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# A Study on the Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers

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*Philippine Normal University*

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**A STUDY ON THE SUBCULTURE OF WORKING STUDENTS  
IN CALL CENTERS**

A Thesis Presented to the  
College of Graduate Studies and  
Teacher Education Research  
Philippine Normal University  
The National Center for Teacher Education

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts in Education  
with Specialization in Social Science Teaching

by  
EDUARDO B. NODA, JR.

December 2016



Philippine Normal University  
National Center for Teacher Education

### APPROVAL SHEET

This thesis entitled "**A STUDY ON THE SUBCULTURE OF WORKING STUDENTS IN CALL CENTERS**" prepared and submitted by **EDUARDO B. NODA, JR.** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education with specialization in Social Science Teaching, is hereby recommended for approval and acceptance.

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**EBNJR**

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is wholeheartedly dedicated to the

Almighty God.

It is also dedicated to my Nanay Auring, Tatay Arnel,

my brothers Arjay, Mac and Job.

To my PLM friends; and

To all the hardworking and committed working students in the call centers.

EBNJR

December 2016

## ***ABSTRACT***

**Researcher:** EDUARDO B. NODA, JR.  
**Title:** A STUDY ON THE SUBCULTURE OF WORKING STUDENTS IN  
CALL CENTERS  
**Key Concepts:** Subculture, Call Centers, Working Students  
**Degree:** Master of Arts in Education  
**Specialization:** Social Science Teaching  
**Advisers:** Prof. Arthur S. Abulencia  
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Employing the descriptive qualitative research method, this study drew on the Functional Theory of Talcott Parsons which espouses that subcultures develop out of their adaptation from the dominant culture. It aimed to describe and analyze the subculture of working students in call centers in Metro Manila and its influence on their family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior. Also, it analyzed the subculture's influence on the academic performance of the working students.

The study was participated in by purposively selected 15 working students from different call centers in Quezon City, Taguig, Mandaluyong, and Makati. Results showed that the norms and values in the call center as reflected in the social environment influenced the values and belief of the working students. The subculture in the call center produced positive and negative effects on the participants. Working in a

call center made them more skilled in terms of communication, particularly when it comes to customer service, confident when it comes to interaction and conscious when it comes to time management. However, the night shift and erratic work schedule in the call center has its pitfalls especially for the working students. It led to health problems, prevalent of which are colds, eye strain, headache, stress, and back pains. The night shift also led to less contact time of the working students with their family and peers.

Moreover, it was revealed that the schooling of the participants was greatly affected because of their work. The academic performance of the participants suffered because of the need to balance work and studies which led to poor academic performance. Because of the night shift, the participants had difficulty staying focused on their studies. Absence and tardiness, together with the frequent failure to submit requirements, became common problems among them.

Despite health complaints, lack of time for family and peers, and poor academic performance, majority of the participants agreed that they became financially stable working in the call center. With a competitive income and benefits, most of them were able to provide for their needs and even for their valued ones. They were also able to sustain their leisure and other recreational activities.

Working in call centers brought significant changes to the lives of the working students. Family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior showed invariable effects on the academic performance of the working students. Thus, there is a need for call center companies and schools to provide the necessary remediation and intervention to address this concern so as to improve the working students' productivity in work and performance in school.

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## **CHAPTER I**

### **THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND**

#### **Introduction**

The Call Center Industry, referred to as the “sunshine industry” due to its stable growth over the past years, has provided many people with the opportunity to earn a living. Call centers are part of the booming business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. BPO is a form of outsourcing that involves the contracting of the operations and responsibilities of specific business functions to a third party service provider. It helps increase a company’s flexibility by providing service to its consumers regardless of time and situation, lowers the overall cost of service of business, and improves the quality of service to customers. The biggest chunk of outsourcing comes from the call centers.

According to Pankaj (2005), call centers are a place where customer calls are handled by a customer service organization. Call centers have the ability to handle a considerable volume of calls at the same time. These communications-based service centers are used by large companies to handle anything from customer complaints and inquiries to technical support via e-mail, voice calls, video conferencing, and computer telephony, among others (de la Cuesta, 2004, p.11). Services provided by call centers are wide, ranging from telemarketing, advisory services, credit collections, handling requests, complaints, sales, billing, transcriptions, technical help desks, and order taking. These centers are usually housed within large, modern office buildings filled with agents wearing headsets and sitting in front of computer screens.

In the Philippines, the call center industry started in 1995 during the administration of President Fidel V. Ramos but reached its peak during the administration of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The improving technology and the deregulation of the telecommunications industry in the country during the mid-1990s paved the way for the launching of the call center industry. It began as plain providers of email responses and managing services. These have industrial capabilities for almost all types of customer relations, ranging from travel services, technical support, education, customer care, financial services, and on-line business to customer support.

Under the administration of President Benigno S. Aquino III, call center companies generated billions of pesos in the country. In his 2012 State of the Nation Address, Pres. Aquino boasted of 638,000 people employed by BPOs, particularly the call centers, which contributed some US\$11 billion to the economy. An estimated 3.2 million taxi drivers, baristas, corner stores, canteens, and many others benefited from the indirect jobs that the call center industry created. In fact, the BPO industry was projected to generate 1.3 million jobs and US\$25 billion in revenue or 8% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) by 2016 (IBPAP, 2015). The BPO revenues increased by 19%, from US\$15.5 billion in 2013 to US\$18.4 billion in 2014, representing 6% of the Philippine economy. Indeed, call centers are creating wealth by being an engine of growth and resiliency amidst the global financial crisis.

According to the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), the Philippines has more than 1,000 call centers in over 20 key city locations as of 2014, the largest of which are located in Makati City with 374, Ortigas Center in Mandaluyong City with 192, and Quezon City with 109. Big companies expanded their centers not only in Manila

but also in the provinces. Thus, the revenues will not only take place within the National Capital Region (NCR) but will also circulate to the provincial areas after passing the standards set by the PEZA. Large call centers are also found operating in Pampanga, Laguna, and Baguio in Luzon; Bacolod, Cebu, Dumaguete, and Ilo-Ilo in Visayas; and Cagayan de Oro and Davao in Mindanao (Bacasong, 2008, p.3).

Since its peak in 2003, call centers have become popular among graduate and undergraduate students because of the relatively competitive salary of call center agents. According to the Annual Salary Report of job search site - job street.com.ph, the BPO industry, particularly the call center work, is included among the highest-paying-industries in the Philippines, with an average basic monthly salary of PHP 21,590.00. Agents also receive allowances, performance appraisal bonus, and other benefits such as SSS, health insurance, PAGIBIG, night differential pay, and commissions on sales, among others. More so, agents get the chance to climb the corporate ladder in a short period of time depending on their performance (Danlog, 2008). In a study by Lorenzana and Molina (as cited by Ermitanio, 2012), call center work is the best option for college students because of the following: a relatively high salary which enables them to contribute to their families' financial needs; a job relatively easy to learn and adapt to; and a venue for training and experience.

One feature that makes call center work unique from most other service occupations in the Philippines is its work hours which require call center agents to work in graveyard shift to coincide with the customers' working hours (Hechanova, 2010, p. 40). The graveyard shift, however, poses several health risks because the agents are working against the normal body clock. According to Ho (2007, p.10), it will result in the

disturbance of the Circadian Rhythm - a biological clock that locks every creature on the planet into a rhythm set by the rising and setting of the sun. The agents' lack of sleep can be associated with the weakening of the body's immune system. Consequently, most of their complaints involve feeling of physical exhaustion because of lack of exercise and sleep. Other concerns include obesity, gastro-intestinal disorders, and susceptibility to colds and flu because of lack of exposure to sunshine. Agents usually manifest signs of burn-out, boredom, and isolation from their social networks. Further, night work appears to be associated with security risks (Hechanova, 2010, p.39).

Another hazard of working in call center is stress. Calling people with the same script, resolving their issues regarding a product, and working at a 12-hour gap can be draining mentally, socially, and physically (McGuire, 2007). Dealing with different customers of different temperament can be very stressful and challenging.

Aside from stress and health risk, a research conducted by the UP Population Institute and the Department of Health showed that sex-related diseases such as STD and HIV are common among call center agents. Danlog (2008) also argued that the work atmosphere in the call center is dehumanizing. Call center agents are often subjected to racial discrimination, harassment, and verbal abuse and yet obliged to remain unruffled and calm (Danlog, 2008).

The unique working environment and condition of the call centers provide a distinction among other occupational subgroups. This condition has become the subject of research. Some of these studies focused on the health condition of call center agents. Ho (2007) discussed the health complaints of the inbound call center agents in Quezon City while dela Cuesta (2008) focused on the effects on health and productivity

of the outbound call center agents. Hechanova (2008) examined the health and security risks among call center agents while Dizon (2010) explored the well-being of single young adult call center agents.

On other aspects, Marcos (2008) studied the eating habits of call center agents while Baccud (2005), Asuncion (2007), and Corpuz (2010) focused on the determinants of high turnover rate among call center agents. According to the Contact Center Association of the Philippines (CCAP), many call center agents do not keep their jobs for long. The turnover rate is between 60 to 80 percent - the highest in the world - due to health concerns (Ermitanio, 2012).

The growth and expansion of the call center industry brought about the demand for more agents in order to maintain its operation. Because of the relatively competitive salary, graduates and young people who are still pursuing higher education are attracted to enter the industry. With more young people, especially students, working in call centers, it becomes imperative to investigate the influence of call center culture on their life and studies. In the literature, most of the studies were focused on health complaints, well-being, and determinants of high turnover of call center agents. Thus, there is a dearth of research on the influence of subculture on the life and academic performance of working students in call centers; hence, this study. It described and analyzed the subculture of working students in call centers in Metro Manila, specifically in Makati, Mandaluyong, Taguig, and Quezon City. It looked into the students' norms, values, and social environment in call centers and their influence on the students' family relations, recreational activities, health, and consumption behavior. Implications of these on their academic performance were likewise examined.

Given the limited studies on subcultures, there is a need to discuss and surface the subculture of people working in call centers. This study is important in the understanding of this occupational subgroup. The effort to understand the culture of a group is to understand social life; understanding a culture is basic to the understanding of human social life. It is also essential to analyze how the subculture in a work place can influence the life of an individual: in this case, how it influences the academic performance of the working students. Given the limited studies on call center subculture and working students, this study would contribute to the wealth of knowledge about subcultures and call centers. Also, it is hoped that the results of this study will be used as a basis in formulating programs for the welfare of working students in call centers in relation to their educational program.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The formation of subcultures is inevitable as society becomes more complex. Subcultures are usually formed by those who get together and form a small group on the basis of their social class, occupation, age, religion, regional origin, nationality, or ethnicity. They have norms, values, and special languages which make them distinct from other members of society. Subcultures may be considered as a “class of cultural specialties having special cultural traits too numerous and yet unique to each group” (Bertrand, 1973 p. 113).

Members of a subculture have a sense of identity; they share something that others in the larger society do not. They provide effective norms for the small group

when the norms of the larger society seem meaningless (Farley, 1992, p. 102). A subculture is identified by language, ethnicity, race, religion, and differences in food, holidays, clothing, and other lifestyle characteristics. While a subculture may have distinctive norms and values, it still contains the dominant values and norms of the dominant society. This is what is called a “small culture within a culture” (Bertrand, 1973, p. 113).

According to Functional Theory, every social group must have a culture of its own - its own goals, norms, values, and typical ways of doing things. Every family, clique, shop, community, ethnic group, or society has its own culture. Hence, every individual participates in a number of different cultures at the same time or in sequence in the course of the day (Tischler, 1990).

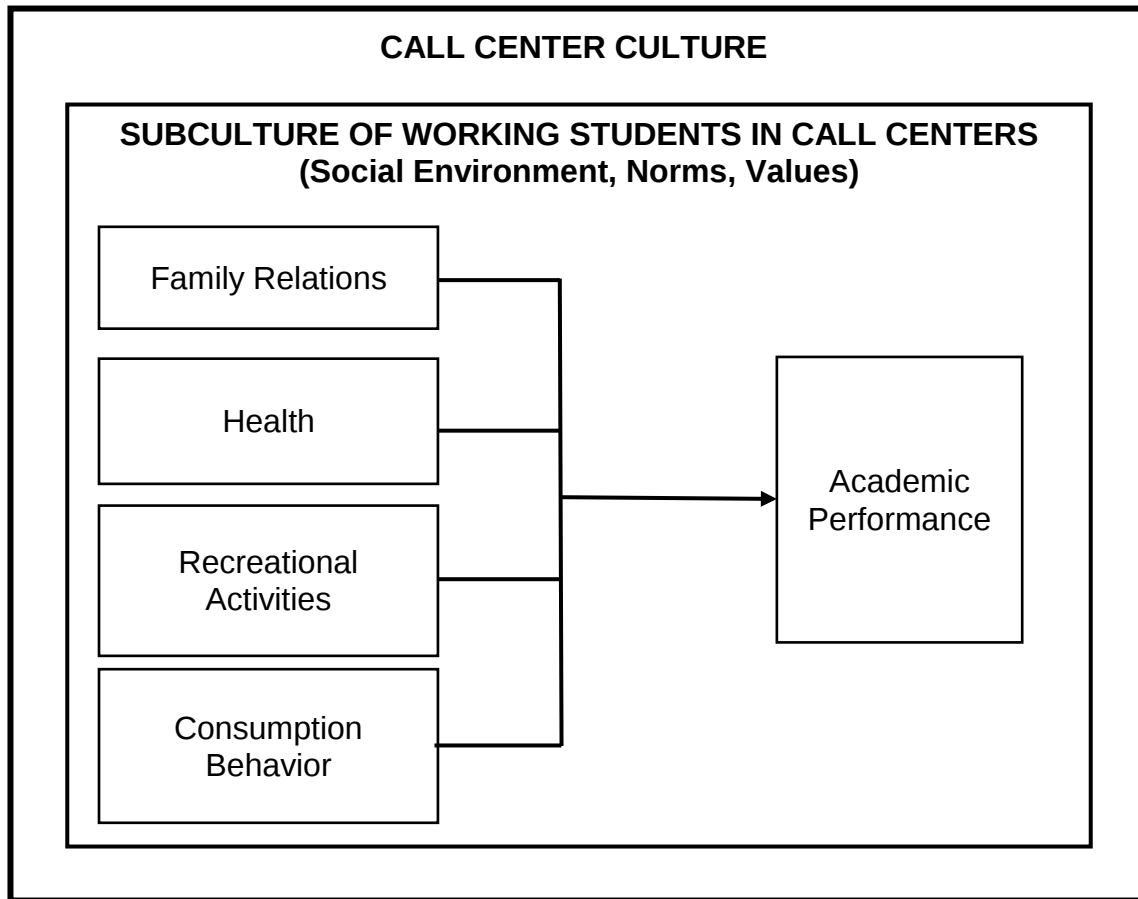
The best known proponent of the functionalist perspective was Talcott Parsons. His theory centered on the view that there were interrelated social systems consisting of the major areas of social life, such as family, religion, education, politics, and economics. These systems were then analyzed according to the functions they performed for the society as a whole and for one another (Tischler, 1990). Parsons was interested in the ways in which the norms and values of a system are transferred to the actors within the system. In a successful socialization process, these norms and values are internalized; that is, they become part of the actors’ “consciences”. As a result, in pursuing their own interests, the actors are in fact serving the interest of the system as a whole (Ritzer, 2004).

On a functionalist perspective, subcultures exist to allow specialized activity. One example is occupational subculture, where it carries the knowledge necessary to

perform specialized tasks, and is essential to the division of labor. Subcultures provide a source of identity in mass society, thus preventing feelings of isolation and anomie. Subcultures permit this by enabling people with a common interest, situation, or set of experiences to stand out from the crowd. They provide effective norms for the small groups when the norms of the larger society seem meaningless (Farley, 1992, p. 104).

As cited by Kammeyer (1990, p. 92), a subculture develops and influences social, cultural, economic, and view of the world of the members of the group. Hess (1992, p. 76) also supports this notion and argues that a subculture is an independent organism which influences and functions in social, cultural, and economic context of a person. The subculture in call centers influence the social life of the agents which includes their family life, peer groups, the church, and others. An individual's personality and lifestyle are partly molded according to the group where he/she belongs.

This research assumed that the subculture in a workplace has an influence on the life of an individual. In this study, it was assumed that the subculture in the call centers develops and influences the life of the working students which includes family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior, and affects their academic performance.



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study using a Parsonian view of the functionalist perspective. Culture, as defined by Parsons, is an organized set of normative values governing behavior which is common to the members of a designated society or group. The research assumed that a subculture exists on the framework of a dominant culture. In this case, the subculture of working students exists under the established culture in the call center. The call center culture is the culture shared by everyone whereas the subculture of working students in call centers is shared only by the working students. The working students still possess and observe the dominant

culture in the call center, but they were able to develop a subculture distinct from the call center culture based on their experiences managing their time as a student and as agent. They share the same sentiment and difficulties in meeting the demands of their work and studies.

The subculture of working students in the call center, as reflected in the working students' norms, values, and social environment, influences their family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior. The research also assumed that these, in turn, affect their academic performance.

The subculture developed by call center agents is influenced by the existing social environment of the company. Social environment encompasses the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people function and interact (Barnett, 2001). In this study, social environment covers the employment relations and demands in a call center workplace.

The call center culture has norms which every agent is obliged to observe and follow. Norms here are reflective of the policies being implemented for regular call center agents and working students in call centers. On a functionalist perspective, norms function to regulate the behavior of an individual. A group of people develop a set of norms and values as they develop a social environment made up of individuals with whom they come in contact (Robertson, 1981). Whether the purpose is to integrate the individual for economic or for social efficiency, the new entrant to a culture should learn the norms so that in the long run, the basis for his/her actions will be his/her culture.

People learn attitudes within the context of intimate personal groups. Within a given culture, an individual's perception of the world and approach to life are expected

to be in accordance with the cultural practices of the group. This means that each member has to undergo socialization or a learning process in order to understand and fully acquire the culture of the group (Robertson, 1981). As Parsons put it, “The combination of value-orientation patterns which is acquired (by the actor in socialization) must in a very important degree be a function of the fundamental role structure and dominant values of the social system.”

The pressure to conform to the group norms is strong in every aspect of social life particularly in the intense atmosphere of a small group. Norms are guidelines people are supposed to follow in their relation to one another. They are shared rules that specify what is right or wrong, and they also indicate what people should or should not do in a specific situation (San Juan, 2007, p. 43). To ensure that members of the subculture conform to the norms, the group evolves a system of reward and punishment. Those who observe the standards and practices of the group are supported by other members of the subculture as a sign of the group’s approval of their actions. Promotion is also seen as a form of reward while those who do not conform are sanctioned by the group through reprimands, memorandum, and even suspension from work (Azanza, 1994, p.41). Call center agents are said to have been successfully socialized into the call center subculture when they have internalized their roles, functions, and group norms. Socialization and social control are the main mechanisms that allow the social system to maintain its equilibrium.

Aside from acquiring the norms, agents also develop values. Macionis (2012, p. 61) defines values as culturally defined standards that people use to decide what is desirable, good, and beautiful, and that serve as broad guidelines for social living.

People who share a culture use values to make choices about how to live. Values also refer to the society's standards of desirability of rightness and of importance (Kammeyer, 1990 p. 83). In this study, students working in call centers experienced transition and adjustment of values based on the social environment and norms of the workplace.

Social environment, norms, and values constitute the subculture of the working students in call centers. The subculture developed in the work place influences the life of the working students in terms of family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior.

Based on the functionalist perspective, families exist to provide care and affection to their members. Every human being needs the nurture coming from his/her family, the one who helps him/her with the problems that arise in daily life and the one who backs him/her up when he/she comes into conflict with others. Although many kinds of social groups are capable of meeting one or more of these needs, the family is often the one group in a society that meets them all (Tischler, 1990, p. 346).

Family relations refer to the social relations among members of the family, how an individual lives with his/her siblings and parents/guardians. It consists of the activities they participate in together and the general way life is carried out at home with family members (Macionis, 2012, p. 470). In this study, family relations refer to how the agents relate with family members, their life in the household, and the quality time they spend with them.

Another component which was examined is health. Health is the general condition of a person in terms of mind, body, and spirit, usually meaning to be free from

illness, injury, or pain. According to the World Health Organization, health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (Macionis, 2012, p. 488). Health, from a functionalist standpoint, is the normal and natural state of affairs for people to be healthy and to contribute something to their society. The opposite situation, ill health, is a form of deviance. Therefore, sickness is dysfunctional for both the individuals who suffer an illness and for the larger society (Farley, 1992, p.470). Following the functionalist perspective, being healthy helps the working students perform their functions well whereas illness hinders them from doing so. This study assumed that the subculture in a work place as reflected in the social environment has an influence on the health and well being of its workers, and in the case of working students, on their academic performance. In this study, health refers to health condition and problems, eating habits, and food preference of the call center agents.

Recreational activities refer to the period of discretionary time spent beyond the demands of work. It is also known as free time, the time spent away from business, work, and domestic chores (Holman, 2002, p. 35). Recreation is rooted in the Latin word "*recreation*" which refers to restoration or recovery. The term implies the re-creation of energy or the restoration of ability to function (Kelly, 1982, p.27). On a functionalist standpoint, recreation refers to experiences and activities chosen and pursued by the individual in his/her free time; the basis being that of the experiences sought and activities pursued. In the real sense of the word, it means "re-creating" the individual so that he/she may be refreshed to enable him/her to resume daily obligations, whatever those may be (Veal, 1992, p. 44). In this study, recreational activities refer to the usual past time of the call center agents.

Consumption, based on its anthropological definition, refers to: first, it refers to a person's "intake" or other ways of using things; second, it refers to a person's "output" in terms of spending using resources (Miller, 2008, p. 81). From the functionalist standpoint, consumption is the end of the line of economic activities. Consumption helps boost production and the economy in return. Through consumption, the needs and wants of the people are being met and satisfied (Goodwin, 2008). The fourth component in this study, consumption behavior, refers to when, why, how, and where people do or do not buy a product (Encyclopedia of Business and Finance, 2008). It refers to the attitude of the agents when it comes to consuming and spending their hard-earned income. This study also looked into the way working students save and invest their hard-earned salary. The motivations of high salary bonuses and incentives create a push and pull effect to the economic life of college students working in a call center.

The influence of subculture on the educational life of the working students was identified in terms of their academic performance. Academic performance is the outcome of education. It is the extent to which a student, teacher, or institution has achieved its educational goals. Crow and Crow (1969) defined academic performance as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instruction in a given area of learning. It also denotes the knowledge attained and the skills developed in the school subject, usually designed by test scores as measured by grades. On a functionalist standpoint, academic performance serves to evaluate and assess the effectiveness of instruction and the effort being exerted by the students towards their study. Academic performance says something on the level of achievement of a student when it comes to his/her studies. In this study, it refers to how the working students in call centers deal with their

studies and how they cope with or accomplish the demands of their studies. Academic performance constitutes the academic standing of the working students. This study also examined working students' usual routine in school, problems, and concerns in their studies, relationship with their teachers and classmates, the benefits of call center work to their studies, and their view towards work and studies.

This study assumed that the subculture of working students in call centers as reflected in their norms, values, and social environment has an influence on their life particularly in their family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior, and in turn on their academic performance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to describe and analyze the subculture of working students in selected call centers in Metro Manila. Specifically, the study aimed to:

1. Identify the subculture in the call center as manifested in the social environment, norms, and values of the workplace using a functionalist perspective;
2. Describe how the subculture influences the life of students working in call centers in terms of:
  - 2.1 family relations;
  - 2.2 health;
  - 2.3 recreational activities; and
  - 2.4 consumption behavior; and

3. Analyze the influence of subculture on the academic performance of working students in call centers.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study described the existing subculture of students working in selected call centers. The outcomes of the study are beneficial to the following:

To the students, the study may be able to give insight and information on the subculture of students working in call center. Results of this study would also give them ideas on the influence of the subculture on their academic performance.

To the social sciences field, the findings of this research may be able to add to the body of literature on subcultures, specifically on call center subculture of working students.

To the researchers, they may be able to gather relevant information that might be useful for future studies specifically about subcultures, call centers, and academic performance.

To the call center companies and their employees, results of this study may be able to help them evaluate and assess the needs of their agents, more particularly of the working students, to establish a conducive and healthy working environment and to improve and encourage growth that can be advantageous to both parties.

To the administrators and curriculum planners, results of this study may be able to provide them information on developing curriculum and program attuned to the demands of the industry. A curriculum responsive to the needs of the society is helpful in attaining economic growth of the country. Administrators may also employ more

working student-friendly policies that will provide platform for these students to manage their studies and work at the same time.

### **Scope and Delimitation**

This study was confined to the subculture of call center agents focused on students working in selected call centers in Metro Manila specifically in Makati, Taguig, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City. About 15 call center agents participated in this study: four (4) from Makati, three (3) from Taguig, three (3) from Mandaluyong, and five (5) from Quezon City. The respondents should have at least two (2) months of work experience in the call center regardless of whether they are presently enrolled or have stopped schooling, and or presently working or have stopped working.

The subculture's influence focused on family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior, and its influence on the academic performance of the working students in call centers was described. Concerns and common problems in relation to work and studies as well as how the respondents managed those problems were discussed. Although the influence of the subculture on the life of working students is encompassing, this study focused only on its influence in four areas or constructs stated in the conceptual framework. The researcher believed that the four areas (family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior) are the most relevant in establishing the subculture's influence on and connection to academic performance.

## Definition of Terms

For clarity of understanding, the following terms used in this study are hereunder defined operationally:

**Academic Performance** refers to the knowledge attained and skills developed in the school subject, usually designed by test scores as measured by grades (Crow and Crow, 1969). In this study, it refers to how the working students in call centers deal with their studies and how they cope with or accomplish the demands of their studies. It also encompasses the working students' usual routine in school, problems, and concerns in their studies, relationship with their teachers and classmates, and their perceived benefits of call center work to their studies.

**Call Center Agents** are people working in the call center industry (Buenaventura et al, 2006). In this study, it refers to the students working in selected call centers in Metro Manila regardless of the types of call they handle.

**Consumption Behavior** refers to: first, a person's "intake" or other ways of using things; second, it refers to a person's "output" in terms of spending using resources (Miller, 2008, p. 81). In this study, it refers to the attitude of the students working in call centers when it comes to spending their hard-earned income. This also includes the way working students save and invest their hard-earned salary.

**Family Relations** refer to the social relations among members of the family, how an individual lives with his/her siblings and parents/guardians (Macionis, 2012, p. 470). In this study, it refers to the relationship of the students working in call centers with their family, their life at home, and the quality time they spend with family members.

**Health** is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (Macionis, 2012, p. 488). In this study, health refers to the influence of the working environment to the students working in call centers as indicated by their health conditions, problems, eating habits, and food preference.

**Norms** are guidelines people are supposed to follow in their relation to one another; shared rules that specify what is right or wrong, and the appropriate and inappropriate behavior. They indicate what people should or should not do in a specific situation (San Juan, 2007, p. 43-45). In this study, norms refer to the standards of behavior an agent must observe in his/her work. It also covers the policies implemented for all call center agents, whether a regular agent or a working student.

**Recreational Activities** refer to the period of discretionary time spent beyond the demands of work (Holman, 2002, p. 35). In this study, it refers to the usual past time of the call center agents, how the agents spent their free time or rest day in order to re-create to do their obligations and functions at work and at school well.

**Social Environment** covers the immediate physical surroundings, social relationships, and cultural milieus within which defined groups of people function and interact (Barnett, 2011). In this study, it refers to the employment relations of superiors to agents and the various demands in the working environment.

**Subculture** is a cultural pattern that differs from the dominant culture in some distinctive ways (Macionis, 1992, p. 40). In this study, subculture refers to the culture shared only by the students working in call centers.

**Values** refer to a culture's general orientation toward life - it is a notion of what is good and bad, what is desirable and undesirable (Tischler, 1990, p. 74). In this study, it refers to the transitions and adjustment of values brought about by work.

**Working Students** are people who work and study at the same time. Work would be part time or full time (Lining, 2007, p. 5). They work in any establishment to supplement family income. In this study, working students refer to the part-time call center agents in Makati, Taguig, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City who are enrolled in college in the present semester.

## **CHAPTER II REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter presents studies that are significantly related to the present research. Topics included are on working students and the dynamics and subculture of call center industry in the Philippines. In this review of related literature, the researcher provided several themes that depict and support the argument and focus of the research. The themes covered include: Call Center Culture; Social Environment, Norms, and Values of Call Center Agents; Family Life, Recreational Activities, Health, and Economic Opportunities of Call Center Agents; Academic Performance of Working Students; and Academic Performance of Working Students in Call Centers.

### **Call Center Culture**

The cultural landscape in the call center industry is different compared to other working environment. For one, a standard language is used. English is the only language accepted in the call center. Agents are trained to neutralize their accent and make it close to a native American accent. Agents' speech and spontaneous responses are tightly regulated. For instance, a general deference to overall production rules and protocol is expressed by agents as they subscribe to enforced patterns of speech on the floor, which agents contend with a similar "removal of behavior opportunities" as when they are required to refrain from talking in Filipino to adhere to the English-only policy, and to speak the specified language using the preferred "normal sounding" accent (Goffman 1961, as cited in Fabros, 2006, p.76).

Moreover, such a level of deference can be seen during calls where agents perform emotional labor as they take on a particular verbose pose structured by tight scripts and spiels and peppered with words that reflect the company affective line such as please, thank you, sorry, and may I. For agents, the totalizing structures of the call center enterprise control them to respond spontaneously to verbal attacks and demeaning and dehumanizing encounters as they are kept from displaying their real feelings, required to suppress negative feelings, and over-express specified emotions and attributes in order to portray the customer service image and persona that the corporation wishes to project (Fabros, 2006, p. 77).

In addition, according to Hechanova (2010, p.53), included in language is the orientation on language of clients. For example, they do not say, “*Encash your check*” in the US; it is “*Cash your check.*” Filipinos tend to say “*Hold your line*” which sounds weird for the Americans because they just say “*Please hold.*” To be in sync with the cultural orientation of their clients, these are some of the observed practices in the call center work.

### **Social environment, norms, and values in call centers**

Fabros (2006, p.70), in her masteral thesis, used participant observation as one of the data gathering methods. A call center agent in a call center in Manila for six months, she observed that the agents performed additional emotional, cultural, symbolic, and social work as they attend to an incessant barrage of calls that are routed to them without let up. In this respect, emotional performances require agents to manage disruptions that result from the abrupt, uninterrupted routing of calls as well as

suppress spontaneous feelings arising from an interaction so that they may be able to consistently present the affective lines specified by the production rules which project the image of empathetic, efficient customer service. The adjustment and management of emotions and feelings become integral components of the service being delivered. In this view, agent performances are structured by scripts, regulating to the pace and content of exchanges. It is also implied in the social and cultural work performed as production imperatives impose particular accents - speech patterns that must be incorporated into agent performances.

The social environment in call centers is different. Call center agents tend to be night owls; agents usually work until 4 am or depending on the schedule of their shifts. It is usually morning in the US as their shifts start. Those contact centers are following US standard zones such as Pacific, Eastern, Mountain, and Central. This existing working environment can be observed in call centers' demands on agent time. The holidays in the Philippines are not in conjunction with all the holidays of other countries. Call centers require the agents to be in the office even during the holidays so that customers can still call about their most urgent concerns. Call centers are used to working even during Christmas or New Year. Aside from this, call center agents also need to operate regardless of weather conditions. It is not an easy job, but call center agents in the Philippines have gotten used to it. After all, the difficulties are just part of the challenges that agents have to face in building their careers in the industry (Asuncion, 2007, p.25).

Both the studies of Fabros and Hechanova (2010, p.77) noted that agents are required to exhibit a particular idea and persona that coincide with the attributes and

characteristics of the calls they receive, as if the exchanges take place at home rather than overseas. As such, agents take on the familiar names Paul (instead of Bong) and Terry (instead of Tere), use more norm-sounding accents, and infuse the performances with everyday jargon and common signs and symbols. This shows how agents must expand additional work on top of their physical and mental labor to bridge the global distance that separates them from their customers. As such, the global and organizational distance implied by globally fragmented call center production has presented a host of different social, cultural, physical, emotional, and temporal demands the agent has to contend with.

On the other hand, in terms of physical surrounding, aside from the computer units, head sets, and air conditioning units installed in the working area, call centers also provide rooms for relaxation for the agents. In the study conducted by Geronimo (2009, p.67), he visited a call center office (ePLDT Vocativ System in Makati City) and described its structure. According to Geronimo, there is a “quiet room” installed for agents who would like to get some shut eye or catch up with other fellow agents. It is a spacious lounge with plush sofas to make the place perfect for unwinding after a long shift. Findings of this study showed that call center companies provide support for the agents in terms of creating space wherein agents can relax and relieve their stress from the demands of their work.

Training is intensive for call center agents. Trainees have to learn account information first. Once they know the account, they will be deployed ready on the floor and receive many calls as they want. It is in the culture of the call center industry to handle customers well and consider them as lifeblood that gives full stream of support

to make the company up and stay on the business top. Aside from the account training, agents are also oriented on the culture and geography of their customers (Bacasong, 2008). Agents need to provide service to people who not only have different language but also different cultural background (Feinberg, 2005). This further relates to another characteristic of the total institution, which is likened to “a finishing school but one that has many refinements and is little refined.” This pertains to the changes that agents have to undergo as they are prepped up, “reassembled”, and “finished” to become “outsourced selves”. Such changes are not limited to the temporal work adjustment of agents but also include emotional, cultural, and social adjustments so that they may embody the attributes and identities expected of “outsourced selves”. Apart from pre-determining the boundaries of the service interaction, the corporation also imposes strict monitoring and metrics to keep the agent in line with imperatives set by the corporation during a call and even beyond. Thus, the agent is subject to control and surveillance measures set by the corporation which imposes sanctions and corrective measures on agents who fail to comply with specified targets for performance and productivity (Fabros, 2006, pp.71, 75). In addition, according to Feinberg (2005, p. 132), agents should answer phone calls quickly, be conscious of the waiting time (do not allow the customer to wait in the queue too long), and be productive (number of calls an agent can close in a given period of time).

Agents also submit themselves to tight, erratic, rotating graveyard schedules that are precisely matched and synchronized with production hours, referring to both the distinct time zones of their callers and the specific times the calls actually come in, with the call volume dictating their actual presence on the floor. Tight schedules require strict

adherence on the part of the agent who is expected to log in on the dot, take his/her breaks on designated times and only for the exact duration set as well as adjust to periodic changes to schedules. Particular attention paid on “over break”, for instance, where failure to return from breaks on time becomes grounds for corrective action and supervisor reprimand, reflects the kind of demanding schedule regime agents have to face (Fabros, 2006, p.73).

Still on the study of Fabros (p.74), under such settings, an agent’s movements and actions are strictly regulated in the sense that they are required to ask permission before proceeding from one activity to another, undergoing a tedious process before they can take “toilet breaks”, authorized absences and leaves. The conditions on the production floor, including the design of the labor process and the design and structures of the work setting, prevent agents from simply getting up, moving about, commencing or ending an activity at their own pace and discretion. Related to this, the timing of shifts and breaks is strictly observed. Typically, in one shift, an agent is allowed two 15-minute breaks and one 30-minute break. Agents are expected to log in and out; failure to adhere to this schedule results in poor evaluation (Hechanova, 2010 p.17).

Call center agents, when interacting with customers; follow a dialog that is displayed on their computer screens. This may be in the form of greetings, alternative scripts, depending on customer responses, and even emotions to display. Their adherence to such script is monitored electronically (Sprigg and Jackson, 2006, p. 197). To ensure efficiency, a policy on the average handling time (AHT) per customer may be enforced. In some call centers, this stipulates that agents may not spend more than five minutes attending to a customer (Holman, 2002, p.35).

Unlike other industries where products are tangible, in the service industry such as call centers, the service performing the service cannot be separated from the service itself. In other words, the service provider is the product. Hence, how front liners behave and interact with customers will determine the quality of the service rendered. A worker who is hesitant and indecisive will provide hesitant and indecisive service (Hechanova, 2010, p. 27). Thus, one of the defining values in the call center focused on customer is service and empathy.

Meanwhile, in India, Kalita (2005) found out that the culture in the call center industry created a considerable impact on the values of the call center agents. Studies show that aside from the jobs and products that US has exported to India, it has also exported values as well. Call centers have brought new wealth to India, but they are also fostering a cultural backlash. Their jobs compel the call center agents to cultivate American pronunciations and keep up with US pop culture. They have their own hybrid vocabulary ("No probs, yaar" means "no problem, my friend."), and they have boundless expectations about where their new careers can take them. As more call centers and multinationals enter India, the agents have become hot commodities, switching jobs and commanding steep salary increases along the way. This, along with their spending and partying, has fuelled a popular image of BPO workers as greedy and individualistic. The existing social environment in call centers changed the social life of the agents while young people's social life which used to revolve around family now increasingly focuses on friends and work. The average Indian youth, specifically those working in call centers, is more outward-looking, more confident, and more liberal in terms of attitudes, values, and social norms.

In the case of call center agents in the Philippines, Filipinos are known all over the world for their hospitality. This trait is also translated in the way agents deal with the people they talk to on the phone. They are courteous and always aware of the customers. Jocano (1999, p.38) explains that what makes Filipino relational values somewhat different from the Westerner's is the importance they give to interpersonal relations. He points to the Filipino value of *pakikipagkapwa* as an indication of this. Despite the negative effect or influence of work such as lack of sleep, no exercise, diminished social life and time for family, it also has its positive influence such as agents became more understanding, patient, and adaptable; improved their English; and developed communication skills.

### **Family relations, recreational activities, and health of call center agents**

Call center usually operates 24/7. Hence, the night shift is part of the call center lifestyle. Young adults in call centers who do night shift, then, develop a distinct pattern of routines compared to those in regular day jobs. Working at night and sleeping at day time would normally lessen their opportunities for social interaction and be more limited to the social environment in the call center which is mainly composed of co-workers who may follow the same routines. The combination of night time work and constant schedule takes its toll on an agent's health, social, economic, and family life (Dizon, 2010, p. 29). This is supported by the study of Fabros (2006, p.75) which showed that the more significant relationships agents are able to sustain are those with co-workers and friends in call centers who share the same sociotemporal space they inhabit.

As agents take on their productive role within the call center, their ability to carry out their roles in other arenas become constrained and reconfigured by the demands of production. Call center production, in this sense, considerably shapes their capacity to play out their roles as husband or wives, fathers or mothers, sons or daughters, and so forth. Instead of actual physical barriers that lock them up, agents confront temporal barriers that isolate them from their parents, their children, their partner, and their friends.

Aside from the erratic schedule of the agents, one of the defining characteristics of the subculture in call centers is the distinct lifestyle of the agents. They are usually clad in casual attire with matching fashionable coats, the most common prop among call center agents. During break time, agents enjoy their 30 minutes to 1 hour break at fast food chains or at coffee shops. Others sit on the corner and lit up their cigarette as a way of releasing stress from work (Bacasong, 2008).

A study conducted by the UP Population institute (2011, p. 15) asked the call center agent respondents on what they usually do when they are not at work or how they spend their free time. Among the most commonly reported leisure activities were mallng, use of internet, watching movies, and shopping. They also engaged in activities with friends from work, likely because their schedules coincide more with co-workers than with their other friends. Agent leisure time becomes a function of production in the sense that they are still pivoted around the hours and structures of the call center system. Agents, in this respect, unwind during 8-am happy hour with co-workers, exchanging stories about work, their supervisors, and their calls.

A recent study entitled “Life Style Health Status and Behavior of Young Workers in Call Centers and Other Industries in Metro Manila and Metro Cebu” by the Population Commission and UP Population Institute (2011, pp.13-15) examined the economic, social, and health status of young professionals less than 35 years old working at call centers and non-call centers. The study revealed that call center agents have a higher risk of acquiring Human Immuno Virus-Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (HIV-AIDS). Because of the environment and peer pressure, call center agents tend to involve in risky sexual behaviors. It was found out that more call center workers have early penetrative pre-marital sex and have sexual intercourse with the same sex. It also stated that more call center workers had casual sex experiences and that nearly one-third of male agents are sexually active. Moreover, more call center agents smoke than non-call center workers. There is also a high level of drinking alcohol among both workers; 85% for call centers and 87% for non-call center agents. In terms of diet, the agents had less regular meal times and high consumption of caffeinated drink and fast food, especially chips, burger, fries, and fried chicken. Based on the study, it was found out that eight in 10 young workers ate fried chicken regularly. In terms of regularity of their meals, in keeping with the out-of-sync work hours, call center workers appear to have less regular meals than non-call center workers. In terms of consumption of coffee, almost two-thirds of the respondents drink coffee with no significance between call center and non-call center respondents. Coffee drinkers in call centers consume significantly more, at 2.3 cups on the average compared with 1.7 cups in the other group (non-call center agents). In terms of smoking, about six in 10 call center agents have ever smoked compared with four in 10 among non-call center workers. Foremost

among the reasons why these workers started smoking is that they were influenced by their friends from their current work and the stress coming from the demands of their workplace.

The finding described above was supported by the survey study of Marcos (2008, pp.23, 33) which revealed that burger and fries are the most preferred food by the agents as they usually eat at fast food restaurants. Truly, fast food remains a staple choice for the hungry stomach of any person who wants it quick and convenient. It was also revealed that the respondents consumed 1-2 cups of coffee a day and a cigarette intake of 1-3 sticks a day. However, the results of the survey showed that there were no serious health risks that were acquired from eating habits and food preference of the 30 respondents. The health problems that they encountered during the six months of their work were common colds, cough, migraine, and back pain - all of which do not have direct connection with what they eat. They were caused by the respondents' physical as well as mental environment (improper work area lay-out and dimension, stress, ergonomic risk factor, and nature of the job). Constant eating at fast food, however, must be lessened because it may lead to serious illnesses, if not taken in moderation.

Stress is also a part of lifestyle in the call center. With the volume of calls and unpredictable customer calls, stress has a negative impact on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and employee performance. It may impede the performance in the call center industry. Aside from the dissatisfaction one can get because of stress, it also poses health risk among the agents - some of them become obese while some become skinny (Lim, 2007). In the study conducted by Villaluz

(2003, p.38) on determinants of job performance among call center customer service representatives, it was revealed that there was a high pressure in the representatives' work. Call centers typically handle all or any combination of the following functions in behalf of other organizations: order-taking, customer inquiries and requests, telemarketing, customer support, market research, etc. According to Batt (1999), tension occurs as call center employees are expected to strike a balance between handling their service and sales function. That is, employees must ensure that they satisfy customers by answering their questions while simultaneously selling as much as possible and minimizing call handling time. When role stress is increased, job satisfaction is decreased.

In the study of Alfaro (2005, p.33), lack of sleep and stress were two of the fatigue factors that influenced work performance in call centers. Every individual requires an optimal sleep period. Experts agreed that adults need 6-10 hours of sleep over a 24-hour day period, with most people aiming for approximate 8 hours of sleep per day. When adults get less than 5 hours of sleep in 24 hours, peak mental abilities begin to deteriorate. With a sleep deprivation of just 2 days, it can be observed that response times will get slower, and initiatives are likely to decline. Lack of sleep due to night shift work will also lead to the disruption of the Circadian Rhythm or the internal biological time keeping system of the body (Ho, 2007, p.11). Shift work and shift changes create stress and pose serious health and safety problems. When workers are on night shift or rotating shifts, their schedule violates both the body's natural rhythms and the dominant social rhythms. Serious negative effects of this description include chronic fatigue, digestive problems, poor eating habits, and negative effects on mental

health (Laurie, 2001). This is supported by the study conducted by UP Population Institute and Population Commission (2011, p. 14), wherein problems getting to sleep is significantly more prevalent among call center workers compared to other field of work.

Ferniz (2008, p. 63) also studied stress among call center agents and their coping mechanisms. The study revealed that being a call center agent is not an easy job. Agents experience stress regardless of their shift schedule. They generally cope with stress by releasing tension through laughing, joking, getting enough sleep, watching movies, seeking support from friends and family, going out of town, and avoiding stressful situations.

Pressure to work such as demands from superior, co-staff, customers, and family contributes to the physical and emotional fatigue of the agents. This is supported by the study of Puthukulangara (2010, p.14). The increasingly repetitive and machine-regulated nature of the call center work and the prolonged sitting postures called for in complex situations create a lot of pressure for the employees. Call center work requires a significant amount of emotional control which leads employees to experience emotional fatigue. More so, according to Baccud (2005, p.19), call center workers found the repetitive work depersonalized, boring, unchallenging, and meaningless; thus, resulting to tardiness and absenteeism. Eventually, they quit in search for more interesting work.

Health risk is, indeed, one of the major concerns of call center agents. Ho (2007) determined the factors that influenced health complaints of workers in an inbound call center in Quezon City. There were five major health complaints of male and female agents: 1. frequent eye strain; 2. worsening eye sight; 3. sore throat or coughing; 4,

frequent back pain; and 5. always sleepy. Hubilla (2011, p. 90) also studied the comparison of occupational health complaints between day shift and night shift workers in a call center. It was revealed that both night and day time shifts workers complained of sore throat, worsening eyesight, sleepiness, ulcer, and frequent back pain. Similarly, Bool (2006, p.64) noted disturbance of sleeping patterns, eye strain due to prolonged exposure to computers, and back pain and migraine as the leading health problems among call center agents.

The study of Geronimo (2009, p. 67) affirmed the findings of the aforementioned studies. It examined the work schedule and its effects on general well-being, social interaction within the workplace, and stress level of day shift and night shift call center employees. Results showed that night shift employees had lower general well-being as compared to day shift employees.

In the study of Hechanova (2008, p.202), among 940 call center workers, majority of the customer service representatives expressed feeling of being physically tired and cranky most of the time. Given the existing problems of agents in relation to work, dela Cuesta (2004, p.57) recommended that a more suitable work scheduling guideline must be made possible to bridge Circadian body rhythm with different time zones and other business requirements and minimize the unfavorable effects of shift work. The study also recommended ways to make call center industry a conducive work environment to the agents, such as conducting learning programs and employee well being; implementing services and reward program; and recognizing workforce planning and scheduling.

## **Economic opportunities and consumption of call center agents**

Given the profuse job opportunities offered by call center companies, young adults find it appealing to start a career in the call center industry. They are more exposed to the prevalent notions on the extreme working conditions in call centers such as graveyard shifts, routine work, tedious training, and misgivings from clients. However, motivations such as high salary, bonuses, and easy promotions create a push and pull effect that simultaneously prevents them from satisfying all aspirations at once (Dizon, 2010, p. 38). Call center jobs are attractive not merely because they are available but because call center workers earn more than double the legislated minimum wage. On top of this, customer service representatives (CSRs) working in graveyard shift received 30-50% night differential pay (Hechanova, 2010, p.47). Call center also gives incentives in a variety of forms such as gifts/merchandise, cash awards, gift certificates, and public recognition. In fact, according to the study of Medina (2008, p.42), financial stability is the greatest benefit of call centers, followed by making new friends, meeting new people, and self- satisfaction. The incentives and benefits that agents receive from their company allow the agents to spend and consume items to provide for their needs and wants.

In terms of consumption of the call center agents, in the study conducted by UP Population Institute and Population Commission (2011, p. 12), call center workers' higher incomes translate to higher consumption of material goods relative to those from outside the industry. About seven in 10 call center workers reported that their income is spent mostly on food. Expenses on house rent, child expenses, transportation, and utilities were also reported as the main expenditure items significant among the call

center agents. There was also a higher level of support given to parents and siblings by call center workers, perhaps as a consequence of their higher income.

### **Academic Performance of Working Students**

In the study of Transfiguracion (1995, p. 78), financial aspect is one of the leading problems of college students and that is why some of them work to earn extra money for their expenses. Meanwhile, in the study of Ozturk (2001, p. 35), a significant negative effect on achievement, especially in math and science, was found out. The more hours' students worked the fewer math courses they completed which in turn led to lower achievements.

Lack of sleep is also a problem being faced by working students. According to the study of Kelly (2001, p.33), the length of sleep among undergraduate students is related to their grade point average.

Having a part time work while studying has positive and negative effects on students. Concerns about school work and how to pass their subjects are the most common concerns of working students (Apostol, 2000, p. 83). According to Orszag (2001, p.15), work experience will improve future labor market prospects for the students. In addition, the study revealed that limited work does not have a negative impact on the student's academics; it might even have a positive effect. On the other hand, full time work seemed to appear to have a negative impact on student enrollment rates and academic performance. The positive effect of having a part time work is supported by Kennedy (1992, p.20) - obtaining a paid/unpaid student job is important to a person's career because it provides experience. It can also gain new dimensions in

personality, make new friends, and learn how to cooperate with co-workers and superiors. Eledia (2005, p.4) also cited other benefits of working such as improvement of self-management skills, preparedness in facing the world, opportunity to learn vocational and social skills, enhancement of attitude, values, habits, and knowledge that will eventually make them a better adult worker, and higher chances of being employed. Most working students even share useful and interesting information from their experiences at work and integrate these to their lessons during recitations. On the other hand, when David (2008, p. 80) examined the effects of student employment on academic performance, he noted that a handful of college students work to be financially independent.

Missing lectures, failing to meet the deadlines, lacking opportunity for socialization, and leaving behind their youth are some of the negative effects of having a part-time work (Leonardo, 1992, p. 80). The negative effect of working on school performance is also discussed in the study of Buot (1989, p. 73). Working students become simply contented to finish all prescribed subjects even with the lowest passing grade or do anything at their command to just graduate. It was also revealed that having a full time work usually impairs a student's performance and limits the access to library and class attendance; thus, has a negative effect on studies.

Maño (2004, p.65) studied the common problems of working students and their relation to academic performance. It was found out that the leading problems faced by working students in terms of health concern are the following: 1. not getting enough sleep; 2. not as strong as they should be; 3. not getting enough exercise; 4. feeling tired most of the time; and 5. weakening eyesight. These results led students to have no time

for studies at daytime and forced them to review and study their lessons at night. It was revealed that having a part-time work had a significant effect on college study performance.

Given the demands of work and studies, Lining's (2007, pp. 85, 88) study revealed that there are various programs initiated by school, company, and government catering to the needs of working students specifically to improve their academic performance. School-initiated programs are scholarships, consideration in terms of punctuality/attendance/projects/assignments, flexible schedules, and free seminar/workshops. Company-initiated programs are scholarships, flexible work schedules, and moral support. Other company-initiated programs unknown to working students are study leave, educational loans, crew leadership program, and individual development program. Government-initiated programs are scholarships, low tuition fee in state universities, job opportunities, and educational loan amounting to PHP 5,000.00 per semester. Other government programs not known to working students are SPES (Special Program for Employment of Student), job fairs, consciousness-raising seminar through WYC (Working Youth Center), and WAP (Work Appreciation Program).

### **Subculture and academic performance of working students in call centers**

Lorenzana and Molina (2012, pp. 84, 88, 90) studied the motivations, challenges, and coping strategies of UP students as call center agents. The study revealed that a lot of students from other schools were also working in call centers. They were from different schools in Metro Manila such as Miriam, UST, PNU, FEU, and others. Call center work was the best option for college students because of the following reasons:

relatively high salary which enabled them to contribute to their families' financial needs; a job relatively easy to learn and adapt to; and relevant venue for training and experience. Financial benefit is the primary motivator of working students. The monetary rewards of working in a call center not only allow them to send themselves to school and meet their financial obligations in school but also extend them the opportunity to lessen the financial burdens of their families.

As with all working students, they also needed to balance their time between work and studies. Performance in school was adversely affected because they worked mostly at night. Also, the study noted that tardiness and absence from school ranked highest among the problems working students faced, followed by lack of proper rest. These problems were attributed to the lack of time due to the demand of call center work and school requirements. Nevertheless, working students were able to adapt to the unique demands of call center in a number of ways, such as students would compensate for their lack of time during workdays by studying during their days off, by reducing time for leisure activities, or staying home on Saturdays and Sundays to rest instead of hanging out with friends. Some bring their lessons to the office so they can study them during breaks at work while others organize their schedules by bidding them out - depending on their performance. Working students in the call centers turn to their family for support, which offers a good balance to the different challenges of working and studying. Coming home to a family who gives them freedom for the odd hours at work was a good coping strategy for them. The parents and other siblings (if any) ask about work, put aside food for them, and give assistance in coping with their academic requirements.

With the promise of high pay, training and experience, call center work is still a viable option for many students. Even those who have first-hand experience still say that the pros of the work still outweigh the cons (Ermitanio, 2012).

## **Synthesis**

The BPO or the Call Center Industry, a booming industry in the country, is here to stay for a long time. The call center industry serves as a lifesaver of the Philippine economy by generating more jobs for Filipinos, especially for fresh graduates. The BPO's multiplier effect on economy is tremendous as manifested through the 24 hours operation of fast food outlets, recreational establishments, and transportation services. The high salary is the strongest factor why many graduates or even undergraduates plunge their way into the corporate world of call centers. But as they say, not all that glitter is gold. It also has its liabilities like health hazard such as adjustment of the body clock and stress obtained from the erratic work at an ungodly hour. There is also the issue of security which highlights the absence of public protection to ensure the safety of night shift call center agents, and lack of time to spend with family and loved ones because of the shift and schedule in the call centers. Despite the said scenarios, BPO is still a thriving industry that offers more jobs to millions of Filipinos with a projected 1.2 million workforce for the year 2015, according to Information Technology and Business Processing Association of the Philippines (IBPAP).

In studies about call centers, health issue is the common concern of call center agents. Being night shift workers, they are exposed to a lot of risks such as stress and fatigue. Villaluz (2003) and Alfaro (2005) pointed out that there is a high pressure in

work that contributes to fatigue. The night shift schedule and the occasional shift work rotation disrupt sleeping patterns, thus causing the disturbance of the Circadian Rhythm. Dela Cuesta (2004), Ho (2007), and Hechanova (2008), on the other hand, studied the health risks faced by call center agents. It was found out that most agents complained about frequent eye strain and worsening eye sight due to prolonged exposure to computer monitors, sore throat, tiredness, and cranky attitude most of the time due to lack of sleep and exercise. Aside from health concerns, their work schedules tend to isolate them from their family and friends, limiting the time to get in touch and bond with their loved ones. The results of these studies are significant to the purpose of the present study which is to identify the influence of call center subculture on the health condition of the working students.

Baccud (2005) studied the work-life conflict and work-life balance of call center agents as predictors of turn-over intent. Her study showed that health risk is a consideration for turn-over, but financial security being offered by the call centers hinders the agent to leave the company. Manegdeg (2007) discussed the call center agents' commitment and willingness. Fabros (2006) discussed the world of call center in its socio-cultural perspective while Gonzales (2006), in its economic scope. Marcos (2008) studied the eating habits and food preference of call center agents. The study showed that agents preferred fast food for convenience which should be taken moderately to avoid serious illnesses. On a lighter note, Hechanova (2010) pointed out positive effects of the work to the agents such as improved English communication, confidence, flexibility, and skills. While the studies described above presented data on the existing lifestyle of call center agents through their diet, food preference, and the

demands of call center work, they limited their discussion on regular call center agents only. While their findings remained significant, the present study would focus not only on the life style and demands at work but also on the academic performance of students working in call centers.

In the case of working students, Ozturk (2000) pointed out that having a part-time work is related to lower performance. Lack of sleep and time to study were two factors of low school performance of the working students. On the other hand, in the studies of Orszag (2001), Kennedy (1992), and Eledia (2005), it was revealed that having a part-time work or having a working experience also had positive effects on a student's performance, like having the drive to improve one's status, gaining new dimensions in personality, improving self-management skills, and learning vocational and social skills. Moreover, Buot (1989) and Leonardo (1992) noted the negative impact of work to school performance such as missing lectures, failing to meet the deadlines, lacking opportunity for socialization, and leaving behind being youth. Lastly, in the study of Maño (2004), it was found out that having a part-time work had a significant negative effect on academic performance since having a job limits the time to study. While the described studies presented the effects of work on academic performance, the present study focused on the influence of subculture in the work place on the academic performance of working students.

The foregoing shows that the big bulk of call centers studies are focused on health problems and work demands experienced by call center agents. There is no study yet which deals with the influence of subculture in the call center on the life and academic performance of working students; hence, this study was conducted.

### **CHAPTER III METHODOLOGY**

This chapter presents the methods used and procedures employed by the researcher in the conduct and completion of this study. It describes the research design, the research locale, the informants of the study, and the data gathering procedure.

#### **Research Design**

The researcher used the descriptive qualitative research in this study. Focused group discussion (FGD), one-on-one in-depth interviews, and non-participant observation were the data gathering methods employed. Calderon (1993) defined descriptive research as a purposive process of gathering, analyzing, classifying, and tabulating data about prevailing conditions, practices, beliefs, processes, and then making adequate and appropriate interpretation about such data. Also, Fraenkel (1993) defined qualitative research as a study in which the investigator attempts to study naturally occurring phenomena in all their complexity.

In order to check for validity, triangulation was done through three field methods of research, namely: 1. In-depth interviews; 2. FGD; and 3. Non-participant observation. In-depth interview is an interview focused on specific topics that are to be investigated in depth (Calderon, 1993). It is a valuable tool because it allows participants to share experiences, attitudes, and beliefs in their own words. In this study, in-depth interview was used as the primary source of data. On FGD, according to the Research and Policy Development (2016), it is a good way to gather participants from similar backgrounds and experiences to discuss a specific topic of interest. The group of participants is

guided by a researcher who acts as a moderator who introduces topics for discussion and helps the group of participants in a lively and natural discussion among themselves. In this study, FGD was used for complementary source and validation of data. This study also used the non-participant observation. According to Calderon (1993), in non-participant observation, the observer is a mere by-stander observing the group he/she is studying about. He/she does not participate in the activities of the group. In this study, the researcher observed the participants once in a while before and during the interviews and inside and outside the call centers.

For analysis of data, constant comparison analysis was used to discuss the findings of the study based on interviews and group discussions. Through constant comparison analysis, underlying themes presented through the data were identified.

## **Research Locale**

The study was conducted in eight different call center companies in Makati, Taguig, Mandaluyong and Quezon City: two call center companies in Makati, one in Taguig, two in Mandaluyong, and three in Quezon City.

Call centers in Makati, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City all specialize on customer service related to health care, utilities, travel and hospitality, technology, finance, and telecommunications while the call center in Taguig, an electronics company and information technology distributor, distributes and markets large variety of electronics from giant companies such as Apple, Lenovo, Samsung, Microsoft, and IBM, to name a few.

In a qualitative research, greater emphasis is put on selecting strategic locations/ settings so that the data are meaningful. Thus, the researcher selected an environment most appropriate for data gathering such as a place convenient for the participants and free from distractions and discomfort. A suitable and convenient time and place were also decided prior to the FGD/interview with the participants.

### **Research Participants**

The researcher used the purposive sampling method in choosing the participants for this study, that is, they were deliberately selected to provide the most information-rich data possible. There were 15 participants in the study: three from call centers in Makati, one from Taguig, eight from Mandaluyong, and three from Quezon City. All of them were college students aged 19-21 years working in call centers in Makati, Taguig, Mandaluyong, and Quezon City. They worked at the call centers for more or less than a year. The population of working students in call centers is quite limited because the centers still prefer college graduate and full time employees. The companies, as part of their security measure, are also strict in revealing information about their agents.

The participants were identified through referral and network of friends working in call centers. The researcher knew only a few qualified for the study. The rest were gathered through chain referral or snow ball method, that is, if a participant knows someone who is also a part time call center agent, that person is a prospective participant and is referred to the researcher. The researcher then contacted these prospects and secured their permission to participate in the study.

Most of the participants were inbound call center agents. They were the ones who receive calls from their target customers. Inbound call center agents are usually Customer Service Representative or Technical Support Assistant receiving customer's inquiry and complaints regarding services and products. Meanwhile, 13 out of 15 participants worked 8 hours a day on a full time basis while only two participants worked on a part-time basis with only 4-5 hours of working time. Most of the call center companies prefer a full time work on an 8-hour shift per day. According to the participants, however, it is still the prerogative of the agent to choose between a full-time or a part-time load. The two participants who worked part time were graduating students who chose to prioritize their studies.

In terms of the enrolled academic load, six participants had irregular load, two were on leave from their studies in favor of work, and seven had a regular full load during the time of research. Based on the interview, the participants enrolled in a few units to give their work more time to support not only their studies but their families as well. Meanwhile, the participants with regular load were still able to balance the demands of their work and studies.

Majority of the participants started work as call center agents as a means to support their studies and help their family. They needed to work to augment their finances for personal needs as well as that of their families. Others entered the job to have experience and to feel their independence. The participants also saw call center job as a way to upkeep their needs.

Other participants involved in the study were: an operations manager, a team leader of the company, and former call center agents, which enriched the results of the

study (Please see Appendix B for the Profile of the Participants). To ensure the confidentiality of information, the participants were asked to sign the consent forms before the conduct of the interviews.

## **Phases of Research**

This section discusses the different phases, activities, and time frame of the research.

| <b>PHASES</b>         | <b>ACTIVITIES</b>                                                                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| PREPARATORY STAGE     | 1. Pre-survey and Selection of Participants<br>2. Preparation of Interview Questions |
| DATA COLLECTION STAGE | 1. Actual Interviews<br>2. Focus Group Discussions                                   |
| DATA ANALYSIS STAGE   | Analysis and Organization of Data                                                    |
| DATA SYNTHESIS STAGE  | 1. Summary<br>2. Conclusion<br>3. Recommendation                                     |
| WRITING STAGE         | Writing of Summative Presentation                                                    |

### **Phase I- Preparatory Stage**

This section discusses the preparation made prior to the actual conduct of the study. It includes the pre-survey and selection of participants, and the preparation of interview questions.

#### ***Pre-survey and Selection of Participants***

A pre-survey was conducted in different call center companies in Makati, Quezon City, and Mandaluyong to determine the possible participants in the study. The results of the pre-survey showed a limited number of call centers who accept working students.

Also, almost all of the companies were hesitant to reveal information about their agents, which is part of their company's security and rules.

Since the researcher only knew few individuals qualified for the study, referral or snow ball method was utilized. The researcher asked the help of his friends working in call centers to find would-be participants who would take part in the study and talk about the subculture of call center agents. The participants were at first reluctant to be involved because of time constraints, lack of time, and tight schedule, but when they were informed of the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses, they eventually agreed. Informal interviews to secure their participation in the study were done through SMS, phone calls, and social networking sites. The content of the interview guides were also discussed to the participants for them to prepare for the actual interview (Please see Appendix A for the Interview Guide).

### ***Preparation of Interview Questions***

The researcher asked the assistance of his friends working in call centers to help him prepare questions for the initial interview. The interview questions were also evaluated by the advisers of the researchers. Questions for the interview included the nature of the participants' work, their working conditions in the call centers, and their educational background. The copy of the interview questions was attached to the letter presented to the call center companies for their perusal.

## **Phase II- Data Collection Stage**

This section discusses the data gathering stage of the research. In this phase, interviews and focus group discussions with the participants were conducted.

### ***Interview***

Interviewing is an important way for a researcher to check the accuracy of a qualitative study. In fact, according to Fraenkel (1993, p. 385), it is the most important data collection technique in a qualitative research.

The researcher conducted a “one-on-one” in-depth interview with the participants. The researcher used a voice recorder to record the interview. The researcher used the personal information sheet and an in-depth interview guide for the data gathering (Please see Appendix A).

The personal information sheet included the participants’ age, gender, year and course, academic load, type of school, length of service, hours of work per day, and nature of employment contract. Meanwhile, semi-structured open-ended questions were used to describe and analyze the subculture of students working in selected call centers in Makati, Quezon City, Mandaluyong, and Taguig. Semi-structured open-ended questions were asked to explore the participants’ experiences in their work and studies.

The participants and the researcher agreed on the most convenient time, date, and place of meeting. Most of the interviews took place in a restaurant near the work place of the respondents. Interviews were conducted either before or after work hours of the participants. Before work hours were usually from 8 pm to 10 pm, and after work

hours were from 5 am to 8 am. The researcher made sure that the place was conducive for the one-on-one interview.

The interview was important because it was used as the primary source of data for the study. To follow the continuity of the participants' story, a focus group discussion was conducted, and an informal follow-up interview was held five months after the last focus group discussion.

### ***Focused Group Discussion***

The focused group discussions (FGDs) were held separately, that is by location of the participants. A group discussion was conducted with call center agents working in Mandaluyong area, and the same was done for agents working in Taguig, Makati, and Quezon City areas. The researcher chose locations which were accessible and convenient for both parties. The FGD was scheduled on the agreed time and date. Responses were recorded through tape/voice recorder and noted in verbatim in the researcher's FGD guide.

The researcher started with a re-orientation of the study which included introduction and presentation of the objectives of the study. The researcher stressed that the activity would be handled with extreme confidentiality. Around three to four participants participated in the focused group discussion. The group of participants was guided by the researcher who acted as the moderator, introduced topics for discussion, and helped the group to participate in a lively and natural discussion.

Once rapport was established, the participants became more comfortable and at ease with the researcher. They became more open in sharing experiences in their work,

their social life, economic life, their concerns about their studies, and their outlook towards work and education. During the FGD, the respondents shared interesting and revealing stories concerning their work and personal life.

Through the FGDs, the differences and similarities on work experiences and life of working students in call centers were identified. The FGD findings helped the researcher to consolidate all information and to come up with a line of thought about working students in call centers which was used as a complementary source and for validation of data.

### **Phase III- Analysis and Organization of Data**

For the participants' profile, the researcher gathered the data given by each participant and made a transcription. The researcher took note of responses that were answered frequently by checking their frequency; thus, the researcher was able to determine similarities and differences among the responses from the participants.

The researcher transcribed the data gathered from the interviews with the participants. After the transcription, the researcher categorized the responses of the participants. The researcher was able to see patterns of responses from the interviewees which include their norms and working conditions, family relations, health issues and concerns, recreational activities, consumption behavior, and their academic performance in school. Constant comparison analysis was used for data analysis. According to Leech (2007), comparison analysis is one type of qualitative content analysis, and the emphasis of this analysis is to discover the themes from the transcripts. In this study, the researcher first read through the entire sets of data. After

doing so, the researcher categorized the data according to themes anchored on the focus of the study. After all the data had been categorized, themes were identified and documented which was used as basis for the discussion in the succeeding chapter. (Please see Appendix C).

## CHAPTER IV PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter discusses and analyzes how the subculture of working students in call centers affects their academic performance.

### 1. Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers

This section examines the subculture of working students in call centers as manifested in the social environment, norms, and values in the workplace.

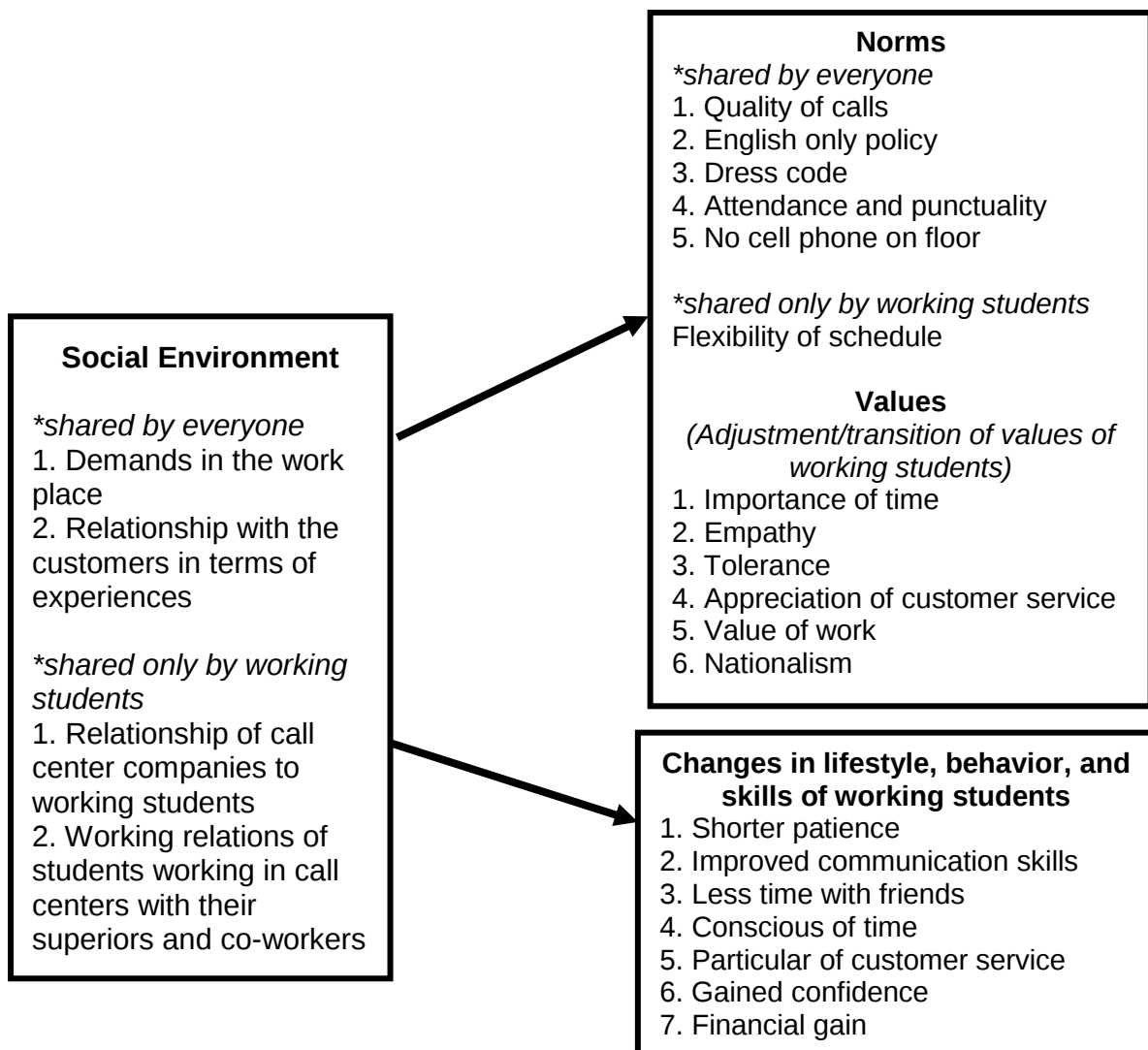


Figure 2. Social environment, norms, and values in call centers

The figure on the previous page (Figure 2) presents how the norms and values are developed through the social environment of the workplace. It is important to distinguish the culture shared by everyone as it reflects the call center culture and those shared only by working students as it reflects the subculture of working students in call centers. The social environment develops the norms and values and eventually changes the lifestyle, behavior, and skills of working students in call centers.

### *1.1. On Social Environment*

The culture in the call center is reflected in its social environment. Social environment, as discussed in the framework, covers the employment relations and demands in the workplace. It is divided into two: those that are shared by everyone which includes the demands in the workplace and relationship with the customers; and those shared only by working students which comprises how the call center companies deal with working students, and the working relations of students working in call centers with their superiors and co-workers.

#### *1.1.1. Demands in the workplace*

Working on a night shift schedule and adherence to quality of calls despite the different temperaments of the callers were the main demands in the workplace. The demands of a night schedule to coincide with the timezone of the target customers affect the time being spent for family, friends and studies. It also leads to lack of sleep, stress, and health problems. *“Nitong huli, feeling ko, masyado na akong na-stress. Nabawasan pati ang time ko sa mga friends ko, pati na rin sa*

*family ko.” [Lately, it’s becoming stressful. I no longer have enough time for my friends and family”], shared by one of the participants. Moreover, working on the wee hours of the day also poses a great risk on them because they are more prone to health problems especially if they have a weak immune system.*

Findings of this study agree with that of Ho (2007) and Dizon (2010). Ho found out that night shift schedule in call center brings health risk while Dizon found out about the lessened opportunity for social interaction.

Given the demands of the workplace, participants of the study enumerated variety of ways on how they handled the demands of work: having breakfast with the team where they can share stories after work; listening to music; mallng; watching movies; playing arcade and online games such as DOTA; going to the spa; travelling; videoke with friends/teams; and reading. A participant shared, “Mostly bonding with friends, classmates, eating together with the team.” Another participant mentioned, “Sharing stories with co-workers after shift or during breaks.” Another respondent shared how he handles a demanding day at work, *“Pag maraming order at medyo complicated pa, after shift, talagang kinakain ko siya. Sleeping din, pagdating sa bahay after work, tulog na ako, tapos kain, ligo, tapos pasok sa school. Sa school, pag may katuwaan at may time, DOTA o kaya basketball. Naglalaro ako ng basketball. Pag sa bahay at rest day, movie marathon lang sa downloaded movies sa computer. Mallng, minsan lang pag nagkayayaan, pero mas kain talaga ako at tulog.”* [If the work gets too demanding, I definitely eat after my shift. Coming home from work, I sleep, and then I would take a shower and go to school. If there is enough time after school, I usually play online games

and basketball. If it is my rest day, I just spend it at home and watch downloaded movies in my computer. I often go to the mall, but I still prefer eating and getting enough sleep.] In addition, some participants preferred taking stimulants such as smoking cigarettes and drinking coffee and energy drinks (Cobra and Bacchus) to awaken their senses and keep them alert in work. "Working in the call center, I can now consume 11/2–2 packs of cigarettes and drink at least eight (8) cups of coffee a day," shared by one of the participants. Lastly, agents restore their vigor and energy by getting enough sleep especially during their rest days.

Findings of the study show that the participants handled the demand of their work in different ways. They may be in the form of relaxation, leisure, stimulants, or spending time with friends. Based on the interviews, the demands of a night shift schedule and dealing with customers from a different cultural background brought stress to the agents. The stress coming from the demands of the work needs to be released. These results support the findings of Bacasong (2008) which noted that some agents smoke cigarette as a way of releasing stress from work. Given the results of the interviews, it is then vital for the working students in call center to consider balanced nutrition and adequate rest to replenish the lost energy due to the whole night shift work. Call centers should continue with their team building activities to relieve the stress of their agents and to establish camaraderie in the team. They should also continue providing rooms or section in the workplace where the agents, particularly the working students, can rest and catch up with their fellow workers.

### 1.1.2. Relationship with the customers in terms of experiences

Being recognized and appreciated in their work was what the participants considered as the most positive experience in terms of relationship with the customers. The same goes to being commended by their callers. One of the participants shared, *“Positive sa akin, nung Mother’s Day at Christmas Day, binati ako ng customer, so parang gumaan ang pakiramdam ko. Sinabi nila sa akin, “you empathize with the customer.”* [Positive for me was during Mother’s Day and Christmas Day, callers greeted me, and I felt good. Callers appreciated a lot that I empathize with them.] Another participant also recalled, *“Isa sa mga positive experiences ko ay pag may mga friendly customer, pag pinupuri ka nila. Sasabihin nila, “you know you have been such a great help!” Nakakatuwa ‘pag nare-recognize ka nila at na-appreciate ka nila.”* [One of the positive experiences I had was when friendly customers commended me for my performance. They would say, “You know, you have been such a great help!” Being recognized and appreciated by your callers means a lot.] Some of the agents interviewed observed that older female callers are more appreciative, calm, and laid back. One of the participants also recalled her experience with a nice caller when she was congratulated because Manny Pacquiao won in one of his fights.

On the other hand, receiving prank, racist, irate, and obscene callers was the negative experience of the participants in terms of their relation with their customers or callers. A participant shared her experience with a prank caller. She recalled receiving a caller who was asking for the phone number of the deceased Iraqi leader President Saddam Hussein, *“So kami, protocol, hahanapin pa rin*

*naming. Then we'll just say, 'I'm sorry, but the person you're looking for does not exist.' Mag-provide na lang ako ng 'not found report'. Tapos magsasabi sila (the prank caller) ng 'you're so fucking bitch! You know that Saddam Hussein is already dead!' May mga caller talaga na walang magawa."* [It is our protocol to still search for the name, and eventually we would say to the caller, 'I'm sorry, but the person you're looking for does not exist,' then I'll provide a 'not found report'. However, the caller will say, 'You're so fucking bitch! You know that Saddam Hussein is already dead!' Indeed, there are people who can't do something good."] Other racist callers would say, "I want to speak from someone who is in America! I want to talk to someone who can speak English!" Despite the discrimination, the agents would remain composed and deliver their spiel, "I'm sorry to hear that, but we are very glad to assist you." One of the informants added, "We have spiels for prank, irate, and racist caller like, 'I hope that you could refrain from saying those words' or 'I'll be forced to release the call'. One of the participants, an outbound call center agent (the one who makes the call), shared his encounter with an obscene caller. He was told that he could not talk to him right now because he was in the middle of making out with his partner. The agent replied by saying, "*Sinabi ko, 'I'm sorry, but it has nothing do with the service'. I will divert the message."* O kaya, *sasabihin ko, 'if it has nothing to do with the business, I would be forced to release the call'."* [I said, "I'm sorry, but it has nothing to do with the service. I will divert the message." Or I would say, "If it has nothing to do with the business, I would be forced to release the call."]

Participants of this study also observed that male Indians and Afro Americans are usually the irate and difficult callers. One participant received a remark from his caller, “I will sue you! You are not meeting the standard of the federal law!” Another participant gave his insight and experience on this matter. He said, “*Once, may isa akong caller na gusto akong i-calibrate pero na-pacify ko din naman. Wala naman racist or prank callers, mostly irate lang. Pero ako sumasagot eh, na parang wala naman silang alam sa ginagawa ko kaya ‘wag sila makialam.*” [I once had a caller who tried to calibrate me. Good thing I was able to pacify him. I did not have any experience with a racist or prank callers; mostly with irate callers. I usually answer back whenever I encountered difficult callers. It’s like I know my job better than they do.] Lastly, participants also experienced callers with difficult accent. One of the participants said, “*Mahirap maintindihan ang accent ng nasa Mountain Time Zone like Texas and Iowa.*” [The accent in Mountain Time Zone like in Texas and Iowa are the most difficult to understand].

Given the findings of the study, it can be concluded that the demands in the workplace and the relationship of call center agents with their customers based on their experiences were all shared and experienced by call center agents regardless of whether they are regular agents or working students. The social environment in a call center work has its positive and negative sides. The positive experiences encountered by the participants, like recognition and commendation from their callers, are validations of their hard work and dedication. On the other hand, the negative experiences, such as discrimination, are part of the hazard of their work. Dealing with customers with different culture and different personality

can be demanding and taxing to the agents. Call center companies should continue training and orienting their agents on the culture and geography of their customers. As what Feinberg (2005) pointed out, agents need to provide service to people who not only have different language but also cultural background. Moreover, results of this study are congruent with the findings of Danlog (2008) which noted that call center agents are often subjected to racial discrimination, harassment, and verbal abuse and yet obliged to remain composed and calm. This is also supported by the study of Fabros (2006) and called this part of call center work as “emotional labor” since agents are required to suppress negative feelings from verbal attacks and demeaning and dehumanizing encounters. Finally, Puthukulangasa (2010) noted that call center work requires a significant amount of emotional control which leads employees to express emotional fatigue.

#### *1.1.3. On how call centers deal with working students*

According to the participants, call center companies have no special treatment for working students, but they are considerate and flexible when it comes to scheduling. The participants said that companies always ask for the students’ preferred schedule; hence, making the schedule of the working students very flexible. The companies arrange the schedule of the working students based on the schedule of their enrolled subjects. The participants also revealed that call centers are very lenient when it comes to students; they just need to show their registration card where their work schedule will depend on. Meanwhile, structured

schedules are only given if the participants are not enrolled or when the working student is on a summer break from school.

Some of the participants also revealed that their companies have Educational Assistance Program for working students. *“As part of their Student Assistance Program, our company provides reimbursement for working students with no failing grades,”* shared by one of the participants.

The program mentioned above is indeed beneficial for the agents. The assistance program will definitely help the working students in keeping up with the financial needs of their studies and even of their families. The reimbursement given to working students with no failing marks per semester is an excellent reward to motivate them to balance their work and studies.

The findings of this study are consistent with the study of Danlog (2008) which noted that agents receive allowances and performance appraisal bonus aside from other benefits like health insurance and night differential pay, among others. The opportunities given by the call center companies are indeed welcoming on the part of the working students as they boost their productivity both in school and work. Call center companies are lenient enough to understand the demands of schooling and work of the working students in the company. This part of the existing social environment is shared only by working students in call centers. The flexibility in schedule being offered by the company for the working students is distinct with that of the structured schedule given to regular call center agents. The distinction on schedule is part of the subculture of working students in call centers.

#### 1.1.4. Working relations of call center agents with their superiors and co-workers

Participants agreed that call center companies provide equal treatment and opportunity to all employees regardless of age and sex. Participants also observed their superiors (Team Leaders, in this case) to be approachable, friendly, and agent-centered. They described their superiors as “cool” and “easy to get along with”. “Age doesn’t define your position,” said one of the agents when asked to describe her working relations with her superiors and co-workers. She also added, *“tsokaran (slang for buddy) ang TL ko, very informal lang. Nagiging formal na lang pag may written account na (this includes adherence to company’s norm, violated company policy, and the AHT).”* [My TL is a good buddy. Our working relationship is very informal. It only gets formal once written account is already involved.] This was also affirmed by another agent who said, *“Yung TLs, reachable naman sila. Para nga silang friends eh pero pag nasa floor na, siyempre, we show respect na. Kapag off work, halimbawa, kakain or badminton kami, para lang magkaka-barkada pero pag nasa loob na (referring to the office), hindi na kami tini-treat na level - may distinction pa rin.”* [Our team leader is approachable and friendly. If we are off work, we usually go out to eat or play badminton. We treat each other as friends, but once we are on the floor, we need to show respect to his/her position.] The participants noted that they do not see any problem in their working relationship with superiors.

When it comes to working relations with co-workers, participants found it plain and normal as well. They consider their co-workers, most especially the singles, as their friends who are fun to be with. *“Okay naman sila, friendly,*

*regardless of age and gender - hindi yun hindrance para hindi ka mapalapit sa kanila. May mga tao kasi na kino-consider nila batch mates nila or from the same age bracket lang.”* [My co-workers are okay. They are friendly to everyone regardless of age or gender. Good thing they are not selective because there are still some who prefer people only from their batch or people from their same age bracket.] One participant noticed that there were also conflicts arising in the workplace such as issues on competition and promotion of agents. Nevertheless, they were still able to manage the situation.

Results of the study show a healthy working relationship between the participants and their superiors and co-workers. The informal set-up in the call centers creates an atmosphere of familiarity and congeniality among the agents, which might be helpful to boost productivity and team work in the workplace. The working relations of the working students with their superiors and co-workers reflect how the company, as a whole, deal with working students, and that is, lenient and flexible. Being considered as the young ones in the workplace, they received the understanding and support of the management. Hence, the working students easily adapted to the social environment of the workplace amiable relations with their superiors and co-workers. The findings of this study somehow negates the study of Puthukulangasa (2010) wherein the pressure in work such as the demands from superiors, co- staff, and others contribute to the physical and emotional fatigue of the agents. This may be due to the reason that the participants of this study were working students who are still young and have the vigor and energy to work with different people. Call center companies, based on the prior

findings of this study, are more lenient and flexible when it comes to working students.

### 1.2. On Norms

The call center industry has norms which every agent is obliged to observe and follow. Norms are guidelines people are supposed to follow in their relation to one another, as well as shared rules that specify what is right or wrong (San Juan, 2007, p.43). Norms are acquired through the process of socialization and through this, call center agents learn and imbibe the expected behavior in the workplace.

Based on the study, the following were the observed norms in the call center by everyone, the last item on the list; flexibility in schedule is shared only by students working in call centers. The norms listed below were developed through the social environment in the workplace.

*Quality of calls-* Quality calls in a call center are observed if the agents are able to resolve the customer's concern in the shortest time possible. Calls are also recorded and monitored by a Quality Assurance Analyst. Customers are also asked for feedback regarding the calls. Moreover, participants also mentioned about the observance of the Average Handling Time (AHT) which is the required number of minutes an agent must attend to the needs of the customers. One of the participants explained, "*AHT- Average Handling Time- yun ung required time na dapat ma-resolve mo ang needs ng caller.*" [AHT (Average Handling Time) refers to the required time

that is needed to resolve a caller's inquiry]. Another participant also shared, *"Speed and accuracy lang. Okay lang kahit working student ka as long as you are able to perform your task well in a timely manner."* [Speed and accuracy is the key. It's okay to be a working student as long you are able to perform your task well in a timely manner.] Indeed, agents should observe less AHT; the lesser the AHT, the more cost efficient for the company.

The result of this interview supports the studies of Fabros (2006) and Holman (2002) which noted that call centers impose strict monitoring to keep the agent in line with the policy set by the company. Based on the previous studies, AHT should not necessarily extend beyond 5 minutes to attend to the needs of the customers. According to the participants of this study, their allowed AHT is between 11-15 minutes only. It should be noted that AHT varies in each company, but the idea to shorten the calling time resolving the customers concern still remains true. Quality of calls as a norm was developed in response to the demand of social environment to provide quality service among their customers or callers.

*English Only Policy (EOP)* - All of the participants said that EOP or English Only Policy should be observed inside the workplace, specifically on the floor (the working area where agents receive and make calls). EOP requires the agent to practice the use of English language when receiving and making calls and when communicating with their co-workers and superiors. *"Sa company na napuntahan ko, very strict sila. Kahit yun mga security guards, they are trained to speak in English. Kapag nahuli ka nga ng TL mo na hindi*

*nag-e-EOP, sisigawan ka -“Tagalog! Ganun!”* [In our company, EOP is strictly imposed. Even the security guards are trained to speak in English. In case you are caught not following the EOP, the team leader will surely call your attention], shared by one of the participants. Meanwhile, few participants revealed that their company is lenient when it comes to EOP and only enforces it whenever there is a visit from a foreign client who supervises and monitors their work. *“Hindi naman talaga nasusunod yun (referring to EOP). Pag nandyan lang yun mga boss namin from the other country na we need to speak in English. Kami, nagdadaldalan kami in the vernacular, pero dapat aware ka pa rin sa EOP,”* [It is only during visits from our superiors from the other country that we are required to observe EOP. Other than that, the company is lenient enough to allow us to converse in the vernacular. But still, we should always be aware of the EOP.], shared by one of the participants.

The practice of EOP is a manifestation of the nature of call center work where fluency in the English language is a must for its agents. Since foreigners are the main customers of these call centers, agents are expected and required to be articulate in English. The findings of this study are consistent with the study of Fabros (2006) which noted that English is the only language accepted in the call center. Agents are trained to neutralize their accent and make it close to a Native American accent. This policy in the call center is a reminder that anyone who wishes to be part of this industry should have the command of the language. Since BPO is considered as a sunshine

industry, the education sector should be responsive to equip the students for the demands of the global market.

*Dress code* - Results of the interview showed that there is no specific/prescribed dress code for the agents. As long as the agents dress up decently and work appropriately, it is acceptable. This means that agents are prohibited to wear shorts, *sandos*, and sandals. According to the participants, smart casual, which usually consists of pants, polo shirt or T-shirt, blazer or jacket (for the cold temperature), is the observed dress code in the call center. Agents are also required to wear their company ID. “*Decent casual, wala namang uniform eh - jacket, aircon eh (referring to the air conditioning units installed in the workplace),*” [We do not have a required uniform. A decent casual look and a jacket to keep us warm will do] said by one of the participants. Another participant added, “*Puwede naka-jeans, basta naka-collar. Minsan, yung iba naka-T-shirt pero naka-jacket naman sila,*” [We can wear jeans as long as our shirt has a collar. Others prefer wearing T-shirts with a jacket on]. One participant said that dress code in the call center should be simple and not flashy. This may be because of the security issue for agents working on the graveyard shift. They are more prone to security risk especially when going to work on the wee hours of the night. Furthermore, the casual dress code of the agents reflects the casual life style of the agents. There is no need for the agents to dress up since they would just sit down and respond to calls. These findings are similar with the findings of Bacasong (2008) which stated that call center agents usually are clad in

casual attire at work. The established norm on dress code is an influence of the casual social environment in the workplace. The casual relations in the workplace translate to the casual dress code among the agents.

*Attendance and Punctuality* - All of the participants agreed that call center companies are very strict when it comes to attendance and punctuality. They avoid the NCNS (no call, no show) to avoid being marked as AWOL (absence without leave). These two are strictly not allowed in the company. *“Mahigpit sila sa attendance eh. They check our OBM (Open Book Management). It is an incentive program based on one’s performance,”* [They have strict policy in attendance. They check our OBM which is an incentive program based on one’s performance] shared by one of the participants. Another participant further explained the policy of NCNS, *“NCNS - ito yung equivalent ng AWOL, hindi ka nagpaalam na hindi ka papasok. Para masabing hindi ka NCNS, dapat tumawag ka at least two hours before your shift.”* [NCNS is equivalent to AWOL. If you will be absent, you should at least notify your superior two hours before your shift.]

The findings indicated that just like any other work place, call centers’ policy on attendance and punctuality is given significant emphasis. On the case of the social environment in call centers where the demand is to deliver quantity of quality calls and transactions, manpower is deemed needed and that is being observed and monitored through the company norms of attendance and punctuality. Moreover, the strict policy of the call center companies regarding attendance is a good training ground for working

students to learn discipline and responsibility. These findings are also similar with that of Fabros (2006) which stated that call center agents are required to ask permission before proceeding from one activity to another, especially for authorized absences.

*No cell phone on floor* - Participants of this study also said that cell phones are not allowed on floor (floor is the term used in call centers which refers to the working area). *“Bawal din ang cell phone sa floor dahil pag tumunog yung phone, makaka-apekto siya sa headset at sa signal ng call”* [Cell phones are not allowed on the floor. It may affect our headsets and the signal of the calls if it suddenly rings], said by a participant. This is the reason why agents leave their cell phones and gadgets inside their lockers. This is done to create an atmosphere of focus and concentration in the working area. The physical surrounding of the workplace which is surrounded by phones receiving overseas call from foreign clienteles dictate the regulation of no cell phone on the work station to avoid interference of signal and, of course, for agents to focus on their work. This practice is also common in the educational setting, where cell phones tend to divide the attention of the students. This company norm helps develop the value of discipline, either at work or in school.

*Flexible schedule* - Call center companies offer flexible schedule for working students based on their school schedule. Most of the participants agreed that their companies are lenient enough to provide them a schedule which is in sync with their academic loads and schedule. One of the participants said, *“Very lenient when it comes to students, just show your registration card”*.

This is also agreed by another participant, “Schedule given is based on enrolled subjects”. The consideration on schedule given by the call center companies is reflective of the lenient relations of the company when it comes to working students. Given the distinction of schedule being offered only to working students’ makes this norm unique to the group of students working in call centers.

Based on the results of the interviews, the norms established in the call centers were relatively similar with the norms in other workplaces. Call centers also aim for quality of service, just like in any other service-oriented industry. This is manifested through quality of calls measured through lesser AHT (average handling time) and their strict policy in attendance and punctuality. Lastly, the EOP (English Only Policy) in the work area is enforced to train everyone in the use of English, although findings of this study revealed that some companies are lenient when it comes to this policy and is only observed whenever there is a foreign visitor or supervisor.

The norms established in the call centers were developed through the social environment of the workplace. Based on a functional standpoint, the established norms serve as a standard of behavior and policies to carry out the existing environment in the workplace. The social environment in the call centers as manifested in their physical surrounding of computer units, telephones, and air conditioning units paved way for the observed dress code of the agents. Wearing of jackets which has been the common stereotypes among agents is

used as protection against the cold temperature in the workplace. Cell phones were not allowed to avoid interference of calls. The demands in the workplace to provide quality service to its callers paved its way also to observe quality of calls through the observance of Average Handling Time, and to be strict when it comes to attendance and punctuality. Lastly, the congenial and lenient relations of call center companies translate to a flexible schedule being offered to working students only.

### *1.3. On Values*

Values, as defined by Macionis (2012), are culturally defined standards that people use to decide what is desirable, good, and beautiful, and that serve as broad guidelines for social living. In this study, students working in call centers experienced transition and adjustment of values based on the social environment and norms of the workplace. Specifically, the following were the values developed by the agents as a result of their work:

*Importance of time* - The participants of the study who were working students learned how to value time. They learned how to manage the demands of their work and studies through proper time management. One of the agents said, *“Every minute counts. Hindi na ako masyado laid back. Mas madisiplina ako dahil sa time restrictions.”* [Every minute counts. I avoid being laid back. I became more disciplined because of the time restrictions I experienced at work.]

Results of this study show the implication of having a part-time work among the working students in call centers. They need to handle their work and school responsibilities; thus, the participants perceived that it is important to use their time wisely.

*Empathy with the customers* - Working students learned from their work the value of empathy. They learned how to understand others by trying to be in the shoes of other people. They became more polite and considerate of the feelings of other people. Everyday dealing with different people helped develop the empathy of call center agents. As what one of the participants said, *“Tinuruan ako ng work ko na maging considerate sa ibang tao.”* [My work taught me to become more considerate to other people.]

*Tolerance* - Being exposed to people from different walks of life, the participants became more understanding. One of the participants said he became tolerant regarding homosexuals. He said, *“I’ve become open to new ideas and new culture. Mas naging tolerant ako sa third sex; hindi na ako homophobic.”* [I became more tolerant about the third sex. I am no longer homophobic.] One of the agents shared she became open-minded after having worked in a call center. She said, *“Pagiging open minded. Lumaki kasi ako na ang area ko eh dati eh school at bahay lang. Ngayon, school-bahay-work na. Marami akong natutunan sa mga ka-trabaho ko, like may mga lugar palang ganito, may mga tao palang ganito.”* [I became open minded. Before, my life used to revolve only around school and home; now it is school, work, and home. I learned a lot of things from my work mates. I

discovered new places and met people from different walks of life.] Based on the interview, call centers provide equal opportunity to anyone regardless of age and gender. The working condition in call centers helped the participants to be more receptive and tolerant of others regardless of belief and preference.

*Appreciation of customer service* - The participants of the study learned to appreciate the value of customer service after working in the call center. As customer service representatives, their work taught them to be more appreciative and precise when it comes to customer service. One of the agents shared her two cents on this matter and said, “*Naging very particular ako sa customer service. Kapag may hindi magandang service, talagang nagko complain ako. ‘Di ba, ako nagbibigay ng magandang service, so inexpect ko yun pag ako naman. Parang nagbibigay ako ng good quality service, so syempre yun din ang gusto ko.*” [I became more particular with customer service. If I feel that I don’t get the right service that I deserved, then I complain. I give quality customer service in my work, so I definitely expect that I deserve the same.]

This change in values could be considered as a repercussion of their work wherein the participants are expected to deliver quality service for each customer call.

*Value of work* - Participants of the study learned how to value their work. They said that working while studying helped them to value and give

importance to their work. They also considered their work as a means to support their studies and their family.

*Nationalism* - While some of the participants tended to adopt the American culture through their language and outlook, other participants said they became nationalistic after working in the call center. One of the agents revealed that her concept of American Dream shattered. She said, “Na-expose ako sa mga problems ng US. Hindi na ganun kataas tingin ko sa mga Amerikano. Mas na-appreciate ko pagiging Pilipino ko.” [I was exposed to the problems that Americans encounter. I learned they are not that great. I became more proud to be a Filipino.] Another participant who used to handle fraud accounts was exposed to the growing problem of credit card debt of the Americans.

The findings above reveal that dealing and working with foreign people made some agents more appreciative of their own country. They noticed and observed that the problems of developed countries such as USA are also similar to those of the developing countries like the Philippines. It is significant to note that some agents still take pride and show appreciation for our country despite being exposed to foreign cultures.

Findings of this study also show that the environment in the call centers helped develop the values of the working students. Based on the results of the series of interviews, the participants of the study became more time-conscious, tolerant, confident, sociable, and empathetic towards others. Working in the call center also helped them to value their work. On the other hand, some of the

participants tended to adopt the American culture in their lifestyle and in the way they speak. Noteworthy also is that some agents embraced more their nationality when they were exposed to the realities of their work.

The values developed by the working students are reflective of the social environment and norms in the call center. Results of this study agree with the Functional perspective - that culture and values are developed through adaptation to the environment. Also, they show that the transition of values among working students were brought about by the social environment in the workplace. Their exposure to the norms of the company helped them develop values such as giving importance to time, which is a result of the norm of delivering quality calls at the shortest possible time. Tolerance and empathy were developed as a result of constant interaction with people coming from different walks of life. Appreciation of service and value of work were developed based on their job function of providing service measured on the quality of their calls. Meanwhile, the development of nationalism is a latent function of their work. The constant exposure of call center agents to the problems and concerns of their foreign callers unintendedly developed the value of nationalism. It should also be noted that the values developed by the agents still reflect the values and norms of the dominant culture, as what Bertrand Russell mentioned. This is called "a small culture within a culture". Lastly, the pros and cons of working in the call center helped the participants develop their values, thus making them better individuals who are more confident, tolerant of others, and more appreciative of their work.

#### 1.1.4. Changes in lifestyle, skills, and behavior of call center agents

The distinct social environment in the call center also paved the way for the changes in lifestyle, skills, and behavior of working students in call centers. The participants offered a variety of responses when asked for the changes they observed in their lifestyle and behavior as a consequence of work. They noted the following:

*Shorter patience* - Some of the participants admitted that they imbibed the attitude of their callers, especially the irate ones. They developed a shorter patience which is evident even after work. Some participants said, “*Parang umigsi ang pasensya ko. Na-adopt ko na kapag irate ang kausap ko, nagiging irate na rin ako. Nagagaya ko na din ang mga expression nila like yung F-word.*” [It seems my patience became shorter. I guess I adopted it from my irate callers. I also even started using the F-word as an expression.] Other participants also observed and said, “*Nagiging mainitin ang ulo ko, umigsi ang pasensya ko.*” [I became hot-headed and impatient.] Thus, it can be implied that the impact of call center work on some agents is more on the psychological aspect.

*Improved communication skills* - Most of the participants agreed that working in the call center helped them improve their communication skills. They were able to acquire the accent and speaking skills of their customers. “*Nakatulong siya na ma-improve ang communication skills ko. Napakinabangan ko yung skills sa call center kapag may mga reporting o group activity sa klase. Mas naging comfortable ako sa English.*” [My

communication skills improved. I became more comfortable with the English language especially when we have activities in school, like grouping or reporting activities.], shared by one of the participants. Another agent also mentioned, *“Mas naging fluent ako, naging wide yung vocabulary ko, at na-acquire ko rin yung accent. Feeling ko, nag-improve talaga ang English ko.”* [I became more fluent, my vocabulary widened, and I acquired the accent. I feel that my English has improved a lot.] Moreover, one of the participant shared he feels like an American after working in the call center since he speaks like one too. The participants also believed that it is really important to speak well in English so that no one would get left behind.

*Less time with friends* - The demands of night work also lessened the time for friends. One of the participants revealed that she hardly sees her friends after work in the call center; her friends have normal day time routine while she is the only one working at night. *“May mga time na pag after school nagkakayayaan, hindi na ako nakakasama. Matutulog na lang ako.”* [There are times that I can no longer join my classmates after school activities. I would rather catch a sleep and rest.], said one of the agents. Another participant also shared, *“More time with call center friends. Mas sila ang nakakasalamuha ko, nagtatampo (referring to friends outside the call center), but they understand.”* [I spend more time with my work mates than my friends who get dismayed once in a while, but still they understand my situation.]

Findings of this study reflect the consequence of a part-time work. Agents' time is now divided between work and other responsibilities (school, family, peers).

*Conscious of time* – The participants learned the value of time management to balance the demands of work and school. They said that after having worked in the call center, they became conscious of time since they needed to balance their responsibilities. A participant said, “*Time is gold. Ayoko ng sinasayang ang oras ko. Gusto ko, nakikinig sa akin palagi yung kausap ko, kahit boyfriend ko.*” [Time is gold, and I don't want my time to be wasted. I want people, especially my boyfriend, to listen to what I say.] Another respondent supported the previous statement and said, “*Naging mas time conscious ako. Like kami ng boyfriend ko, ayokong nasasayang ang oras ko. Pag nag-uusap kami kahit sa phone, gusto ko talagang nakikinig siya. Nagagalit ako pag feeling ko hindi siya nakikinig. Ayoko na kasing inuulit ang sinasabi ko. Magagalit ako, sasabihin ko, ‘alam mo sinasayang mo lang oras ko.’ Dati, sa bus, nalilibang ako kahit mahaba ang biyahe. Ngayon, hindi na, na-iinip na ako. Parang feeling ko, sayang oras. Ang mga Amerikano, ganun di'ba? Ayaw nila ng paulit-ulit, ayaw nila ng nasasayang ang oras nila.*” [I became more conscious of time. One example is whenever I have phone conversation with my boyfriend, I always demand his full attention. I don't want to waste my time repeating what I've already said. Another example is riding on a bus. Before, I used to enjoy it even if the travel would take a long while, but now I get easily irritated. I feel like my time is being wasted. It's an

American way, right? They don't want to repeat the same thing over and over. They don't like their time being wasted.]

These changes in the behavior may be attributed to the company's norm of speed and accuracy when it comes to customer service. Agents are expected to be time efficient when responding to their customer needs; thus, they tend to adapt and imbibe the practice of being always conscious of time.

*Particular of customer service* - Most of the participants believed they became more particular when it comes to customer service. Most of the respondents in this study were CSRs (Customer Service Representatives), which means it is their job to provide assistance to the inquiries and concerns of the customer. Given the nature of their work, they too have become conscious when it comes to customer service. After having worked in call centers, participants became assertive of their rights as a customer. *"I've become particular of customer service. Alam mo na ang rights mo. Kung бага ako, I'm giving quality service; I also expect it should be returned."* [I have become more particular of customer service, and I became more aware of consumer rights. I give quality service to my callers, so I also expect the same treatment to be returned.], shared by one of the agents. One of the participants also stated that as a consumer, you really have to complain if you feel you have received poor service.

*Gained confidence* - Most of the participants gained greater confidence through interaction with different kinds of people. Some of them said that they became straightforward. They learned how to speak their mind and how

to deal with people from all walks of life. *“Mas naging diretso na ako sa pakikipag-usap, wala ng paligoy-ligoy. I gained more confidence in English.”*

[I became more straightforward, and I gained more confidence in English.], said one of the participants.

*Financial gain* - The monetary gain that the participants received from their work enabled them to buy the things they wanted. A participant shared, *“Dati, peke lang ang mga nabibili ko, ngayon authentic na! Hindi na ako nanonood ng pekeng DVD ngayon, kaya ko nang mag-IMAX.”* [Before, I used to buy fake DVD's, but now I can buy original copies and even see a movie in an IMAX theater.] Most of the participants believed that call center job offers higher salary and benefits compared to other jobs.

The findings above revealed the influence of the social environment on the lifestyle, skills, and behavior of the participants. The unique environment in call centers developed the behavior and brought change to the way of living of the agents. These changes may be positive or negative. These results are supported by the Functional view that culture can be adapted based on the environment. In this study, it was revealed that there were changes in the lifestyle, behavior, and skills of the working students as part of adaptation to the environment and norms of the workplace.

Results of this study agree with the Functionalist perspective of Parsons. The subculture developed among the working students in call centers is a result of adaptation based on the existing social environment of the workplace. Norms and values were developed through the social environment. On a functionalist standpoint, the norms serve their functions to regulate the expected behavior of the agents based on the existing environment. Meanwhile, values of the working students also developed and adjusted as influenced by established environment and norms in the workplace. In return, this also paved the way for the changes in lifestyle, behavior, and skills of the working students in call centers.

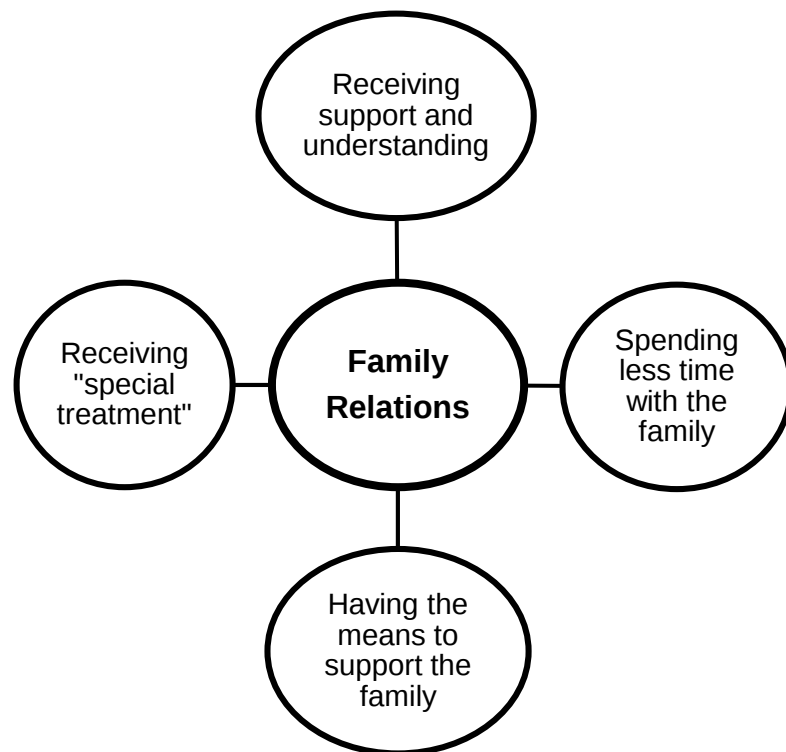
On a functional viewpoint, subcultures exist as a source of adaptation in a society. In such cases, a group of people in the society adopt a new set of values and beliefs that are better adjusted to the new realities. This group thus develops a subculture in response to the new conditions (Farley, 1992, p 104). Given the adaptation of the working students in the call center, this paved the way for the development of a subculture. Subcultures exist through the distinct norms shared by the members of the group. The relationship of call center companies to working students, the working relations of students working in call center with their superiors and co-workers, the demands of managing studies and work, and the leniency of call center companies when it comes to schedule make it distinct only to the working students. The foregoing comprises the subculture of working students in call centers. This subculture of working students in call center was born out of cultural adaptation in the environment.

## 2. Influence of the subculture on the life of working students in call centers

This section examines the influence of the subculture in the workplace on the lives of the working students. The study looked on four components, namely: family relations; health; recreational activities; and consumption behavior of the informants.

### 2.1 On family relations

Family relations, as discussed in the framework, refer to the social relations among members of the family. In this study, family relations were examined as to how the participants interacted and related with the members of their family, their life in the household, and the quality time they spent with their family.



**Figure 3. The Perceived Relations of the Students Working in Call Centers with Their Family**

Figure 3 presents how the students working in call centers perceived their relationship with their family. Listed below are the views of the participants on how their family perceived their work in the call center.

*Receiving support and understanding* - Some of the agents felt the support and understanding of their family regarding the nature of their work. “*Na-understand naman ng mother ko yung work ko kaya pag rest day ko, talagang pinagpapahinga niya talaga ako.*” [My mother understands the nature of my work. If it is my rest day, she will make it a point that I have my complete rest.], said by one of the participants. Some of the participants said that their families see their job as a means for them to be more independent and responsible. One of the participants said, “*Malaki tulong ng work ko lalo na sa family ko. Ang daddy ko pa naman na-stroke, yung mama ko walang trabaho, so parang ako din ang breadwinner.*” [My job serves as a big support for all my needs especially for my family. My dad suffered from stroke while my mom is a plain house wife, so practically I am the breadwinner of the family.] On the other hand, some agents felt that their family was not that fully supportive when it comes to their job. One of the agents shared, “*Yun mama ko, pinipilit niya na ako mag-resign December pa lang. Sabi ko nga, ‘Mama, tapusin na natin (yun school year) kasi kahit mag-resign naman ako ngayon, wala naman akong school na mapapasukan.’ Tapos, eto ngayon, pinag-reresign na naman ako. Sabi niya sa akin, ‘bahala ka na sa buhay mo.’ Parang gusto niya na nga kong i-disown (laughing). Sabi niya, ‘bahala ka kung hindi ka makikinig sa akin, malaki ka na rin*

*naman’.*” [My mom kept insisiting that I resign from work. I told her that it is impractical for me to do that, and it is better if we wait until the end of the school year. She did not like what I said, so she told me that I am all grown up to have my own decision. It feels like she might disown me anytime now (laughing).] This sentiment stemmed from the fact that she now spends less time with her family after working in the call center. Most of the participants said that the only time they can be with their family is during their rest day. However, it is unfortunate that they also use their rest day to recover lost sleep and rest.

*Spending less time with the family-* Working students in the call center experienced significant changes in their family relations brought about by their work. The participants mostly agreed that having less time and communication was one significant change they experienced after working in the call center. Their schedule did not give them the luxury of time to catch up and spend time with their family since their work was at night, and they had to divide the day time to go to school and catch up with sleep. One of the participants said, “*Weekend ko na lang nakikita ang family ko.*” [I only see my family during weekends] since she needed to manage her time for work and studies. Some participants also revealed that after working in the call center, they experienced difficulty visiting their family in the province due to lack of time. On the other hand, other participants said that because of the less time they spend with their family, they found new family in their co-workers whom they also considered as friends. These findings reflect that of in the study of

Kalita (2005) which claimed that the subculture in call center changed the social life of the agents. While young people's social life used to revolve around family, now it increasingly focuses on friends at work.

Yet, the participants believed that despite having limited time spent with their family, they still considered themselves as family-oriented. They still believed that despite the time constraint, nothing was changed in their family relations. One agent said, "*Walang nagbago, no compromise, no difference at all. Ever since naman kasi, family- oriented ako. Pag weekends, lumalabas kami, ako manlilibre.*" [Nothing has changed. Ever since, I have always been family-oriented. I treat my family whenever we go out during weekends.] Some of the respondents who lived in boarding houses used the convenience of technology to constantly communicate with their family. One participant who lived on her own shared her experience, "*Nakatira ako sa boarding house. Pag rest day ko, tumatawag ako sa bahay namin (in Batangas). Umuuwi ako every two months o pag may occasion.*" [I live in a boarding house. During my rest day, I call my parents in Batangas and see them every two months or during special occasions.] Moreover, their family remained supportive of their endeavor while encouraging them to prioritize their studies and perform well in school despite being a working student.

*Receiving "special treatment"*- Meanwhile, some of the agents enjoyed special treatment from their family, mostly from their parents, after working in the call center. They were excused from doing the household chores. Meanwhile, one of the participants gave a funny remark on how the

subculture on her work influenced her interaction with people in the household. She said, "*Minsan sa bahay, napapa-Ingles ako. Kahit nanay ko o kahit nga yung katulong naming, nakaka-usap ko sa Ingles.*" [Sometimes I tend to speak English at home. I even talk to my mom or to our house maid in English.] This "special treatment" that some of the agents experienced from their family could be attributed to their additional new role in the family. They are no longer just plain sons and daughters of their parents, but also a mere provider and supporter to the needs of the household. Given such change in their role in the family, members of the family give them special treatment to acknowledge their valuable contributions in the household.

*Having the means to support the family-* One positive change that the participants experienced after working is the personal fulfillment they gained by helping and providing for the needs of their family. Most of the participants said they were able to shoulder some of the expenses in the household such as paying for the grocery and utility bills and giving allowances to their younger siblings. Their work also entitled them to go out on their own after having their own money to spend. One of the participants shared his experience, "*Hindi na ako hirap, hindi na ako nanghihingi ng baon sa kanila, nakakapag-abot pa ako sa kanila. Ngayon, nagkaroon na ako ng disposition. Kung dati binu-budget ko lang kung ano ibibigay ng parent ko, ngayon, may sarili na akong pera. Nagkaroon na ako ng freedom. May sarili na kasi akong pera kaya minsan nakakagala na ako.*" [Money is not an issue anymore. Before, I would always ask my parents for my allowance, but now it

is the other way around. I can now share part of my salary to my family. I can now also buy whatever I want and explore places with my own budget.] Being employed in their young age, enabled the participants to support not only their needs but on their family as well.

Results of the interview showed that the family relations of working students in call centers are diversified and complex. Based on the findings, some of the family accepted the part time job of their son/ daughter. They support and understand the situation of their son/daughter, and some even provide them the special treatment on the household. This can also be attributed to the fact, that after working in the call centers, the participants were able to support the financial needs not only of themselves but their family as well. This lead to finding a feeling of fulfillment for the participants, seeing they were able to share their hard-earned income with their family. In addition, there were other families who discouraged the participants to work because of lessened time for studies. Also, most of the participants agreed that they experienced less time spent with their family.

On a functional standpoint, the family of the working students functions as an emotional support. According to Parsons, although most people have close friendship that give them emotional support, family members generally play a larger role in this area. Most people feel a particular bond with family members which are unlike of that felt in any other social relationship. Family also performs the affectional function. The family has been referred to as the “shock absorber of society” in that it offers support for the individual who must cope in a difficult world (Farley, 1992, p.

385). This is true based on the results of the interview where participants of the study revealed they feel the support and concern of their family.

In terms of influence of the subculture on family relations, there is an indirect relation of the subculture to family relations. One distinct influence is on the case of some participants absorbing the language of the call center work in conversing with the members of the household. Nevertheless, the changes in family relations of the working students were mostly brought up by the demands of the night shift schedule as manifested in the less time spent with their family.

## *2.2 On health*

This study assumed that the subculture in the workplace affects the health condition of its members. According to the World Health Organization (2013), health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being. In this study, health refers to the health condition and concerns, eating habits, and food preference of the call center agents. Listed below are the findings of this study that showed how working on a graveyard schedule affected the food preference, eating habits, and health condition of the participants.

*Food preference* - Most of the participants admitted that they prefer eating in fast food restaurants, usually ordering chicken or burger, while some preferred eating in convenience stores. In addition, the participants said that they started consuming more cups of coffee after having worked in a call center. Coffee shops such as Starbucks have been to-go-place when it comes to coffee. It has also become a status symbol for most of the agents.

*“Starbucks or Coffee Bean, pero pag may pera lang. Pag wala, coffee na lang sa office. Yun nga lang, sa kaka-kape, naging acidic ako.”* [If I have the budget, I always buy coffee at Starbucks or Coffee Bean. If not, I just go with the free coffee at the office. The problem is I got acidic because of drinking too much coffee.], shared by one of the participants. Meanwhile, the male participants revealed that they drink energy drink like *Cobra* to keep them awake before going to class. One of the participants said, *“Nag-ta-take ako ng energy drinks, lalo na pag may class ako. Cobra (energy drink brand), para mabuhay ako! (laughs)”* [I always take energy drinks especially if I have classes. It keeps me alive during schooldays.]

The preference of the participants to fast food might be explained by the convenience and accessibility of these food establishments to the location of the call centers. One of the participants noted, *“Fast food, wala ka namang choice e. Sa pantry, paulit-ulit lang naman ng luto. Sabagay, ganun din naman sa fast food. Unless magbabaon ka. Kaya lang wala namang time na maghanda pa ng baon.”* [You don’t have a choice but to eat in a fast food restaurant. The food in our pantry is always the same, and we no longer have time to prepare our own food.] Because of limited time, they just eat food that is served fast and easy. Their schedule also ruined their normal eating and sleeping habits which resulted in becoming moody. Others gained weight due to stress eating and unhealthy diet.

*Eating habits* - In terms of eating habits, the participants described it as erratic and distorted. *“Yun ang nabago talaga. Sobrang na-distort yung eating*

*habits ko. Yung 11 pm ko, yun ang nagiging breakfast ko; yung lunch ko, nasa 4-6 am; and yung dinner ko yung lunch time na.*” [My eating habit changed a lot. I will have my breakfast at 11 pm, lunch at around 4-6 am, and dinner at lunch time], revealed by one of the agents. Their work schedule prohibited them to eat on a normal time. They usually eat their breakfast before going to work which usually starts in the evening. They will take lunch after work which is around 4:00 AM- 6:00 AM.

The findings of this study support the study of Marcos (2008) which also found out that agents had less regular meal times and high consumption of caffeinated drink and fast food. Fast food is indeed a staple choice for the hungry stomach of agents who want it quick and convenient. Given the findings of this study, frequent dining in fast food chains must be lessened because it may lead to serious illness if not done in moderation. Agents should observe proper diet and nutrition through a balance meal.

*Health condition* - The participants also experienced significant change in their health due to call center work. The work schedule of the agents gave them less time for sleep. One of the participants said, “*Apektado yun pagtulog ko, sira yun sleeping habits ko. Masakit sa ulo talaga siya. Masakit minsan sa katawan kasi wala na akong exercise. Pagdating sa bahay from work, higa ka na. Paggising, kakain tapos pupunta na sa school kaya minsan as much as possible nilalakad ko na (papuntang school) para exercise na rin.*” [My sleeping habits changed dramatically. I experience headache and fatigue since I don’t have enough sleep and exercise. This is why sometimes,

if I have classes, I just walk going to school as a form of exercise.] They also became moody and impatient. Some of them felt they gained weight. Moreover, one participant revealed that she underwent operation for the removal of her gall bladder due to unhealthy eating habits. She said, *“Operada na ako. Natanggalan na ako ng gall bladder, kaka-fast food. Isa pa, I gained weight talaga.”* [My gall bladder was removed due to excessive eating of unhealthy food such as fast food. I also think that I gained a lot of weight.] One agent mentioned that he squeezed his time to visit the gym to be physically fit to combat the health hazards of work.

The participants of the study shared their health complaints relating to their work. Most of the participants complained about eye strain, back pain, headache, cough, colds, UTI (urinary tract infection), and stress. The participants gave a variety of responses on this matter such as: *“Dahil nga laging puyat, lagi kong complaint yung headache ko - number 1 yan! Kaya ngayon, I take vitamins na talaga.”* [I always experience headache because I don't have enough sleep that is why I am now taking vitamins.] Another participant talked about her UTI problem, *“UTI, nagkaka-problema ako sa amin kasi 3 times ka lang puwede mag-CR, malamig pa naman sa office.”* [UTI is a common sickness. Here in our office, we would only be allowed for three CR breaks despite the cold temperature in the office.] Another one, her eye strain: *“Eye strain, magpapagawa na nga ako ng bagong salamin.”* [I'll have my eyeglasses fixed due to eye strain.] As a solution to eye strain, a participant shared his practice to avoid experiencing eye strain due to long

contact period with the computer monitor. He said, “*Dapat, for every 20 minutes na nakababad ka sa monitor, you pause and look 20 meters away from your monitor for about 20 seconds.*” [For every 20 minutes that you are focused on the computer monitor, you should pause and look 20 meters away from your monitor for about 20 seconds.] Others experienced and complained about numbness of arm, pimples, tiredness, sore throat, carpal tunnel, high blood pressure, and hyperacidity. The findings above reflect the consequences of their work schedule. The night shift work of the participants created stress due to lack of sleep, and posed health and safety problems.

The results of the interview support the study of Lim (2007) which noted that stress in work posed health risk among the agents - some of them lose or gain weight. One respondent supported this statement and said, “*Ako, I gained weight after working in the call center. Stressed talaga. Part of work eh.*” [I gained weight after working in the call center; stress is indeed part of my work.] This was seconded by another participant who stated, “*Stress talaga, and dahil din sa nature of work namin, hindi na namin alam ang nangyayari sa mundo.*” [It is definitely stress, and we basically no longer have an idea of what is happening in the outside world because of the nature of our work.] The lack of sleep due to night shift schedule also led to the disruption of the Circadian Rhythm or the internal biological time-keeping system of the body. Based on the study of Ho (2007), when workers are on a night shift or rotating shift, their schedule violates the body’s natural rhythm.

The health complaints mentioned above are relatively similar with the findings of Hubilla (2011) and Bool (2006).

The health concerns discussed above is a clear manifestation of the influence of the subculture on the health of the participants. The physical surrounding and the demand of night shift schedule posed risks on the health and well being of the working students. On a functional perspective, the health problems and sickness experienced and encountered by the participants served as a dysfunction since they were not able to perform their obligations as an agent and student.

The health hazards brought about by the night shift schedule of the agents need to be addressed by the call center industry through programs promoting wellness among its employees. This is deemed important most especially for working students who divide their time for work and studies.

### *2.3 On recreational activities*

Recreational activities, as discussed in the framework, refer to the flexible time spent beyond the demands of work (Holman, 2002). This part of the study covered the usual leisure and past time of the participants, the significant changes in their recreational activities they observed brought about by their work, and the way the participants usually spent their rest day. The findings on the participants' recreational activities were categorized into three: leisure and vices; social life; and rest day.

*Leisure and vices* - The participants shared a variety of answers when asked about their usual leisure. Most of the participants answered watching movies in cinema house, mall, shopping, videoke singing,

travelling, eating out, playing games (DOTA, PSP), and reading books as their leisure activities. One of the participants shared, "*Ako, leisure ko talaga is travelling lalo na pag long weekend or rest days, like punta sa Baguio, ganun, or Tagaytay.*" [I love to travel especially during long weekends or rest days, like going to Baguio or Tagaytay.] Another participant said, "*Eating out talaga - food trip, kumakain sa mga lugar na hindi pa nakakainan before.*" [I prefer eating out especially in places that I have never been before.] Other participants spent their leisure time on computer games and sports. One of the agents said, "*Leisure ko talaga is mag-computer. Pag nasa bahay lang ako, talagang nasa harap na ako ng laptop, nag-cocomputer. Basketball din yung libangan ko. Sumasali ako sa mga liga.*" [My leisure is playing computer games in my laptop. I also play basketball and join basketball tournaments.] Another one said, "*PSP, games sa cell phone lalo na pag break sa shift.*" [Playing games in my portable playstation or cell phone during breaks] Some answered watching sports events, visiting the spa, and surfing the net. On the other hand, going to bar, drinking occasionally, and smoking cigarette were the vices common to the informants. "*Pag suweldo at may pera, nag-ba-bar kami sa BGC (Bonifacio Global City), pero mostly cocktails lang naman ang iniinom namin.*" [During paydays, we go bar hopping at BGC, but we make it a point to drink cocktails only.], shared by one of the participants. Meanwhile, one agent admitted about his smoking vice and said, "*Ako, guilty talaga sa yosi at kape kaya nga mas lalong lumala ang asthma at*

*insomnia ko eh.*” [I am guilty of too much smoking and coffee drinking that is why my asthma and insomnia got worse]. Likewise, another participant said, “*Ako, natuto talaga ako mag-smoke sa work. Nakaka-tatlo ako (cigarette sticks) sa isang shift.*” [I learned smoking from work. I can take three (3) cigarette sticks in a single shift.]

The usual leisure and vices of working students in call centers reflect their desire to escape from the demands of their work. The improved financial standing of the participants allowed them to spend their hard-earned money for their leisure and even for vices. It is significant to note that some agents in this study learned to smoke cigarette to keep up with the pressure in their work. The leisure and vices of the agents are ways of coping up with the stress brought about by their work. This is supported by the study of Ferniz (2008) which stated that agents cope with the demands of work by releasing tension through laughing, joking, watching movies, getting enough sleep, seeking support from friends and family, and going out of town.

*Social life* - Working on a night schedule also brought significant changes in the participants’ social life. Having lesser time with friends was one of the common observations of the participants. One of the participants said, “*Minsan nagtatampo mga friends ko sa school, but they understand my work.*” [There are times that my friends in school would feel upset, but they still understand the nature of my work.] In the absence of their friends in school, the participants found a new set of friends in their co-workers.

Meanwhile, other participants said they were still able to balance their time for work and studies. One of the participants even disclosed that he is still an active member of their college fraternity despite working and studying at the same time.

These findings are again about the repercussions of their night schedule. The participants, in lieu of school friends, created a new circle of friends to hang out with and give them support to their endeavors. These findings are related to the results of Fabros (2006) which claimed that agents create significant relationship with their fellow workers who share the same socio-temporal space they inhabit.

*Rest day* – The participants of this study usually spent their rest day by getting enough sleep, watching TV, or having DVD marathon to catch up with their favorite series. Moreover, most of the participants spent their rest day at home to get enough rest and revive their strength to face the demands of school and work. One of the participants even joked and said, “*Pag rest day ko, ang wino-workship ko na lang kama. Pag higa ko, napapasabi na lang ako ng “Oh my God”. Talagang bumabawi ako ng tulog.*” [I spend my rest day by getting enough sleep as much as possible. I stay in bed almost the entire day like almost worshipping it.]. Moreover, they also used their rest day to catch up with their school requirements.

The findings of the study show that students working in call centers had different recreational activities and different ways of spending their rest day or free time. On

a functional viewpoint, the recreational activities aim to re-create energy in order to restore the ability to function of an individual. This holds true, most especially when most of the participants spend their rest day by catching enough sleep or catching up with school requirements. The different recreational activities helped the participants to lessen the stress brought about by the demands of the workplace.

In terms of the influence of the subculture on recreational activities, this is manifested in the congenial social environment in the workplace. The casual and friendly working relations in the call center paved way to create recreational activities being spent with co-workers, be it eating after work, videoke, or playing sports. The competitive salary offered in the call centers also paved way for the participants to pursue their leisure, be it shopping, watching movies, or travelling out of town. The demands of a night shift work also influenced how the working students spend their rest day as they need to keep in mind that they must balance work and studies.

#### *2.4 On consumption behavior*

The consumption behavior, as stated in the framework, refers to the attitude of the call center agents when it comes to consuming and spending their income. The consumption behavior of the participants covers how they spend their earnings, their material and non-material investments, and the significant changes in their economic status brought about by their work.

*Spending habits* - The participants of this study said that they received a salary from PHP 7000-10,000 per cut-off. Most of the participants used their salary to help themselves and their family. The participants of this

study who happened to be working students pay on their own expenses in school. Some of them also shared that working in the call center allowed them to augment the finances for the family's expenses such as paying for the grocery and utility bills like water and electricity. Others who lived independently pay on their own the rental fee of a boarding house or dormitory. They were also able to buy what they wanted such as new clothes, shoes, and latest gadgets. They now also have the means to at least treat their loved ones whenever they go out. However, one of the participant shared she became an impulsive buyer after working in the call center. She said, "Naging impulsive buyer ako. One time, may nagbenta sa akin ng cell phone. Sabi ko, "magkano?" Sabi niya, "PHP 13,000.00." Maya-maya, nag-withdraw na ako sa ATM. Inabot ko yun PHP 13,000.00." [I became an impulsive buyer. There was one time when someone offered me a phone for PHP 13,000.00 and I immediately bought it]. One agent also said, "Tumindi ang 'one-day millionaire syndrome' ko." [My one-day millionaire syndrome got worsened.]

These findings show that earning a big salary entitles the working students to spend for their needs and wants. One positive effect of earning on their own is that they were able to assist in the financial needs of the family. Unfortunately, some became impulsive buyers and unwary of their purchases so long as their needs and wants are satisfied.

*Investments* - Working in call centers enabled the participants of this study to invest on material and non-material things. Most of them were able to

invest on new shoes, cell phones, clothes, and gadgets while some, on the improvement of their homes by buying new appliances such as TV and refrigerator. Meanwhile, education, travelling, and financial assistance to their family were the considered non-material investments of the participants. The material and non-material investments of the participants were obviously the fruits of their hard work as call center agents. The monetary freedom gained from their work gave them the opportunity to invest on the things they needed and pursue on the things they wanted. On a functional perspective, the investments made by the participants provided them a sense of worth and purpose not only for themselves but also for their family. Material and non-material investments also served their function to motivate the participants to work hard to achieve the things they aspire the most.

*Changes in the economic status* - Most of the participants agreed that one significant change brought about by their work in their economic status is that they became financially stable. They said that they experienced less financial problems compared when they were not yet working. Being financially stable, they were able to sustain their lifestyle. Moreover, they were also able to help their family and friends in need of financial aid. A participant said, “*Nakapagpapautang na ako sa mga classmates ko.*” [I can now lend money to my classmates.] Another participant also disclosed, “*Okay ang financial life ko. Yun nga lang, dumami ang mga gusto kong bilhin. Maraming pera sa call center. Hindi mo mamalayan,*

*may pera ka na naman.*” [My financial status has improved. However, my expenses also multiplied. You can earn a lot of money from call centers.] Some participants felt they became well-off after working in the call center considering the salary they received every cut-off. On the financial condition of the working students, most of them were able to save money. They were able to put their savings in the bank or under the custody of their parents. A participant who keeps his own earnings to himself revealed that he was able to save up to PHP 60,000.00 at the time of the interview. On the other hand, there were also few participants who admitted that they did not have savings. According to them, their salary was just enough for their studies and for their family.

Given the findings of the study, the high salary in the call centers enabled the working students to support not only themselves but their family as well. Despite the night schedule they had to deal with, the participants agreed that they became financially well-off working in the call center. These findings support Medina (2008) who found out that financial stability is the greatest benefit of call center, followed by making new friends, meeting new people, and self-satisfaction. Based on these findings, it is imperative that working students in call centers learn how to intelligently spend their money to avoid impulsive buying which will help them save out of their hard-earned money. With the given concern, a call center company should at least promote programs on how to spend money/income wisely. This will help the working students to value the essence of savings and to recognize their needs and wants for wise spending.

Findings of the study strengthen the Functional Theory of Parsons. The subculture in call centers influences the life of the working students in four areas, namely: family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior. This happened when working students adapted to and attained the norms and values of the workplace, and integrated them into their life. In this study, call center agents' membership in an occupational subculture influences and affects their life, whether in their family relations, their economic status through their consumption behavior, and even in their health and recreation. The belief and the lifestyle of the participants were also molded based on their association with the group. The subculture in the call centers as reflected in the social environment, norms, and values of agents has indeed formed the participants' way of life.

### **3. Influence of the Call Center Subculture on the Academic Performance of Working Students**

This section discusses the influence of the subculture on the academic performance of the working students in call centers. Based on the discussion of the framework of the study, academic performance refers to how working students deal with, cope up with, and accomplish the demands of their studies. This section covers the problems and concerns of working students concerning their studies, the relationship of the working students with their classmates and teachers, the influence of their work on their academic standing, the benefits of call center work in their studies, and their view towards work and studies.

### 3.1 On Problems and Concerns of Working Students

This section discusses the most common problems and concerns related to studies of the students working in call centers. This includes the concerns and problems regarding lack of time in studies, attendance, submission of requirements, and preparation during examinations.

#### 3.1.1 Stress and lack of time

The participants of the study described their typical day in school as stressful and tiring. One of the participants shared that her schedule at school starts from 10:30 am and usually ends at 7:30 pm, and her work schedule is from 10:00 pm until 6:30 am. Another participant had a work schedule from 9:00 pm to 6:00 am and with a 10:30 am morning class. Most participants had the same sentiment of having less time for sleep which made them look haggard in school. With a sleeping time of only around 3-4 hours, most of the informants felt sleepy and tired in school. One of the participants shared, *“Malaking epekto. Inaantok ako palagi sa school. Kulang na rin yung time ko na mag-aral.”* [It affects me a lot. I feel sleepy at school, and I don’t have enough time for my studies]. Similarly, another participant shared, *“Minsan, pag pumapasok ako, hindi na ako prepared. Pag afternoon class na, lumilipad na isipan ko, naantok na ako.”* [Sometimes, I go to school unprepared. During afternoon class, my mind drifts away, and I feel sleepy.] This was supported by another participant who stated, *“Madalas ako makatulog sa klase. Hindi na lang ako*

*ginigising ng mga classmates ko pag ganun. Nauunawaan naman nila ang condition ko eh.”* [Most of the time, I can’t help but doze off during class. My classmates do not bother to wake me since they know my situation.]

### *3.1.2 Attendance*

One participant recalled his experience in school, “*Haggard buong araw, sa school na ako nakakatulog. Pag nakikita na ako ng mga classmates ko na natutulog ako sa klase, minsan, hindi na nila ako ginigising. Inuunawa na lang ako.*” [I feel haggard the entire day, and it is in school that I get to sleep. My classmates just ignore me, seeing me asleep in classes, as they understand my situation]. Most of the respondents also shared that they were often late in class, usually missing their first period subject. There were also times that they committed absences in school just to catch up with their school requirements.

### *3.1.3 Submission of requirements*

Working students also felt stressed when they were bombarded with homeworks and requirements. Some of them failed to submit school requirements on time. One participant, on the other hand, said she remedied the situation by submitting her requirements online. Moreover, most of the participants crammed whenever school requirements demanded immediate submission. One of the participants shared,

*“Medyo hirap na (referring to the submission of requirements). Dati, pag may mga assignment, nagagawa ko kaagad kasi ayaw ko ma-late magpasa. Nakakapag-advance study pa ako. Ngayon, na-le-late na ako sa mga lessons.”* [I find it hard to submit the requirements on time. Before, I used to submit requirements ahead of time. I even managed to do advanced study, but now I am already behind our lessons.] A participant, on the other hand, shared her insights on this matter, *“Hindi ako nakiki-usap sa mga professors ko for extension of submission ng mga requirements. Hindi ko ginagawa yun. In the first place, hindi naman nila kasi ako pinilit mag-trabaho eh. Basta kung kailan ang submission, pinapasa ko talaga. Ako na lang ang mag-aadjust.”* [I don’t ask favors from my professors. If they set a deadline for a particular requirement, I try my best to submit it on time. I just make the necessary adjustment to beat the deadline.] As pressured to conform to the demands of school and work, some participants admitted that they dropped subjects.

#### *3.1.4 Preparation during examinations*

Most of the participants also found it difficult to review especially during exams. Other participants revealed that they just relied on stock knowledge whenever there was an examination. As shared by a participant when she took a final exam, *“May shift ako ng gabing yun na kinabukasan final exam, dire-diretso. Naranasan ko na mag-exam na hindi ako gaano nakapag-review. Ayun, pasang-awa ang score.”* [I had a

night shift schedule, and the following day was our final examination. I took the examination without reviewing, and I got a barely passing score.] Meanwhile, one of the participants shared that he takes a leave from work whenever there is a major examination, like midterm or finals, to give more time to prepare and review.

The findings discussed above support the study of Lorenzana and Molina (2012), which revealed that performance in school is adversely affected because call center agents work at night. It was also noted that tardiness and absences from school ranked highest among the problems of working students, followed by the lack of proper rest. The study attributed these problems to the lack of time due to the demand of call center work and school requirements. Given the said scenario, it is deemed important for the working students to manage their time well. Working students should learn to adapt to the demands of call center work by studying during their rest day or lessening the time for recreation to give more time to studies or by organizing their schedule in work especially during examination period.

### *3.2 On relationship with the teachers*

Most of the participants described their relationship with their teachers as normal. They received equal treatment, whether they are working students or not. Most of them did not ask for consideration as they were the ones who adjusted to the requirements set by the class. Some participants shared that their teachers were more concerned about their tardiness. A participant shared,

*“I comply with the requirements. I do not ask for considerations. Ako na lang din ang nag-aadjust. Yung prof ko, mas concern sa tardiness ko sa klase.”* [I adjust to the situation. The only concern of my professor was my tardiness in class.] Moreover, one of the participants recalled that her teacher even encouraged her to stop working, so she would be more focused on her studies. On another note, one of the agents admitted that she asked for favor and consideration from her professors whenever necessary. She said, *“May time nga na nagpa-deliver ako ng Jollibee sa faculty room para lang payagan ako makapagpasa ng projects.”* [There was a time where I contacted a fast food restaurant to deliver food to the faculty room so that my professor could reconsider accepting my project.] These findings reveal how the participants related with their professors. Most of them aimed to achieve equal treatment while some did the extra mile such as treating the entire faculty for a free meal for an academic consideration.

### *3.3 On relationship with classmates*

Most of the participants revealed that they became irregular students due to call center work. Although their classmates understood the nature of their work, most of the participants noticed that they did not have permanent classmates or blockmates because of their irregular status. One of the participants shared, *“Nakakapanibago lang kasi iba-iba na ang classmates ko. Naging irregular na ako. Yung iba kong classmates, tawag na sa akin “ate” at yung mga ka-batch ko, napag-iwanan na ako.”* [Everything suddenly changed. I became an irregular student. I was left behind by my batch mates, and now I

need to adjust to my new and younger classmates.] Meanwhile, one of the participants also noticed that after working in the call center, she was no longer assigned a leader in group activities. She shared, “*Before kasi, nasanay sila (classmates) na kapag may mga group activities, ako ang leader. Sa akin, okay lang. Pabor pa rin sa akin kasi natuto ako. Pero ngayong nag-work ako, hindi na gaano.*” [Before, I used to be assigned as the leader during group activities, which was fine with me since I was also learning at the same time, but that change when I started working.]

The findings of this study revealed the varied relationships of the working students with their teachers and classmates. It is good to note that the professors of the participants showed concern over the academic standing of their students, as when they called the attention of students who were always tardy, as revealed by some participants. Based on the sharing of the participants, some professors even went the extra mile of personally talking to and advising them to focus more on their academics. The encouragement given by the professors definitely helped the working students to be motivated, knowing and seeing that their teachers were concerned about them.

### *3.4 On the influence of call center work on academic standing*

The participants shared how their work affected their academic standing. Most of them agreed that working in the call center affected their performance in school. Aside from occasional tardiness, difficulty in catching up with lessons, and complying with requirements, they observed their declining academic

standing. One of the participants said, “*Mas lalong bumaba (ang) academics (ko).*” [I got lower grades.] while another participant said, “*Medyo bumaba ang performance ko sa school, at may mga grades na dapat din akong i-maintain.*” [My performance in school declined, and I need to maintain passing grades.] A participant also recalled that she was not anymore able to make it to the Dean’s List after getting a grade of 3.0 in one of her subjects.

In addition, the irregular academic standing of most of the participants was the consequence of dropping subjects. They also enrolled with underload units each semester to balance their work and studies. “*Nag-drop ako ng two subjects last sem. Hindi na kasi talaga kinaya ng schedule ko eh. Kaysa bumagsak pa ako, inunahan ko nang mag-drop.*” [I dropped two subjects last semester since I could no longer handle the schedule. It was better to drop than fail in those subjects], shared by one of the participants. This also resulted in being behind their batch mates who usually enrolled with normal and full academic load. This also led them to extend their residence in the college they enrolled in. These findings indicate how the academic standing of most of the participants suffered as they needed to balance their time for work and studies.

While most of the participants experienced difficulty to balance work and studies, few participants were still able to make it in the Dean’s List. One of the participants mentioned, “*Naniniwala ako na hindi hindrance ang pagiging working student para mag-excel ka sa school.*” [I believe that being a working student is not a hindrance for you to excel in school.] Another participant also shared the same, “*Wala naman akong bagsak. Maganda naman yun effect niya. Dean’s*

*Lister pa rin naman ako. May privilege din kami dito sa work. Kapag student ka eh ma-i-reimburse mo ang binayad mo sa tuition fee. Yun pa lang, malaking tulong na.*” [I do not have any failing grades. As a matter of fact, I am one of the dean’s listers in our college. Our company gives us privileges, like we can reimburse the amount we paid for our tuition fee which is a big help.] Moreover, one of the participants graduated as a cum laude despite being a working student. Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be deduced that although working in the call center have some negative effects on the agents’ academic performance, the latter may be avoided as long as the working students are able to manage and use their time productively and wisely.

### *3.5 Benefits of call center work*

On a positive note, almost all of the participants agreed that working in the call center helped them improve their communication skills. They developed greater confidence especially in English or speech class. They also noted that working in call center gave them confidence in reporting and interviews. Working in the call center also gave them a sense of maturity. Their work taught them how to interact with different people. It also helped them financially; expenses in school became not so much a problem. One of the participants said, *“May mga gastusin sa school na madali na lang.”* [School expenses were not anymore a big issue.] Another participant shared, *“Ako naman, naging very useful ang work ko sa tinatapos kong thesis. Napakinabangan ko yung affiliation ko sa call center para sa topic at respondents namin sa thesis.”* [My work became useful in my

thesis. My work affiliation helped me in my research topic as well as in getting respondents for my study.] Aside from financial stability, participants were also able to apply the values and work ethics they learned in the call center at school. The English Only Policy in the workplace, for example, helped them become more articulate especially during reports and discussions.

The results discussed above concur with that of Eledia (2005) who pointed out the benefits of being a working student, such as improvement of self-management skills, being more prepared in facing the world, having the opportunity to learn vocational and social skills, and acquiring good attitude, values, habits, and knowledge that will make one a better adult worker. Moreover, working students even shared useful and interesting information about their experiences at work and integrated these to their lessons during recitations or group activities.

### *3.6 On participants' view towards work and studies*

When the participants were asked how they perceive and view their work, most of them answered that they believed their work in the call center was just a stepping stone or preparation for a future career. They valued their work, and they considered it a way to finish their studies. One of the participants said, "Work finances my studies. Without it, I cannot send myself to school." On another note, a participant described his work as "temporary and transient". Moreover, the participants viewed their work as monotonous and routinary.

“Work is monotonous. It is the co-workers who bring spice,” said one of the participants. Others saw it as extremely stressful especially when there is a big event in the US, an example of which was during the release of iPhone 5; they were expected to handle huge volume of calls. In addition, a participant said, *“Mahirap, taga- absorb (ka) ng stress ng mga customers, robot ng kompanya na wala dapat emosyon. Nag-wowork lang ako para maka-graduate lang.”* [It is difficult. You’re the shock absorber of all the complaints and stress of the customers. You are like a robot of the the company. You are not allowed to show any emotions. I only work here just to finance my studies.] Another participant said, *“Stepping stone, I don’t see my self staying longer (in this work). Pag nakatapos lang ako sa school, aalis na ako. Hindi ako mag-sesettle dito.”* [It is just a stepping stone. I don’t see myself staying long in this kind of work. As soon as I graduate from college, I will resign. I will not settle here.]

Results of this study showed that the participants still gave huge regard to their schooling compared to their work. It was also revealed that their work was also one of the reasons why they had difficulty with their studies. The effects of night schedule on their studies impaired their academic performance.

## Synthesis

Given the results of the study, the subculture of working students in call centers was developed through adaptation to the existing culture in the call center. The distinction in the social environment on the basis of working relations of working students in call center companies and to their superiors and co-workers provides a distinction that is unique with the existing culture in the call center. Norms and values were developed through the social environment in the workplace. Given such distinction in the practices and experiences only shared by the working students in call centers, the subculture of working students was developed. The subculture of working students in call centers also influenced family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior of the participants. They experienced changes in how they relate with their family given the limited time they spend with them. The limited time spend with the family is of course an influence of the demand of the call center work which is part of the social environment. The night schedule in call center also affected the health of the participants, manifested in their various health complaints. Working in call centers also influenced their recreational activities and consumption behavior as their work entitled them to pursue their leisure and vices and purchase things they need and want.

The subculture in call center also influenced the academic performance of the working students. The erratic schedule in the call center lessened their time to rest and study; hence, it led to their poor academic performance.

Results of this study support the Functional Theory of Talcott Parsons. Functionalists view society as a system of highly interrelated structures or parts that

function or operate harmoniously. Based on the context of call center culture which served as a system, the subculture which is part of the dominant culture served as a subsystem. There may be distinction on the subculture of working students, still the values they possess still reflects and in consonance with the dominant values. The subculture of working students works harmoniously with the structure of the call center industry. The participants adopted the norms and values based on their exposure and affiliation to the group. Their affiliation in the subculture provides them identity as manifested by the changes in their values, belief, and life style. The discipline, the language, and the norms of the workplace were brought by the participants even outside their work, as revealed in the interview. The subculture influenced the four areas (family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior) and in turn influenced the academic performance of the participants; thus, the results of the research proved the assumptions of the study put forward earlier to be true.

The subculture in the call centers helped influence the family life of the participants. The demands of night shift work lessened the time for the family. Health was greatly influenced by the subculture in the call centers. The erratic working hours in the call center affected the health of the working students. Recreational activities, on the other hand, were influenced by the subculture. The recreation of the working students changed when they needed to meet the demands of their work and their studies. The participants learned to spend their free time as a way of releasing their stress or recovering their energy. The casual and congenial working relations in the call center paved the way to spend recreational activities with co-workers. It also paved the way for the participants to pursue their interests, like travelling or shopping, since they

have enough money to spend for recreation. Lastly, the consumption behavior was influenced by the subculture in terms of the economic opportunities being provided in the working environment. The competitive salary plus the perks and incentives given to call center agents paved the way to improve their level of consumption. Working students were able to purchase and spend on the things they want. They were also able to finance their studies and offer financial support to their loved ones. More so, the participants were also able to invest on material and non-material things such as education and save money for future consumption.

The subculture of working students in call centers influenced the academic performance of the participants through the effects brought about by the demands of the call center work. The demands of a night shift schedule influenced the health and wellness of the working students and in turn affected their performance in school through frequent absences, tardiness, and failure to comply with requirements. The congenial working relations in the call center developed the working students' confidence which helped them in their academics. The observance of "English Only Policy" as a norm helped improve the communication skills of the working students which translated to their confidence in speaking and reporting in front of the class.

Family relation was seen to influence the participants' academic performance through the encouragement and motivation from loved ones to prioritize education over call center work. Health also influenced the academic performance of the working students. The unique working condition in the call center produced numerous negative effects on the health of the participants. Negative effects such as poor focus due to stress in the workplace, frequent absences and tardiness, and lack of time for review

and studies led to the poor academic performance of most of the participants. The recreational activities of the working students likewise influenced their academic performance. Earning relatively high salary in the call center enabled the participants to indulge on their leisure and vices. However, the findings also revealed that the rest days of the participants were used to catch up with their studies; hence, reducing their time for recreation. Finally, the consumption behavior similarly influenced the academic performance of the participants. The financial stability brought about by their work in the call center enabled them to easily finance their school needs like school projects and activities as part of their academic requirements.

Given the influence of the subculture of call centers on the lives of the participants and on their academic performance, it is then imperative for call centers to help agents to cope with work through an adequate wellness program and learning programs particularly for the working students. The schools may also help them catch up with their academic performance by providing them remediation programs and exposure in which they can use and share their talents and skills to catch up with their deficiencies and eventually improve their academic performance.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This chapter presents significant outcomes of the study. It also shows the implication of the results to education. The researcher's conclusions and recommendations for educators and for future researchers are also included in this chapter.

#### **Summary of Findings**

The main goal of this study was to describe and analyze the subculture of working students in call centers in Metro Manila and its influence on the working students' family relations, health, recreational activities, and consumption behavior. The study also aimed to analyze the influence of the subculture on the academic performance of the working students.

Based on the research questions, the following are the summary of findings:

1. The social environment in call centers in terms of working relations provided no special treatment for the working students. However, call center companies are flexible when it comes to scheduling as this can be arranged ahead of time especially during the examination week. Working in a call center had positive and negative effects on call center agents. Moreover, the distinct working environment in call centers helped influence and develop the lifestyle, skills, and behavior of call center agents.

Norms observed in call centers include adherence to quality of calls measured through less AHT (average handling time), attendance and

punctuality, observance of appropriate dress code, and implementation of English Only Policy (EOP). The results suggested that like in any other workplace, call center companies follow the same norms except for the distinct work schedule and the policy of using only the English language.

Norms and values were developed through the social environment. The values developed were the following: giving utmost importance to time, empathy, tolerance, service, and nationalism.

The findings of the study supported the theory of the study that subcultures exist out of the need to adapt to the environment; in this study, that of the working students in call centers. They also showed consistency with the findings of previous studies - that call center agents developed values by practicing the culture of their workplace.

2. Working in the call center resulted in less time spent with the family. However, the financial gain gave the call center agents the opportunity to provide for and assist with the needs of their family which gave them a sense of fulfillment. The participants of the study believed they are still family-oriented despite the time constraint brought about by their work.

Call center work also led to distorted eating habits and health problems of the agents. Common health complaints of the agents included eye strain, headache, back pain, stress, cough, and colds. The health problems brought about by call center work had a considerable impact on the performance of the working students in school.

In terms of recreational activities, malling, watching movies, drinking, shopping, and travelling were the common leisure of the participants. Rest days of the participants were spent getting enough sleep and catching up with their studies.

Lastly, working in the call centers enabled them to financially help their family and pay for their studies. Through their work, they were also able to buy/purchase material things such as shoes, clothes, cell phones, and gadgets. Moreover, they considered education and financial assistance to their family as their non-material investment. Most of the participants were also able to have savings from their salaries.

The findings indicated the influence of the subculture of call center on the life of working students. These were evident in the less contact time with the family due to the night shift schedule, and in the health complaints of the agents. The participants were also able to imbibe the norms of the company as manifested in their improved communication and interaction skills with other people. Notably, the demands of night shift work in call centers generated problems in schooling and academic performance of the participants. These findings confirmed the findings of the previous studies on the working condition in call centers and its impact on call center agents.

3. Working students in the call centers suffered from stress in balancing their time for work and studies. Absences and tardiness were the common problems aside from frequent failure to submit school requirements on time. The night shift schedule also made it difficult for them to catch up with the lesson; hence, having

poor academic standing as a result of occasional drop outs and barely passing grades. On a positive note, working in a call center helped the agents to be confident and articulate, which they were able to apply during classroom discussion and reporting.

The results indicated that the night shift schedule of call center agents affected the academic performance of the working students. The influence of call center work on the academic performance of the participants brought positive and negative effects. The results supported the findings of previous studies concerning working students in call centers.

Overall, the results of the study were consistent with the hypothesis of the researcher - that the subculture in call centers has an influence on academic performance. This is true with the influence of the subculture on family relations, health, recreational activities, consumption behavior, and academic performance of the participants.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the aforementioned findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The subculture of working students in call centers developed through the adaptation of working students to the existing culture in the workplace. The distinct policies and experiences shared only by the working students paved the way for the formation of the subculture in the call center.

The social environment helped develop the norms and values of working students in call centers. Working in the call center helped the working students in

terms of self-improvement based on the work ethics and values imparted in the workplace.

Working in a call center has positive and negative effects. Most of the positive effects are improved communication skills, confidence, and financial stability while the negative effects include less social time, difficulty in balancing time for studies and work, and health hazards caused by work. Given the negative effects of call center work on the participants, it is deemed necessary for working students to adapt to their schedule and balance their time for work and studies.

2. Working in the call centers brought significant changes in the lives of the working students, particularly on their family relations, recreation, health, and consumption behavior.

The night shift work schedule in the call centers yielded negative effects on the working students. Late night work made them more prone to health risks and problems which later affected their performance in school.

3. Working students in call centers experienced difficulty in their studies. Hence, it is necessary for call center companies and schools to provide the needed remediation to address this concern to improve productivity in work and performance in school of the working students.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are proposed:

1. Call centers should recognize work force planning and scheduling especially for working students through observance of regularity in shift to help them adjust easily to their work and studies. They should also provide employee manuals or guidelines for working students to cover clear policy in dealing with working students. This way, working students could easily adapt to their work schedule and balance their time for work and studies.
2. Call center companies should conduct professional development programs such as wellness program for agents, most especially for working students, to cope with the demands of their schedule. This way, students working in the call centers may be able to have a healthy relationship with their family, improve their health conditions, find time for recreation, and t manage their finances well.
3. Call center companies should provide incentive programs such as scholarship program for working students to help them in their studies and motivate them to become more productive and competitive. In case there are already existing incentive programs in the company, it is recommended that these programs be continuously implemented.

Working students should also be encouraged to participate in activities, training, and seminar that will help improve their academic performance. Furthermore, teachers, through classroom activities, should provide activities such as oral presentations where working students of call centers can share their

talent and skills. The activities will provide them opportunities to perform well in school.

4. Future researchers may conduct further studies to examine the effectiveness of remediation programs of call center companies and schools in improving the academic performance of working students. They may also conduct studies on how to improve the academic performance of working students.
5. Future researchers may also conduct studies on the subculture of students working in call centers in the provinces to further validate the results of this study.

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# **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**PERSONAL INFORMATION SHEET AND INTERVIEW GUIDE**

**Personal Information Sheet**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (optional)  
Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_  
Year and Course: \_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Load: \_\_\_\_\_  
School: \_\_\_\_\_  
Length of Service: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours of work (per day): \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of call handled (inbound or outbound): \_\_\_\_\_

**In-depth Interview Guide**

**I. Social Environment, Norms, and Values in the Call Center**

1. How did you get started as a call center agent?
2. What are the norms of your company concerning work?
3. How does the company deal with working students like you?
4. What do you like most about your work? What do you like least?
5. Can you recall positive or negative experiences dealing with your customers?
6. How do you handle difficult situations in work? How do you cope with the demands of your work?
7. How would you describe your working relations with your superior and co-workers?

**II. Family Relations**

8. How does your family perceive your work?
9. Are there any significant changes brought about by your work that affect your relationship with your family?
10. How does the nature of your work influence your relations with your family?

### **III. Health**

11. How does the nature of your work affect your diet and eating habits?
12. Are there any significant changes brought about by your work in your health?
13. Do you have any health complaints regarding your work?

### **IV. Recreational Activities**

14. What are your usual leisure and vices?
15. Are there any significant changes brought about by your work in your recreational activities?
16. How do you usually spend your rest day?

### **V. Consumption Behavior**

17. How do you spend your earnings?
18. What are the materials and non-material things that you have invested on because of your work?
19. Are there any significant changes brought about by your work in your economic status?

### **VI. Academic Performance**

20. How do you describe your typical day as a student?
21. How does the nature of your work affect your academic performance?
22. What specific gains have you acquired being a working student in a call center?
23. How would you describe your relationship with your classmates and teachers?

## **VII. Other Questions**

24. What positive and negative effects do you acquire on the existing nature of call center?
25. What were the changes in you as a result of your work (in terms of values and beliefs)?
26. How do you perceive your work? Your studies?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS**

The following are the profiles of the college students working in call centers. The participants agreed to use their nicknames for the study.

**Hannah** is a 19 year-old Accountancy student of PUP Manila. Being the eldest in the family, Hannah entered the call center industry to help her family when his parent got sick. She admitted that her academic life turned upside down when she entered the call center. She was even removed from the dean's list because of frequent absences. As of this writing, she already resigned from her work to focus on and finish her studies.

**Lei** entered the world of call center to support his studies. Coming from a big family, he worked as an agent in a call center in Eastwood. Aside from being an agent, he also worked as a student assistant in the university where he studied. His aptitude in the English language also gave him sideline jobs like writing reports and term papers. At present, he is a neophyte teacher in a school in Quezon City.

**Mia** comes from a middle class family. While others work because of financial constraint, Mia took the job for the sake of experience and money of her own. Her easy-going attitude made it easy for her to get acquainted to the world of call center and to be promoted to a higher position. All the perks and incentives of call centers made her decide to take a one-year leave of absence from her studies. At present, though, she is finally a graduate of Education and is on her way to finding a job related to her degree.

**Darwin** is from Taguig and a consistent dean's lister in the University of Makati, a proof that he gave more priority to his studies. Despite the graveyard shift of his work, he still

managed to balance his social life by playing basketball and computer games, and hanging out with his friends. He resigned from his work in the call center when he had his OJT. At present, he works as an Android Application Developer - a career in line with his degree.

**Joyce** is an ECE student who works in a call center at Mandaluyong at the time of the interview. The financial difficulties of her family pushed her to work as an agent. Joyce is a veteran when it comes to call center as she had a total of five years of working experience in the industry. Realizing she was getting older and continuously being pressured to finish her studies, she resigned from her work to focus on her studies and eventually become a licensed ECE.

**Grace**, like any other working students, chose to have a part-time job to support herself and her family. She admitted that because of her work in the call center, she was able to invest on appliances for their home. As of the last interview, she only had three subjects left before graduation. It was her plan to resign from work to pursue her goal of becoming an elementary school teacher after graduation.

**Mark** is an open gay guy and is proud of it. His job in the call center industry gave him colorful experiences in life. He admitted that he had his first casual sex in the workplace during office break. He credited his professionalism to his work which gave him financial security and exposure to different people. At present, he works on a part-time basis to give more time for his studies.

**Den, Blessa, and Kim** are classmates in high school who tried their luck in the call center industry to make their summer productive. Their summer job gave them extra money for the summer and for the opening of classes. Before the opening of the school

year, they resigned to focus on their studies. Den graduated with a degree in BS Computer Science, Blessa in BS Chemistry, and Kim as *cum laude* in BS Chemistry.

**Randell** has a different take when asked why he entered the call center industry. He was forced to look for a job in order to pay for his debt. He spent the money given by his father for the payment of utility expenses in the casino. Coming from an affluent family, he regarded his work as a way of earning his own money. At present, he works as a Media Relations Executive, a career in line with his degree.

**Harvey** is raised as a devout Catholic. Coming from a well-off family in the South, he finished his secondary education in the seminary. The strong values taught by his parents and years of stay in the seminary made his values strong and intact amidst the temptation of the city. Harvey admitted that he was able to save a lot of money because of his work and scholarship from the university. As of the present, he continues to manage his time as an agent and BS Financial Management student.

**Belle** is a BS Political Science student from the University of the Philippines-Manila Campus. The financial condition of her family, particularly her intention of helping her mother, pushed her to take a part-time job and eventually landed in a call center. Her dedication to her work paved the way for her promotion as Quality Assurance Specialist. Despite her graveyard schedule, she continues to manage her time in work and studies. At present, she is on her way to finish her studies and plans to tender her resignation from work after graduation.

**Ron's** desire for independence landed him a job at a center in Makati. Unlike others who were forced to work to provide for their financial need, Ron worked to prove to his

family that he can be independent. He graduated with a degree in BS Psychology, and at present, he continues to work in the same call center company.

**Blu** is also a BS Political Science student from University of the Philippines-Manila Campus. He was obliged to work in the call center to help his sister with their finances. Because of financial difficulties, Blu was forced to take a leave of absence from UP to help his family. Determined to finish his studies, he finally graduated this year.

## APPENDIX C

### SAMPLE TRANSCRIPTION AND THEMATIC CODING

*Hannah Ruth/ Juan Carlos*

**R: What are the norms of your company? How does the company deal with working students like you?**

**H:** Kami dito sa Stellar, ano sya, may privilege kami, may **preferred schedule**. Sa ibang company kasi, ayaw nila. Hindi sila mag-aadjust ng schedule for you. Ikaw ang mag-aadjust. Sa amin, ano, pinagbibigyan nila, magsasubmit ka lang ng preferred schedule mo pero dapat 8 hours pa din ang work hours, tapos may rest day ka pa rin ng 2 days a week. Pero, at least, nasusunod mo ang gusto mong schedule.

**R: So depende pa rin un sa naka-enroll at schedule mo ng particular sem?**

**H:** May papakita ka ring registration card.

**J:** Kasi kahit saan naman yatang call center, alam ko, as much as possible, ina-avoid nila ang mga estudyante. Kaya ako, nung nag-aapply ako, hindi ko sinabing estudyante ako. Sinabi ko nag-stop muna ako sa school. Nung na-hire na ako dun sa account, dun ko na lang sinabi sa TL ko na estudyante ako. Since then, hindi naman sya nagalit, basta ang gusto niya pag malalate ka eh magpaalam ka muna beforehand, tatawag ka muna. Since then, pag nalalate ako, hindi na sya nagagalit kasi nauunawaan niyang estudyante ako.

**R: So parang meron kayong “internal arrangement”?**

**J:**(he nods)

**R: Anu- ano ba yung mga company norms niyo like dapat ba EOP (English Only Policy) sa pagtitime-in, ung mga ganun.**

**H:** **Mahigpit sila sa attendance** eh. They check our OBM (Open Book Management. It is an incentive program based on one's performance. So yun attendance mo, **quality of calls**, mino-monitor yun. Yung sa **EOP, sa calls lang pero sa floor kahit hindi na**.

**R: Ano yun tinatawag niyong floor?**

**H:** yun yung working area namin.

**R: Ganun di ba sa inyo, Sir?**

**J:** Sa company na napuntahan ko, very strict sila. Kahit yung mga security guards, they are trained to speak in English. Pag nahuli ka nga ng TL (Team Leader) mo na hindi- nag-eEOP, sisigawan ka- Tagaloooog!!! Ganun.

**R: So attendance, quality of calls, and EOP, yun common norms ng company niyo?**

**J:** **Bawal din ang cellphone sa floor, dahil pag tumunog yung phone, makaka-apekto sya sa headset at sa signal din ng call.**

**R: Anu-ano yung mga jargons na gianagamit niyo sa pertaining sa work?**

**H:** **AHT o ung Average Handling Time yun yung time na dapat naming ma-resolve ang needs ng customers. Irate- yun yung demanding na customer, nag-cocomplain. Pag feeling ng caller hindi sila satisfied sa call, magpapa-sup call sila. Yung sup call, short for supervisory call. Dinadala sa supervisor yung mga calls na hindi resolved.**

**R: Bukod sa irate, AHT, ano pa yun mga lingo na ginagamit niyo as working students sa call center?**

**J: Wala naman**

**R: So mostly eh puro technical ba?**

**J: yosi break, bio break or pea break**

**R: Yosi break refers to?**

**H: pag break ng agent at gusto niya mag-yosi (smoke), yun ang yosi break. Mostly yung iba, gay lingo's na.**

**R: Next question na tayo. How do you relate with your customers? What problems do you find in dealing with customer calls?**

**H: Yun sa call flow mo, dapat hindi ka mawala dun. Pag irate yun caller, dapat relaxed ka lang, calm down ka lang. Ipadama mo sa caller na your eager and willing to help.**

**J: Sa akin, yung mga demanding customers.**

**R: Can you recall positive or negative experiences dealing with your customers?**

**J: Positive sa akin, nung Mother's Day at Christmas Day. Binati ako ng customer so parang gumaan ang pakiramdam ko. Sinabi nila sa akin, "you empathize with the customer".**

**H: Ako pag may mga nakaka-usap ako na mga Filipino. Masaya yun.**

**R: Pag ganun, pag kausap mo Filipino, may pino-project ba kayomg image na dapat you're not from the Philippines.**

**H: Hindi naman. Isa pa sa mga positive experiences ko ay pag may mga friendly customers, pag pinupuri ka nila- sasabihin nila "you know you are such been a great help!" Nakakatuwa pag na-rerecognize ka nila at na-aappreciate ka nila.**

**R: How about sa negative?**

**H: Pag sobrang demanding, like ako, ang account eh on-line directory. Pag may hindi ako nabigay na number, magagalit kaagad sila.**

**R: May mga times ba na feeling mo nabastos kayo?**

**H: Pag may mga lasing, may mga prank callers.**

**J: Sa akin, he asked me for the number of Justin Bieber (laughter)**

**H: Pag alam mung prank caller yun, protocol mo pa rin na i-search yung pinapa-hanap niya.**

**J: You'll be marked down.**

**H: Yung iba naman, may I have the number of Saddam Hussein. So kami, protocol, hahanapin pa rin namin, then we'll just say, "I'm sorry but the person you're looking for does not exist". Magpoprovide na lang ako ng "not found report", tapos magsasabi sila ng "you're so fucking bitch you know that Saddam Hussein is already dead!" May mga caller talaga na walang magawa. May mga bata ring tumatawag.**

**R: May mga nagdidiscriminate ba naman?**

**H: May magtatanong, "Where are you located?" Sabihin ko "In the Philippines." Sabihin niya, "oh that's why you don't know it!" Tapos ibaba niya na lang ang phone. May mga sinasabi pa sila na "you Filipinos are ignorant!"**

**R: So paano niyo hina-handle ang mga ganun?**

**H: Parang gusto mo gumanti, pero syempre dapat composed ka pa din. Minsan nag-mumute ako ng call, dun ko sila mumurahin. May isa pa akong caller, naghahanap ng site, Filipinosucks.com. Sasabihin ko na lang "OK" mag-sesearch ka na lang. Kasi hindi mo alam mino-monitor ka pala. Sasabihin ku na lang "I'm sorry but I could not find the website". Tapos sinabi niya, "you're Filipino right?! Everytime that I see Filipino I want to punch them in their face!"**

**R: Eh panu ung pag namumura ka na?**

**H:** *May mga spiel naman para dun, like "I hope that you could refrain from saying those words"*

**J:** *I'll be forced to release the call.*

**H:** *Pero bibigyan mo pa rin sila ng warning. Pag bago ka, eventually masashock ka pa.*

**R: Wala naman bang parang maniac na tumawag o obscene caller?**

**H and J:** *Meron din!*

**J:** *Ung sa akin ang sabi, "I'm touching myself, how about you?"*

**R: eh anong sagot mo dun?**

**J:** *Sasabihin ko, "I'm sorry but it has nothing to do with the service." I will divert the message. O kaya sasabihin ko, "If it has nothing to do with the business, I will be forced to release the call."*

**R: How do you handle difficult situations in work? How do you cope up with the demands of your work?**

**J and H:** *Music ganyan.*

**J:** *Rotating shift kasi kaya minsan nakaka-stress. Kaya dapat i-foresee mo na kagad ang schedule mo para hindi ka mahirapan.*

**R: So how do you release stress?**

**J:** *Ako, pagkain.*

**H:** *Pagkain din, Videoke, team building*

**J:** *Breakfast together with the team*

**R: so yun yung way to release the tension from work, parang you discuss what happened during the day. Talagang you need to pamper yourself.**

**J:** *Yung breakfast with team, very common yan.*

**R: How do you perceive your relationship with your family and friends? Let's start with famiy.**

**J:** *Ako naging masaya ako nung nagka-trabaho ako, malaki kasi sweldo ko, nabibili ko na yung mga gusto ng pamangkin ko.*

**R: So naging provider ka?**

**J:** *Parang ganun.*

**H:** *Sa akin fulfilment yun. Yun nga lang less na lang ang communication. Pero hindi na ako hirap, hindi na ako nanghihingi ng baon sa kanila, nakakapag-abot pa ako sa kanila. Ngayon nagkaroon na ako ng disposition. Kung dati binu-budget ko lang kung ano ibibigay ng parent ko, ngayon may sarili na akong pera. Nagkaroon na ako ng freedom, may sarili na kasi akong pera kaya minsan nakakagala na ako.*

**J:** *Pero time talaga ang nawala, parang bibili lang ako ng regalo ko sa mga pamangkin tapos aalis na ako.*

**R: How about sa friends?**

**H:** *Less time na din. Pero barkada pa rin.*

**J:** *May mga time na pag after school nagkakayaan, hindi na ako makakasama- matutulog na lang ako. Naging matakaw ako sa tulog. May time na 17 hours straight ang tinulog ko."Ni hindi nga ako tumayo para umihi. Talagang bumabawi talaga ako sa tulog.*

**H:** *Ako once a week kailangan ko din makabawi ng tulog. Nitong huli, hirap na ako makagawa ng tulog. Kaya minsan nag-vivitamins ako.*

**R: How about vices/leisure?**

**J:** *Vices? Wala! Mas more sa pagkain. Pag nagutom ako, talagang lamon. Buti nga hindi ako tumataba eh. Parang guilty pleasure ko. Minsan, umiinom ako.*

**H:** *Ako, hindi pareho, hindi ako umiinom at nag-yoyosi.*

**R: (Referring to J) Do you consider yourself social drinker?**

**J:** *Moderate drinker, minsan sa loob ng 1 buwan mga 5-7 x ako iinom.*

**R: How does the nature of your work affect your health?**

**H:** *Apektado yun pagtulog ko. Sira yun sleeping habits ko. Masakit sa ulo talaga siya. Masakit minsan sa katawan kasi wala na akong exercise. Pagdating sa bahay from work, higa ka na. Paggising, kakain tapos pupunta na sa school kaya minsan as much as possible nilalakad ou na (papuntang school) para exercise na rin.*

**R: How about eye strain?**

**H:** *Parang lumabo nga ang mata ko.* Magsasalaman na nga ako after.

**R: How about throat problems?**

**H:** *Ayan, ganyan din, minsan masakit sa binti at braso. Ngayong sembreak regular na ang badminton naming para magpapayat.*

**R: Ikaw, Sir, (referring to J) ano ba mga common health problems mo?**

**J:** *Wala, wala naman. Pag may time para matulog, matutulog talaga ako. Disiplina talaga.*

**R: How about sa eating habits?**

**J:** *Fast food. Parang wala ka naming choice eh*

**R: Ano usual na kinakain niyo sa fast food?**

**H:** *chicken, burger*

**J:** *Sa pantry, paulit-ulit lang naman ng luto. Sabagay, ganun din naman sa fast food.*

**R: Eh sa mga convenient stores?**

**J:** *Mga tsitseria (junkfoods)*

**H:** *Instant noodles*

**J:** *Coffee*

**R: Ilan ang na-coconsume niyong coffee?**

**H and J:** *Free kasi ang coffee sa amin*

**H:** *Ako, nakaka-dalawa sa isang araw.*

**J:** *Pag hindi ako inaatok, hindi talaga ako mag-kakape. Hindi naman ako mahilig sa Starbucks.*

**R: Talaga bang mahilig sa Starbucks ang mga taga-Call Center?**

**J:** *Hindi naman lahat. Nagiging trademark na nga lang kasi nga kape ang binebenta nila. Pero ako, never ako nahilig sa Starbucks.*

**R: Balik tayo sa eating habits**

**J:** *Ako lamon kung lamon*

**H:** *In moderation lang naman ako.*

**R: How about socialization? May nabago ba because of work?**

**H:** *Bago ako nag-work, bahay-school lang, Minsan nag-sSM kasi malapit lang school naming (PUP Sta. Mesa) sa SM (Centerpoint in Sta. Mesa). Pero ngayong may work na ako, feeling ko nag-upgrade ang social life kasi iba-ibang age ang na-meet ko. Nagkaroon ako ng friend na nasa 30's, ganun. Nagyaya sila ng kain, videoke.*

**R: So parang you learn to interact with people from different walks of life. May time pa rin ba kayo mag-internet? Mag facebook? Twitter?**

**J:** *Yun yung na-deprived sa sarili ko.*

**H:** *Ako, hindi naman. Nakakapag-facebook pa naman ako.*

**R: Naging mas sociable ba kayo dahil sa nature ng work niyo?**

**J:** *Ako, natuto ako mag-bar.*

**R: How about sa sex life? May recent study kasi ng UP Population Commission at DOH na ang higher incidence ng HIV-AIDS ay sa Call Center Industry. Anung opinion niyo dyan? Mas naging promiscuous ba ang mga call center agents? Kasi nga, di ba, may pagka-liberal ang setting dun.**

**H:** *sex life, wala ah! Bata pa ako ah!*

**J:** *May alam akong agent sa amin na pag may nagustuhan syang babae, gagawin niya ang lahat para makuha lang at nakukuha naman niya kaagad. Meron din bading na agent kumukuha ng mga lalake. Sa mga sleeping quarters, alam ko may mga nangyayari rin. May time na pumasok ako sa sleeping quarters, parang nasa loob ng iisang kumot nakatalukbong ang 2 lalake. May nakita rin ako babae at lalake.*

**R:** **Anung policy ng company dun?**

**J:** *Bawal yun pag nahuli sila*

**R:** **Sa sleeping quarters talaga nagaganap?**

**J:** *Talagang oo. May mga kwentong ganyan lalo na pag walang mga calls. Napag-uusapan ang mga experience ng mga kasama kong agents. Mas marami akong naririnig na mga homosexual encounters.*

**R:** **Sa tingin niyo, bakit kaya mataas ang incidence ng HIV-AIDS sa call center?**

**H:** *Open kasi ang call center. Kahit anong gender ka pa o sexual preference, tanggap ka. Tsaka hindi lang naman sa call center nangyayari ang mga ganyan. Nangyari lang open ang mga tao sa call center.*

**R:** **How about casual sex?**

**J:** *Meron ako alam, sa mga lockers nanyayari. Naka-conceal kasi ung lockers eh, kaya hindi kita yun mga nanyayari. Since medyo public ang area. Nakabihis naman sila pero nakalabas na yung mga alam mo na. Dini-diskartehan nila yan.*

**R:** **So confirmed talaga sa call center. Pero sino mas involved, homosexual o heterosexual?**

**J:** *Parehas lang naman.*

**R:** **Sa iba naman, what is the typical fashion and style of a call center agent?**

**J:** *Decent casual, wala namang uniform*

**H:** *Jacket, aircon eh*

**R:** **Gadgets?**

**J:** *Oo ganun nga, para akong Justin Bieber pag lumalabas ng work. Naka-headset. (H nods and agree)*

**R:** **How about accessories?**

**J:** *Pouch bag lang. Tumbler, tumbler itself is already an accessory.*

**H:** *Tumbler lagayan namin ng tubig, kape, ganun.*

**J:** *Damit, mahilig sila sa damit dahil wala ngang uniform dito.*

**R:** **How does the nature of your work affect your religious life?**

**H:** *Ako, hangga't maari nagsisimba ako, since Sunday naman ang rest day ko.*

**J:** *Ako, hindi talaga ako pala-simba. Sa totoo lang, wala pa akong nakikitang call center na nagsabing religious siya.*

**H:** *May mga times na nakakapag-skip ako ng mass, but I make it a point na makabawi ako.*

**R:** **How do you perceive your economic life? How do you spend your earnings? If you won't mind, magkano ba take-home ng isang agent?**

**H:** *Sa amin kasi, pag cut-off, natatake-home ko 8k (PHP 8000), minsan 7k (PHP 7000)*

**J:** *Mas okay yan kaysa sa pag-seService Crew.*

**R:** **Anu na yung mga na-invest mo because of work? Yung masasabi mo na eto, katas to ng call center.**

**H:** *Wala akong ipon kasi nag-aaral din ako eh.*

**J:** *Cellphones*

**H:** *Ako damit, damit talaga. Pero nag-aabot ako sa parent ko.*

**R: So how do you see your economic life? Masaya ba? Okay ba?**

**H:** *Satisfied naman. Financially stable na ako. Dati maliit lang allowance ko. Hindi ka pupuwede mag-demand sa magulang mo. Ngayon, okay na ako.*

**R: How does the nature of your work affect your student life? School performance**

**H:** *Minsan pumapasok ako na hindi prepared*

**J:** *Pag hapon lumilipad na isipan ko, naantok na ako.*

**R: Paano yun mga requirements?**

**H:** *Medyo hirap na. Dati pag may mga assignments, nagagawa ko kagad kasi ayaw ko ma-late magpasa. Nakakapag-advance study pa ako. Ngayon nala-late na ako sa mga lessons.*

**R: Eh paano pag may mga group activities?**

**H:** *Pag reporting, dati ako inaasahan na leader. Ngayon, parang hindi na ganun.*

**R: Pag may mga major exams, Paano set-up niyo?**

**H:** *May shift ako ng gabing yun na kinabukasan final exam, dire-diretso. Naranasan ko mag-exam na hindi ako gaano nakapag-review.*

**R: Pero okay naman ba grades mo?**

**H:** *Para sa akin, nabago talaga. Nawala nga ako sa Dean's List ngayong sem na 'to.*

**J:** *Sa akin okay lang naman.*

**R: What specific gains have you acquired being a working student in a call center?**

**H:** *Nakatulong sya na ma-improve ang communication skills ko. Napakinabangan ko yung skills sa Call Center kapag may mga reporting o group activity sa klase. Mas naging comfortable ako sa English.*

**J:** *There was a time na nag-comment ako sa pronunciation ng classmate ko, biglang banat ng mga classmates ko- ang yabang mo naman! Like yun pagpronounce sa data.*

**H:** *Mas naging articulate kami.*

**R: What positive and negative effects do you acquired on the existing culture of call center? Let's start with positive**

**H:** *Aside sa na-develop ang skills ko sa communication, mas humaba ang pasensya ko. Mas naging confident din ako.*

**J:** *Ako rin, dahil sa pag-attend sa mga class, mas nag-improve ang patience ko. I learned how to get along with other people.*

**H:** *Natuto ako magpahalaga sa hard-earned money.*

**R: How about sa negative effects?**

**H:** *Ako kasi, natuto ako magmura sa call center. Hindi naman ako natuto uminom o manigarilyo sa call center. Yun lang talaga, natuto ako magmura.*

**R: How do you perceive your work?**

**H:** *Ako kasi, napamahal na ako sa work. It is my medium to attain my goals in life gaya ng makatapos sa pag-aaral. Without work, I cannot help myself. Malaki tulong work ko lalo na sa family ko. Ang daddy ko pa naman na-stroke, yung mama ko walang trabaho, so parang ako din ang breadwinner.*

**J:** *Parang pansamantala lang, na parang after graduation, aalis na din ako dito. Kaya lang, napapamahal na din ako sa mga kasamahan ko dito sa trabaho. Nagkaroon ako ng loyalty sa kanila. Hindi mo sila magawang iwan.*

**R: How about sa studies?**

**H:** *Priority ko sya, pero parang nahihirapan ako na pag-sabayin ang work at ang school. Pero ngayon ayos na ako. Mas focused na ako sa studies.*

**J:** *Ako, aabsent ako sa work, pero hindi sa school.*

**R: How do you see yourself in the future?**

**H:** *Siguro, habang nag-aaral, sa call center na muna ako. Nagbabawas na ako ng units ngayon. Pero ang goal ko pa rin, maging CPA ako. Kasi itong kinikita ko sa call center, walang wala pag nag- CPA ako. Stepping stone lang 'tong call center from what I want to be. Pero fulfilling pa rin itong trabaho sa call center. Nakakadagdag sya ng pride kasi may mga kasabayan ako na graduate na pero ako hindi pa naman na parang ka-level ko sila. Ganun. Advantage to kasi nakapag-gain ako ng advantage na sure mapapakinabangan ko sa future.*

**R:** Salamat sa inyong dalawa!

**Transcription  
Darwin Louis**

**R: How did you get started as a call center agent?**

**D:** *Kelangan ko tulungan ang family ko. Lima kami magkakapatid, ako yung second. Nag-try lang ako dito based sa suggestion na din ng sister ko. Pinalad naman, 1-day processing lang.*

**R: Talagang sa call center? Hindi mo sinubukan mo yung iba, like service crew which is common?**

**D:** *Actually nag-try ako dyan (service crew). Nakapasa na nga ako eh. Magsta start na nga ako ng training sa Jollibee kaya lang nagkataon tumawag ang Ingram na may job opportunity. Nagkataon mas malaki ang job offer kaya dinis-regard ko muna ang Jollibee.*

**R: Ano ang typical day mo as a call center agent? Like anong oras ang pasok, anong oras ang uwi.**

**D:** *Pag nasa floor kami at wala namang gagawin pa, ganun kwentuhan lang. Part-time lang ako, shift ko 2am to 7 am. Meron din ako sa gabi.*

**R: Hindi ba delikado ang ganung time ng biyahe?**

**D:** *Minsan nag-tataxi ako. Pag may available na jeep, nag-jjeep ako. Pag umaalis ako ng bahay, sakto lang dala kong pera para safe.*

**R: How about yung typical day mo as a student? Do you still have time to mingle with your classmates? Mahirap kasi yan, di ba, lalo na sa working student.**

**D:** *Bale, before 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> months hirap talaga ako - adjustment talaga. Pagdating sa school, naantok na ako, may ilang klase na nakakatulog ako. Pero nung mga 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> month ko, naka-adjust na ako. Naka-adjust na katawan ko. Kasi ako naman, sanay naman talaga ako sa puyatan.*

**R: May mga times ba na-lalate ka or nakaka-miss ka ng klase?**

**D:** *Meron, pero hindi naman madalas. Pag late or sobrang late na ako, hindi na ako pumapasok. Pero pag mga 15- 30 minutes late, humahabol pa ako. Mababait naman kasi mga professors ko.*

**R: Wala naman bang special treatment sa inyo na working student?**

**D:** *Wala naman, fair sila. Pag late ka, late ka talaga. Equal treatment naman talaga. Like this time, natapos na namin ang thesis namin. This coming sem, OJT na namin. Ang target ko makahanap ng magandang company.*

**R: Anu-ano yung mga norms ng company niyo towards work?**

**D:** *Speed and accuracy lang. Okay lang kahit working student ka, as long as you can perform your task well in a timely manner. Hindi rin pwede na lagi kang late. Hindi pwede yun. "No Call, No Show". Bawal din yun.*

**R: How about yung dress code?**

**D:** *Puwede naka-jeans basta naka-collar. Minsan, yung iba, naka-t-shirt pero naka-jacket naman sila.*

**R: How bout EOP?**

**D:** *(Laughing) Hindi naman nasusunod talaga yun. Pag nandyan lang yung mga boss namin from the other country, we need to speak in English. Kami, nagdadaldalan kami in the vernacular. Pero dapat aware ka pa rin sa EOP.*

**R: How does the company deal with working students like you?**

**D:** *May mga time na nala-late ako pagpasok ng work dahil sa school work gaya ng thesis. Nauunawaan naman nila. Kaya minsan, talagang ina-adjust nila ang schedule ko.*

**R: May mga special consideration ba sa'yo knowing na bata ka pa?**

**D:** *Kahit ako yung youngest diyan (sa company), hindi ka nila tini-treat na iba. Simula pa lang ng training, pinapakita ko naman na kung ano ang ginagawa ng iba, magagawa ko rin naman, at nakita naman nila yun.*

**R: Ano ba ang mga special language o jargon na ginagamit niyo sa call center?**

**D:** *Kami naman kasi wala naman kaming mga irate or AHT dahil non-voice naman kami. Hindi kami tumatanggap ng call. Ang ginagawa namin, kami ang tumatanggap ng order thru e-mail.*

**R: How do you relate with your customers? May mga probems ba kayo na na-eencounter?**

**D:** *Wala. kasi since non-voice po kami. Pag may mga reklamo ang mga customers namin, dini-direct namin sila sa Sales Contact namin. Support lang talaga kami. Hindi naman kami stress sa work kasi kausap lang naming yun sales contact lang.*

**R: Can you recall positive or negative experience dealing with customers?**

**D:** *Pag nakakakuha ako ng mga positive feedback, yung positive. Pero wala namang negative kasi nga pag may concerns at nag-escalate sa supervisor, sila na yung nag-reresolve nun. Wala kaming na-eencounter na mga irate, racist callers. Yun ang advantage ng non-voice. Talagang mag-aattend ka lang sa needs nila thru e-mail.*

**R: How do you cope with the demands of your work?**

**D:** *Kinakain ko na lang sya.*

**R: Parang yun nga ang common denominator ng mga agent - eating as a way releasing stress.**

**D:** *Pag maraming orders at medyo complicated pa, talagang kinakain ko sya. Sleeping din. Pagdating sa bahay after work, tulog na ako, tapos kain, ligo tapos pasok na sa school. Sa school, pag may katuwaan, DOTA o kaya basketball. Naglalaro ako ng basketball. Pag sa bahay, movie marathon lang - sa download sa computer.*

**R: How about malling?**

**D:** *Minsan lang pag nagkakayaan lang. Mas kain talaga at tulog.*

**R: How do you perceive your relationship with your family?**

**D:** *Sa family kasi, magkakahiwalay kami eh. Si Mommy sa Abu Dhabi nagwo-work. Tatlo lang kami magkakapatid dio sa Manila. Yung father ko, binabantayan ang 2 pang kapatid ko sa Pangasinan. So hindi ko rin masasabi kung paano yung sa relations ko sa family ko. Mommy ko, 3 years na dun (Abu Dhabi).*

**R: So ang kasama mo sa bahay mo, sister mo lang?**

**D:** *Oo, tatlo kami. Kasama ko dalawa kong ate.*

**R: Kailan ka nakakauwi ng Pangasinan niyan? Gaya nito, sembreak, instead na nasa bakasyon ka, nasa work ka.**

**D:** *Yan, ganyan, hindi ako nakakauwi. Ang ginagawa na lang nila (yun family ko), sila na lang umuwi gaya pag Christmas, yun dalawang kapatid ko sa province, gustong gusto nila mag-mall at gumala. Pag si mama, video chat na lang kaya dapat stable ang internet connection sa bahay.*

**R: So ngayong may trabaho ka na, nalilibre libre mo na ang ate mo, mga pamangkin mo?**

**D:** *(he nods) Oo, katulad nito, 3 months nag-vacation si Mama dito (Sa Pilipinas), trineat ko sya bago sya umalis.*

**R: So sa family, wala ka namang problema kasi magkaka-hiwalay naman kayo.**

**D:** *Oo, nasanay na lang ako sa set-up.*

**R: How about relation sa mga friends mo, may nagbago ba?**

**D:** *Wala namang nagbago. The usual pa rin. Napaganda na nga lang kasi pag may suweldo ako, mas na-ttreat ko sila ngayon, kumakain kami sa labas.*

**R: San ka mas maraming time, friends mo sa school o sa work?**

**D:** *Sa school, kasi mas focus na sa trabaho pag nandito ka sa office pero friends ko naman sila lahat.*

**R: So, nakakasama ka pa rin kapag may mga gimik o lakad ang barkada?**

**D:** *Oo, kasi may kaibigan din kaming call center agents. Ang ginagawa nila, sine-set nila yung date na lahat okay sa amin para makasama kami.*

**R: How about your leisure, vices?**

**D:** *Leisure ko talaga is mag-computer. Pag nasa bahay lang ako, talagang nasa harap na ako ng laptop. Nag-cocomputer. Basketball din, yun libangan ko. Sumasali ako sa mga liga.*

**R: Do you smoke? Do you drink?**

**D:** *Ay, hindi ako nag-i-smoke, pero drinking, oo, minsan.*

**R: Mabuti at hindi ka na-encourage mag-yosi?**

**D:** *Ay, hindi talaga! Good influence naman ang barkada. Walang peer pressure!*

**R: How does the nature of your work affect your health?**

**D:** *Lack of sleep, pumayat ako lalo.*

**R: Ano yung mga usual health problems mo?**

**D:** *Feeling kog pagod ako lagi. Kahit paggising ko, feeling ko pagod pa rin ako.*

**R: Nagte take ka ba ng vitamins?**

**D:** *Hindi eh. Hindi ko kasi sinasanay ang katawan ko sa mga supplements.*

**R: Ano ang eating habits ng isang call center agent?**

**D:** *Nagbabaon na kasi ako eh, para hindi na ako bababa sa pantry. Chips, minsan C2 (green tea) or sandwich, ganun.*

**R: Do you take energy drink?**

**D:** *Ay, hindi. Hindi ako nagte take ng mga ganun.*

**R: How about fast food? Mahilig ka ba dun?**

**D:** *Before, pero hindi ako mahilig dun. Gulay, kumakain ako, I love vegetables! Ako nakaka-ubos ng gulay pag nasa bahay lang.*

**R: Are you a coffee person?**

**D:** *Before din, ngayon hindi na. Before kasi, nagpapalpitante ako eh.*

**R: I-debunk nga natin ang myth, kasi di ba pag call center agents. automatic ma-Starbucks na yan o ma-Coffee Bean. Totoo ba yun?**

**D:** *Hindi naman. Nasa mentality lang nila yun eh. Minsan nahahawa na lang.*

**R: How about your social life? Mayroon pa ba?**

**D:** *Pagdating sa work, sa mga kakilala ko dito. Nauunawaan naman nila na umuuwi ako ng maaga dahil may pasok pa ako sa school. Pero pag may time naman, nakakapag-kulitan pa rin naman ako sa mga ka-trabaho ko. Family din kasi ang turingan dito sa work.*

**R: How about facebook?**

**D:** *Active ako sa facebook. May time pa rin ako sa mga college friends ko. High school ang wala na, kasi nasa Pangasinan naman sila. Sa school, nag-a-allot pa rin ako ng mga 2 hours para sa bonding ng barkada ko like DOTA, ganun. Minsan, hang-out kami sa Market Market.*

**R: Girlfriend? Do you have a girlfriend?**

**D:** *Ay wala, wala! (laughing)*

**R: Ano ba ang typical fashion ng isang call center agent?**

**D:** *Naka-casual, like jacket. Tumbler, mga ganun. Yun iba, naka-earphones, naka-head set.*

**R: Etong next question is medyo maselan. It's about sex life. Recently kasi, di ba, may balita na most number of HIV-AIDS victim is from the call center industry. Anong stand mo dun? Totoong bang nanyayari yun? May alam ka ba sa sex life ng mga agents?**

**D:** *So far, wala naman. Pero ang stand ko dun, may possibility nga kasi dahil sa call center, yung ibang call center agents dahil sa schedule nila, sobrang bonding nila – nag a out of town, team building, so may possibility na ganun.*

**R: So, sa tingin mo sa labas sya nagaganap ng building, hindi sa loob like sa mga quarters, ganun.**

**D:** *Sa quarters o sleeping area, before may narinig ako kasi galing yun sa mga friends ko sa ibang call center. Mostly casual sex lang.*

**R: Isa rin bang factor kung bakit ganun eh dahil sa attitude sa call center na may pagka-liberal? So, sa'yo naimpluwensiyahan ba ang values mo?**

**D:** *Hindi naman. Wala naman sa company yan. Nasa tao yan eh. Ang mas maganda nga, I learned how to deal with Americans - kung paano makipag-usap sa kanila. Pero pagdating sa values ko, wala namang nabago. **Naging mas sociable lang ako at mas naging confident. Mas naging conscious din ako sa oras.***

**R: How about your religious life? Do you still have time attending Sunday mass?**

**D:** *Oo naman. Roman Catholic ako, pero nitong huli, ang ina-attend ko Born Again Christian, sa Victory Christian Fellowship. Na-encourage ako ng friend ko, like nito member na ako ng Youth Service.*

**R: How do you perceived your economic life?**

**D:** *Ayos naman. **Nakakapag-libre na ako. Nakakatulong yung sweldo ko sa mga gastos sa school.***

**R: If you won't mind, magkano ba ang take-home pay mo?**

**D:** *Nasa 12,000 ang monthly ko, so more or less nasa 6,000 kada cut-off.*

**R: Okay na rin ah!**

**D:** *Yeah! Malaking tulong na talaga.*

**R: Paano mo ma-describe ang consumption behavior mo? Impulsive ba o matipid ka? Paano?**

**D:** ***Pag bagong suweldo lang ako bumibili ng mga gamit ko. Pag may mga bills or bayaran sa bahay, ako na nagbabayad. Binu-budget ko na kagad ang pera ko for the next 2 weeks bago ulet ako sumuwledo.***

**R: Pero may savings ka naman ba?**

**D:** *Meron naman, malaki-laki na rin naman. Nakatabi sya sa ATM ko.*

**R: Ano yung mga na-invest mo na dahil sa work mo?**

**D:** ***Laptop. Kailangan ko, lalo na nung nagti thesis kami. Kasi ako yun developer sa thesis namin eh. Damit, mahilig ako bumili ng damit. Sapatos, hindi naman. Pag sa bahay nag i stock na ako ng mga food.***

**R: So nitong nag-call center ka, masasabi mo bang financially stable ka?**

**D:** ***Oo, masasabi ko namang financially stable ako kasi hind na ako humihingi. Mas naging independent na ako.***

**R: How does the nature of your work affect your students life? Performance?**

**D:** *Wala naman ako bagsak. Maganda naman yun effect niya. Dean's lister pa rin naman ako. May privilege din kami dito sa work. Kapag student ka eh ma-irereemburse mo ang binayad mo sa tuition fee. Yun pa lang malaking tulong na.*

**R: Sa mga school activities, kamusta naman yun?**

**D:** *Ayos naman, mas nagkaroon ako ng confidence magsalita sa klase dahil sa call center. Nakaka-sali pa rin naman ako sa mga activities. Equal treatment naman dito sa school. Pag may dapat gawin, dapat gawin. Hindi excuse na may trabaho ka.*

**R: May mga instances ka ba na nahirapan ka sa studies mo dahil sa work?**

**D:** *Nitong huli kasi more on sa major kami. Kaya hindi na ako hirap. Mas sanay ako sa hands-on eh. Tsaka nakapag-adjust na din naman ako.*

**R: So far, how about security issues, knowing na panggabi ang work mo? May naging problem na ba tayo?**

**D:** *Before sa Guadalupe ,muntik na ako mahold-up.*

**R: So far, ano yung mga specific gains o positive things na na-gain mo nung pumasok ka sa call center?**

**D:** *Self-confidence. Financially, malaki naitulong sa akin. Nadagdagan din ang pasensya ko.*

**R: How about sa negative?**

**D:** *Sa studies lang, dapat budget ka talaga sa oras. Lack of sleep.*

**R: How do you find your work?**

**D:** *Ayos naman. Hindi naman sya boring or monotonous. Nasanay na lang ako sa set-up.*

**R: How do you perceived your work and your studies?**

**D:** *Bale stepping stone ko tong call center para makatapos sa studies ko. Now, kung hindi man ako makahanap ng work na related sa natapos ko, at least may fallback na ako - which is call center. Sa studies naman, priority ko talaga yan. Nag-wowork ako to finance my studies.*

**R: How do you see yourself in the future?**

**D:** *Stable job, happy family. Magkaroon ng trabaho in line with my course (ComSci)*

**R:** Maraming Salamat, Darwin!

**Transcription  
Randell Joseph**

**R: Can you tell me how you started in call center?**

**RJ:** *(Laughing)* Ang hirap naman sagutin niyan. Sobrang simple lang ng nanyare. Nagpunta ang parents ko sa States, and then ako na lang ang naiwan sa bahay. Lima kaming magkakapatid. Lahat sila, may mga family na. I am the youngest in the family, and I wanted to help them in the expenses at sa pagmaintain ng house. Nagtrabaho ako.

**R: So, nasa States nga ang parents mo. sino kasama mo sa bahay?**

**RJ:** Ako lang, pero within the village naman yon at malapit lang ang bahay ng mga kapatid ko.

**R: So, pumasok ka sa call center because you wanted na rin to support your self?**

**RJ:** Parang ganun na nga.

**R: Eh, since mag-isa ka lang sa bahay, paano yung pagkain mo? Sino ang nagluluto?**

**RJ:** Nakikikain lang ako. Binibigyan ako ng food ng mga kapatid ko since nasa same village lang naman kami.

**R: Hindi ka naman malungkot sa bahay, na “home alone” ka. Wala kang kasama sa bahay.**

**RJ:** Hindi naman, kasi madalas naman pumunta yung kuya ko at yun mga pamangkin ko, doon sila madalas maglaro.

**R: So far, okay lang naman ba sa parents mo na magtrabaho ka?**

**RJ:** Ayaw nga nila eh, kaya lang nagustuhan ko na rin.

**R: Let's discuss the nature of your work. Anung account ang hawak mo?**

**RJ:** I'm handling the fraud account- Capital One. Mga Americans mostly ang clients namin.

**R: Regular ka na ba sa work?**

**RJ:** Yup *(he nods)*

**R: You mentioned a while ago na 4<sup>th</sup> year ka na. Paano yun, tapos na ba OJT mo? Hindi ba conflict sa work mo?**

**RJ:** Nung 1<sup>st</sup> sem namin ang OJT. This coming sem (2<sup>nd</sup> sem), thesis writing na ako.

**R: So, kaya ka na rin pumasok sa call center para na rin makatulong sa gastos mo sa thesis mo?**

**RJ:** Not really kasi okay naman kami eh. Inisip ko na lang na at this age, dapat may trabaho na ako.

**R: Can you describe to me the typical day of an agent and a student?**

**RJ:** As an agent muna, nasa fraud account ako. We check the identity of the caller to verify if he/she is the one using the credit card. 1am start ng work. Matapos 10 am na.

**R: Hindi naman ba delikado sa pagpasok sa work?**

**RJ:** Hindi naman. Sanay na ako.

**R: As a student, wala naman bang consideration na binibigay sa'yo ang school knowing you're a working student?**

**RJ:** Our professors are not like that. Like with our thesis adviser, he is expecting us to do our work. Pero kilala naman nila kami.

**R: Yun mga classmates mo, kamusta naman relationship mo sa kanila?**

**RJ:** Ok lang naman. Pag lumalabas kasi ako, mas kasama ko family ko or yung mga ka-brod ko *(sa fraternity)*.

**R: As a student, kamusta naman ba? May mga times ba na na-lalate ka sa pagpasok sa klase?**

**RJ:** Oo, madalas. Pag nalalate ako sa klase or nahuhuli magpasa ng mga requirements, syempre may deduction sa points.

**R: May mga reimbursement program ang company niyo para sa mga working students?**

**RJ:** *Wala sa aming ganun.*

**R: May mga conflicts ka na ba na-encounter specially sa schedule at school and at work?**

**RJ:** *Wala naman. Willing naman mag-adjust ang company sa schedule ng school basta notify them in advance.*

**R: Tell us something naman sa existing norms niyo sa call center.**

**RJ:** *NCNS- No call, no show- ito yung equivalent ng AWOL (absence without leave), hindi ka nagpapa-alam na hindi ka papasok. Para masabing hindi ka NCNS, dapat tumawag ka at least 2 hours before your shift. AHT- Average Handling Time din yun ang required time na dapat ma-resolve mo ang needs ng caller. Sa amin, since nasa Fraud identity kami, maluwag ang AHT. Kahit 2 hours kami mag-usap okay lang.*

**R: How about dress code?**

**RJ:** *Basta bawal ang shorts. Casual naman sa amin eh.*

**R: How does the company deal with working students like you?**

**RJ:** *Maluwag naman. Basta pag conflicts sa schedule, dapat informed kaagad ang TL.*

**R: Can you give me a positive experience dealing with a customer?**

**RJ:** *Mga "You've been a big help." Mga typical lang. Sa akin kasi, wala gaano dahil nga sa account na handle ko. Mas marami irate kasi fraud ang hawak ko eh. Madali silang mag-flare up. pera yun, especially when they have issue with their bank that can't be verified, dun sila naiinis.*

**R: Sino ba ang mas appreciative na mga callers?**

**RJ:** *Mostly mga old women, old American women ganun*

**R: May mga calls ka ba na irate na hindi mo makakalimutan?**

**RJ:** *Once, may isa akong caller na gusto ako i-calibrate (murahin) pero na-pacify ko din naman. Wala naman racist or prank callers, mostly irate lang. Pero ako sumasagot ako eh, na parang wala naman silang alam sa ginagawa ko kaya wag sila makialam.*

**R: How do you handle difficult situations at work?**

**RJ:** *Yosi*

**R: I hope you won't mind pero saan ka natuto mag-yosi?**

**RJ:** *College*

**R: Nakaka-ilang stick ka sa isang araw?**

**RJ:** *Nakaka-isa't kalahating kaha ako. Minsan, dalawa. Mahina pa yun. May asthma pa ako nito.*

**R: How about coffee? Mahilig ka ba sa coffee?**

**RJ:** *Nakaka-dalawang cup ako pag nasa work ako. Sa isang araw, kaya ng 8 cups.*

**R: Wow! Hindi ka naman ba niyan insomniac?**

**RJ:** *Yung insomnia ko, nung college pa naman.*

**R: Aside from coffee and yosi, ano pa?**

**RJ:** *Reading, it depends upon my mood. Tulog din. Pag walang pasok, talagang bumabawi ako ng tulog.*

**R: How's your relationship with your family?**

**RJ:** *Madalas kami lumabas ng family ko. Kasama ko mga pamangkin ko, kapatid ko ganun.*

**R: So family-oriented ka talagang tao. How about girlfriend? Meron ka ba?**

**RJ:** *Wala.*

**R: Parang common observation na nainterview ko na mga agents eh mostly single ah! Ano yung usual bonding mo sa family mo?**

**RJ:** *Kain sa labas. Pag nasa bahay, kuwentuhan lang naman. Laro ng PS3.*

**R:** **Paano nakikipag-communicate sa mga parents mo?**

**RJ:** *Thru Skype*

**R:** **How about your relationship with your friends?**

**RJ:** *Wala ako friends sa call center eh. Meron sa UP.*

**R:** **Kamusta relationship mo sa kanila?**

**RJ:** *Bihira kami magkita, pero pag typical day na magkita kami, lumalabas kami.*

**R:** **Nililibre mo din ba sila?**

**RJ:** *Ay, hindi, kasi may mga work na din naman sila. Ako na lang din kasi ang napag-iwanan dahil naka-ilang lipat na din ako ng course. May frat din ako.*

**R:** **Anong frat mo?**

**RJ:** *Alpha Sigma*

**R:** **If you won't mind, ah, may mga hazing ba kayo jan?**

**RJ:** *Define hazing.*

**R:** **Yun pina-paddle, ganun.**

**RJ:** *Well, based sa Merriam Webster Dictionary, parang hazing is physical, emotional, psychological, physiological, social, basta you try to define that person through a proper process. May hazing, yeah! Matagal na din ako sa frat.*

**R:** **So far, naging supportive ba naman ang frat sa mga endeavors mo?**

**RJ:** *Ay, oo naman lalo na yun mga kapanuhan ko.*

**R:** **Anu ung mga usual bonding niyong magkakaibigan?**

**RJ:** *Kapag friend from the course, we usually go to church. Minsan, malling. Sa mga ka-brod ko, inuman, yosi, kuwentuhan.*

**R:** **May time ba na natulungan ka ng mga ka-frat mo?**

**RJ:** *Etong nagka-Ondoy since nakatira ako sa Cainta, they went to my place para tulungan ako sa pag-aayos at paglilinis ng bahay.*

**R:** **Let's proceed to your leisure and vices**

**RJ:** *Going out with my friends and family, PSP. Vices- kape and yosi. Alcohol? Hindi, allergic ako sa alcohol.*

**R:** **How does the nature of your work affect your health?**

**RJ:** *Last week hindi ako nakapasok dahil sa hyperacidity.*

**R:** **How about yung eating habits mo, may nabago ba?**

**RJ:** *Yun ang nabago talaga. Sobrang na-distort. Yung 11 pm ko, yun ang nagiging breakfast ko, Yung lunch ko, nasa 4- 6 am. Yung dinner ko, yung lunch time na.*

**R:** **Saan ka usual kumakain?**

**RJ:** *Sa Pantry, pero pag may Panchetto dun ako bumibili. Liempo ganun.*

**R:** **Nag-tatake ka ba ng mga energy drinks?**

**RJ:** *Cobra, para mabuhay ako (laughs)*

**R:** **Socialization tayo. Do you still have time for social life? Sa facebook, active ka pa rin ba?**

**RJ:** *Social life... Yun sa cell phone muna, hindi allowed sa floor yun kaya ang ginagawa ko tinatali ko cell phone ko sa lower leg para hindi sya makita. Sa facebook, hindi ganun, more on twitter. Pero hindi ako tumatagal ng mga 15 minutes dun. Hindi ako mahilig sa mga social networking sites eh.*

**R:** **Ano yung way mo para makapag-socialize?**

**RJ:** *Pag may mga birthdays ng mga friends ko, punta ako dun. Mostly inuman lang. Pag sa friends ko sa course, church.*

**R:** **May position ka ba sa church?**

**RJ:** *Member ako ng Music Ministry.*

**R:** Salamat sa time. I believe may klase ka pa niyan. I'll schedule another date for our interview.  
Salamat, Randell!

**Transcription**  
**Follow-up Interview – Hannah**

**R: Good afternoon! I'm just here to ask for an update on your studies, work, and personal life after 5 months you were interviewed.**

**H:** *So far, sa last interview natin, sa work wala namang nag-change, andun pa rin naman ako-hindi pa rin naman ako nag-reresign. Sa studies, binawasan ko ang units ko, instead na mag-24 (units) nag-12 (units) na lang ako. Wala kasing part time sa Stellar eh. At present, nag-susummer ako as part of our program para makahabol ako sa mga na-miss kong units.*

**R: Wala pa namang plano mag-resign sa work?**

**H:** *May balak na, baka June or July para makapag- focus na talaga sa studies ko. Pag natuloy ang resignation ko baka mag-full load ako, pero pag hindi 12 units na naman.*

**R: Hindi ka naman ba nakakaramdam na parang nahuhuli ka na sa studies mo?**

**H:** *Oo naman, kasi napag-iiwanan na talaga ako ng mga kaklase ko, pero wala naman ako magagawa dahil kailangan mag-work so tinanggap ko na lang. Sayang din naman kasi ang trabaho.*

**R: Eto, may hindi ata ako natanong sa last interview natin. How would you describe your working relations with your superiors and co-workers? Start muna tayo sa superiors.**

**H:** *Yun TL, reachable naman sila, para nga silang friends eh pero pag nasa floor na siyempre we show respect na or kahit na off work halimbawa kakain, badminton- para lang kami magkakabarkada. Pero pag nasa loob na (office), parang hindi na kami tini-treat na level- may distinction pa rin.*

**R: Wala bang special treatment sa'yo na parang ikaw yun un student kasi, na parang ikaw ang baby ng grupo?**

**H:** *Parang... kasi since student ako, nabibigay sa akin yun preferred schedule bagay na yung iba, hindi. Tapos kung ano gusto mong shift, madali ka nilang pagbigyan.*

**R: How about sa mga co-workers mo?**

**H:** *Okay naman sila, friendly regardless of the age and sex- hindi yun hindrance para hindi ka mapalapit sa kanila. May mga tao kasi na kino-consider nila batch mates nila or from same age bracket lang.*

**R: So far, sa health concerns tayo, may bago ba?**

**H:** *Wala naman, pero nitong huli feeling ko masyado na ako na-stress. Medyo natuto ako uminom pero minsan lang yun. Ayoko na maulit dahil lasing ako naka-uwi. Naging acidic din ako.*

**R: In terms of socialization, meron bang bago?**

**H:** *Wala naman so far.*

**R: This one, hindi ko rin ata natanong before: What changes have happened to you (in terms of life style) as a result of your work?**

**H:** *Eating habits, social life- naging less ang time ko sa mga college friends ko or mas madalas nasa work na ako. Pag nagkayayaan sa college friends hindi na ako gano nakakasama.*

**R: Sa bahay niyo, paano set-up? Nakaka-tulong ka pa ba sa mga household chores?**

**H:** *Yan ang nabawasan na. Hindi na nila ako inoobiiga gumawa sa bahay. Pahinga na lang madalas.*

**R: Eto naman, how does interacting with people of different races and culture affect you?**

**H:** Siguro yun confidence sa English, yun accent nakuha ko na. Canadian at American ang mga callers namin, pero may mga American din kasi na mahirap kausap eh- like un mga American Indians mahirap sila intindihin. Parang ang bilis nila mag-English na mahirap intindihan.

**R: What else?**

**H:** Parang umigsi pasensya ko. Na-adapt ko na kapag irate ang kausap ko, nagiging irate na din ako. Nagagaya ko din ang mga expressions nila like yung "F word".

**R: How about yung pagiging straightforward or liberal?**

**H:** Natuto ako magmura sa call center.

**R: Economic life tayo. Sa past 5 months na hindi tayo nagkita, how do you now perceived your economic life?**

**H:** Okay lang naman kung sa akin lang siya. Before dependent ako sa binibigay ng parents ko, ngayon hindi na, ako pa mismo ang nagbibigay (sa parent's ko). Sapat lang naman siya.

**R: How would you describe your consumption behaviour? Impulsive buyer ka ba?**

**H:** Ayun pag may sale, bili kaagad. Lalo na kapag suweldo pero hindi naman ubos-ubos biyaya.

**R: Anu- ano na ba ang mga na-invest mo? Material investments?**

**H:** Accessories lang

**R: How about non-material investments?**

**H:** Education siyempre!

**R: Student's life na tayo. Ano ba mga nagbago?**

**H:** So far wala naman, hindi naman ako hiram na- since 12 units lang naman ang kinuha ko sa school.

**R: How would you describe your working relationship with your classmates and teachers? Let's start with teachers. Alam ba nila na nag-wowork ka?**

**H:** Yun iba alam. Iba-iba naman kasi mga professor. Nalalaman nila kapag nala-late ako sa pagpasok. Minsan nalalaman nila kapag First Day of Classes kapag may mga getting to know activities.

**R: Kapag may mga pasahan ng requirements, hindi ka naman ba nakiki-usap sa mga professors mo, like extension of submission?**

**H:** Hindi, hindi ko ginagawa yun, in the first place hindi naman nila kasi ako pinilit mag-trabaho eh. Basta kung kalian ang submission- pinapasa ko talaga, ako na lang ang nag-aadjust.

**R: Classmates naman, paano relationship mo?**

**H:** Alam naman nila, minsan kinakantyawin nila ako pag Inglesan na o kaya manlibre ka, or utang ganun.

**R: Kapag may mga school activities nagbibigay pa rin ba ang classmates mo ng responsibility? Like projects or reporting vital task pa rin ang binibigay sa'yo o magagaan na lang?**

**H:** Before kasi nasanay sila (classmates) na kapag may mga group activities ako ang leader. Sa akin okay lang, pabor pa rin sa akin kasi natuto ako. Pero ngayong nag-wwork ako, hindi na gaano. Okay naman relationship ko sa mga classmates ko.

**R: Salamat, eto naman: what changes have happened to you in terms of your belief and values because of work? Ano yun mga naimbibe mong values sa call center?**

**H:** Yung pagbibigay ng importansya sa oras, yun customer service- na parang yun ang ine-expect mong ibibigay din sa'yo pag ikaw naman ang nasa labas.

**R: Ano pa?**

**H:** *Pagiging open minded. Lumaki kasi area ko eh, dati school at bahay lang ngayon school-bahay-work. Marami na akong natutunan sa mga ka-trabaho ko like, may lugar pa lang ganito, may mga tao palang ganito.*

**R: Sa tingin mo may pinagbago sa personality mo nang pumasok ka sa call center?**

**H:** *Sa tingin ko wala naman pinagbago kasi wala naman nagsasabi sa akin na “uyy nagbago ka na, ganun”. Natuto ako magmura pero as much as possible iniwasan ko yun. Nasa tao lang naman kung madali siya papa-impluwensiya o hindi eh- maganda lang sa company mababait mga kasama ko.*

**R: Ayun, salamat sa time, Hannah!**

**H:** *Walang anuman.*

**Transcription**  
**Follow-up Interview (Mia)**

**R: Before we start, paki-update naman ako ng mga nangyari sa'yo in terms of your work, studies, family, personal.**

**M:** *Sa work, ganun pa rin. Wala naman masyado pinag-bago. Ganun pa rin naman ang time ko. Sa family ko, yung mama ko, pinipilit niya na ako mag-resign December pa lang. Sabi ko nga, "Mama, tapusin na natin (yun school year) kasi kahit mag-resign naman ako ngayon wala naman akong school na mapapasukan." Tapos eto ngayon, pinag-reresign na naman ako. Sabi niya sa akin, "bahala ka na sa buhay mo." Parang gusto niya na nga kong i-disown (laughing). Sabi niya, "bahala ka kung hindi ka makikinig sa akin. Malaki ka na rin naman."*

**R: Eh yung Daddy mo?**

**M:** *Wala naman siya, eh. Hindi na rin naman kami nagkaka-usap. Balik tayo sa work. Sa work, okay naman sya. Kaka-promote lang ako as Customer Service Senior Specialist. Masaya sa work. Maraming freebies like nitong tumbler, nakuha ko ito as freebie. May mga points ka na naearn sa work mo na maari mo ma-redeem as items. Tapos at the end of the month, may mga bonding/ parties. Ang saya di'ba?!*

**R: So liliit na yang sweldo mo? Tsaka hindi ka ba niyan mahihirapan sa transportation mo from Commonwealth to Manila?**

**M:** *Ang alam ko, pag part time, kalahati lang talaga ang sinusweldo. Pero ganun talaga.*

**R: Pero okay lang naman ba sa superior mo? Lalo niyan at ikaw ang iginu-groom na TL (team leader)?**

**M:** *Sinabi na rin sa akin ng boss ko yun. Naisip ko na rin kasing option eh magresign na kaya ang advice niya part time na lang. I-didis own na ako ng Mama ko pag hindi pa ako bumalik sa school. Although may mga iba na nagsasabi na wag ako umalis kasi may iba na TL pero undergraduate (college) lang ang natapos.*

**R: Nung time na nag-call center ka, talagang nag-leave ka muna sa school?**

**M:** *Leave talaga.*

**R: So, nagpaalam ka talaga sa mga teachers mo? Anong sabi nila?**

**M:** *Sabi ko financial reason kaya ako mag-leave muna. Ayun, sabi sa akin, basta after 1 year makabalik na ako sa program. Okay naman sa kanila (school).*

**R: So far, may mga problems ka ba na na-encounter sa work, sa mga customers?**

**M:** *Wala naman. Mahaharot sila eh! Hahahahaha (laughing). Minsan ginagaya ko boses ng mga customers ko. Enjoy naman ako talaga sa work ko.*

**R: Sanay ka na rin naman kasi eh.**

**M:** *Bale mag-1 year na din ako this May.*

**R: Paano mo i-dedscribe ang working relationship mo sa mga superiors mo at sa mga co-workers mo. Start tayo sa TL mo.**

**M:** *TL ko? Super cool niya- parang friend lang siya. Minsan nakakapag-off line ka.*

**R: Ano yun off line?**

**M:** *Yung hindi ka mag ko call pero bayad ka. Minsan, 1 hour pinag-o-off line ako. May time na 1 day ako naka-off line! Galing noh?*

**R: Anong ginagawa niyo pag off line?**

**M:** *Kuwentuhan! Mabait yun TL ko eh. Sobrang baet niya!*

**R: Ilang taon na ba TL mo?**

**M:** *Turning 30 ata.*

**R: Bata pa pala. Lalake ba?**

**M:** *Oo. May girlfriend na yun, may asawa na din yun.*

**R: Ano pa?**

**M:** Minsan nag-hahaduken kami.

**R:** Ano yung haduken?

**M:** Yun yung may pinipindot kang button sa Avaya (name of phone) para hindi makapasok ang tawag sa'yo. Pandaraya yun! Hahahhaha! (laughing)

**R:** Parang congruent naman yung mga kuwento ng mga interviews ko, na parang regardless of age and sex, pantay pantay talaga sa call center.

**R:** Paano naman sa mga co-workers mo?

**M:** Ayos naman, Masaya kaya lang yung mga may asawa, sila yun medyo hindi ko nakakamingle. Kami kasing single at mga bata pa, may lakad pa after ng shift. Sila, hindi na. Diretso na uwi sila sa kani-kanilang pamilya. Sa schedule, madalas din kami magkagulo. Pag kaming mga singles, kami nilalagay sa pang-gabi na talaga at may pasok kahit weekends pero sila hindi puwede. Kailangan i-consider sila. May nagreklamo nga na Sunday na lang niya nakikita asawa niya. Problema yang mga may anak na anak na yan. Umaga suweldo, mamayang gabi utang na naman. Yun, mga utang, madalas utangan. Ako madalas utangan.

**R:** May times ba na nahirapan kayo sa schedule?

**M:** Ay meron. Nung ni-release ang I-phone 4s, hindi ka puwedeng mag-log out talaga. Babad talaga kami sa calls. Super daming tawag talaga- naka-40 calls kami- walang pahinga talaga. Grabe craze ng iphone. Isa pa, pansin ko, tuwing Monday ang buhos ng mga tawag. Pero after nun, relax relax na.

**R:** Let's proceed to health concerns. May mga bago ba?

**M:** Eto, may bago! Nung nagpa-medical ako, overweight na pala ako! (laughing). Kasi di'ba sa annual check-up, they will check kung nagmamatch ba ang height sa weight at sa age mo. Kaya eto papayat, kaya nga sasali ako sa Fun run eh! Hahahah!

**R:** Nung last time na nakausap kita, sabi mo nawalan ka na ng sense of time, ganun pa rin ba?

**M:** Ako kasi, ang alam ko na lang eh yung Easter time... yung time sa US! Hahahhahhahah! (laughing)

**R:** Sa socialization mo, musta naman? May improvement ba? The last na nagkausap tayo eh umaabot ka sa 2 buwan na hindi nag-fafacebook.

**M:** Ay, ngayon hindi na! May pocket wifi na kasi ako eh. Wala na ako problema connecting with friends. Nakakapag-bar na nga ako eh.

**R:** So umiinom ka na din?

**M:** Yan ang hirap! Mahirap kapag nakaka-inom ako. Kaya I avoid drinking as much as possible.

**R:** Anu-ano yung mga nabago sa lifestyle mo because of work?

**M:** Nasanay na akong lumalabas pag gabi, at nasa bahay lang pag araw. Pag off ko, bumabawi talaga ako ng tulog. Sa fashion, ngayon na lang ako naka-suot ng jeans! Hahahha! Feeling ko pumapayat naman ako. Wala naman drastic na nabago sa akin.

**R:** Eto naman, how does interacting with people of different culture affect you? Sinu-sino ba mga nakaka-interact mo sa calls?

**M:** Filipino, American, Chinese, Indian

**R:** Paano mo nalalaman na Filipino kausap mo?

**M:** Sa pangalan, sa accent nila na very Pinoy talaga. Minsan maririnig mo, pag nag-mute ka, sasabihin sa kabilang linya, "ikaw na nga kumausap dito."

**R:** Puwede mo bang sabihin na Filipino ka rin?

**M:** Ayy bawal, hindi puwede yun. Puwede namang mag-Tagalog sila (caller) pero kami, dapat English talaga.

Ay meron pa ako, Spanish naman- parang Dora lang! hahahhaha! Ayun i-hohold ko na lang siya tapos i-transfer ko siya sa Spanish account

Meron pa mga Indian, ang titigas ng mga dila nila. Hahahahha (laughing follows)- minsan ginagaya ko sila. Sabi kasi ng trainer ko before, the best accent to use is the accent of the caller.

**R: So there you go, since kausap mo lagi Indian, American di'ba, paano sila naka-impluwensiya sa'yo? Meron ka bang na-imbibe na culture mula sa kanila?**

**M:** Siguro na lang, naging very particular ako sa customer service. Kapag may hindi magandang service, talagang nag-cocomplain ako. Di'ba, ako, nagbibigay ng magandang service so ine-expect ko yun pag ako naman. Parang nagbibigay ako ng good quality service, so syempre yun din ang gusto ko.

**R: What else?**

**M:** Naging mas time-conscious ako. Like kami ng boyfriend ko, ayokong nasasayang ang oras ko. Pag nag-uusap kami kahit sa phone, gusto ko talagang nakikinig siya. Nagagalit ako pag feeling ko hindi siya nakikinig. Ayoko na kasing inuulit ang sinasabi ko. Magagalit ako, sasabihin ko, "Alam mo, sinasayang mo lang oras ko". Dati, sa bus, nalilibang ako kahit mahaba ang biyahe. Ngayon, hindi na, na-iinip na ako. Parang feeling ko, sayang oras. Ang mga Amerikano ganun di'ba? Ayaw nila ng paulit-ulit. Ayaw nila ng nasasayang ang oras nila.

**R: How about yung pagsasalita? Yung accent?**

**M:** Ay, nakuha ko rin yan. Minsan, sa bahay napapa-Ingles ako. Kahit nanay ko o kahit nga yung katulong namin, nakaka-usap ko sa Ingles! Hahahhha! (laughing)

**R: Economic life tay. How do you perceived your economic life?**

**M:** Okay naman, nabibili ko naman ang mga gusto ko. Pag yung mama ko naglambing na may pabibili, nabibili ko naman.

**R: May ipon ka naman ba?**

**M:** Wala eh! Hahahhaha! (laughing)

**R: How do you describe your consumption behaviour?**

**M:** Naku, impulsive! May ka-wave (batchmate)ako nun, nag-aalok ng Samsung touchscreen phone - PHP 13,000 - pinabibili sa akin- pero kailangan cash. Ayun, maya maya, nagwithdraw kaagad ako sa ATM. Bigay kaagad ang PHP 13,000!

**R: Anu-ano ang mga materials and non- materials things na na-invest mo dahil sa trabaho mo? Materials muna**

**M:** laptop, cellphone, mga appliances sa bahay like yung TV ni Mama. Si Mama kasi, kung ano maisip, papabili kaagad. Pag susuweldo na ako, may naka-ready nang ipapagastos sa akin. Ganyan siya pero okay lang. At least, nakikita ko mga pinagharapan ko.

**R: How about sa non-materials?**

**M:** Natulungan ko kapatid ko sa OJT niya. Yun lang naman.

**R: May communication ka pa ba sa mga classmates mo?**

**M:** Ay, oo naman! Manlilibre, papa-inom sa bahay gagawin. Nitong huli nga lang, nakaka-lungkot na grumadweyt na sila. Ako ang napag-iwan na. Nag-fafacebook si Mama, makikita niya mga classmates ko naka-graduate na, ako hindi pa. Naiingit siya kaya sasabihan na naman niya ako mag-resign na. Kaya eto, ang mga ka-batch mates ko na, nasa lower years na. So, sa school, ang tawag na sa akin eh Ate Mia!

**R: Sa mga teachers, okay naman ba relationship?**

**M:** Oo naman, ina-anticipate na nila pagbalik ko sa PNU! Hahahhaha! (laughing) Na-mi-miss na nila ako.

**R: May mga nabago ba sa values and belief mo dahil sa work mo sa call center?**

**M:** *Siguro, yung pagka-straight forward nga. Magkaiba kasi ang mga Amerikano at mga Pilipino. Tayo, negative tignan kapag straight forward pero sa mga Amerikano okay lang naman. Yun bang ganun. Sa call center, nawalan na din ako ng time sa lovelife. Alam mo bang 2 months na kaming hindi nagkikita ng boyfriend ko? Pero ayos lang naman. Pero dahil sa pag ko call center, feeling ko naman I became a better person dahil open and equal ang environment sa call center.*

**R:** Salamat sa time, Mia!

**M:** You're welcome!

| THEMES                                                             | QUOTES FROM INTERVIEWEES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
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| <p><b>Call Center Culture</b><br/>[culture shared by everyone]</p> | <p><i>“Mahigpit sila sa attendance eh.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Quality of calls, mino-monitor yun. Yung sa EOP, sa calls lang pero sa floor, kahit hindi na”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Bawal din ang cell phone sa floor, dahil pag tumunog yung phone, makaka-apekto sya sa headset at sa signal din ng call”</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“AHT o yung Average Handling Time. Yun yung time na dapat naming ma-resolve ang needs ng customers.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Irate - yun yung demanding na customer, nag-cocomplain. Pag feeling ng caller hindi sila satisfied sa call, magpapa-sup call sila. Yun sup call, short for supervisory call. Dinadala sa supervisor yun mga calls na hindi resolved.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Pag irate yung caller, dapat relaxed ka lang, calm down ka lang, ipadama mo sa caller na you’re eager and willing to help.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“May mga spiel naman para dun like “I hope that you could refrain from saying those words.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Rotating shift kasi kaya minsan nakaka-stress. Kaya dapat i-foresee mo na kagad ang schedule mo para hindi ka mahirapan.”</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“Yung breakfast with team, very common yan.”</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“Decent casual. Wala namang uniform.”</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“Wala naman, fair sila. Pag late ka, late ka talaga. Equal treatment naman talaga.”</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Speed and accuracy lang. Okay lang kahit working student ka as long as you are able to perform your task well in a timely manner. Hindi rin pwede na lagi kang late. Hindi pwede yung “No Call, No Show”. Bawal din yun.”</i><br/>-Darwin</p> |

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|  | <p><i>“Puwede naka-jeans basta naka-collar. Minsan, yung iba naka-t-shirt pero naka-jacket naman sila.”</i></p> <p>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Hindi naman nasusunod talaga yun. Pag nandyan lang yung mga boss namin from the other country, we need to speak in English. Kami, nagdadaldalan kami in the vernacular. Pero dapat aware ka pa rin sa EOP.”</i></p> <p>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Kahit ako yung youngest diyan (sa company), hindi ka nila tini-treat na iba. Simula pa lang ng training, pinapakita ko naman na kung ano ang ginagawa ng iba, magagawa ko rin naman at nakita naman nila yun.”</i></p> <p>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“NCNS - No call, no show- ito yung equivalent ng AWOL (absence without leave). Hindi ka nagpapa-alam na hindi ka papasok. Para masabing hindi ka NCNS, dapat tumawag ka at least 2 hours before your shift. AHT- Average Handling Time din. Yun ang required time na dapat ma-resolve mo ang needs ng caller.”</i></p> <p>-Randell</p> <p><i>“Yun TL, reachable naman sila. Para nga silang friends eh pero pag nasa floor na, siyempre, we show respect na or kahit na off work halimbawa kakain, badminton, para lang kami magkakabarkada. Pero pag nasa loob na (office), parang hindi na kami tini-treat na level. May distinction pa rin.”</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Okay naman sila, friendly regardless of the age and sex. Hindi yun hindrance para hindi ka mapalapit sa kanila. May mga tao kasi na kino-consider nila batch mates nila or from same age bracket lang.”</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Masaya sa work. Maraming freebies like nitong tumbler, nakuha ko ito as freebie. May mga points ka na naearn sa work mo na maari mo ma-redeem as items. Tapos, at the end of the month, may mga bonding/parties. Ang saya di’ba?”</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> <p><i>“TL ko? Super cool niya. Parang friend lang siya. Minsan, nakakapag-off line ka.”</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> <p><i>“Masaya kaya lang, yung mga may asawa, sila yung medyo hindi ko nakaka-mingle. Kami kasing single at mga bata pa, may lakad pa after ng shift. Sila hindi na, diretso na uwi sila sa kani-kanilang pamilya. Sa schedule, madalas din kami magkagulo. Pag kaming</i></p> |
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|                  | <p><i>mga singles, kami nilalagay sa pang-gabi na talaga at may pasok kahit weekends pero sila, hindi puwede. Kailangan i-consider sila. May nagrereklamo nga na Sunday na lang niya nakikita asawa niya. Problema yang mga may anak na yan. Umaga suweldo, mamayang gabi utang na naman. Yun, mga utang, madalas utangan. Ako madalas utangan.”</i></p> <p><i>“Nung ni-release ang I-phone 4s, hindi ka puwedeng mag-log out talaga. Babad talaga kami sa calls. Super daming tawag talaga- naka-40 calls kami- walang pahinga talaga. Grabe craze ng iphone. Isa pa, pansin ko, tuwing Monday ang buhos ng mga tawag. Pero after nun, relax relax na.”</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> <p><i>“Ayy bawal, hindi puwede yun. Puwede namang mag-Tagalog sila (caller) pero kami dapat English talaga.”</i></p> <p><i>“Ay meron pa ako, Spanish naman- parang Dora lang! hahahahaha! Ayun i-hohold ko na lang siya tapos i-ttransfer ko siya sa Spanish account.”</i></p> <p><i>“Meron pa, mga Indians, ang titigas ng mga dila nila. Hahahahaha (laughing follows). Minsan, ginagaya ko sila. Sabi kasi ng trainer ko before, the best accent to use is the accent of the caller.”</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> |
| <b>a) Health</b> | <p><i>“Apektado yung pagtulog ko, sira yung sleeping habits ko. Masakit sa ulo talaga siya. Masakit minsan sa katawan kasi wala na akong exercise.”</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Parang lumabo nga ang mata ko.”</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Fast food. Parang wala ka namang choice eh”</i></p> <p>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“Lack of sleep, pumayat ako lalo. Feeling ko, pagod ako lagi. Kahit paggising ko, feeling ko pagod pa rin ako.”</i></p> <p>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Nakaka-isa’t kalahating kaha ako. Minsan, dalawa.”</i></p> <p>-Randell</p> <p><i>“Nakaka-dalawang cups ako pag nasa work ako.”</i></p> <p>-Randell</p> <p><i>“Last week hindi ako nakapasok dahil sa hyperacidity.”</i></p> <p>-Randell</p> <p><i>“Yun ang nabago talaga. Sobrang na-distort. Yun 11 pm ko, yun ang nagiging breakfast ko. Yung lunch ko, nasa 4- 6 am. Yung dinner ko, yung lunch time na.”</i></p> <p>-Randell</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |

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|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                            | <p><i>"Cobra (energy drink), para mabuhay ako."</i><br/>-Randell</p> <p><i>"Wala naman, pero nitong huli, feeling ko, masyado na ako na-stress. Medyo natuto ako uminom pero minsan lang yun. Ayoko na maulit dahil lasing ako naka-uwi. Naging acidic din ako."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Nung nagpa-medical ako, overweight na pala ako! (laughing). Kasi, di'ba, sa annual check-up they will check kung nagmamatch ba ang height sa weight at sa age mo. Kaya eto papayat, kaya nga sasali ako sa Fun run eh! Hahaha!"</i><br/>-Mia</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>b) Recreational Activities Vices</b>                                                    | <p><i>"Moderate drinker. Minsan, sa loob ng 1 buwan, mga 5-7x ako iinom."</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>"Ay, hindi ako nag I smoke, pero drinking, oo minsan."</i><br/>-Darwin</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers</b><br>[shared only by working students] | <p><i>"May privilege kami, may preferred schedule."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"May mga time na nala-late ako pagpasok ng work dahil sa school work gaya ng thesis. Nauunawaan naman nila kaya minsan talagang ina-adjust nila ang schedule ko."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"May privilege din kami dito sa work. Kapag student ka eh ma-irereemburse mo ang binayad mo sa tuition fee. Yun pa lang, malaking tulong na."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Wala naman. Willing naman mag-adjust ang company sa schedule ng school basta notify them in advance."</i><br/>-Randell</p> <p><i>"Maluwag naman. Basta pag conflicts sa schedule, dapat informed kaagad ang TL."</i><br/>-Randell</p> <p><i>"kasi since student ako, nabibigay sa akin yung preferred schedule bagay na yung iba, hindi. Tapos kung ano gusto mong shift, madali ka nilang pagbigyan."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Very lenient when it comes to students. Just show your registration card."</i><br/>-Harvey</p> |

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|                                           | <p><i>"Schedule given is based on enrolled subjects".</i><br/>-Belle</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>a) Transition/adjustment of values</b> | <p><i>"Mas humaba ang pasensya ko."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Mas nag-improve ang patience ko. I learned how to get along with other people."</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>"Natuto ako magpahalaga sa hard-earned money."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>Naging mas sociable lang ako at mas naging confident. Mas naging conscious din ako sa oras.</i><br/>- Darwin</p> <p><i>"Yung pagbibigay ng importansya sa oras, yung customer service-na parang yun ang ine-expect mong ibibigay din sa'yo pag ikaw naman ang nasa labas."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Pagiging open-minded. Lumaki kasi area ko eh. Dati school at bahay lang. Ngayon, school-bahay-work. Marami na akong natutunan sa mga ka-trabaho ko like may lugar pa lang ganito, may mga tao palang ganito."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>Siguro, yung confidence sa English. Yung accent, nakuha ko na. Canadian at American ang mga callers namin pero may mga American din kasi na mahirap kausap eh. Like yung mga American Indians, mahirap sila intindihin. Parang ang bilis nila mag-English na mahirap intindihan."</i></p> <p><i>"Parang umigsi pasensya ko. Na-adopt ko na kapag irate ang kausap ko, nagiging irate na din ako. Nagagaya ko din ang mga expressions nila like yung "F" word."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Siguro na lang, naging very particular ako sa customer service. Kapag may hindi magandang service, talagang nag-cocomplain ako. Di'ba, ako nagbibigay ng magandang service so ine-expect ko yun pag ako naman. Parang nagbibigay ako ng good quality service, so syempre yun din ang gusto ko."</i></p> <p><i>"Naging mas time-conscious ako. Like kami ng boyfriend ko, ayokong nasasayang ang oras ko. Pag nag-uusap kami kahit sa phone ,gusto ko talagang nakikinig siya. Nagagalit ako pag feeling ko hindi siya nakikinig. Ayoko na kasing inuulit ang sinasabi ko. Magagalit ako, sasabihin ko, "Alam mo, sinasayang mo lang oras ko." Dati, sa bus, nalilibang ako kahit mahaba ang biyahe. Ngayon, hindi na, na-iinip na ako. Parang feeling ko, sayang oras."</i></p> |

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|                            | <p><i>Ang mga Amerikano ganun di'ba? Ayaw nila ng paulit-ulit. Ayaw nila ng nasasayang ang oras nila."</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> <p><i>"Siguro, yung pagka-straight forward nga. Magkaiba kasi ang mga Amerikano at mga Pilipino. Tayo, negative tignan kapag straight forward pero sa mga Amerikano okay lang naman. Yun bang ganun. Sa call center, nawalan na din ako ng time sa lovelife. alam mo bang 2 months na kaming hindi nagkikita ng boyfriend ko? Pero ayos lang naman. Pero dahil sa pag ko call center, feeling ko naman, I became a better person dahil open and equal ang environment sa call center."</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> <p><i>"Na-expose ako sa mga problems ng US. Hindi na ganun kataas tingin ko sa mga Amerikano. Mas na-appreciate ko pagiging Pilipino ko."</i></p> <p>-Belle</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>b) Family Relations</b> | <p><i>"Yun nga lang, less na lang ang communication. Pero hindi na ako hirap, hindi na ako nanghihingi ng baon sa kanila, nakakapag-abot pa ako sa kanila. Ngayon, nagkaroon na ako ng disposition. Kung dati binu-budget ko lang kung ano ibibigay ng parent ko, ngayon may sarili na akong pera. Nagkaroon na ako ng freedom. May sarili na kasi akong pera kaya minsan nakakagala na ako."</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Yan ganyan, hindi ako nakakauwi. Ang ginagawa na lang nila, (yun family ko) sila na lang umuuwi gaya pag Christmas. Yung dalawang kapatid ko sa province, gustong gusto nila mag-mall at gumala. Pag si Mama, video chat na lang, kaya dapat stable ang internet connection sa bahay."</i></p> <p>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Madalas kami lumabas ng family ko. Kasama ko mga pamangkin ko, kapatid ko, ganun. Kain sa labas. Pag nasa bahay, kuwentuhan lang naman. Laro ng PS3."</i></p> <p>-Randell</p> <p><i>"Hindi na nila ako inoobiiga gumawa sa bahay. Pahinga na lang madalas."</i></p> <p>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Sa family ko, yung Mama ko, pinipilit niya na ako mag-resign December pa lang. Sabi ko nga, "Mama, tapusin na natin (yun school year) kasi kahit mag-resign naman ako ngayon wala naman akong school na mapapasukan." Tapos eto ngayon, pinag-reresign na naman ako. Sabi niya sa akin, "Bahala ka na sa buhay mo." Parang gusto niya na nga kong i-disown (laughing). Sabi niya, "Bahala ka kung hindi ka makikinig sa akin. Malaki ka na rin naman."</i></p> <p>-Mia</p> |

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|                                                    | <p><i>"Minsan, sa bahay, napapa-Ingles ako. Kahit nanay ko o kahit nga yung katulong namin, nakaka-usap ko sa Ingles! Hahahhha! (laughing)"</i><br/>-Mia</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>c) Consumption Behavior/ Financial standing</b> | <p><i>"Wala akong ipon kasi nag-aaral din ako eh."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Satisfied naman. Financially stable na ako. Dati maliit lang allowance ko. Hindi ka pupuwede mag-demand sa magulang mo. Ngayon okay na ako."</i> -Hannah</p> <p><i>"Nakakapag-libre na ako. Nakakatulong yung sweldo ko sa mga gastos sa school."</i><br/>- Darwin</p> <p><i>"Pag bagong suweldo lang ako bumibili ng mga gamit ko. Pag may mga bills or bayaran sa bahay, ako na nagbabayad. Binu-budget ko na kagad ang pera ko for the next 2 weeks bago ulet ako sumuweldo."</i> -Darwin</p> <p><i>"Laptop. Kailangan ko lalo na nung nagti thesis kami. Kasi ako yung developer sa thesis namin eh. Damit, mahilig ako bumili ng damit. Sapatos, hindi naman. Pag sa bahay nag i stock na ako ng mga food."</i><br/>- Darwin</p> <p><i>"Oo, masasabi ko namang financially stable ako kasi hindi na ako humihingi. Mas naging independent na ako."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Before, dependent ako sa binibigay ng parents ko. Ngayon, hindi na. Ako pa mismo ang nagbibigay (sa parent's ko). Sapat lang naman siya."</i></p> <p><i>"Ayun ,pag may sale, bili kaagad lalo na kapag suweldo pero hindi naman ubos-ubos biyaya."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Nabibili ko naman ang mga gusto ko. Pag yung Mama ko naglambing na may pabibili, nabibili ko naman. "</i></p> <p><i>"Naku impulsive! May ka-wave (batchmate)ako nun, nag-aalok ng Samsung touchscreen phone, PHP 13,000, pinabibili sa akin pero kailangan cash. Ayun, maya maya, nagwithdraw kaagad ako sa ATM. Bigay kaagad ang PHP 13,000!"</i></p> <p><i>"Laptop, cell phone, mga appliances sa bahay like yung TV ni Mama. Si Mama kasi, kung ano maisip, papabili kaagad. Pag susuweldo na ako may naka-ready nang ipapagastos sa akin, ganyan siya pero okay lang. At least, nakikita ko mga pinagharapan ko."</i><br/>-Mia</p> |

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| <p><b>d) Recreational Activities/ Rest day of Working Students</b></p> | <p><i>“May mga time na pag after school nagkakayaan, hindi na ako makakasama- matutulog na lang ako. Naging matakaw ako sa tulog, may time na 17 hours straight ang tinulog ko.”ni hindi nga ako tumayo para umuhi. Talagang bumabawi talaga ako sa tulog.”</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>“Bago ako mag-work, bahay-school lang minsan nag-sSM kasi malapit lang school naming (PUP Sta. Mesa) sa SM (Centerpoint in Sta. Mesa). Pero ngayong may work na ako, feeling ko nag-upgrade ang social life kasi iba-ibang age ang na-meet ko. Nagkaroon ako ng friend na nasa 30’s ganun. Nagyaya sila ng kain, videoke.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Pag maraming orders at medyo complicated pa, talagang kinakain ko sya. Sleeping din, pagdating sa bahay after work, tulog na ako, tapos kain, ligo tapos pasok na sa school. Sa school, pag may katuwaan, DOTA o kaya basketball. Naglalaro ako ng basketball. Pag sa bahay, movie marathon lang sa download sa computer.”</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Leisure ko talaga is mag-computer. Pag nasa bahay lang ako, talagang nasa harap na ako ng laptop. Nagko computer. Basketball din, yun libangan ko, sumasali ako sa mga liga.”</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Active ako sa facebook. May time pa rin ako sa mga college friends ko. High school ang wala na kasi nasa Pangasinan naman sila. Sa school nag-a-allot pa rin ako ng mga 2 hours para sa bonding ng barkada ko like DOTA, ganun. Minsan, hang-out kami sa Market Market.”</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>“Naging less ang time ko sa mga college friends ko or mas madalas nasa work na ako. Pag nagkayayaan sa college friends, hindi na ako gano nakakasama.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Nasanay na akong lumalabas pag gabi, at nasa bahay lang pag araw. Pag off ko, bumabawi talaga ako ng tulog.”</i><br/>-Mia</p> |
| <p><b>e) School as Priority/ Academic Performance</b></p>              | <p><i>“Ako kasi napamahal na ako sa work. It is my medium to attain my goals in life gaya ng makatapos sa pag-aaral.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>“Priority ko sya, pero parang nahihirapan ako na pag-sabayin ang work at ang school. Pero ngayon, ayos na ako. Mas focused na ako sa studies.”</i><br/>-Hannah</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

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|                                       | <p><i>"Ako, aabsent ako sa work pero hindi sa school."</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>"Bale stepping stone ko tong call center para makatapos sa studies ko. Now, kung hindi man ako makahanap ng work na related sa natapos ko, at least may fallback na ako which is call center. Sa studies naman, priority ko talaga yan. Nagwowork ako to finance my studies."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"May balak na, baka June or July para makapag- focus na talaga sa studies ko. Pag natuloy ang resignation ko, baka mag-full load ako, pero pag hindi 12 units na naman."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Hindi, hindi ko ginagawa yun. In the first place, hindi naman nila kasi ako pinilit mag-trabaho eh. Basta kung kalian ang submission, pinapasa ko talaga. Ako na lang ang nag-aadjust."</i><br/>-Hannah</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>f) Influence of work to school</b> | <p><i>"May shift ako ng gabing yun na kinabukasan final exam, dire-diretso. Naranasan ko mag- exam na hindi ako gaano nakapag-review."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Nakatulong sya na ma-improve ang communication skills ko. Napakinabangan ko yung skills sa Call Center kapag may mga reporting o group activity sa klase. Mas naging comfortable ako sa English."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"There was a time na nag-comment ako sa pronunciation ng classmate ko. Biglang banat ng mga classmates ko, "ang yabang mo naman!" Like yun pagpronounce sa data."</i><br/>-Juan Carlos</p> <p><i>"Pagdating sa school, naantok na ako. May ilang klase na nakakatulog ako."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Pag late or sobrang late na ako, hindi na ako pumapasok. Pero pag mga 15- 30 minutes late, humahabol pa ako. Mababait naman kasi mga professor ko."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Mas nagkaroon ako ng confidence magsalita sa klase dahil sa call center. Nakaka-sali pa rin naman ako sa mga activities. Equal treatment naman dito sa school. Pag may dapat gawin, dapat gawin. Hhindi excuse na may trabaho ka."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> |

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|  | <p><i>"Sa studies lang, dapat budget ka talaga sa oras. Lack of sleep."</i><br/>-Darwin</p> <p><i>"Oo, madalas. Pag nalalate ako sa klase or nahuhuli magpasa ng mga requirements, syempre may deduction sa points."</i><br/>-Randell</p> <p><i>"Sa studies, binawasan ko ang units ko, instead na mag-24 (units) nag-12 (units) na lang ako. Wala kasing part time sa Stellar eh. At present, nag-susummer ako as part of our program para makahabol ako sa mga na-miss kong units."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Oo naman, kasi napag-iwanan na talaga ako ng mga kaklase ko, pero wala naman ako magagawa dahil kailangan mag-work so tinanggap ko na lang. Sayang din naman kasi ang trabaho."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Alam naman nila, minsan kinakantyawon nila ako pag Inglesan na o kaya manlibre ka, or utangan ganun."</i><br/><i>"Before kasi, nasanay sila (classmates) na kapag may mga group activities, ako ang leader. Sa akin okay lang, pabor pa rin sa akin kasi natuto ako. Pero ngayong nagwowork ako, hindi na gaano. Okay naman relationship ko sa mga classmates ko."</i><br/>-Hannah</p> <p><i>"Ay oo naman, manlilibre, papa-inom sa bahay gagawin. Nitong huli nga lang, nakaka-lungkot na grumadweyt na sila, ako ang napag-iwan na. Nag-fafacebook si Mama, makikita niya mga classmates ko naka-graduate na, ako hindi pa. Naiingit siya kaya sasabihan na naman niya ako mag-resign na. Kaya eto, ang mga ka-batch mates ko, na nasa lower years na. So sa school, ang tatawagin na sa akin eh Ate Mia!"</i><br/>-Mia</p> |
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## APPENDIX D CERTIFICATION OF AUTHENTICITY TEST



Philippine Normal University  
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PUBLICATION OFFICE



### AUTHENTICITY RESULT

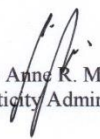
Date of Release: April 29, 2016  
Result Code: 2016-0131  
Submission ID: 667218962  
Title of Output: A Study on the Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers  
Author(s): Eduardo B. Noda, Jr.

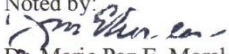
#### Authenticity Report:

- **Similarity Report: 10%**
- **Interpretation:** A similarity report of 10% means that 10% of the whole paper is similar to sources in Turnitin's (authenticity software) online repository. The colored bibliographical references denote the sources of similarity to previously published work which maybe from internet sources (9%), publications (2%) and student papers (5%) for the remaining similarity percentage.
- **Highlighted text in the Manuscript:**
  - Red marks and highlights are set of texts directly or exactly copied from online sources
  - Other color marks and highlights are set of text exactly copied from other sources (student papers and publications).

#### Recommendations:

- Use of quotations for exactly copied text is suggested.
- For assumed to be cited parts of the manuscript but highlighted, it is recommended that authors rephrase these portions.

  
Rio Anne R. Maño  
(Authenticity Administrator)

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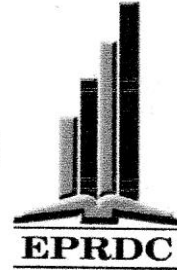


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APPENDIX E  
CERTIFICATION OF EDITING



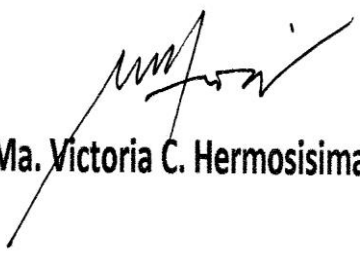
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Tel/Fax: (632) 527-0366 e-mail: eprdc@pnu.edu.ph



## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the thesis of **Eduardo B. Noda, Jr.** entitled *A Study on the Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers* underwent language editing.

This certification is issued on July 27, 2016 for thesis oral defense purposes.

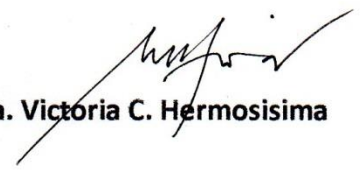


Ma. Victoria C. Hermosisima

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that the thesis of **Eduardo B. Noda, Jr.** entitled *A Study on the Subculture of Working Students in Call Centers* underwent language editing.

This certification is issued on February 2, 2017.



Ma. Victoria C. Hermosisima

## APPENDIX F RECOMMENDATION LETTER

GRESO FORM-005



**Philippine Normal University**  
*The National Center for Teacher Education*  
**College of Graduate Studies and Teacher Education Research**  
Pedro Orata Hall, Room 304 B, Taft Avenue, Manila



**GRADUATE RESEARCH OFFICE**  
Tel. No. 317-17-68 loc. 539

### Endorsement for Oral Defense of Adviser/s

JULY 27, 2016

(Date)

**Dr. Zenaida Q. Reyes**  
Dean, CGSTER  
PNU, Manila

Thru: **Dr. Teresita T. Rungduin**  
Director, Graduate Research Office

Dear Dr. Rungduin:

This is to recommend the oral defense of EDUARDO B. NODA JR., He/ She is a candidate for the degree MAED- SOCIAL SCIENCE TEACHING for his/her study titled A study on the  
Culture of Working students in Call Centers.

May I further request that the oral defense be scheduled tentatively on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ subject to the availability of the panelists and Dean, CGSTER schedule.

Thank you very much.

Truly yours,

  
Arthur S. Abunias  
(Printed name over signature)  
Adviser

  
MINDA CABILDAN VALENCIA  
(Printed name over signature)  
Adviser

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### **Eduardo Buan Noda, Jr.**

**294 Zabala Street Tondo, Manila**

**20 June 1983**

**09155694879**

**edwardnoda@yahoo.com**

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#### **Educational Background:**

*2008- 2017: Graduate School*

**Philippine Normal University (PNU)**

**Master of Arts in Education with specialization in Social Science Teaching**

*1999- 2003: Tertiary Education*

**Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM)**

**Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Social Studies**

- *Cum Laude*
- Outstanding Student Teacher (F. Torres High School)
- Full Time Scholar/ Scholar (CHED- Congressional District and PLM Alumni Association in Australia)

*1995- 1999: Secondary Education*

**F.G. Calderon Integrated School**

*1990- 1995: Primary Education*

**F. G. Calderon Integrated School**

#### **Teaching Experiences:**

**San Sebastian College Recoletos- Manila, Junior High School Department**

- ❑ *Subject Area Adviser- Araling Panlipunan (2012- present)*
- ❑ *Club Moderator of Honor Society (2004- present)*
- ❑ *Adviser of the YMCA (2009- present)*
- ❑ *Adviser of the Mondialogo (International Competition sponsored by UNESCO and DaimlerChrysler) tied up with Russia in 2006 and Mexico in 2008*

**Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (PLM)**

*Part Time Faculty,*

*College of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (2012- present)*

Teaching Humanities, Philippine History, Politics and Governance,  
and Sociology,

*College of Education (2013- present)*

Teaching Child and Adolescent Development, Facilitating Learning,  
and Social Dimensions of Education

**Other Working Experiences:**

**Greenwich Pizza Pasta Corporation**

- *Service Crew, Divisoria Mall (April- September 2002)*
- *Service Crew, Tutuban Centermall (November 2001- January 2002)*
- *Service Crew, Padre Rada (August- October 2001)*

**House of Representatives, District II of Manila**

- *Junior Staff (Summer 2001)*

**Special Award:**

- Outstanding Teacher for Education for International Understanding,  
World Teachers Day Celebration, Philippine Normal University  
(October 2006)

**Professional and Social Organizations:**

- Philippine Historical Association, Member
- Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA of Manila), Member
- UNESCO- APNEIVE (Asia Pacific Network for Education for International  
and Values Education) and UNESCO ASPNet (Association for School  
Project Network), Member

