

FAMILY LIFE MANAGEMENT OF SOLO PARENTS

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ABSTRACT : Family stability is the most important thing in society. A Solo Parent is a single father or mother who takes all the responsibility in the family alone. This study sought to understand the Family Life Management of Solo Parents. The study focuses on the experiences of family and moral management, financial management and spiritual management, and the strategies employed to address problems encountered by the ten (10) solo parents in Naga City, Camarines Sur, Philippines as participants in the present study. An interview guide was used to conduct a face-to-face interview. The 10 solo parents usually encounter Problems in parenting in responsibilities, expectations, and disappointments. The tiredness that they have is struggling that happens over days, weeks, and hours of working at home. The common problems encountered by the participants are the following: Discipline of the children; Sole Responsibility; Lack of Social Support; Educational Impact, Financial Involvement, Discrimination, and Spiritual Doubt in the Discipline issues. Furthermore, participants have difficulties in managing family life. The City Social Welfare and Development Office offers individual counseling to help them to handle personal stress and the entrepreneurial skills training to help them establish their own business as a source of their additional income.

KEYWORDS – Family, Life, Management, Parents, Solo

I. INTRODUCTION

Ideally, a family can be described in many conformations. It does not define by who is in it, but rather by the relationships of those in it. Circumstances of family life and its relationship change the interaction of the people in a family, particularly the projection of parental figures that demonstrate proper behavior, a sense of responsibility, discipline, and respect among members who share emotional bonds, common values, goals, and responsibilities. The accompanying urbanization creates and continues to instigate many changes in family composition, causing a sharp change in life and occupational styles like the increasing cases of a solo parents. The phenomenon of husband-wife separation, imprisonment of either wife or husband, being widowed, death of one partner, and other connected forms that constitute solo parenting happening to the family is relevant to the limited income, behavior of the children and personal problems such as guilt, fear and loneliness. As stated in Republic Act 8972 otherwise known as the Solo Parent Welfare Act of 2000^[1], any solo parent in the Philippines whose income fall under the poverty threshold set by the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) is given support as long as the concerned had been assessed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development Office (DSWD), the primary government agency which carries out the implementation of the specified Republic Act (Lopez & San Juan, 2019)^[2].

In the context of the Solo Parents' Welfare Act of 2000, where this study has been anchored, solo parents go through many stresses a combination of psychological, physical, and emotional anxieties. Administrative Order 86 (2003)^[3] says that the loss of separation from a partner is an intensely painful experience, and the grieving process cannot be ascertained. The experience is compounded by financial difficulties and the challenging demand of rearing children alone. What makes it even more difficult is that there is not much outside of the family milieu regarding support and guidance that will enable them to perform their functions effectively. Moreover, an individual who falls any of the following is legally categorized as Solo Parent: a woman who gives birth as a result of rape; an unmarried mother or father; any person who solely provides parental care to the child; any family member who assumes the responsibility of the head of the family as a result of death and abandonment. Parents left solo or alone with the responsibility of parenthood due to the following circumstances: death of a spouse, a spouse being detained, physical and mental incapacity, legal separation, annulment of marriage (Chanrobles, 2019)^[4]. With the onset of globalization, solo parents would usually engage in some of life's most difficult challenges: physical illness, unemployment, discrimination, loss, poverty, educational problems, the welfare of the children, and mental illness. In this regard, most solo parents are filled with countless, tiring ups and downs, like an endless journey of obstacles. Their dilemma includes multiple roles as a mother and a father to a child, the loneliness while earning a living away from the child, and earning double

to augment the child's needs. Solo parents are most worried about financial concerns. They can be found primarily in the social welfare offices of each local government unit in numerous public and private agencies that serve individuals and families in need and even in churches and other religious organizations that could help them with their present situation. The considerable hurdles of the stress of the solo parents in raising the children and managing the family lead frustration, exhaustion, worrying about their future, and the sense of being dragged into a manifold of inclination associated with the many difficulties of life. Moreover, involvement in crimes increased resulting in lots of separation between wife and husband. Solo Parents need to be helped and assisted in fulfilling their irreplaceable social role and empowered in every possible way. Family stability has been in continuous decline today. They are progressively faced with many obstacles, and problems not only to their material needs but also to their emotional well-being. Besides, the government cannot afford to fully replace the functions that families perform for the benefit of their members and the good of society.

The researcher vividly saw and experienced these situations first-hand during her visits. As such the researcher had taken it upon herself to have individual interviews with solo parents as it can be observed that they have different conditions in life and stories to tell in managing the family when they embarked on the journey of becoming a solo parent and the sacrifices of their life. Also, studying the experiences of solo parents will impart understanding of situations that led to their engagement in family life. Since the researcher is a licensed social worker and is part of the clientele group and one of the focuses of the profession, the researcher intended to endeavor on this study. Furthermore, this study looked at the difficulties encountered and faced by the respondents and explored the coping mechanism in handling their situations.

II. METHODOLOGY

Research Design. This study made use of the Phenomenological Research Method (Creswell, 2018)^[5]. This qualitative research approach was appropriate given that it allowed for the benefit of data collection methods that provided a detailed understanding of a phenomenon of the study. In this study, the experiences of family and moral management, financial management and spiritual management, and the strategies employed to address problems encountered of the ten (10) solo parents in Naga City, Camarines Sur as the main focus of the study.

Participants of the Study. The primary sources of data were the responses of the ten (10) participants of the study who are members of the solo parent, have a valid identification card (ID) and in the master list given by the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO)-Solo Parent Federation in Naga City, Camarines Sur, Philippines and fall under the categories of Solo Parent-Republic Act 8972. This study mainly focused on ten (10) solo parents and as participants of the study the circumstances were based on the following categories: 1) Solo parents who gave birth as a result of rape, 2) Spouse has a physical/mental incapacity; 3) Unmarried father/mother; 4) Widowed; 5) Annulled; 6) Separated, 7) Abandoned; 8) Imprisonment of the spouse; 9) Any other person who solely provides parental care and support to children and 10) Family member who assumes the responsibility of the head of the family as a result of death, abandonment, disappearance or prolonged absence of the parents.

Data Gathering Procedures. An interview guide was used to conduct a face-to-face interview of the identified participants. The researcher asked permission from the City Social Welfare and Development Office (CSWDO) and Solo Parent Federation Office to ask for approval and access the master list of the solo parents in Naga City, Camarines Sur, Philippines that served as reference in selecting the participants in the study. The researcher conducted the interview. The interview was held in the participants' respective houses. Follow-up questions were raised to elicit clarity and explanation from their responses. The interview stopped once the participants expressed that they had no longer anything to say. All information gathered were audio recorded, transcribed, and data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. The data was treated with the utmost confidentiality and only used for the purpose of the study to come up with recommendations and interventions as part of the findings of the study.

III. RESULTS

Experiences in Family Life Management of Solo Parents :

Participant 1. Participant 1 is 31 years old, female and currently working as an online seller in Naga City, Camarines Sur since 2015. She earns an income that ranges between Php 3,000.00 to Php 5,000.00 monthly. She has been single for many years as she has been a victim of sexual violence. she had experienced trauma for over a decade, or nearly 15 years, after being raped by an unknown person when she was only 20 years old. she admits that she has become very financially and emotionally dependent on her family to provide for herself and

her son's needs. She rather stays home and takes care of her only son. Her son is in her custody and lives in her parents' dwelling.

Family and Moral Management. Though she was a victim of rape with son she tried to make her family be happy by trying to manages all the household needs and expenses of the family, especially of her son. But it seems that her son doesn't love her and he didn't show that she is important to him. Sometimes eating together at the table causes arguments in how her son talks to her wrongfully; "*Padangat ko ang aki ko dawa na dae ko lang masabi saiya na nasasakitan na ako sa aro- aldaw.*" (I love my son even though I can't tell him that I'm struggling every day). To find out if her son loves him back she tried to ask her son during the meal when they are only at the table, "*padangat mo man ako? Dae siya minagirong busy sana siya magparakawat kan saiyang celpone.*" (Do you love me too? He pretended to be busy playing with his cell phone) It is a hurtful experience for her, and she just decides to finish her meal. Since she is a working mother, she gradually uses her time to fulfill the child's needs. she admitted that her son, at times demanded to know his father mentioning that they do not have a complete family. She said, "*masakiton pa ipaintindi saiya ta baka anupa gibohon kang aki ko pag-naaraman niya pa na ako sarong biktima ning rape, baka ikasupog niya ako kaya hanggang ngunian dae man sya nagtutubod sa mga nadadangog niya sa barangay.*" (It's still hard to make him understand because my son might do something to you when he finds out that I'm a rape victim, he might embarrass me so until now he still doesn't believe what he hears in the barangay).

Financial Management. She frequently handles several things in her financial strain that she has experienced disruption in delegating balance of work to meet the family needs with her very limited resources that she has. She said "*Nasasakitan ako sa pag budget kang kwartang nakukua ko sa aroaldaw para sa samuyang pagkakan, sa balon, sa mga utang pati na sa bayadan sa kuryente.*" (I have a hard time saving the money I earn every day for our food, allowance, debts and electricity bills). She did not complete her schooling and preferred to work and earn a living, and because of this she was likely over from her disadvantaged circumstances. As she said "*Nag-aagi ako sa depression, dae ako nakaka- isip ning tultul na trauma akong maray kang mga nangyari sakuya kaya nagging arog lang kaini ang sakuyang trabaho.*" (I'm going through depression, I can't even think about it, I'm traumatized by what happened to me, so my job is like this). She faced unemployment and had the option to work from home as an online seller for almost a year, depending on the help of her parents.

Spiritual Management. Looking back on 2008, when she was raped in their own house alone. She never thought in her entire life and part of her childhood experiences that she was raped at a very young age. She said, "*Dae yan mangyayari sa sakuya promise.*" (It could never happen to me, promise). For almost a year after the incident, the trauma was still fresh and she could always remember and visualize how that man raped her. There was a time that she wanted to commit suicide. She admittedly experienced sleep deprivation; she feels excessive worrying about managing the family needs, and burnout, both physical and emotional stress of how she can support the necessities of her children all by herself.

Participant 2. Participant 2 is 30 years old, female, and works as a barangay health worker, earning a low-income wage of Php 5,000.00 monthly. She has been a widow since 2014, because her spouse died in a vehicular accident under the influence of liquor. Since then had become the breadwinner and sole earner of the family when the unexpected accident with her spouse happened. She now lives on independently to take custody and responsibilities of her five (5) children. She spends a few years barely surviving, living day in and day out – a routine that has taken away her passion for life.

Family and Moral Management. After her husband died she feels worried and stressed about the health and education of her children "*kaya ko ba na mapaogma sinda? magkaigwa ning maray na iribanan sa pamilya, sa mga pagsubok sa buhay na magibo ko ang duwang responsibilidad kang sarong magurang. Masakiton na saro sana ang madisiplina sa mga aki aroaldaw na ginigibo ninda.*" (If I can make them happy? I will always find a way to be with the family to make them happy and fulfill the dual responsibility as a parent. Though it is difficult for me to discipline my children alone). Relationship within the family life changed. "*Mga aki ko nagkaka-igwa ning pagbabago sa emosyonal pati na sa pag-uugali asin mga kahelangan na namamatian nindang mga kasakitan arog kang pag-iiba kang ugali na dulot kang sobrang pakikipag barkada.*" (My children are having emotional changes as well as in behavioral and health changes. Most of them prepare to be with their friends. Which makes her more worried.

Financial Management. Her enormous problem with her family life is her financial obligation. As the head of the family, she is more likely to experience insufficiency of needs due to the loss of her husband/partner. These includes: numerous finances to pay, educational expenses, employment status, unexpected illness of family members, low income, debts and sustaining family's living. She said "*Dakulon akong pinag-gagastusan, masakiton na maray pagbudgeton ang kwarta napapaduman lang sa pangbayad sa mga utang, pagkakan mi sa aroaldaw, pagklase kang aki asin mga balon sa pang aroaldaw.*" (I have a lot of financial expenses, it's hard to budget, the money is only used to pay the debts, our food every day, my son's schooling and daily allowances).

Spiritual Management. When she went through the death of her partner/spouse, she lived in pain and depression as she could not pay attention to her sleep. She also related the pain of living with anger and shame after her painful loss. She said "*Masakiton makamove-on sa sitwasyon kong ini, bako ining totoo, dae ko maako kung ano nangyari sa padangat kong agom, dae ko na siya makakaibahan gabos na mga hinanakit ko sa buhay pigsasabi ko ki amang diyos.*" (It is painful to move on in my situation. It is true. I cannot accept what happened to my husband. I resent that I can't be with him and I deliver all these through prayers). She grieves for the unexpected loss of her loved ones and reaches to the point of questioning the Lord why all these painful things are happening to her life.

Participant 3. Participant 3 is 39 years old, female, and a barangay supplemental feeding volunteer with an income of Php 2,000.00 monthly. She has been a solo parent for quite a few years because of her husband's drug addiction and imprisonment. She shares, she does not know that her husband has been using drugs. This causes their arguments since husband's get easily irritated and neglects the responsibilities and needs of the family. When her husband got imprisoned she experienced financial difficulties and has taken all the responsibility for their five (5) children.

Family and Moral Management. She is living independently as a solo parent together with her five (5) children. In her family incidences of parental conflict and stress intensified. She feels worried in ensuring the family needs through the hard times of life. "*Permi ako nakakamati ning pagkahandal na dae ko matao sainda ang mga gusto pa ninda lalo na ta lima sindang mga aki ko na iba iba ang mga pangngaipo.*" (I'm always saddened by the fact that I can't give them the things they want, especially since I have five children with different needs). She also provides them the good values as a person however the children do not take it seriously. Transitioning from living with both parent to solo parent left alone with the responsibility of two parent. "*Dae nakakatutul ang sakuyang mga aki sa pagklase, sa aroaldaw na pauru-utrong gibohon, preparasyon sa harong asin an income ko dae man kayang gabos na gusto ninda matao ko.*" (I always feel worried that I won't be able to give them what they want, especially since I have five children with different needs). She sacrificed much of her responsibilities as a parent and ended up not to grieve alone; she also felt discriminated against by her husband's status as a drug user and subsequently traumatized the entire family. She said "*Nakakatrauma ang gibo kang sakung agom ta pig garabos na kami, aroaldaw na pagsubok ini sakuya bilang solong magurang sa harong.*" (It's traumatizing because my husband's work is also ours, every day it's a test for me as a single parent at home).

Financial Management. She has been into financial difficulty having a lack of finances and an inability to meet her family's basic needs. Her incompetence in properly managing finances as a parent affects her children to growth. She said "*ang prioridad ko kaya si kakanon mi sa aro-aldaw, mga bayadan sa kuryente, tubig, tapos pagklase kang mga aki lalo na sa balon ninda.*" (My priority is to pay for the electricity, water, and schooling of the children, especially with their allowances). As a solo parent she is not adequately prepared to handle her finances. Thus, she is not confident about her inability to manage family finances due to her income, so she has to take other jobs to pay for the basic expenses.

Spiritual Management. Her grief over her husband's imprisonment is complicated because, at some point, she also feels unworthy and unlovable. She tends to blame herself and experience self-pity thinking that her marriage is a failure. She is emotionally and physically exhausted. She said "*Pagkakulong kang agom ko sinisisi ko ang sadiri ko na mayo lamang ako naginibo kung aram ko kuta, nataraman ko lamang siya, pamilya kami may mga aki may mga panahon na nawawaran na akong pag-asa na mabuhay pa.*" (After my husband went to jail, I blamed myself for not having done anything. If I had known, I would have told him, we are a family with children, there were times when I lost hope of living).

Participant 4. Participant 4 is 48 years old, male, and has been a solo parent when his spouse becomes mentally incapacitated after giving birth to their children. Before, his wife had been helping him take care of the children and even assisted in the household chores. Living with a wife with a mental illness is completely draining and challenging. He guides her for help in bathing, feeding, and changing clothes as his wife suffers from mental illness. His wife was diagnosed with postpartum disorder and suffered from severe stress and loss of appetite. After months of treatment, nothing has changed. His wife can no longer help him with the day-to-day needs of their family. His motivation to continue living for his wife and children is God.

Family and Moral Management. As a family, he has the responsibility to teach his children. *“Kaidto kaya ko pa matukduan ang mga aki ta duwa kami nagtatabang pero kang ako na sana ang nagigibo kang gabos napapagal naman ako.”* (At that time, I can still teach the children, we both help each other, but when I have been the one doing all the work, I feel tired). He has difficulty in handling the emotions, behaviour and needs of the children. His children have difficulty expressing their feelings and sharing things that they experience in school. He said, *“Naiistress ako asin nakakamati ning kapagalan sa kadakulan na responsibilidad sa pagmamangno kang sakuyang mga aki, pagmangno sa sakuyang agom habang nagtatrabaho.”* (I feel stress and emotional exhaustion, with a lot of responsibilities in looking after my children, taking care of my wife and working at the same time) doing the household chores and enjoying each other's company is a challenge for him on a regular basis. He shared he feels angry, and ashamed. He said *“May mga nagsasabi na gabos daa kami kapay ta may agom ako na may problema sa pag-iisip masakiton pa tanggapon mga taram nasa barkada ko pa hali.”* (People make comments that we are all have a mental problem since my wife has a mental problem. It is harder to accept their criticism especially when it is coming from a close friend).

Financial Management. He always struggles with his low income to meet his responsibility as a father in the family. He cannot make enough money, he has no stable job, and it affects the overall expenses of his family members. *“Ta sadit lang ang income ko sa aro-aldaw natatakot ako na dae ko matao gabos ang pangaiipo ninda.”* (My daily income is just enough that I'm afraid I won't be able to meet all their needs). He could always visualize and feel the burden as a solo provider in paying all sorts of utility bills, buying the family's daily needs, paying the children's school fees, and other expenses when they got sick. *“Ang sakuyang sahod dae sapat na makayanan gabos na responsibilidad kung pangpinansyal.”* (My salary is not enough to cover all financial responsibilities).

Spiritual Management. Parenthood comes with ups and downs. He is more likely pointing towards stress exposure, grief, and feeling isolated with bombarded duties and responsibilities as a solo father. The time and energy were once available for developing and maintaining the demands of problems encountered.

As for the family as a whole, he cannot adjust to the changes in the family structure and express the belief that he could not do such a thing in her life. He said *“Iyo ini ang tinao sakuya, mayo naman ako magiginibo pa, yaon na, gibohon ko na sana kung anu pa ang makakaya ko.”* (This is what was given to me, I can't do anything else, I'll just do what I can).

Participant 5. Participant 5 is 43 years old, female, and legally separated. She is currently working as a midwife and earns Php 25,000.00 a month. Her former husband left and worked as Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW). She did not hear of him until she knew of her husband's illicit affair. Even though she was working, it was difficult for her to handle everything alone, but she managed to provide for their needs and send her children to school. When her husband finally decided to show up, it was all because he wanted to discuss and process their legal separation. After the legal separation their children left in her custody.

Family and Moral Management. She said *“dae madali maging solong magurang, na separate sa sakuyang agom lalo na mga hubin pa mga aki ko.”* (It is not easy to be a solo parent, especially in the early age of my children being legally separated from my spouse). However, she ensures the healthy development of the children by eating proper nutrition as she expresses her love by hugging, comforting, and talking every day. Furthermore, she many times experiences judgement from friend and neighbors which tremendously impacts her self-esteem and confidence to manage the family. She said *“Sige sinda tararam sakuya, ako na sana nasusupog, mayo man ngani sindang ambag sa pagkabuhay ko naapektuhan ako kang paulit-ulit na pagtaram ninda.”* (They always insult me to the point I get ashamed. I later realized, they didn't even contribute to my life.)

Financial Management. A large proportion of her income, estimated at 80%, goes toward school expenses, allowances, and shelter expenses such as her utility bills [electricity and water], clothing, and food. Financial

management is highly felt by the family. A single mother automatically takes a dual role, one of which is about working to make a living for the children she is responsible for because the role that was previously the role of the father then became the role of a single mother. In the case of legal separation, the situation will not change. Her husband is no longer providing a sufficient amount of support for the needs of her children. She said, "*Kaipuhan ko magtrabaho para may pandagdag ako sa sakuyang sweldo.*" (I had to work to supplement my income). So, she has to work to earn a living to support the children she bears.

Spiritual Management. She certainly never hopes to become a single parent; her dream is to have a complete family, but her fate has different desires. The challenges were one of the first of many of her experiences "*bilang solong magurang ako nagtios, nagsakit, nagpapakatatag, na ining mga inaagihan ko sa buhay malagpasan ko.*" (As a single parent, I endured and suffered. These are the things I will go through in life that I will surpass). After her legal separation, it took time to put her life aligned back together to face such circumstances through the present crisis. She is guilty of accepting her fault in sustaining most of the family functions daily.

Participant 6. Participant 6 is 33 years old, female and a barangay health volunteer earning Php 2,000.00 monthly. According to her, she was a plain housewife before her husband filed for an annulment. It is hard for her to accept that her husband no longer cares for their relationship. Presently, she takes all the responsibilities, claiming it to be tiring. As a solo parent, she finances all the survival needs to be met.

Family and Moral Management. Some of the typical problems she experienced are related to finances, loneliness, time management, budgeting, disciplining, and decision-making. As a solo parent, she does not have a partner to share in dealing with problems and in terms of educating and raising their children, which impacts/affects the child's psychological development. She said "*bakong madaling maging magurang, dakol na problema ang sakuyang aagihan sa pagmanehar kang mga aki pati na pagmanehar kang pampamilyang pangangaipuhan.*" (It's not easy to be a parent, I go through a lot of problems in managing my children as well as managing the family finances). As a solo parent, it is not easy because she faces many problems such as social, emotional, and economic problems. She admitted that she lacks parental involvement in her children's social development, and that her children feel neglected and feeling less affectionate. She shared that she will likely face mental and physical health problems. "*Sa sobrang pagtao ko kang mga kaipuhan kang sakuyang pamilya nakakaigwa na ko ning problema kung ano ang iinuton ko sa kadakol dakol na importanteng pangaipuhan kang sakuyang pamilya, makulugon sa payo kung pagpara-isipon, mapagal man pati kalusugan kang mga aki apektado.*" (Because I am so busy with the needs of my family, I am having this problem of what to prioritize among the many important needs of my family, it hurts in my head to think about it, it is tiring and the health of my children is also affected).

Financial Management : Budgeting is increasingly an everyday basis that is essential to her family to survive in the present economy where goods increase in price to suffice the basic needs, which is crucial to family financial management. She is experiencing a financial crisis between the family budget and saving to meet their financial problem. Borrowing money from her family and friends enables her to purchase goods and pay utility bills that she cannot obtain from her current income. "*Igwang pagkakataon kaya na nakakabakal ako kang mga dae kaipuhan kaya na dae man sana kong naiipon.*" (Because there are times when I buy things that I don't need so I don't even save).

Her financial difficulty exposes the children to inappropriate ways of life, resulting in several health problems. The shortcomings in the health of her children, confronts single mothers. She shared "*Nagkakahelang minsan sinda dahil ngani kulang ako sa kwarta pambakal ning masusustansyang pagkakan.*" (Sometimes they get sick because I don't have enough money to buy healthy food). Financial situation was definitely her issue in everything "*dae pwedeng mayo akong kitaon sa sarong aldaw.*" (It is not acceptable to earn nothing within a day).

Spiritual Management. As she had to go through the annulment process, it was very painful, disturbing, and sad that her marriage process was totally devoid. She cannot have a complete family, and her children are also greatly affected. The hate, ill emotions, and prolonged experiences prolong affect her spiritual management. As a solo parent, she also experienced that she lacked concentration and attention to her problems during the separation and parenting. She had anger issues with her husband, experienced a sleep disorder, and behavioral and spiritual problems as her faith grew weak after encountering these circumstances. She shared "*Na-sstress ako sa gabos na nangyari sakuya na pano-pano ning kaanggutan ang sakuyang namamatian sa aro-aldaw, gusto ko na sana*

matapos ining buhay ko sa grabeng depression na inagihan ko sa buhay." (I'm so stressed from everything that happened to me that I feel so much anger every day, I wanted to end my life due to severe depression).

Participant 7. Participant 7 is 42 years old, female and presently working as a store clerk earning Php 250.00 to Php 300.00 per day and approximately Php 6,000.00 monthly. Her husband abandoned her at the age of 37. She shared that her husband has no regular work or income. She only has experienced verbal and physical abuse. It has always resulted in an exchange of arguments. Once, her husband left without any communication or financial assistance, abandoning her to face financial difficulties and responsibilities to fund family needs. She has to work to support, meet basic requirements, and promote children's growth and development.

Family and Moral Management. She felt that parenting requires sacrifice and that she almost gave up her interest/hobby and agonized over her limited resources, time, energy, and emotional support. As a parent, she has overextended her duties so that she can face the burden of too many demands that she simply cannot make time for many activities. She said "*Dae ko mataw-anan atensyon ang mga aki lalo na paggibo ning mga assignment ninda ta mauli ako pagal-pagal na, bilang magurang tigmamanehar ko gabos ning ako lang, sa pagluto, sa mga kakanon, pati sa paglilining harong.*" (I can't help but pay attention to my children, especially when they do their assignments. I have to work hard, as a parent. I manage everything by myself, cooking, meals, and cleaning the house). She holds lots of problems with her roles as a father who works for the family living and as a mother who works to nurture the children. Parenthood is a challenge as she suffered from social discrimination in the community fearing that she would be labelled failure as a parent. She added "*Dae ako komportable na maenjoy ining gabos sa buhay ko mga paghuhusga sakuya na dae ko kaya padakulaon mga aki ko, nasasakitan na ako sa pang-aroaldaw sabayan pa kang mga ugali kang mga aki na challenge na marahay ang pagiging magurang ko.*" (I'm not comfortable to enjoy all of this in my life with the judgments that I can't raise my children, I'm having a hard time with the day-to-day life, even with my children's habits, it's a challenge to be a worthy parent).

Financial Management. Her struggles come from assessing her own education, spending over half of her income on utility expenses [water and electricity bills], on child care, and less money for unexpected expenses. In addition, she is not happy about her financial situation, considering its inadequacy "*Nastress ako kung sain ko kukuruanun ang pang-aroaldaw mi, kulang pang marai ang sweldo ko sa mga gastosan.*" (I'm stressed about where I'm going to get money for our daily expenses, my salary is not enough for our daily expenses). She feels worried, and she tries to borrow money from her friends and family to cover the insufficient cost of the family day-to-day needs. She expresses her feelings about how judgments affected her as a single mother, making her life harder. "*Stress na ngani ako sa mga responsibilidad ko minadagdag pa ang mga sabi-sabi sakuya, naapektuhan na akong marai kaini.*" (I'm already stressed with my responsibilities and the negative things they say to me add more to my stress).

Spiritual Management. She has experienced a period of crisis and hardship. She said solo parenting carries several burdens and struggles since, she is unmarried by choice. It puts her in a place where she wanted to do something but could not satisfy herself that she has the capability to do it. "*nagdududa na ako na makakaya ko pa ba ini nasasakitan na ako sa mga pangyayari sa buhay ko ang pagtubod ko sa sadiri ko nagbaba.*" (I doubt that I can do this anymore, I am hurt by the events in my life, my faith in myself low). She said, she lacks trust in her abilities, which are attributed to circumstances she encountered in life that affected her understanding.

Participant 8. Participant 8 is 37 years old, female, and abandoned by her boyfriend after she gave birth their youngest child. She has two children left in her custody. She has remained unwed, and she has not committed to another relationship. She focused on taking care of the children. The children do not have support, and she does not know the whereabouts of her children's father.

Family and Moral Management. She explained that being a solo parent was painful. She experienced stress and strains. Parenting every single day is a learning experience. As an unmarried mother, she does not get out of the challenge she faces. However, she is learning new skills and ways of caring her children. Having a child is the happiest moment but she realized that it is exhausting and irritating. "*Dakulon trabaho na permi ko namamati kapagalan tapos irritable. Lalo na pagtig-gibo ko mga gibohon sa harong tapos trabaho ning sarabay.*" (I do tons of work and chores and working simultaneously). She also feels like she is doing her work too much and has no time to rest. She is having difficulty balancing work and parenting, and family life. As she experienced emotional distress, solo parenting was not an easy job as she had been through many struggles. Then

she claimed that her children are her priority. She always sees that she prepares food for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, as she loves to spend time with them.

Financial Management. The functions of her family are of great importance to the family. However, financial distress prevents her family from functioning successfully. She claimed she was required to work extra in carrying out her responsibilities. She usually feels depressed compared to having two parents at home. As a solo parent, she further raises economic challenges together with the level of stress. As a parent she deliberately neglected her children's health since her income was very limited to sustain their health. She shared "*Kulang na kulang ang sakuyang budget ang pinaka-importante may kinakakan kami sa aroaldaw dawa kadikit ang income ko.*" (My budget is not enough, the most important thing is that we have something to eat every day, though my income is small). It is tougher. She is trying to manage her family's budget since; she has no stable income.

Spiritual Management. She becomes more impatient and weak in understanding the problems in her family. The loneliness that she felt is the major stress in her life. "*Ako nalang ang magurang kaya dapat makaya ko ini para sa mga aki ko, pero dae maabot man guiraray sapunto na hahaputon ko si Lord nata sakuya ini nangyayari naging marahay man akong aki*" (I'm the only parent so I should be able to handle this for my children, but though it is difficult it will never reach the point that I will question the Lord about why all these things are happening). She admittedly that this is her faith, and doubt as she focuses on the negatives of herself due her difficult circumstances as a solo parent.

Participant 9. Participant 9 is 45 years old, male, and presently provides parental custody to his nephews. He works in the barangay with a monthly income of Php 2,000.00 to Php 3,000.00. At 35 years old, he has accepted the roles of a mother and a father to take charge and meet the family's basic needs. The parents of his nephews cannot support and, for that reason, he has acknowledged full parental support. The financial aspect is his major problem like earning money to provide necessities for the family. Raising children is financially and emotionally exhausting. He is in charge of paying the expenses at home, and he cannot look for employment since he is the one to look after the children's day-to-day activities.

Family and Moral Management. His role in the family is fathering, which he played in directing her nephew to become more mature and independent physically and mentally. As a solo parent, he still has difficulty parenting because he got plenty of things to do at home, such as cooking for breakfast, cleaning the backyard, washing the clothes, and washing the dishes. The stress of parenting increases the strain as time goes by, which decreases his satisfaction in life. He said, "*Dae ako nag-uuntok na magtao sa pamilya ko ning kwarta na permi ko namamati na giniibo ko gabos na trabaho sa harong lalo sa pag-ataman sa mga aki, minsan namamati ko kapagalan tapos mayo akong kusog.*" (I do not stop contributing to the family in terms of money; that sometimes I feel so tired). But he still provides because, as a parent, his goal is to help the children grow and develop their values and beliefs as he wanted them to grow to be independent adults who will make the right decisions or choices in life.

Financial Management. He earned his living with a little income every day. He expressed that his lack of education affected him to make a living through an on-call job to provide for the needs of his nephew. His income is among low-skilled individuals. He expresses a range of experiences of his daily household chores as he faces financial constraints and does not have the means to do what he wants with his children. She shared "*Dae man ako swerte dikit man sana ang kita ko, ta dae ko man kaya bakalon mga gusto kang pamangkin ko.*" (I am not lucky; my minimal earnings cannot afford to provide everything for my nephews).

Spiritual Management. These past years, he stood as a parent to his nephew, even though he wanted to have his own family, he preferred to take full responsibility for taking care of them. He is making a sense to live a meaningful life as he is feels frustrated and tired in dealing with his daily challenges. He said "*Si mga stress man kang pagbantay kang mga pamangkin pati na responsibilidad bilang magurang dae ko makayanan lalo na sa pagresolba kang mga inaagihan kong problem.*" (I can't handle the stress of watching over my nieces and nephews as well as the responsibilities of being a parent, especially solving the problems I'm dealing with).

Participant 10. Participant 10 is 40 years old, male, and assumes all the responsibilities as the head of the family since the parent of his nephew left five years ago. Some people in the neighborhood say that his sister already has another family attending to her and has neglected her responsibilities as a mother. He had no choice

but to take over the responsibilities of her sister. He experienced difficulty adjusting to the situation at first. But afterward, he slowly accepted the reality that he is a solo parent even though he is not married

Family and Moral Management. He faces the added challenge of being the primary parent of his nephew, which leads him to the additional stress of needing to fulfill multiple roles alone. A greater part of his nephew manifested enormous academic problems, learning difficulties, emotional distress, and poor relationship with peers. Being a parent, she feels overburdened, unable to find time for his personal needs, and is often tired and lonely. He is strongly aware of his being single. With that, it becomes more of a challenge for him as a parent with lower levels of education to assist his nephew with assignments. As a solo parent is twice the work and twice the stress. She said that: "*Nakakamati ako ning depression sa emosyonal, mental pati pisikal na hali sa doro-dobleng stress sa aroaldaw na pagiging marulang.*" (I experienced burnout from emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion brought on by the repeated stress of day-to-day parenting). He feels sad and angry being discriminated against in the community. "*Makamundo man may mga tawo na pinag-uurulayan ako, hinahanap mga magurang kang mga aki na eu dapat ang mag-ataman.*" (It's sad that there are people who will talk about me, looking for parents of the children that should take care of them).

Financial Management. He was unable to raise his nephew according to the standards she would have wished to, for he had a lack of adequate finances, he certainly faced financial difficulties, at the same time, suffered from the loneliness of not being married and focused more on child-rearing. He has mostly shouldered the family's entire financial responsibilities as he is his nephew's main parent. This is in relation to the rising cost of living due to inflation. He mobilized limited resources and a busy work schedule toward his fathering, prioritizing being involved with his nephew. He express "*Ang gastusan ang problema ko lalo na sa importanteng pangangaipuhan dakula ining isyu sakuya lalo na self-employed ako tigpapasabot ko sana ang sakuyang kapasidad para maging sarong breadwinner na nagtatao kang mga pangangaipuhan kan pamilya.*" (my finances is problematic in terms of basic needs and it is a big issue for me. I am self-employed and I emphasized my capacity to be the sole family breadwinner in providing the family basic needs).

Spiritual Management. He becomes a solo parent without choice. "*Naging solo parent ako dae man ako nagpili nangyari sana ta mayo naman iba mabantay sa mga pamangkin ko. ta mga tugang ko binayaan nasakuya ang responsibilidad niya, kaya masakiton man sa part ko, sa kadakol dakol tawo sa mundo ako pa talaga.*" (I became a single parent even though I did not choose to be one. It would have happened, but there is no one else to take care of my nieces and nephews, and my siblings are left with their responsibility, so it is painful on my part, because there are so many people in the world it I wonder why it has to be me to take all the responsibility). When the time he becomes solo without choice, he needs time to adjust. This permits those people to say negative opinions towards him as a male provider.

IV. DISCUSSION

In managing their role as a solo parent, participants faced involvements related to the Family and Moral Management experience. The most common problem of solo parents was organizing the home. Most of the solo parents felt worried about caring and affection of her children. Some children are stubborn because of lack of affection from both mother and father. In this case, solo parents become distressful because always dreamed to have successful children but due to the absence of permanent job and low income of the solo parents, they could not provide that needs of children particularly in food, shelter, clothing and most all education. Quality child rearing and caring mean consistent response to children's signals, being available for communication, stress alleviation, and creating a base for attachment bond with the child. Single parents experience difficulties in paying attention during sickness, disciplining them, helping with school assignments, choosing the subject for their higher studies, and taking them out for recreation like movies, picnics, and trips, Agnafors et al. (2019)^[6] and Ehora and Calimutan (2020)^[7] studies revealed that solo parent difficulty are brought about by stress and fatigue and child discipline. It is reflected in the present study that, sole parents, there is a direct effect on the behavioral attitude of their children. In the absence of a partner, the consequent multiple role responsibilities of the solo parent significantly impact how they manage everything by themselves. Single mothers in low-income households find it almost impossible to closely monitor their children because they are the only income earners and must work to sustain their children's lives. Furthermore, they struggle simultaneously with the dual responsibilities of earning a livelihood and child-rearing (Yue et al 2018)^[8]. The catastrophe of being a solo parent adds more pain to the situation. Most participants shared their experiences, except Participant 1, shared that she does not need a partner and is already content with the relationship and companionship with her child. Participant 5, shared she can manage her family life alone. Dawadi (2019)^[9] stated there is no one to share the

difficulties and their joys as well. If the parent is single because of a spouse's death or any tragedy, it can be even harder for the parent to bear all sorts of responsibilities. Single mothers may feel loneliness, trauma, and depression and may find it difficult to handle the responsibility of childcare and establish a routine for their children. Common to all the solo parent participant's experiences. Being a parent does not start and end with earning for the children because family life comes with many trials, mainly financial problems present in every family. One of the problems of the solo parent in providing for the needs of the family is the status of educational background attainment, occupation, and income which plays a vital role in providing the needs of the children that also affect their day-to-day living. Harkonen (2018) ^[10], it was stated that the educational disparities in the prevalence of single parenthood mean that single parents have on average, lower levels of education, and single parenthood often leads to very high poverty risks. Thus, poverty risks and other adverse outcomes can be particularly prominent among single parents with low education. Solo Parents face many barriers to earning a higher income and employment, due to the obstacle of poor education. Lopez and San Juan (2019) ^[11] stated that 62% of people under low-income or unemployed conditions face financial hardship, while the rest were engaged in rather stable job opportunities. Life for others is far beyond reality. Being a child of a single parent can pose many challenges in life. Growing up and being raised by a single mother, children faced many difficult days. Single parents trying to provide basic necessities of shelter, food, and clothing are their first priorities (Cotman, 2022) ^[12]. In relation to the study, all of the participants are solo parents and are all in-charge of all family needs to support their children financially. They are prioritizing mainly food expenses, school expenses and utility expenses. Solo parents are trying their best to provide for their family's needs, but still their income is very limited. They allocate a greater share of their budget for their food since they cannot attain an adequate standard of living. All of the single-parent participants described feeling judged by others. (Bain, 2019) ^[13] revealed that rumors about the family, especially raising the children, status of the participants, were the common gossip of other people. With above experiences and challenges of solo parent's support system is necessary either form the relatives and friends but most all form the Philippines government. Nunes et al. (2021) ^[14] said single mothers have had to rely on informal support systems found throughout their community. Single mothers often experience food instability and difficulty paying bills, thus turning to friends or other sources of support within their community. Solo parents with family and social support can also handle stress easier because they have people to turn to in difficult situations. Furthermore, for solo parents, social support helps increase their quality of life, and when they have someone there to cheer them through difficult times, the hardships seem less impactful.

V. CONCLUSION

The responses of the participants' families play the most important social institution whose primary role is crucially related to their experiences in managing family life in the aspect of Family and Moral Management. Participants experience Problems in parenting/Upbringing of children because of the responsibilities, expectations, and disappointments. Also, the tiredness that they have is struggling that happens over days, weeks, and hours of working at home. The sole responsibility of all the solo parents' respondents is that the disturbance in everyday routine becomes problematic being stressed in adjusting to the challenges in the family life and the demand of parenting to perform all the tasks solely. It also shows that the most of them suffer from financial difficulties, which cause them to pay utility bills, daily food consumption, and make allowances for the children. Most of the solo parents encountered problems disciplining their children. All of the participants that affected their relationship with God expressed their frustrations about having challenging life experiences in Spiritual Management. Being a solo parent was also affected by the people around them, which hindered them from functioning as a parent. In response to their problem Family Therapy Sessions to strengthen the family aspect and relationship with each other, Livelihood program to improve their income; Spiritual session to strengthen their faith and Individual Assessment Sessions- to establish rapport in open and positive communication between the City Social Worker and participant confidentiality are recommended.

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