions

Family institutions are integral to societies. However, with the limitations posed by traditional structures and corresponding strain experienced by the individual as he/she cope with the demands vis-à-vis these structures act to lay the groundwork for change to set in. The new trends and ideas will then emerge as a result of the changing structures in society. The Filipino family which is basically a nuclear family consisting of a mother, father, and the siblings, has been extended with the rise of transnational families where the children of migrant parents stay with their auntie/uncle or to their grandparents adds layers to the structure or composition of the family.

The findings show that the rise of transnational families in which the husbands or wives need to work in other countries modifies the structure of the family. The parents/s of these transnational families worked abroad to improve their living conditions so they could provide and sustain the needs of the family, especially in providing a good future for their children. However, the set-up of the family has been modified due to increasing cases of transnational families wherein a household becomes fatherless or motherless. As a result, the extended

family will assume the roles of the parent/s to the child and serve as their support system. The grandmothers and aunts become the guardian of the head of the household. These modifications then lead to the rise of transnational families leading to the new care roles, new parenting styles, and the new support system in the family structure.

The changes in the structure positively and negatively affect the entire set-up of the family. Improving the living condition of the family was positively achieved by these transnational families because they were able to build their own house, their lifestyle also improved, they were able to maintain and sustain the needs of the family especially the needs of their children and some children who were able to understand the situation of their family used the sacrifices of his/her parents to strive for the best so they could pay back the sacrifices of their parents.

However, on the negative aspect it affects the Left-behind member wherein it gives the rise of fathers' disengagement to the family structure; and some children became rebellious and misbehaved because of failure to understand the status of the family or were not properly guided on the reason why their parents worked abroad, and the children were not properly taken care of by the support system that they have.

Moreover, the left-parents recognize the difficulty of raising a child alone because of the absent spouse. Still, they understand that they really need to sacrifice for them to improve their living conditions as the main reason why they both agreed that the other spouse needs to work abroad.

It is however interesting to note that one of the enduring issues is the patriarchal ideology that runs throughout the narratives of the informant; the kinship system as a push and pull factor of transnational families that strengthen their motivation to work abroad; and the functionalist theory that was manifested in the case of support system of these transnational families in maintaining the stability of the family as a primary institution.

Above all, the support system coming from the extended members which include the grandparents, aunties, uncles or close relatives are very helpful to the transnational families especially if they properly take the role of the absent parent/s, but it may also affect the child negatively if these support systems did not properly guide the child.

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“This article was approved by the editorial team as a complete piece, so it was published with a higher number of pages, not following normal rules, only possible in special cases and approved by the editor-in-chief.”