

**Patrícia Manuela Oliveira Silva**



Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse (LS-CSA) – The Case of the Philippines

University Fernando Pessoa

Porto, 2020



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Thesis presented to the University Fernando Pessoa as part of the requirements to obtain the Master's degree in Humanitarian Action, Cooperation and Development, under the orientation of Prof. Dr<sup>a</sup>. Teresa Told.

Porto, 2020

## RESUMO

PATRÍCIA MANUELA OLIVEIRA SILVA: Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse (LS-CSA) –  
O Caso das Filipinas

(Sob Orientação da Prof. Doutora Teresa Toldy)

O presente trabalho procura analisar um tema cuja visibilidade permanece algo reduzida. Esta ‘nova’ forma de abuso apropria-se das vulnerabilidades tradicionais e locais, mas também das ferramentas que, enquanto sociedade, agora nos encontramos altamente dependentes. Nomeadamente o acesso à internet, este novo ‘terreno’ dá lugar a novas rotas para antigas formas de criminalidade e dá origem a toda uma panóplia de ferramentas que permitem crimes como o abuse sexual de crianças tomar todo um novo paradigma.

Tendo em conta a globalização e a conetividade do mundo atual, crimes como o abuso sexual de crianças ‘via live stream’ tendem a surgir cada vez mais, colocando crianças de todos os locais do mundo em perigo. Face a esta problemática o presente estudo procura, através de uma abordagem exploratória, dar a conhecer o fenómeno do abuso sexual de crianças ‘via live stream’, especificamente no contexto da sociedade Filipina, onde, de acordo com diversas entidades internacionais como a Europol e a Unicef é o verdadeiro epicentro deste tipo de cibercrime.

O tema é tido em conta com recurso à perspetiva da população local, a sua cultura, história, valores e como estes podem ou não influenciar a crescente expansão do crime pelo país. Neste sentido o trabalho adota uma metodologia de investigação qualitativa que permite aceder aos testemunhos de 8 Filipinos através de entrevistas que foram depois analisadas e discutidas de acordo com as questões de investigação pré-definidas. Em adição realizou-se a análise documental de diversas fontes de forma a permitir comparar-se as conclusões adquiridas através das entrevistas. E por último foi brevemente analisado o trabalho de 5 organizações de cariz internacional e que estiveram ou estão atualmente a desenvolver iniciativas nas Filipinas.

Num país onde predomina a pobreza e existem poucos métodos de investigação da cibercriminalidade, concluiu-se ainda que os valores e a cultura Filipina contribuem para proliferação deste tipo de abuso. As famílias são concorrentemente responsáveis por expor os próprios filhos a esta realidade como forma de escapar à pobreza, algo que é encobrido por uma cultura de silêncio generalizada.

**Palavras-Chave:** Cultura, Globalização, Internet, Abuso Sexual de Crianças via Live Stream, Filipinas

## **ABSTRACT**

**PATRÍCIA MANUELA OLIVEIRA SILVA: Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse (LS-CSA) –  
The Case of the Philippines**

(Under the orientation of Prof. Dr<sup>a</sup>. Teresa Toldy)

The aim of this paper is to enlighten and bring attention to a growing issue, a form of abuse that not only takes advantage of traditional and local vulnerabilities but also of the very means and tools we, as a society, have grown dependent on. The Internet has rose as breeding ground with new routes for old crimes but it has also been the place of birth for a while new set of tool that allow crimes like online child sexual abuse to take place.

In face of globalization and the undeniable connectivity of the current world, crimes like live streaming – child sexual abuse (LS-CSA) tend to emerge and expand rapidly reaching children from all corner of the world. Given the gravity of the issue the present study seeks, through an exploratory approach, to share some of the details about this phenomenon, specifically as it takes place in the Filipino society, recognized by several organizations like EUROPOL and UNICEF as the epicenter of this type of cybercrime.

The study of the topic resources to the perspective of the local population, its culture, history and values to know how they may influence the expansion of the crime throughout the nation. The study is composed of a qualitative methodological design, in which, the interview of 8 Filipino individuals was conducted and whose data was then analyzed and discussed accordingly to pre-established research questions. In addition, an analysis of documental data was conducted to provide grounds for the comparison of the collected data. Lastly the work of 5 international organizations currently/or not present in the country were also considered.



In a country where poverty is established and there's a real gap in the enforcement of the law in cybercrimes, it was also concluded that the values and Filipino culture contribute for the proliferation of LS-CSA where the families are often 'facilitators' and expose their children in order to escape poverty; something seemingly indivisible from a generalized culture of silence.

**Keywords:** Culture, Globalization, Internet, Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse, Philippines

## **DEDICATION**

*For my Mom, for everything she  
helped me accomplish and so much  
more that I could never place into  
words...*

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## ACRONYMS

CRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSAM	Child Sexual Abuse Material
CSEA	Child Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
DSWD	Department of Social Welfare and Development
ICMEC	International Centre for Missing and Exploited Children
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IJM	International Justice Mission <sup>FF</sup>
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
LS-CSA	Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OSAEC	Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PNP	Philippine National Police
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
VAC	Violence against Children
WHO	World Health Organization
WWW	World Wide Web

## KEY-CONCEPTS

The definition of important concepts is fundamental in order to sustain a balanced approach to any subject. In this light it is important to state out the definitions of certain terms that will be often referred throughout this study. This will, hopefully, prevent any misconceptions or misinterpretations as a result of the different and sometimes even conflicting definitions of certain concepts. The presented definitions will be the ones respected for the purposes of this study.

### ‘Age of Consent’

Often confused with age of criminal responsibility or age of consent to marriage, the age of consent refers to “the age below which, in accordance with national law, it is prohibited to engage in sexual activities with a child” (European Parliament cit in. Greijer and Doek, 2016, p. 7), which, according to the Lanzarote Convention, in its article 18, indicates that this is to be decided by each national government.

### ‘Child’

For the purposes of this study, child will be used according to the definition established by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), “a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier”<sup>1</sup> (1989, p. 2).

### ‘Culture’

There isn’t a fixed, universal accepted definition to be stated; and globalization has certainly only made it harder to achieve. Given the complexity in defining the term, for the study in question, the approach of Bates and Plog (1976) will sustain the term as a system of shared beliefs, values,

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<sup>1</sup> *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, New York, 20 November 1989, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1577, p. 2 Available at: <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/44/a44r025.htm>>

customs, behaviors, and artifacts that the members of a society use to cope with the world as well as one another. The system is then transmitted between generations but also changed by it.

#### ‘Live streaming - child sexual abuse’ (LS-CSA)

A form of online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSAEC) involving the participation of a child (alone or not) – by definition, under coercion – in sexual activities that are transmitted (‘streamed’) over the internet (Varrella, 2017). The data is transmitted ‘live’ (instantaneously) to the viewer, who can watch and engage while the abuse occurs (through requests or even by dictating how the ‘show’ should be carried out) (Greijer and Doek, 2016). In the case of this study LS-CSA will refer to both child sexual abuse (CSA) and child sexual exploitation (CSE) simultaneously as the crime itself is always a form of abuse and develops on one hand as a form of profit.

#### ‘Orientalism’

The concept allows to revisit old fashionable ideologies of a preexisting division between the West (a group of superior civilizations) and the East (whose practices, perceptions and representations are supposedly created and imposed by the West) (Qingxue 2003; Curaming 2009). The term is understood as a paradigm, an underlining framework for some of the concepts and ideologies that will be unveiled about culture, religion and the mind of individuals when addressing LS-CSA from a local or an external perspective.

#### Philippines

The Republic of the Philippines is a complex archipelago with several islands, for the study whenever the country is referred to, unless stated otherwise, it will refer to northern area where the Catholic religion is prevalent and the population shares common traits and values. Hence the Southern part where the population is mostly Muslim and its own particularities will not be considered.



‘Religion’

Consist of a very important concept for the study; it is addressed not as a social institution but rather given its role in the life of the individual (Baston, Schoenrade and Ventis, 1993). In particular religion will attend only to the practices of Roman Catholics in the Philippines that unlike other Catholic communities have their own interpretations of the teachings and the Bible.

‘Streaming’

This particular term will be used to distinguish LS-CSA from other types of child abuse/exploitation also carried online. It basically consists of technology that transmits information directly to the computer or device of the recipient (via a webcam, audio interface, etc.); this technology leaves no trace on the device unless the content is deliberately downloaded/recorded. In the case of streams of sexual content by children they mostly involve a real-time production and transmission of the audio/video data through the webcam at the victim’s end (Greijer and Doek, 2016).

## CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

*“Bad men need nothing more to compass their ends, than that good men should look on and do nothing”* (Mill, 1867).

Every day we find ourselves ignoring much of the world around us.

Freedom of choice and economic gain are at the heart of our nations, profit has obliterated our respect towards others, and humanity is no longer a given but a goal within a society, as we face a growing number of threats. Technology that we created to bring us closer together is exposing us to increasingly hurtful crimes; children face more risks now than ever before with their own safety being placed in harm's way by those deemed to protect them.

In 1981 the world could finally rejoice as the last standing country [Mauritania] abolished slavery (Sutter, 2012). Throughout years of endless pain and efforts country after country recognized the need to abolish all forms of slavery. At a first glance humanity itself had accomplish a great deed, recognizing equality among all human beings. The struggle, the stories and the harsh reality many advocated against, unfortunately, had a very short-lasting effect. With new words and new schemes, and against all odds slavery persevered. Humans were once again, or in fact, never stopped being; traded, sold, used as common goods. Modern slavery as it is currently addressed, takes many forms. In 2017 Siddharth Kara described it to the UN News as the ‘dark underbelly’ of economic globalization (Pastorino, 2017), with the Global Slavery Index indicating that 40.3 million people around the world were enslaved in 2016 (2019). Exploitation happens worldwide (even if at different scales) through forced labour, debt bondage, human trafficking or other forms; and globalization continues to fuel what humanity once believed to have abolished (Landam and Silverman, 2019; The Minderoo Foundation, 2019).

In the human trafficking market, the consumers are employers of trafficked labor and the products are human beings, be it by supporting abuse through online visualizations or by actively engaging with victims, societies across the globe create demand and thus allow and contribute for what is

already considered one of the most profitable crimes worldwide (Wheaton, Schauer and Galli 2010; Robinson, 2011). The exploitation of children is, perhaps, one of the most hideous and yet, one of the most profitable forms of modern slavery. By taking into consideration the routes and new shapes of abuse and exploitation presented with the development of technology, children face a panoply of harm like we had never imagined.

This study will focus on one particular form of child abuse/exploitation that takes place on the online space, known as the Internet, this “has become an integrated and quite natural part of everyday life [...] the idea of a society with no internet access is quite alien” (The Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs, 2010, p. 7), especially when we address developed societies, yet, the same can now be said about societies all around the globe. Live streaming - child sexual abuse (LS-CSA) a crime with very low financial costs or the need of any criminal expertise, a type of abuse that has proven so complex that very little cases have seen the light of justice (US Department of State, 2017). Through active research and the collection of a few testimonies of a community (Filipinos) that has lived with close ties with several forms of child abuse (LS-CSA included) the study will comply a few reflections on different elements surrounding the crime and its prevalence in the country of the Philippines.

The research is presented throughout five chapters; chapter I includes the Introduction to the paper, statement of the problem, research questions, aim and limitations of the study. Chapter II presents a review of literature, including a view over online sexual abuse and exploitation of children (OSEAC) (highlighting LS-CSA) and a look into the Philippines and its specific experience with this form of crime. Chapter III describes the methodology used for the research; chapter IV presents the study’s overall findings including the results of the interviews and of the conducted data analyses on international organizations and recommendations for further research. Lastly, chapter V provides the conclusion of the paper.

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

The process of investigation, is by definition, a constant work, “a walk towards more concrete knowledge and it should be accepted as such, with all the hesitations, detours and uncertainties that are implied” (Fortin, 1996, p. 31). Nonetheless a starting point and a certain structure or guiding line is important to be established in order to obtain valuable information and conduct the development of the study (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). The subject under research will be ‘Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse in the Philippines’, a form of online child exploitation that occurs throughout the world but has shown to take on different characteristics within this country (Terre des Hommes (TdHN), 2016).

LS-CSA consists of a serious violation of human rights; the fact that it remains so pervasive and yet to be curtailed raises deep concern. As it happens with other forms of abuse, LS-CSA started as a small trend that began to show upon police radars as affecting province areas of the Philippines where children from poorest communities began to fall victims to yet another form of exploitation. Initially addressed as a ‘phenomenon’ (European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, 2018) the abusive trend was not believed to continue to flourish yet, nowadays, the same agency and others alike recognize it as an established reality.

As small families and organized crime groups take advantage of technology and young children for profit, enforcement agencies continue to struggle to tackle it: be it for its digital characteristic or the cultural characteristics of the community where it develops (Philippines), it remains hard to detect and until fully understood, to create effective measures to tackle and prevent its further advancements.

## 1.2 Research Questions

The development of research questions is an interactive process, constantly evolving with the planning of the study and even within its initial stage. The collection of data or the results of an exploratory interview (as it so happened with this study), often may lead to the redesign of certain questions or even the emergence of new ones (Hung and Popp, 2009). The questions provide a path, they help the researcher set boundaries, realize what needs to be collected and which methods are best applied in order to obtain the needed answers. With such in mind, bellow, are presented the questions with provide the guidance for this study:

- 1) ‘Live streaming - child sexual abuse was initially defined as static event in the Philippines. Only when numbers started to grow did it capture international attention and scholars began to question its seemingly attachment to ‘family’. Are local’s aware of this association, or is it a foreign construction?’
- 2) ‘From a local (Filipino) perspective, does culture and social interaction play a major role in the creation of personal interpretations of this type of criminality? Or, in fact, are most of the ideas and information acquired and constructed through transnational influences?’
- 3) ‘(The Philippines) as an Eastern country has been evaluated by its western peers, as economically fragile and dangerously susceptible to human violations (like the one in study). Are Western organizations taking the country’s needs and knowledge in consideration when tackling live streaming - child sexual abuse or, are the interventions standardized for the crime regardless of its context?’
- 4) ‘A poor understanding of another’s culture can often lead to misconceptions and conflicts of opinions. Children are regarded for their need to be protected until they are of age, yet protection can mean different things and be represented by a variety of attitudes that can often cause opposing stances. Child prostitution is not only forbidden but often a ‘well-hidden secret’; in the Philippines the subject appears well known by the inhabitants, but does that mean it is accepted? Or do they ‘look the other way’ for a reason? In reflection of this case, is there a possibility that LS-CSA will follow a similar fate?’

### 1.3 Aim of the Study

The main goal of the research is obtaining information concerning the particularities of LS-CSA as it occurs in the Philippines. By taking into perspective the ‘voice’ of the local community and the studies provided by academics and international western agencies presently addressing the issue, the study aims to explore the reason why the phenomenon has continuously grown in the country as a ‘cottage (family) led business’. While, at the same time, verifying if this idea is shared by the locals (Filipinos) and the international community.

While exploring it as a local phenomenon under the globalization scoop, the study will take into special consideration: the Filipino Culture (beliefs, values, social patterns) as well as personal traits of the individual (education, digital awareness) in order to sustain the concluding arguments concerning the initial idea that this type of Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC), in the case of the Philippines, has very close ties to the family and poverty. The latest [poverty] follows the ideology of a study conducted by Hong (2019) where poverty is also directly linked to a sense of powerlessness and lack of equal social power experienced by individuals in the lower social-economic scale.

Considering the complexity of the theme and the research undertaken it’s important to underline that this is an exploratory study, as such, any conclusions obtained cannot be extrapolated or generalized. While it is sustained and rigorously explored the data will merely provide an input, a glimpse over the subject.

### 1.4 Limitations of the Study

No study can be free from shortcoming and drawbacks. From the very beginning reaching the target population to address a sensitive topic as LS-CSA could impose some limitation to the number of participants willing to be reply; in addition, the resources available and the limited time

spam also played an important role. Participants who did participate had to be able to speak English and have access to a fairly stable Internet connection (which immediately made it harder that individuals of the lower socioeconomic status could be contacted); due to their own daily lives they [the participants] were often busy and interviews ended up delayed which inevitably delayed the continuity of the work and led to a smaller sample than wished.

The data analysis was mostly compromised in the way many other studies are, the availability of mostly journals and papers of Western scholars in the Portuguese or English language immediately revealed that incorporating studies produced by Eastern scholars would prove difficult, thus creating a gap between what could've contributed to the study if there existed familiarity with the Filipino language. When it came to collect data on international organizations working in the Philippines directly or indirectly towards the issue of LS-CSA the challenge was greater than initially predicted; not only was the number of organizations directly addressing the issue extremely low (as far as the research allowed to perceive) but many the available information of each organization varied in quantity and quality, nonetheless the less a collection was made and analyzed.

In the light of the above limitations, and having already mentioned before the findings on this paper are exploratory, the impossibility to generalize the results may also be perceived as a limitation.

## **CHAPTER II – LITERATURE REVIEW**

Unlike many others before him Schütz realized the presence of an inevitable gap between a subjective experience and its interpretation by others. The author realized that, not only, was there an impossibility to fully understand oneself but a “fundamental problem of an adequate understanding of another human” persisted (cit in Strobl, 2010, p. 4) throughout societies.

The gap between what one attempts to transmit and what is perceived by the other is unescapable. Luhmann (cit in Strobl, 2010) argues that understanding is always “context bound; the relevant context [being] first of all the background knowledge of the person involved or the background knowledge of the observer” (p. 5). By considering the affirmations of the authors when addressing LS-CSA or the conception of the child as a victim, these are social and culturally structured conceptions. The perception one has of a phenomenon is conditioned not only by formal rules (which usually remain uniform within a nation) but also by informal rules (one's background, values) which may vary between different cultural and subcultural groups.

With regards, a solid literature review is not only important but necessary to allow the researcher to establish a credible context between the existing knowledge on a theme and the related questions one seeks to investigate (Cardoso, Alarcão and Celorico, 2010).

## 2.1 The West and The East – Post Colonial Thoughts

“We can live side by side and still in very different worlds” (Blumer, 1969 cit in Strobl, 2010, p. 9).

The Philippines are, without a doubt, a unique country. After withstanding Spanish rule for 333 years and U.S. tutelage for a further 48 years, the country has flourished with plenty cultural affinities with the West. They are one, among many populations subdued by Western countries that throughout hundreds of years “exercised a benevolent violence though colonization [advocating in the name of civilizing the uncivilized their actions held] the promise of redemption, both for the colonizer and for the colonized” (Assayag, 2007, p. 253).

When one addresses western influences over the east it is impossible to ignore colonialism, and it's almost impossible to ignore the works of Edward Said that through Orientalism sought to express a style of thought based upon the ontological and epistemological distinction that is made



between ‘this side of the world’ (the Occident) who then describes, through its own ideals and impressions, ‘the other side of the world’ (the Orient). Nevertheless, his discourse is often overlooked or neglected by American historians and diplomats that accuse him to deny the existence of a ‘real’ Orient (Rotter, 2000); something the author refutes by stating that the Orientalism is...

“is, above all, a discourse that is by no means in direct, corresponding relationship with political power in the raw, but rather is produced and exists in uneven exchange with various kinds of power, shaped to a degree by the exchange with power political [...] intellectual [...] cultural [and] moral" (Said, 1979, p.12).

Regardless of the position taken the research inevitably provides far more data of Western scholars, not by choice but given the wide array and availability of such in comparison to the ones of Eastern scholars. The concept and idea itself of comparison between the East and West perceptions over one subject presents an important framework that accompanies the study, methodology and the underlining ideas and premises discussed throughout this paper. Orientalism allows us to revisit old fashionable ideologies of a preexisting division between the West (a group of superior civilizations) and the East (whose practices, perceptions and representations are all created and imposed by the West) (Qingxue, 2003; Curaming, 2009).

Sides of the world with different cultural patterns (beliefs, values, attitudes, norms, customs) that underlie most common behaviors but that whose population now partakes of a global village. Modernization, development, globalization. The problems once thought to be of one nation are now common and connected as we enter a new world stage (Breckenridge and Van der Veer, 1993); thus one must seek to avoid errors of the past, where often one would seemingly ‘hear’ a discourse from the Eastern side that would be a construct of the West rather than allowing it [the East] to express his own ‘voice’ (Moosavinia et al., 2011).

## 2.2 Internet Communication and Technologies (ICTs)

As of 2017 there was an estimated 3.9 billion Internet users worldwide, by 2019 the number rose to over 4.13 billion users (Statista, 2020); mankind is more connected than ever in known history; a fact that will persist and repeat itself making the affirmation itself obsolete before data that reveals a continuous growth of online users as the internet reaches more corners of the world.

In the past, Internet access was expensive and required a wired connection. a computer for one to access it; nowadays with better or lesser quality, people can access the online environment with a simple smartphone. Wi-Fi technology is reaching more and more users, at home, school, work and through free hotspots placed around the major cities. In addition, the offers of cheap data plans provide yet another alternative to those who seek to remain online even when a Wi-Fi connection isn't available. Numbers are the first to demonstrate the reality above mentioned with International Telecommunication Union (ITU) revealing there's already more cellphone data subscriptions than population in the world; the numbers do not imply that everyone has a subscription but they do present enough information to predict what is to be expected as more parts of the world, specially least developed countries (LDCs) catch up with the rest of the world (2018).

It's undeniable that digital tools, platforms and services have altered and continuous to shape human development. By closing gaps in the access to information, connecting people worldwide and providing the means for continuous growth and opportunity we can no longer imagine a world without it. Borders, time-zones and socioeconomic statues hold no strength and children now have the opportunity of becoming part of a global village, yet, like with any new developments, the balance is tipped by a darker side and children are now more exposed to dangers than ever before in the history of mankind.

"The World Wide Web was born in the same year as the Convention on the Rights of the Child" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 11), and even though the Convention has contributed to the recognition of the child as an individual of rights and helped countries continuously improve the context in which child's rights are uphold the truth is: that when compared to the World Wide Web (WWW), the

knowledge and interest towards one when compare to the second is not even in question. Nowadays one in every three children worldwide are thought to be regular users of the WWW, commonly addressed, as the Internet (UNICEF, 2017; Cooper, 2018 and UNICEF, 2020) with “more than 175.000 [going] online for the first time every day – a new child every half a second” (Cooper, 2018).

Throughout borders these children fall prey to abuse and exploitation, no nation is exempt (Hepburn and Simon, 2010). Driven by profit and, at times, other ulterior motives, individuals found ways to adapt themselves and the business of child sexual abuse and exploitation (CSAE) in this wide, modern world we found ourselves upon. The online environment doesn’t just allow geographical borders to be crossed, it erases them (Latonero, 2011); giving birth to borderless crimes that take shape and develop thanks to ICTs advances and the disrespect and disdain for a child’s dignity.

With traditional channels of exploitation still in place, online technology has provided criminals unfettered access to multiple victims at a minimized risk and brand-new forms of abuse and exploitation began to slowly take shape: ‘grooming’; sextortion; OSAEC: mass production and distribution of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and LS-CSA (Latonero, 2011). These are but a few examples of a panoply of forms, of concepts, to describe ways through which children are being coerced into abusive situations, watching their innocent being chattered for the lust demand of man.

A closer look into cyber criminality leads yet to another atrocious discover, while many crimes occur through familiar networks and websites like Facebook and Twitter. According to Thorn (2020) the reports of CSAM online have increased 10.000% since 2004; by 2019 there were over 70 million accounted files that were reviewed by the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children which gives an average of 480,769 images per week in which 78% of the material depicts children under 12 years old. More and more CSAM is emerging and even with a proactive attitude of many organizations there is still much to be done and immense material not accounted for. Some of that material can be only be found on a very specific and anonymous part of the web, to which I will briefly address.

The harmful data actually accounted for, only relates to a very small part of the Internet itself. More precisely the numbers previously mentioned only attend to what happens in 4% of the online environment; the one known and accessible and to most users. That leaves 96% of untouched data that constitute what is currently known as the ‘Deep Web’ and the ‘Dark Web’. The first term refers to “a class of content on the Internet that, for various technical reasons, is not indexed by search engines, and thus would not be accessible through a traditional search engine (Finklea, 2017, p. 2). The second term refers to a segment of the Web that has been intentionally hidden (Chertoff and Simon, 2015) but can be accessed through special browsers like Tor<sup>2</sup> (The Onion Router) or I2P<sup>3</sup> (Invisible Internet Project).

Characterized as “unregulated, untaxed, and hidden from a typical Internet search” the Dark Web often addressed as a facilitator for a wide variety of crimes and described as a “self-contained market place that functions under a set of informal institutions” (Hardy and Norgaard, 2016, p. 1). Private Chatrooms, illegal markets and websites with constantly shifting names and domains constitute a great part of the data within this part of the Web; though there isn’t much viable information available to sustain the affirmations about the enormous amount of data that is related with child sexual abuse material (CSAM) the affirmations continue to be done (Finklea, 2017). Through the ocean of data related to CSAM there are a few that up to a certain moment retained a very strong reputation among its users: ‘Lolita City’, ‘Playpen’, ‘The Cache and ‘Dreamboard’ are but a few examples.

‘Lolita City’ was often cited as one of the largest child pornography websites available. With over 100GB of data available the website was finally shut down during ‘Operation Darknet’ led by the *Anonymous*<sup>4</sup> that leaked the user database of the website containing usernames, membership time

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<sup>2</sup> The Onion Routing consists of a software, initially developed in 1995 by the U.S. Naval Research Lab that allowed users to communicate anonymously. In the early 2000s, Roger Dingledine, Nick Mathewson (Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduates) and Paul Syverson (U.S. NRL) continued with the project that would later be released under a free and open software license relying on volunteering nodes that conceived a decentralized network. After the release of the actual browser in 2008 the network became assessable to anyone who wished to safeguard themselves and their digital rights from the mass surveillance carried out online (TorProject, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> I2P is an anonymous network that applications can use to anonymously and securely send messages to each other, all of it being encrypted and currently also allowing a fairly stable streaming connection (I2P, 2020).

<sup>4</sup> The Anonymous may be characterized for its intrinsic constitution and complexity. After getting global attention for its actions in 2010 against the copyright industry the group has yet to be defined, the lack of a central authority, ideology and identity makes them more of a movement than a static group. One cannot define what is unknown, as a

and CSAM uploaded by over 1500 users (Gallagher, 2011; Finklea, 2017). ‘Playpen’, lunched in 2014, constituted a website accessible with over 215.000 users with access to a database of over 50.000 images and videos of child abuse (Carter, 2016; Cox, 2016; Russon, 2016; Finklea, 2017); shutdown in 2015 after an investigation led by the FBI<sup>5</sup>, with more than 185 individuals identified and charged with criminal offenses, in addition 55 American children identified and rescued (Farivar, 2017).

‘Dreamboard’ (created in 2008) provided links to CSAM content, which was posted off-site and encrypted with passwords shared solely by its members. Individuals who wished to join were required to submit CSAM portraying children of 12 years of age or younger, if given access, members were also required to continue the uploads in order maintain set membership at the risk of being expelled from the group if they failed to comply (US Department of Justice, 2014). The online bulletin board was "conceived and operated for the sole purpose of promoting child sexual abuse, disseminating child pornography, and evading law enforcement" (Anderson, 2013, p. 4). ‘Operation Delego’ started in December 2009 as a result of material provided by ‘The Cache’ members which led authorities to ‘Dreamboard’. The website would be shut down in 2011 leading to 52 arrests, including two bulletin-board administrators in Canada and France (BBC, 2011; US Department of Justice, 2014).

The issue of child oriented sexual offenses did not emerge with ICTs, in fact it long predates such technological advancements. Its actual emergence is hard to indicate given its strict relation with the cultural and legal systems of a nation. Yet, despite its pre-existence, they did provide a vast new environment and tools for those who seek or actively participate in the abuse of children. Websites, peer-to-peer file exchange, social media communication tools (email, instant messaging), cloud storage and anonymized networks are a few examples of means provided by the

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result, most authors and journalists who do not take a side (in favor or against the Anonymous) can but judge them for their actions (Uitermark, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> The investigation itself has to date been referred to as the ‘FBI’s ‘Unprecedented’ Hacking Campaign’ due to how they applied network investigation techniques to hack the website and any eventual users that accessed it (over 1300 IP addresses were identified) (Carter, 2016; Cox, 2016).

ICTs that not only help to proliferate but are, in fact, a breeding ground for worldwide offenses against children.

### 2.3 Child Sexual Abuse/Exploitation

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted unanimously by the UN General Assembly in 1989, the document “is the result of a ten-year collaborative process during which the rights and the wording of articles were proposed and debated by 80 countries” (Third et al, 2014 p.14). The CRC encompasses a broad range of rights from humanitarian to socioeconomic, cultural, civil and political rights standing apart from previous declarations and treaties for enriching the idea of children as individuals with a degree of self-determination, an individual with rights and a sense of self (Third et al, 2014).

The pictorial and written portrayal of children as sexual objects has existed through the millennia and across civilizations, with examples dating back to ancient Greece, Rome, China, and India (Wortley, 2018, p. 1). Prior to the existence of communication methods even as basic as the post offices or the ability for people to transport things from one side of the world to another the depiction of children as sexual objects had already started, be it through erotic texts or the production of art and drawings it has accompany us the same way other forms of liberate art have. The amount was insignificant compared to the modern age but it proves the interest for children in a sexualized purpose is not a trend but something that has long accompanied humanity and that we have yet to properly address. In fact, one might even say, not only did we fail to address it, to contain it while we still could but our inaction has contributed for the terms in which we face it, today.

When it comes to exploiting children in a sexualized manner, namely through the production of child pornography material such was largely unheard of prior to the late 60s; in fact, at the very start it was young adults who resembled children that would be used to mimic the youth’s

innocence. This trend, however, was a short one. During the late 1960s and early 1970s child pornography experienced a ‘boom’ particularly in Western European countries where censorship laws with respect to obscenity experienced a ‘relaxation’ period. Denmark had a leading role, with most material (cine films, pictures, videos, magazines) now designated as child pornography originating from during these years (Hawkins and Zimring, 1991; Taylor and Quayle, 2003).

After seen CSAM reach public magazines as *Lolita* or *Children-Love* in the 1970s (Taylor and Quayle, 2003) it almost seemed the practice would take drastic contours from then on, yet nothing as what we now realized. The magnitude that would be reached with the birth of the Internet was completely unforeseen, leading not only to a drastic increase of the available material but to an easier distribution and new shapes of child abuse that would connect the globe; once again revealing the worst sides of human nature.

Even with laws to protect children being established at both national and international levels, OSAEC takes place continuously regardless of the part of the world one lives in. Daily children are robbed of their safety, their freedom and their dignity.

### 2.3.1 Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC)

OSAEC can adopt many different shapes and forms that commonly denigrate and abuse a child, the only different of other forms of abuse being the ‘online’ factor, that is that there has to be a link to the online environment. With that said this is most are not new or distinct forms of abuse but adapted manifestations of abuse and exploitation facilitated by the ICTs. The Luxemburg Guidelines (Greijer and Doek, 2016) call attention for the difficulty in a widely accepted terminology and its definition, while providing a suggestion of how one should perceive OCSA as a:

"term to refer both to the sexual abuse of children that is facilitated by ICTs (e.g. online grooming) and to sexual abuse of children that is committed elsewhere and then repeated by sharing it online through, for instance, images and videos (which is where it becomes exploitation)" (p. 22).

The concept of exploitation differentiates from other forms of sexual due to the underlying notion of exploitation, the two concepts while distinct tend to overlap between them making the semantics even harder to clarify<sup>6</sup>. Regardless, it is important to consider that online child sexual exploitation (OCSE):

"It includes any use of ICT that results in sexual exploitation or causes a child to be sexually exploited or that results in or causes images or other material documenting such sexual exploitation to be produced, bought, sold, possessed, distributed, or transmitted. This notion can thus encompass (but is not limited to): [cases] carried out while the victim is online (such as enticing/manipulating/threatening a child into performing sexual acts in front of a webcam)" (p. 27).

As previously mentioned, it was during the mid-90s, with the rapid expansion of the World Wide Web (WWW), that attention fell upon the growing number of circulating CSAM (be it digital creations or real representations of children in sexualized scenes). By 2000 concerns were paramount with online interactions between sex offenders and children, with an estimated 750.000 child predators online at any given moment (US Department of State, 2017; ICMEC, 2018) the threat hovering upon a child was undeniable.

As sadly expected, the scale and severity of OSAEC continues to grow at alarming rates (Thompson, 2017; Cooper, 2018 and UNICEF, 2020) despite continuous national and international efforts to prevent the unfolding of such crimes the reality seems that perpetrators remain one step ahead of the very measures that should be deterring them:

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<sup>6</sup> It important to notice that through the study both online child sexual abuse and online child sexual abuse are referred to as a single term Online Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Children (OSAEC) thus taking into consideration both sides and often inevitable overlapping or congruence of both crimes.



“Any children under the age of 18 who are used for pornographic performances or materials are victims. Any image or video of child abuse is documented evidence of a crime in process. The production and distribution of these child sexual abuse and exploitation materials – whether in print, online, or live-streamed – represent a violation of fundamental human rights, and these children need to be protected” (Sarah Norton-Staal cit in Brown, 2016).

Social media in particular plays a crucial role as a discursive system, allowing individuals to construct an alternate social reality that through discourse (conversation) allows the manipulation of the existing one by the other (Albert and Salam, 2012). This idea, when applied to the interactions of children in the digital world quickly reaches a very worrisome construct: that anyone at any given moment can pretend to be someone they’re not. What may start as a seemingly innocent exchange of words can easily lead into an abusive relationship (Choo, 2009; Albert and Salam, 2012; ICMEC, 2017). The initial contacts are often traced to social networks (Facebook, Twitter) or open chat rooms (like the ones available on Yahoo), the practice was already common in the past but has been growing in recent years given the active usage of such platforms by the younger generations (Yar, 2014). Among billions of social media users (2.82 billion being daily active) approximately one in every three are underage children; the last being a number which, accordingly with a “growing body of evidence indicates that children are accessing the internet at increasingly younger ages” (UNICEF, 2017, p. 2).

From then on and with the abuser in control of the relationship children find themselves under abuse without even realizing it, and if they do, they are either too scared or too exposed (before the abuser) to seek any help. Not only in the online environment itself but offline as well the child finds herself trapped and is easily controlled through fear. At a formal level more and more tools and “legal innovations in response to a real and yet previously unimagined extent of online offenses” (Yar, 2010, p. 229) continue to emerge but fail to prove its efficiency.

### 2.3.2 Live Streaming – Child Sexual Abuse (LS-CSA)

The ICT's take a privileged role as a tool for extensive forms of exploitation and abuse. They have enabled consumers to live stream TV shows, news and conversations with loved ones; from such perspective one immediately thinks of how beneficial they have been in a person's life. The other side of the coin, however, often unnoticed or undermined, reveals to which extent technology has been used to endanger children, namely through the spread of CSAM.

LS-CSA is “one of the main forms of [OSAEC with] financially driven” (National Crime Agency, 2019, p. 12) intent and has slowly become recognized by agencies as EUROPOL for being “particularly complex to investigate” (EUROPOL, 2018, p. 35) given its untraceable nature. This form of OSAEC involves two manifestations of child sexual abuse in one crime: (1) the production and transmission of child sexual abuse material, and (2) the exploitation of children through a shape of prostitution. Children are coerced to perform sexual acts alone, with other children or adults which are then transmitted directly over the Internet to a paying viewer located anywhere in the world (TdHN, 2013; TdHN, 2016).

Individuals who have sexual fantasies or erotic attraction towards children have always existed (Choo, 2009). That being said, studies continuously reveal that these individuals often abuse those close to them, victims end up being part of the family or children within the close circle of the perpetrator but, the need to groom a child required a closed physical proximity, that ultimately, would come at a great personal risk (Berson, 2003; Babchishin, Hanson and VanZuylen, 2014; ICMEC, 2017). In the hands of such individual's technology is a “convenient tool [for those] who wish to pursue the gratification they experience from child abuse from the comforts of their own home while avoiding the risk inherent” to a direct approach (Buchanan, 2020).

As they ('virtual offenders') continue exercising 'power, control and coercion', now through a few strikes of a keyboard, more and more children fall prey to a spiral of psychological and physical harm. The online environment alone appears to appease the guilt of the individuals who find themselves surrounded by those who share their interest and incentive such behaviors. At the same

time children also show a tendency to act out behaviours that would, otherwise, be disapproved by parents, guardians and peers alike (Choo, 2009; Albert and Salam, 2012; ICMEC, 2017). The combination of these two factors enables the context of an ‘alternate social reality’ where the individual can manipulate the child’s thoughts by making her believe she is the one in control of the situation (Buchanan, 2020).

In the case of LS-CSA the viewers are not the only offender’s worthy of mention. Besides them there are the ‘facilitators’ who take a primary role in the abuse given; they are often who initiates contact with the perpetrator (usually a foreigner), help with production of the ‘show’ and claim the payments (when using transfer services like Western Union children do not have the necessary documentation requirements to withdraw the money). The ‘facilitators’ can be child traffickers or individuals close to the child: parents, family members, close friends or neighbors. This highly depends on the location where the LS-CSA takes place. In this study we will focus on the role of family and close friends or neighbors as the ‘facilitators’ given it’s important in the Filipino society’s context. The information on such details will be provided further ahead once the Philippine’s context is explored (2.4.4 ‘Perfect Storm’ – The ‘epicenter’ of LS-CSA).

To present a scope over the children who have fallen prey to LS-CSA is quite a difficult task, not only are there few studies starting to emerge that address this particular type of child abuse, but there is even less reliable data that may help researchers measure its prevalence and incidence in the Philippines (or other countries), given the anonymous nature associated with this type of occurrences. Accordingly, with Child Rights Network, LS-CSA like other forms of OSAEC are being conducted through different social media platforms; Facebook continues to grows as a targeting network alongside Twitter and chat-rooms. Some children also find themselves involved by their own initiative, usually as a result of discovering the involvement of their peers who then teach them how to use their bodies to obtain ‘easy money’ in order to get several material goods, be it food, internet access for gaming, clothes, alcohol or even drugs (TdHN, 2016).

Also referred to as ‘Child Abuse for Order’ or ‘Child Sexual Abuse on Demand’, the different terminologies all seek the same: to attempt to better portray the crime and lead to a better understanding, prevention and prosecution of those involved, a particularly complex task when the

crime and those involved may be in different parts of the world bringing into play national and international enforcers and laws that struggle to find common ground.

### 2.3.3 Legal Framework

“The Governments of all countries shall ensure that a child who is capable of forming his or her own views should have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting that child and that the views of that child should be given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>7</sup>, 1989)

Gillespie (2010) reflections on the legal definition for child pornography draw attention to the variety of definitions one can find in legal documents (especially when it comes to cybercrimes) and the inevitable lack of correspondence that results between nations. Be it towards the age of consent or the actual definition of the crime in cause. The ambiguities within and among different legislations should be reduced to a minimum or we are left with a gap between the establishment of the law and its actual enforcement.

Internationally speaking the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), adopted in November 20<sup>th</sup> 1989 and entered into force September 2<sup>nd</sup> 1990, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC), adopted May 25<sup>th</sup> 2000 and entered into force January 18<sup>th</sup> 2002. The CRC continues to date as the...

“...most comprehensive and universal international legal instrument for the rights of the child, and the OPSC, with its 176 States parties, sets forth fundamental legal obligations to protect children from sale and sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, the considerable developments of the past two decades, in particular, but not only, in the digital

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<sup>7</sup> UN General Assembly (1989), “Convention on the Rights of the Child” (hereinafter CRC), Res. 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entered into force on 2nd September 1990, article 12.

environment, do raise challenges for States and other stakeholders working to prevent the sale and sexual exploitation, and to protect children from these scourges” (Greijer and Doek, 2019, p. 10).

In response to the challenges and increasing use of ITCs in OSAEC several countries had to readapt their national laws and new international treaties were signed with the intent to protect children and prosecute the criminals. Western countries like the United States of America (USA) with the Stop Enabling Sex Trafficking Act (SESTA) or Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) and European countries with the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime (Budapest Convention) and the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) have sought to enhance their national defenses and international cooperation for an effective and sustainable fight of crimes as OSAEC.

In the case of Eastern countries, The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), have also adopted and ratified news national and international laws to face the new paradigm. The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Trafficking Protocol); the International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention are two primary examples. The Philippines in particular is currently the only country in the region also considering the ratification of the Budapest Convention and the Lanzarote Convention. The latest being an important mark since its signing in 2007, given that it was the first time an international treaty identified and criminalized various forms of sexual abuse of children as criminal offences, including abuse committed in the home or by family members, with the use of force, coercion or threats; exposure to sexual activities and; criminalize those assisting or aiding and abetting sexual exploitation (Greijer and Doek, 2016; Greijer and Doek, 2019). The Convention enables certain elements of behaviour’s as sextortion, online grooming and LS-CSA to finally be taken under consideration.

International, national protocols, treaties and guidelines continue to emerge yet the challenges discussed more than ten years ago remain relevant today in the fight against the different forms of OSEAC. Distinct international jurisdictions, incompatible legislations and different interpretations

of the subject itself in addition to lack of awareness, and enforcement of written laws create an additional threat to what are rapidly developing forms of abuse against children worldwide.

## 2.4 A Look into the Philippines

Modernization and new information systems have led to a global dissemination of lifestyles, ways of thinking and alternative perceptions that were, to an extent, hitherto unknown in the history of mankind. These changes have brought unrivaled positive changes to the world but also new and more harmful actions. LS-CSA started as a trend in the Philippines but is now an established reality where children, especially young girls “end up as breadwinners for their families by performing sexual acts online” (Cruz and Sajo, 2015, p. 1).

In order to understand the evolution of LS-CSA in the country of the Philippines one must address its values and norms (Garcia, 2012, p. 17) as well as other significant elements like legislation and economic development so that a light may be shared over why it rapidly spread throughout the country.

### 2.4.1 History

The Philippines consists of an archipelago of over 7000 islands, of which 2000 are inhabited; the islands are categorized into three main clusters – Luzon in the north, Visayas in the center and Mindanao in the south. Each cluster has its own costumes, culture and language, making them unique in comparison to one another and creating a vast and intriguing country.

The Philippines take its name from Philip II – king of Spain during the colonization of the islands in the 16<sup>th</sup> century – it was also as a result of colonization that it sustains to this day the major

Catholic community among Asian countries as well as the second community with more English speakers (right after India). For the specifics of this study, the focus will be on the Catholic population residing, mainly, in the northern area of the archipelago thus taking into consideration its values and cultural dynamics and the colonial influence it sustains to modern days.

### *The Spanish Period*

The 16<sup>th</sup> century dates the arrival and beginning of colonization of the Spanish over the Filipino indigenous population, upon three failed expeditions Miguel López de Legazpi successfully established the first, permanent, Spanish settlement in Cebu in 1565; the Manila settlement would be founded later in 1571 and by the end of the century most of the coastal and lowland areas from Luzon to northern Mindanao were under Spanish rule. Roman Catholicism spread throughout the communities while vigorously suppressing local religious beliefs<sup>8</sup>.

Throughout over a hundred years the Spanish exercised the *encomienda*, where taxes were exercised over farming across the land; corruption, abusive treatment of tribute payers to religious institutions and withhold of revenues from the crown eventually led the Spanish to abandon the system. A general governor was appointed who then began to appoint his own civil and military governors. During this period religious orders acquired great wealth in the form of land. Economic and political institutions were also altered but had far less impact than the religious realm.

The former leaders ('*datus*') of the '*barangays*' (original name given to the small towns where communities resided in the country) took advantage of the introduction of the Western concept of absolute ownership of land to claim as their own the fields cultivated by various retainers thus eliminating the previous traditions of limit usufruct of the land. In 1863 public education was introduced in the country but its curriculum was highly controlled by the church as well as those who had access to the education (mostly Spanish or high ranked Filipinos like the members of '*datus*' families). A climate of nationalism and passion for reformed began to blossom after the

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<sup>8</sup> The Muslims of Mindanao and Sulu, whom the Spanish called Moros, were never completely subdued by Spain and like mentioned earlier retain control over the southern area of the archipelago.

1880s when the sons of the wealthy began to be sent to Europe to study and returned with a spirit aching for a more liberal atmosphere, thus arising what would be known as the Propaganda Movement (Fitzpatrick, 2013). Among the lower social classes, a firm commitment to independence also began to arise; with the support of Andres Bonifacio and activists of the less privileged class, the Katipunan was formed, a movement dedicated to expel the Spanish from the islands. The preparations for the Philippines revolution was set.

### *The Philippines Revolution*

In August of 1869 the Spanish began to uncover evidence of the Katipunan's plans and the movement was forced into a premature set of actions. Revolts broke out in several provinces around Manila and after months of fighting the Spanish retaliation forces forced the revolutionary army to retreat to the hills. Truces would later be signed in 1897 thus ending the revolution.

In the meantime, war had broken out between Spain and the United States of America (The Spanish-American War) which would bring unexpected changes to the Filipino archipelago. After a U.S. naval victory in the Manila Bay in 1898 the Spanish enemy began to liberate several towns from Spanish rule giving Filipinos reason to celebrate once again, in fact, 12 of June of 1898 is to this day commemorated as the declaration of Philippine independence from Spanish rule. Unfortunately for Filipinos, the initial claims of support for the country's full independence were but empty promises.

On December 10<sup>th</sup> of 1898 with the signing of the Treaty of Paris the Spain handed control over the Philippines to the United States of America (USA) as part of the peace negotiations. Hostilities had already broken out in the archipelago at the time of signing of the treaty, the USA wouldn't recognize the sovereignty of Filipino leaders and Filipinos wouldn't accept being under rule of yet another country. Conflict was inevitable.



"The Philippine-American War suppressed an indigenous movement for national independence, turned a former Spanish outpost into the centerpiece of a new American empire, and set the United States on a path of global engagement at the dawn of the 20th century" (Capozzola, 2017, p. 1).

### *The United States Imperial Rule*

The Philippines would later be known as the first and only colony of the USA, whose democratic and imperial rule, between 1898 and 1946, stated their actions to be a necessary until Filipinos could learn to self-govern their own country (Congressional Research Service, 2019). In fact, The Jones Act (1916) would've fixated a definite date for the granting of independence but in reality, the act, officially recognized as the Philippine Autonomy Act of 1916 merely stated that it was "the purpose of the people of the United States to withdraw their sovereignty over Philippine Islands and to recognize their independence as soon as a stable government can be established therein".

The USA took advantage of the Philippines strategic geographic position to establish naval bases throughout the years and retained control over defense and all foreign affairs through a general governor and an executive branch. They did carry efforts to create economic opportunities and reduce inequality among the communities but such efforts resulted in modest outcomes at best. The only successful intervention was within the educational policy that gave the basis to the academic curriculum still in vigor in the archipelago (Mateo, 2016).

Self-government resulted in a accumulation of power by Filipino's who were already in leadership positions; the Elite that once ruled over the lands now took the political stage and all strategic positions given little opening to the educated middle class that instead of climbing the power ladder adjusted to the values and practices already in place, accepting their fate. The first elections took place between the Federal Party (backed up by the USA) and the Nacionalista Party that, by advocating independence won overwhelming and remained in power from 1907 until the independence of the country (Cornelio, 2018).

The Commonwealth of the Philippines inaugurated in 1935<sup>9</sup> was the culmination of efforts to secure a definitive timetable for the withdrawal of American sovereignty over the country; from 1919 onwards several ‘independence missions’ had been sent periodically to the U.S. Congress and the White House lobby to negotiate independence which would finally happen with the Tydings-McDuffie Act of 1935 setting a ten year transition from the American rule (Friend, 1964).

The transitional period would, unfortunately, suffer with the breakout of World War II, Japan attacked the Philippines on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1941 leading to massive casualties and a rapid advancement of the Japanese troops that led to the surrender of the Filipino and American forces in May, 1942. José Laurel, a former associate justice of the Commonwealth Supreme Court would preside the ‘Independent Philippine Republic’ by Japanese recommendation. The scenery in the country would prove different than in other Asian countries and Filipinos strongly resisted any collaboration with the Japanese and the pre-war Commonwealth system would be reestablished in 1945 with the help of the Americans. Independence would finally be achieved in 1946. The nature and effectiveness of Filipino political institutions have, since then, been of special concern to the former colonial power that helped establish them but for Filipinos the blossom of nationalism and diversification of external ties have been significant to achieve and establish its own identity as a singular country.

### *Present Days*

Nowadays the Philippines has over 106,651.394 habitants, there’s over 170 dialects still spoken throughout the islands and plenty of diversified beliefs and mystic ideologies that proliferate across different communities. Tagalog, one of the dialects sustains the title of official language, followed by English – often the language used for Filipino’s who speak different dialects to understand one another. Apart from the Muslims that dominate the southern islands, the Philippines has an overall 85% of Roman Catholics making it the biggest Asian catholic community.

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<sup>9</sup> Upon the inauguration of the Commonwealth with Quezon as president, a constitutional convention was quickly drafted, framed and approved by plebiscite and by the President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

In such contemporary times, Filipinos, continue to grapple with a society that is filled with paradoxes, the most obvious being the presence of extreme wealth alongside extreme poverty.

#### 2.4.2 Social-Cultural Dynamics and Religion

During the years of 1954 and 1971 the researchers Paul Parin, Goldy Parin-Matthèy and Fritz Morgenthaler traveled and studied, through an ethno-psychoanalytical approach, tribes in West Africa. At that time, it became clear that “the effects of social forces are manifest and foregrounded in the individual, whereas biological aspects are less important than the cultural conditions” (Nadig and Reichmayr, 2004, p. 42). Culture became an important way to access and understand the individual in a society.

The Philippines is geographically located in Southeast Asia yet its culture is strongly influenced by Western values, particularly those of Spain and the United States of America. Due to the country’s colonial past, the Philippines have often struggle to assert their national and cultural identity, in fact one might even go as far as to say that any Filipino is:

“a blend of East and West. The Western influence can be seen more in external ways – dressing, liking for hamburger and other food, Western music and dance, etc. However, the internal aspect, which is at the core of his *pagkatao* (personality), is Asian – deference for authority, modesty/humility, concern for others, etc” (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 56).

One can find similarities in conduct, ideas and even institutions of different societies but that does not imply that the meanings or processes which order them are the same. In fact, according to Boholm (1998) “there is a mass of ethnographic evidence, from all kinds of society, to prove that human social existence is culturally variable” (p. 135). After all, culture is, according to Tylor (1871) a “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, morals, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (cited in Quingxue

2003, p. 1). And in the case of Filipinos its development has been the result of a national effort to strengthen its Asian heritage without abandoning but rather re-adapting its Western acquisitions.

#### ‘Hiya’

The term roughly translates as ‘shame’ or ‘embarrassment’ when we take into account English translations by scholars like Lynch (1961) and Sibley (1965), on the other hand Filipino scholars like Enriquez (1992) describe the value similarly but associate it to one’s sense of self, propriety and respect (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). In either cases, the value directly related to the importance of an individual and its family public image and how the actions of one may bring shame or dishonor to the family, which is strongly reprehended (TdHN, 2013).

#### ‘Family Oriented’

Family is the core of Filipinos values, it’s the foundation for their social life. Family is ranked high above honesty and justice, the well-being of one relative is important for the whole family, and the younger ones are expected to make sacrifices towards their parents, to whom they own their life’s and the elders out of respect. One child may often give up on pursuing their education in order to help around the house (in case of girls) and help tend to younger siblings or in order to do some type of work to help support the family (in case of boys).

#### ‘Filial Piety’

This particular value is quickly associated with ‘hiya’ and family bonds. For Filipinos it is essential to maintain a collective ‘face’, in other words, a collective positive presentation of the family as whole. Public Image as it may also be referred to is extremely important in the society, preserving it and avoiding any kind of ‘hiya’ (shame) is important not only for the self but for the family. If one member of the family has his public image damaged such will be reflected in the family as whole; observing and respecting one another allows the family to stay in harmony among itself and among others.

### ‘Hospitality ‘

Filipinos are described as a warm and welcoming people, a sentiment many foreigners experience while visiting the country, the sentiment being so strong that in the past it would be unthinkable to suspect of a foreigner to be visiting the country with criminal intent as that of committing child sexual abuse (TdHN, 2013).

### ‘Utang na loob’

Andres (1944) defined the value as a principle of reciprocity or the feeling a person experiences when in need to repay another after being helped. It was later translated by Kaut (1961) as ‘debt of gratitude’, simplifying the definition of the previous scholar. Among the Filipino psychology the translation was quickly refuted as one that would only suit Western ideologies in which Filipino’s would forever be ‘in debt’ of their colonizer benefactors (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Instead they prefer to see it as one of opportunity to return a favor rather than repay a debt. That payment can happen within the lifetime of the individual or not; given it would be something the family as a whole would recognize and seek to honor.

### Religion

Early on Filipinos followed various local deity’s, a mixture of monotheism and polytheism spread throughout the indigenous population in the islands. The propitiation of the spirits and deity’s required numerous rituals but there was no obvious religious hierarchy. The pattern changed in the southern islands when Islam was first introduced during the 15<sup>th</sup> century and later on with the introduction of Roman Catholicism by the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The Philippines, has, since then, become home to the biggest Roman Catholic community among Asian countries, and ranks third worldwide with over 80% of the population practicing the religion. The country’s religious beliefs have long been an important influence in the life of the local’s (Baston, et al., 1993; Miralao, 1997; Austria, 2004; Fitzpatrick, 2013; Lagman et al., 2014 and Hong, 2019), and church an important political and economic influence since the days when the archipelago was still a colony (Austria, 2004; Cornelio, 2013). Undeniably important not only for its dynamics and functions but also for the consequences it might have upon the construct and

interactions with the social world of the Filipino community are known to turn to God ('Bathala') with blind trust (TdHN, 2013). A value immediately associated with religion is that of 'Bahala na'.

'Bahala na'

The interpretation of the value varies depending on the scholars that approach it. For instance, Western scholars such as Bostrom (1968) and Andres (1994) tend to associate it with the American fatalism, thus describing Filipino's as individuals who present an attitude of resignation or who diminish their personal responsibility by accepting what happens as their fate or God's Will (TdHN, 2013). When a wider approach is taken into consideration, namely that of the Filipino psychology it's not that Filipino's simply accept fate as it is, but in fact, regardless of circumstances and their reference to 'God's will' they are not passive and do seek to change and overcome the obstacles in their lives (Pe-Pua and Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; Lagman et al., 2014 and Hong, 2019) is only when they failed to do so that, at time, a more passive and fatalistic expression may be associated to their discourse.

Other forms of Catholicism are also practiced in the country, among them is the indigenous church 'Iglesia ni Cristo' founded in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century which has grown both in number and influential power among political parties. The Filipinos not are quick to acknowledge the major influence God and religion has in their life, for them "moral acts are [almost] the same as human acts" as such the judgment of human acts by God is inevitable and as "their end is worthy of blame or praise so are our deeds worthy of blame or praise" (Aquinas, 2006 cit in. Li, 2016, p. 30).

#### 2.4.3 Economy, Legislation and ICTs

The Philippines is a country of disparities both in income and in quality of life. The country is known for its abundant resources and environmental assets yet, poverty remains widespread throughout the archipelago with people living with less than 1.70 euros a day and one in five children living in extreme poverty (Alindogan, 2019). According to ChildFund (2020) the country

has the highest rate of economic and social inequality in Southeast Asia with more than a quarter of the country's population of 92.3 million living below the poverty line and no opportunities to escape it. While a small group of Elite families retain most of the country's wealth the rest of the population is underpaid or, in case of those in poverty, they struggle to have enough to feed their families on a daily-basis which inevitably reflects on the countries widespread violence, drug abuse, growing crime rates and exposure to exploitation.

The Philippines has a wide array of national laws that address children's rights, in fact it's Constitution, article XV, Section 3(2) requires the State to defend the rights of children to assistance and provides for special protection from all forms of neglect, abuse, cruelty, exploitation and other conditions prejudicial to their development (Child Rights International Network, 2019). Some of the relevant legislation can be found across different Codes and Acts as the ones to be mentioned but it's in no way limited to: The Civil Code; Family Code; Labour Code; Child Youth and Welfare Code; the Republic Act No. 7610<sup>10</sup>, article 5, section 9 includes legislation concerning 'Obscene Publications and Indecent Shows' where it states that:

"Any person who shall hire, employ, use, persuade, induce or coerce a child to perform in obscene exhibitions and indecent shows, whether live or in video, or model in obscene publications or pornographic materials or to sell or distribute the said materials shall suffer the penalty of prison mayor in its medium period. If the child used as a performer, subject or seller/distributor is below twelve (12) years of age, the penalty shall be imposed in its maximum period. Any ascendant, guardian, or person entrusted in any capacity with the care of a child who shall cause and/or allow such child to be employed or to participate in an obscene play, scene, act, movie or show or in any other acts covered by this section shall suffer the penalty of prison mayor in its medium period" (1992).

In addition, the Republic Act No. 9262<sup>11</sup>, in its section 3 defines sexual violence, including, "forcing the woman or her child to do indecent acts and/or make films thereof" (2004); the Republic Act No. 9344 or Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act that installed the Juvenile Justice and

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<sup>10</sup> Republic of the Philippines (1992), "An act providing for stronger deterrence and special protection against child abuse, exploitation and discrimination, and for other purposes", Republic Act No. 7610, 17 June 1992.

<sup>11</sup> Republic of the Philippines (2004), "An act defining violence against women and their children, providing for protective measures for victims, prescribing penalties therefore, and for other purposes", Republic Act No. 9262, 8 March 2004.

Welfare Council (JJWC); the Republic Act No. 9775 (Anti-Child Pornography Act)<sup>12</sup> adopted in 2009, finally made illegal child sexual abuse materials in the Philippines, and enumerated a number of related crimes as LS-CSA stating in its Section 4 that it:

“shall be unlawful for any person: (a) To hire, employ, use, persuade, induce or coerce a child to perform in the creation or production of any form of child pornography; (b) To produce, direct, manufacture or create any form of child pornography; (c) To publish offer, transmit, sell, distribute, broadcast, advertise, promote, export or import any form of child pornography” (2009).

A law of special importance in cases of LS-CSA given it could be used to prosecute both ‘facilitators’ and the ‘viewers’ that have access to the produced material. In addition, the Republic Act No. 10175<sup>13</sup> (Cybercrime Prevention Act) adds further prevention for children who may fall victims of any form of OSAEC, in its Chapter II, section 4(c-2), states:

“The unlawful or prohibited acts defined and punishable by Republic Act No. 9775 or the Anti-Child Pornography Act of 2009, committed through a computer system: *Provided*, That the penalty to be imposed shall be (1) one degree higher than that provided for in Republic Act No. 9775” (2012).

Most of the legislation mentioned above often referred to children as anyone below 18 years old unable to take care of herself which would be in accordance with international standards like the CRC, unfortunately, the age of consent in the Philippines remains at 12 years old, according to the country’s Revised Penal Code, Article 335<sup>14</sup>; a provision that greatly weakens the protection of children, given that any child victim of abuse who is above 12 years old cannot be considered a victim of statutory rape.

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<sup>12</sup> Republic of the Philippines (2009), “An act defining the crime of child pornography, prescribing penalties therefor and for other purposes (Anti- Child Pornography Act of 2009)”, Republic Act No. 9775.

<sup>13</sup> Republic of the Philippines (2012), “An act defining cybercrime, providing for the prevention, investigation, suppression and the imposition of penalties therefor and for other purposes (Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012)”, Republic Act No. 10175.

<sup>14</sup> Republic of the Philippines (1930), The Revised Penal Code, Article 335 “Rape and Acts of Lasciviousness”.



In addition to its national laws the Philippines have also signed and ratified several International treaties that seek the protection of children, including their specific protection against forms of OSAEC., namely LS-CSA. The CRC<sup>15</sup>, article 34, states that “the exploitative use of children in prostitution, [...] other unlawful sexual practices, [and] in pornographic performances [LS-CSA falls in this category] and materials” (1989). The CRC was signed and ratified by the Philippines in July 26, 1990<sup>16</sup>. The country also signed the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in August 1981; ratified the International Labour Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention in November 2000, and the OPSC, signed in September 2000 and ratified in May 2002 that offers even more specific protection for children by embracing a broader and more protective interpretation of child sexual abuse online (ECPAT International, 2017). It’s important to remind that, as it was already mentioned, the potential signing of the Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)<sup>17</sup> has also been deemed a possibility in previous communications by the country’s leaders. The addition of this convention to the legislation would prove highly relevant given it stands as:

“the most advanced and complete legally binding standard at the international level in the field of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children. It focuses on substantive and procedural criminal legal measures in order to define and criminalize SEC-related crimes, prosecute perpetrators, promote appropriate national policies, as well as provide specific measures for the protection of child victims” (ECPAT International, 2017, p. 51). The Lanzarote Convention, article 21 criminalizes:

“recruiting a child into participating in pornographic performances or causing a child to participate in such performances; coercing a child into participating in pornographic performances or profiting from or otherwise exploiting a child for such purposes [and] knowingly attending pornographic performances involving the participation of children” (2007, p. 8).

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<sup>15</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), Article 34 (b and c).

<sup>16</sup> This made the Philippines to be the 31<sup>st</sup> country to ratify the Convention.

<sup>17</sup> Council of Europe (2007), “Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse” (hereinafter Lanzarote Convention), signed on 25th October 2007, entered into force on 1st July 2010.

The convention gives a clearer recognition to the need to prosecute crimes of LS-CSA and the criminalization of both ‘viewers’ and ‘facilitators’ while appealing for an International cooperation, though it was initially signed by European countries alone other have signed but despite initial discussions there has been no recent mentions of the Philippines taking further steps towards the signing of the convention (Greijer and Doek, 2019).

A technological facilitated crime as LS-CSA often falls under statutory regimes that were created to address crimes related with child pornography; as a result, the law itself fails to address the complexity of LS-CSA consumers. Pornography consumers are passive viewers of depictions of past abuse moments, they aren’t directly responsible for their victim’s abuse. The same cannot be said of LS-CSA consumers, the late have an active role in the abuse even if there is a lack of physical contact with the victim they are, in fact, paying to view a live feed and often play a conducting role on how the abuse unfolds (Buchanan, 2020). Continuous work and better, precise definition for LS-CSA are needed if the crime is to be properly faced and hopefully prevented regardless of the technological advances that seem to, always, outrace the evolution of the law.

The internet became widely available in the Philippines in 1994, which led to a slowly developing internet savvy consumers in the country, by 2018, the number of internet users in the Philippines grew to almost 70 million people, accounting for more than half of its population (Sanchez, 2019). Internet usage in the country is extremely high, placing the Philippines among the top 20 countries in the world in terms of the number of daily Internet users (ICT Development Index, 2016).

In a country where family bonds are strong and a striking number of families live in poverty it’s not uncommon for one member of the family to ‘sacrifice’ him or herself for the benefit of the rest as a whole. Children, in particular, are one of the main sources of income of many Filipino families which has led, to the proliferation of different forms of child abuse.

#### 2.4.4 'Perfect Storm' - The 'epicenter' of LS-CSA

The manufacturing and distribution of child abuse material has long been a problem that haunts societies as a whole. Nowadays online sexual abuse takes on new shapes, criminals take advantage of young children but so do those who are meant to protect them (as we shall address ahead). WWW is the birth place of LS-CSA given that, in nature, it's a form of cybercrime; yet, when taken into consideration its physical presence, the Philippines are referred to as 'the epicenter of LS-CSA' (Brown, 2016; TdH, 2016; EUROPOL, 2017; IJM, 2020). Directed by its 'producers' and 'costumers' alike children (aged from a few months up to 12 years old) once again find themselves prey, victims of greed, desire and lust of adults. TdHN (2013) described the practice as "a combination of child pornography and child prostitution [in which] adults travel abroad albeit through the internet to engage in sexual activities with vulnerable children, avoiding laws in their own country" (p. 20).

Globalization, technological advancements and the result of years of colonization created perfect conditions for the emergence LS-CSA in the country of the Philippines. In the words of Cruz and Sajo (2015) "rudimentary technological skills, the ability to speak basic English, the ability to empathize and foster costumer relations" (p. 1) in addition to a basic internet connection and a community that struggles to survive are apparently the required factors for LS-CSA to thrive (Brown, 2016).

In 1993, Kendall-Tackett, Williams and Finkelhor, began calling attention towards a continuous increase of child abuse cases in the Philippines. Official reports began to be produced by researchers and clinicians resulting from a growing recognition of the problem (Castillo, 2009). The economic struggles, the religious and cultural background of a country still heavily endangered by poverty lead to a fight that, though not vain, was hardly enough to begin to tackle the growing threat hovering over the Filipino children. By 2015 a National Baseline Survey on Violence Against Children (VAC) was conducted in the country, the data conveyed that 1 in 2 Filipino children had experienced some sort of online violence including, sexual violence (Cortes, 2020).

In 2017 LS-CSA made the front pages of UNICEF’s State of the World Report, this allowed for more attention to be given to the growing issue thus exposing more of its reality. An increasing number of cases and a truly devastating abuse that affected Filipino children both physically and psychologically made the country start to be described as “the global epicenter of the live-stream child sexual abuse trade” (UNICEF, 2017). This relatively ‘new’ shape of OSAEC emerges not just as another form of organized crime but rather as an easy, low-cost and ‘relatively harmless’ way to obtain an extra income; making it more appealing and accessible for a wider range of individuals, namely the poorest families that are often in dire need of an extra source income as a means of survival.

The nature of the business doesn’t imply that organized crime isn’t present in the country or that many cases of LS-CSA do involve trafficking or organized cybersex dens’ where children and young teenagers are forced to work around the clock with no conditions. Victims of trafficking, of deceived by the promise of better jobs many find themselves trapped in this exploitive busines. An example was ‘cybersex den’ found operating in Negros Oriental with girls between thirteen and eighteen years old; the owner charged around 2850 Filipino pesos (around 50 euros) per live stream and very little would actually go for the girl (even less to her family) (Buchanan, 2020). For the interest of this study the focus will be on the major tendency, which is LS-CSA conducted as a ‘cottage business’, that is small family ran business, a particular element that distinguishes the proliferation of the crime in the Philippine when compared to other countries (where trafficking is almost always involved) (TdHN, 2013; TdHN, 2016).

LS-CSA removes children from the open streets, bars and restaurants of the known areas where foreign would look for child prostitutes and places them outside the public eye, in front of a computer webcam or a smartphone, often under the roof of their own houses. From this point on, children are not only exposed to sexual interaction with foreigners but also pass undetected by police raids and organization ventures that seek to help them. “In areas like Cordova and the Taguig both located in the Cebu province, [LS-CSA] have become widespread and family members are aware that there is a lot of money to be earned from it” (TdHN, 2013, p. 5).

ICMEC (2017), studies done in developed countries showed that there was no typical victim in cases of OSAEC; in fact, the heterogeneity was initially regarded as a striking outcome if not for the loss in strength when it comes to studies with a more localized approach. Victimology literature, in particular, has continuously sought to show that between countries and even within a country, certain groups of the population (in this case certain children) are systematically at higher risk to become victims than others. Authors like Hindelang, Gottfredson and Felson are but a few that sought to create theoretical models to explain why one individual may be more vulnerable than other but those initial theories highly focused on routine activities and individual's lifestyle (Pratt and Turanovic, 2015).

Later on, different authors sought to try and explain correlations between external factors and particular types of victimization, like child abuse. Children live with the families that often mistreat them and are not able to leave; if they live in poor and dangerous neighborhoods they cannot move away; they are overall are weaker in a physical and mental expression in comparison to adults and they mostly depend on adults, on parents, on family to survive. These are external factors that definitely contribute for child victimization, childhood is in its all a stage of dependency with social and psychological immaturity making them vulnerable to a spectrum of abuse forms (Finkelhor and Dzuiba-Leatherman, 1994). A research led by Paxson and Waldfogel, (1999) revealed that “children living below [the poverty line] have higher rates of child maltreatment” (p. 28); inequality studies showed the need to conduct further investigation in different countries if one if to understand the full implications and relationship between poverty, child abuse and neglect (Featherstone et al., 2019).

When addressing LS-CSA in the Philippines the complex social and cultural dynamics, as well as other discussed elements that represent the country's reality (economy, politics, ICTs) seem to be some of the factors that place children of the lower socio-economic status at higher risk to be victimized. In a study led by TdHN (2013) 40% of the discovered victims of LS-CSA had family members who were either involved in the operation itself or who were aware of what was being done to the children.

The most common type of operations ran in the Philippines combine the province and poor families. In the province it's common to find small ran computer shops where one can use computers with internet access, for a limited time, for about 5 php (about 9 cents). In these cases, children would often be led by an older teen (often a former victim of LS-CSA herself) who would rent the place for the evening (while it was supposed to be close) and by using curtains would provide enough privacy for brief shows to take place, performed by different children.

The second type of operation, and the one which caught the attention of the Philippines for its cases of LS-CSA, are the 'family run operation' or 'cottage businesses'. Parents or other family members would coerce their children to perform in exchange for money and even convince other parents in the neighborhoods to do the same. Data collected by an IJM study in partnership with Philippine Government and a variety of stakeholders revealed that by 2020 the prevalence of parents in cases of LS-CSA as the 'facilitators' was of 41%. These occurrences mostly take place in very crowded and poor areas in the Philippines where the inhabitants struggle to survive given the scarce means of income (Cordova in the province of Cebu is an example of such an area):

"Parents will pretend they don't know what the children are involved in [...] they will not admit it but they urgently need the money this child can bring in. Parents are shocked at first but appease their conscience by thinking it is not harmful for their child and [certainly] not as bad as prostitution" (TdHN, 2013, p. 28).

Undeniable 'facilitators' of the crime, parents, "use excuses, refuse to denounce their acts, perpetuating the "myth of the mother's eternal love" (Guerra, 1984, p. 385 cit in Sirgado and Paçó, 2012) or 'ignorance' towards any harm befalling the child is waved aside due to the lack of any physical contact with the perpetrator, a mere 'viewer' (TdHN, 2013; IJM, 2020). Due to this 'hands off' classification, the misconception that there is in fact no physical abuse tends to spread; not only does the child suffer psychological trauma simply by undressing or touching herself for the video performances but in many cases other children (of the same age or older) or even the parents or other adults (often the 'facilitators' of the crime) participate as well conducting and abusing the child in accordance to the request of the individual paying from the other side of the screen (TdHN, 2016).

The ‘show’ or ‘performance’ itself can be done from different places, be it in front of a computer in a computer-shop (when the owner is involved as a third party to at least receive a cut of the money), through organized cyber-den’s where children are placed, for hours, in front of computers while expecting the appearance of new costumers (these children are often drugged in order to stay awake for several hours and work non-stop to maximize the profits of the owners of the den). Lastly the ‘shows’ can be done at home, be it through a computer or a simple smartphone with an internet connection. If the child or the ‘facilitator’ do not speak English they resort to online translators like google to chat with the foreign costumer; most shows will then last between 15 and 30 minutes and take a variety of performances, it can go from something as simple as showing the upper body genitals or dancing naked; to masturbation with the resort to sex toys or eggplants (TdHN, 2013). The shows can also be performed by one or more children simultaneously or involve adults; more extreme cases found by an investigation of TdHN (2013, 2016) showed requests that involved animals as means to abuse the child; whatever the fetish the ‘facilitators’ and the children would cater for. Just like the shows take a variety of shapes so does the money children can make, the length, age of child, number of those involves as well as the acts performed all influence the price. Reports often indicated that victims would receive between 500 to 2000 php (between 8 and 35 euros) per show; of that money some victims would often not even receive any because the facilitator be it family or not would keep it (TdHN, 2013).

The acceptance and facilitation of this practice by the community and family members may be due to – but is not justified by – a lack of awareness and knowledge about the harm caused upon the child. In fact, the effects appear to be waved aside and played down by the parents or those involved given the inexistent physical contact between the perpetrator and the child (TdHN 2013; 2016). As a result, children often refuse to speak, or deny anything happened to them to protect their parents, family or neighbors thus magnifying the psychological costs to the child.

Children develop a distorted view of their own sexuality as a result of this type of abuse, they adopt the idea that sexuality and money are intertwined; when parents are involved in the abuse the distress and confusion that builds within the child is even bigger and more traumatic given the closeness of the families, seeing parents as their protectors and guides, children develop conflicting ideas between right and wrong in order to solve conflicts that might emerge in their loyalty towards

the family. Children ultimately blame themselves by excusing the parents who were only trying to provide for the family as a whole; if they seek help that would bring ‘hiya’ on the family and they would be branded as immoral, so yet another conflict emerges with their perception of the world and their own self-image (TdH, 2013; 2016).

Mae Fe Ancheta-Templa, the Undersecretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), in the Philippines, pronounced herself on the subject in hand, expressing that parents are the first and foremost educators of their children. If they present themselves as responsible for such hideous forms of abuse one cannot expect children to morally distinguish right and wrong which might, inevitably so, lead to a cycle of numerous negative behaviors later perpetrated by the those who were once victims (Alcantara, 2019).

The widespread of the English language (given its status as second official language of the country), the increased internet access add fuel to the root cause proliferating in the country, poverty (Brown, 2016; TdHN, 2013; 2016). Around one in every three people in the capital city of Manila live in slums where makeshift houses made of wood, metal sheets and cardboard are often piled three or four storeys high alongside rivers and rubbish dumps. Poor communities also spread throughout the provinces and the online world offers an opportunity, a shady, dark route, that surrounded by a culture of silence and deference to family swallow’s child after child towards a history of hidden abuse through LS-CSA (Brown, 2016).

#### 2.4.5 An Enforcement Gap

Actively engaging in an international scenery immediately poses a challenge for local and authorities, especially when the means and tools to engage the crime are lacking. The fact that LS-CSA leaves no digital trace makes it all that harder to tackle and prevent. Given there is no need to download or storage any data once the stream ends so does the online evidence that it ever took place. As such, this requires enforcement agencies to capture those involved while the abuse is



occurring (which is undoubtedly hard due to the hidden nature of the crime and the culture which lead to a very small amount of reports). Another way is to attempt to detect any strange money transactions from external countries, but given that transfers often take place through transfers outlets, direct deposits or by using virtual currencies not only is there often lack of regulation and possibility to even gather such data but in the case of crypto currencies they are almost untraceable.

As portrayed above<sup>18</sup> the Philippines do have an extensive amount of laws and treaties ratified that address VAC but, the data and the population both seem to indicate that there is a gap to its implementation; especially against crime like LS-CSA where, often, there is no ‘evident’ direct sexual contact (World Health Organization, 2020). The way child rights are or should be approached in the country is still a matter widely discussed as a result of cultural norms; for instance, while there is a primary local structure that should formulate and implement child protection programs in cities, municipalities and ‘barangays’, the Local Council for the Protection of Children (LCPC), in reality, many local governments units either do not have an LCPC or, if they do, is simply on paper (Council for the Welfare of Children and UNICEF, 2016).

When the reality doesn’t match the Government’s promises it is impossible to put in place laws and norms to help trace and condemn criminal practices as the one in discussion. In the case of OSEAC, namely LS-CSA, tackling the responsible is not just a local job but an international one. With the offenders being able to obtain access to such material from anywhere around the world the task is no longer of just one nation but rather a global task. Unfortunately, and though many international treaties have emerged there is still a wide gap when it comes to the enforcement of the ideology behind such treaties. Law enforcers still find themselves withhold by physical boundaries that do not affect criminals and certainly do not help protect the children. With such perspective in mind when it comes to the legal side of the battle it is undeniably an unfair setting.

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<sup>18</sup> Revisit Section 2.4.3 Economy, Legislation and ICTs for detailed information.

## 2.5 The Role of International Actors

Different ways of understanding the world compose the threads of a globalized world where the possibility of an equal sides coexisting grows stronger in face the previous idea presented by authors as Said in *Orientalism* where one side of the world, the West suppressed the other, the East. In the presence of different social and cultural dynamics, international intervention needs to be adequate and ethically developed.

As international attention rose towards the crime of LS-CSA in the Philippines, and its particular global implications, many governments and organizations began to investigate and join forces to face the growing issue. In fact, a study on the national prevalence of VAC in 2010, revealed that:

“the presence of NGOs and other civic organizations that supplement and complement the programs and services of the local governments have been a game-changer in the way responses and assistance are provided to children” (UNICEF, 2016, p. 15).

Activities ranging from prevention, advocacy for political change, interception, rehabilitation and reintegration are but a few areas of engagement by the international non-governmental actors, many of which have its headquarters in the occident, thus bringing with them a different set of eyes and perspective on the issue and how to address, which may be both a blessing or a ‘curse’ if a serious background research on the nation itself isn’t collected to provide for an adequate approach.

In 2016, after Rodrigo Duterte took office as Philippine new President his strict regime and 'war on drugs' policy led to thousands of extrajudicial killings conducted by state forces and government-backed paramilitaries. Political activists, community leaders and journalists attempted to expose the human rights violations occurring in the country, often at the expense of their own lives. The situation captured the attention of the world and, finally, by 2019 the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) adopted a resolution asking the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to submit a report by June 2020 on the human rights

situation in the country. The President's administration, whose general elections in May 2019 solidified its power base, and issued a memorandum (in August 2019) suspending "all new talks and deals for foreign loans and grants [with the eighteen signing countries] due to the administration's strong rejection of the resolution of the UN Human Rights Council" (Human Rights Watch, 2020, p. 460).

Though yet, uncertain, the decision might have strong effects on the cooperation with other countries to face crimes such as LS-CSA and also in the work led by International agencies that, despite often having local offices, still depend from Headquarters for financing and to whom the President decision might lead to the removal of associated budget for the local Filipino community.

2.5.1 International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) and Initiatives

Table 1 – ChildFund

<b>Headquarters</b>	Richmond, Virginia, United States
<b>Creation</b>	Founded October 6, 1938 by J. Calvitt Clarke
<b>Brief Description</b>	Through innovative solutions it seeks to help children living in poverty achieve their potential, by working through local partners and ensuring child protection at every age.
<b>OSEAC addressed</b>	All types
<b>Target audience(s)</b>	Young children, teenagers; Young adults Community;
<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	(1) Creating safe spaces for children victims of violence; (2) providing psychological support to children after emergencies; (3) supporting and training community-based health care centers (4) educating families about saving money, livelihood training, early childhood development and other important issues; (5) developing early childhood programs, and (6) providing loans, mentoring and entrepreneurial training to older teens and young adults
<b>Results</b>	In 2019 ChildFund was promoting initiatives in 24 countries, through 261 local partners and reached 13.6 million children and families.

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the information on ChildFund website

ChildFund has long been present in the Philippines with several programs and initiatives to fight poverty and provide children with proper health care and educational opportunities. With the emergence of several forms of OSEAC and its prevalence in the country, the organization decided to join the fight in the nation in 2019. After already having started to address the issue in other countries the team supported by the Out of the Shadows Index Advocacy Fund lunched the #ShutdownOSEC campaign alongside with a promotional summit that brought together young people, law enforcement, the media and several technology companies committed to join the fight. As a result of this first effort the organization was able to partner with the media so that they would

could help raise awareness on the issue, as a result it is estimated that some media has doubled their reports on cases of OSEAC.

Throughout 2020 the COVID-19 epidemic has placed a huge obstacle in many of the ongoing plans the organization had, but they were still able to continue some of the initiatives, namely, by partnering with Facebook to develop internet safety materials and activities for children, youth and families through text messaging. They also actively participate in Filipino radio shows broadcast their initiatives to families in the provinces (ChildFund, 2020).

Table 2 - International Justice Mission (IJM)

<b>Headquarters</b>	Washington, DC
<b>Creation</b>	Founded in 1997 as a faith-based NGO by Gary Haugen
<b>Brief Description</b>	IJM is a global organization that protects people in poverty from violence by partnering with local authorities to combat slavery, violence against women and children, and other forms of abuse.
<b>OSEAC addressed</b>	All types
<b>Target audience(s)</b>	Young children and teenagers; Community; Government
<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	(1) Rescue and restore victims, hold perpetrators accountable; (2) help strengthen public justice systems, and (3) seek to help people victims of other types of violence: police abuse; sex trafficking; forced labor; citizenship rights abuse and land theft.
<b>Results</b>	By 2020 IJM is now present in 17 countries with over 19 Programs

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the information on IJM website

The organization made its first contact in the Philippines back in early stages of its missions when Haugen traveled to the country and learned of a sexual abuse case against a young girl, whom he worked to help when he returned to the US by tracking down the perpetrator and helping authorities conduct the case against him. Nowadays one of the major focus of IJM in the Philippines is fighting against cybersex trafficking, “the live sexual abuse of children streamed via the internet, set up by

adults who receive online payments from predators and pedophiles located anywhere in the world” (IJM, 2020).

Since 2000 the organization has worked alongside the government and law enforcement agencies to help training authorities on cyber-investigation and local agencies like DSWD how to care for young survivors of this type of crime. They have established two local offices, one in Manila that in 2017 finally saw the 1<sup>st</sup> conviction of a Filipino man solely for the conduction of LS-CSA related crimes. And a second one in Cebu, the office helped open ‘HerSpace’ a safe place where survivors of LSCSA can go for crises care after being rescued; in 2009 it helped establish and train Philippine’s first anti-trafficking unit and by 2018 had accounted for 100 children being rescued from LS-CSA cases (IJM, 2020).

Table 3 – Plan International

<b>Headquarters</b>	Woking, England
<b>Creation</b>	1937 by John Langdon-Davies and Eric Muggeridge
<b>Brief Description</b>	Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organization which works in 71 countries across the world, in Africa, the Americas, and Asia to advance children’s rights and equality for girls.
<b>OSEAC addressed</b>	All Types
<b>Target audience(s)</b>	Children, communities and government agencies
<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	(1) Empower children, young people and communities; (2) drive change in practice and policy at local, national and global levels through our reach, experience and knowledge, and (3) work with children and communities to prepare for and respond to crises and to overcome adversity
<b>Results</b>	In 2019 the organization was present in 77 countries, 21.6 million girls received help and 18.9 million boys.

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the information on Plan International website

The organization has been present in the Philippines since 1961 where they focus on child protection, economic empowerment of young adults, risk management in disaster areas and awareness over nutrition and responsive care. They have an established office in Manila and currently develop programs and projects for several Filipino areas: Masbate, North Samar, West Samar, East Samar, Occidental Mindoro, Metro Manila and Central Mindanao.

Their fight began against offline forms of abuse and exploitation but they have come to address issues of OSEAC as well, in fact, according to their studies 8 in every 10 Filipino children are at risk of being victims of online abuse or bullying as a result they have begun to take measures to tackle the issue by partnering with the government and service providers to help them improve the care needed for children victims of cases like LS-CSA. Through a 3-year project started in 2017 they provide specialized training on OSEAC, started the establishment of community-based child protection mechanisms to involve and raise awareness among the civil society, as they stand in the front lines to help children. Peer-to-peer educators also lead local workshops where they seek to facilitate communication between children and young people from local schools and the community.

A second effort led by Plan International is the ‘Not for Sale’ campaign which focuses solely on OSEAC issues in the country, they seek to raise awareness on the issue by creating healthy and safe environments where children and civil society can discuss the issue; led digital education campaigns so that people learn what is safe to share and to whom they should be talking (Mau, 2018); in addition they are actively lobbying towards pending bills in the Filipino legislature which will help the fight, namely: amendments to the Anti-Rape Act of 1997 such as raising the minimum age of sexual consent (which remains at 12 years old) ; a bill that seeks to institutionalize the Human Trafficking Preventive Education Program that would enable education in schools and barangays towards the dangers of trafficking and its relation to OSEAC as well as protective services for the victims. Lastly Plan International seeks to be and provide a platform for anyone who wishes to start a discussion on OSEAC issues without the fear of being heard and to help foster cooperation between different sectors by acting as a liaison between the members of the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) and other society leaders in both the public

and private sector so that a proper and effective combination of measures can be taken to address the problem in hand (Plan International, 2019).

Table 4 – SaferKids Philippines

<b>Headquarters</b>	Australia
<b>Creation</b>	2019 (finishes in 2023)
<b>Brief Description</b>	Is an Australian Government initiative, delivered through the pioneering consortium of Save the Children Philippines, The Asia Foundation and UNICEF to reduce the online sexual abuse and exploitation of children in the Philippines.
<b>OSEAC addressed</b>	All types
<b>Target audience(s)</b>	Government, NGOs, communities, parents, caregivers and young people.
<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	(1) adopting positive behaviour towards protection of children from online abuse and exploitation; (2) strengthening investigation, prosecution and adjudication of OSAEC cases consistent with national legislation, and (3) improving service delivery for prevention and protection of children against online sexual abuse and exploitation in OSAEC hotspots.
<b>Results</b>	Results have not been made available yet

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the information on SaferKidsPH website

SaferKids Philippines is not an organization, but an initiative, a 6 years commitment led by the Australian Government to invest over 7 million euros to protect children from several forms of OSEAC, the aim of the program is to join the public, the government and the private sector to develop and enforce the best online solutions for a safer digital environment for Filipino children (Geneva Internet Platform, 2019). 2019 marked the beginning of the ongoing battle, with the release of an awareness film based on real stories of rescued Filipino victims. In October 2019 the program joined the Department of Education and part of its funding will be directed towards intervention in schools with guidance counselors, teachers and students in order to raise awareness



on OSAEC causes and consequences; how to detect signs of abuse and how to help protect and prevent children from becoming further victimized (Department of Education, 2019).

Digital awareness will also be a major focus, for that SaferKidsPH has joined with Facebook, Youtube, Instagram and Google that will help adapt and create future tools that can be applied to the Philippines panoramic and hopefully strengthen the efforts digital illiteracy and the exposure to OSEAC material (Kids for Kids, 2019). The project is still in its early stages and much is unknow, especially since the efforts for local campaigns would bring to a halt as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, nevertheless, it is an important initiative that may still bring and help immense results in the fight against LS-CSA and the protection of children both online and offline.

Table 5 – Terre des Hommes International

<b>Headquarters</b>	Geneva, Switzerland
<b>Creation</b>	1960 by Edmond Kaiser in Lausanne (Switzerland)
<b>Brief Description</b>	Initially created as a movement, Terre des Hommes International Federation is now a network of ten national organizations working for the rights of children and to promote equitable development without racial, religious, political, cultural or gender-based discrimination. Given the aid provided since it holds a consultative status with the United Nations, UNICEF, the ILO and the Council of Europe
<b>OSEAC addressed</b>	All types, as well as all forms of child abuse and exploitation
<b>Target audience(s)</b>	Children; Young adults; Governments and local NGOs
<b>Delivery mechanisms</b>	(1) Implement projects to improve the living conditions of vulnerable children and the exercitation of their rights; (2) mobilize political will and advocate appropriate public policies on child rights and development from a human rights perspective;
<b>Results</b>	Supports 816 projects over 67 countries with over 6.562.042 direct beneficiaries

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the information on TdH website

The organization makes its presence in the Philippines through one of its offices, Terre des Hommes Netherlands (TdHN) that now is physically present through an office in Manila. Like the International federation they aim to prevent child exploitation in all forms and ensure their development in a safe environment. Among their many projects is one that focus specifically on OSAEC.

The organization works alongside SPARK! Philippines, ECLIPSE Inc., Bidlisiw Foundation, Inc and the Children’s Legal Bureau of the Philippines, experienced partners with local awareness and knowledge that can help the organization adapt their approach to the needs of Filipino children and the country’s own reality. The organization developed two programs that engage with children and OSEAC, ‘Sweetie’ and ‘Down to Zero’.

“Sweetie is a ten-year-old virtual Filipino girl. Her highly life-like image appears online in chat rooms and on dating sites. When men start talking with her in a sexually suggestive way, she engages back. All the information from their exchanges gets stored and used to warn, track down or even arrest and convict perpetrators” (TdHN, 2019a)

Started in 2013 as part of a research on ‘webcam child sex’ now currently known as LS-CSA, the program was operational for almost 3 months in online chat-rooms where it gathered the information of over 1000 individuals worldwide, data which helped the eventually prosecution and conviction of 3 suspects and was of great importance to raise awareness towards the growing epidemic of LS-CSA in the Philippines. Right after the first stage investment began to be directed towards the development of Sweetie 2.0, by working with international specialists the organization sought that the software could be used worldwide against the crime in study. By “using a ”chatbot, the software can be deployed 24/7 to identify potential perpetrators in multiple chat rooms simultaneously, deter them or, if necessary, have them arrested and prosecuted by transferring our suspect case files to the police” (TdHN, 2019a) After the donation of the Dutch Postcode Lottery sum of over 2.9 million euros, in 2019, the now addressed as Sweetie 3.0 program is intended to be used not only in the Philippines where the problem is still deemed ‘severe’ (TdHN, 2019a) but also to Cambodia, Nepal and Kenya. The development of its core software now allows to track

suspects across different types of social media platforms with the stored and analyzed information than continuing to be transferred to law enforcers so children can be located and rescued.

The second program, ‘Down to Zero’ was developed with Plan International Netherlands, Defense for Children – ECPAT, Free a Girl and ICCO Cooperation and aimed to end commercial sexual exploitation in ten Asian countries and the Latin America by 2020, the five year program was applied to the Philippines where and by 2019, 12 victims of CSEC and OSEC (6 boys and 6 girls) were able to return to school with the support of their families and peers; the records of the program also showed that the reporting of cases of OSEAC by children had improved thanks to the training led by the organization of 893 children on how to report set cases to the authorities (TdHN, 2019b).

### **CHAPTER III – METHODOLOGY**

As any viable study, the first step the researcher must take is to decide the theme to investigate, under a panoply of choices the topic chosen may be described as ‘Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse’ (LS-CSA) in the Philippines’, a form of online child exploitation that occurs throughout the world but has shown a higher impact among the Filipino community (TdHN, 2016).

“Different traditions, schools and disciplines operate with distinctive views about what makes the social world go ‘round, what is important in it [...] producing as a result, [...] different ideas [...] about what empirical research can tell us [...] As such, [...] qualitative research does not dovetail neatly into one uniform philosophy or set of methodological principles.” (Mason, 2002, p.3)

In all its complexity this type of methodology seeks to produce a contextual understanding of how the social world is interpreted, understood and experienced. A proper qualitative research should, nonetheless, be strategically conducted allowing for flexibility and contextualization, without ever disregarding its rigor and accountability for its quality and arguments (Mason, 2002).

With the view above in regard, an a debatably lack of empirical research on the topic, for the construct of this study a qualitative research was adopted given that the phenomenon [in study] is complex, and, from the start, a hypothesis was taken into account that, the expression of LS-CSA in the Philippines would, likely, have a symbolic and subjective component that would be difficult to capture through other methods. The way...

“...qualitative research emphasizes understanding by closely examining people’s words, actions, and records, [it] examines the patterns of meaning that emerge from data gathered [and] often presented in the participants’ own words. [The researcher merely seeks to contextualize the found] patterns within [the] words, and to present those patterns for others to inspect while at the same time staying as close to the construction of the world of the participants as they originally experienced it” (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008, p. 89).

Considering the complexity of the theme and the research previously undertaken it is important, to underline, once again, that this will be an exploratory study. While it is sustained and rigorously explored, the data will merely provide an input, a glimpse over the subject. By obtaining information concerning particularities of LS-CSA as it occurs and is perceived in the Philippines; and by taking into consideration the perspective of the local community and the studies provided by academics and international western agencies; the study aims to explore the reason why the phenomenon appears to continuously grown in the country as a ‘cottage (family) led business’.

### 3.1 Research Design

The process of investigation, is by definition, a constant work. “It’s a walk towards more concrete knowledge and it should be accepted as such, with all the hesitations, detours and uncertainties that are implied” (Fortin, 1996, p. 31). Nonetheless, a starting point and a certain structure or guiding line is important to be established in order to obtain valuable information and conduct the development of set study (Corbin and Strauss, 2008). That is why the first step was establishing the conduction of a qualitative research, a term that may seem too generic from a standalone

perspective given it encompasses a variety of different approaches, which differ in their theoretical assumption and understanding of the object under investigation (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008).

Provided the exploratory aim of the study to address the phenomenon of LS-CSA in the Filipino context, a phenomenological approach seemed to be appropriate as it “involves the description of [a] phenomenon present in the world [that] the researcher is concerned with clarifying [...] and recognizing [...] through the eyes of the participants” (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008, p. 90). This approach thus, allows, communities to have a voice and provides a deeper understanding of an individual’s perspective; which subscribes what Kukla (2000) once referenced, that obtaining an absolute truth is not as important as what is perceived to be real by the individual.

While exploring a local phenomenon, under the globalization scoop, the study takes into special consideration: the Filipino Culture (beliefs, values, social patterns) as well as personal traits of the individuals (education, digital awareness) to sustain concluding arguments concerning the initial idea that this type of OSAEC in the country, has very close ties to its values and the state of the country itself. At the same time adding a collection of data focused on international (Western) organizations active in the country will allow to take into consideration a more globalized perception.

The research would be conducted throughout several months, the conduction of interviews and time needed to properly evaluate the recovered data proved scarce despite the continuous efforts to stay to produce work within a continuous timeline. The initial delivery date would be extended after a request to the Direction of the University. A much-needed time not only due to the particularities and difficulties encountered through the study (such as the commitment of the participants to participate) and the state of the world we now live upon (COVID-19 has affected our lives like never expected).

Upon a prior evaluation of available data and the possibility of the conduction of the study around the topic of LS-CSA in the Philippines a proposal was submitted to the Ethics Committee of the University Fernando Pessoa, whose approval would allow the retrieval of interviews (5 to 7) to

start taking place along with the remaining necessary tasks, namely data collection and analysis, which I will address in detail ahead.

### 3.1.1 Sampling

Very often it is impossible to collect data from everyone in a community in order to be able to validate and generalize the research, as a result, in qualitative research one can resort to the use of a sample of the population that is within reach for the collection of data (Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley, 2012). This way it remains possible to “attempt to obtain insights of a particular process [and] practices that exist within a specific location and context” (Connolly, 1998 cit in Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2007, p. 240).

Given statistical generalization is not the goal but rather a deeper understanding of the phenomenon of LS-CSA is, the size of the sample is not as important as the information collected, which should provide a significant insight concerning the issue. For the aimed purposed of the study the design predicted gathering a sample of at least five to seven individuals. Given the time and necessary work that translated as the data began to be gathered a total of 8 individuals were the resulting sample. The sample in question relied on a group of selection criteria in order to select which individuals could contribute with valuable information, as well as those who should be excluded from the sample. In that order, inclusion and exclusion criteria were devised:

The inclusion criteria being a total of seven: (1) country of origin; (2) age; (3) education; (4) language; (5) awareness of the existence of LS-CSA in the Philippines; (6) internet access, (7) voluntary. The first is rather self-explanatory, all participants must be Filipinos, born in the Philippine’s and raised within the country; (2) The individuals must have reached adulthood (in accordance with the national law of their country, as such only those with 18 years or above); (3) The participant must be able to understand the aim of the study, its implications and the questions that will be directed, thus he should be culturally educated; (4) The participant must be able to

understand and explain his own thoughts clearly through the use of the English language; (5) In order to contribute with valuable information, the individual must be aware (prior to the contact) of the existence of the crime in study and how it occurs in the country. (6) All individuals must have access to the internet; lastly, (7) all participants that join the sample must do so willingly, which is then proved and emphasized through a verbal informed consent.

Another group of viable criteria are the elements for exclusion, as such those which fit the criteria cannot be a part of the sample. (1) Individuals unable to understand and thus provide an informed consent; (2) individuals born in the Philippines who weren't exposed to its culture while growing up; (3) vulnerable groups are also to be excluded given it would be unethical to place them at risk. In the case by vulnerable we refer to children and families alike directly involved with the phenomenon under study.

The 'Snowball sampling' or 'chain referral sampling' was adopted for the study for being able to provide an alternative way of access to more impenetrable communities as it happens with Filipinos. This method enables one to reach potential participants, according to Berg (1988) based on the assumption that there is an underlying network that enables the access to a series of referrals (cit in Atkinson and Flint, 2001). The method resorts, initially, to the researchers own network, as it was the case, to find an 'Informant, this first person than allows further contacts to be made through his own network, the process repeats itself until a group of 'potentially good' participants was found – 'snowball effect'- (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008) thus allowing for the sample of 8 individuals with viable information to form the final sample.

The contact with the informant was established at an early stage of the study in order to secure that its conduction would, in fact, be possible and, also, to provide the opportunity to revise the interview questions, ensuring they would be ethically correct and likely to receive a reply; if the terminology was recognized and if there were questions to be added or possibly removed/restructured. The informant in question was an individual within the social circle of the researcher, a Filipino national (born and raised), aware of the LS-CSA and capable of enabling contact with other Filipino's whom he believed would be able to provide valuable information for the study.

According to Marshall (1996, p. 523) “an appropriate sample size for a qualitative study is one that adequately answers the research question”. Of course, that is not as simple as it sounds; the sample requires adjustments that take into account the development of the subject (or the lack of it) and external elements such as time and availability of potential participants which are not under the researcher’s control (Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley, 2012). Even so, and within the context provided above (respecting all criteria and procedures) the sample was obtained and conclusions were able to be drafted over the subject of LS-CSA in the Philippines.

### 3.2 Techniques

The effective collection of data to enable composing and presenting properly supported arguments was conducted through different qualitative techniques. Starting by the selection of sources to be used, such as (1) people (8 individuals were interviewed); (2) organizations or initiatives that have studied the subject in question or have been led in the Philippines and (3) texts (scientific publications, official statistics; reports from recognized NGO’s and international organizations...).

The texts are a combination of primary (information collected in first hand such as those found in archives, official statistics or even interviews) and secondary sources of data (papers and works elaborated and published by other authors) (Lundin, 2016) resulting in an undeniable contribution for the body of knowledge on the subject and the planning, implementation and production of results.

#### 3.2.1 Interview

Kvale (1996) describes the interview as an instrument that "seeks to describe the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. [with the] main task [being] to understand the



meaning of what the interviewees say” (cit in, Lunenburg and Irby, 2008, p. 91). The use of this instrument [the interview] is specifically important when sensitive topics are being addressed, as it is the case; due to its strength in providing rich textual descriptions of people's experiences.

As mentioned earlier, the study aims to access an individual's perspective, as such the use of the interview is the best option for it may help to identify contradictory behaviors, beliefs, opinions, and emotions from the participant's perspective (Dias, 2007). This particular technique “(...) is probably the most commonly used in qualitative research” (Mason, 2002, p. 62) if one is to obtain “insights of a particular process [...] and practices that exist within a specific location and context” (Connolly 1998 cit in Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007, p. 240). A group of questions should always be fully prepared to work as a script in the interviews for, as stated by Lundin (2016), all studies have an underlying agenda, thus questions are prepared within a certain logic and never without purpose.

A semi-structured interview was the chosen style. By containing a mix of close and open-ended questions that cover a group of topics the interview aims to provide meaningful information while preventing awkward silences that would disrupt the flow of the conversation as it could happen without any previous script. In addition to a previously prepared set of questions that were presented, as deemed better, throughout the different interviews, for a successful conduction of an interview it is also important to retain the knowledge left by authors as Seidman (1991) who upholds the idea that the quality of an interview will always rely on the qualities of the interviewer. To listen rather than talking; being able to respect pauses and silences rather than interrupting; knowing when to wait for the other's reply, to keep its opinions to himself and respect the other. Ultimately the interviewer's job is to listen, to gather as much information as possible on the subject and learn from the other rather than allowing himself to get personally involved (cit in Coutinho, 2014). The interview<sup>19</sup> (Annex II) is divided in four topics: (1) ‘Cultural and Personal Traits’, (2) ‘Information and Communication Technologies’ (ICTs), (3) ‘Live streaming - child sexual abuse’ and (4) Local & Transnational Knowledge.

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<sup>19</sup> The structure and questions presented for the interviews were personally developed.

The first topic takes into account the history and cultural background of the individual, in other words it seeks to learn the individual's understandings while interacting with the social world, the values, norms and beliefs that guide him. Religion is set forward as an example given its strong presence in the Filipino society as it can be seen with the 2017 Global Attitudes Survey which revealed that around 91% of the Filipino population considers it a very important aspect in their life's. Other elements will also be considered, given the relevance of an individual's background on their perception, opinions and interactions; (2) given the connection of the crime being studied with the online world it becomes fundamental to inquire about how Filipinos perceive technology, how they use it and how digitally educated they actually are, (3) LS-CSA, the core subject in study, gives place to several questions accounting to both personal acquired knowledge and, most importantly, the individual's perceptions towards the subject (how, why or to whom it happens, for example). The questions provide a 'mirror' to see the phenomenon and perceive it through the eyes of the individual, and (4) lastly, a set of questions to verify whether there is a common understanding over the subject and how it should be addressed between the local and the international community. The international intervention success or failure to tackle the crime will not be directly under scoop but rather whether these actions are visible to the local population and done in accordance with their own perceptions and ideas or, if there is more of an imposition of western measures and a feeling of neglect by the Filipino community.

The questions, were elaborated under a careful ethical conduct which, in due care, sought to be reflected during the interview itself. They [questions] were also carefully adapted in order to obtain the most significant amount of information possible. The interview guide presents topics and related questions under a logic order but the style of interview adopted still provided the researcher freedom to add/remove, rearrange or reformulate them according to the needs of the interviewed. The method also allowed the participant to ask his own questions and add further information he deemed significant for the subject in hand, a instrumental 'freedom' which proved to be an advantage.

The participants in question were informed through an emailed *Plain Statement Letter* (PLS) (Annex I) about the objectives of the study, its context and the request to participate in a recorded interview upon their availability. At the beginning of each interview the subjects addressed in the

PLS were always revisited, particularly the rights of the participant and the need for a verbal consent<sup>20</sup> to be provided at the start of the recorded interview. At the end of set interviews an opportunity was always given for them to provide their email address in case of interest towards receiving the work once completed and, approved by the University.

Ideally, the interviews would be conducted through direct contact enabling the collection of additional data such corporal language or actions that might indicate different reactions of the interviewees, but given the impossibility, the interviews were conducted through the use of technology, online. According to Sturges and Hanrahan (2004) the Internet actually provides an opportunity for participants as well, that is, it enables individuals that live at a long distance to still participate in a study that they deem relevant. In a more positive perspective, as that enabled by the mentioned authors, a phone conducted interview has its own advantages as well given it may be seen as a less invasive method than a face-to-face conduction; something particularly important when addressing a sensible topic, and that may have led participants to disclosure more intimate and personal opinions as stated to happen according to Elmir (et al., 2011) and (Mack (et al., 2005).

By resorting to online applications (that enable contacting via audio/video people all around the globe with no costs such) as Skype and WhatsApp (compatible with both smartphones, tablets and computers) depending on the availability and request of the participant the interviews were conducted through the two mentioned applications. Throughout each call, a background program (Audacity Software) provided the ability to record both ends of the conversation (being the participant informed and fully aware of this, be it a video call or an audio call); as a preventive measure in case of a failure in the recording all calls were also recorded by resorting to the use of speakers and a microphone connected to a personal computer where a secondary recording program OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) was also used.

All interviews, regardless of the time, or application were conducted in a private and quiet place not only to ensure a good flow for the interview but also, and most importantly, to ensure the confidentiality of the interviewed and the information provided. In addition to the recordings,

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<sup>20</sup> The provision of a verbal consent rather than a written one was approved by the Ethics Committee.

throughout the interview, personal notes were taken for adding/reformulating questions, or even request clarifications and check for consistency, or lack of it, in the interviewer's responses. The notes were also a method of facilitating the transcriptions. Initially each interview was determined to have between 60 to 90 minutes, most of which remained in the range of the 60 minutes while others reached almost 120 minutes given the amount of information participants were willing to share.

The transcription process of an interview must be congruent with the methodological design adopted to the study and its theoretical underpinnings (McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig, 2003; Halcomb and Davidson, 2006). The first step when beginning the transcription process is to decide whether the textual document should include nonlinguistic observations (facial expressions, body language, etc.), in this study that would be of no significance given only one of the interviews was conducted with resource to video format, all the others merely included audio thus the implications of such physical entails will not be taken into consideration. The process, remains, a continuous challenge:

"incomplete sentences, overlapping speech, a lack of clear-cut endings in speech, poor audio quality due to connection failures, background noises [...] and determining where and when punctuation is required so as not to change the intent or emphasis of an interviewee's response or comment" (McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig, 2003) are but a few of the issues encountered.

When the analysis focuses on providing a description of the knowledge, values or beliefs of an individual (as it happens to be the case), lengthier units of text are necessary to be included in the transcript. In addition, to provide an accessible transcript, a set of principles were followed: phonetic sounds like "hums" "hmm" and "you know" are retained but not always produced in the revised transcripts; notes on 'inaudible text', 'overlapping' and 'interruptions' were made accordingly. Nevertheless, a transcription is not only time consuming but also complex and filled with technical dilemmas; being human immediately opens the process to a range of errors including "misinterpretation of content, class, and cultural differences and language errors" (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006, p. 41) as such, a reflexive, iterative process is more cost-effective

allowing the management of verbal data through a close word-to-word transcript along with all additional notes taken throughout the course of set interview (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006).

### 3.2.2 Data Analysis

Pursuing of a study's objectives cannot dismiss literature that has already been developed and published prior to its conduction. There are always new studies, new data being created and one must be fully aware and updated on subjects related to the research in question. Nonetheless, once sources were properly consulted and the problematic refined, key-terms related to the research questions and the theme itself start to emerge, a more precise research starts to take place (Lunenburg and Irby, 2008; Coutinho, 2018).

“Data collection and analysis processes tend to be concurrent, with new analytic steps informing the process of additional data collection and new data informing the analytic processes, it is important to recognize that qualitative data analysis processes are not entirely distinguishable from the actual data” (Thorne, 2000, p. 68).

Despite its complex nature data analysis receives very little discussion in comparison to other techniques of a qualitative work, yet the process begins the moment the researcher starts to interpret the data, using certain strategies to transform what was raw data into a coherent depiction of what is being studied. Though based on certain ground rules the analysis is not a rigid process, in fact, according with the National Science Foundation, its conduction mostly depends on the researcher critical thinking skills and the context in study (1997).

The technique combines primary information (information collected in first hand such as those found in archives, official statistics or even interviews) and secondary sources of data (papers and works elaborated and published by other authors) (Lundin, 2016). In the case of this study much of the data *corpus* consists of public records, available in official websites, reports, researches or news conducted and published by international (Western based) organizations that focus part or

the total of their work on the issue of OSAEC in the Philippines. Such data, once analyzed, provides the foundation for one of the underlying issues in study, that is to verify how international organizations (from the West) construct and apply measures in a local (Eastern based – the Philippines) context. Attention was given to how they perceive and explain the phenomenon as well as how they undertake an intervention in a culture other than their own. That is, if there is a respectful approach towards the local dynamics or if there is an imposition of a standardized interventional model (Grbich, 2013).

A constant comparative action is needed so that the findings from the conducted interviews can be compared to each other as they are collected and similarities as well as different responses start to be noticeable, providing a general tone of ideas and recurrent patterns of response. At the same time this primary source of information must be in constant comparison with the compiled secondary sources that comprise the backbone to the entire paper and the findings concerning international intervention.

### 3.3 Informed Consent and Ethical Considerations

It is important to underline a constant and utmost concern with matters regarding confidentiality and consent of participants within a qualitative study, as stated by Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley (2012), the two are major necessities when conducting research under a qualitative methodology, as it happens to be the case.

Consent is not only a process to ensure the viability of the obtained data but also a way to ensure the protection of the participant itself, who must be informed in a way that he is capable of understanding the theme and the objectives of the dissertation (Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley, 2012). A written consent is usually required as a formality, however, the sensitivity of certain topics (as it so happens in this study) often leads to this ‘step’ becoming an obstacle that may alienate some of the individuals that would otherwise be willing to participate (Miller and Bell,

2012). In addition to this remark, and upon the contact established with the informant, it was established that such requirement would prove difficult to comply due to the lack of individuals that actually possess or have regular access to a computer and a printer/scanner in order to provide a written consent; in addition the period of political instability in the Philippines increases the distrust and discomfort feeling that many Filipino's would undoubtedly experience under such request.

Given the explanation provided above and the undoubted need to acquire an informed consent from each participant in order to assure the study's viability (McLellan, MacQueen and Neidig, 2003; White, Woodfield and Ritchie, 2003; Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Swift et al, 2007; Fahie, 2014) the best option was to resort to a verbal informed consent .(after such measure was approved by the Ethics Committee). Which as, previously mentioned, was always required at the beginning of each interview.

The anonymity, confidentiality and right to withdraw of the participant remained a priority throughout the conduction of the study; just as the compliance with the university requirements for securing the data. In the particular case of this study all recorded data was encrypted, labelled and stored on a secure external device rather than a personal computer in order to prevent data loss and reinforce security measures. The information collected is only to be used in this study with all the participants aware of their rights to listen to their personal interviews; request to rephrase certain answers that they not believe were well transmitted, and, request to delete partial or all the information they have previously provided, prior to the submission of the study.

In respect to the recruiting process of individuals that could partake of the sample, it was immediately taken under consideration the capacity for the individual to fully comprehend what was requested so the informed consent would not prove void. No minors or individuals directly involved with cases of LS-CSA were interviewed; when specifically asked none of the participants expressed discomfort with any question and would even present more detailed recollections than initially expected and seek to ask in detail about matters which they were unfamiliar with; none suggested any alterations to the interview or their replies till date.

**CHAPTER IV – FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

In the words of Slavin (1992) “the best research design is one that will add to knowledge, no matter what the results are” (p. 3, cit in Lunenburg, Irby, 2008). The study presented intended to provide an exploratory view over the subject of LS-CSA in the Philippines by taking into account the perception of the national citizens and external factors as the work led by INGOs when tackling the cybercrime at a local level.

Table 6 - Demographic Data of the Interviewees

	<b>Intvr.1</b>	<b>Intvr.2</b>	<b>Intvr.3</b>	<b>Intvr.4</b>	<b>Intvr.5</b>	<b>Intvr.6</b>	<b>Intvr.7</b>	<b>Intvr.8</b>
<b>Age</b>	21	18	20	37	39	32	31	39
<b>Gender</b>	Female	Female	Male	Female	Female	Female	Female	Female
<b>Nationality</b>	Filipino							
<b>Language(s)</b>	Filipino (Tagalog)/English							
<b>Education</b>	High School	1 <sup>st</sup> Year College	3 <sup>rd</sup> Year College	Doctorate	PhD	Post-Grad	High School	Post-Grad
<b>Marital Status (Y/N)</b>	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
<b>Children (Y/N)</b>	No	No	No	Yes (2)	No	Yes (1)	Yes (1)	Yes (1)

Source: Developed by the researcher

A brief summary of the sample demographics (i.e., gender, nationality, highest degree of education, marital status and parenting) is presented above (Table 6) to give an idea of the members composing the sample of interview. Important findings from the collected data (including the interviews) are mentioned throughout different paragraphs with resort to quotes, literature and discussion notes for a more structured expression. Lastly the research questions are presented and discussed, also, with resource to the collected data



An initial premise underlying the research was the distinct dynamics of a two-sided world, the West and the East. The inevitable presence remains, as one cannot change the physical world itself but the mindset of ‘post-colonial’ attitudes and a visible disruption of core values over a nation as a result of another was not present in the speech of most participants. They recognize and embrace their colonial past in a, overall, more positive tone than one would expect from the discourse of Edward Said with Orientalism or the ‘disruptive colonialism’ of Frantz Fanon (Yeh, 2013).

The English as a second official language of the country, the educational system and even the political system has its roots on the American influence over the country:

*“Capitalism is everywhere, actually coming from a socially development point of view is really the culprit of all these things like inequality, structural violence that we have in the Philippines. This is basically because of, you know, the neoliberal framework of profit earning and all without sharing it to the to the poor people” (0812a)*

But for most Filipinos is in more symbolic ways that American influences make themselves present:

*“the Philippines has been a colony of the United States for some time and until today, many of the movies, music are influencing many Filipinos today” (0409a)*

*“our kind of consumer behaviour is highly western; the traditional Filipino culture is more sustainable” (0509a)*

*“there was this whole Hollywood culture put in and we still receive western movies and everything here [...] We have all this western culture coming in which have sex in it and [...] but because we have no formal education about these subjects [given sex is a taboo topic], this is the only education they're getting. The international influence on us is good in a way [it widens our perspectives] it's also very dangerous because we don't have any supporting education to guide the children” (0709a)*

*“in terms of values [...] we still have that [the Filipino values] Just in the in the way you talk, in the way you look, in the way we dress. Yes, [in those elements] we are very westernized” (0610a)*

On the other hand, the Roman Catholic religion, which plays a major role in the Philippines, is a Spanish inheritance:

*“Religion is everywhere, it's on every Facebook post, even in schools they make examples, [...] about God and stuff like that. It's pretty much everywhere” (0209a)*

*“Religious influence is [...] very strong in the country this time, we connect this to the Spanish influence, because the Philippines was also a colony of Spain for a long time and so the Roman Catholic church had been a very strong institution in the country for a very long time and until today” (0409a)*

*“the people with lower social economic status believe that they get by in life because of their faith [and the teachings] the Bible” (0509a)*

*“We are very religious as well. In South-East Asia we are the only Catholic country so we are very, very religious [...] Religion still plays a big role in how we conduct our daily lives [...] Like for example we do not have divorce in the Philippines [...] abortion it is not legal [...] we do not have marriage equality [...] religion really it's ah- it's something else in the Philippines” (0812a)*

In both cases Filipinos did not just accept the changes in their culture it was something that slowly emerged throughout their culture; they adopted these influences and made it their own, made it part of its unique culture:

*“[colonization] has affected our culture; it influenced our culture greatly [...] Filipinos are very Western [but] we have our unique values and traditions” (0309b)*

The values within a community tend to vary and are even often hard to precisely identify unless a study is addressing them. Throughout the interviews many participants would not specify values right away but rather speak in a general tone, describing the closeness of the family, the attendance to mass on Sundays or describing the people as generally kind and less individualistic than what is known to happen in the occident. As the interview unfolded, taking almost a conversation like tone, that was would be when most participants would refer to traditional Filipino values: family oriented, public image, ‘hiya’ and ‘bahala na’ would be among the values every participant would mention.

*“Filipinos in general [they] love their family” (0409a)*

*“Family is very, very important for Filipinos, it comes before anything else” (0709a)*

*“Filipinos are very family oriented, we value the family very well and we are a very closely-knit family. Usually an extended family composed of about three to four generations is common in the Philippines even in urban or rural areas. Even when a-a children have their own families they live nearby within ten kilometers or five kilometers; even with families that are abroad to work they always have this constant communication” (0812a)*

Values would often be interrelated, for example, when it came to Public Image, this would be directly related with family. The image of one individual would affect the image others have of the whole family:

*“we usually judge but we don’t like being judge, like we really want [to portray] a good image” (0109a)*

*“For many Filipinos, they say that public image is important. There are those who would value appearances over, you know, what’s inside” (0409a)*

*“whether it is face to face or online or in print, in media it’s very [public image] it’s regarded” (0509a)*

*“always keeping the family name clean and having pride in yourself. There's a lot of shame in doing bad things [...] They like to be seen to be well mannered and well respected, they're not very keen on being seen as being at fault for something” (0709a)*

*“public image is very important for Filipinos. Very, very important for us. Like, hum, public humiliations is really something else so we don't like to be humiliated. And Filipinos value smooth interpersonal relationship as much as possible we don't want to get into conflict with other people. So public image is very important [...] So even if you are suffering from something, for example, from poverty or illness, you wouldn't want to show that to the public because public image is very, very important for us” (0812a)*

Public Image also has a correlation with the value ‘hiya’ that is often described as actions that bring shame down on the person and the family, Filipinos would avoid ‘hiya’ at all costs to preserve the image others have of the individual as one and, of course, the image of the family. This particular premise can be led to serious extremes in some communities, especially smaller ones in the province where:

*“even if someone from the family does something bad you would rather hide, that certain incident [...], we would prefer that other families would...view us as a model family. And i think that is in part because Filipinos are also keen on spreading rumors about other people so they need to be very careful with what we do especially as a family” (0309b)*

*“even when people don't have enough money but if there is a town fiesta or there is a town festival or there is a family celebration that needs to be done people, many people still borrow money just so they can do the celebration. So that they can spend for the celebration even if it put them in debt. So yeah, ‘Saving Face’ would also mean you know, getting a girl pregnant and the girl will be forced to get married because, the pride of the family will be shamed or the name of the family will be shamed” (0509a)*

‘Hiya’ is to be avoided at all costs, which can actually prove to be quite a challenge, specially, once again, in the provinces or overcrowded neighborhoods of the low socioeconomic end because everyone tends to know everyone, and Filipinos, specially the woman:

*“like to gossip [...] it's really negative to the point of, it becomes toxic that a lot of people don't do stuff that they want to do because they [want to] protect themselves from the negative backlash” (0209a)*

This particular action, ‘gossiping’ is not uncommon; all over the world people in smaller towns or local neighborhoods tend to gossip about one another’s life’s, but when it affects them, they would immediately criticize gossiping; it’s part of societies, but something that, because of Filipino values towards the family image can even affect their actions, as related above. Gossiping could also be another term for ‘meddling’; though not a value per say, meddling in another individual or family’s life is very lashed down in the Philippines:

*“we shouldn't meddle in other people's business [...] We're very big on that, although we gossip a lot. [...] We just gossip, but we don't do any action” (0610a)*

*“Filipinos would value smooth interpersonal relation, and they don't want to meddle into other's affairs because they want to maintain good interpersonal relationship. We don't want to offend other people” (0812a)*

Though only directly referred to as a value in one of the interviews, ‘Utang na Loob’ is also mentioned across literature as something important to the Filipinos, it relates to a debt (be it a negative construct or a positive one depending on the authors) it reflects on the relationship of Filipinos with others, especially that of sons/daughters and parents:

*“There are still parents, there are adults, couples who want to have kids [...] because these kids will take care of them when they're old” (0509a)*

*“A lot of children are, you know, are born because they supposed to support their families or take care of their families when they're older. There is even a thing were women will try and get pregnant by foreigners so that their baby can be either superstar, a celebrity or basketball player” (0709a)*

*“We have this belief in the Philippines that after our parents take care of us, we now have to take care of them” (0610a)*

*“it’s a lifelong reciprocity. So since your parents took care of you when you were younger so you are expected to take care of them during their twilight as well” (0812a)*

Following the values that directly affect Filipino’s image and how interpersonal relationships tend to shape, ‘Bahala na’ was another all participants referred to. As a very religious people their relationship with God tends to be a close one, ‘Bahala na’ is referred to by literature with two very different notes, which I previously refer to in more detail<sup>21</sup>, one reflects an almost fatalist attitude towards life while the other; with a more positive tone reflects the faith in God without the inheritance of action, to believe in God’s Will not to a fatalist point where all is in his hands but where when you’ve done all you can, then yes, it is up to God. The participants don’t make such a distinction, they accept both and the tendency seems to be that Filipinos will interpret the value itself the way it’s more appropriate, more suitable to them in a given moment:

*“God will take care of the rest, will take of your problems. It can be used to comfort yourself when you know that you are into wrong doings” (0409a)*

*“this is how a lot of Filipinos tend to go by with their everyday lives. Everything depends on God, whatever happens to me. God must probably have planned it a long time ago before I was born. There’s always that divine intervention. There’s always that reason. If some if someone does something wrong to me, I’ll just leave it up to God.” (0610a).*

Another value worthy of mention, which is highlighted in literature is the ‘hospitality’ in Filipino countries. Throughout the interviews this was not immediately advocated and perspectives were not alike, they did describe Filipinos as:

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<sup>21</sup> For more information revisit the Section on ‘West and East – Post Colonial Thoughts’

*“very hospitable especially with guests, you would really feel the warmth of the Filipino people wherever you were. Probably because we are family oriented and it’s easy for us to treat other people like family” (0109a)*

*“They are generally hospitable not only to foreigners but to- friends of friends. You know, when you have common friends, they find out you have common friends or common relatives, people are very hospitable [...] I’ve always been based in Manila but on my first week here in the province hmm [...] Even if it’s a very new community and I don’t understand I don’t know the local language, I don’t know the local community, people are very accommodating when it comes to getting me acquainted to the kind of life here. I think it’s true for a lot of Filipinos” (0509a)*

Despite agreeing with the general warmth of the Filipino as an individual, the hospitality trait was often associated as how they treated foreigners rather than other Filipinos:

*“we are also very hospitable. Especially towards...in my experience we are especially towards people from the West, yeah, it's easy- We often [...] greet them when they are walking the streets [...] Also differs depending on the economic class, I guess, the lower class seem to be more, they seem to be friendlier towards white people” (0309b)*

*“there is the occasional, people wanting to get money from people from abroad, I think that's in every country, but for the most part they welcome foreigners. There is a tiny element of racism but I think that's in every country, there's a little bit of personal bias but for the most part, this is a very good place for foreigners to come, they are very welcome” (0709a)*

*“when you go to the provinces. Filipinos are very welcoming especially of foreigners [...] I think that in a certain extent we can associate this to what we call the, "Colonial mentality". You know, the Philippines has a very long colonized past so it's possible that we, Filipinos, have been programmed to defer to foreigners [...] we defer to foreigners who used to be our colonizers and so that attitude is still with us today and we call it by the name hospitable” (0409a)*

*“to foreigners, you have to be very, very specific about that, we are very hospitable to foreigners. I notice that we are hospitable to foreigners, but not so much to our own countrymen [...] It's also dependent on who we are welcoming into our homes. So I'd like to think that it has something to do with what you have to offer to me if I welcome you into my home” (0610a)*

As the internet began to spread throughout the country Filipinos quickly began to embrace ITCs into their daily lives. Nowadays Filipinos are known for their ongoing high rank in the usage of social media, Facebook in particular continued to be the leading social media platform in the country with 74 million Filipino users as of 2019 out of the 800 million in Asia (Statista, 2020), overall Filipinos are the most active social media users worldwide, spending an average of 3 hours and 53 minutes on social media every day (Kemp, 2020).

*most of the time you will see the younger ones all on their phones, but the older ones just staring at them. So that's a common sight. It's actually very sad (0610a)*

According to one of the participants this could actually be the result of an initial Facebook study in the country where the platform was free for many telecom subscribers:

*“In 2014 Globe telecoms, it's a local telecommunication company here in the Philippines, had a partnership agreement with Facebook providing free access to local subscribers so when we use our cellular data, we automatically get free Facebook access. So- it's also one of the reasons why we use it so much” (0509a)*

Nowadays Internet is accessible to mostly anyone in the country, though a few ‘offline’ spots remain in certain islands where connection to any mobile network is almost impossible, overall internet is reaching communities across the archipelago. In the table below, a recollection of the overall responses given by the participants concerning Internet availability is presented in a summarized form:



*“I think. It's not difficult, difficult, and it's not easy, easy. It has something to do with how much you spend and where you're located” (0610a)*

Table 7 – Internet Access

<b>Forms of Access</b>	Wi-fi	Data Mobile Plans	Hot-Sports	Computer Shops
<b>Accessibility</b>	Easy			
<b>Pricing</b>	Slightly expensive	Cheap (Subscription's or Pay to Use)	Free (but sometimes time limited)	Cheap (around 5 php, 0.09 cents for one hour)
<b>Limitations</b>	Low Speed (home connections in major city are usually around 5/Mbp per second in the provinces it is usually slower)			
<b>Most Popular Platforms</b>	Facebook, Twitter, Instagram			
<b>Most Popular Mean of Access</b>	Smartphone			

Source: Developed by the researcher with resource to the Interviewees responses

Wi-fi in family homes is still mostly only reserved to the families in the middle and upper socioeconomic classes given not just the prices but the fact that Internet is not an necessity *per say* but rather a commodity for many of the users, thus for those in the lower economic scale it would be an extra an unnecessary expense to add to the monthly bills. Regardless of this fact, participants agreed that Wi-Fi is usually easily found in the cities for free, especially in public spaces like malls, restaurants or even specific spots in the city (at time the service is limited to the use of one hour).

*“a lot of Filipinos still rely on mobile Internet, like when you buy the prepaid credits on your phone [but with free hotspots around major cities] free Internet [can be found] anywhere. There are times I don't go out. I don't buy prepaid credits anymore. I just go to a mall” (0610a)*

With several telecommunication companies emerging throughout the country and competing for subscriber's mobile data has become cheaper and with most Filipinos nowadays owning a smartphone (which can also be found at fairly cheap prices) they opt to this method of access that is, more disseminated and cost-friendly for the families:

*“our pre-paid cards, or pre-paid load we call it pre-load we can buy it for 20 pesos in Philippine pesos [0.35 cents, in addition there are] mobile data that is charged directly from the telecommunication company we are associated to [so] we the post-paid and the pre-paid access” (0812a)*

Youngsters and children alike rely on mobile data but also on computer shops, these can usually be of two types, for work related activities and for gaming:

*“There are computer cafes for those who need to work. So this would be situated in a lot of business centers. And then there are computers solely for gaming” (0610a)*

*“it's basically a regular shop with computers so you can rent and use them for a certain number of hours or minutes depending on what you need it for [...] I usually go to computer-shops when my laptop is broken or my desktop is broken and I need to encode or print stuff, email for work-school. For other people there are specific cybercafés like for gaming so the gaming cybercafés offer programs and activities for gamers so they have competitions, they have prizes and things like that [then] are there are a mix of both, there those with computers used for gaming on one side of the room and computers used for printing on another, another side used for printing or word processing” (0509a)*

But they can also vary in both size and price:

*“internet cafes also have, you may say, different categories, you know, the more expensive ones, you can expect better and faster internet access and then there are the cheaper ones and then there are those that, you know, are not so good, you may say, there are no windows and the place that looks unsafe” (0409a)*

*“It depends on how big the place is. I've been into one that had about like 50 computer units [...] And then there's like one in the garage of a home, about five units, I think, or two. It's also you, can also consider computer shops, a small business here in the Philippines. You could set up one in your backyard, actually” (0610a)*

Many can still be found in the major cities, especially close to business areas or universities; in these cases, the computer shops usually offer Internet access, document processing programs and printing for those who do not have such commodities at home. Another type of computer shops or are dedicated to gaming, those are usually very crowded and noise, unlike the previous ones, and usually attended by young teens to play online games.

*“we have computer shops, internet shops - internet cafes stuff like that and it's not very expensive” (0209a)*

*“for less than a dollar you could stay at the Internet shop for several hours already [even though they may seem less common in some areas] in more in poor communities or in communities like of lower income families, I think that's where I see a lot of these coins slot computers so that the kids can do their projects or play games” (0610a):*

*“we also have Piso-Net [...] You put a coin on a slot and then it gives you like a limited amount of time to access the internet. In that way it's easier for lower class people to access the internet” (0309b)*

‘Piso-Net’ provides two means of internet access, and is most frequently found in the province areas; some are a simple mechanism where you insert a coin and it provides wireless connection for a limited amount of time, others actually have a computer set up that is activated by the insertions of the coin and, once again allows internet access for a limited amount of time.

With the widespread of ICTs, it was important to reflect the impact on the Filipino population, like in any nation internet was accompanied by both positive effects as the access to information and the ability to stay in constant communication with friends and family (an aspect of high important for Filipinos):

*“the internet has helped me to accept myself more than the people around me have [as a bisexual and] an atheist so it's more in the internet that I learn how to question things more than the people around me have, so, I think, that if you look at me now, I was shaped more by the internet than my own parents” (0109a)*

*“The internet and technology in terms of communications have eliminated a gap between the poor and the rich so now not only the rich are capable of accessing vast information; the poor are also capable” (0309b)*

*“the fact that people can educate themselves on the internet is great and there should be more access to it for that purpose the” (0709a)*

*“Positively because Filipinos love to communicate Filipinos love to talk to our family members whether they are here in the Philippines or abroad the modern technology makes us closer to each other [...] with the texting, with video calls and with phone calls. Our, you know, as a revolution in the 1990s when wanted to remove Joseph Estrada who was one of the most corrupt presidents in the Philippines, we just did texted each other and all of us decided in less than one hour that we were all in you know. So that's the power of modern technology” (0812a)*

And negative sides but the balance between the appears to have, long been lost, with the negative effects outsourcing the positive ones:

*“technology and social media has worsened us by the spread of fake news and has paved a way for political candidates with questionable reputation and questionable track record [...] Social media, technology has made possible the prevalence or popularity of online sex videos, online exploitation of sex workers who are usually young children” (0409a)*

*“internet divides us [Filipinos] because there is so many trolls online, the internet is being filled with hatred and negativity, so i guess the internet right now is providing more harm than good” (0509a)*

*“technology is making it easier for people to commit crimes basically. Because without technology, you would have to do it manually. But these days, it's easier for you to harass*

*someone and you won't get caught because technology lets you hide your identity. [...] it's as if for every time the technology gives us something good, something bad comes out of it. Times Ten” [In addition] I think we are at the point where we are marketing the use of technology to be closer to each other” (0610a)*

*“[but if you are] a poor person who had a little bit of money to spend on the internet, they would want to entertainment themselves. They don't learn. They're going to use it for gaming or for porn or for Facebook [...] they're not actually using it for actual potential” (0709a)*

In the Philippines the transition between the 90s and the 20<sup>th</sup> century was not a smooth one, the population went from a stand where computers were rare and Internet even more intangible to a context where suddenly computers were widespread, Internet was widespread but education, awareness did accompany the transition as a result many Filipinos endanger themselves due to lack of knowledge, lack of digital literacy (the last being referred by all participants):

*“[Internet is cheap and] that it's easy means that millions of Filipinos can easily access the internet anytime even [this] easy access to the internet [means] kids as young as grade schoolers have their own social media account so if they're not supervised by their parents or caregivers [they are very exposed] on YouTube for example, there are ways for predators to bait children into watching certain shows that are not meant to be seen by kids” (0409a)*

*“they [children] can access pornographic materials in YouTube, they can [...] see pornographic material in Facebook” (0509a)*

*“we still have a lot of people who can catch up with the technology but do not really understand the power of technology and the advantages and disadvantages” (0610a)*

Accompanying this lack of digital literacy (0109a, 0309b, 0409a, 0509a and 0610a; 0709a) and awareness for the online dangerous that continue to grow, in the Philippines the Internet became part of the Filipino, became part of their daily lives, almost as an extension of their identity:

*“[Filipinos] believe that their Facebook identity is supposed to be an extension of their real self and when don’t feel validated the way the way their validated in Facebook or in YouTube, or Instagram, or Snapchat, whatever social media group they’re in [it affects] their real life. They get depressed, they more angry- they get more angsty” (0509a)*

*“Because, like for example, in Facebook a lot of our the younger generation tend to measure their self-image based on the number of likes that they have on Facebook and also you know you can sugarcoat a lot of things you post [...]” (0812a)*

*“We consider our phones, our devices, our accounts an extension of our lives, and I believe this is the same with a lot of other people [...] we invest so much in whatever we put on our devices. Like, for example, and this is very common, a lot of Filipinos have multiple Facebook accounts because they tend to forget passwords” (0610a)*

When it comes to face the problems of the modern world as a connected, global village several nations did realize the importance of developing both national and international legislation that would help protect users and Filipinos have a fairly strict Data Privacy Act, that seeks to protect users, so incidents like that of 2004 Facebook and Globe Telecom services were secretly stealing private information from the population in order to study the market won’t be repeated (Tan, 2018).

The side effects of those events still prevail, even with the Data Privacy Act in place, Filipinos are fearsome of how the government could use their data without them being aware (0209a, 0610a), this, once again causes an obstacle for prosecution of online crimes like LS-CSA given how hard it would be for them to give away some of that privacy:

*“I think that people would be more willing to share their private data if it means [...] it helps with the prosecution of online child ah- exploitation. But then this can mean a difficult thing since the government has to get the message across and try to communicate [...] that they have no ulterior motives [which they probably might] since that’s our current political situation right” (0309b)*

*“Because of that whole ‘Saving Face’ thing [Public Image] they probably think that - ‘Are you doubting my personality? Are you saying that I’m committing a crime so that they can monitor my online activities?’ – Many Filipino’s can be paranoid that way. So...I’m not sure that if for the purpose of solving crimes they’ll give private data” (0509a)*

The idea of relinquishing a right they fought for years on, proves difficult accordingly to the participants mostly because of the distrust towards the Government, the agencies and the miss use of the data they might end up collecting, in fact one participant goes a little further stating:

*“I’m sure Rodrigo he goes around. Rodrigo is our president by the way. I think they are violating a lot so even with the Privacy Laws themselves they are picking on our cellphones you know, like Facebook did to us for a long time” (0812a)*

LS-CSA was the main topic under research, the aim of the study was to explore the phenomenon and how it happens in the Philippines but to do so it could not be without context, thus why the topics previously discussion had to be approached and investigated. The exposure of children to online predators was agreed upon by all participants to have a high and easy prevalence, particularly on social media platforms like Facebook:

*“the chances of a child being approached by a predator online is very high, especially when you consider that children can be very innocent and naive they don’t know much and they don’t know who to trust so it’s very easy for them to get attacked so- it’s easy to persuade them” (0109a)*

*“We have documented cases about the child it’s just, you know, chatting to someone and he though or she thought it’s an adolescent but it’s not. It happens to be a pedophile as well” (0812a)*

*“it’s so easy to access children because they’re not aware of security issues, they’re not aware of predators [...] How do you know? How do you tell if there’s a predator behind a picture of this 14-year-old girl on Facebook or not? How can you tell?” (0709a)*

Regardless of legislation to battle LS-CSA, present in the country, the lack of visible deterrence effects has led to further doubts in both the system, the legislation due to the lack of visible deterrence effects and overall capacity of law enforcement agencies:

*“it's a combination of different factors. I guess they are aware, but lack of budget, lack of training. What else? Lack of budget, lack of training [...] I believe that they know that this problem exists. I also believe that they don't know how to address the problem that exists. we have to change a lot of things. It's not just, you know, being able to figure out where the crime is happening. It's being able to actually prevent it and to prevent children from being abused”* (0610a)

*“law enforcement units like National Bureau of Investigation, cybercrime division [lack] staff and- or lacking in professional, technical professionals, people who are knowledgeable about cybercrimes so we lack these professionals to deal with the issue”* (0309b)

One last finding that was deemed particularly importance was the role of the media as a source of information for the population; though some networks do attempt to conduct more research and present more news covering OSEAC (according to what was gathered by one of the studied INGOs, ChildFund). Between and within nations the role of the media differs throughout political, economic and social systems, yet, it must be taken into account. Like with other institutions, the media have different national and traditional determined ‘interests’ which influence what is newsworthy and how it is transmitted (Boholm, 1998). In the case of the Philippines, and taken into account the replies given, Filipinos are a good example of the growing influence of social television as “a consequence of the convergence of TV and internet. Twitter, Facebook, and a growing list of tablet applications, allow ratings, checking-in and instantaneous communication” (Montpetit, 2014).

*“these days, you see a lot of people coming out with stories of abuse of every kind, like not just sexual abuse, but abuse by the family, verbal abuse by classmates, companies abusing their employees [when it comes to LS-CSA in particular information was mostly acquired*



through] *news from other countries* [but mostly because of the interviewers personal interest] *I kind of like to research about certain topics, especially as part of my advocacy*” (0610a).

And such stories are rarely if ever covered on national news from the perspective of the participants:

*“mainstream media is heavily focused on politics and show business and corruption. Well, from time to time, there are reports about sex trafficking but it's not really one of the main concerns of the Philippine society and mass media right now”* (0409a)

Online, Filipinos have found a way to disseminate their stories, stories of interest, raise their own awareness towards what is unfolding in the country. Besides, accordingly to Interviewer 2 and 6 most things you even hear on the local news are already online to begin with and people have little time so they focus on the Internet where they quickly search and connect to the topics of their interest (0209a, 0309b and 0610a). In addition, it ends up resulting in a awareness tool on its own:

*“a lot of really serious stuff in here gets turned into memes [serious topics, thus they are in a way a source of information for Filipinos]”* (0209a)

*“So, for example, if I see a child being abused, I will take a video posted online and then I will hashtag these shows and then other people will do the same. I just have to make sure that they actually think it's worth looking into. If it's not, then it's just another viral post”* (0610a)

Normally reporting any case be it in your neighborhood or not would be consider to meddle in another’s business, it could bring ‘hiya’ upon the family:

*“that’s why there’s a lot of violence committed against children and woman which are not reported even if the entire community knows about it no one is going to report. And if you do report, you’d be the antagonist”* (0509a)

But with technology, now crimes can be anonymously reported and Filipinos can ‘meddle’ without actually worrying with the consequences to one’s self-image or that of the family, which are values often repeated that Filipinos seek to respect.

In the next paragraphs by resorting to the research and the collected data a discussion surrounding the research questions will be provided.

- 1) Live-streaming child sexual abuse was initially defined as static event in the Philippines. Only when numbers started to grow did it capture international attention and scholars began to question its seemingly attachment to ‘family’. Are local’s aware of this association, or is it a foreign construction?

The question relates to the construct and knowledge over LS-CSA in the Philippines, which was denounced by the international community as no longer phenomenon but rather a type of criminality whose epicenter seemed to be established in the Philippines (TdHN, 2016; EUROPOL, 2017; IJM 2020):

*“behind closed doors child abuse really happens [...] I think people are not paying much attention to it and [...] the people who know about it try to cover it up as much as they could [...] and I think it's just another problem with the people the kind of people in here” (0209a)*

Initially some of the participants did discuss the existence of cases led in cyber-dens (0309b, 0509a) but family involvement as ‘facilitators’ was well known as well as it’s relation to poverty and the country’s own values and nature<sup>22</sup> which seems to help perpetuate LS-CSA cases in the country, especially given that in most cases these are, indeed, ‘family led’...

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<sup>22</sup> This particular relation between the Filipino values and LS-CSA is further developed when answering research question 3.

*“a lot of online prostitution of children are encouraged by their [...] parents or family” (0309b).*

*“it's the parents themselves who push their children to get into this kind of work. They are in communities, where everyone knows what's going on in these communities but then they cover up for each other because they all know that it's a good source of income for their families” (0409a)*

*“a lot of the time it's the parents who are doing the abusing and filming it for people abroad” (0709a)*

People within the community know but...

*“whenever is happening to your neighbors, you just don't- just don't meddle. Mind your own business. We're very big on that, although we gossip a lot [so] it's not that we are indifferent. It's more like we don't want to involve ourselves” (0610a)*

*“when it's already happening to someone that they know they stop talking about it” (0509a)*

On research question 4 some notes are provided to address the relation between people's awareness on child prostitution and their own personal interests; the two seemed to be linked, with 0309b making a clear mention of such, and 0610a raising questions as to why wouldn't awareness rise if the information is available online? Perhaps the answer truly lies not only in the secretive nature of the crime and culture but also in the individual's own search for awareness on issues that affect their country but not themselves as it is explored in mentioned research question.

The involvement of family in VAC is not a Filipino, standalone case, and it's important to recall this; situations involving VAC exist worldwide in families of any social statuses, and the silence of the child is not only due the fact that she relies on the parents but continues to love them (Sirgado and Paçó, 2012). Love within families is global, it's almost a given regardless of where a child is, what seems to exacerbate this silence from part of the children victims of LS-CSA in the family is

the culture of silence that is perpetuate at a cultural level; avoid ‘hiya’ to be shed upon the family, to keep matters within the family and to trust and rely on their word rather than what authorities or other interventional organs could have to say in contrary..

- 2) (The Philippines) As an eastern country, is evaluated by its western peers, as economically fragile and dangerously susceptible to human violations (like the one in study) are western organizations taking the country’s needs and knowledge in consideration when tackling LS-CSA or, are the interventions standardized for the crime regardless of its context?

To address the issue of the approaches of international organizations (Table 8) in the Filipino community a few INGOs were briefly analyzed<sup>23</sup> taking into account their mission, their presence in the country and the type of programs or projects they adopted to fight LS-CSA.

Table 8 - INGOs and Initiatives against OSEAC

<b>INGOs and Initiatives</b>	ECPAT International	International Justice Mission	Plan International	SaferKids Philippines	Terre des Hommes International
<b>Local Office</b>	Yes				
<b>Active Local Projects</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<b>Approach</b>	With the help of different, local, sectors and actors each agency has, through its offices or member agencies, sought to create an approach adequate to the Philippines context.				
<b>Local Partnerships</b>	Yes, with both Public Agencies; the Private Sector and the Community (local leaders, barangays, local NGOs, advocates)				

Source: Developed by the researcher

<sup>23</sup> Refer to Section 2.5.1 International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOS) work in the Philippines

A cross-sectoral approach along with international cooperation between law enforcement in different countries is essential to address the global nature of the threat of LS-CSA and other forms of OSEAC (ECPAT International, 2018).

*“if an international organization [...] should come here, part of their agenda is to learn first the culture and the social dynamics before they roll out their programs or projects in grass roots communities because what worked in other places might not work [here] precisely because of the difference in cultures and values” (0409a)*

The organizations that were briefly analyzed for this study (Table 8) proved to recognize and adopt their approaches to the local contexts while attempting to address the needs of the locals; of course the Philippines is still a complex country with many issues to be addressed, as such, even the efforts of organizations like the ones mentioned are not enough, especially, when the root causes of LS-CSA is the country’s poverty which is worldwide a pressing issue in many issues.

When addressing the interviewees about this particular matter responses were very much alike:

*“if it’s a question of how they should deal with the problems in each country, of course they should have a different strategy, because [...] a lot of this is also caused by cultural factors [...] unique factors in different countries so they should have different strategies” (0309b)*

*“[Organizations] try to adjust a bit or enormously, depending on how, depending on the needs of the communities” (0812a)*

But their knowledge differed greatly considering their own engagement or not with NGOs and their own personal interest on the matter, they did agree that multiple national and international agencies are present in the country:

*“There are like multiple here in the Philippines [but when it comes to INGOs] I’m not really sure on- how they act- in other countries i mean. I’m not sure how they do their stuff*

*in other countries but i guess that the way they act here it's- it's conforming with our values" (0109a)*

*"a good NGO should adjust according to the values and practices that are on the ground, so if an international organization [...] should come here, part of their agenda is to learn first the culture and the social dynamics before they roll out their programs or projects in grass roots communities because what worked in other places might not work in other places precisely because of the difference in cultures and values" (0409a)*

*"they consider the culture here in the Philippines. They are very big on, you know, like ensuring that it is very relevant to us [...] although at times I feel like it speaks to people from a certain level [and I think these programs should] reach the masses, for the communities that are actually in dire need of understanding because they are the ones who are more at risk [and] We need to close the gap" (0610a)*

The in-depth knowledge concerning organizations initiatives varied according to the participant's personal knowledge about the country itself; its contact or not with NGOs and their own personal interest towards the issue:

*"I'm not really kinda aware of how their approaches are i think it's good that they're using, you know, actors and actresses to indorse it since celebrities are very influential in the country. So it's nice they are using them to promote awareness is really good" (0109a)*

*"they have [...] campaigns, ongoing campaigns to address this problem [OSEAC] and raise awareness that it is happening" (0309b)*

*"Well there's ECPAT [they do] You know, monitoring? They really have people on the ground, they are all over the country, they are distributed specially in tourist areas, they get the numbers, talk to the families then and sometimes, they really get the child and then they bring it to the shelter, the ECPAT shelter, so that's all I know" (0409a)*

*"we have child sexual exploitation projects, there's also online child exploitation projects, we have trafficking we have projects on trafficking, keeping the city safe, there are a whole lot of projects with Plan International dealing with these kinds of issues [in terms of*

campaigns] *we have the children literacy campaigns [...] then Facebook is doing massive digital literalization with different organizations [...] they provide training for the youth so that they will know which ones are fake which ones are real news, things like that. [this reaches the community and schools depending on the organization they partner with]*” (0509a)

Regardless of the programs or initiatives led by the organizations some participants did share what they believed should be the focus of those organizations and how the government agencies and private sector should also be involved. A cross-sector approach was advocated by the participants with resource to the locals so that different issues could be addressed and ultimately LS-CSA would, as a result. A few of the suggestions supported raising awareness:

*“it’s very important for the government and it’s organizations to talk about what can be done regarding these [LS-CSA] and people should be very much aware of the punishments for this”* (0109a)

*“make the kids aware of what should be and shouldn’t be because when it all comes down to, you know, this stuff happening they could be the only [...] they could be the only ones to stop what’s happening to them”* (0209a)

*“international groups they should prioritize long-term as well on awareness and education [and] and since we’re talking about online exploitation of children and our target audience [has online access so] doing awareness campaigns through the internet I think it’s [not just about what you do but also] it really depends on the strategy at this point [...] How would they get the attention of everyone? [through] popular culture basically, because kids access the internet more frequently. than the adults [so] perhaps instead of like those videos where it shows that child prostitution is happening and it’s all gloomy [...] we need to notice alternative ways of awareness [by] social media influencers or making [and doing] a campaign that is entertaining to young folks but at the same time acknowledging the seriousness of the problem”* (0309b)

*“with respect to delivering the messages to the community, it has to really be in the language of the people locally. It should respect the values but at the same time raise*

*awareness for the issues that these values can affect [the issue and the measures to be applied]” (0509a)*

...providing, job opportunities and promote the economy...

*“since families are doing this because they need to earn money perhaps the government should also try and provide opportunities for these families so they can provide without, you know, exploiting their children [...] something to help them get a job, because they want instant results” (0109a)*

*“because poverty it's the root of the problem than by addressing poverty and giving job opportunities to [...] parents not only will they significantly alleviate the problem of child prostitution online but would also, I believe, address other problems such as engaging in crimes” (0309b)*

...and promote training and guidance of professionals:

*“our own social workers need a lot of training on how to manage [LS-CSA] cases so that they can actually proceed to trial and so that the children can actually receive [...] psychosocial support [...] we need to capacitate them some more.” (0509a)*

*“educate our police, because the police are the ones, you know, when DSWD officers rescues children you always have the police” (0812a)*

Education was also raised as a method that could be instrumental towards fighting LS-CSA:

*“basically, it's really the parents and the children who need to be educated I think that it needs to be [part of the] curriculum, how to protect yourself from harm and from exploitation as well” (0812a)*



...unlike the other measured education had different interpretations and was not seen by all interviewees as a priority, because in order to educate, at least the parents:

*“education is only good if you know the people are interested to learn anything” (0209a)*

Most parents would be quick to prefer learning a trade or a way to earn quick money instead of receiving education on the subject, so even if that is, without a doubt a pressing and important measure to be taken, perhaps, in the case of the Philippines and particularly in the cases of LS-CSA where poverty is still the root cause for resorting to the crime, other needs of the families must be addressed before one attends the needed education.

*“It's not just economic, it's not just money, it's how we see our children as people we own. It's how we exercise authority over them [because money] It's never going to be enough. Even if you're a solo person, if you're supporting just yourself, it's never going to be enough” (0610a)*

In the end it should really be a combination of measures, a wide panoply of measures adopted and carried on by different agencies, including those who are exist in the country:

*“work with the local law enforcement agency of certain provinces or towns, coordinate with them with regard to the monitoring of certain communities” (0409a)*

*“what works is having people of the grassroots level raising awareness and then working [towards] the behaviour change and the attitude change from the community level so the parents, the adults in the community and then in the- the government institutions, the education system, The Department of Social Work in Development, the police, the health sector and then at the national office focusing on governance and policy advocacy [particularly in the case of LS-CSA] there should be an approach from the grassroots level once there's awareness and there's attitude change and acceptance of the issue, the recognition of the issue” (0509a)*

*“What the organizations can do is to strengthen the role of these offices [..] They either go from home to home or they invite people to go to the halls to the community halls to talk about certain topics. [They just need to] make use of these systems already in place and maximize it. [...] You have to be able to talk to the husbands, to the wives, to the women, to the men, to the elders [but] the foundation is already there” (0610a)*

And the participation of the private sector; especially those in the ICTs branch whose significant and unique responsibility may actually help shape the impact of technology on children (Cooper, 2018). “Whilst we must continue to address the myriad material and structural barriers to leveraging digital media [ICTs] to positively impact children’s capacity to enact their rights” (Third et al, 2014, p. 12).

*“It cannot just be simply about the education of the parents or families, or the education of children. It should also include the creation of the livelihoods and training for parents to earn incomes and maximize their resources, integrating both public and private partnerships [which may seem] difficult to do but it’s necessary” (0409a)*

A fact announced in literature and that would possibly pose a real ‘dent’ against LS-CSA and other forms of OSAEC is, in the words of Dorothy Rozga of ECPAT International would be the involvement of one “the world’s most influential bodies [playing an active] part. And few- if any – have more influence than religious communities” (cit in UNICEF, 2017). In the Filipino case, this could pose an important initiative given the close relation to religion and the church’s guidance for the locals.

*“[Filipinos] are very religious but still go against certain teachings, it can even divide the population in aspects like reproductive health, the church is against abortion and the use of contraceptives like the pills or condoms and some people follow and believe the church [The church goes as far as to say that going against those teachings] it is somehow a form of abortion because you are already killing what is intended to be formed [so there is] a divided opinion among Filipinos because some may think that as a woman you would want*

*your body to be safe but also as a catholic you wouldn't want to go against the word of God” (0109a)*

If the church continues to uphold such power in matters of great importance as the example above, their involvement in the fight against crimes as LS-CSA could in fact help mobilize and reach families that may otherwise dismiss the continuous advocacy of the harms inflicted upon children.

Both literature and interviewees also seem to agree, that when it comes to the protection of children in the digital playground, everyone within the community (different generations within the household), including governments, national and international institutions (schools or specialized departments) must be involved.

*“I believe that if the government is stricter with the laws and policies, for example, regular home visitations by social workers or law enforcement officials. I think many parents would think twice or thrice before they let their children go into these kinds of work” (0409a)*

*“for us to be able to prevent these types of crimes from happening, of course we have to empower our children [...] not just the authorities” (0610a)*

- 3) From a local (Filipino) perspective does culture and social interaction play a major role in the creation of personal interpretations of this type of criminality? Or, in fact, are most of the ideas and information actually acquired and constructed through transnational influences?

As mentioned earlier in the discussion, Western influences are recognized and visible across the Filipino culture, but Filipinos do have a culture of their own and they do have ideas of their own as individuals capable of thought. As such, the way they address and interpret LS-CSA is highly related to their own unique values, social patterns and regard towards local legislation and law enforcement.

The value of ‘Utang na loob’ is one of the first that seems to directly link to LS-CSA cases in the Philippines, the sacrifice of one for the good of all, children must be willing to sacrifice themselves for their parents because they ‘owe’ them their lives (TdHN, 2013): In result, actions such as going into sexual work be it online or as local sex worker is seen as a ‘positive’ sacrifice one must be willing to do for the sake of the family (TdHN, 2013). Children owe their parents eternal gratitude for being ‘alive’ and will do anything to help the family, to help the parents:

*“family almost always comes first to a point where it becomes very problematic” (0610a)*

With that many children end up being exploited be it through LS-CSA or other means:

*“I guess that's the life of a lot of Filipinos. And it's not- just I don't think it's just like live streaming that they do. A lot of kids here in the Philippines, sometimes younger than my child [8 years old], are already used to working and earning money. Many of them work in the landfill's, picking up trash so that they can resell it [other kids] they would stay up really, really late just waiting for the deliveries [to local markets] and then whatever falls from the crates, what fall on the ground they would collect, they would clean them up, they would slice them, and then they would sell them outside of the market [or how they end up in LS-CSA operations, by resorting to traditional values like] Utang na Loob [...] after our parents take care of us, we now have to take care of them [the core value] Family First. That's how these kids are manipulated into doing these things” (0610a).*

Parents seem to take advantage of ‘utang na loob’, disregarding other values as the wellbeing of the family as a whole and their faith, though many seem to believe they guide their lives through the teachings of God and the Bible that places no deterrence when it comes to child prostitution or, apparently, for the conduction of LS-CSA. Families will still place their children under such atrocious abuse, turning them into sinners, while committing a sin themselves:

*“There should be a conflict between their decision and their religion but [...] Philippine society is also influenced by western values of materialism and consumerism, for example, and so it's possible that for some families that could be more important” (0409a)*

*“God or maybe Saint Peter keep score of all the good things [one does, as such] every time [one] commits something that's morally unacceptable points are deducted [so the] ticket to heaven gets shorter and shorter [but] when nobody points it out publicly it's okay for as long as it is within the walls of the house” (0509a)*

*“desperate times call for desperate measures [...] their capacity to do the right thing is impaired because there's nothing else that's available for them. So they will definitely set religion aside. The fact that they were able to set aside, you know, the children as things for them to be able to earn money off from. I, I doubt that religion still plays in that particular frame of mind [...] they are no longer thinking of religion. It's really the immediate need to address the hunger or that need for money, because it's not just food that they need to buy. Actually, they need money for rent. They need money for electricity. So, you know, when you have all these things in your head, you're not going to think of other things anymore. You're not going to think of karma. You're not going to think of heaven. You're already living in hell” (0610a)*

From the overall responses to the issue the participants were clear that, Filipinos have a tendency to only remind themselves that God will forgive them for making mistakes, instead of being fearsome of judgment; they would be quick to dismiss karma and the fear of going to hell by finding other teaching and quotes from the bible that would explain and even excuse their behaviour; almost misleading one to interpret the real power of religion over the population, if some may in fact be truly faithful and religion guided, others seem to only appear to act as such and adapt from both religion and values alike what they deem fit for each situation they find themselves upon.

Ultimately the public image is more important than what the family is actually facing and parents often claim the children are not being ‘abused’ or under any ‘harm’ because of the idea surrounding the crime that there is no physical touch; this is true when we consider the child and the ‘viewer’

of the stream but not true when it comes to the show itself. A statement most participants strongly disagree upon (0109a, 0409a, 0610a):

*“everybody knows everybody's business [the community] allowed these things to happen under their noses [which is not understandable even with poverty because Filipinos] are very talented people even those who are not schooled [...] We can actually utilize our skills, we are very adaptable, very flexible because [...] our survival skills is really high. [...] It's really a lame excuse to say that – ‘This is the only thing that we can do so that we can [have] money, use our children” (0509a)*

*“they are just justifying their actions because [...] If you're old enough to know that what is being done is wrong so they are probably just justifying [themselves]” (0109a)*

*“Why would they need to hide it? [...] If you think it's not wrong to strip a child and your put your child on video to an adult, then you wouldn't have any trouble doing that in front of other people. But the fact that they have to hide it means that they know that it's wrong. I guess they just have to say it like that [because how would you be able to do it]” (0610a)*

*“there's really no harm they don't have to see the foreigners anyway [its what families say and] I think it really depends on how deprived or impoverished the families are, if these families are really impoverished and are in dire need of money. I think they wouldn't even think about the effect or impact of these online abuses on the health or the wellbeing of their children because they themselves are struggling financially, emotionally, psychologically. They might no longer have the cognitive the resources to process long term consequences of these practice on their children's developments” (0409a)*

While others believe that parents lack of awareness, their lack of access of information and almost a certain naiveness or at least inability to process the events affects parents in such a way that they become oblivious to the harm (0209a, 0309b, 0409a).

*“I think that it's somewhere in between the parent is naive and they choose to be” (0610a)*

"Humans do not merely respond to the 'physical' impact [...] of an event but also [...] what is reported, in what way and by whom" (Boholm, 1998, p. 136). Many of the harmful consequences that befall children who suffer any type of abuse can persist unto adulthood, increased mental and physical illness, poor educational and working attainment; in addition a child who is abused is more likely to abuse others as an adult (UNICEF, 2020; TdHN, 2016), it creates a cycle of violence that in the case of LS-CSA may even start when the children reach their teenage years and become recruiters of next generation of children, because just like it happens with children victims of other types of crimes and abuse.

*"young women in their province no longer want to work as house keepers in the cities because they are now working as online sex workers and they are earning from that kind of job compared to working as house keepers in the cities"* (0409a)

*"children turning into doing criminal stuff, children becoming criminals. [...] it always has something to do with trauma that was inflicted unto them as children"* (0610a)

In addition, children often suffer several times of physical abuse in addition to the already, undeniable psychological abuse; from harming themselves with sex toys to the cases where children are forced to engage with older individuals or even animals, the physical repercussions are also undeniable (IJM, 2019):

*"in the long term they [children] would have, perhaps, disperse of false impression of romantic relationship, trusting other people, sexual boundaries [...] They would not know how to behave properly and what it's appropriate sexually"* (0309b)

*"[children] will be compromised when it comes to how they view their bodies, how they view their sexualities, if their sexuality is up for sale it can be bought so easily by strangers, I think this has a is serious psychological consequences for the development of children who are involved in this industry. I think it would eventually harm the way they would form relationships in the future when they engage sexual romantic relationships, I think their past will have an effect on their future relationships and interactions with their partners"* (0409a)

*“They’re not children anymore [...] the repercussions for these children can be summarized as psychological but in two different ways as they may experience internalizing and externalizing behaviour’s. Mistrust, attachment issues - These are my parents, they shouldn’t be doing this to me but I am forced to do it. Maybe they don’t love me, or maybe I’m not enough - and negative thoughts about themselves are some of the internalizing impacts that may occur, they can see themselves as someone who is only important if they have utility in another person’s life. At the same time they may experience an impact that results in changes of their externalized behaviour; their need to please and be of use may lead them to follow poor advices, as for example, to carry on and reproduce their parent’s behaviour with their own children given that, in a way these children were raised without morals at all [...] if they don’t have ethical principles in life, in the future”* (0509a)

*“There are no stressors too big or too small. It depends on how the person copes really. But as a child, children don’t have the same coping mechanisms as a lot of adults [as children they might not immediately realize of what is right or wrong but eventually, in their future]”* (0610a)

*“it’s crazy how people think [children are] free from harm, you know, that’s something that potentially will drive these children to more damage, especially in their future, how they going to get into good schools, you know, good future if they don’t think so highly of themselves because of all the things that have had happened to them?”* (0209a)

The Philippines' economy is considered as one of the most dynamic economies in the East Asia Pacific region (World Bank, 2020), yet poverty is still widely spread and likely to increase due to the global economic contraction of 2020 (Llorito, 2020). Known for its divide among the population where the wealth seems to be accumulated by a small group of Elite Filipinos while most the remaining population ends up on the opposite spectrum living in poverty (only a very small group of the population stay in the middle class), struggling on a day to day basis.

*“I will not be surprised if we find out that there are so many children being abused online. Number one, it’s very easy for us to stay connected to the Internet. You know, if you have*



*a dollar, you would have Internet [and if there's an offer] it would take so little for the foreigners to be able to afford a person who's so desperate to survive [and thus end up find themselves in a seemingly easy money driven business like that of LS-CSA] I will not be surprised if this is being done because we are at a time where everyone's just desperate to survive” (0610a)*

Inequality, thus, still defines the nation and that is the reality not an image created by external minds.

*“because poverty it's the root of the problem than by addressing poverty and giving job opportunities to [parents] not only will they significantly alleviate the problem of child prostitution online but would also [...] address other problems [other types of criminality and abuse]” (0309b)*

*“Money plays a big role in how Filipinos understand a lot of things, like it's not because they don't want to or they're too lazy. It's because if you don't have money, everything is limited from access to information to food to where you can go” (0610a).*

From the perspective above, poverty, addressed as the root cause of LS-CSA in the country, can help explain why people would do it, why perhaps they might truly be unaware of at least the laws against it and when they do know about the law:

*“even though sometimes people know about a certain law, they still go against it. They couldn't care less about the law [because they don't think it will be enforced, or simply because, as mentioned before they are too focused on surviving to think of anything else]” (0109a).*

*“is it okay turning a blind eye on this problem because in some localities it's a source of income? [I don't know] I heard that the kids earn in dollars! and when you convert dollars to pesos it's really a lot of money for many poor families” (0409a)*

With the 0610a another relevant influence of Filipino values was raised, namely when LS-CSA is not carried by parents but other family members or friends of the family and parents are truly unaware of the activities a child, when aware that something might appear of feel wrong, might not resort to her parents or anyone, in fact. Due to two things, the culture of silence and ‘hiya’, the children could:

*“[be] afraid of their parents. So sometimes bad things would happen to them and they wouldn't tell their parents because they fear that their parents will get mad at them because they allowed it somehow. They would think that their kids did something. That's why it happens” (0610a)*

Lastly it is also important to denote that is not just poverty that needs to be addressed but years of culture and tradition as well; Like the way children are perceived:

*“[Seeing children as property must also end, otherwise parents will keep on saying] They are MY children so I can make decisions on their behalf. They might have that kind of mindset, that's why you know they go on with these kinds of practices” (0409a)*

And how the hierarchical relationships long established in the country among the population may no longer uphold a positive nuance but rather influence poor habits and misconceptions:

*“the way we relate to each other is very hierarchical [...] young people defer to older people. Children are expected to follow their parents. They are expected to follow the words or the wishes of their own parents” (0409a)*

*“It's part of our culture that if you're meeting your elders, you have to do the mano. So you take their hand and you put it on your head as a sign of respect. It's also common for a lot of kids to sit on their elder's lap to please the elders. [...] those things are not sexual in nature, but the fact that kids could not say no to these instances [but] It can then lead to like so many things in the future, like if what if a person who's much older than them was an actual predator telling them? - Ok, you sit on my lap and I will give you money - They*

*will do that because they think that they have to do it to show respect to that other person”*  
(0610a)

“A culture must be reasonably stable, but it must also change, and it will presumably be strongest if it can avoid excessive respect for tradition and fear of novelty on the one hand and excessively rapid change on the other”  
(Skinner, 1971, p. 153)

*“We have to unlearn a lot of things that have long existed in our communities like number one, a lot of parents think that they own their children. So, you know, like desperate measures, desperate times call for desperate measures”* (0610a)

- 4) A poor understanding of another’s culture can often lead to misconceptions and conflicts of opinions. Children are regarded for their need to be protected until they are of age, yet protection can mean different things and be represented by a variety of attitudes that can often cause opposing stances. Child prostitution is not only forbidden but often a ‘well-hidden secret’. In the Philippines the subject appears well known by the inhabitants, but does that mean it is accepted? Or do they ‘look the other way’ for a reason? In reflection of this case, is there a possibility that LS-CSA will follow a similar fate?

The question above encompasses several important matters, starting with the way children are regarded and their need for protection until they are of age. Being of age, in the case of this study, means until they reach adulthood which, according to the CRC is when they reach 18. Though as a teen they no longer need as much care and protection as in childhood, is important to remember that in the Philippines the age of criminal responsibility is 15, according to the Republic Act 10630<sup>24</sup> and the age of sexual consent is set at 12 years old according to the country’s Revised

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<sup>24</sup> Republic of the Philippines (2013), An Act Strengthening the Juvenile Justice System in the Philippines Amending for the Purpose Act No. 9344, Otherwise known as the “Juvenile Justice and Welfare Act of 2006”, Republic Act No. 10630.

Penal Code, article 335<sup>25</sup>. These two reminders are important specially when we are addressing the issues of child prostitution and LS-CSA which directly involve the participation of children.

*“12 is really young, they should at least raise it to [...] 16 or 18 because i don’t think there is much difference in the mind of a 12-year-old and a 13-year-old [...] And when you’re a minor you’re still a little bit clueless and weaker so...12 shouldn’t be the- you know, the legal age of consent. And this has been an ongoing issue for some time” (0109a)*

*“If you look at all the other laws in the Philippines with respect to child protection [most] child protection laws really say that age of consent should be 16, it’s not explicitly stated because that is a law that explicitly states that the age of consent is 12 but a lot of other laws consider 16 as the right age for consent” (0509a)*

Children for their status alone are meant to be protected, loved, nurtured they have their own set of legal rights which the Philippines recognizes and has promised to uphold with the signing and ratification of the CRC in 1990; at the same time given the Filipino’s family orientation with the child being a part of the family one would expect them to be protected by their parents against any external or even internal threats but that doesn’t always seem to happen as we can see through the cases of child prostitution and OSEAC and its direct family involvement.

Prostitution has long been a persisting problem in the Philippines, child prostitution is an unfortunate common practice in specific districts or town areas with cab drivers and foreigners being the primary costumers of these children (Arcilla and Pamilya, 2001; IJM 2020) the practice, though illegal according with Republic Act 7610<sup>26</sup>; continues to be quite visible with many young children (both boys and girls) placing themselves under this type of exploitation without there being an apparent apparatus by the community:

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<sup>25</sup> Republic of the Philippines (1930), The Revised Penal Code, Article 335 “Rape and Acts of Lasciviousness”.

<sup>26</sup> Republic of the Philippines (1992), “An act providing for stronger deterrence and special protection against child abuse, exploitation and discrimination, and for other purposes”, Republic Act No. 7610, 17 June 1992.

*“some people would just [...] turn a ‘blind eye’ for this and there are some people who just- who just wouldn’t stop because they need the money so they just wouldn’t stop even if it’s illegal” (0109a)*

*“I think that people are just directly you know, not trying to see the things that are happening because people are [...] caught up with their own problems, their own issues that it's only when they're becoming the victim, you know, that they become active [and] become more aware of things” (0209a)*

*“I think that because there's so much of these going on that people became a little bit desensitized” (0709a)*

*“There are places [in the country] where it’s more prevalent but then there are places where there are people who are not aware that this is happening or proliferating that much here in the Philippines [so] I don’t think they actively ignore these incidents [...] but at the same time [...] they are just not aware, they are just busy with their own stuff, with their own affairs unless it affects their field of experience, unless it affects them they would not act or do things to address the problem. And I guess that’s also part of the mainstream culture here in the Philippines; being indifferent and- apathetic because we’re a developing country and- and we are used to these things happening on streets, people being murdered ah- child prostitution so- we often just- perhaps it's a coping mechanism ah- we just put a barrier between ourselves and what is happening” (0309b)*

*“It could be turning a blind eye or we're just not equipped to actually see that it's happening [because of our belief that] we shouldn't meddle in other people's business [but] also [...] we are not sure what child prostitution should look like at times” (0610a)*

When reflecting upon the answers provided above it’s clear that Filipinos awareness towards a certain issue may differ, which is common in most countries as people will tend to focus on gather more information on subjects that interest them; directly affect them or at the very least avoid those which disturb them, which may happen with sensitive topics as that of child prostitution. An importance reference was also made by 0309b when addressing the fact that perhaps Filipinos

attitude towards child prostitution is due to the increasing prevalence of violence in the daily lives of citizens in developing economies (Moser, 2006) which happens to be the case of the Philippines.

When directly addressing the translation of the Filipinos attitudes towards child prostitution into LS-CSA, what was revealed was a sad reality that ‘turning a blind eye’ be it due to lack of awareness or lack of direct interest would be perpetuated (0109a, 0209a, 0309b, 0509a):

*“They don’t actively try to ignore these incidents, like prostitution of children in the internet, they just have a tendency that despite [...] what is being shared on social media or the news is something to be [focused on themselves] for example: - I’m a person in the lower class, I’m just gonna focus on surviving and improving to get out of poverty*

*“and basically on other stuff that would help me [or] they would also prefer, hum, looking into popular stuff things that entertain them” (0309b)*

*“[Besides] the Philippines is still working on more urgent issues like shortage of rice, all these health issues and so there’s not much serious talk about online sex industry” (0409a)*

but at the same time accompanied by a glimpse of hope that resonates across the participants words:

*“it’s sad to say that [but] yes [Filipinos will tend to ignore LS-CSA]. I hope not...I hope there should be an ongoing discussion about this. Recently, they passed a data privacy law, privacy matters and so many institutions all over the country are now being more careful about the privacy of minors but for the communities that engage in online sex industry, it’s a different matter altogether but there’s a strong call to action from the citizenry or certain numbers of civil society and NGOs I think that at some point it will become a priority of our government, but realistically I think we are far from that time yet. The Philippines is still working on more urgent issues like shortage of rice, all these health issues and so there’s not much serious talk about online sex industry” (0409a)*

*“Hopefully not. Despite all of these horrible things that we just talked about I’m still hopeful that we can do something about it [...] The Philippines is a very complicated scenario we have more than 180 ethnic-linguistic groups in the Philippines [...] because of the language barrier, because of the cultural barrier, but- we are hopeful”* (0812a)

*“even if at a first glance there appears to be a lack of it there is sufficient awareness and we just have to organize ourselves so that we can have better impact for social change”* (0509a)

In summary, it appears that in order for LS-CSA not to follow the same fate as the cases of child prostitution and even to change the behaviour of Filipinos towards both there is a need to address other issues first; there is a need to change the priorities of Filipinos, to remind them of their values:

*“our cultural trait is that we like to help each other that's true but it's only to the extent of [what] we can help with [and we always] prioritize our family”* (0309b)

So that LS-CSA is not forgotten and continues to evolve and involve more children but instead becomes something the community stands and advocates against to protect their children, help families and perhaps even set an example for other countries like Kenya where the phenomenon appears to have begun to spread as well (Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons , 2017; IJM, 2020).

## **CHAPTER V – CONCLUSION**

“When the history of this horror calls, we cannot let this period be remembered as one in which the global community knew but did not act” (Ki-moon, 2010, p. 1).

As the child abuse begins to take new forms and grows increasingly difficult to track, law enforcement agencies need to continue to improve their own tools and investigation methods. A better insight over ICTs capabilities, a framework for both national and international cooperation and the ability to perform operations that ally the public and private sectors is undoubtedly the only way to face the ever-changing criminal world (Wainwright cit in Moralis, 2012).

Technology is not a bad thing, but it can be used for bad things; “by protecting children from the worst digital technology has to offer, and expanding their access to the best, we can tip the balance for the better” (Lake, 2017 cit in UNICEF, 2017). ITCs has brought the world together, the nation of the Philippines is now more actively communicating than ever, which is highly important given their focus on family; at the same time, just like other world countries crime has risen and law fails to keep up. LS-CSA continues to spread across the nation with more and more families joining the practice given the profits it brings even though continuous studies indicate that “the impact on the victim is similar to childhood sexual trauma which includes traumatic sexualization, betrayal and powerlessness” (Brown, Napier and Smith, 2020, p.2)

In the case of the Philippines much is still needed in order to protect children from LS-CSA, starting with the change of patterns of thought and the hearts of the families and ‘peers’ who endanger children. An exploitive family environment coupled with severe economic poverty, lack of education and awareness are all issues that must be address in addition to the previous necessities of coordinated cross-sectoral work. In fact, by the conduction of this study it was perceived that Filipino values play a major role in the exacerbation of the crime and its expansion across the nation.

Poverty is identified in both data and study conclusions as the root cause of the issue but also the Filipino patterns of thought and values; a culture of silence and predominance of the value of public image rather than its real wellbeing is a major issue, Filipinos will push aside their morals and readapt their own values just like they did with the ones transmitted by colonization to justify their actions. Their fear of God turns into a message that God is forgiven when they repent for their sins; their family bonds and intergenerational connection and aid as an obligation that children in particular must carry even if that means exposing themselves to criminal offenses. Children go by



untreated and not only will they suffer throughout their entire life but they might grow to become perpetrators themselves (Choo, 2009; ICMEC, 2017; EUROPOL, 2019), making it, once again, crucial to exacerbate the need to help these children and punish those involved, even if those are the child's family.

Intervention within the Philippines by external actors, just like in many other countries, is a complex and challenging endeavor. With the recent declarations of the country's president to refuse external help and, it's concerning decision revoke the country's Rome Statute, thus withdrawing from the members of the International Criminal Court (ICC)) as of March 17 may still bring upon the country a numerous negative effects when it comes to the abilities of international legislations upholding human rights to be further violated (Human Rights Watch 2020). Further violations and an increase difficulty to prevent and protect children from crimes as LS-CSA will be, without a doubt, an even bigger more challenging.

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## ANNEXES

### Annex I – Plain Statement Letter



University Fernando Pessoa,  
Faculty of Human and Social  
Sciences

Praça 9 de Abril, 349  
4249-004 Porto  
Portugal

August 2019

*Invitation to participate in a research project*

#### Live Streaming - Child Sex Abuse (LS-CSA) in the Philippines

I, Patrícia Manuela Oliveira Silva, a master student in Humanitarian Action, Cooperation and Development from the University Fernando Pessoa in Porto, am currently working on my master thesis. The research aims to understand Filipino's perspectives on live streaming child sex abuse in the Philippines (where the phenomenon has continuously grown) but also to understand the perspective of the western society, through the discourse and measures taken by its international organizations while tackling this type of exploitation in the Philippines. This research will be developed under the supervision of Doctor Teresa Toldy from the Department of Social Sciences and Behavior.

This letter is an invitation for you to participate in my research. The research aims at revealing the root causes of the phenomenon in the Philippines, and for that, it touches upon local factors, e.g. culture, personal beliefs as well as the way of life that exposes children to this type of exploitation. At the same time, the research also seeks to explore and compare the perspective of the Filipino and Western societies by taken into account the work of its organizations, whether they work with the Philippines to prevent and even stop the abuse from happening or where they impose the measures, they deem adequate.

As part of the project, I am especially interested in interviewing members of the local Filipino community on the subject as it happens in the country, through online tools that prove most suited to each case. Online applications such as Skype, WhatsApp and Viber being the most common for interviews that should take approximately 60 to 90 minutes with no costs for the interviewed. Through this, I will seek to explore personal experiences and retrieve individual perspectives related to the subject (how they first learned of it; why it happens, where within the country is it more common). In addition, I will also seek to learn about daily life aspects such as culture, norms and religious beliefs that may be interpreted as important in the construct of social reality.

The anonymity and confidentiality of the participant (you) will be always a priority. Your name or contact will never be provided or mentioned in the study. The data collected during the interview will be analysed and aggregated for publishing in the master thesis. Research results may also, be presented at academic conferences and in scholarly publications. All information gathered, including data and records of the interview will be securely stored in compliance with the university requirements. Information you provide will only be accessible to myself and my supervisor but all the raw data will be destroyed once the thesis is presented.

The information you provide will be highly beneficial; given it will not only provide details upon the population awareness when it comes to this issue but also as to how it is perceived by people rather than just scientific specialists. It will enable a wider explanation for its root causes, readapt how it should be approached and even help identify how to raise awareness among the local communities and prevent further children to fall pray into this exploitation cycle. Thus, sharing your experiences and views will make a substantial contribution to this research.

Please note that your participation is, voluntary, and you are free to withdraw yourself, or any unprocessed data, at any time simply by stopping the process of the interview. There will be no disadvantage for yourself if you decided not to complete the interview.

Should you require any further information, please feel free to either: contact myself, or my supervisor at University Fernando Pessoa.

Dr. Teresa Toldy

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor, Department of Political Science and Behavior.

University Fernando Pessoa

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Miss Patrícia Silva

Master's Degree Student in Humanitarian Action, Cooperation and Development

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Ph. (+351)939524895

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research or about the manner in which the research is conducted, you can either directly talk to me, address your concerns to my supervisor listed above or contact the University Fernando Pessoa Ethics Committee, that has approved the conducting of this study, at Praça 9 De Abril, 349 or by email at [comissaodeetica.ufp@ufp.edu.pt](mailto:comissaodeetica.ufp@ufp.edu.pt)

I thank you in anticipation of your time and cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

*Patricia Manuela Oliveira Silva*

Patricia Manuela Oliveira Silva



## **Annex 1I – Interview Guide**

### **Live Streaming - Child Sexual Abuse**

Before we begin, allow me to remind you of a few points that we have previously discussed. Please note that your participation is voluntary, as such, you are free to withdraw yourself at any moment as well or refuse to answer any of the questions. Let me also add that, for your own safety, all of the collected data will be securely stored in compliance with the University requirements and that your anonymity and the confidentiality of this interview will be respected and protected.

Finally, I must remind you that this interview is being recorded, so that the collected data may be added to my study. With this mind, do I have your consent to proceed with the interview?

#### **Demographic Data:**

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Nationality:
4. Language:
5. Highest Degree of Education:
6. Profession:
7. Marital Status:
8. Children? (Y/N)

‘Cultural and Personal Traits’

According to a few NGO’s and even Legal Documents, child sex exploitation seems to have always been unacceptable by the Filipino society, yet, and do correct me if I am wrong, many authors believe that regardless of the immorality and illegal status of prostitution this is somehow tolerated and known by the citizens. In this light, I believe it to be important that to understand the background of child exploitation, one should understand the values and norms of the Filipino culture.

1. If you do not mind, I would ask you to share values and cultural aspects that you find important.

<p><b>Personal Tips</b> Family bonds; <i>Hiya or Mapahiya</i> (public image); Hospitality; Virility The values will be suggested in case of no reply.</p>
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2. Religion still plays a major role in many societies across the world. What can you tell me about the religious aspects of the country and how they affect, or not, the daily life of Filipino families?

- 2.1 Do these religious and cultural facts affect communities in different lengths according to personal aspects of their life?

<p><b>Personal Tips</b> Personal aspects such as: Income; Where they Live (rural or urban areas), Education...</p>
--

3. In a wider perspective, what values or norms would you believed to be associated with western societies? Do you find them similar to those of eastern societies as your own?

## Information and Communications Technology

The role of technology and of the internet has, without a doubt, shaped the world and the younger generations. We now have the ability to access information from all over the world and communicate with anyone just the click of a button. Of course, the internet has both positive and negative sides, as it enables an easier access of predators to children – a problem we have yet to tackle.

4. In your opinion, has technology and internet access been causing more harm than good in people's lives?
5. According to statistical data, the Philippines has been one of the countries where internet access has grown at a rapid pace due to its large number of users. Do you think the access is as easy and widely represented as statistic refer?

5.1 When it comes to accessing the internet itself what is the most common method used by Filipinos?

<p><b>Personal Tips</b></p> <p>Cellphone, Tablets, Personal Computers.</p> <p>Through open, free wi-fi spots, through private networks or through internet cafés?</p>
---

6. Worldwide many treaties and laws have been adopted in order to protect digital users. The Philippines, in particular, established a set of Privacy Laws for this exact purpose. Are you familiar with them? – *If the interviewed is unaware, explain it* – Do you think people would be willing to share more of their private data if that enabled entities an easier pursue of online crimes as child exploitation?
7. Is the term Cyber-Cafés familiar to you? - *If not, explain what they are* - They appear to remain a popular point of internet access in the Philippines, do you have an idea as to why? In addition, do you think the prohibition of closed cubicles has affected what users do or who frequents such establishments?

## Live Streaming Child Sexual Abuse

Child pornographic material has unfortunately spread to every corner of the internet; it no longer remains a small section, hidden on the *deep web*. Nowadays live-streaming child sexual abuse or ‘*show-shows*’ (as children in the Philippines call it) are becoming just as common as any other type of pornographic material related to children.

8. Have you ever found child related pornographic material of any kind while you were online? Did you ever heard or saw anything related with the title ‘*Daisy’s Destruction*’?

The mention of ‘Daisy’ is important to relate the internationalization of this criminality and the local knowledge of it.

8.1 How easily do you think it would be for a child with internet access to ‘bump’ into such materials? Do parents make use of restrictive tools to control what children may or not access?

9. Studies state that, nowadays, children prefer to spend time with online friends rather than those they know face-to-face. How easy or how common do you think it is for a child to be approached by a predator impersonating a ‘friend’?

9.1 In what social platform, in your opinion, would such contacts be first initiated in the Philippines?

10. Regarding the specific subject of live streaming child sexual abuse in the Philippines, are you comfortable to share what you know about the matter?

### **Personal Tips**

Where it takes place; How it unfolds; Who are the victims; Who is responsible; Is it a well-known issue?

Only use the questions if needed to further develop the reply

11. Are government entities open about matters that regard child abuse? Specifically, about live-streaming of child sexual abuse?

12. Given the widespread of the issue international laws and treaties were developed and the Filipino government has in fact been establishing more national laws in order to protect

victims and tackle the crime. In your opinion, are these laws being carried on? Is population aware of their existence and their efficiency?

**13.** Again, in your opinions people's awareness of the issue risen as quickly as the cases? (Y/N)

How would you explain that?

**14.** That traffickers and predators seek to exploit children is already a serious crime against the rights of any child. In the case of the Philippines the scenario is different as it often involves family members, neighbors or close family friends who take the role of submitting children to participate in online performances. Why do you think this happens?

**15.** When it comes to the children, do you have a general idea as to, how old and what gender is on highest demand?

**16.** According to interviews previously done to Filipino families involved in such exploitation cases, the families would claim that their children were free of harm given that there was no direct contact between them and the perpetrator. Do you share such perspective?

**16.1** (If its replied 'No') Can you envision what sort of repercussions will unfold upon these children if they are submitted to this type of abuse?

**16.2** Personally, do you believe that these families or *peers* are truly unaware of the harm that is inflicted upon the child? Do you find their actions justifiable?

**17.** Is online exploitation to be addressed more lightly than the one conducted 'offline'? In reality, from your knowledge, is that what happens?

**18.** Regardless of its prohibition, child prostitution is visible and frequent in the streets of some Filipino cities. Do you find it possible that instead of punishment, the society might grow to 'turn a blind eye' to this issue as well?

### Local & Transnational Knowledge

The data upon this subject has slowly begun to spread across the scientific community, NGO's and many government entities. Unfortunately, though the data collected is significant it does not seem to reach the common citizen, in fact, many people around the world remain unaware of the significance of this problem.

19. Often referred to, by international news, as 'the epicenter' of live-streaming child sexual abuse, the Philippines have in fact a large number of reports concerning this issue. Is this an idea shared by the Filipino community?
20. The media is often associated with the idea of *free speech*, and is often how we first come in contact with information upon subjects as the one we are currently discussing. In the Philippines does the media pay close attention to such sensitive issues? Do they have an important role when it comes to raise awareness?
21. Are you aware of the legal age of consent in your country? Do you find it suitable for the world we live in now or should a child have a higher or lower age before being held responsible for its actions?
  - 21.1 Given the often need of the child's testimony for a trial to be held against the family (if those are the facilitators) do you find that the Judicial System in the Philippines should pursue alternative paths when prosecuting these cases?
22. When it comes to international actors, such as non-governmental agencies, there has been shown a significant interested towards preventing and tackling this type of offense. Are you aware of any organization currently acting in the Philippines to address the issue?

**Personal Tips**

If needed explain Asian agencies are not taken into account.

If given a given a positive reply without further information. Ask about the organization and their implemented measures.

- 22.1 Do international organizations appear to adopt an approach that respects both Filipino values and social dynamic? Is the approach to live streaming sexual child abuse established taking into account how and why it has developed in the country?
23. Internationally NGO's often adopt measures that focus on children education and family aid (through health and economic support programs) in order to prevent more children to

become victims of crimes as the one we have discussed. Given the particularities of the issue in the country, do you find that such a generalized approach will be effective? Are there specific actions or focus areas they should be choosing to obtain, in your opinion, better results?

- 24.** As a final remark, do you have any ideas or suggestions as to how we could reach out to the communities or the victims? So that they may be able to grow more aware of the implications of their actions towards children but also so we can, if not prevent, help children who are or were involved in such practices.

**Thank you for your cooperation and for taking the time to answer my questions. Should you require any further information, please feel free to contact me.**

**Once again, thank you.**

## INTERVIEWS

### Interview I

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 1] [0109a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [09/12/2019] [09:15 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview I] [00:51:33]

**Intvr:** Hello? Can you hear me?

**Resp:** Hi? Hello? Yes...yes i can i hear you.

**Intvr:** Okay great. So hmm, before anything thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview.

**Resp:** No problem.

**Intvr:** Before we begin I would like to ask you if you received and read the ‘Statement Letter’ I sent you before so that you are aware of the aims of the study and all of your rights?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Okay...and one more thing before we start, I need you to give your verbal consent for the recording and participating in this interview.

**Resp:** Now?

**Intvr:** Yes, please.

**Resp:** Okay, I am voluntarily participating in this interview.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you so much. To begin I will ask you a few quick demographic related questions.

**Resp:** Ok.



**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 21 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: College Graduate
- Profession: IT Professional
- Marital Status: No
- Children: No

**Intvr:** Okay, so I will start to ask a few questions about your culture. I would you to share with me the values and cultural beliefs that you find to be important within the Filipino culture.

**Resp:** I think the Philippines is very family oriented like we- we never really leave home. Like in Western countries is normal to leave at the age of 18, for a Filipino it doesn't matter how old you are, you always stay. It doesn't matter if you stay with your parents even if grow old, and we really value how we are seen by other people. Like- we usually judge but we don't like being judge, like we really want a good image for us. Yeah...that's it.

**Intvr:** What about hospitality? Is that important in the Filipino culture?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. It's-Filipinos really want to be very hospitable especially with guests, you would really feel the warmth of the Filipino people wherever you were. Probably because we are family oriented and it's easy for us to treat other people like family. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay, when it comes to religion that is still an important trait in many societies across the world. When it comes to the Philippines how important is the role of Religion in Filipinos life's?

**Resp:** Religion...Well Philippine's is one of the biggest catholic countries right now. And i read somewhere that we have more Catholics than [inaudible 00:04:27 – 00:04:29] I think. Filipino's

usually go or live based on is what's written on the bible. I got this because usually whenever there is a discussion Filipinos will always use like verses from the bible. If they don't know what to say in the argument and sometimes you can go-Filipino's always go to church or attend mass sometimes they don't- we don't really act as holy as what the church expects from us [pause] Yeah.

**Intvr:** So it's basically like in other countries.

**Resp:** Mhm...Mhm...

**Intvr:** So it's basically like in other countries. There's different opinions, for example the church does condemn the use of condoms which is a highlighted topic in the Philippines, how do you think the overall population reacts to that?

**Resp:** Hum. I remember there is this bill or law that is supposed to be passed here in the Philippines with regards to- Patern- It's for Reproductive Health which, hum, promotes the use of condoms and pills for safe sex in order to avoid unexpected pregnancies. But it is being discussed because the church says that it is somehow a form of abortion because you are already killing what is intended to be formed, and it is still in discussion it- it's a divided opinion among Filipinos because some may think that as a woman you would want your body to be safe but also as a catholic you wouldn't want to go against the word of God. Yeah...

**Intvr:** Overall then, the church still has a strong and visible presence in the country?

**Resp:** I think so yes. Because if the church isn't as strong as- as strong as community or something then it would have- it would have been easy for us to pass the reproductive health bill and other bills [pause] Yes...

**Intvr:** So, given the examples that you provided me, the values and influence of religion, do you think these are equally shared by the community? Or is there a difference between the richest and the poorest groups and how these values reflect upon them?

**Resp:** Hmm i guess, a bit, yes it can affect differently because not everyone lives in the same place. Like- Yeah. They grow up practicing different, you know, values and culture especially youth, if you grow up like- if you're not a Filipino, if you're half-American or half-Spanish then you would have different values and it would affect [pause] how you'd adapt to certain...you know.

**Intvr:** ...right. For example, some studies actually reference an idea where Filipino woman often travel abroad to work and send most of the money back home...right?

**Resp:** Yes, yes that is true. Yes.

**Intvr:** By doing so how do you think they can still progress in their own lives?

**Resp:** I guess that the very first reason why those who are working, especially those who are working abroad it's because they want to provide for their families back home, so i guess even though it's kind stressful or even toxic Filipino's will keep on striving, and keep on sending more money back home because they believe they need the money more than they do.

**Intvr:** Ok...what about when it comes to children, and in this case the value of children. There's a lot of indicatives showing that many Filipino children do not go to school and instead they have to work to help the families.

**Resp:** Yes, yes that is also an issue here...If a child is underprivileged, they wouldn't really go to school. Instead they will work and [pause] if there are children who don't even want to go to school because there are areas here where children would have to walk for hours just to even reach a school, because education- there isn't really a proper budget allocated for education here so...yeah.

**Intvr:** I see...i wasn't fully aware of that. Do you think that, in general, the Filipino society is growing closer to Western values like those of the United States and Europe? Or do you think the Philippine's are growing apart from those 'Western' standards?

**Resp:** I guess the Western countries have been very influential since we were also colonized by the Americans and...there is still this mentality that being white is better than being Filipino because they see that the United States is a much progressive country than the Philippines so most people want to live the American life rather than grow the resources we have right here.

**Intvr:** Ok, so thank you so much for all the information so far. Now i would like to ask a few questions concerning the second topic of my research which focus on Information, Communication and Technology.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** In your opinion has technology and internet access [background noises] been causing more harm or good to the lives of Filipinos?

**Resp:** I guess at some point it's very helpful, i think it's very helpful to us Filipino's because we have numerous countrymen who work abroad and internet is one way for us to communicate with each other but at the same time internet divides us because there is so many trolls online, the internet is being filled with hatred and negativity, so i guess the internet right now is providing more harm than good.

**Intvr:** According to some data that i was able to gather for this study the Philippine's actually has been one of the country's where internet access has increased at a rapid pace due to its large number of users. Do you agree with the statistics? And if so do you believe that the access is as easy and cheap as they make it out to be?

**Resp:** I guess, hmm, we really have so many people using the internet right now. Like even babies have Facebook accounts. I don't know what that is for, but sometimes when there is so many people using, you know, the misuse of the internet isn't safe because some might be catfishes some might be using it to persuade people into bad stuff so...Yeah.

**Intvr:** So there is a lack of digital literacy in the population?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** When it comes to accessing the Internet what is the most common method? A computer, a tablet...?

**Resp:** I guess right now it's for phones, like everyone around you, wherever i am, i can always see people on their phones. Like if you're on public transportation, or even if your poor you can have a phone and you can have access to the internet. So i guess it's the cellphone.

**Intvr:** Have you ever heard about the establishment in the Philippines of a set of Privacy Laws to protect the users while using the Internet?

**Resp:** Hmm. I'm aware of this.

**Intvr:** Do you think people would be willing to share more of their private data to authorities if that enabled entities an easier pursue of online crimes as child exploitation?

**Resp:** [...] I guess yes...people would be open to-, well share information, but at what cost? I mean not everyone would just share it for the better, like people would always see something negative about it.

**Intvr:** Going back to the Privacy Laws, given you are aware of them, do you think they are effective?

**Resp:** [...] Actually i'm aware of them, but i am not really aware of when they took effect because i didn't see any difference. But i guess somehow it- it will change because as a result more people are getting arrested and being held liable for crimes- for cybercrimes.

**Intvr:** Thank you. So is the term cyber-café known to you?

**Resp:** Sorry?

**Intvr:** Cyber-Coffee?

**Resp:** Hmm I don't think so.

**Intvr:** Perhaps you know it by a different name. Hmm, it's usually a shop where people can access the internet or just use computers...

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** ...oh yes yes. I am aware of them. I think it's like a computer-shop or something.

**Intvr:** Oh ok, so, have you ever visited one?

**Resp:** Yes in our neighborhood there are three cyber-café's here.

**Intvr:** Can you describe them to me? How everything is the environment and how it functions?

**Resp:** Sure. Cyber-café's are usually a go-to for Filipino children to play games so it's usually noisy and sometimes it smells like sweat. [chuckle] You know there's just plenty of children, it's a row of computers with seats in front of them. And children will just...because they don't have money, they will all share a single computer so it's pretty noisy.

**Intvr:** I see. So it's a wide open space? There're no cubicles or-

**Resp:** No. Hmm. You'll able to see what the other person is doing. No privacy.

**Intvr:** Are you aware that there was a law placed in effect a while back to prohibit the use of cubicles or curtains in this type of shops?

**Resp:** Sorry i didn't get that, what kind of law?

**Intvr:** It's a law that prohibits these shops to have cubicles or curtains around the space, so that there is instead an open space like you described.

**Resp:** Oh- I didn't know about that.

**Intvr:** It was one of the measures put in place to try and tackle certain types of online crime.

**Resp:** Hmm ok ok, since this way everyone can see whatever you're doing so you wouldn't do crimes.

**Intvr:** Exactly. So now I will ask you some question related to the main topic of my research which is live streaming child sexual abuse, so if there's any question you would not feel comfortable to answer just let me know.

**Resp:** Hmm. Hmm.

**Intvr:** So, hmm, my focus on the Philippines is partially because it was identified as a focus for the conduction of these types of [loud undistinguishable noise in the background] so my first question-

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** Ah yes I've also- Sorry?

**Intvr:** No, please go on ahead.

**Resp:** Sorry I can't hear you.

**Intvr:** I meant to please continue what you were about to say.

**Resp:** Oh ok. So I've also- hmm, saw it in the news multiples like times over the years that child exploitation is really rampant here in the Philippines even online, yes, online and like- usually clients are americans so i think that it is very- happening here because in a way they are supporting for the crime as well. Because of course people wouldn't do it without benefiting from it.

**Intvr:** Have you ever encountered any pornographic material while browsing online? By that i mean without actively searching for it.

**Resp:** No...no i didn't see any.

**Intvr:** You don't think it's easy to find that type of material?

**Resp:** Hmm, yes.

**Intvr:** Did you ever hear anything about the title 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** Sorry what title?

**Intvr:** 'Daisy's Destruction'.

**Resp:** Hmm, no I'm not familiar with that.

**Intvr:** It was actually a very mediatized case at an international level since it involved an Australian man who abused young Filipino children and then would sell the recordings online

**Resp:** It was covered by the media, right?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes it was. At an internationally level in fact.

**Resp:** Hmm...so it involves child exploitation?

**Intvr:** Yes the male would abuse the children along with the female partner, there was even a children involved.

**Resp:** Oh ok...i also search for it right now so...there is an Australian behind, right?

**Intvr:** Yes he was the head of the operation.

**Resp:** Hmm, so were the children like sold to this guy or-?

**Intvr:** No, not exactly. One of the girls, his partner in fact just would go on local neighborhoods and she 'recruit' the children, give the mother some money and take them away.

**Resp:** Ah yes, that is... I also saw an interview here, which features a movie, which feature this scenario like- you know a mom would just take her daughter to a strange guy and then he would pay the mother a percentage for it.

**Intvr:** Yes, it seems to be documented to happen often. [...] When it comes to the parents do you think that they are well acquainted with the internet in order to protect them or prevent them to access certain things? Or do the children know more than the parents?

**Resp:** I think- If you come from the middle class or the high-class type of family then sometimes the parents know more than their children, but when its with poor families the parents lack the knowledge to even access the internet and if the children go to school, they have their friends and- hum they get access to- the internet and they probably know more than their parents.

**Intvr:** Right. So- [background voices] Hmm can you hear me?

**Resp:** I can hear you.

**Intvr:** Okay, according to some studies recently carried out children seem to prefer to spend more time online with their virtual friends than [barking sounds in the background] with their real friends. Given this factor they do spend a lot more time online, so how easily do you think it is for them to be approached by a [barking sounds in the background] predator pretending to be a ‘friend’?

**Resp:** [barking sounds in the background] I think the chances of a child being approached by a predator online is very high, especially when you consider that children can be very innocent and naive they don’t know much and they don’t know who to trust so it’s very easy for them to get attacked so- it’s easy to persuade them, so chances are really high.

**Intvr:** [barking sounds in the background] I’m not sure if you’re aware but the latest data collected indicated that any time there are around 750.000 sexual online predators active worldwide.

**Resp:** That’s scary.

**Intvr:** It really is. Hmm... In what social platform do you think these predators first attempt to establish contact with the children?

**Resp:** I think they usually see each other on Facebook because Facebook is the most popular social platform right now Like-it’s just what i said, even babies have Facebook accounts so i think that’s usually where they seek to meet children.



**Intvr:** Now regarding the specificities of the topic of live-streaming child sexual abuse, what do you know about it?

**Resp:** I was aware of it, but- i wasn't really aware of the statistical data, the numbers surrounding it. I was aware that it was happening. [barking sounds in the background]

**Intvr:** Ok, so can you tell me a little about what you do know? [barking sounds in the background] Where it happens, When, to whom...?

**Resp:** I don't have any idea of the places- it can happen anywhere i guess but probably on the provinces where it's easy, you know, hide. [pause]

**Intvr:** Did you ever heard of the term 'cottage business'?

**Resp:** Yes. Yes.

**Intvr:** Okay so one of the major differences of this particular crime when carried [barking sounds in the background] out in the Philippines is that we are dealing with a 'cottage business' or a [barking sounds in the background] 'family ran business'. It's the parents or relatives that often lead the child to this type of abuse, [barking sounds in the background]. Why do you think this happens?

**Resp:** Right...i think it's all for money. Like they value- they are probably so poor that their need to survive just takes away their morals and just do this. So i think that's why they do this, of course they wouldn't just do it out of nothing, they do it to survive.

**Intvr:** Of course, but then again, if we go back to the values and the religious aspect of the community these actions would be going against what the church teaches, right?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. That's right. [...]

**Intvr:** So it's complicated to understand it. [...] To your knowledge, do you know if the government is taking any specific measures to tackle this type of exploitation?

**Resp:** I...i don't have any idea since our government is more focused on other stuff right now. But i- Even now there are so many issues that need to be addressed they are tackling other stuff so i'm not sure if child exploitation is one of them.

**Intvr:** From the data i collected [loud background noises] the Philippines did establish a few set of national laws and treaties to try and protect children from different forms of abuse and exploitation. But given that you just mentioned that you weren't aware of any specific measures and attempting to get a more generalized idea, how well do you think these laws are known throughout the communities?

**Resp:** Yes I don't think...we have many laws right now but- well Filipinos aren't well informed about them. The government needs to do something in order to inform the people about laws that are present in our country.

**Intvr:** How effective do you believe such laws can be if people aren't aware of them?

**Resp:** I don't think- Hmm, I'm not really sure if they are effective, because even though sometimes people know about a certain law, they still go against it. They couldn't care less about the law.

**Intvr:** So people aren't really afraid of disobeying the law?

**Resp:** Hmm, hmm.

**Intvr:** When it comes to numbers, and you did refer you weren't fully aware of those. The cases of child being sexually abused through the means of live-streaming have continuously increased. Do you think people are aware of this? Do you think they know it happens but ignore it...?

**Resp:** I think most people know that it happens. Like even up to this day i know that it happens. But sometimes people, you know, they are not like- or they probably aren't aware of how big the numbers are.

**Intvr:** Do you have there's any explanation as to why the numbers continue to rise? Is it related to the economy or is it growing awareness that makes it seem like there's more and more cases?

**Resp:** I think it's probably because of the economy. There are so little, hum, opportunities here. To a point that some parents needs to go abroad to work but, you know, not all are given that chance to begin so that's probably why they turn to child exploitation.

**Intvr:** Okay...When it comes to the children, do you have an idea of the age or gender that is in highest demand?

**Resp:** I think most of the children are females, i guess then, i guess it's- the age range would be 4 to 12, even i guess, 1 to 17, i guess.

**Intvr:** Yes that's what the data reveals too, up to twelve after that they are considered too old. When it comes to the involvement of the Filipino families in the abuse of the children, they often claim in their defense that the children are 'free of harm' when they are involved in live-streams because there is no direct/physical contact with the abuser, do you agree?

**Resp:** Of course, it's not true. It isn't just based on direct contact, the effects that- that was brought on the child, the child is already traumatized so i think it still has the same bad effects [loud background noises] even if though there isn't a direct contact.

**Intvr:** This is actually one of the main arguments used by the families taken to court in order to avoid prosecution. [pause] Do you believe that when these families state that the child suffer no harm, they truly believe in their own words or are they just trying to find a way to excuse their actions?

**Resp:** I think that they are just justifying their actions because, if you're... If you're old enough to know that what is being done is wrong so they are probably just justifying what as if what they did is ok.

**Intvr:** Do you think that online abuse is addressed more lightly than the cases conducted 'offline'?

**Resp:** I guess so, because it's easier online than it is offline.

**Intvr:** Yes but do you think that these two types of exploitation should be addressed differently by the authorities?

**Resp:** Sorry, sorry i didn't-

**Intvr:** Do you think that online exploitation compared to face-face exploitation shouldn't be taken as seriously by the authorities?

**Resp:** No, no i think they should have equal charges because it's still child exploitation whether [barking sounds in the background] it is online or offline.

**Intvr:** From your knowledge in the Philippines do authorities take the stance you stand for?

**Resp:** [barking sounds in the background] I think so yeah, based on what i know.

**Intvr:** Concerning the prohibition of child prostitution in the Philippines, regardless of the law it's reported to be very common to find workers on the streets of certain [barking sounds in the background] cities. Is this true?

**Resp:** Sorry i didn't- understand.

**Intvr:** That's okay, hmm, child prostitution is prohibited in the Philippines.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** But according to several reports and studies it's still very visible on the streets of certain cities in the Philippines, do you agree?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Why do you think this continuous to happen when its clearly against the law?

**Resp:** I guess some people would just- [barking sounds in the background] would turn a 'blind eye' for this and there are some people who just- who just wouldn't stop because they need the money so they just wouldn't stop even if it's illegal.

**Intvr:** Okay... The media that is often associated with the idea of free speech and is also the main source of information. Do the media play an important role in raising awareness to the such issues in the Philippines?

**Resp:** I guess...yes. The media should be- The media should be to keep the Filipino people informed of what is happening regarding all the changes for important issues but sometimes, like, the media would focus on something else rather than the issues. And i don't know why it happens but it occurs.

**Intvr:** Do you think it is related to government policies?

**Resp:** Sometimes...i think so yes. Like there is some issues with media blackout so- yeah, i guess the government sometimes may play a role in this but not always, i think.

**Intvr:** Are you aware of the legal age of consent in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Yes it's hmm, 12, i think.

**Intvr:** Do you find it suitable?

**Resp:** I think 12 is really young, they should at least raise it to- i don't know, 16 or 18 because- i don't think there is much difference in the mind of a 12-year-old and a 13-year-old. You know what i mean? And when you're a minor you're still a little bit clueless and weaker so...12 shouldn't be the- you know, the legal age of consent. And this has been an ongoing issue for some time, there are some people [barking sounds in the background] here who are suggesting that the legal age of consent should be brought down to 9 years old and that really opened up the discussion regarding this, because you know... It isn't just about cases of child exploitation anymore, children who commit crimes at the age of 9 shouldn't be like- charged as adults and i don't think it's right. [barking sounds in the background]

**Intvr:** Oh i though they were actually trying to raise it, not lower it.

**Resp:** [barking sounds in the background] Yeah there has been speculations that 've read online that they are trying to lower it and i don't know why. And i think children do not need this, the legal age of consent shouldn't be lowered, it should be higher, [barking sounds in the background] children need more guidance not punishment.

**Intvr:** Yes, absolutely. [barking sounds in the background] When it comes to the judicial system, when prosecuting live-streaming sexual abuse cases, often the only available evidence is the child's testimony which is rarely given, especially when the family is involved. As such do you find that there should be an opening of the judicial system to pursue alternative [barking sounds in the background] paths?

**Resp:** Sometimes I don't know if it's right because- it can be traumatizing for a child to face who ever abused them or...so there- there should be another option for this, i don't know what it is but i know that it is possible to find other alternatives.

**Intvr:** Do Filipinos trust the system? The Judicial System?

**Resp:** Sorry, sorry.

**Intvr:** If you trust the Judicial system, if Filipinos find it effective, if it works in general.

**Resp:** (Hmm) As of the moment no. I've seen so many defects in the judicial system in the country. With- corrupt politicians, i mean like Senators and convicted murders brought out of jail, so i don't have enough trust in our system.

**Intvr:** When it comes to international actors, such as NGO's or other internationally agencies there has been a growing interest towards the issue of online sexually abused children. Are you aware of any organizations or missions being carried out in the country?

**Resp:** I know...yes...i'm actually aware of- hmm foundations, or something. There are like multiple here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** Can you perhaps name a few?

**Resp:** Hmm, the one that i know that is really active is Bantay Bata 163 it's- founded by one of the most... one of the richest, or something, families here in the Philippines and it has saved thousands of children from the abusers or something.

**Intvr:** I see, i wasn't aware of this one, thank you. Can you text me the name after we finish the call just to make sure i got it right?

**Resp:** Sure, sure. I'll send it to you.

**Intvr:** Ok, so what about international organizations?

**Resp:** I don't know...UNICEF or World Vision.

**Intvr:** Did you ever heard about Terre des Hommes?

**Resp:** No i don't know it.

**Intvr:** They were actually one of the first to raise international awareness for what was happening in the Philippines.

**Resp:** I wasn't aware of that.

**Intvr:** So, when it comes to NGO's particularly international organizations. Do you think that their approach to help the community takes into consideration the local values and needs or do you think it's a standardized approach adopted regardless of the country?

**Resp:** I'm not really sure on- how they act- in other countries i mean. I'm not sure how they do their stuff in other countries but i guess that the way they act here it's- it's conforming with our values. I'm not really kinda aware of how their approaches are but i think it's good that they're using, you know, actors and actresses to indorse it since celebrities are very influential in the country. So it's nice they are using them to promote awareness is really good.

**Intvr:** Do you find that the government supports the work of these agencies or does it complicate their work [barking noises in the background]?

**Resp:** I don't know. As of now i haven't heard any issues... Sometimes- i don't think... [ barking noises in the background] No there's no problem.

**Intvr:** Ok. [barking noises in the background] That's good to know... So as a final remark to you have any ideas or any suggestions as to how we could reach out to the communities and help the victims or even tackle live-streaming child sexual abuse in the country?

**Resp:** I think it's very important for the government and it's organizations to talk about what can be done regarding these hum- you know, cases and people should be very much aware of the punishments for this and since families are doing this because they don't- they need to earn money perhaps the government should also try and provide opportunities for these families so they can provide without, you know, exploiting their children.

**Intvr:** When it comes to such 'opportunities' do you think families would value more being provided with general education or being taught more specific or technical skills for work?

**Resp:** I think they would prefer a job. They want- you know, something to help them get a job, because they want instant results, you know? They wouldn't think there is no time for them to learn. But there are also some who value education so i think, both would work.

**Intvr:** Right, So i think that is about it. Oh, just one more thing, i was previously told 'rape' is actually not well known in the Philippines, do you agree?

**Resp:** I don't think so, i think it's actually pretty well known. Like they are holding different conferences and forums regarding rape and so on...

**Intvr:** Okay...i think now I'm all done. Do you have anything you would like to add or ask me?

**Resp:** No, i think this pretty much covers everything on the topic.

**Intvr:** Ok, so thank you again, so much for participating in the study. Also if you know of anyone who would be willing to participate please let me know.

**Resp:** Ok. Ok. Thank you. Bye.

**Intvr:** Bye, thank you so much.



## **Interview II**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 2] [0209a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [09/12/2019] [09:15 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview II] [00:51:33]

**Intvr:** Hello? Can you hear me okay?

**Resp:** Yes, yes I can.

**Intvr:** Okay great. So hmm, before anything thank you for agreeing to participate.

**Resp:** Yeah sure.

**Intvr:** Before we begin I would like to ask you if you received and read the ‘Statement Letter’ I sent you before?

**Resp:** The statement problem?

**Intvr:** Statement Letter.

**Resp:** Oh... Yeah, I read it but it was a few days ago when you sent it to me but I don't remember much of it anymore so yeah...

**Intvr:** Okay, so before we start I will remind of what it was there. First of all the aim of the study which is to gather information about...live streaming-child sexual abuse in the Philippines and-

**Resp:** Yeah Yeah I remember that.

**Intvr:** Okay, then just to remind you of your rights. This participation is completely voluntary, you can withdraw at anytime or refuse to ask any questions and you can ask me anything you wish, also everything will remain confidential, the recording will be for me only and I will process the data carefully. Is everything clear?

**Resp:** Oh yeah, yeah...

**Intvr:** Before we begin I do need you to state that you are aware of your rights and doing this voluntarily, it will serve as a verbal consent for the conduction of the interview.

**Resp:** Yes. Okay. I'm doing this interview voluntarily and aware of my rights.

**Intvr:** Thank you

**Resp:** You're welcome!

**Intvr:** To begin I will ask you a few quick demographic related questions.

**Resp:** Okay.

**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 18 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: High School
- Profession: Student
- Marital Status: No
- Children: No

**Intvr:** Okay, so I will start to ask a few questions about your culture.

**Resp:** Okay, I will try to answer.

**Intvr:** So i would you to share with me what are some of the values and cultural aspects that you find important.

**Resp:** Important in the Philippines?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** I think, ah yeah, I've observed I think Filipinos really value that close-knit family relationship you know? Other things [...] I think we really like to keep it traditional; we don't change- I don't- I don't know what I'm really saying but, we like to, you know, be respectful to our elders and be really accommodating, is that, is that something you want to know?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes definitely.

**Resp:** Okay. Hum- I'd like to think that we're progressing. I would like to think but, you know in look at it, in some aspects [...] When you know- When it comes to family things, the father is still the one who leads the family but it's not always the case anymore but, you know, it's still observable and [...] ah- that's what I've seen in my family [chuckle] for me.

**Intvr:** Okay so what about Public Image?

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah of course. It's something that we really you know because- we really avoid to become like the negative [...] we avoid the negative stuff because a lot of Filipinos and I'm sorry to say this [chuckle] but you know a lot of Filipino women like to gossip a lot and you know and it's really [...] it's kind of the point that it becomes toxic that a lot of people don't want to do stuff you know, that they want to do because they're like trying to protect themselves from the negative backlash. Yeah...so that's basically all I have to say about that. Yeah...so that's basically all I have to say about that.

**Intvr:** Okay. When it comes to religion, as you must be aware, this aspect still plays a major role in many societies across the globe.

**Resp:** Yes, yeah.

**Intvr:** So, what can you tell me about the religious aspects of the country and how they affect, or not, the daily life of Filipino families?

**Resp:** Affects, okay. So my daily life or in general?

**Intvr:** Overall, how it affects most of the community.

**Resp:** Oh you know, it's every Facebook post, even in schools they make examples, you know, about God and stuff like that. It's pretty much everywhere, you know. [...]

**Intvr:** Okay, is it true that Filipino's tend to refer to God in instances when something goes wrong in life?

**Resp:** Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yes, yes, I have observed that.

**Intvr:** Do you think that these religious and cultural values affect communities in different lengths according to their economic-social status?

**Resp:** [...] I- I don't think it really matters in the Philippines as long as you're a Filipino you believe in something. That's how I see it, you know. [...] I think we are embracing but at the same time we also like- if it gets to, you know, if it gets too liberated, we steer clear of that if you get my point. [...]

**Intvr:** I see. So in your opinion, has technology and internet access been causing more harm than good in people's lives?

**Resp:** I wouldn't know if in general but my experience, the internet has helped me, you know, to learn a lot of things on my own that I didn't need- to learn from my parents or people. I'm a bisexual person, yeah and the internet has helped me to accept myself more than the people around me have and I'm also an atheist so it's more in the internet that I learn how to question things more than the people around me have, so, I think, that if you look at me now, I was shaped more by the internet than my own parents.

**Intvr:** So ultimately you would say it had a positive effect in life...

**Resp:** Yes, in my case but I wouldn't know when it comes to other people.

**Intvr:** According to statistical data, the Philippines has been one of the countries where internet access has grown at a rapid pace due to its large number of users. Do you think the access is as easy and widely represented as statistic refer?

**Resp:** Is the access easy? [...] Oh, we do have to pay if it's like in the comforts of our home but in malls, we have free Wi-Fi for like an hour and stuff like that and we have computer shops, internet shops - internet cafes stuff like that and it's not very expensive.

**Intvr:** When it comes to accessing the internet itself which do you think is the most common method used by Filipinos?

**Resp:** I think it's still the phone because it's more easy access so you can bring it anywhere for example, I go to the mall you know and access the internet easier than one using a computer.

**Intvr:** Do you think that it is the same with minors and children?

**Resp:** Children. I think a lot of children nowadays have phones so i guess it's the same.

**Intvr:** Worldwide many treaties and laws have been adopted in order to protect digital users. The Philippines, in particular, established a set of Privacy Laws for this exact purpose. Are you familiar with them?

**Resp:** I think I might have heard something but i don't remember much.

**Intvr:** Okay so do you think people would be willing to share more of their private data if that enabled entities an easier pursue of online crimes as child exploitation?

**Resp:** If it would help the authorities, I'm kind of 50/50 on that because a lot of things might be revealed about me that I don't want to be revealed. But i think actually i'm okay with it cuz it's for the better.

**Intvr:** It would mostly be data that doesn't directly relate to you.

**Resp:** Oh yeah okay. I'm good with that.

**Intvr:** Is the term 'Internet-Café' familiar to you?

**Resp:** What? Oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** They appear to remain a popular point of internet access in the Philippines, do you agree?

**Resp:** Here we call it an internet cafe. Yeah yeah it is. Yeah- a lot of times, I'm a college student so, and I don't have a laptop currently so I go there lots of times to do project and research assignments. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Can you briefly describe me how an establishment like that looks like? Is it private or is it a wide-open space?

**Resp:** Other people can see it but you know there's like a barrier in between but if someone sneaks out behind your back, they can definitely see what-yeah, yeah, yeah

**Intvr:** Do you think the prohibition of closed cubicles has affected what users do or who frequents such establishments?

**Resp:** Of what? Cubicles?

**Intvr:** Hum, yes. Like according to research there were some computer shops that had this like separated computer units, I'm not sure how to place it, like in marketing offices so people wouldn't see what you were doing and those were forbidden.

**Resp:** Ah yeah cubicles, oh... really? No I didn't know that.

**Intvr:** So you never saw one like this?

**Resp:** With the cubicles? No? I haven't.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** No, actually, no that's why I'm kind of curious, you know?

**Intvr:** Yes, of course, I was too when I first read about them. Still am.

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay, so now I will ask you a little more about the actual subject of the research.

**Resp:** Okay, okay.

**Intvr:** So have you ever encountered any type of pornographic material online without actively looking for it?

**Resp:** No, no.

**Intvr:** Okay. Did you ever heard or saw anything related with the title 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** Sorry, what's that?

**Intvr:** It was the name of a series of clips showing the child abuse of two young children and a toddler.

**Resp:** No, I have never heard, thanks goodness.

**Intvr:** Okay...Do you think parents make use of restrictive tools to control what children may or not access?

**Resp:** If they have any control? I think the parents are pretty lax about it, they don't - yeah that's what I've observed, coming from me who learn lots of things from the internet, my mom never really checked up on me.

**Intvr:** Studies state that, nowadays, children prefer to spend time with online friends rather than those they know face-to-face. How easy or how common do you think it is for a child to be approached by a predator impersonating a 'friend'?

**Resp:** On the internet? pretty easy. Children learn- Children are guidable and people can hide you know as different identities on the internet so it's pretty easy to be someone you're not on the internet or pretend someone you're not on the internet.

**Intvr:** In what platform, in your opinion, would such contacts be first initiated in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Major place? Like sites?

**Intvr:** Sites, social media...

**Resp:** Yeah, easily Messenger? Yeah yeah because everyone can creep up on you on Messenger

**Intvr:** Are government entities open about matters that regard child abuse? Specifically, about live-streaming of child sexual abuse?

**Resp:** Open? I'm not really very political but I haven't seen much you know, I haven't seen much things about you know, protecting children about child abuse - I don't know. Maybe, it's just me not paying attention to the news.

**Intvr:** Do you think its easier to find information online then?

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** Regarding the specific subject of live streaming - child sexual abuse in the Philippines, what do you know about the matter?

**Resp:** I have no... I don't have that much to comment on the cyber thing. But behind closed doors child abuse really happens. It's actually something that someone close to me has experienced. just a year ago so this is part of the reason why I agreed to be interviewed by you is because of the topic that you're now talking about studying on. And yeah- I think people are not paying much attention to it and you know the- the people who know about it try to cover it up as much as they could [...] and I think it's just another problem with the people the kind of people in here. Not necessarily everyone but I definitely knew someone who could have done something who didn't do it.

**Intvr:** You think it's because when it's behind close doors it implicates the family and Filipinos are family oriented?

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** If you don't mind me asking was that the case with your friend?

**Resp:** Yep. It was domestic I think definitely.

**Intvr:** So given the value that families give to themselves and their wellbeing and how religious Filipino are, why do you think cases where parents place their children in abuse like in LS-CSA continue to happen?

**Resp:** Why do I think that's [...] something that I try to really answer because that thing that happened with the person that I was close to, it was a family thing, and so, I don't know it was because the person who did the act thought he could get away with it or I don't know maybe he felt so powerful in his own skin that he thought he could do anything and just get away with it? I -Actually don't know, that's something that I really want to answer myself but somethings are- I can't answer.

**Intvr:** I can understand your feeling since of my studies and the familiarity I have with abuse, since it happened to me.

**Resp:** Oh whoa.

**Intvr:** And if you allow me, my advice is that... you just can't keep trying to understand it. Some things are just not to be understood at all, specially when they are close to us.



**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** Okay so- resuming, given the widespread of the issue, international laws and treaties were developed and the Filipino government has in fact been establishing more national laws in order to protect victims and tackle the crime of LS-CSA. In your opinion, are these laws being carried on? Is population aware of them?

**Resp:** Oh, oh yeah...Yup.

**Intvr:** Given that cases continue to rise in the Philippines concerning LS-CSA given the profit it brings to poor families; do you think this will continue to happen or-?

**Resp:** Oh oh yeah. Yep. [...] I can definitely see that happening because a lot of Filipinos are poor, a lot of Filipinos don't have jobs and the poorer they are the more prone they are to have children. You know that type of thing yeah that happens a lot in here. They don't have any jobs they don't have anything to do they just, you know, create more kids and it's really counterproductive to what they're trying to do you know. So i guess I could see that happening cuz you know there's nothing else to you know do.

**Intvr:** When it comes to the children, do you have a general idea as to, how old and what gender is on highest demand?

**Resp:** In my opinion I think it'd be like 6-year-old, 5-year-old girls. [...] That's what I think.

**Intvr:** According to interviews previously done to Filipino families involved in such cases, the families would claim that their children were free of harm given that there was no direct contact between them and the perpetrator. Do you share such perspective?

**Resp:** I think [...] I think, they may be free of harm physically but mentally, how is this child ever getting to see herself, you know? As a person being exposed to that kind of exploitation? It's, I don't know, it's crazy how people think they're harmless or they're free from harm, you know, that's something that potentially will drive these children to more damage, especially in their future, how they going to get into good schools, you know, good future if they don't think so highly of themselves because of all the things that have had happened to them? So, I think they're not free of harm.

**Intvr:** Personally, do you believe that these families or *peers* are truly unaware of the harm that is inflicted upon the child? Do you find their actions justifiable?

**Resp:** Okay- I'm going to go push the know button again. I do think that some parents could be that naive because I have a parent just like that keeps denying stuff you know to that person who was a victim last year the one I was close to? the one who could have done something. That parent blamed the person you know? The parent blamed that person because that person was apparently being selfish because the one who did something was the parent partner you get it?

**Intvr:** Yes of course...

**Resp:** Yeah... So the parent thinks that the victim was being selfish because the parent loves the partner and the parent thinks that the victim is just to-, you know, hinder the parent from being happy. I think that it's somewhere in between the parent is naive and they choose to be.

**Intvr:** Is online exploitation to be addressed more lightly than the one conducted 'offline'? In reality, from your knowledge, is that what happens?

**Resp:** Yeah I think so.

**Intvr:** Regardless of its prohibition, child prostitution is visible and frequent in some streets of Filipino cities. Do you find it possible that instead of punishment, the society might grow to 'turn a blind eye' to this type of online exploitation like they apparently do with child prostitution?

**Resp:** Yup, I think, I think that people are just directly you know, not trying to see the things that are happening because people are, I think, people are so, you know, caught up with their own problems, their own issues that it's only when they're becoming the victim, you know, that they become active and I think that thing could apply to me but yeah it's definitely easier to become more aware of things when you're the one, when you're part of the, you know, yeah yeah yeah.

**Intvr:** The media is often associated with the idea of *free speech*, and is often how we first come in contact with information upon subjects as the one we are currently discussing. In the Philippines does the media pay close attention to such sensitive issues? Do they have an important role when it comes to raise awareness?

**Resp:** Sensitive issues... I think, I think a lot of the people who try to cover sensitive issues are, you know, like a lot of teenagers or people who really seem to care about it but if you look at the media in general doesn't. Like the ones who want to speak up are the only ones who are talking about stuff.

**Intvr:** So you don't think the national news covers the topic?

**Resp:** Sorry what topic?

**Intvr:** Cases like we are discussing, online abuse, prostitution cases...

**Resp:** I don't really watch the news anymore cuz I don't even have a television and [...] but if we talk about Facebook posts and stuff it's a lot of politics are centered on LGBTQ stuff cuz, you know, and so I do see a lot of, you know, a lot of updates on that but if you look at it in general I think there are more memes than anything. And sometimes you know memes are incorporated and are used to cover news stuff. I don't really know what i am saying anymore...

**Intvr:** So basically, online, you end up learning about serious issues and topics through something as generic as memes?

**Resp:** Yeah, I guess what I'm saying is that a lot of really serious stuff in here gets turned into memes so yeah.

**Intvr:** Are you aware of the legal age of consent in your country?

**Resp:** Wasn't it 12? Oh yeah, yeah it's 12.

**Intvr:** Do you find it suitable for the world we live in now or should a child have a higher or lower age before being held responsible for its actions?

**Resp:** Oh yeah I think it could be harmful. [...] I don't really have...I don't really know what to think about it I mean if- I really say what I want to say I would say that it's really young, it's really young considering their rights and the rise of teenage pregnancy and stuff, it's really not a good look but yeah. I think they should be raising it yeah.

**Intvr:** Are you aware that there is a bill to try and raise the age of consent?

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah, yeah

**Intvr:** What about lowering it? I've heard that there might be some intentions to do that as well, were you aware?

**Resp:** What? Oh- no.

**Intvr:** In your opinion what should they attempt to do about the age of consent?

**Resp:** I think I would be against lowering it. So they should raise it.

**Intvr:** Do you have any idea as to why it has remained this low?

**Resp:** I think, I wouldn't know too much to comment. so yeah, that's it.

**Intvr:** Okay... When it comes to the judicial system, are you aware of how it works, and if it works as it should?

**Resp:** I don't know, honestly.

**Intvr:** Given the often need of the child's testimony for a trial to be held against the family (if those are involved in the abuse) do you find that the Judicial System in the Philippines should pursue alternative paths when prosecuting these cases?

**Resp:** To testify against the family? I don't know...I think, i think it's the child's right, you know, to be able to fight for themselves. It's a children's right.

**Intvr:** When it comes to international actors, such as non-governmental agencies, there has been shown a significant interest towards preventing and tackling this type of offense. Are you aware of any organization currently acting in the Philippines to address the issue?

**Resp:** Help children? I think there are lots of those I think i've heard but I don't think I can name any. Yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** Do you think international organizations appear to adopt an approach that respects both Filipino values and social dynamic?

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** Internationally NGO's often adopt measures that focus on children education and family aid (through health and economic support programs) in order to prevent more children to become victims of crimes as the one we have discussed. Given the particularities of the issue in the country, do you find that such a generalized approach will be effective?

**Resp:** I think it should be standardized? I think, that's- what I think. Standardized? I mean, I don't really know if there's a problem with it. I don't know.

**Intvr:** Are there specific actions or focus areas they should be choosing to address in order to obtain, in your opinion, better results?

**Resp:** [...] I think, you know, the education part is good for both parts. [...] I mean [...] earning money, yeah. I mean education is only good if you know the people are interested to learn anything so maybe it's better to...I don't know

**Intvr:** Let's place it in a different way, do you think just addressing general education rather than teaching parent and communities' jobs and ways to obtain an income affects the overall results of programs?

**Resp:** I think it's definitely a problem because as I've said it's education is only good if they're interested to learn but if they aren't given a job and there's nothing available for them because they don't know how to do anything I don't know what a proper solution, you know, I don't know if there's a proper solution. It always goes back to finding something to earn money with. [...] I think maybe there could be a difference but the difference wouldn't be that big, because a lot of people here...don't really give, you know, much care about things that don't really involve them or even if it does, they just don't listen. [...]

**Intvr:** Ok, what about children? Do think they awareness should be raised among them?

**Resp:** [...] I think, yeah, it's good to make the kids aware of what should be and shouldn't be because when it all comes down to, you know, this stuff happening they could be the only, you know, they could be the only ones to stop what's happening to them. If that made any sense.

**Intvr:** As a final remark, do you have any ideas or suggestions as to how we could reach out to the communities or the victims?

**Resp:** Okay so my friends' case I really tried to help her as well. It's speaking up against the people who wronged her, trying to tell on them but none of that worked. So, I think, in my friend's case, what would've helped is you know, telling someone that had higher power than we have, we had but it was a personal decision to keep it a secret, yeah, because she's that kind of person, you know, to wish a lot things in life and she doesn't want to change things and if things did change then- you know, it will all come crashing at her than it would have made her suffer more, so it was a decision to keep it a secret was for her own wellbeing.

**Intvr:** Well in the case of your friends aren't there group supports or victim support units made by organizations that could, at least at an emotional level, have helped her?

**Resp:** You know I've been trying to find stuff like that. I don't know if they exist but if they did their really, really, you know, well hidden. Yeah cuz I've been trying to talk to someone myself and I don't know. It's just really hard to find someone to talk to here, professionally, or maybe you know a lot of us are scared of the mentality of Filipinos cuz they think mental illnesses, you know, are some stuff that you can cure by bringing it to Jesus and stuff.

**Intvr:** Oh, I see. That makes very little sense when it comes to professionals though. Okay so that's about it, is there anything you would like to ask me or anything you'd like to add?

**Resp:** Nope.

**Intvr:** Okay, then thank you so so much for agreeing to participate and share your knowledge with me.

**Resp:** You're welcome, i hope i did help even though a lot of the things i said were- i don't know.

**Intvr:** You did. I'm very grateful. If you want, I'll keep your contact and when I finish the dissertation, I will send it for you to read.

**Resp:** Yeah, of course! I would be glad to read it.

**Intvr:** Great, thank you again for everything.

**Resp:** Okay, you're welcome! Bye.

### **Interview III**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 3] [0309b]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [18/09/2019] [12:19 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview III] [01:43:58]

**Intvr:** Good afternoon first let me thank you for sharing some of your time to help me with my research.

**Resp:** No problem.

**Intvr:** Okay so I sent you the guide for the questions that I will be posing to see If you would be comfortable answering them like you requested, did you find everything okay?

**Resp:** So far i think i am comfortable about it.

**Intvr:** Okay, great.

**Resp:** Great. I also sent you the Statement Letter to you where i address the objective of the study and your rights, including how your participation is voluntary, and that this interview is being recorded, did you read it?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Okay so before we begin, I also need your verbal consent that you are aware of your rights and that you are participating voluntarily if that okay. In replacement of the usual written consent that one usually asks.

**Intvr:** I consent to be part of this interview and I'm aware of my rights.

**Resp:** Thank you. So I'll start with a few demographic related questions.

## Demographic Data

- Age: 18 years old
- Gender: Masculine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: High School
- Profession: College Student (Political Science)
- Marital Status: No
- Children: No.

**Intvr:** Okay so to begin I would ask you to share with me what are some of the cultural values and beliefs that are important to the Filipinos.

**Resp:** [...] Cultural values [...] In terms of values, we have- values that I think are important here with Filipinos, one is hum- our ability to help each other. I think compared to other countries, hum, Filipinos help each other more. They are more open to help each other. Also have, openness in communicating i think compared to Western countries, and – basically it's easy to talk to people, there are less boundaries, i think. In a way people see each other as almost like family, kind of like a familiar community that we have. And [...] Filipino's give importance to family, not sure if you heard about it?

**Intvr:** Yes, it's one of the things I've heard the most actually.

**Resp:** It's one of more common values we have here. We are very family centered, hum- to the point where we- we usually stay with- a lot of us stay with our families after we...finish our college, have our jobs we still stay with our grandfathers, yes basically that [...]

**Intvr:** Okay. What about your relationship with foreigners? Are you a hospitable community?



**Resp:** Hum, Yes. Yes, the more highlighted traits on Filipinos we are also very hospitable. Especially towards...in my experience we are especially towards people from the West, yeah, it's easy- We often, often times- we greet them when they are walking the streets. Hum, yeah. Well that's for the majority of Filipino's. Also differs depending on the economic class, I guess, the lower class seem to be more, they seem to be friendlier towards white people, i think. Generally, we are hospitable, i think as a- [...]

**Intvr:** As a whole.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** What about Public Image, is that important?

**Resp:** Public Image? Hum-Yes. [cough] Very important, Public Image and I think that is another thing about, us being Asian even if, even if- for example, even if someone from the family does something bad you would rather hide, that certain incident than ah- than ah- openly share it with other people. And we would prefer that our family is ah- is seen as ah- something that should be, like a model family. Like we would prefer that other families would...view us as a model family. And i think that is in part because Filipinos are also keen on spreading rumors about other people so they need to be very careful with what we do especially as a family. Since as I said earlier, families usually stick together even after getting work of finishing college. We are very careful, yes.

**Intvr:** And you mentioned that this is because you are Asian. So you think this happens in most Asian countries? They are very worried with public image?

**Resp:** Hum [...] Yes I think so. I think compared to the West, at the same time we are more family centered, I think Asian in general but then Filipinos ah- I think they are also more centered in family than other Asians. Hum. I think Asian countries in general they care about their public image and- in helping family and stuff like that.

**Intvr:** Okay, what about religion? Do you believe that religion plays an important role in the Filipino society as it does in other countries around the world?

**Resp:** Well almost around like 95 or 90% are Roman Catholic they are very religious and even superstitious people, it plays a major part in Filipinos lifestyle since- ah- I know a lot of people

who dedicate their lifestyle, their whole lifestyle, everything they do, their belief, their religion, for their spiritual belief so it effects. It affects Filipinos in that way, yes.

**Intvr:** So do you believe the church has a strong presence in the society?

**Resp:** It has a very strong presence in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** And this happens across all community or you think the [...] poorest communities are even closer to religion than the higher class?

**Resp:** I think that...in that case it's, it also depends on the class [...] The lower class here in the Philippines are more religious from my observation, hum, the middle class less so, you know.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you. So if you compare the Filipino society with the Western Societies do you find common values these days?

**Resp:** [cough] Yes I can even say that our culture is revised, in a way. Of course, we have our own Filipino culture also but it is influenced by mixed races. Since our history is hum, Filipino history is- since before we've been colonized by several Western countries that's ah- mostly the US and Spain and because of this hum [cough] it has affected our culture, it influenced our culture greatly. I can say that even it's revised in a way because [...] The Filipinos are also very Western although we have our unique, like I said we have our unique values and traditions, we are very Western and ah- Like for example we have- hum- consumerism we practice consumerism in a way, we patronize this- the newest flagship phone or brand new Nikes or an international brand of a product like Prada ah- we also now there's also kind of change in culture since people are becoming more individualistic than before. And I think that's in a way us trying to mimic Western cultures specifically the US... Yeah...basically we are copycats we try to copy everything that the US does even our...yeah, yeah...that's it.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you again. Now let's talk a little about communication and technology topic. In your opinion has technology and Internet access been causing more harm or good in people's life's?

**Resp:** I think that it goes both ways. The internet and technology in terms of communications have eliminated a gap between the poor and the rich so now not only the rich are capable of accessing vast information; the poor are also capable although less so because there's also- you need to

electricity and these technologies to access ah- the internet and this information but it lessens the gap and it helps a lot in terms of educating oneself in awareness which is important in ah democratic country like the Philippines. But then again, ah- it goes both ways, the internet has been also an avenue for- things like planning online attacks and- and basically what we are supposed to talk about, hum, online sexual exploitation of children. Hum, especially from what I've heard we have the Deep Web in the internet and that's where it mostly happens, these activities. So, yeah, Internet access and technology have been great help in lessening inequality but then again it has also has been the reason for very atrocious criminal activities.

[momentarily interruption in communication, connection lost]

**Resp:** Did you get what I said?

**Intvr:** Ah- yes. Atrocious criminal activities, it stopped there.

**Resp:** That's the last thing I said.

**Intvr:** Okay... According to statistical data previously gathered, the Philippines has been one of the countries where internet access has grown more rapidly in the latest years, particularly given to the increasing number of users. Do you think the statistics are close to reality and that Internet is that widely distributed and easy to access?

**Resp:** Well i think that it's definitely true but varies with experience. Because there's a lot of telecommunications advancement in the country hum, and it's easy to access the internet because we have internet hotspots although i still think we one of the slowest internets in the world. We have- hotspots here in the Philippines like we have malls, public spaces where they can give out free internet access over- in a- but it's limited though so you can only access to it for one hour. But compared to before like- if we go back 5 years before, we definitely have grown in terms of the- the majority of Filipinos gaining access to the internet.

**Intvr:** What do you think is the most common method used to access the internet? Computer, smartphone...

**Resp:** The most common method to access the Internet, well the majority of us are lower class people, most of them, hum, you know. Are- are you aware of prepaid load? Load of the SIM Card?

**Intvr:** Ah, yes, yes.

**Resp:** Well that's what they do, they load the SIM cards, prepaid and access the internet through data. Data promos like you have 50 pesos and then you get to surf the Internet for one ah- one gigabyte of data. And then we also- we also have these computer- computer shops or cyber-cafés. It's called Peso- [...] You put a coin on a slot and then it gives you like a limited amount of time to access the internet. In that way it's easier for lower class people to access the internet.

**Intvr:** Okay. [indistinct background noises] Nowadays there are many treaties adopted in order to protect digital users. The Philippines in particular have established a set of Privacy Laws. Are you aware of them?

**Resp:** Privacy laws [indistinct background noises] for the Internet?

**Intvr:** Yes, to protect our users.

**Resp:** I don't exactly know the specific like legal terms or the laws but I am aware that there are privacy laws for the use of the Internet. Yeah.

**Intvr:** So from what I've learned they are actually stricter than those established in other countries, your Government doesn't allow GPS location to be shared and-

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** Because of- [background voices]

**Intvr:** Please go on ahead. [background voices]

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah. Before we had less strict laws, we were able to go on the public records of other people but then there were more laws established and now we can't do that anymore.

**Intvr:** Why do you think there were such reforms made to the legislation?

**Resp:** Oh- Perhaps- hum [background voices] A fact for this I think this might be due to uninformed legislation but also because of external like- external factors, other countries influencing that- I'm not really sure but privacy laws that I know are- like the ones on child pornography and similar laws.

**Intvr:** Okay well, do you think people would be able to revisit these laws and share more information if that would help the prosecution of crimes like child exploitation?

**Resp:** Hum, can you repeat the question?

**Intvr:** Yes. Hmm, do you think that people would agree to share more of their private data if it was to help authorities prosecute crimes?

**Resp:** [...]

**Intvr:** Like for example if you would allow information like GPS tagging to be gathered in certain terms if that would help authorities to prosecute child abusers?

**Resp:** Yes I think that people would be more willing to share their private data if it means ah-pursuing, ah- if it helps with the prosecution of online child ah- exploitation. But then this can mean a difficult thing [cough] since the government has to get the message across and try to communicate, hum, that they have no ulterior motives. But then again, of course, they might have ulterior motives since ah- that's ah- our current political situation right now. Our government here in the Philippines have been investing on ah- intelligence to look into our private data so as a population Filipinos are less trustful of the government in these sorts of things so, hum, yes. Hum, the government has to make sure to get the message across, make sure that's really their intention and they have to be definite in what kind of data they're going to be collecting and sharing to law enforcement for example.

**Intvr:** Earlier you already mentioned computer shops do exist in the Philippines, have you ever visited one?

**Resp:** Yes, i have gone to computer shops.

**Intvr:** Can you describe me how one looks like? Within i mean?

**Resp:** Hum, here in Manila most of the computer shops we have are- it usually has a lane and kind of partitions for lane, like a small partition to divide each computer from the next one. Ah- but then we also have computer shops that don't have that. Those are mostly computer shops, hum, computer shops near educational institutions but then most of the computer shops do have these covers between the computers and then like i said before, we also have Peso-Net, i can remember

now, it's called Peso-Net they have slots for each computer and you can put coins like 5 pesos, 10 pesos and then, hum, you can access the internet.

**Intvr:** Okay...

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** And then also, sorry, each computer also has its own earpiece. Most computer shops have that feature and [background laughter] and then ah- For a computer shop we also have kind of a moderator, where you can pay your access fees for [...] basically he is the person who shuts down the computer if the- the time is already, the time for the computer is already done.

**Intvr:** Did you ever hear about the computer shops where they have closed cubicles or curtains for isolation?

**Resp:** I haven't [cough] I haven't personally seen a computer shop like that but hum, but i think i might have read that there are cyber cafés where there are closed rooms but then- in relation to the topic we're talking about those are- like cybersex dens from what i know. I hear about them in the news.

**Intvr:** Oh okay, there's actually a law against it. Were you aware?

**Resp:** No, I did not know that.

**Intvr:** Okay. Now moving onto the topic of online child abuse itself. Have you ever encountered abusive child-related content even though you weren't actively searching for it?

**Resp:** Yes, hmm online- Actually in the Philippines we have online communities dedicated towards sharing pornographic material and then we have specific online communities who have these certain, what we call kinks so they specifically look and share material with minors, children.

**Intvr:** Did you ever access one of those communities?

**Resp:** Yes because as I've said earlier I do advocacy work when i find these materials. So last year [2018] we investigated a community which stored it's media using Google Drive and this was shared between peers and often times it leaked through the internet. So we have hum, yes and then- by that time you can't control the spread anymore so we just like everyone- It's also a cultural thing, I think- like in male culture here in the Philippines that we not even allow that but we

encourage that because, especially for the lower-class people I think that they lack the awareness on how ah- this kind of behaviour is dangerous and- dangerous towards the victims.

**Intvr:** Hum, were you able to do something about the community that you found?

**Resp:** Yes, I was. So i collected, we collected the information we found from these online communities and we were able to- ah- create a report, we sent this report to the, hum, law enforcement and actually the Department of Justice in the Philippines. So now it's what they are using to, hum, to- it's what they're using as a reference whenever they encounter similar cases. For example, when there is a leak of compilation of photographic media or yeah, on cases like that. So we were able to do something about it but, hum, it still happens. Those online community still operate and they still share that material with each other although they are more hidden since there was a [...] hum, like a phenomenon that happened two years ago where in these groups called, hum, PASTOR and HOAGEA, they were, hum, they were investigated and, hum, a lot of the content of their group chats- because this online communities they use different kinds of the mediums and software to do what they're doing. So they're using social media sites like Facebook, they also using the messaging applications such as WhatsApp, Discord and ah- yes the government made an effort in cracking down on these communities and now they- they are more hidden. Hmm. So- Yeah.

**Intvr:** Did you ever hear anything about the title 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** Yes I know that, hum...

**Intvr:** Usually people don't know what it is which I found odd since there was a lot of coverage about it even here.

**Resp:** Exactly.

**Intvr:** In there was it on the news?

**Resp:** A lot of what happens here in the Philippines, atrocities like that, [...] The West more- ah- more developed countries are aware of what's happening here but not us Filipinos so far as what I experienced. Hum, we don't ignore them but we're not aware of them as well.

**Intvr:** So it's not something that the news covers?

**Resp:** Well, hum, I know news companies that covered the specific incident, Daisy's Destruction, hum, there was, actually several news groups covered that. But, I'm not sure why- it's- there is no sense of- I mean in general Filipinos are just not as aware as the more developed countries.

**Intvr:** Do you think that these days children are more equipped to use the internet than the parents?

**Resp:** Oh hum, the parents will use restrictive tools but those are mostly parents from the- upper class because they often these parents are more aware of how to use technology and the internet and stuff like that. But then parents from the lower class usually do not ah- bother to use restrictive tools or software in ah- trying to control what their children sees in the internet because, well first of all they don't have time and second, they don't know- they don't know how to do that.

**Intvr:** So taking into account what you have shared about the online communities and online child exploitation, how do you think it is for a child to be approached online?

**Resp:** [cough] Well they would use a dummy account (fake account) like on Facebook and they would, for example they would act as someone that was in the same age group as the child and [...] Can you repeat the question again?

**Intvr:** Sure, if you think it is an easy thing to happen to begin with.

**Resp:** Oh yes, it is easy, from what we discussed rules there aren't much restrictive tools for children, specifically in the lower class. And, hum, and if i can piece it together, the lower class does have enough access to the internet, a large population of the lower class at least. And it's easy for predators to act as someone else and- It's really easy because people have limitless, hum, it doesn't have a limit to how many accounts you can make on Facebook for example, and you can be different people to different ah- children you're, hum, you're looking for and [...] yes. That's basically yes.

**Intvr:** Okay now specifically about live streaming child sexual abuse in the Philippines what can you tell me about it?

**Resp:** I know that it is prevalent here in the Philippines. There are hot spots but it- it varies [...] It is prevalent and I think that the international community recognize it as well, that the Philippines is if not, I'm not sure but it's number one in these kinds of incident, in online exploitation of children. Hum, what I know is that- it wasn't like this before. If I'm correct it's just something new,



this phenomenon sex trade of children is now happening online and it's a new thing and it's being encouraged by, hum, I mean it's easier- no I mean it's harder to crack down, to find these incidents. Based on news I know that the government in the Philippines is making efforts but it's having a hard time since it's not really, hum, the government is not really- well knowledgably in anything related to cybercrime some more so we have incidents like this which are hard to catch or crack down on.

**Intvr:** They actually created, I'm not sure if you're aware, on March or April of this year [2019] a new unit is, that with the help of the Australian government, is focused on this type of criminality.

**Resp:** The Government of the Philippines is coordinating with ah- Unit? Is it the law enforcement unit?

**Intvr:** No they actually create a special unit, I'm not sure of its name right now though.

**Resp:** Is it for awareness or for prosecution?

**Intvr:** It's for prosecution.

**Resp:** Hmm. I'm not aware of that particular unit but I know that the international community is helping. More developed countries and NGO's from international countries are coordinating with law enforcement and our own NGO's here in the Philippines to combat sexual exploitation of children.

**Intvr:** Did you hear about Project Sweetie?

**Resp:** Yes I did. Is it still ongoing that project?

**Intvr:** Hmm, no. The first phase ended because EUROPOL was not really happy with the independent approach of the NGO, but they are to launch Sweetie 2.0 soon.

**Resp:** [cough] It was a kind of movement-, campaign on social media, it was really popular then and I heard about it but now I don't think that a lot of people are aware of it, so I think it would be good that they- they continue on what they've been doing.

**Intvr:** Still on this particular phenomenon and how it unfolds on the Philippine's, did you ever hear about the term 'Cottage Business'?

**Resp:** Cottage Business? A cottage business in terms of economics? As in small-scale businesses here or in terms cyber child exploitation?

**Intvr:** In terms of child abuse...

**Resp:** Oh no but if i did heard it in the term. And the person says that it's related to child exploitation than I would automatically think about like a sex-den or cybersex-den. But I'm not entirely aware of this specific term.

**Intvr:** Ok some studies and some NGOs use the term to distinguish the sex-dens that you mentioned now, from the family-run business. So cottage is when we refer to the families who place their children under this type of abuse. Were you aware that this is a common thing, happening in the country?

**Resp:** I knew- I knew that a lot of- hum, online prostitution of children are encouraged by their, for example, their parents or family but hum, Yes i am aware of that. So ah- i think this is also because of the- the pressure. I mentioned earlier that we are very family centered, we stick together. We have to help each other, of course. We try to help each other, our families, especially the lower class try to, hum, improve from their poverty and- it's also a matter of survival for them, i think. Although it's something we shouldn't do, i acknowledge that it is a tendency for parents to prostitute their children online, hum, because from what i said children in the Philippines here are also pressured to earn for themselves and for their families. And we're very resourceful people as well. You would be doing a variety of odd jobs; you would see children on the street selling, hum, cigarettes and ah- they would be doing a lot of odd jobs. So I wouldn't be- I'm surprised that they are doing that but at the same time I'm not surprise that it's a tendency, I acknowledge that because at the same time it's because of cultural factors as well, for Filipinos and- ah- the pressure like I said earlier, the pressure to improve, hum, to improve their family from poverty.

**Intvr:** Do you believe the Government is sharing the reality about what is happening in the country?

**Resp:** [pause] I am personally aware that there are measures being done by the government and especially, ah- NGO's such as, for example we have International Justice Mission. You aware of them?

**Intvr:** Yes, I am.

**Resp:** With coordination with different NGO's they are doing something about it but so far it's not yet working. This information is not yet part of mainstream information in a way that- we have other problems, for example, we have problems about like ah- the LGBTQ, and we have problems about insurgencies, divorce and abortion but then- compared to online prostitution of children in terms of information dissemination and awareness they're not yet on the same level of awareness for the other issues I mentioned earlier. So I acknowledge that the government is doing something but it's not much [...] and if they're doing a lot then it's not working yet, ah- yes. And it's a new thing of course, it's because child prostitution online is a new phenomenon just like I said before, so i guess government is having a hard time in how to deal with this issue since they're not really [...] we're not really knowledgeable about actually anything that concerns cybercrime and from what I know even we have law enforcement units like National Bureau of Investigation, cybercrime division who are lacking in, hum, staff and- or lacking in professional, technical professionals, people who are knowledgeable about cybercrimes so we lack these professionals to deal with the issue. This certain issue we are talking about

**Intvr:** Okay, so. you answered this already, now when it comes to the children that are targeted do you have an idea of how old like the age gap and what gender is in highest demand?

**Resp:** Oh you're asking if I know the- What is it, can you repeat that?

**Intvr:** Oh, sure. What gender and age are in most demand to perform the live-streams?

**Resp:** Not sure of the statistics in terms of the age of the children but ah- I'm sorry what do you mean by gender?

**Intvr:** Oh if it's female or male.

**Resp:** Well, in general prostitution here in the Philippines is, hum, most of the prostituted children are female's and I know that so i'm guessing, i'm assuming that most of the children performing online are also female, but then i also acknowledge that there are some male's because the demand- we have a variety of consumerists for media. We have predators from all around the world and i acknowledge that they have different interests in terms of gender and age. So yeah, i think we have- there is a variety of demand for these things and it's also disturbing to know that- that we

have people who specifically look for, like for example in Daisy's Destruction, they look for infants as their interest.

**Intvr:** Do you have an idea of how much it costs each performance?

**Resp:** I saw a news article this year [2019], it looked into, hum, let me look for that- [pause] [keyboard sounds] Can you repeat the question?

**Intvr:** Sure, hum, the costs. If you have an idea of how much a session or performance would be.

**Resp:** Hmm, I would- I would assume that it would be very costly I encountered a news article about- the ah- the amount of money found in suspicious transactions for crimes in the Philippines and it says here that [...] I read this before but I'm just repeating what I've read hum but it was worth 17.9 trillion pesos that the government found transactions for ah- Oh no I'm sorry it's 5 trillion that comes from the 17.9 trillion that comes from human trafficking and majority of this according to the- the article is specifically on cyber and child pornography. And this includes human trafficking through live streaming, hum, so I'm guessing there is a lot of money in this ah-kind of industry or what. And it would cost- it would cost thousands of Philippine pesos to pay for one ah- like a live stream, an episode, hum, but I'm not sure of the specific pricing. I haven't really encountered information.

**Intvr:** I actually have through my research...

**Resp:** So you have an idea?

**Intvr:** Yes, actually it's quite cheap, when its family ran, they pay around 10 US dollars for a live-stream of a strip show.

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** That's 500 pesos.

**Intvr:** Then they pay around 50US dollars when it involves explicit sexual acts and the most expensive that i found was related with infants and animals, I think it was close to 400 US dollars.

**Resp:** I'm not surprised though, because my experience with investigating on prostitutes so it's not ah- an online, it's what's happening outside. For walkers they also pay like, for freelancers in the streets they can pay 500 pesos, or a thousand and then we have more and then we have more

coordinate- like people who are employed in a specific group or a brothel, they usually pay them 3,000 pesos. So you said earlier that they pay they can pay 50US dollars and that's around 3,000 pesos and then [...] Yeah. But since it's children who are being live streamed, hum, I am a bit surprised that ah- it's that cheap but for international standards, from a perspective of a developed country such as Portugal or the US, hum, 10 dollars is cheap but if you compare that to the perspective of a person here in the Philippines from the lower class 500 pesos for 10 dollars is already a lot. I mean it's not different but if it is 500 pesos or 10 dollars is a substantial amount for a person, a child here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** So, according to some interviews that were done to Filipino families in cases of live stream child exploitation, one of the reasons why they claim they choose to submit their children to this is that they believe there is no harm in it. Because there is no physical contact between the viewer and the child. In your opinion, do these families really believe in this or do they use it as an excuse?

**Resp:** I think that [background voices] families do believe this. It's- I don't think a parent would, hum, actually let their child do something that they think is that bad. I think it's also a matter of what they believe in or perhaps they justify it to themselves that what they're doing is not that harmful and then, perhaps, also socio-cultural factor, like I said before, oh no I haven't mentioned this but we also have this kind of term, hum, 'bahala na' means to disregard ah- future, the future consequences of something, it's very prevalent here as well. Perhaps ah- because of that people don't usually up because we know that the lower class are not as aware as other people especially in terms of these things and crimes. And thinking about that we have this kind of trait, cultural trait, 'bahala na' means that you don't even make an effort in trying to understand what the- what involving our children in so- a lot of it is related to what the traits of families are, here in the Philippines but it's also, I think, a lack of awareness in general and of course that is the responsibility of the government and civil society to deal with.

**Intvr:** Isn't this value that you mention a little against what's the Catholic Church teaches?

**Resp:** Which is?

**Intvr:** That our actions are always being judged by God and everything we do for ourselves and others we will face judgement for it.

**Resp:** The is Filipinos for- I'm not sure if it's also the same for other people or religious but [cough] Filipinos in particular have a selective, hum, like a selective, they're very selective in what they pick off from religion or from the Bible on what is convenient to them. So they would do these crimes or atrocious acts but, hum, since the Bible says that their sins will be forgiven if they made a mistake and then at the same time they're ignorant that they even made a mistake then they'll be forgiven, so they are very selective of these things. At the end of it all it's really a matter of awareness and it should, the government should tell them that they're wrong, and since they're ignorant you know- how can they be judge. So although. We are a Catholic country there those- it's different because we have our own culture. there are the values and traits we give values words are also different we have our own culture

**Intvr:** Okay, so even though families probably don't envision what will happen. Do you have an idea the effects that such abuse could have on a child?

**Resp:** I think it depends on, hum, what is done to them during the live stream, the incident of cybersex, hum, if what happened to them is similar to what happened in 'Daisy's Destruction' of course they will develop trauma, I think. And this is long-term, it's kind of a ripple effect, then they can be developing emotional problems in the future, depression, hum, ah- disorders and symptoms like that but in incidents where- in where they don't know yet what they're involved in , for example, the usual live streaming of a child showing their sensitive parts then of course it would also affect them in the long term they would have, perhaps, disperse of false impression of romantic relationship, trusting other people, sexual boundaries, ah- They would not know how to behave properly and what it's appropriate sexually. So it's things like that will affect then, it's undesirable of course because it will be trouble for them in the future, in their relationships with other people and how they deal with these things.

**Intvr:** Okay, so, ah- you mentioned already that children work on the streets, that there is child prostitution. Is common to hear that there they are quite visible on the streets-

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** It depends on the place. Sorry...

**Intvr:** No, that's okay, please...

**Resp:** Yeah, it depends on the place. There are places where it's more prevalent but then there are places where there are people who are not aware that this is happening or proliferating that much here in the Philippines. Specially here in the place where I stay, in Manilla, it's actually prevalent here.

**Intvr:** Okay...hum, so- A lot of people are aware that this is happening so do they 'turn a blind eye' to it?

**Resp:** [cough] Hum, I don't think they actively ignore these incidents since anyone that found out about Daisy's Destruction would be disgusted by what happened but at the same time they would- ah- People here in the Philippines are busy with what's happening in their lives and what's popular and mainstream, things like that so- They don't actively try to ignore these incidents, like prostitution of children in the internet, they just have a tendency that despite [cough] what is ah- what is being shared on social media or the news is something to be, ah- the Filipinos ah- often times hum they-they are just not aware, they are just busy with their own stuff, with their own affairs unless it affects their field of experience, unless it affects them they would not act or do things to address the problem. And I guess that's also part of the mainstream culture here in the Philippines; being indifferent and- apathetic because we're a developing country and- and we are used to these things happening on streets, people being murdered ah- child prostitution so- we often just- perhaps it's a coping mechanism ah- we just put a barrier between ourselves and what is happening, for example: - I'm a person in the lower class, I'm just gonna focus on surviving and improving to get out of poverty and basically on other stuff that would help me – for example they would also, hum, they would also prefer, hum, looking into popular stuff things that entertain them. Yeah it's also ah- like ah- like a problem perhaps in society here in the Philippines. I'm not sure if it happens as well outside but ah- that it is my- what I get from my experience. People being apathetic basically.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** I think in the West is more people being, hum, hypocrites because they know it's happening, they know they can do something but they leave it for someone else to solve it.

**Intvr:** Oh yeah it's also that of course. People are too busy with surviving, specially the lower class, they are not even capable of helping other people. But I said earlier one of our cultural trait

is that we like to help each other that's true but it's only to the extent of- things we can help with and our capabilities in helping other people and also, hum, since we are also family-centered we care about preserving our family, we care about our family, we care about its ah- involving ourselves in solving crimes like this is dangerous and ah- we think about that. Our family cares about ah- us not involving ourselves in dangerous activities, so ah- us helping other people, our neighbors is also selective in a way that we avoid, we prioritize our family, hum, in self-preservation.

**Resp:** Okay... so we already covered this. Sorry, just a second... Hum are you aware of the legal age of consent in your country?

**Intvr:** Yes it's 12 if they haven't changed that.

**Resp:** Why do you think they haven't changed it?

**Intvr:** Well because if they did i would probably have known about that since it's a sensitive issue nowadays, the age of consent. Even here in the Philippines yeah. That's it.

**Resp:** So there are two proposals currently to change it are you aware of them?

**Intvr:** No I am not aware I have not yet research on that.

**Resp:** Okay so one is supposed to raise it to 16 or 18 and there's a different one apparently that seeks to lower it.

**Intvr:** Hmm- I didn't know about that latter one. Because I know that if it's related to the criminal age of responsibility... Is it related to that?

**Resp:** Yes I think so.

**Intvr:** Is it related to mental capacity?

**Resp:** Yes in being responsible for their involvement in the crime.

**Intvr:** But is it based on actual- hum data? Research?

**Resp:** Yes there is research supporting why it should be raised to eighteen years and-

**Intvr:** I mean is there research supporting that it should be lowered?



**Resp:** Oh- there is some research because the data is related with the criminality committed by children but I'm unsure of any research on the lowering age of consent, it was actually information I received recently and that I am trying to verify.

**Intvr:** So it's actually happening here in the Philippines there are efforts in lowering it, the age of consent, and that is influenced by the issue on age of criminal responsibility. Thank you for raising that. Is it correct to assume that if they raise- I mean if they lower the age of criminal responsibility they would also- it might have an effect on the decision of lowering the age of consent?

**Resp:** I believe so, it would be on step towards proving that younger children are mentally aware of what they are doing, so it might be reflected on what happens with the age of consent.

**Intvr:** Thanks.

**Resp:** Sure, hum, ok in cases of child abuse, particularly cases of live-streaming child abuse the child is often forced to testify given there is little evidence to convict someone of this type of crime. Hum, so- if the child doesn't testify which is often the case when families are involved as facilitators, then there is no case. That's one of the reasons why there's such a low rate of prosecution of these cases.

**Intvr:** Is that here in the Philippines?

**Resp:** It's internationally, not just there, even with cases in other countries the testimony of the child is the main piece of evidence and there is very little prosecutions as a result.

**Intvr:** So given the issue do you have any ideas on how we could change the judicial system to try and avoid that the testimony of the child remains as the main and often only piece of evidence?

**Resp:** So you are saying that- the suspects- the child should- should agree that she was exploited or?

**Intvr:** No, what I'm staying in that in this type of case, what the justice system has against the offenders is often just the testimony of the child and I'm basically asking if you know of alternative pieces of evidence that should be explored so that the case doesn't rely on just that.

**Resp:** Humm...

**Intvr:** Because, for example, with pornography we have the videos or the photographs so they can be used but in the case of live-streaming we don't usually have that, sometimes we have a trace of money...

**Resp:** Yes...I also am aware, if I'm not mistaken on the Privacy and that's why you can take the recording of a crime to court, I think, unless all of the parties' consent to it so I can see, I can see that is a problem for prosecution and since online prostitution of children is something that happens ah- in a- it's very secluded and hidden. So perhaps besides, of course, looking for circumstantial evidence and cross-examination, hum, I have none really. None yet in mind, hum, perhaps what you discussed earlier. There can be an increase for gathering intelligence so while it's already happening the investigators are already gathering evidence and recording everything, hum, so they can prove that something happened of course. Besides that like are you- are you looking for changing the actual legal system?

**Intvr:** Yes I am looking for suggestions basically, because it's complicated for me to do understand what would work there since the justice system is very different from the one in here, for example. Like the case of the videos that you mentioned, in Portugal, as long as they are acquired by law enforcement they can be used as proof in court.

**Resp:** I think that- that is why most cases in prostitution and online prostitution, the majority of the methods used by law enforcement is entrapment so they would wait for the family or the pimp or the- someone handing the- prostitution received money or accept the money and then that's when they like that is a solid evidence. So they wait for that moment, I think the majority of child prostitution is that what they use. Other than that all I can think about is, hum, intelligence perhaps, investigations.

**Intvr:** The cases you investigated, the communities, were you able to gather the chats and media that you encountered?

**Resp:** The media?

**Intvr:** Yes, the conversations and the pictures.

**Resp:** I'm sorry can you repeat the question?

**Intvr:** If you were able to like screen-print the conversations of the pictures exchanged in the communities that you investigated online.

**Resp:** Oh- Yes our investigation, those online communities, for that we created a kind of drive, a kind of database where there are, we took screenshots of the conversations because we were looking at how they behaved in these communities in sharing these pornographic material, and we also specifically ah- downloaded the sensitive, hum, the sensitive material and the- the people involved and stuff like that.

**Intvr:** And is that viable to use in court?

**Resp:** Yes, it is. Ah- wait, hmm, so far I did not encounter any law that would not allow that- since- yeah I've not encountered any law. Also because there is a lack of laws in the case of cybercrime and regulation of behaviors in the internet, so yeah. If they would accept the request to enter that chatroom like they did to me, it's like they are allowing you to save the chat history and stuff like that. I'm not aware of any laws and I don't think there's- But you can research on that.

**Intvr:** I will. So- when it comes to International actors like the NGOs you mentioned, are you aware of any International Organization active in the Philippines to face live streaming sexual abuse of children?

**Resp:** Yes, in fact I was just talking to one before you interviewed me. I was talking to International Justice Mission, so they have ah- they have campaigns, ongoing campaigns to address this problem and raise awareness that it is happening, and then we also have Visayan Forum Foundation, this specific NGO is for prostitution and human trafficking in general so I'm not sure if they're handling- but I am guessing that they are also handling child prostitution online since a lot of cases of child prostitution happens online in the Philippines nowadays and because it is, hum, prevalent now. But from what I know the organization in the forefront in addressing this issue is International Justice Mission IGM Philippines because they are specifically handling child here in the Philippines, here in Manila, specifically is handling or- online sexual exploitation of children. So, yes. We do have and other NGOs that are working towards solving, hum, human trafficking in general since it's prevalent in the country. But IGM is specifically addressing this, hum, this issue.

**Intvr:** So what do you think of the approach of that International NGOs adopt, do you they think that they have respect for the culture and what is needed for each country or do you think that their missions and their projects are like standardized? Like if it works in one country it will work everywhere?

**Resp:** Well I'm not really sure how they operate internationally in other countries, like for example I know that child prostitution online is happening in other Asian countries but I'm not sure how they are handling that. time. Of course, they should, if it's a question of how they should deal with the problems in each country, of course they should have a different strategy, because like I mentioned earlier a lot of this is also caused by cultural factors unique ah- unique factors in different countries so they should have different strategies. Is that the question, right?

**Intvr:** Yes, that is part of the it, yes.

**Resp:** What is the other question?

**Intvr:** Well in your opinion, in the Philippines, what should be the focus areas of these organizations?

**Resp:** Well most of what I've encountered, the news articles ah- on how International groups and groups here are addressing problems is through prosecution, hum, and I know that there are measures being done to, hum, the long term. Awareness and education.

**Intvr:** Education of the children or of the parents?

**Resp:** Hum, both is better but I think they are- from what I've observed at least, the news groups or ah- like sharing these stories about prosecution itself but I'm not as much encountered news articles on ah- actual awareness or if I have- I haven't encountered them and perhaps because of this international groups they should prioritize long-term as well on awareness and education, since of course, we know, they won't be able to prosecute every single child perpetrator and things like that. So we should focus our resources on what is ah- viable and effective. It's not only the long-term, I think that awareness campaigns ah- have short term effects so- And I also know, I've also read an article in the Philippines on how law enforcement, here focus on prosecution so- They should really make efforts in the awareness part. And from what I know, NGOs like IJM is doing that right now. Making social media campaigns and like that...

**Intvr:** Okay...so one of the things that I've been told is that it would be more effective not to give a general education to parents but rather teach them like a specific profession. Do you think that would be better and more acceptable then to just-

[interrupted by the interviewee]

**Resp:** Can you expand on that? You mean educating parents in a work place setting?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. Like in the lower socioeconomic people, since they often don't have jobs instead of just giving them general education classes like we do with children we should just teach them a trade to provide them more job opportunities. Do you think they would accept it better than to tell them to attend general education classes?

**Resp:** Yes, I agree because prostitution, this thing happening, online prostitution I think it's a product, it's really a product of property, especially here in the Philippines and especially in developing countries it's very prevalent, hum, because- well, hum, its- it's I think the parents are made- they are forced to actually let their children do this because it's a matter of survival as well, hum, because they don't have any other choice, and of course because poverty it's the root of the problem than by addressing poverty and giving job opportunities to, hum, parents not only will they significantly alleviate the problem of child prostitution online but would also, I believe, address other problems such as engaging in crimes, other crimes, so yes. But of course it's not an easy, hum, thing to do because a majority of the population in the Philippines are lower class, a lot of them are from secluded places so if you're going to provide job opportunities it would be hard especially that the Philippines is an archipelago and that's why even services like healthcare, government services are- ah- it's hard to provide this for the- for the poorest of the poor and for families from secluded areas. So I think we should look into- I think you should look into any viable option on how to address this issue. But of course, I like to say that poverty is at the root of it. Ah- that way parents are made to prostitute their children so- [...]

**Intvr:** Ah- you did mention that awareness is very important and we should work towards it in the Philippines but how do you think it would be more effective to do that? How do you think we can reach the potential victims and secluded communities, because social media probably doesn't reach them as easily as they do in central areas of the Philippines?

**Resp:** Well, hum, of course that's a factor people in- in provinces and in other islands in the Philippines, some of them do not have internet connection even but I think that- I really stand by the fact that still a majority, a lot of population, a lot of people here in the Philippines already have internet access even in places far off- far from, hum, cities and then in provinces people do have internet access and since we're talking about online exploitation of children and our target audience would be- our target audience would be the populations who mostly engaged in this kind of criminal activity then by doing awareness campaigns through the internet I think it would reach them since they are able to engage in this activity which requires internet access. And I think it's not just a matter- it really depends on the strategy at this point ah- How are they going to make people aware or like ah- be a popular... The mainstream, hum, like mainstream culture? How would they get the attention of everyone? How would they not make people just ignore it and stuff like that? Are the things that should be considered, reaching out to ah- popular culture basically, because kids access the internet more frequently. than the adults. How are we- what is our strategy in reaching out to them? Like we can make it- kind of- instead of- perhaps instead of like those videos where it shows that child prostitution is happening and it's all gloomy and then you have to notice- ah- perhaps we need to notice alternative ways of awareness, hmm, make ah reaching out to influencers or like social media influencers or making it kind of like- a partnership with like ah- a campaign that is entertaining to young folks but at the same time acknowledging the seriousness of the problem. Like anything that would get attention of young folks nowadays so- [pause]

**Intvr:** So the use of celebrities would help?

**Resp:** Yes, ah- anything that children nowadays can absorb really since people really have a short attention span and like I said before people are stuck within their own field, of what they, in their experience what they like being exposed to. Hum reach out to popular culture, mainstream culture and get their attention through that.

**Intvr:** Okay I think that's about it. Yeah so do you have anything you wish to add or anything you would like to ask me?

**Resp:** Well because there since violence against children is my advocacy in general, since you have any volunteer opportunities you know or offer to people like me, I would like you to share

those opportunities, I would like to help. For example, I would love to help hum, child prostitution online, so if you have any opportunities, hopefully you can reach out and share.

**Intvr:** Okay sure, but you are looking for opportunities there in the Philippines, right?

**Resp:** Hmm yes here in the Philippines because I also have peers here, people who are also concerned I mean, who also have this as an advocacy so- if we knew about how else we can help.

**Intvr:** Okay, I'm actually am in contact with a human rights foundation in Indonesia but I'm trying to get in touch with the team on the Philippines so I will let you know.

**Resp:** Thank you so much because it's really my advocacy, my advocacy is on human trafficking specially on child human trafficking so I acknowledge that, hum, child prostitution now is related online so I would love to help anyway I can.

**Intvr:** I will let you know. So- thank you so much.

**Resp:** Thank you.

**Intvr:** Thank you and if you know of anyone else who might be able to participate in the interview please let me know since I'm still looking for volunteers.

**Resp:** Is there a specific demographic?

**Intvr:** No, just Filipino's over eighteen.

**Resp:** Okay I will have that in mind. Are we finish with the interview?

**Intvr:** Yes yes, it's all done.

**Resp:** Thank you very much and I'm glad to help with you research and good luck.

**Intvr:** Thank you, thank you so much.

**Interview IV**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 4] [0409a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [09/29/2019] [10:03 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview IV] [01:35:50]

**Intvr:** Can you hear me?

**Resp:** Hello?

**Intvr:** Hello?

**Resp:** Yes, Good evening!

**Intvr:** Good evening!

**Resp:** Hello?

**Intvr:** Okay. That's much better.

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Thank you so much for giving me some of your time to help me out.

**Resp:** Yes, yes, no problem!

**Intvr:** You read the statement letter that I sent you, Yes?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. I also checked the interview questions.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Is it alright if I cannot provide you information with some of the questions?

**Intvr:** Yes, of course, yes.

**Resp:** Okay, okay.



**Intvr:** Before we start, I have to ask you that usually, we require like a written...that someone...that the interview signs a paper that...she...read the statement letter? Because In my case, the university agreed that we need this verbal agreement that you say, that you know, are aware of your rights and that you're doing the interview voluntarily. If can just say that...that way, then we can begin.

**Resp:** Okay. Yes, I agree to participating in this interview and I am aware of my rights. I am participating freely out of my own desire to share information about your research topic.

**Intvr:** Okay, that's it. Thank you so much.

**Resp:** Your welcome.

**Intvr:** The first few questions that I have are very basic and concern demographic information.

**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 37 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: College Graduate
- Profession: University Teacher
- Marital Status: Yes
- Children: Yes (2)

**Intvr:** Okay and that's it. That's about it for the first few questions.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Now I will start with the questions and whenever you have something to add or something to say, you can just begin to add.

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** The first part is about the culture and personal traits. I would like to know about your cultural aspects and what you fancy important in your culture and traditions to this day.

**Resp:** Alright. About Filipino culture in general. Let's say...is that what you mean?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Okay, well Filipino culture is, I would say, is a collectivist culture, you know? People value relationships and then the way we relate to each other is very hierarchical. So, young people defer to older people. Children are expected to follow their parents. They are expected to follow the words or the wishes of their own parents. However, Philippine society is also heavily influenced by western values because the Philippines has been a colony of the United States for sometime and until today, many of the movies, music are influencing many Filipinos today and so, some of our beliefs and practices are western in nature.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** What else? Religious influence is also very strong in the country this time, we connect this to the Spanish influence, because the Philippines was also a colony of Spain for a long time and so the Roman Catholic church had been a very strong institution in the country for a very long time and until today. So for example, when we talk about the values related to marriage, sex, sexuality. These values are usually tied to our religious beliefs as Catholics, at least in the northern part of the Philippines because in the southern part of the Philippines, there are more Muslims there than Christians or Catholics. What else? That's just the general Filipino culture, however, in the Philippines, there are also many sub cultures based on the different ethnic minorities. Let's say, these subcultures, they also have their unique ways of conducting their lives but I would say that these subcultures are not so disconnected from the general predominant Filipino culture that has been a combination of the collectivist values and western influence from the American colonizers as well as from the Spanish colonizers. I think that's how Filipino culture in very general terms.

**Intvr:** The other interviewers usually mention that the Filipino people are very hospitable?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Is that true?

**Resp:** uhuh

**Intvr:** Do you agree?

**Resp:** Yes, somehow, I agree, especially when you go to the provinces. Filipinos are very welcoming especially of foreigners like you and I think that in a certain extent we can associate this to what we call the, "Colonial mentality". You know, the Philippines has a very long colonized past so it's possible that we, Filipinos, have been programed to defer to foreigners?

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** Okay and yes, we defer to foreigners who used to be our colonizers and so that attitude is still with us today and we call it by the name hospitable.

**Intvr:** Okay, what about public image?

**Resp:** Public image?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** What do you mean public image?

**Intvr:** Public image is how you are perceived by the other Filipino, is that important?

**Resp:** Well, somehow, yes for many Filipinos. They say that public image is important. There are those who would value appearances over, you know, what's inside but I don't have exact evidence or research to support this observation.

**Intvr:** Okay. You have already mentioned those religious part. Personally, does it affect you? Are you over religious person?

**Resp:** Am I a religious person? I call myself a non-practicing Catholic.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** I've been baptized as a Catholic. I was raised as a Catholic. I went to a Catholic high school but when, you know, I started to read books when I went to college. I started to question things and one of these is how religions sometimes limit the way we understand the world. It limits our appreciation of liberal ideas or liberal values related to freedom, equality, that sort of thing. Most of the extent, I am religious but as of now, I have my personal debates regarding the practice of my faith

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Do you think that these values that you mentioned and religion aspects, they affect the community in different ways? depending if they are richer, if they are poorer in their communities? if there are farther away from the main cities?

**Resp:** Yes. Oh, okay, okay. Your concern is about the difference between the rural and urban community?

**Intvr:** Yes, mostly.

**Resp:** Right?

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** So, how religious and cultural beliefs shape the urban life as compared to rural life? Okay, I think, in the urban area, Filipinos are more modern. They have more western values. They are, to a certain extent, less religious especially in the middle class or upper middle-class section of urbanized areas but of course, here in the urban places, we also have what we call, the urban poor and sometimes, they are the ones who are more religious as can be seen from their heavy participation in religious rituals or religious celebrations. In contrast, in the provinces, in general, people are more conservative. Communities are tighter because people in small towns know each

other very well and I suspect, many people in the rural areas are more religious, regardless of whether they are rich or poor.

**Intvr:** Okay. You already spoke about western societies too, so I can skip that. You know that technology has been very important over the world in the last few years. Do you think that nowadays technology and internet has been causing more harm than good, at this point?

**Resp:** In a very general sense, I think yes. Here in the Philippines for example, technology and social media has worsened us by the spread of fake news and has paved a way for political candidates with questionable reputation and questionable track record. With regard to your research problem, I think the answer is also yes. Social media, technology has made possible the prevalence or popularity of online sex videos, online exploitation of sex workers who are usually young children and I've heard because I spent some time with NGO, if you've heard about the NGO ECPAT? Have you heard of that?

**Intvr:** Yes, I've heard about them.

**Resp:** Yes. ECPAT is End Child Prostitution and Trafficking. I spent some time with them so I've heard about how small communities in far flung provinces would have something like a cottage business, where neighborhoods have computer shops and kids work there as online sex workers and from what I've heard, parents, sometimes or most of the time, know what their kids are doing. In fact, sometimes, it's even the parents who ask their children to work for these online sex sites, so to speak. I've heard from ECPAT that these are more common in provinces where the incident of poverty is very high. The families depend on this kind of job as a lucrative source of alternative income, you know? especially because they do not have many other sources of income.

**Intvr:** Yes. That was actually the reason why I actually chose the Philippines for my base work. It was exactly because of that cottage business of the families being involved in the online sex business of the children. It's what makes it so different of how children are being exploited in other countries; because usually families are not that involved and, in the Philippines, what we are finding out is that they are, and so it was what drove me to explore what's happening there.

**Resp:** Yes. That's right.

**Intvr:** According to statistics that I recovered. The Philippines has been one of the countries where the internet access has been growing faster in the latest years due to a large number of users. Do you think that the access is as easy as it's going through the statistics or is it actually limited?

**Resp:** The access is easy but the speed is one of the lowest in the world according to many reports. It's easy, even in the provinces, it's also cheap but it's not as good. Like right now, I cannot see your face in the video.

**Intvr:** Oh, I can see you very well...

**Resp:** I think it's an indication that my connection is not that very good.

**Intvr:** Oh?

**Resp:** Yes, but the fact that it's easy means that millions of Filipinos can easily access the internet anytime.

**Intvr:** What do you think is the easiest method for Filipinos to access the internet? The most common? Is it through private internet? through free Wi-Fi spots or through the computer cafes?

**Resp:** I think it depends on where you are in the Philippines. I think that in the cities there are Wi-Fi spots or people have their own subscription to internet providers. In the provinces, I think there are internet or coffee shops that also offer internet access but I think, there are also those who would have their own services, you know, subscription to internet servers even in the provinces. Not really sure which one is more popular.

**Intvr:** Okay. Have you ever visited a computer cafe?

**Resp:** Yes, I've visited a computer cafe, many times for work, but you know, internet cafes also have, you may say, different categories, you know, the more expensive ones, you can expect better and faster internet access and then there are the cheaper ones and then there are those that, you know, are not so good, you may say, there are no windows and the place that looks unsafe. There are different types of coffee shops.

**Intvr:** Okay. Did you know that the Philippines created a law, I think it was 2 years ago, prohibiting internet cafes to put cubicles and the use of curtains within?

**Resp:** Oh, that was just two years ago?

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** Honestly, I haven't heard of that. What I know is the anti-sex trafficking law but about the internet cafes with cubicles, I haven't heard of that law yet. So, there is such a law?

**Intvr:** Yes, there is a law like that in the Philippines, because in the poor establishments, they use curtains so the place will be completely private in a way and that is prohibited now as well.

**Resp:** Oh, I didn't know about that and yeah, I forgot to mention that many internet cafes in the past, when I was still in college, used to have cubicles but I haven't seen cafes with curtains. Well, maybe not in the city. Nowadays, at least here in the city, the internet cafes, the good ones, no longer have cubicles even the internet cafes for online gaming. They no longer have that cubicles so the gamers are just seated side by side.

**Intvr:** Okay. Worldwide, I'm sure you are quite aware many laws have been adapted to protect the digital users and their data. The Philippines, actually has one of the strongest laws to protect the users compared to other countries. Are you aware of that? or were you aware?

**Resp:** No, honestly, I am not aware that at present there are such laws? Where can I find these laws by the way?

**Intvr:** You can actually find them in the government website.

**Resp:** Government site? What are the names of these laws?

**Intvr:** Privacy Laws usually. That's the wider name. If you look for privacy laws plus the digital education, you can usually find the laws about the Philippines, but if you can't, just let me know and I can send them to you because I have it in archive. I can easily send all the information you need or want to read about the laws. It's totally fine.

**Resp:** Yes, yes. I might look into that when I have the time.

**Intvr:** Okay. Given that the privacy laws are very strict but do you think that people would be willing to share more information, if they know that it would be used by entities to pursue crimes as in online exploitation?

**Resp:** Here in the Philippines, we have the data privacy law that has been recently passed. I think in the cities and in the education system, some people will be more careful with the information that they share but, in the provinces, I'm not sure if they have heard of these laws or are taking these laws seriously at present. You mean when it comes to supporting law enforcement agencies? Is that your concern?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes.

**Resp:** Well, I think it depends on the person's intentions so if they really have strong evidence to help law enforcement, agencies or officers, I think they would be willing to do so. For as long as they would not be incriminated in the process but, you know, that also depends on the credibility of the law enforcement officers. If the law enforcement officers are to rely- to be entrusted then I think people will come out and help these officers go after criminals or syndicates, sex traffickers for example.

**Intvr:** Okay. Let's move on to the main topic. You already spoke a lot about it since you worked from ECPAT but have you by any chance ever found any child-related pornography material while online? but like, not searching for it but it happened to pop out

**Resp:** Just by browsing?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** So far, no. I haven't seen any child-related pornography material popped up while browsing but of course when I was in ECPAT, I did try to check the websites they point out, just to know which is which and I think that was the time when I realized that there is such a thing called dark web.

**Intvr:** Have you ever heard about 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** No, it's my first time to hear that. What is it about?



**Intvr:** The Daisy's Destruction was a very big deal in the online community at least in the West. It was a very popular incident because it was a group of videos that a man from Australia did in the Philippines with three different girls. One of which was fifteen months old and the other two were less than 10. They were very sexually abusive videos, with him, his girlfriend and the little kids. Not only did he abuse them, he actually made the tool, the girls used to dig their own graves so they would be buried there. It was like 5 different videos, he streamed them first through a website in the dark web and then he recorded them and sold them. The authorities were able to catch him because his girlfriend felt guilty and let one of the girls out. The girl went to the police and the police were able to capture Phill. He was prosecuted and is currently in jail. This was all very recent. He's in jail but if you see the small reporting that you have with him, he has no sense of guilt, he's perfectly fine and the videos are very, very bad to view, you know, they are very sad, to be less explicit. So sad even the police had trouble viewing them, they were not able to view the full videos. This was a big deal in the west because they were such small children and it involved an Australian man. It called a lot of attention from the media but there's very little people in the Philippines that heard about it, because in the beginning of our interview about livestream exploitation, this would be the very first case we think about in the west.

**Resp:** You know, I did not hear about this in the news whatsoever. When did this happen?

**Intvr:** 2008 maybe?

**Resp:** Okay, okay. 2008, 2010. Ah...I remember! I think it was not referred to as 'Daisy's Destruction'. Yeah, I can remember but it is not called as Daisy's Destruction and then it was not reported on mainstream media. I read about it on social media and then from ECPAT but not on mainstream media.

**Intvr:** Is that common? Is it common for general media not to report cases like this?

**Resp:** In general media?

**Intvr:** Yes...

**Resp:** I think no, not common because here in the Philippines, mainstream media is heavily focused on politics and show business and corruption. Well, from time to time, there are reports

about sex trafficking but it's not really one of the main concerns of the Philippine society and mass media right now.

**Intvr:** Okay. How easily do you think it is for a child to find materials like these? Pornographic materials I mean?

**Resp:** It's just one search away. When a child is on Google or YouTube, it's that easy. I heard that on YouTube for example, there are ways for predators to bait children into watching certain shows that are not meant to be seen by kids so I think it's really easy especially when they are not guided by their parents.

**Intvr:** I see, Hmm recently some reports actually reveal that children prefer to spend more time online speaking with other people than speaking face to face so this creates another opportunity for predators to engage with children by pretending to be their age. Do you think that this is common in the Philippines?

**Resp:** I haven't read any studies that has looked into this problem. I only heard about these on social media but I think it's very likely you know, because cellphones here are very cheap, it's easy to access the internet and kids as young as grade schoolers have their own social media account so if they're not supervised by their parents or caregivers they can easily become victims of- what you call? Streaming?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** You know, adult pretends they care about the young kids, that they are, you know, friends, they are out there to take good care of them so things like that are very likely if young children are not supervised. Here in the Philippines if both parents are working, you know we have many parents working overseas, Overseas Filipino Workers. So, if their children are left here in the Philippines unsupervised then that could be a problem.

**Intvr:** When it comes to social platforms, which do you think is the one used the most to initiate these sorts of contacts?

**Resp:** Well, here in the Philippines, Facebook is very, very popular. I think, we have the highest rate of use of Facebook in the world, so I think, that's the most common social media platform used in establishing contact for young children, if one may say so. Yeah, I think Facebook is the most popular platform.

**Intvr:** Did you ever heard of Project Sweetie?

**Resp:** Project what?

**Intvr:** Project Sweetie.

**Resp:** Like sweets?

**Intvr:** No, no. Sweetie, it's a name they gave to a robot girl.

**Resp:** Oh, okay. No, not yet. I haven't heard about that. What is it about?

**Intvr:** The Project Sweetie was actually one of the first projects in the Philippines to try and catch predators who try to roam the children. It's from an NGO called Terre des Hommes from Sweden. They created a robot image of a girl that looked like a young Filipino girl and then they began to enter shops and they created Facebook accounts and try to talk with men there to see how easy it was to gain access to them. This Project Sweetie was unfortunately shut down because of Europol. It turned out they were not aware of this project beforehand and that made them unhappy. At the end of the project though, they were able to get 1000 predators. They had the credit cards, their real names and everything because it was so easy for the fake children to get access to those things but at the end, they were only able to process 3 men of the men.

**Resp:** 1000?

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** That's a lot.

**Intvr:** Yes, and to think that the project lasted only for like 3 months. So, that's a lot of data for so little time.

**Resp:** Yes, and it's sad.

**Intvr:** And they believed it to be more but they didn't have the enough people to work on it at the same time. You know, if they have more people working on it, maybe they could have caught more.

**Resp:** Yeah, I mean 1000 men doing this to small children.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Yes. I heard about it when I was in ECPAT, even saw a video of it but I didn't know the name of the project and what happened after.

**Intvr:** Yes, actually they are trying to launch now Sweetie 2.0 which would be the same type of project but Europol is aware, Interpol is aware so hopefully the project will kick off to be more productive than the first one.

**Resp:** Okay, hopefully.

**Intvr:** Yes. Now regarding the specifics of livestreaming sexual abuse in the Philippines, you already told me that you know there are cottage business where families are involved or the community is involved. Do you have anything else to add to the matter?

**Resp:** Well basically, that's it, you know, what I learned from ECPA and from people I know, it's hard to get the cooperation of the parents, because it's the parents themselves who push their children to get into this kind of work. They are in communities, where everyone knows what's going on in these communities but then they cover up for each other because they all know that it's a good source of income for their families. Way back in ECPA, I think, it's a problem for law enforcement officers, for social workers who would go up there and try to convince the parents to send their kids to school but then the parents wouldn't cooperate because they want their kids to earn money for them instead of sending them to school.

**Intvr:** So, poverty is actually at the root of the issue?

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** This is common in tourist spots. Places where foreigners come for a vacation and they start their operations there with the local children. What else? I think basically, that's it..

**Intvr:** Is it a well-known issue outside of the communities? Is the rest of the Philippines aware of this?

**Resp:** I don't think so. I don't think, like what I said, it's not always discussed on mainstream media. There are not enough reports about this and then culturally, this problem it involves sex and, in the Philippines, talking about sex is a taboo. So one of the reasons why it's not seriously discussed in the country maybe, I don't know, is it okay turning a blind eye on this problem because in some localities it's a source of income? you know. I heard that the kids earn in dollars! and when you convert dollars to pesos it's really a lot of money for many poor families. I don't know.

**Intvr:** Did ECPACT give you an idea of the values of how much they earn?

**Resp:** Oh, no, no. I can't remember the exact figures now. No, but it's in dollars. For example, I heard from a friend who has relatives in the province and then he was asking his mother in the province to look for a house helper and come work for them here in the city but his mother told him that the young women in their province no longer want to work as house keepers in the cities because they are now working as online sex workers and they are earning from that kind of job compared to working as house keepers in the cities. So, it's a more, you know...but the exact amount, I haven't heard of that.

**Intvr:** I heard only rough values. I know it can be very cheap for Americans. Like if the child is only resting and not doing anything it can go from 10 to 30 dollars which I don't know how much in the Philippines.

**Resp:** 10 to 30 dollars? That's a lot for a child. If you have 30 dollars...

**Intvr:** They spend a little time doing it so it's probably very rentable. It's for few minutes, doesn't last long.

**Resp:** ...That's 1,500 pesos, you can buy a lot from that already. Is that for 1 hour?

**Intvr:** Less 1 hour, like 30 minutes or so.

**Resp:** If you live in the province, that could buy a week's worth of food for your family.

**Intvr:** I know about the most expensive one that there is record of. They pay you 500 dollars for sex with animals of a young girl.

**Resp:** 500 dollars?

**Intvr:** Yes. It was one girl and a dog, I believe. One or two dogs, I'm not sure now. It's the most expensive one, the one that involves animals.

**Resp:** Okay, that sounds very scary.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's getting worst in time, instead of people accommodating the sexuality, it's expanding to very dark parts. You already mentioned that this is not approached in the open media? What about the government entities? Are there well-known laws about it?

**Resp:** Well there are laws, I think, I don't remember the exact ordinance. There's a law on sex trafficking and human trafficking, there are key politicians who are looking into this but right now this is not one of the priorities of these politicians. I'm following one, she's a Justice or an undersecretary of Justice. She just went to New York about anti-human trafficking here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** I wasn't aware of that.

**Resp:** There is one in New York, I think, but it's not really a major, major issue. It's not being framed as an urgent issue in the Philippines right now, although, I think it should be but it's not. At present, the Philippines is distracted by the West-Philippines-Sea South-China-Sea problems. That's what they talk about on the news, they talk about rice problem, budget, corruptions etc. and of course, polio outbreak if you heard of that or the return of polio in the country, measles outbreak, so health-related problems, also HIV problem but these online sexual exploitations on children, no it's not being discussed as an urgent issue in the country right now.

**Intvr:** So even though the case is evolving in number and in severity, the awareness of the people is not, In your opinion?

**Resp:** No, in my opinion. No.

**Intvr:** Okay. When it comes to the children, do you have a general idea of how old and the gender is in highest demand?

**Resp:** The exact number, no but I know it could be as young as preschool, grade school, mostly girls but I heard when I was in ECPA that boys are gradually are being included in this dark market. Boys are also being included in this online business.

**Intvr:** According to interviews, previously done with the Filipino families that were involved in such cases. The families usually claim that the children were free of harm since there were no direct contact between them and the predator. Do you share the same perspective like this?

**Resp:** Oh, of course not but first, yes, that's what I heard from ECPAT and then from social workers of ECPAT and then from people who have a direct knowledge of this, so when parents are confronted by social workers or by neighbors, they'd say that well - there's really no harm they don't have to see the foreigners anyway - but for me in my opinion, I think that there is serious harm especially these are young children, who should be going to school, so now, their privacies are compromised because once you upload something on the internet it could be there forever, so when they are old, it's still there and then, psychologically, there are emotional development, I think, will be compromised when it comes to how they view their bodies, how they view their sexualities, if their sexuality is up for sale it can be bought so easily by strangers, I think this has a is serious psychological consequences for the development of children who are involved in this industry. I think it would eventually harm the way they would form relationships in the future when they engage sexual romantic relationships, I think their past will have an effect on their future relationships and interactions with their partners.

**Intvr:** Okay, so even though families give that response about it. Family or peers, do you truly believe that they are unaware of the harm? Are they that innocent or is it just a way to justify their actions? even though deep down they know that the child is being affected?

**Resp:** I think it could be both. It depends on the families. Let me see, I think it really depends on how deprived or impoverished the families are, if these families are really impoverished and are in dire need of money. I think they wouldn't even think about the effect or impact of these online abuses on the health or the wellbeing of their children because they themselves are struggling financially, emotionally, psychologically. They might no longer have the cognitive resources to process long term consequences of these practice on their children's developments. So that could be one. Of course there are families or parents, who also care for their children because I would like to believe that Filipinos are family oriented as whole, in general who love their family members but if they have no many choices in life, even though they care or they love their children, they might set aside their care or feelings for their children and grab the opportunity that's in front of them. I think, since there's not much surveillance or there's not much deterrence on the part of the government, I suspect parents are not as fearful, they feel like embodied to make decisions on behalf of their children because they might be thinking that these are my children. They are MY children so I can make decisions on their behalf. They might have that kind of mindset, that's why you know they go on with these kinds of practices but I believe that if the government is stricter with the laws and policies, for example, regular home visitations by social workers or law enforcement officials. I think many parents would think twice or thrice before they let their children go into these kinds of work.

**Intvr:** Isn't this a bit conflicted with the relation? I mean, if the Filipino people are religious as you mention and as the research says. The fact the they are doing these to their child is against it, like I'm a Catholic too, so the first thing it would come to mind would be, how I would be judged in the eyes of God and things like that. How is not that a detriment to the families, you think?

**Resp:** Yes. There should be a conflict between their decision and their religion but as I mention earlier, Philippine society is also heavily influenced by western values of materialism and consumerism, for example, and so it's possible that for some families that could be more important and of course, addressing basic needs, these are more important than their religious beliefs. An example is a family in the province would watch an American show and they see that all the good things that money could buy from all these shows and that creates envy and aspirations on their part to want the same things and that could be more important for some families, more important than their religious beliefs.



**Intvr:** Okay. I was also told that what happens there when it comes to religion is that it's selective, they think about the religious factors but they take only the part that is good for them like the fact that everything will be forgiven if you open your heart and you will admit your sins. Is that true? is it common to think that way?

**Resp:** Yes, we have a term for that 'bahala na', that's a Filipino word, 'bahala na', which means 'God will take care of the rest, will take of your problems'. It can be used to comfort yourself when you know that you are into wrong doings, when you just hope that God will take care of everything in your life but when it comes to specific practices I don't think many religious people are that careful especially when certain needs are not being met out of poverty or out of necessity.

**Intvr:** Okay. Do you think that even to these days that online exploitation is still being addressed more likely than it happens offline?

**Resp:** Here in the Philippines?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** The answer is no because until today, I see or hear from the local news it's more about offline sexual harassment or rape cases but when it comes to online problems or regarding sexual exploitation, I think that the government is not making progress in terms of addressing the problem and I think that it's getting worse because of the popularity of Facebook. It's becoming more popular, more accessible it's getting cheaper in the Philippines and young children are all into Facebook, Instagram and YouTube nowadays and there are no government regulation looking into this so it's all up to the parents to guide their kids or monitor their children but that can only be true for educated parents or parents who really care for the wellbeing of their children or who really practice their religion to heart, who are sincere about their religion but that may not be true for all parents.

**Intvr:** Okay. I don't know if this still happens but child prostitution is usually still portrayed in the west that in the Philippines it's very visible and frequent in the streets of some cities. Is that still happening?

**Resp:** From what I've heard from ECPAT, I think I mentioned that earlier, Especially in tourist spots in the Philippines, where the beaches are very beautiful, so these are well known tourist spots all over the world but then at the same time, it's also a well-known destination for pedophiles, for those who plan to exploit children, well, at least in the tourism industry, I hear that they are increasing awareness on the part of the people who work for in the tourism industry, you know, people who work in hotels, airlines, resorts are being made aware that sex tourism is happening in many parts of the country but I think that's just for the tourism sector but for the broader sector of society, I think there is not much awareness and there's not much action to address this issue.

**Intvr:** Okay. Even though it is not a popular issue, it's more well known by the people, do you think the society will address the online exploitation, the same way they address prostitution? Will they turn a blind eye to it when time passes and the problem is not solved?

**Resp:** Well, it's sad to say that yes. I hope not...I hope there should be an ongoing discussion about this. Recently, they passed a data privacy law, privacy matters and so many institutions all over the country are now being more careful about the privacy of minors but for the communities that engage in online sex industry, it's a different matter altogether but there's a strong call to action from the citizenry or certain numbers of civil society and NGOs I think that at some point it will become a priority of our government, but realistically I think we are far from that time yet. The Philippines is still working on more urgent issues like shortage of rice, all these health issues and so there's not much serious talk about online sex industry.

**Intvr:** Okay. About the international and transnational knowledge. Are you aware of the legal age of consent in your country?

**Resp:** The legal age of consent for sex?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** It's 18. So, if you are below 18 then you are considered a minor and you should have the consent of your parents for all of your activities. That's our legal age of consent here in the country.

**Intvr:** Okay. Less than 18 is only? The illegal age of consent?

**Resp:** For?

**Intvr:** For what you mentioned.

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Because it's constantly noticed that 12 is the legal age of consent of sexual activity in the country.

**Resp:** Yes, I think so, 12? or is it 15? I'm not sure.

**Intvr:** They are trying to raise it. It is 12.

**Resp:** Right now, it's 12, right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** And there's a move to raise it to 15, there has been some discussion on that in the Senate or in the Congress because some NGOs are pushing to raise the age to 15 because 12 is very low and it's one of the lowest in the region in South-East Asia and in Asia.

**Intvr:** Do you know that there's also a movement to lower it?

**Resp:** Lower the?

**Intvr:** Lower the age of consent.

**Resp:** Oh, yes, yes. I heard that some groups want to lower it to 9? I think or...

**Intvr:** Yes, it's 9.

**Resp:** Yeah, which is also very scary.

**Intvr:** Yes. Given that there's a need for the child's testimony for a trial to be held against a family in cases like this. Do you find that the judicial system in the Philippines has alternative paths, to deal with these cases?

**Resp:** Yes, I think yes because culturally, I mentioned earlier that, in the Philippines, children are raised or trained to defer to their parents and in a case like sexual trafficking or sexual exploitation, it's hard to expect children to say something negative against their parents or to compromise their parents and so I think that alternative paths should be taken into consideration like working with social workers or an out of court settlement, discussion or agreement then they should work closely with counselors or psychologist and social workers. From my experience in ECPAT, is that it's usually the social worker that works closely with the child victim. They go to court and the victim gets confronted by her parents and it was a very traumatic experience for the child and you can just imagine that not all children are capable of compromising their parents' wellbeing let alone want to see them go to jail because of what they've done.

**Intvr:** Regardless of this, which happens in lot countries, the child testimony is still the main evidence. Do you trust the justice system in the country?

**Resp:** Pardon? If you...?

**Intvr:** Do you trust it? The justice system.

**Resp:** The system?

**Intvr:** Yes, if you trust it?

**Resp:** If the system will prioritize the testimonials of the child and if the system is really upright and is not vulnerable to bribery then yes. In other countries, well they have the jury system, right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** You know where there's a group of people deciding but, in the country, it's really just the judge that gives the verdict and that can be sometimes be problematic also, so if they're not vulnerable to bribery or threat it can be...

**Intvr:** In Portugal, the system is the same, we only have 1 jury, so it creates a lot of commotion, because there isn't full trust in the jury, in the system itself because of bribery and so on and in major cases it's often very questionable.

**Resp:** Yes, you mean if, they get bribed by international operators, then that's a lot of money or threats. Then there you go.

**Intvr:** Okay. When it comes to international actors such as NGOs like ECPAT, that you mentioned, are you aware of other organizations, any else, active in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Related to sex trafficking?

**Intvr:** Online sex trafficking, yes.

**Resp:** Online sex trafficking, well there's Plan International, if you heard of that but Plan International is more focused on the education of girls, the empowerment of girls so to speak. I think UNICEF should also be looking into this, what else? And then there are local NGOs here that also look into the wellbeing of girls and women because we also have a big problem in the country about Teenage Pregnancy, we have the highest rate in South-East Asia, again, so local NGOs are prioritizing that as of now. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Do you know like specific missions or projects that international NGOs are developing?

**Resp:** For this sexual exploitation? No, honestly no. It's only with ECPAT that I've heard about these things. You know, monitoring? They really have people on the ground, they are all over the country, they are distributed specially in tourist areas, they get the numbers, talk to the families then and sometimes, they really get the child and then they bring it to the shelter, the ECPAT shelter, so that's all I know, ECPAT basically.

**Intvr:** Okay. Given general knowledge I guess, do you think international organizations, when they do try to adapt matters in the Philippines, do they respect the Filipino values and cultural dynamics or do you think that the approach is standardized if it works, for example, in Spain, it will work in the Philippines.

**Resp:** Please repeat the word, there's a word that I missed from what you said. If they are to adopt a...?

**Intvr:** Adopt an approach.

**Resp:** An approach? Ah okay. Well, a good NGO should adjust according to the values and practices that are on the ground, so if an international organization like ECPAT, should come here, part of their agenda is to learn first the culture and the social dynamics before they roll out their programs or projects in grass roots communities because what worked in other places might not work in other places precisely because of the difference in cultures and values.

**Intvr:** So, you think that ECPAT does respect that?

**Resp:** What do you mean, there is...?

**Intvr:** You think that, given that you know ECPAT, do you think that they respect these differences? These cultural differences?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. Yeah, I think so because the strategy of ECPAT is, they hire local social workers, of course from time to time there are foreign employees or workers also, but it's usually the local social workers who are aware the cultural practices of the region who work with these families.

**Intvr:** Okay, that's good. Okay, so what often happens is international organizations adopt matters that focus on education and family to prevent more children to become victims.

**Resp:** Kindly repeat the questions please.

**Intvr:** What I was asking about is that international organizations focus mostly on child education and family education when trying to prevent more children to become victims of these type of criminality. So, given the particularities of the country of the Philippines and the needs of the communities, what you think should be the focus areas of these organizations? Should it really be focusing on the general education? Or should they, I don't know, be teaching specific jobs to the people in those communities? or how to take advantage of local resources? Which will give better outcomes?

**Resp:** I think it should be a combination of these things you mentioned. It cannot just be simply about the education of the parents or families, or the education of children. It should also include the creation of the livelihoods and training for parents to earn incomes and maximize their resources. If these NGOs have a lot more resources, they could help create jobs in these cottage

industries and in these communities that would be helpful so then they have sources of income and then if possible NGOs could also work with the local law enforcement agency of certain provinces or towns, coordinate with them with regard to the monitoring of certain communities, they could do that right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** You know, they could see the internet traffic in certain spots, how heavy the internet traffic is, or the remittances of the dollars, transactions in banks, of course, it sounds a lot more complicated but I think a serious problem like this should be approached in a more comprehensive manner.

**Intvr:** Yes. Okay, so, as a final remark, do you have any other ideas you would like to point out? Any suggestions? Anything you like to share? Or ask me?

**Resp:** I want to ask you why you chose this topic and why the Philippines? for the suggestion, I think it would be good that when you educate the girls, for example, the children in general. NGOs could look into how they could empower these children by presenting alternative ways of relating with their parents. I don't know if that's possible, because as I've said in the country, children really follow their parents even sometimes when parents become abusive in some families, children might not have the vocabulary of parental abuse and things like that. What else? You know, focus on empowering boys and girls and as part of the attempt to help them recover from trauma. There you go and then there's policy-based approached. You know, really influencing legislation, that kind of work. I think that's all, Patricia and my questions, why did you choose this topic and are you a social worker? are you into social work? and why Philippines?

**Intvr:** I'm a student still, I'm finishing my Masters in Humanitarian Action and International Cooperation so to finish the thesis, I needed a topic and since at a young age, I actually have always been very curious about what happens online and unfortunately, I did some research through the dark web and very soon saw a lot things I would like not to have seen and so that led me to be interested in the subjects of cybercrime, and since I study Criminology, I was focused on sexual crimes given that I have personal connections with people who are sexually abused and it led me to try and see how technology relates to this and I began to unravel all the sexual crimes online,

the pornography so on and eventually I bumped into cases of what happens in the Philippines, the cottage business, I studied the culture, I realized it was very family-driven, I learned about how it had influence from the west, you know like you told me, like it was colony from the United States and so it was Catholic and I always associated Asian countries mostly with other religions. It really captured my attention as to how this connects to the web and how technology would influence everything there. There was so little research when I began to try and spread it, when I began to present small papers in school. The teachers didn't understand it, didn't know about it. I spoke to a member of the United Nations from Bangladesh who didn't know about it either and actually told me that it would be important to produce information like this so people become aware of what's happening around the world and so here I am trying to collect information and hopefully do a good job to provide more intel so that other people can do more investigations in the case and help.

**Resp:** Okay. Well, you got yourself into something very serious especially dark web, it's so heavy on the heart getting into these things.

**Intvr:** Yes, yes.

**Resp:** That's what I felt when I was in ECPAT and when I was working with the children. Anyways Patricia, good luck and I wish you well.

**Intvr:** Thank you so much for the help!

**Resp:** You're welcome. It's really my pleasure to participate in this kind of study because I think it's really important. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you!

**Resp:** Good luck, Patricia and if you could give me, I don't know, a summary of your study in the future?

**Intvr:** Yes, once I finish it. I can send it to thesis and you can read it. If you want, once I pass everything to the computer, I can send you the interview and if there's something that is not well captured or if you like to rephrase it. You can do that.

**Resp:** Ah yeah, Thank you! I would look forward to that, Patricia.



**Intvr:** Okay, so I would be in touch and in any case, if you know anyone that might be willing to participate as well, please direct them to me because it's hard to find people willing to talk about it.

**Resp:** Ah, okay. I will try to ask my friend; she's working for another NGO. If she has time, I will ask her to get in touch with you.

**Intvr:** Okay. Thank you so much!

**Resp:** You're welcome, Patricia.

**Intvr:** Have a nice day. Okay, thank you!

**Resp:** Yes, thank you!

**Intvr:** Bye.

**Resp:** Ba-bye.

**Interview V**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 5] [0509a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [09/10/2019] [13:32 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview V] [02:24:21]

**Resp:** Hello can you hear me?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes I can hear you. And you?

**Resp:** Yes I can hear.

**Intvr:** Hmm, okay I hope your day was a little less busy than usual.

**Resp:** It wasn't but it's okay. It's the start of our International Day of the Girl Child celebrations will be on Friday but we've been making preparations for it so- it's one community after the other, it's fun kind of busy.

**Intvr:** Oh I completely understand. Hmm, for starts I would like to thank you for taking time of your busy schedule.

**Resp:** You're welcome, you're welcome.

**Intvr:** Also before we start I'm not sure if you are aware of this but to conduct and record the interview as I mentioned in the Statement Letter I sent you earlier on I need your consent, usually it is required a written consent but I was given authorization from the University to ask for a verbal one. So before we begin with...Oh you did read the Statement Letter I sent you right?

**Resp:** Yes, yes I did.

**Intvr:** Okay, so what I need is that you state that you're participating voluntarily and fully aware of your rights. If that's okay.

**Resp:** Sure. With respect with the present study I am aware of my rights, I was informed fully of my rights as a participant of the research and I am voluntarily participating in this interview process.

**Intvr:** Alright, that's it thank you. Okay, the first data I need to collect is basically just some demographics. So-

**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 39 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: Presently Working on Dissertation for a PhD, so Post-Graduate on Development of Psychology.
- Profession: Student/ Faculty Teacher
- Marital Status: Single
- Children: No

**Intvr:** So to begin I would like to ask you some questions about the Filipino culture, so if you don't mind I would like you share what you believe to be some of the values and cultural aspects that you find important in the Philippines.

**Resp:** The Filipino culture generally view on- see ah- a lot of values as part of its culture. Personally the one's that I share is higher regard for education and love of family. Oh probably part of the reason why I wanted to become a social scientist. Yeah Is because of the pride that I could give both parents when I become successful in this chosen field. So- most of the things that

like any other Filipino most of the things I do is to make your parents proud and part of it is the pursue of academic excellence I guess and the contribution for the society, things like that.

**Intvr:** What about other values that you know that- exist in the Filipino society but you don't exactly partake of them.

**Resp:** Hum- Obedience. I am not a very obedient person and that's something they really value. So- Yeah children should follow instructions from parents, children should follow instruction from teachers, we are not supposed to disagree, we are not entitled to feel upset because generally things are already made-done easy for us. So we shouldn't complain, we shouldn't answer back but these are not things I value as part of the love of family. Another thing that I share as part of the Filipino values is I guess is patriotism or nationalism because it's one of the things that's been in my family for a long time, we really want to- we were raised to be contributing members so all of my siblings, all of my cousins we were trained like that, growing up in a family of police officers, military personnel, government employees. These are things that are institute in us as contributing members of the society even if you're not in politics but- if you do things, you have to do it well and make sure that other Filipino people will benefit from what you do. That's probably the reason why I'm also here in this kind of work.

**Intvr:** Right...Hmm- What about Public Image is that important in the Filipino culture?

**Resp:** Public Image, oh yeah. For a lot of people, it's very important 'Saving Face'. I forgot what it's called. But there is a Filipino term for it but hum- being shamed is really- whether it is face to face or online or in print, in media it's very- it's regarded. So- when people are, even when people don't have enough money but if there is a town fiesta or there is a town festival or there is a family celebration that needs to be done people, many people still borrow money just so they can do the celebration. So that they can spend for the celebration even if it put them in debt. So yeah, 'Saving Face' would also mean you know, getting a girl pregnant and the girl will be forced to get married because, the pride of the family will be shamed or the name of the family will be shamed. So even if the girl doesn't want to get married or the guy doesn't want to get married, especially if they are very young, they'd have to tie the knot.

**Intvr:** Oh...I wasn't aware that they would be that strict.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** How old do they have to be before they get married, in the Philippines, do you know?

**Resp:** People can get married at age 18. It's already legally binding to get married at age 18. But before that it can be nullified because their underage, but at 18 up until 22 men and woman still need to get parental consent. They can only get married without parental consent at the age of 23. 23 for girls and 22 for boys actually.

**Intvr:** Okay, I didn't know that...thank you. What about Hospitality? I was told previously that the Filipino people are very hospitable for foreigners for example.

**Resp:** They are generally hospitable not only to foreigners but to- friends of friends. You know, when you have common friends, they find out you have common friends or common relatives, people are very hospitable. I- this is only my 5th month in this province, I've always been based in Manila but on my first week here in the province hmm- I didn't- I felt welcomed. I felt welcomed in the communities. Even if it's a very new community and I don't under- I don't know the local language, I don't know the local community, people are very accommodating when it comes to getting me acquainted to the kind of life here. I think it's true for a lot of Filipino's but again, I guess it's one of those things I don't share so- [laughter] I forgot about it.

**Intvr:** But it is a very nice trait for a society.

**Resp:** Yeah it is.

**Intvr:** I was also made aware that even if it's not exactly a value, people should not meddle in another's business, as in they should only worry with what happens in their own lives.

**Resp:** It's true, that's why there's a lot of violence committed against children and woman which are not reported even if the entire community knows about it no one is going to report. And if you do report, you'd be the antagonist, you'd be a meddler and it's none of your business. It's a family thing, the law should not be intervening because it's something that should be, that should be resolved domestically. Yeah so- yeah.

**Intvr:** I see. Okay, religion as you are probably well aware still plays a major role in many societies across the world. In the case of the Philippines do you think that religion still has an important role in how Filipino's lead their daily lives?

**Resp:** Yeah definitely. Filipinos are very religious people whether they're Islamic or Christians, whatever religious group they belong to they are very religious. So most people, most Filipinos act and are led by their religiosity, many Filipinos still believe in the concept of the [Inaudible 00:11:20 – 00:11:28] though I rarely hear this term from more recently but a lot of Filipinos still think that their ticket to heaven is through a merit system and that God or maybe Saint Peter keep score of all the good things you do or the number of times you pray in the day or the commitment to a novena cycle. So a lot of people still do that, the novena to different patron saints and- We have a patron saint for lost causes, we have a patron saint for lost items, for lost people... All of those things, but hum with this [Inaudible 00:11:46 – 00:11:49] that we were told or we were taught as children, every time we commit something that's morally unacceptable points are deducted from you [laughter] so your ticket to heaven gets shorter and shorter. Yeah so you can hear people cursing and in the same statement say the name of God. [chuckle] You know to-to I guess negate the whole cursing thing. Gender based violence (GBV) is very observable in everyday, practically all communities in the Philippines with less GBV observed in indigenous people's groups. Except the Islamized and the Christianized ones. I think it's because both religious groups perpetuate patriarchy values still. So- there are less GBV in indigenous groups, which are the traditional indigenous groups here in the Philippines like don't believe in the Christian faith or the Islam faith.

**Intvr:** Okay, so they practice other types of religions?

**Resp:** Yes, we have all sort of religion here.

**Intvr:** Okay...Do you think communities are affected differently by religious influences and cultural values depending on their socioeconomic status, for example are the poor more affected than the higher or middle class?

**Resp:** I like to think that both. Both hum- socioeconomic groups are affected by their religious and cultural believes. I think those in the middle, the middle...group are the ones that get more indifferent. So on the extremes, they are still very religious, you can see a lot of people, a lot of those in the ABC SEC socioeconomic groups they donate big time in church because they believe in the Church's cause but at the same time commit unfair labour practice. In the lower SEC they

believe that they get by in life because of their faith so even when they are hmm- you know, hand to mouth kind of earners they do get by because of their faith, it helps them cope.

**Intvr:** Okay...okay. Now in a wider perspective do you think the Philippines has been influenced by Western societies like the United States?

**Resp:** Yeah big time. We definitely are. Our educational system is patterned in the American system so- and it's the primary institution of learning so a lot of the things learned by the people are really, mostly western.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Can you give me other examples?

**Resp:** Hum a lot of things. food preference, fashion, pop culture, references from movies. Even in the rural areas, although we already have the Korean popular, popular- trends and Japanese popular trends here in the Philippines. These Asian trends are still highly westernized. Hmm the behaviour on social media ah- even the practice of religion is really western. That one is more Spanish than American, but even the concept of meritocracy that's very, that's very western is not so much Asian.

**Intvr:** Okay... Just give me a moment...

**Resp:** Hmm, still thinking... Well the urbanized communities of course is more Western compared to rural, the rural areas. Rural meaning that they are still in the agro, fishery type of economic life but then- generally the- [pause] the type of dreams and goals I guess, of the people of the younger generations are still really influenced by what is deemed as highly regarded jobs by the Western society, for example, you know, getting titles like being a teacher, being a lawyer, an engineer. Titles are very important. In the Asian culture we value, we value hard work, we value persistence, we value perseverance, I'm sure it's also valued in the Western society but titles are not as important in South-East Asian cultures until it became westernized. Ah- our kind of consumer behaviour is highly western; the traditional Filipino culture is more sustainable but with ah- with the Spanish and American influence we are more consumer driven already. The capitalist behaviour.

**Intvr:** That's one of the things I wanted to ask about actually, capitalism and the consumer behaviour.

**Resp:** [Chuckle] Yeah our consumer behaviour is highly driven by the Western culture. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Even the poorest communities? Do they still-

[Interruption by the Interviewee]

**Resp:** Yes. Yes. They still do. In material possessions, in their desire for work, the kind of work... Like the Philippines is a rich, is a very rich country in terms of natural resources but nobody wants to- to work with the soil. Nobody wants to work with the land and the sea, because we were made to believe that these kinds of work is less dignified compared to the- to the office type of work.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Now I would like to ask some questions about the ITC's, information and technology basically. In your opinion, in the point that we currently find ourselves, do you think the internet has caused more harm or good?

**Resp:** Definitely yes. In the Philippines is really very evident. Hum- you do know that we are the top social media users worldwide for 4 years, already right?

**Intvr:** Yeah...yes, it was quite an impressive discovery when I first learned about it.

**Resp:** Yes. I'd like to think it's not [chuckle].

**Intvr:** Well in a way it is, if we, well If we take the negative parts that inevitably have resulted from it.

**Resp:** We continue to use it right? And it's scary, it's scary for s social scientist like myself or a psychologist like myself in human development it's really scary that we don't learn. We don't learn from the negative experiences that we have here. Every day you find in the news reports of cyberbullying, cybersex crimes, a lot of cybercrimes happening like scamming. A lot of things really, I couldn't even name them all. But- the mere presence of 'bashers' and 'trollers' in the online community that values free speech it's really- it's a very dark online. The online work is a



very dark world with all of these things. Especially that- hum you also do know that Facebook had an agreement with a local telecoms company in 2014 and it made Facebook free for the subscribers and guess that's one of the reasons why we had such high numbers of users on social media.

**Intvr:** I actually wasn't aware of that. You said 2014 right?

**Resp:** Oh yeah! In 2014 Globe telecoms, it's a local telecommunication company here in the Philippines, had a partnership agreement with Facebook providing free access to local subscribers so when we use our cellular data, we automatically get free Facebook access. So- it's also one of the reasons why we use it so much.

**Intvr:** I really wasn't aware of that. It's not well known, I think...

**Resp:** I think it's not one of those things that the Philippines is proud of. It's not well known at all because, from what I read before it's like an experiment by Facebook that they'd like to know- I think they'd like to know how to expand of how- how the data analytics, the deep learning components of Facebook. I really don't know much about this part it's the underworld of the online community. But they were experimenting all of these, the data analytics, you know, for advertisements and all of these things.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** They did have an agreement so Facebook was doing an experiment as part of its development of the software, of course is good for Globe telecoms because it's a marketing strategy.

**Intvr:** Yes, of course.

**Resp:** And yes, after this 2014 partnership agreement I know how this very, very slowly- Actually not slow at all because it's already 2019, so just in a matter of 5 years the Filipino community has been divided into different polar believes. Polarities in religion, polarities in politics, polarities in principals. All of these things and then- I realized that our Facebook account has become an echo chamber for its users. Like it will only post things that you are interested in and even if you're still friends with some people their post won't appear in your wall because of this whole data analytics thing. I think it did affect human behaviour not just our online behaviour but our human behaviour in general because of- because of specially for the user. They feel like their virtual- they believe

that their Facebook identity is supposed to be an extension of their real self and when don't feel validated the way the way their validated in Facebook or in YouTube, or Instagram, or Snapchat, whatever social media group they're in ah- it affects their- their real life. They get depressed, they more angry- they get more angsty. We've experienced a lot of recent suicides because of online lashing, cyberbullying, in the past weeks we've had like 4 reports so it's really sad...

**Intvr:** It is and it's not just there. It happens a lot here as well, especially for teenagers or older children they care more about how they are seen online than how they are seen in real life. How they present themselves, how they react to their pictures is far more important than how they present themselves to the family and parents seem to...not see it and they don't realize how what they post online might reflect on their real life.

**Resp:** It's-It's the same here. Specially in the urban areas, in rural areas they use for a lot of different kind of things, most of- hum they still use it for school, they still get to share materials through Facebook but it really has its downside, especially when- when 'bashing' starts, it really gets lighten so their real self is already part of their virtual image and it's- It shouldn't be like that.

**Intvr:** No...it definitely shouldn't but I think we are at a point where there's no turning back from it, we can only try to manage and handle the side-effects.

**Resp:** Right. That's right I agree.

**Intvr:** So- accordingly to some data I collected they do claim that you are top users of social media but they also claim that there has been an extensive and rapid growth of internet coverage across the country. Do you agree and do you think the access is as easy as they seem to claim it to be?

**Resp:** It is already easier, although there are still areas that are considered dead spots but in the of a particular village or in the center of a particular municipality there are hotspots also. So people would converge there to get Wi-Fi access. Or to get data signal for free, yeah, it's provided by the local government for some. For some you have to- is like 'vendo-machine', like a vending machine but for internet or Wi-Fi signal. You need to insert coins into the machine and then you just have to tap your phone and then voila. Or there are also like, literally 'vendo-machines' or vending machines where computer machines are connected and then you insert coins and then you can use the computer in that 'vendo-machine' and then you can access the internet for like 15 minutes for 5 pesos... I'm not sure but it's really cheap and then cellular data is very cheap plus Facebook used

to be free when you have data so there is easy access. There's still-there already is easy access. In the island groups, offshore signals are difficult but it's just a boat ride, a 30-minute boat ride and then you can already get your regular data signal so it's easy.

**Intvr:** What about the quality of the connection? Do you have an idea of the megabits that you have for example at home and the speed?

**Resp:** In my house is- oh gosh I forgot...

**Intvr:** [Chuckle]

**Resp:** I-I'm subscribing to 25Mbps per month, I don't know what that means. [chuckle]

**Intvr:** It's 25 megabytes for second.

**Resp:** Yeah? Oh...here in the province I think it's 5Mbps.

**Intvr:** And that's about how much per month? In average I mean?

**Resp:** It depends on the telecom subscriber; I mean subscription so it can reach from 999 pesos to 3000 pesos for a residential kind of connection but if is for businesses is more expensive.

**Intvr:** Right makes sense, but it's actually slower than I thought.

**Resp:** [Chuckle] We are used to small data signal.

**Intvr:** Okay, what do you think is the most common method to access the internet? Is it the tablet, computers, smartphones...?

**Resp:** Mostly smartphones. A few years back it's tablets but then smartphones became cheaper and you know, it shifted to smartphones but in the rural areas the vendo-machine that I was talking about, that really hits big time, it's a hit.

**Intvr:** Right, okay... As you are probably aware there are many treaties and laws that have been adopted in order to protect digital users. The Philippines, in particular, established a set of Privacy Laws for this exact purpose. Are you familiar with them?

**Resp:** Oh yeah.

**Intvr:** So they are actually very restrictive compared to other countries and these can actually pose an obstacle for authorities when persecuting online crime. So my question is, do you think Filipino people would be willing to share more of their private data if that enabled authorities an easier pursue of online crimes as child exploitation?

**Resp:** When I read this question before it was difficult for me, because... A lot of people, a lot of Filipino people fall for scams, online scams offering money or free stuff. Hmm that's also, also why there a lot of crimes committed to younger children or older people who are using the internet, because of these scams. So with respect for these scams I guess they are very good at soliciting information from people, because people fall for them but I don't think that if you tell them it's to help solve crimes or is to enable entities to pursue crimes I doubt they would give you data. Because of that whole 'Saving Face' thing they probably think that - 'Are you doubting my personality? Are you saying that I'm committing a crime so that they can monitor my online activities?' – Many Filipino's can be paranoid that way. So...I'm not sure that if for the purpose of solving crimes they'll give private data but it's for scams they most probably will. [Chuckle] So sad.

**Intvr:** Do you think that given the country is often confronted with a lot of corruption problems is also something that would make people doubt that opening hand of their data would be actually done for good use?

**Resp:** Possibly, possibly, because...the Filipino community has been polarized big time with the whole political happenings here. Hum, so- recently there are reports that our President still has very satisfactory rates from people but I'm not really sure even if he receives very high popularity rate people will trust the government. I'm not sure about that. They will probably trust some personalities and politics but the agencies, the government agencies say, Social Welfare, the police, the military, the educational, the judiciary system... I doubt that they actually trust these agencies to do their jobs well, they do trust the President but not the agencies. So there' a disconnection.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's quite a disconnection between the two. I actually thought it would be otherwise, they would trust the agencies but not the President.

**Resp:** [Chuckle] No, it's not like that unfortunately.

**Intvr:** Thank you for...clearing that out for me.

**Resp:** Of course.

**Intvr:** This actually reminds me of something I forgot to ask you earlier when we were discussing the Filipino culture and values. I was also told that Celebrities have a big influence in the Philippines, do you think so?

**Resp:** That's right. Oh yes that's true. That's why we have a lot of politician/actor/singer/...

**Intvr:** Precisely, I was told about that...

**Resp:** Yeah but they are not really equipped with cognitive skills to make laws or to even study the context that they're working on so that they can create laws to mediate the quality of life of the Filipino people. It's really sad, there's this particular Senator jurying the- the Supreme Court Chief Justice impeachment trial when another Congressman presented by graphs of something that's not even very, very relevant to the case was presented. It got him to vote for the impeachment of the Supreme Court Justice considering that there is insufficient, there is insufficient of evidence actually that could impeach him because of the whole popularity, hum, the mileage, the media mileage, this whole impeachment trial became popularized so they have to vote for what the people like, something like that. It was sad, people will win politics by popularity rather than based on competencies.

**Intvr:** So you end up with celebrities in important positions of the Government instead of those prepared for the task...

**Resp:** Exactly. That's right, lots of them. We have a Sex Guru in the Government, representing the- foreign workers. I have no problem with that kind of work, I mean if they choose to be a part of it and if they feel that they can say no because they have control of their bodies I'm fine, but she is not trained. She is not trained to represent migrant workers, she was never a migrant worker, she doesn't study international law or she didn't study international law, I don't think she is the first person that will come to mind if you're going to assign someone to represent migrant workers, migrant Filipino workers. But she is, she is a good media influencer as part of her- sex channel. She actually lost the election though; she lost the election in May.

**Intvr:** That's good then...

**Resp:** But she was appointed a special post created by the President himself violating the one year, one-year suspension period for all losing candidates to occupy posts in the Government. So-so that rule was suspended by the President, the one year waiting period, she shouldn't be able to get into a government post by June next year but well she is a star and she got that post specially made for her [chuckle].

**Intvr:** That's...that's surprising but-but not in a good way, I guess.

**Resp:** [Chuckle] True, true I agree.

**Intvr:** Are you familiar with the term computer-shop?

**Resp:** Yap we have lots of them here.

**Intvr:** Okay because I was, initially, calling them cybercafés but the term didn't seem to be familiar.

**Resp:** We do call them cybercafés too or computer-shops, internet-shops.

**Intvr:** Have you ever visited one?

[Overlapping Speech]

**Resp:** They are used interchangeably here.

**Intvr:** Oh, okay.

**Resp:** Yes I do when my computers go berserk.

**Intvr:** Can you describe them to me?

**Resp:** It's usually- it's basically a regular shop with computers so you can rent and use them for a certain number of hours or minutes depending on what you need it for. I usually go to computer-shops when my laptop is broken or my desktop is broken and I need to encode or print stuff, email for work-school. For other people there are specific cybercafés like for gaming so the gaming cybercafés offer programs and activities for gamers so they have competitions, they have prizes and things like that. So only gamers go there because they don't have your regular word processing apps. There are there are a mix of both, there those with computers used for gaming on one side of the room and computers used for printing on another, another side used for printing or word

processing, so there're a lot of those things here because ah- it's an easy access for internet and document processing. We have a lot of those here.

**Intvr:** I was told that in the province's mostly there are these systems where you insert coins to use a computer, have you ever seen those?

**Resp:** Yes...yes. It's fascinating like you insert the coin and the computer will be connected to the internet. It fascinates me because I don't know- it's unusual for me. But it's really, it's really a hit in some rural communities. So that's how they access the internet but it's not connected to- it's not connected for word processing is just for internet so it's not for printing or- So in the streets you can see these vendo-computer units, you can see them around, children access it, adults access it, students access it and it's cheap. And you- you earn a lot of money for it.

**Intvr:** Right. Hmm- Do you know about a law that was established in the Philippines to prohibit closed cubicles and the use of curtains in this particular establishments?

**Resp:** I'm not aware of that particular law. I didn't hear about it. For this particular computer vendo-machines is that what you're talking about?

**Intvr:** No, no. It was more of a generalized law to be applied in computer-shops because at a certain point in the country, especially in small communities, there were computer-shops that allowed people to use curtains to obtain more privacy and that was used a lot by those conducting sexual online activities.

**Resp:** Oh these don't happen in cyber-café's, these actually happen in a home or in a rented house, not necessarily in the home of the owner, that's where crimes happen. So they're not usually cyber-café's.

**Intvr:** Yes, I am fully aware of it. It's not common but there were cases and that's why the law was established. There were even reports that they would pay the owner of the shop and so- the owner would leave and let them stay all night.

**Resp:** Okay...okay, these are probably in areas densely populated. In areas that are not densely populated ah- computer rentals are more exposed probably because these one's are licensed to operated, they have permit to operate, a business permit. While those small, computer rental, they don't have this permit, they are the ones that are under private networks. So there's already an

illegal context when they operate, that's probably why they pass the law on closed cubicles, I would understand.

**Intvr:** Have you ever found pornographic material of any kind while you were Online, when you weren't actually searching for it? Like in adds or pop-ups?

**Resp:** Not in particular...but there are adds that are insinuating or that will probably link you to those kinds of websites but it never happen to me. Like a pop-up, there was a pop-up leading to a porn site through some adds that could possibly lead to cosmetics, possibly cosmetics you know, slimming, boob-jobs I think that those are links that if you click them it can lead you directly to- These adds can lead you to those- Possible websites so- yeah.

**Intvr:** Did you ever heard or found anything related to with the title 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** Yes I did. When i...in the news, it was really hyped on the news for a particular time. After there were series of arrests, of foreign nationals that are into the whole cyberpornography business. So they come to the Philippines securing hum, a property, a house and they lure young children there- In one of the documentaries that I saw it was a newborn, it was an infant that was killed and the female partner of the guy, the one whose luring children in the cybersex den. The partner of the foreign guy who lures the children to this cybersex den actually got away with it, it was really- So yeah and then, yeah and then for a period of time I had my internship in ECPAT, End Child Prostitution and Trafficking, here in the Philippines and we had children who were survivors, who were rescued and were survivors of hum online sexual violence against children so- It's really heart breaking, I don't know if these kids can ever- ever go back to being kids again after what they have experienced in they- in those foreigners hands.

**Intvr:** Yes it's a really complex situation for them who experience it, for those who try to help...

**Resp:** That's right.

**Intvr:** How easily do you think it would be for a child with internet to access pornographic material?

**Resp:** I would not say easy, except if they are already exposed to it in some way it's not necessarily easy. Maybe in another form of media, hum, in densely populated communities' children are very much aware of sexual behaviour's. They hear it, they witness it [chuckle] it's just around. Because



houses are very small and there's no privacy at all and then the community is really just like [inaudible 00:51:30 – 00:51:34] would away from another family so I guess they are very exposed to sexual behaviour's already. Hum- For those in the university I received reports that children are able to accidentally access pornographic materials while using their parent's computers, ah- there are also parents that say they restrict the internet use so- I guess it's fairly accessible so parents have to consciously put an effort to restrict the browsing access of their children. Then maybe these pop-ups can really be- can really be that interesting for kids and get mousetrapped in it so- Maybe...maybe it is of easy access to the kids.

**Intvr:** You did mention that they are often exposed to it from a young age but-

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** To sexual behaviour's.

**Intvr:** Yes, ah- but I had the idea from my research that even though they are exposed there is still a taboo when it comes to talking about sex, so they have no sexual education per say.

**Resp:** [Chuckle]

**Intvr:** Is that true? Is my research in accordance with what you think happens?

**Resp:** There is none, no talk at all. If children start talking about sexual behaviour's with families the first thing that the parents would as is – 'Where did you learn that? The person that got you talking about it is a bad person. Stay away from that person.' – And that's the end of the conversation, sometimes they don't even ask – 'Where did you get that information?' – automatically you get a slap.

**Intvr:** Right...just because they mention the topic.

**Resp:** They should be, they should talk about it. I was talking about this earlier with our communications specialist in the project because I am not for censorship. To me it is important that every single topic it's discussed with young children specially if they ask about things, if they ask about sex, if they ask about things, they are curious about; if they ask about things that they observe around them like poverty... These things are things that should be discussed with their children on a language they can understand so- it is up for adults to learn how to talk to children and not for children to adjust to the ways of adult's communities. So we had a big conversation

about censorship and me not being for censorship even as a child development person, it was really a surprise for her. I told her that things that are online should be materials that are public. So if it's something private keep it to your private self you don't make people censor themselves because you want to post and it's a private material. Your crazy if you do that. Yeah so we should talk about things like these with children, gender based violence, LGBT, these are things that should be discussed, drug addiction, all of those things so that they know and they can make more informed choices as they grow up. Yeah...we also have increased rate of teenage pregnancy because of no sexual health education. These are a part of social issues.

**Intvr:** Is the pressure made by the Church with its stance against contraceptive measures also influencing the numbers?

**Resp:** Ah- The aspect of increase teenage pregnancy I can attribute it more to online access. We did a study in a zone up North. So these are predominantly indigenous groups we were comparing, were actually comparing child protection access in those communities and we saw that in Mindanao there were more cases of children in conflict with the law and the offenses are related to sexual behaviour, sexual related crimes. Up North, there is close to none of these types of things, usually their- usually their crimes are perpetuated by adults to young children but not for children against children. When people were looking at the data, we- the children themselves reported that they committed those things in Mindanao because of YouTube. So they can access pornographic materials in YouTube, they can actually hum see pornographic material in Facebook. I don't know how they search it or where they search it but they can find censor- materials for censorship in Facebook so that's how they- that's how they get aroused, that's how they get the sexual violence and that's how it got them to commit those crimes but in-in the zone there was none of that. So- one of the things that we inferred was maybe that we should really control, we should really control the content of- we should really control the access of children to these things. The content I think is something else, if it's really pornographic I think it shouldn't be up there in the first place but it's there so I don't know.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's very strange that they are able to find such things on YouTube and Facebook.

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** You mention this data was the result of a study you carried on, was it with ECPAT?

**Resp:** This one is with Child Fund.

**Intvr:** Oh is it published?

**Resp:** No, I didn't publish it, Child Fun should but I couldn't as a consultant.

**Intvr:** Oh right. In your opinion what is the main social platform where children first end up in contact with online predators?

**Resp:** Hum. In the Philippines is mostly Facebook, is mostly Facebook. In- yes because the youth here usually uses Instagram or Facebook. Instagram there's not a lot of conversations that can take place it's mostly exchange of media, videos or pictures but in Facebook they can actually converse, they can join chatrooms and yes there's this problem that sometimes children- children go into chatrooms to look for hook-ups, to find a boyfriend or a girlfriend, yeah just hook-ups. Yeah, some, some parents actually unto their children to look for somebody they can meet with, foreigners they can meet with so that they can- so that they can get out of poverty. Here in this province there are island groups where young girls at the age of 15 are groomed, groomed to become wives of foreigners. So there's like a group of, there's like this Facebook group looking for Filipino brides so foreigners from different countries and then, hum, Filipino girls are just...there. There are also dating apps to find foreign husbands and then- so they stop scouting at 15 so that they can focus on looking for somebody to get married to. So that they can get the citizenship and get out of poverty. So here there is, hum, an island community of young Filipina's married to older foreigners and they have built some sort of community there, they have livelihood there, hum, their children are there going to school. They did experience social mobility; their lives have become better because of it so- So it is like ah- a dream for many families for their young girls to get married to a foreigner.

**Intvr:** It's a way out.

**Resp:** Yes, it's a way out for social mobility.

**Intvr:** Regarding the specific topic of live streaming child sexual abuse in the Philippines what can you share with me about it?

**Resp:** Ah- there's a lot of those things here in the Philippines, both in Metro Manila and in the provinces. I used to work with Save the Children in the Philippines and there is this particular city

that we have, that we partner with, and unfortunate it's one of the cities with the top number of- with the prevalence of live sex streaming with little girls, with young girls as actresses, I don't know what to call them, but they are victims. It's really heart-breaking for me knowing that there's an area of Save the Children very strong on child protection but it still managed to grown like an industry in that particular area, in that particular village quickly and we knew all of the village captains we know all of the village leaders. We had discussed with them child protection, we have discussed with them child safe guarding, gender-based violence, violence against children, all of these things and yet they allowed it to happen right under their noses. In the Philippines, everybody knows everybody, it's like a thing like hum, one of the- one of the jokes, although it's not really funny for me, is that there is no serial killing in the Philippines because we will automatically know what's happening because everybody knows everybody's business so I wouldn't- I couldn't understand how these village captains allowed these things to happen under their noses. I'm sure you know about it, they're not doing anything so- It is, it's more than heart-breaking because we don't know the extent of psychological impact of these on children and they say that – 'It's okay because we're not touched, they just look at us, they just see us but they don't touch us so it's okay.' – but the psychological impact it can have on the children, in the future the behavioral impact of these things... They're not children anymore. So- yeah, I don't know what else to say about it. I think it's heart-breaking.

**Intvr:** Yes, it is. Hum...when I first started the research on the topic it was, it was hard not to be affected at a personal level over the things I learned... Hum...do you have an idea of how old the victims usually are?

**Resp:** Oh it can range from very young children 5, 6, 7 to teens 18 or older girls pretending to be young girls and- In the news we've heard, I've heard one where an infant died because the child was molested so- the infant died. Yeah that's horrifying. I don't know what kind of species commit that, I couldn't call that person human after doing that to a child, I just couldn't.

**Intvr:** Like you mentioned above...these types of crimes are happening and people are aware of them, at least for example in small villages or the province but overall, even in the major cities do you think Filipino's know that this is a growing phenomenon in the country?

**Resp:** It is. The city that I was telling you about it earlier it is actually one of the most progressive cities in the Metro Manila, it's not even in the province. It exists in the province but ah- the big ones, the big cybersex dens are mostly in Metro Manila and hum suburban areas around Manila but there are also in other metropolitan but they are mostly around the cities the big ones.

**Intvr:** Okay so to sum it up, people are aware. This is not a hidden issue?

**Resp:** It's not a hidden issue at all and everybody is against it, outward they are all against it, they're already talking about it, but when it's already happening to someone that they know they stop talking about it.

**Intvr:** Right because then you get into conflict with the values, where one should not meddle in another family's business.

**Resp:** Yes, that's right and it brings money. Sometimes they get to recruit other girls and it's a lot of money, I've heard it can be for younger children like 5, 6, 7 years old, for appearance it can be as high as 5000 pesos for 30 minutes. That's a lot of money for 30 minutes. So the whole remittance business is also big in the Philippines because of that.

**Intvr:** Ah- okay this one you already answered...just one second. Okay, hum, Given the widespread of the issue international laws and treaties were developed and the Filipino government has in fact been establishing more national laws in order to protect victims and tackle the crime. In your opinion, are these laws updated and being carried on as stated?

**Resp:** We have all kinds of laws to protect children, not just in online crimes. We have two volumes of laws [chuckle] that should be protecting children and these are really thick books of laws to protect children and woman. It's the enforcement of the law that's really- it's not being right. It's where we fail, because we're supposed to be reporting- we're supposed to report crimes as good citizens of a state we should be reporting crimes. So we will report it to the proper forum and then it will be settled, it can be settled in that forum. For example, in the village it can be settled because there is- The smallest unit of the judiciary is in the 'barangay' or the village levels. We have the local council for the protection of children, there are- there are cases that are already settled there so it doesn't escalate to getting reported to the police. Often when the issues can shame the family, for example this...it will not be reported at all. Or for example, for example, child rape it will not be reported because the perpetrator will just pay or marry the child.

**Intvr:** I see...

**Resp:** That, in the law, that should be reported to the police immediately, it should not go to the local council for the protection of children because that's a hideous crime, so it is supposed to be to the police, but the police... The police complain that it cannot act in a particular case of crime against children if the local social welfare doesn't write a case, hum, story about it. The social worker should be the one to file the case against the perpetrator and it should be the social worker who manages that particular case of the child. So often, the police receive- if the file is not settled at the 'barangay' or the local council it will escalate to the police. The police will not act on it until the social welfare manages the case. And that's- That's another- issue, that's another issue because we have very few social workers who can actually manage cases like that. We have the laws, the laws are in place, the enforcement is where it fails, it's where the problem is, the enforcement. And then if, if, it does succeed in terms of the case being filed to the right Court and the perpetrator can already be prosecuted it can last forever and ever. It can last for so long depending on how, how well the money talks.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** When I was still in ECPAT during my internship, we had this particular case where the child was prostituted by her own mother and then the mother is in [inaudible 01:13:35 – 01:13:38] the bar owner because the mom works for the bar. So- the case has been filed, five years now, but they never charged the bar owner, who was the perpetrator also, part of ah- part of the whole- ah- pimping prostitution of the child. So because they never charged the bar owner the case continued on, the child is already and adult now. They never done- That person never went to jail; the perpetrator never went to jail. The mom is in hiding but ah- with the bar owner and the bar owner being rich, because it's one of the Business Districts in Manila, he has a lot of money. He can actually pay the neighbors to shut up.

**Intvr:** Oh...I see.

**Resp:** The entire neighborhood would shut up about it.

**Intvr:** Right...so the laws exist and people know that they exist but they aren't put to practice as they should.

**Resp:** Right.

**Intvr:** I was also alerted for a particular conflict when it comes to abuse of children, especially in cases where parents are involved like the one you just mentioned. Children are often seen by parents as property, they have to obey to adults even if that implies this type of situation. But at the same they have rights. The Philippines have signed the International Charter and people aware of the rights of the child so how can a person recognize the child as entitled of rights and at the same time treat it as property?

**Resp:** [pause] Ah- That's a very difficult question to answer, very difficult, because we really have a long way to go when it comes to these things. The western culture influenced us with the whole patriarchal system and then the East Asian culture, which came older in the Philippines, influenced us with the filial piety... With all these things I think the Filipinos are a very adjusting kind of group of people and we get influenced, we get influenced by different cultural, hum, pressures throughout our history. Even if in philosophy, in principal we agree with Child's Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and we have laws put in place to protect children... The Child's Rights Network has an office here in the Philippines, we have the IACAT, the Inter-Agency Council for Trafficking of Children but it's hard because the attitude, the attitude that children are owned by their parents or that nobody else is responsible for children other than their parents is an attitude that we really do need to change. Laws are not enough even if they are already put in place to protect children we really have to- ah- to move towards attitude change, behaviour change especially of adults towards young children. There are still parents, there are adults, couples who want to have kids because it's fun. They wanna have kids because these kids will take care of them when they're old but none of them will say that – 'Well I wanna get pregnant, I wanna have a kid, a child because I want my child to become a contributing member of the society.' You don't hear that from any parent, you hear about – 'It's nice to have kids. The essence of being a woman is to have a child so oh I's a pity you don't have a child. It's a pity you can't have a child to care of you when you grow old.' – All of these things, but none of them will actually say – 'Hey have a child so that you can have someone who can contribute to the society when they grow older' – None like that, so we have a long way to go. The disconnection will continue to stay until we have already made sufficient dent on the attitude towards children.

**Intvr:** As you probably know live streaming child sexual abuse it's not just happening in the Philippines but, for instance this is one of the reasons why I chose to study the Filipino case in specific, unlike what happens in other countries there's a particular scenario unfolding, that is the 'cottage business' which is the involvement of family members, close friends and neighbors that actually lead this children to participate in online performances. Overall, why do you think this is how things are happening in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Because of the poverty. The incidence of poverty in the Philippines is not been curb through the years. There are still, there are still a lot of Filipinos living below the poverty line so what they do is just [chuckle] lower the poverty line, they just lower the per capita income.[Chuckle] So that- So that poor people can live on the poverty line but it's insane. According to the most recent report a family of 5 can survive on 4 US dollars daily. 4 US dollars but that's- [chuckle] that is not much.

**Intvr:** I wouldn't be able to make my way to college with that money, even less live with just that.

**Resp:** I know, I wouldn't be able to make three meals with that money, or make my way to the office. You see and I'm just one person so if this is the per capita income needed for a family of 5 to eat I don't think they measured it right or I don't think they calculated it right. So families, parents would always say that it's for the children, so that they can eat, so that they can go to school, so that they can get the toys that they want. – 'So we subject them to these type of things and in any way they are not touched.' – So their virginity is not touched at all, so it's for the benefit of the family and the children they can- they can be easily manipulated to do that. They can be made to believe that – 'Oh this is my way of helping my parents and my brothers. So that we can go to school, we can have education' – things like that. So the children think it normal since its working for their parents.

**Intvr:** So besides poverty, do you think that because there is this mindset we have been discussing of the child as obedient and as a property that this also instigates this type of crime?

**Resp:** Hum...

**Intvr:** Because given things are seen like this, it's easier for parents to justify their actions.

**Resp:** It definitely makes it easier to justify the action but the primary reason for them to engage in that type of business is because of poverty. Normally, hum, families who earn sufficient,



sufficient income to send children to school, to have a decent house, hum, to eat 3 times a day will not engage in that kind of business. So the most- mostly ah- most of the victims or most of the family that engage in this type of business are those that are in dire need. That's why it's easy to convince them to participate and even if they don't like it, initially it will have- it will have a bad taste in your mouth. – 'What? Put my child in cybersex dens are you crazy? That's horrible.' - but then when they see that other families can eat, they can travel, they can go to the malls, they can eat out, they can get convinced. That's where the ah- the ownership of children begins to- to [inaudible 01:24:35 – 01:24:39] and it becomes ah- it's the one that eases the dissonance – 'Oh its okay this will help us survive. At the end of the day the children will benefit from it' – That's how they would think as part of the dissonance.

**Intvr:** What about a conflict with religion? Like we've discussed earlier religion is still a major influence in the Filipino's lives and there's even this point system so wouldn't they be scared that by submitting the children to this, that they- they would lose their possibility to go to heaven?

**Resp:** [laugh] Yeah but then- if nobody points it out then they're innocent.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** So when nobody points it out publicly it's okay for as long as it is, it is within the walls of the house or in the walls of the cybersex dens then it is something that is unknown to the public even if it's. you know, known. Meaning you- They keep that image that everything's okay even if it's not.

**Intvr:** Right, okay, so...ah- So we did discuss the fact that families do not seem to care or think about the harm that will come to the child because of being subjected to this.

**Resp:** Hmm.Hmm.

**Intvr:** Because like you said they use the- the excuse that there is no physical contact so there is no harm done. Do you think the family's or friends involved that say this are they truly unaware of the harm or is it really just an excuse?

**Resp:** It is an excuse. I don't think ah- a person in his right mind wouldn't think that this would not pose any harm to a developing child, even if you're not educated or you're not schooled. No

person in his right mind will think that a child that is sexualized early on will not experience any trauma or damage. Sorry for the lack of term.

**Intvr:** No, no that's perfectly okay.

**Resp:** So to me it is an excuse, it is really an excuse because of that cognitive business that they experience. They can't provide for their kids so they can utilize their kids to earn money for their kids. Because their kids will benefit from them, from the- the whole business. Not counting the fact that the children will get hurt because they feel that they cannot do anything about it anymore. So- Yeah it's really an excuse. And then maybe, maybe for those who-who are the operators of these dens maybe they're the ones who are sociopaths? I don't know maybe we should study them but I think they are.

**Intvr:** It's an interesting point, when we are addressing cyber-dens it's a whole different ordeal since we are often already talking about other crimes such as trafficking being involved as well. It is hard to understand what is going on in the head of those people other than their drive for money. For instance I read a report where they mention the story of a girl who ended up in a cybersex den, she was from the Philippines but was trafficked to Thailand and she was kept in chains, forced to stay in front of the computer for hours in a row, she was forced to take drugs as well so she could stay awake for long hours. When she tried to escaped, she was beaten up so badly that she almost died...so it's truly hard to understand the people behind this.

**Resp:** Likewise. I feel the same.

**Intvr:** So you do find this to be just an excuse-

[overlapping speech]

**Resp:** I do.

**Intvr:** -but do you think that the need to escape poverty and this feeling of hopelessness that leads them to use their children makes it justifiable?

**Resp:** They- they still find it justifiable, I just don't. I don't. Filipino's are very talented people even those who are not school, even don't earn degree. We are very talented people. We can actually utilize our skills, we are very adaptable, very flexible because- possibly because of our location and our- I don't know. The whole structure of the Philippine archipelago so our survival

skills is really high. Our need for survival is really high as well so, to me, it's a lame excuse. It's really a lame excuse to say that – 'This is the only thing that we can do so that we can use money, use our children'. So it's not justifiable for me, no amount of justification is enough to violate a child in that sense without looking at the consequences in the long term.

**Intvr:** When it comes to such consequences or the repercussions that will unfold upon the children, do you have any idea of what those could be?

**Resp:** Because children are sexualized early on. At imagine at preschool or in early grade they are already sexualized it can- It can lead to- like in any other scenarios of children getting sexualized whether it's grooming or child pornography, it can result in a lot of risky behaviour's in the future. There have been a lot of researches ah- correlating aggression, promiscuity among girls even boys, ah- substance abuse, things like these. So- Yeah it will require a lot of effort to reverse the damage, if it can be reversed at all for children who have experienced these types of things. [pause] Yeah.

**Intvr:** So- when it comes to cases like type of performances that take place, basically we have been talking mostly about the psychological repercussion that might affect the child but as you are aware there are more- more aggressive and violent performances that take place.

**Resp:** Hmm. Hmm.

**Intvr:** For example, other than a stripe, one of the most common things that tend to happen is the use of sex toys and even the use of eggplants-

[overlapping speech]

**Resp:** Yeah...yes. Even candles.

**Intvr:** -so the children they actually get physically harmed-

[overlapping speech]

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** So the parents can't really use the same excuse we were just discussing in these cases. Hmm, when it comes to these children do you think that besides psychological damage this will influence even harder the repercussions they will suffer?

**Resp:** Yes. If we think about it these are all psychological, both internalizing behaviour and externalizing behaviour's are all psychological impacts. So children can feel- they can feel mistrust – 'These are my parents, they shouldn't be doing this to me but I am forced to do it. Maybe they don't love me, or maybe I'm not enough, or maybe...' – a lot of other negative thoughts with respect to attachment issues. Hum, children can be viewed- they can see themselves as someone who is only important if they have utility in another person's life. Ah- the need to satisfy other people, these are internalizing behaviour's, these are things that they can think about themselves. But with respect to- to how these internalized behaviour's, to how they can impact their outward behaviour, their externalized behaviour, ah- yes it's- it will also be really bad because, trying to please other people they will risk to be like that. Follow their parent's instructions even if they don't feel good about it, or they ah- do something to earn money, they-I wouldn't want to call children who live in this situation as immoral because it was not their fault, they were raised without morals at all. I mean it's not their fault if they behave like that, as if they don't have ethical principles in life, in the future, so these are all externalized behaviour's as a result of possibly, ah- attachment issues, possibly trust issues, possibly the result of aggression and aggression is not really- You know I wouldn't want to call it like violent aggression because there is also soft aggression in the whole scenario of kids getting involved in sex- cybersex crimes. So it's both softer violence and aggressive form of violence and- we know how children can think very negatively about them. It's-it's their fault or it's because of them, that's why they have to do it. So- Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok, so even though you have mentioned that there are laws and the failure is in enforcing them; as well as the fact that people are quite aware of what is happening when it comes to online and other forms of child exploitation do you think that online sex exploitation is still addressed more 'lightly' than that conducted 'offline'?

**Resp:** Yeah I think so. I think so because- ah- if the kind of violence committed to children is, say for example, rape or molestation of children, the perpetrator will immediately go to jail. If the child is caught with a parent in cybersex den or in a cybersex scenario it can still proceed through the usual route of the justice system; fighting the case, there's the child, there's the hearing but the parents could not automatically go to jail, because- because of the- principal of the best interest of the child. So there is ah- in terms of the degree of severity it appears to me that when there is

physical violence, when there is physical aggression committed against the child that there is more severe punishment. But for cases like this when the violence is subtle the severity is not considered so the child can still stay with the family even if they know that the perpetrator is just there also. So- ah- maybe because, maybe because the whole judiciary and the law enforcement agencies in the Philippines is not yet mature and it's not enacting fast enough with respect to- ah- cyber technology. So- a lot of our, a lot of our- hum, lawmakers, actually do believe that when you are not touched then it's okay!

**Intvr:** Oh, so they share this idea...?

**Resp:** Yes. They share that idea so it's hard for, hum, for the same kind of- the same kind of cases of ruling in these kinds of cases. Knowing that these are both sexual abuse of children.

**Intvr:** Ah- When it comes to prostitution, I am aware that it is forbidden but it's still very visible and frequent in some Filipino streets.

[overlapping speech]

**Resp:** That's right. That's right.

**Intvr:** My question is, do you think that in the future society will 'turn a blind eye' to live streaming child sexual abuse the same way that they appear to do with child prostitution right now. They know that it's illegal, that it's happening but they don't do anything.

**Resp:** Hopefully not. Despite all of these horrible things that we just talked about I'm still hopeful that we can do something about it. The research that you will be working on, once you publish it, once you share it. I'm sure it's going to go to help somehow, it might not be able to put a dent on the actions we are seeing but it could help somehow. The work that I do right now and with- with the people that I work with, we are, we really bent on at least creating behaviour change when it comes to gender-based violence. The Philippines is a very complicated scenario we have more than 180 ethnic-linguistic groups in the Philippines, hum it's very difficult to deploy workers like me to different fields because of the language barrier, because of the cultural barrier, but- we are hopeful because ah- we want to start with, we want to start with the root cause. It's hard to identify one of which is gender-based violence because of, because of the cultural norms so- I was telling this to my, to my office meeting earlier that if we are able to at least create change in the attitude

or in the behaviour of the people towards gender-based violence, once they recognize that gender-based violence actually do exist in every single family, in every single community in the Philippines, once there is recognition than maybe we can have that change. At least here in the Municipalities that we are working on. 14 villages if we can make the people recognize that gender-based violence actually exist, then we can proceed with- hum, educating or at least socio and behaviour communication towards gender equality and then towards sexual and reproductive health rights and then child protection issues and then it will be a long, long, long time but hopefully we can also address online- sexual crimes against children.

**Intvr:** Do you do you think that the younger generation, your generation and the ones to come are more open-minded to this?

**Resp:** Yes they are. I am very hopeful with the younger generation because they're actually experiencing the, the kind of violence online, the kind of violence- in the community so they're more vigilant, I think they're more vigilant than our generation. Ah- if you don't mind me asking how young are you?

**Intvr:** I'm 26.

**Resp:** Okay so we are really in different generations but I think your generation and the generation younger than you is more vigilant than us. We experienced the kind of protection that- in the family that we needed, maybe other people were not as lucky as I was or as I am, but what I appreciate from the children or the youth these days is that they're open to talk, they like to communicate, they-they like to express their feelings and they want to be a part of change. At least the youth that we are working with here in the province, they're very cooperative and- in fact they really study things like this all on their own and they come to us asking if they actually learned the right thing or is it a fake news or is it a credible research, because they want to share the information to their peers. So- I'm happy that they have this kind of attitude. I'm surprise and happy. [laughter] And right now what we are going to do with the project is involve the parents as well, tell them that – 'This has been the work of your kids. And we are really proud of them.' – And we want them to be a part that- a part of that kind of information sharing network so parents can share with other parents the kind of information that we showed to their peers. So that we can at least ah- break some- norms and fuel this.

**Intvr:** I think that- if you get the people talking about this with each other, I think that will be a really great breakthrough.

**Resp:** We're working on it. [chuckle]

**Intvr:** So now changing the topic a little I would like to ask you about national and transnational knowledge. Okay, so- this one we already covered. So- the media is often associated with the idea of free speech, and is often how people first come in contact with information and cases like sexual exploitation. Do you think that in the Philippines the social media plays an important role in raising awareness to these issues?

**Resp:** Raising awareness...we are getting there. We are beginning to- do, to do that. To utilize the Internet, and other forms of media, all media, so we can raise awareness. Ah- Just- The whole- the idea of free the speech I'm still reticent about it because of all the trolls and bashers in the Philippines. So I believe that they violate free speech because they want to shut people up by trolling.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** So- but with raising awareness, with raising awareness I think that we're beginning to- to use it now especially in international NGOs for children, working for children. Like the Children Child Fund, Plan International... All of these things, so- the media does not pay close attention to it yet but- remember I told you about International Day of the Girl Child that we are celebrating this week-

[interruption by the interviewer]

**Intvr:** Yes, yes.

**Resp:** - Friday is the culmination, the focus of this global movement is on media for this year so we have scheduled a press conference in media and we have, we have need some news and radio stations, and newspapers not just over our event but to be taken over by our youth educators so they'll the ones manning the station, they'll be the ones doing the radio programs, they'll write news articles about girls rights and women's rights. So I think there's already a growing awareness somehow.

**Intvr:** Okay so- I think we mentioned this before so you are aware that the age of consent in the Philippines is currently 12, right?

**Resp:** Yes that's right.

**Intvr:** I believe, from my research that they are attempting to change that.

**Resp:** Yes they want to lower. Wait- I think that what they want to lower is the-

[interruption by the interviewer]

**Intvr:** The age of criminal responsibility.

**Resp:** With the- the legal age of consent there is a movement to actually increase it to 16.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** Not to lower it.

**Intvr:** Why do you think there's currently that idea to lower the age of criminal responsibility?

**Resp:** They think that children are being used as- many indicate as tools for criminal behaviour. Yeah. So there are a lot of crimes also perpetrated [pause] by children against other people. So they think that children can actually think about their behaviour's in these cases when in fact they are not. Yes when-when originally the age of- the minimum age of criminal responsibility in the Philippines is 9 and then there was a Senator who moved for- raising the minimum age to 15. What happened was [pause] there was an increase number of crimes committed by children so they want to lower it back to 9 years old. And the children, the syndicates are very- are very progressive about it too because they make the children bring their IDs or their birth certificates to proof that they're 15 so that they'll not go to jail.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** So- that's why there was a movement to lower the minimum age of criminal responsibility. But of course, we do not let- people will not let them lower the age from 15 for criminal responsibility. As for the age of consent I'd like it to be raised to 16 just like in other countries like the US, because- it's not right. If you look at all the other laws in the Philippines with respect to child protection and, hum, most child protection laws really say that age of consent should be 16,



it's not explicitly stated because that is a law that explicitly states that the age of consent is 12 but a lot of other laws consider 16 as the right age for consent. So- though they are silent about it, that is implicit on the law. Many law makers believe that 16 is the right age but I don't know how come it was lower to 12 so now there is proposition to raise it again. So- that it- the age of- the legal of consent will now be consistent will all the other child protection laws that we have.

**Intvr:** That will be a great improvement that, if passes.

**Resp:** Yes that's right.

**Intvr:** I'm not entirely aware of how the Justice system works in the Philippines given I am still conducting a lot of my research, is it like in the United States where you have a judge and then you have the people who are selected and actually decide what will happen to the prosecuted-

[interrupted by the interviewed]

**Resp:** We don't have a jury. It's just- just the judge.

**Intvr:** Okay so it's like in Europe. Okay, so do you think that there is enough confidence in the Judicial system to- so that when cases sexual abuse, even if it's rare in the case of the online ones, reach the court that it will be properly prosecuted?

**Resp:** We are confident if the perpetrator is foreigner.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** We know that we can get the perpetrator to be trialed in court up until that point, because often what happens is the perpetrator, if it's a foreigner, gets extradited or gets by the Interpol and gets trialed in their country or walks free on their own country. But at least when the perpetrator is foreigner the judicial system acts more fast, they act faster in this cases so that- and usually it's because they are working with the Interpol. But otherwise there is no such level of confidence, hum, especially now. Especially now that people go to- people get charged people get jailed for reasons that are not clear in the justice system so not everybody has that kind of confidence. And as I've mentioned even those who actually believe in the president of the Philippines, many of them do not believe in the justice system. We-we have lost that kind of trust.

**Intvr:** Okay but is the mistrust in the people who work in the judicial system or in the system itself?

**Resp:** In the system itself. It's in the system itself. Now that's- that's more difficult to address. Because when it's the people you can just replace them. When it's the system it needs an overhaul. That's why- that's why people take justice in their own hands. It's actually been indicated by the public; the Robin Hood kind of behaviour is still indicated here.

**Intvr:** Is it true that it's actually quite expensive to go through the judicial system?

**Resp:** It is. It's very expensive. The fact that it takes too long will require you to go out of work so that you can attend hearings makes it so expensive already as it is. So people just choose to settle.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** On a extrajudicial, extrajudicial settlement is what happens more often.

**Intvr:** Well over the world, as you are likely aware, a child's testimony is often the main piece of evidence on trials held in this type of cases, be it online abuse of 'offline'. Do you think that there could be a way around this? That we could find alternative path when prosecuting this type of cases so that we don't involve the child?

**Resp:** Yeah, I know. There actually should be a way to do it. Hum- [pause] Evidence as, maybe the medical report, psychological assessment of the child without having to- make the child retell and tell the story. What else...witness reports, DNA testing's, these are the only things I can think of.

**Intvr:** The witness reports, for example, are those accepted as viable evidence in the Philippines?

**Resp:** It is, it is actually. We have a case here in one of the public schools we are working with, where a child is being sexually- the child is sexually involved with an older man who is also married and the- the wife of the husband, the wife of the man it's already going to school, getting hostile with a child and all of these things. So- I was telling the- the guidance counsellor what they should do about it. It's common knowledge on the school, it's common knowledge of all the students and the teachers but they're not doing anything about it, because they needed evidence. [chuckle] And I was telling them – 'What kind of evidence do you need? You don't need evidence in cases like this.' – [chuckle] I mean to report, to report child abuse. A mere allegation is enough to report child abuse. But ah- with respect to evidence, evidence build in the Philippines, the

evidence is still managed by the police unfortunately based from the feedback from my lawyer friends the kind of evidence that the police gather it's almost always compromise and it's very, very hard to put somebody in jail when the evidence is compromised. But I think DNA testing specially if there is contact can work, if-if the child can consent to that. And- and if the court is able to get at least a warrant for a DNA sample collection.

**Intvr:** Yes that would be very important.

**Resp:** Yes...

**Intvr:** Maybe you know about this more than I so, for example, when the police recover data from hard drives from computers with videos that were recorded with children and so on- are they accepted as evidence in court as well?

**Resp:** Oh they are. They are accepted in court. Even cell phone recordings because they leave, hum, footprints, they have footprints so these are considered evidences.

**Intvr:** What about, like for example, bugging a phone? The police bugging a phone without the person knowing?

**Resp:** Oh that's not. That's not acceptable as an evidence. An email and text message or phone call records these are acceptable evidence if- if it's- if it is taken through a judge issuing a warrant for release of these records. So it's done with the telecoms company, but- even, but if they are illegally acquired, for example phone records if these are illegally acquired than they cannot serve as evidence.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** But text messages are, chat messages, emails.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you. When it comes to international actors like NGO agencies, they have showed a significant interest towards tackling these types of offenses. Are you aware of any agencies currently acting in the Philippines?

**Resp:** There are a lot of them here actually. Yes there's been international- we have child sexual exploitation projects, there's also online child exploitation projects, we have trafficking we have projects on trafficking, keeping the city safe, there are a whole lot of projects with Plan

International dealing with these kinds of issues. There is also Save the Children Philippines, there is ECPAT, ECPAT is one of the- in the front line. There is Child's Rights Network but it's not really an implement organization is more of an advocacy organization. Hum, there's Oxfam but this one is more on sexual and reproductive health rights and violence against children, hum, there are- there are other foreign organizations that I cannot pronounce the name because they're either in German or Dutch, I think those are the same I'm not sure. [chuckle]

**Intvr:** Oh that's okay, can you perhaps send me the names through a message of one or two more later on?

**Resp:** Sure, sure. No problem. We also have local- Oh these are international, because we also have local organizations here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** Okay so- from what you know do these international organizations appear to opt through approaches that respect the Filipino values, cultural and social dynamics or do you think they have a- standardized approached, that what works in one country will work in this country as well?

**Resp:** I do believe that ECPAT adjusts to the culture of the country they're working with, so- and when we do social an behaviour communication change, change communication here with Plan and with Save the Children they also take the Filipino values, the Filipino culture as part of it, especially with respect to delivering the messages to the community, it has to really be in the language of the people locally. It should respect the values but at the same time raise awareness for the issues that these values can- can affect. Hum, so- so for things like that, for awareness reasons we do consider the- the culture and the values of the country we're working with. When I went to Cambodia and Nepal, they also have different approaches in those countries, so I do believe that the organization adjusts to the context where they are working on to make the program more efficient and sustainable and effective.

**Intvr:** That's-That's great. Okay given the particularities of the country that we have been discussing throughout the interview, what do you find would be an effective approach for these organizations to adopt?

**Resp:** Based on my experience, what works is having people of the grassroots level raising awareness and then working towards attitude change so you start off by raising awareness and the behaviour change and the attitude change from the community level so the parents, the adults in

the community and then in the- the government institutions, the education system, the Social- The Department of Social Work in Development, the police, the health sector and then at the national office with the- they also have a policy advocacy focusing on governance and policy advocacy so that we can do bottoms and top-down approaches to change the present situation. It worked for- it worked for the CCCD project so far, it worked for first one thousand days campaign so I suppose in due time we will be able to do that for this particular issue, hum, child sexual exploitation and gender-based violence so- there should be an approach from the grassroots level once there's awareness and there's attitude change and acceptance of the issue, the recognition of the issue there's gonna be- There's gonna have a push to the policymakers at the local level. So while the push is there and then a push is going to be given from the national office so- meet halfway and across the social sectors we have people working on it, on the issue.

**Intvr:** Can you give me examples of projects, like specific projects that are active in the Philippines either to address or prevent this type of online exploitation to happen or to help the victims? It doesn't have to be from international agencies it can be from local ones.

**Resp:** Hum, we have- we have the children literacy campaigns from- from different organization tying up with the media so there are media outfits here which are- hum, more socially conscious I would say, socially and politically conscious. So they create an opportunity or a venue for keeping children safe when it comes to media, so there is- there is an organization, it's called acttv organization it is- it is an organization of private individuals and media practitioners and they create standards for what is safe content for both tv and the internet which are produced by our local, hum, producers of shows and online materials. So they create that kind of standard and they also have like- hum, media, some sort of media awards for internet shows, for TV shows, even for advertisements that are child-friendly. And they're working on different themes, so- there's this one and then Facebook is doing massive digital literalization with different organizations here in the Philippines who work for children because of the impact it has created in the Philippines because of use of social media. So I think they're trying to rectify their mistake. So yeah recently they've partnered with Save the Children and now they're partnering with Plan International for digital literacy, awareness, they provide training for the youth so that they will know which ones are fake which ones are real news, things like that. Fact checking and then how to report content

that turn up, content that are not good, content that will be harmful for them and for children, content that will be harmful.

**Intvr:** They do this at schools too?

**Resp:** They do this in partnership with organizations, so if the organization is within- working with schools they do it in schools. But with other organizations they also do it with the community and I think they're also doing it with the Philippine Information Agency, and Philippine Information Agency it's a government agency; they also have their own digital literacy campaigns for the use and young adults because they're also the primary users of social media in the Philippines. So there's- those are the ones that I am familiar with.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** And the universities there are university organizations, the university where I came from, we have alternative- lash of learning experiences where different organizations can have these kinds of- campaigns. When I was still in the university I did, hmm, parent-education training on how to protect their children from content in the internet that could be harmful, in choosing the right content for their children. I have friends in media who do- in their own personal capacity who go to schools in their own free time to educate the teachers on how to choose appropriate development, appropriate media for children in their grade schools. Is not as organized as in INGO's do or the one's that Facebook is doing right now but these are on individual capacity, at least those that I know, they do these things. So there is- I suppose there is sufficient awareness and we just have to organize ourselves so that we can have better impact for social change.

**Intvr:** Do you have any ideas or suggestions as to how we could reach out to the communities that are falling victim to this route of exploitation?

**Resp:** Of all the organizations that I know, the only one working on this is ECPAT and then, of course, the Social Welfare and Development Department in the Philippines but our own social workers need a lot of training on how to manage this cases so that they can actually proceed to trial and so that the children can actually receive, hum, psychosocial support, so- there is an effort to address the needs of the survivors or those who are rescued but we need to capacitate them some more. But there are things being done.

**Intvr:** Again, that's positive. Okay, that was...the last question I think I got everything. If there is anything, you'd like to ask me or anything you'd like to know please feel free to do so.

**Resp:** This is for your graduate thesis, right?

**Intvr:** Yes, my Master's thesis.

**Resp:** Do you- do you plan to publish it?

**Intvr:** Yes, initially I will have to ran it through the University once it's approve and later on I hope to be able to publish it so I can maybe pursue a doctor's program and in that case I would have investment so that I could further develop the research and actually try to advocate or try to get more involved.

**Resp:** Okay...that would be really nice. Your graduate program is...what again?

**Intvr:** My Master's is in Humanitarian Action, Development and International Cooperation but I am already graduated in Criminology

**Resp:** Oh okay, that makes more sense. This is really nice, it's good that you found interest in the Philippines even if it's on a bad issue. Do you still need people?

**Intvr:** Yes, actually if you can refer me someone that would be great.

**Resp:** Yes, I already talked to one so since hmm -name- mentioned to me that you might need to interview some more participants so before coming to day I asked around my office if they would be willing to be interviewed so maybe they can also refer someone else to you.

**Intvr:** Okay, great that is a huge help, thank you.

**Resp:** So this is like, hum, qualitative research, is it? Your design is qualitative, I forgot already.

**Intvr:** Yes, yes the design is qualitative, I am basically gathering interviews from the individuals from the Philippines and then I'm going to gather information about the international agencies that are acting in the Philippines and not only do I want to provide a local perspective on the issue but to compare how things are addressed from the west and imposed on the east and if its, if both sides are in agreement. Because I think that a lot of the mistakes made in projects of NGO's is due to

the fact that they go to try and help but they waste the money and the efforts on projects without taking into account the local culture and need, so I think it's important to know that as well.

**Resp:** Yeah I think the gap takes place in the- baseline research, the generation of the baseline research that's where- for NGO's, from my observation at least, that's where the gap happens. From the baseline- if the baseline is not done prior to the development of the program, the development of the intervention...

**Intvr:** Then it's bound to fail.

**Resp:** Exactly it's bound to fail. That's right. So how many more interviews do you need?

**Intvr:** Hmm, I have a baseline of 7 but I will see how many I can do and work given the time I will be given to complete the thesis.

**Resp:** Okay, alright. I'll ask my friend if it's okay to give her contact details so that you can send the details of the interview.

**Intvr:** Okay, that's a great help. Thank you so much for the help and for the time.

**Resp:** I hope you can share your paper.

**Intvr:** Oh I will send it to everyone once it's finished and approved so- you'll be able to read it if you wish.

**Resp:** Thank you.

**Intvr:** Thank you again for all the help, and if you ever need anything from me please feel free to ask. So...okay this is it, thank you and I hope you can finally get some rest.

**Resp:** You too. Thank you, and good luck. Bye.



**Interview VI**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 6] [0610a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [04/10/2019] [14:30 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview VI] [02:34:21]

**Resp:** Hi, hello.

**Intvr:** Can you hear me?

**Resp:** Hi. Yeah, we are in clear

**Intvr:** Ok. I'm sorry that I look sick, but I'm still recovering

**Resp:** Huh? What happened?

**Intvr:** I got the flu, but it's been a little strong stride in Portugal, so it's been complicated

**Resp:** Oh, OK. OK, well, I hope you get better soon. I don't like having the flu as well. It's it's annoying.

**Intvr:** It is. It's very terrible

**Resp:** Ok, so, yeah, I'm just really surprised that you picked Philippine's or do you have other countries that you're also just.

**Intvr:** No, no. Just the Philippines

**Resp:** Yeah, it's really, really bad here. I've been reading up on a lot of articles lately about child abuse. And \*\*\*\*, the guy I told you about

**Intvr:** Yes

**Resp:** He's the one who's had a hand in ensuring the safety of a lot of kids. I think he is doing volunteer work for an NGO right now or an organization. So, yeah. Uh huh.

**Intvr:** I actually already spoke with him so he shared a lot of information. Even how he was able to tackle down a community of predators online and send information that's amazing

**Resp:** Yes, yes, he's still in university, I'm not sure if he told you that in just a couple of weeks ago he went undercover, just not- not like a police operation or anything

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** Just on his own, just something that he wanted to do. But of course, he has contact with the police. But it's really difficult in a country like the Philippines where justice is very expensive.

**Intvr:** Oh, I wasn't aware of that. No one told me that justice was actually expensive in the Philippines so far

**Resp:** Yeah, we might discuss it later on, because I was looking at your questions and I was like, I don't think I can ever prepare well for the questions that she has for me. So better if we talk about it.

**Intvr:** I think it's easier because it's a conversation we have from both sides. So, yeah. Actually before we start I have to ask you that the ethics committee demands that I have the verbal agreement from the person I'm interviewing. That they're aware of their rights. That they are volunteers, not forced to answer this.

**Resp:** Yes!

**Intvr:** So, I need you to say that before we actually start

**Resp:** Yes. Yes, I am yes, I am volunteering to have this interview with Patricia, and if it's recorded, that's fine by me.

**Intvr:** Ok. The first things I have to ask are very general demographic questions.

## Demographic Data

- Age: 32 years old
- Gender: Female
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: HighSchool
- Profession: Virtual Assistant
- Marital Status: No
- Children: Yes (1)

**Intvr:** Ok. That's about it. Let's start with the Filipino culture. So, what can you share about it? It's values? Important aspects that you might refer?

**Resp:** I believe it's quite universal, something that you'd find in a lot of countries, I believe. Still, we're very OK just before anything else. I come from a slightly modern family. So whatever I will say in terms of our culture, these are things that I've observed and have been discussed in classes. These are cultures that have been established before. You know, the kind of family I have become modernized.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So, yeah. So in the Philippines, it's family almost always comes first to a point where it becomes very problematic. Yeah, and I think it's the same with a lot of you know, a lot of other countries, not just in Asia, but. Yeah. And also very religious to a point where they mistake a lot of the teachings of like for example, the Bible. So as I'm sure you're aware, that we are a Catholic country slash Islam

**Intvr:** Yes

**Resp:** So those are the two major religions here in the Philippines. So, yeah, very family oriented. We see our elders as authoritative figures. So that's under the family-oriented umbrella, I believe. Yeah. So, you know, being family-oriented means that you see them as authority figures. It's not normal for us to move out after graduating from college. Most of the time, we still live in family homes. I don't. But it's not-It's not like in the US where if you have a family, you know, you have your own home...

**Intvr:** Yes...

**Resp:** Here in the Philippines, like there are times there are like 10, 15 people in one home. So we're kind of used to-to big family settings.

**Intvr:** Ok. That's actually nice. Compared to what you see in the states. Uhm, what about hospitality? I've heard you are very hospitable to foreigners.

**Resp:** Yes. Foreigners, yes, to foreigners, you have to be very, very specific about that, we are very hospitable to foreigners. I notice that we are hospitable to foreigners, but not so much to our own countrymen

**Intvr:** Oh, ok.

**Resp:** It's also dependent on who we are welcoming into our homes. So I'd like to think that it has something to do with what you have to offer to me if I welcome you into my home. Yes. So, yeah.

**Intvr:** What about public image? I was told that public image is actually very important in the Philippines.

**Resp:** Oh, my goodness, yes, public image is something that I don't think it's unique from the way we dress, from the way we talk, from the way we interact with other people. I was actually brought up by my mom to be very cautious of how I move, how I look like even the way I talk, even the way I eat my food. You know, like where I put my hands or how I pose in photos. So, we are a very superficial set of people. I believe we- we look up like even our politicians. We treat them like celebrities. If you're famous, there's no, there's no distinction, actually, between celebrities and politicians these days. They get the equal amount of attention from the people.

**Intvr:** Oh ok. I didn't know that

**Resp:** Yeah. Oh, my gosh. So much to tell you about that part. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Oh, okay. Uhm...

**Resp:** We also have this thing I'm not sure if \*\*\*\* or your other interviewees told you about this, we have this thing called *Utang na Loob*. I will send you that later

**Intvr:** Yes, please.

**Resp:** or I could send it to you now before I forget. OK, [typing sounds] *Utang na Loob*. I don't know how to translate that directly into English, but it's basically we have a system of I owe you.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So you do something nice for me. I owe you for the rest of my life.

**Intvr:** Oh, ok.

**Resp:** It's something like if- if there is a family reunion or a gathering, there will always be that one person telling you that, hey, I did this for you. Like sometimes it's indirect.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** So I think in our conversation, moving forward, in our conversation, that will play a big part in explaining the topic at hand, *Utang na Loob*. So I sent it to you via messenger.

**Intvr:** Yes. I saw, I saw because I didn't know how to write that. Yeah. Ok, you mentioned religion. So religion still plays a major role in many societies across the world. It's not just in the Philippines, but particularly in the daily life of the Philippines what can you tell me about it?

**Resp:** I read in a history book when I was in college that we are very fatalistic in nature

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So we tend to put everything up to God. That's how- I'm not very religious, but this is how a lot of Filipinos tend to go by with their everyday lives. Everything depends on God, whatever happens to me. God must probably have planned it a long time ago before I was born. There's always that divine intervention. There's always that reason. If some if someone does something wrong to me, I'll just leave it up to God. We also believe in the word karma

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So, yeah, we think that the karma will come from God and God will do something to that person who did that to us. A lot of us also are afraid of doing bad things. Because of that, we are afraid of going to hell. So it's very basic. If you do good, you will go to heaven. If we do bad, we will go to hell. The problem there is we misinterpret a lot of what is good and what is bad, like I said, and we misinterpret the Bible a lot and we also tend to force our beliefs onto other people, especially if it is religious.

**Intvr:** I see...

**Resp:** So you will see a lot of conversations revolving around, you know, like basically the end point is, oh, it's wrong because it's in the Bible. It doesn't matter if it's the law,

**Intvr:** Ok. If it's in the Bible it's more important then?

**Resp:** if it's in the Bible, then apparently you have to follow what the Bible says, even if the message is twisted somehow.

**Intvr:** Ok. So, the Bible is more important than for example what the Pope is trying to represent or we you the Pope before the Bible?

**Resp:** The past two popes that we've had, they did have a lot of progressive ideas, like, for example, embracing the LGBTQ community doesn't matter if it's the Pope saying that it's what the Bible says otherwise.

**Intvr:** Ok. So it's the Bible first?

**Resp:** Yes, to a point where you actually want. Well, I've asked a lot of them, like, why are you telling me to hate on X, Y, Z? Just because the Bible says so? Because the Bible does not like that.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** That's- that's how they understand the Bible.

**Resp:** Yes. Yes. It comes to a point where it becomes hateful and questionable. So, yeah, the Pope, No.

**Intvr:** Ok because some Catholic communities it's more important what the Pope is saying than what's written in the Bible. It happens in my country. In my country, when the Pope starts being a little more open minded, people starts being more open minded. Not the Bible, because a lot of people do not actually read it.

**Resp:** No, no. It's like- something like that, I think the basic lesson of the Bible is, is compassion and love and respect. Right. Those three things, right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** You can't re-rewrite the Bible. But what others say changes right?

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** So you always try to keep pushing them back. What are the basic lessons that you, that God is teaching us? But no, the Bible says this. So sometimes I actually would like to think that is the Bible before God, before the Pope.

**Intvr:** Ok. Do you think that when it comes to religion like you have different communities within the Philippines and you have people who have more money and more education and people who don't? Do you think that religion and the culture aspects you discussed early with me do they affect these communities in different ways?

**Resp:** I believe it's...If you have money, you have more access to information. It just happens that way.

**Intvr:** Yes- unfortunately.

**Resp:** You go to better schools here in the Philippines. If you go to an exclusive school, if it's a Catholic school, they know that you have money.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** So, so, you know, and the big universities that we have here, aside from the National University, which is University of the Philippines, they're all Catholic schools. Ateneo, University of Santo Tomas, the La Salle University. They're all Catholic schools, so it does play a big role. Money plays a big role in how Filipinos understand a lot of things, like it's not because they don't want to or they're too lazy. It's because if you don't have money, everything is limited from access

to information to food to where you can go. It's not just it's not just here. It's physical. You're physically limited from progressing toward anything.

**Intvr:** That makes a big difference. Yes.

**Resp:** Yes, actually, I don't want to add, like if you wanted to be a priest here in the Philippines, most of what I really don't- I'm not going to say it's 100%, but a lot of the priests that I met because my family is very religious. We have two in the family who are members of the apostate. So we get invited to, you know that thing that happens and is when you're finally a priest and you have your first mass?

**Intvr:** Yes...sorry I don't know the term either.

**Resp:** I noticed that a lot of them come from families with, you know, with financial capacity to send them to the seminary. A lot of our priests actually are from like- you would hear their last names and you will know that oh! they are from that family.

**Intvr:** Oh!

**Resp:** Yes, because if you want to be a priest, you're really not going to earn anything because that it's not a job. Right

**Intvr:** Yes

**Resp:** It's a... what do you call it? It's a vocation.

**Intvr:** It's a vocation.

**Resp:** So it's a vocation. So while we do have a lot of priests from poor families, it's really not practical. We are a very practical set.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** That's also what I can say. Yes.

**Intvr:** That's interesting because in my country being in a catholic country like most of our priest like over 95% are from poor families, they choose the seminar then go to the seminar because they have no other choice.



**Resp:** Yeah, We have seminary's here, the seminary near my house is very big, it's a very nice complex and, you know, like just hearing the names and then you would check it online. Oh, this person wanting to be a priest is a member of this family who owns this much land! Something like that. So I guess it has something to do- as well with being able to travel, because since it's a vocation, no one's really going to donate and if you do want donations, you have to have a network of people who want to donate. And I can say this because my uncle, who is a member of the apostate, wanted to be a priest. So he had- it's not that we have money, but we did have connections to give him the capability to study in Spain in order to go around the country to actually travel to different countries in the world before he became a professor, because I don't know what happened. But, yeah, that that's that's- how I see it. Yeah.

**Intvr:** So, for example during church or in general, church, doesn't it ask for a lot of donations from the Filipino people?

**Resp:** We don't really, I've never heard of. Anyone asking for any amount in particular, but, yeah, I guess it depends on the church that you go to if you are in a church inside a subdivision. Do you have subdivisions in Portugal?

**Intvr:** Uhm, I don't think so.

**Resp:** Like a private it's a private community

**Intvr:** Oh, no...

**Resp:** So, when it's a private community, it's a gated community. There are a lot of those in the Philippines, if the church is inside that, you'd expect more money coming in because the people there, the homeowners have more money. But if it's a church in a rural area, you would actually see the difference. Sometimes it lacks windows. Sometimes you would really see the difference between the churches in well-off communities in comparison to poor communities.

**Intvr:** So when you go to church there isn't someone gathering money from people?

**Resp:** There is there is, but I guess the fact is that we are free to give or not to give.

**Intvr:** Right, in here too.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok. I just wanted to make sure to compare like what happens here and what happens there. Even though it's still catholic. Because in here, the churches it's like you donate to one church, but then it's a national level. They join the money and they send it to the church who needs the most. So, the church is more actually more maintained, I guess.

**Resp:** I think here in the Philippines, it depends if that church that you go to wants to donate to another church, but mostly it's for the development of the church and the community surrounding it.

**Intvr:** Ok. Now in a wider perspective. When it comes to values and norms of Western societies like the United States do you see any resemblance between the Philippines and the United States when it comes to that?

**Resp:** When it comes to?

**Intvr:** To values for example, if you think of the United States as a society that is very materialistic and it's a capitalist country so, that's two big things in the United States because of the colonial past you share, for example, do you see that reflected in the Filipino community?

**Resp:** We tend to mimic a lot of the values that we see. I guess we are westernized in a way that we- in comparison to a lot of Asian countries. We no longer wear our traditional clothing if there is such a thing

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** We do, but only during very special occasions. And even then we have a choice of wearing something modern.

**Intvr:** Ok..

**Resp:** So, I guess that's- that's what we got from, you know, from Spain and then America. Yes. We don't actually have a very strong identity in comparison to the countries around us. We also think that if you speak English very well here in the Philippines, they already consider you smart.

**Intvr:** Oh!

**Resp:** It doesn't matter what you're talking about, so long as you can speak English. Well, you're a smart person. What else? Fair skinned, blonde hair. The way we put makeup on, it's very Western.

It's very Westernized. The shows that we watch, we do have local channels, but they're really, really bad. The material that we put out locally most of the time are really bad. We have great talent here in the Philippines. It's just that we don't want to invest in them. So for people like me who can see that because I'm very particular with the shows I watch, I don't really watch a lot of shows, but right now I watch a lot of Korean dramas. But let's see movies. I'm not going to waste my money on something that doesn't make sense. So I tend to watch a lot of foreign movies. So and I guess it's the same for a lot of Filipinos. Yeah. So Westernized in terms of values. Not really, because we still have that. We respect our elders. We still practice that. We still ensure... We actually don't feel comfortable sending our elders to home for the elderly we have in the Philippines. But it's not something you talk about casually. And most of the time, if you do that, you have a lot of your neighbors judging you and they would call you abusive. In fact, we have a proposal from one of our lawmakers that if you abandon your parents or if you do not support them, you could go to jail.

**Intvr:** Oh! Ok I didn't know that.

**Resp:** So I don't think in that aspect we have you know, we are still sort of Filipino

**Intvr:** Yes

**Resp:** Yes. Just in the in the way you talk, in the way you look, in the way we dress. Yes, we are very westernized. But values like family.

**Intvr:** When it comes to values?

**Resp:** Yes. Still a very Filipino. Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok. That's good. Now when it comes to information and technology. In your opinion so far, to the date we are now has technology and internet access been causing more harm than good?

**Resp:** Yes

**Intvr:** Yes?

**Resp:** Like in the now, like 2019, yes, I will never I will not be able to work without the Internet. I think I started working using the Internet. So I have I cannot remember myself doing manual work. And even then, I'm still guided by the Internet. But these days, you see a lot of people coming

out with stories of abuse of every kind, like not just sexual abuse, but abuse by the family, verbal abuse by classmates, companies abusing their employees. And, you know, there are times when. How do I say that it's it's...Ok Sorry, I need to go back. So, like, technology is making it easier for people to commit crimes basically

**Intvr:** [...]

**Resp:** Because without technology, you would have to do it manually. Like, you know, if you need to assault someone, you can assault someone. But these days, it's easier for you to harass someone and you won't get caught because technology lets you hide your identity. So, yeah, I believe that at the same time that we are getting so much from technology. Yeah, we are also I think it's- hum, I don't want to say it's a balance, but it's as if for every time the technology gives us something good, something bad comes out of it. Times Ten

**Intvr:** Yes. Ok for example, I've been reading that the Filipinos are one of the increasing communities in the world that has been more active online in latest years. Do you think that this affects how the community interacts in their day to day life? Because we are so obsessed in being online and sharing stuff online that we no longer value direct contact, like we used to?

**Resp:** Uhm... I would like to think that we still value physical, like actual contact with each other. It's just that we are way too distracted. You would see like every Sunday, it's still a big thing, like after church people go out to malls. I know. I believe you're also aware that we have tons of malls in the country.

**Intvr:** Yes, very big ones

**Resp:** So, all the malls here in the Philippines, they have this thing called food courts. So food courts is a big area of different restaurants. So instead of going into one particular restaurant, you have a choice of sitting in this one big food hall and then you can just choose where you want to eat. So if I'm a family, like I want to eat here, my kid wants to eat there and my husband, my partner wants to eat in another restaurant, we can still do that while sitting in the same place. So that's how our food halls work, most of the time you will see the younger ones all on their phones, but the older ones just staring at them. So that's a common sight. It's actually very sad. I used to work for a phone company, for a phone brand, and that's one of the things that I had to observe as part of their marketing team, that it's usually the older generation who are having a hard time

keeping up with the distractions that the younger generation have. But I think we are at the point where we are marketing the use of technology to be closer to each other. So like, for example, I have several family chats. I have a family chat with my mom and my two sisters. I have a family chat with the bigger family. I have a chat with my cousins. So in a way you know like before I didn't talk to them anymore because I was busy talking with my friends. But now we realize that, hey, we can still do that with social media because we all live in like several hours away from each other.

**Intvr:** So it's bringing you close actually, instead of pulling you apart

**Resp:** Yes. These days it's actually cool if you have selfies with your grandparents

[interruption by the interviewer]

**Intvr:** Yes that's true.

**Resp:** -or if you can see your grandparents have selfies back then it's a no no. But these days it's I guess it's like a cycle of a you know, we probably just realized that, hey, we've forgotten a lot of things. Maybe we shouldn't. Yeah, it's I guess you just have to be very conscious about it. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay so according to statistical data I gathered not only has a lot of people in the Philippines been active but the access to the internet has been growing very rapidly. Do you think that the access, the way they speak about it is it this easy and widely represented or our statistic's a bit narrow? Like if you go outside the main cities is the access as easy as they try to make it sound?

**Resp:** OK, so my mom lives about four hours away, I live in Metro Manila and Metro Manila is the capital, right. But it's not the city. Metro Manila is a combination of a lot of smaller cities that make up the capital. So I live in Makati City. There's also Manila City inside metro Manila. So-so it kind of looks like that. So there are probably, I don't know, probably five, six or seven cities within the capital.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** Yes. For you to be able to go around the capital of Metro Manila will take you several hours already.

**Intvr:** That's a lot

**Resp:** Yes. So my mom lives about four hours away from here, up in the mountains. While it is not really difficult to get Internet connection for you to have constant Internet connection, you have to have it installed in your home. But a lot of Filipinos still rely on mobile Internet, like when you buy the prepaid credits on your phone. Yes, I think. It's not difficult, difficult, and it's not easy, easy. It has something to do with how much you spend and where you're located. My mom's place is developing right now. It's one of the cities outside of Manila that people are already trying to develop so they can move there. Metro. Manila is getting very small for the amount of people living in it that a lot of people are choosing to live right outside of it so that they can continue working inside Metro Manila. So I guess it also has something to do- It has something to do with how much you can spend and where you're trying to connect to the Internet from. So if it's in a place that is being developed because people need to buy homes and move someplace near the capital. Yes. So the Philippines isn't just... we don't just have Metro Manila as a big city. We also have places like Cebu City, which is in the middle part of the Philippines and Davao, which is in the Mindanao area. So, yes, those cities tend to have really good Internet. And again, it still depends on how much you're willing to spend.

**Intvr:** Ok...thank you.

**Resp:** It also depends on- on what network you're choosing to go with. Yes. So it's a combination of a lot of things that you need to consider. So I can't say it's easy easy. It's difficult difficult, but really, yeah.

**Intvr:** It's a combination of factors like you said

**Resp:** Yes. yes

**Intvr:** So there's a lot about which network you choose as well. Is there a lot of providers?

**Resp:** A lot in Metro Manila, you have no- I'm sorry, nationwide, you have for cellular providers, I think there are one, two, three, four, four or five. And then you have the Wired connection, which in Metro Manila alone, as far as I know, there's one I think more than five around 10. And there are there are some companies in place outside of metro Manila. My mom has her Internet connection from a provincial company that offers Internet services.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** That's a lot

**Resp:** A lot, yes!

**Intvr:** So from what you told me as well I can assume let's say that the main method of use is still the cellphone. Most people in the Philippines use the cellphone to access the internet?

**Resp:** Yes, yes, when I was working in digital marketing, we were very keen on ensuring, like, you know, when you create assets, it has to be mobile friendly because more than I think about 70 percent of our audience are still on mobile. It's easier to get the mobile phone than a computer. Yeah.

**Intvr:** It's cheaper too right?

**Resp:** Yes, it's oh, no, here in the Philippines, it doesn't matter how much Filipinos spend on mobile phones, it's just that I think it's more accessible to them to be on the mobile phone instead of bringing a laptop with them. That's why the likes of Samsung, it doesn't matter if-if your phone is four hundred five hundred dollars, Filipino's, if they have money, they will buy it.

**Intvr:** So I was told that there are free Wi-Fi spots around. Is that true?

**Resp:** Yes, malls! My city alone has free Wi-Fi, you can just connect anytime I know there's another city who's offering that when you go to the trains, two competing brands have offered free Internet services, same as malls, restaurants, cafes. Yes, a lot of free Internet anywhere. There are times I don't go out. I don't buy prepaid credits anymore. I just go to a mall and- Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok. That's good. But the velocity of the internet is not that good right? From what I was told.

**Resp:** I guess I would like to say it also depends on how much you're spending and who you're connecting with. My Internet, the Internet connection that we have, it's I think a regular family would want to spend. Let me see about twenty dollars for their Internet connection here in the Philippines. And that's big money already. But we spend about forty dollars and we chose a company that our landlord actually advised us to get because it's really good in our area. So it depends on the area that you live in.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** So yeah, it really depends on how much you're spending, although I understand that in other countries it's really, really good, regardless if you're paying very little for further fee.

**Intvr:** Yeah! let's say in my country, I pay around \$25 and I have a speed of 100 megabytes per second

**Resp:** Wow really!? Because we pay \$40 and we just have 20 Mbps.

**Intvr:** Yes, we have very cheap internet connection. You can pay like \$50, but that's because they already include international rates and they offer you channels for the TV and they give you like a PlayStation that you... But I get the cheap one, it's fine with me.

**Resp:** I feel bad, I want 100 Mbps.

**Intvr:** In here they are good. And now- it was really bad in the beginning, a few years ago, like 10 years ago. It was terrible, It's so slow.

**Resp:** For you to- to be able to get 100 Mbps here in the Philippines, you'd have to give out a lot of money. And I don't think we want to afford that, seeing that we're just using it at home. Maybe, if we have a restaurant. Yes, that's something I could consider. But I would love it if for \$25 dollars I could get even 50. But this, my Internet connection has never failed me. That's one thing. Even if it's if there's a storm, it's always been up and I work from home. So I really, really need the Internet connection.

**Intvr:** Yes, so it proves that it really is as good as they actually claimed it

**Resp:** Yeah, so some people will tell you it's really bad, but ask them what company they're with.

**Intvr:** Yes. Many people complain in college and places where there's a lot of people trying to access, it gets bad, which is normal.

**Resp:** It happened here too!

**Intvr:** I guess people are never satisfied.

**Resp:** Yeah.



**Intvr:** So, now I would ask to talk a bit about legislation, such as International treaties. So because the use of internet has become so wide there have been a lot of international treaties signed to protect the digital users. In the Philippines, I found that there is a set of privacy laws, that were created exactly for this. Are you familiar with them?

**Resp:** Is it the Data Privacy Act?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Yes, I'm friends with the prosecutor of the national office. Yes, I was a victim of data hacking. So I actually have a case filed against the company. So I'm very familiar with it.

**Intvr:** So probably more than most people in fact. Do you think people are aware of this law? In general?

**Resp:** For the past few months, yes, there is a surge in awareness, but prior to 2019, it was one of those laws that didn't really get a lot of traction. The National Privacy Commission is a very small office and it's quite new, but I guess they need to add more people because now there are so many people who are suddenly hyper aware of their rights when using the Internet, the Filipinos tend to sign contracts without reading them. Just to let you know, we tend to sign contracts without reading our contracts. We also tend to sign our contracts after reading it without even understanding anything. We have this thing where we don't ask. A lot of foreign employers find this interesting about Filipinos. We keep on saying yes and yes and yes and yes. And then suddenly the foreigners realize that we don't understand anything. I'm not sure how you would call it, but they're Filipinos are like it's-it's an observation of how Filipinos deal with things. We just say yes all the time

**Intvr:** Ok. I didn't know that either. So compared to other countries, I think that your data privacy laws is very good.

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** It's very well executed and...

[interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** very specific.

**Intvr:** Exactly very specific. While in other countries, the laws are not that... uh, well, there's a lot of flaws in it. Given that you just mentioned that people are more aware of their rights. Ever hyperalert with them. Would it be more difficult now to ask them to give up certain rights when it comes to help entities to pursue online crimes?

**Resp:** I would like to think yes. We consider our phones, our devices, our accounts an extension of our lives, and I believe this is the same with a lot of other people, regardless of the country. But, but here in the Philippines, we invest so much in whatever we put on our devices. Like, for example, and this is very common, a lot of Filipinos have multiple Facebook accounts because they tend to forget passwords, because they're suddenly like, for example, you could- you could probably attribute it to the fact that in the 1990s, not a lot of people had computers and that in the early 2000s, boom, suddenly everyone had to have a computer. So there's- there wasn't a smooth transition between manual and then digital. So a lot of the people had to hurry and catch up. So sometimes when you want to search for one person, you will see that this person has about five accounts. And then you would ask that person all five accounts. Oh, I keep forgetting my password, so, you know. Yeah, yeah. Do you know that you can reset them? No. OK, that's how a lot of Filipinos are, including myself. So, yeah, that's how technology works for us.

**Intvr:** OK, that's funny actually, because it's a lot of work to create a new account, then just reset your password.

**Resp:** But like, like I was saying, the transition between not having a computer versus having a computer had to be really quick. We had to like I really can't give you the number of months or the number of years. But I do remember in the 1990s when I was going to school, it wasn't really important for you to have a computer at home. You can go to a computer shop or you can actually do group projects because there would be at least five people in the class would have a computer at home. And these computers that aren't even theirs, it would be their parents. So we would ask for their parents permission. Can we use your computer so we can make this group project? So that was how it was in the 1990s. Suddenly in the year 2000. And I remember this. I realized that everyone in class suddenly had computers, so I had to go out and build mine. So I learned to build my own computer because, you know, you were in high school already. We had to start being independent. So that's when I guess it all started in the early 2000s was a boom for computers and cell phones here in the Philippines. In the 1990s it was more of like a necessity for the older people

who needed to work or who needed to accomplish things. But so I guess there's that disconnect. That's why we still have a lot of people who can catch up with the technology but do not really understand the power of technology and the advantages and disadvantages. Yes.

**Intvr:** OK, so you mentioned just now the term computer café or computer shops? Yes.

**Resp:** Yes, I guess in the Philippines, you call it a computer shop, but in other countries it's a computer café.

**Intvr:** That's why I sometimes asked about cybercafé and people... They didn't know what I was asking about, so. OK, have you been to them in the past?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. Yes.

**Intvr:** Can you describe for me how they were like their physical establishment itself?

**Resp:** Based on the ones that I've gone through. There are actually two types here in the Philippines. It doesn't matter how expensive or how cheap the computer shops are, there are two types. There are computer cafes for those who need to work. So this would be situated in a lot of business centers. And then there are computers solely for gaming. I have never been in one except for that one time that I thought it was a regular computer cafe. And when I went, it was very dark and everyone was screaming and everyone was playing. So I have had to leave. Those are the two types

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** Usually just a couple of sets, several sets of computers. It depends on how big the place is. I've been into one that had about like 50 computer units

**Intvr:** That's a lot...

**Resp:** And then there's like one in the garage of a home, about five units, I think, or two. It's also you, can also consider computer shops, a small business here in the Philippines. You could set up one in your backyard, actually.

**Intvr:** Oh. So they are easy to establish?

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** So if you put coins in, just like when you do your laundry and then you put money in and then it gives you a certain amount of time for you to wash your clothes. There are businesses like that here in the Philippines. For less than a dollar you could stay at the Internet shop for several hours already. That's why we have a lot of kids they like going to the Internet shops after school.

**Intvr:** So are they still as popular now that people have an easier access to the Internet?

**Resp:** Yes, we still have a lot of families cannot afford their own computers or who do not see the need of having their own computer units because, you know, they have their own cell phones anyway. Yeah. So because right now, while technology is a big thing in the Philippines while you can see that we are very connected country. The television is still a major form of entertainment for us. So, but like here where I live, I-back then you would see a computer shop every other block. But right now, not so much.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So I guess but I won't say that it's a dying industry. It's just, you know, it depends on where you live. I live near the business district, so it's kind of expected that families living around the business district have computers their own. Yeah, but like in more in poor communities or in communities like of lower income families, I think that's where I see a lot of these coins slot computers so that the kids can do their projects or play games.

**Intvr:** OK, so did you hear about a law that was established in the Philippines concerning the banishment of curtains in those places?

**Resp:** Hello? Sorry I lost you for a second.

**Intvr:** Oh. Ok, if you heard about a law concerning the use of curtains in computer shops.

**Resp:** A law?

**Intvr:** Yes, there was a law that was placed for the, um, the computer shops. Let me try and stick with the term, for the provision of closed cubicles and the use of curtains. Are you aware of that?

**Resp:** Um, I didn't know that there was a law, but I know that that's how cybersex den's look like.

**Intvr:** OK, so there was actually a law because in a lot of communities, apparently, they would use curtains to give privacy to the people who were there. And so, the government established that law, in a way to fight the types of crimes or to prevent people from watching pornography websites and so on...

**Resp:** I didn't know.

**Intvr:** So you never saw a computer shop that was like that?

**Resp:** Oh, my goodness! No. never. I mean, I'm so relieved that I've never seen that before. I guess you would need a special pass for you to be able to go into one? I mean, like, sometimes I would see somebody chatting with her boyfriend or his girlfriend online because it's an open area. I'd be just be staring, but never- not nothing with covers. It's nothing like that. Nothing like cubicles.

**Intvr:** Ok. Good. Now let's go to the to the main topic. So, uh, before I spoke to you, have you ever heard about live streaming child sexual abuse?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok, so can you walk me through what you know about it?

**Resp:** I can't remember the first time I've heard about it. Sorry, child... child abuse videos, right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** I cannot remember the first time I heard about it. I'm thirty-two and I've been connected to the Internet since I was, I don't know, maybe 12, 13, 14. I can't really- can't remember. Usually they come up in the news or sometimes when I read news from other countries. Uhm... also I, I kind of like to research about certain topics, especially as part of my advocacy.

**Intvr:** Oh, I see.

**Resp:** So yeah I- I've heard of a lot of and I at one point I did my research on the Dark Web, so apparently. A lot of these bad things exist there. Yeah, so that's how I learned about them. Most likely it was in the news when I first heard about it.

**Intvr:** Ok, hum, did you ever like while you were browsing without intention to look for this type of topics, did you ever, like, bump or did a pop up suddenly appear related to child pornography? You think it's easy for children to bump into these things?

**Resp:** Ok, thankfully, not that I remember. I don't think so. I would have reported it. I would have felt uneasy. It would have been something I would never forget. I don't think it's easy because even with my research, I never- I would always- or it probably also has something to do with when I research about... let's say I go to Google and I research about it. I look at the URL first before I click on it just to be on the safe side. So I'm also particular with the links that I like because, you know, I don't want anyone tracing me back because they thought that I was trying to access child abuse videos. So yeah, I have never encountered.

**Intvr:** Ok. Have you ever heard of 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** Yes. It's- Yeah. That was big.

**Intvr:** It was, it was big in the Philippines then?

**Resp:** Yeah. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok, so it's the first time I heard someone in the Philippines that actually heard about the video, usually people don't seem to recall it being very spoken about on the news at least.

**Resp:** I heard it, probably in my circle of friends. Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok because it was a really big thing here, even if it's not related with the- with the topic directly, it was on the news a lot when it happened. So I asked the question because it was such a major thing in the West, it was so important, I imagine that it would be as reported in the Philippines, but I guess that was not the case?

**Resp:** I don't watch a lot of local news. I depend on the Internet too so I could find out more about the news. Here in the Philippines, what you see on TV is already online anyway, but I tend to filter out a lot of local things, TV shows, commercials. I just don't have time for them. But I guess it's because of the fact that I'm friends with... I... my circle of friends. We are like advocates for a myriad of things. So we tend to talk about these things a lot, like we have someone advocating for mental health. I also have a lot of friends advocating for the same things as I am. It's just in a different capacity. So for me, I could say that it was a big deal for us. But yeah, you're right about

the Daisy's destruction not being a big thing in the Philippines based on the news coverage that I could find.

**Intvr:** Ok...thank you for the information on that.

**Resp:** Online you could find a lot but from local sources, not so much. When Peter Skully was arrested here, I was actually surprised that he was here and nobody bothered to report somebody like him. I was like, oh! What's wrong with you? Yeah

**Intvr:** It's- it was a big thing

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** I think that if it was here, we would have had the same reaction. Like there's this man doing all these things. Why didn't anyone say anything?

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok, hum...

**Resp:** So please don't say that it was a big thing in the Philippines because now that I am trying to remember it's not as it wasn't like breaking news. It wasn't in the news for like one entire month. No, it wasn't like that. Probably just for me because I was hyper aware, and I was alert to these things. Yeah

**Intvr:** Ok. Don't worry actually before I, I submit everything I can send you your answers and if it's anything that I didn't write correctly or you didn't explain the way you want it, you can review it and I'll make the changes. So don't worry. Hum, ok, sorry I was a bit lost, so the studies now they tell us that children prefer to spend more time online with online friends than with those they go to school with or that they know from the neighborhood. How easily do you think it is and how common that these children aren't actually talking to other children, but with predators trying to impersonate a child?

**Resp:** I don't think it's difficult for predators to find children, Filipino children online. My son is online a lot, probably because of the fact that I work from home, so there are times I'm busy. The thing is, as an advocate against rape culture, I was able to- I guess I was able to prepare myself to

give him that talk about predators online. He's eight, but he already knows about rape culture, sexual abuse. I had to talk to him about it.

**Intvr:** I see...

**Resp:** So he would tell us about people he talks to online when he's gaming. So... [background noises] So he would tell us about it because like I said, we are kind of a modern family. So we made sure that because here in the Philippines, a lot of kids are afraid of their parents. So sometimes bad things would happen to them and they wouldn't tell their parents because they fear that their parents will get mad at them because they allowed it somehow. They would think that their kids did something. That's why it happens. But for us, it's the complete opposite. Sometimes my kid overshares there are things that we want him to learn that if he has a crush on somebody, something like that, but no, he would tell you everything. So seeing that, I could say that, yes. Number one, it would be very, very easy for predators to find children, Filipino children for online abuse because of the secretive nature of a lot of children, because their parents- because they are afraid that their parents will get mad at them for trying to figure things out on their own.

**Intvr:** What do you think is the like the main social platform that is used for this contact?

**Resp:** Facebook. Facebook is a big thing here in the Philippines and It gets very easy, especially the chatting part. Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok, so going back to live streaming child sexual abuse specifically in the Philippines, you told me that you already know a little about it before we spoke. So do you have, like, a general idea of the main victims where it happens, how? Small details like that?

**Resp:** So there's this case I remember. They did a sting operation with the FBI, I believe. So this undercover agent had to pretend that he was interested in kids..

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** And I think it was the parents or the aunts of these kids who started showing him pictures. And of course, you have to imagine the shock of that agent because he had to pretend that he was enjoying these things until he then had to go to the Philippines and pretend that he was going to do physical things to them.

**Intvr:** Ok...



**Resp:** These women brought the kids to a hotel room so that they could leave the kids with this old man and that's when the FBI came in. I'll look for it and I'll send it to you

**Intvr:** Ok, thank you, because I am not aware of that operation, actually.

**Resp:** Yeah, I may have said something's wrong, but basically in general, that that's how that's what happened. So my understanding is...It's the Philippines is a very cheap country for a lot of foreigners.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So I don't think that it's just they would be content in doing it online, but I will not be surprised if we find out that there are so many children being abused online. Number one, it's very easy for us to stay connected to the Internet. You know, if you have a dollar, you would have Internet for three days. You can connect to the Internet for three days and say somebody offers... if you tell a Filipino who is desperate to earn some money that you're going to give them fifty dollars, that's a big amount of money to them already. We have a lot of small-time scams here and people are happy to earn dollars per day out of these scams. So I don't know how much it will cost, but I'm just imagining that, you know, it would take so little for the foreigners to be able to afford a person who's so desperate to survive. And then this person will then find somebody who would be more willing to do these bad things. So, yeah, that's how I understand it. And there are a lot of foreigners coming here. We're very open. We don't have visas for foreigners who want to visit this country. So here in Makati alone, we have places that foreigners frequent so they can meet local women. And there are a lot of local women and they tend to look very young.

**Intvr:** Sorry [background noises]

**Resp:** Yeah?

**Intvr:** Oh no, please go on, I just had a cable that fell down.

**Resp:** So sometimes it's a very old foreigner and a very small, petite Filipina. And I wonder sometimes like, how old is this child? Because, you know, like I'm thirty-two and I look quite young. So sometimes- yet I had to say that because a lot of people tell me that. So I was like this child. You can see the body itself. It's not even- it looks like a typical teenager whose about

fourteen. So yeah. So you know like- I don't know anymore. I don't know what I'm trying to say, but that's my understanding of how child abuse [...]

**Intvr:** Online

**Resp:** -actually online and offline works, because we also have a lot of apparently, a lot of Filipinas, Filipinos go online and look for relationships with foreigners because they think it's the easy way out.

**Intvr:** Ok, just give me one second...

**Resp:** Ok!

**Intvr:** My headphones were falling, Ok

**Resp:** Oh! Ok

**Intvr:** Ok. So I can share a little with you about what I've researched so far about the live streaming and with that we can discuss it a little bit more?

**Resp:** Ok

**Intvr:** So for example, why I chose the Philippines in particular to study, we know that live streaming happens all over the world in many countries, in many different ways. But what was more the biggest impact was that in the Philippines, it's often designated as a 'cottage business' because it's the family who is behind the children who start doing these live streams, which actually was something new to agencies like Europol and Interpol. They didn't know how to react to it because they weren't expecting to be the family or the neighborhoods to be the ones to coercing children to do this. From what i could research so far, this happens in the poorest communities, mostly because they are not as aware of the issue of what how bad it can be to use technology and because of economic needs, because, like you said, a little money for the United States could be a lot of money in the Philippines. In a small, very brief live stream show where the child just dances and just removes their clothes, they would pay like ten dollars. That's not a lot of money when we think about it. But like from what I've been told, that can be a lot of money for people who have a big family and no work.

**Resp:** Yes

**Intvr:** That's correct then?

**Resp:** Yes

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** It's extremely- it's painful to think about it, but yeah, that's- I guess that's the life of a lot of Filipinos. And it's not- just I don't think it's just like live streaming that they do. A lot of kids here in the Philippines, sometimes younger than my child, are already used to working and earning money. Many of them work in the landfill's, picking up trash so that they can resell it. So these kids, mostly, they don't go to school or they go to school, but they have to earn the money first. I learned of two kids who would pick up hum, so, you know, it is in the market and not in the groceries with air conditioning, but like the outside markets. So the outside markets here in the Philippines. The deliveries come in very, very early in the morning, and- There's this documentary about these three kids, and they would stay up really, really late just waiting for the deliveries and then whatever falls from the crates, what fall on the ground. Nobody bothers to pick them up and they would collect, they would clean them up, they would slice them, and then they would sell them outside of the market. They would come home about four or five in the morning after selling, give the money to their parents or to their caregivers, sleep for like two hours and then go to school after school. They go home, help take care of the family. So that's how it is for a lot of Filipino children. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Um, do you think that, um, live streaming and child abuse online is a well-known issue in the Philippines?

**Resp:** I don't think so it's possible that we just haven't really found a lot of them. I don't... it's rare for me to hear anything like that in the news. It just so happens that Daisy's destruction went big because of other countries, but in the Philippines, I really don't know if it's because our authorities are busy doing other things, but I will not be surprised if this is being done because we are at a time where everyone's just desperate to survive. And you know, like what I said about *Utang na Loob* and Family First. That's how these kids are manipulated, I believe, based on the stories of kids who work like, you know, our kids are not supposed to work, but I'm just going to call it regular jobs in comparison.

**Intvr:** To this?

**Resp:** Yes. So, like, whenever you talk to a child who's working for the benefit of their families, they would always say the same thing. I want my family to survive. I love my family. I want to help my parents and I have to take care of my parents. We have this belief in the Philippines that after our parents take care of us, we now have to take care of them. So for these kids, as early as five, six, seven, eight years old, it's already ingrained in them. So I guess if I have to translate it for the benefit of kids who are forced to do sex work, it's kind of the same thing. It's how they're manipulated into doing these things if their permission is actually requested.

**Intvr:** Yes, because when they are too young, they don't even understand they don't even understand what's going on.

**Resp:** Like, how do you explain what's happening to them when they don't even know how to call these body parts? Right? Yeah, that's... there's this shelter that I know of. I couldn't visit. Somebody was asking me to visit, but right now I can't. This is a shelter of kids, mostly girls who were rescued. Actually, I know two shelters, but I'm thinking of one right now. These are kids who were rescued from sex work. I can't remember the exact... I cannot remember the exact nature of the sex work that they do. But I think it's a mix of physical and digital. And the youngest, I think, was at four years old

**Intvr:** [...]

**Resp:** -and is the child of one of the victims who's in her late teens. So it's possible that she four years old I think it was a four year old child, around that age. But I- I, I can't remember anymore because it's been years since I was invited. And they are suspecting that this child is a product of the sex work that the teen was forced into doing. There is another shelter. They do the same work. This shelter, the house that the kids or the rescues live in was actually donated by J.K. Rowling, the writer of Harry Potter.

**Intvr:** Really?

**Resp:** Yes. So I can't really say how many of them were rescued from digital sex work or from physical sex work, but it just dawned on me that kids and sex work here in the Philippines, It's not something new, and it's not it's not an isolated case anymore because we already have two shelters within two hours of each other. Well, they are very close then. Yes. I don't know how many more shelters are there, but just in Metro Manila and right outside of Metro Manila, there are already

two, the one donated by J.K. Rowling. I've already visited. This one is within metro Manila. I have not because the kids in this, in this particular shelter at the time had not been counselled. And I- I know that I am not in the capacity to counsel them.

**Intvr:** Ok. I was not aware that J.K. Rowling actually was like- devoting part of her money to help children. So that's a good thing. And you mentioned now that one of the youngest that was in the shelter, for example, was around four years old?

**Resp:** Toddler age, I really can't remember. Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok, so from my research the age gap that is mostly searched by foreigners for the live streams is between, let's say, 12 months old and 12 years of age, because any more than 12, they are too old. But 10 months is the youngest case I heard of so far I think.

**Resp:** Yeah, I think I was looking at the list of... I was just curious the other night. I think about three nights ago or four nights ago, I was looking up a list of fetishes. And apparently you don't just- you don't just call it pedophilia there are different terms for different ages of kids that a person tends to get attracted to, and it's really sick. Yeah

**Intvr:** There's actually symbol's I don't know if you know that, too.

**Resp:** No...

**Intvr:** Like you like a boy within a certain age gap, you have like a butterfly with the wings closed. Then if the wings are open, it means something else. There's like five or six symbols because it's easier for them to communicate with one another without the authorities realizing what they are saying if they use symbols as common as a butterfly. So, yeah, it's like in the chat. If you look sometimes at the various symbols that people are like shaking you would think, "oh, look, it's emojis, it's nothing serious". But in fact, it could be like a serious conversation and we don't even realize it.

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** Do you have any idea of where the people who requested that this type of let's say of service, are from?

**Resp:** I don't know, like I know there are some from the US and the UK.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** I don't know other countries

**Intvr:** Actually, so far with the latest reveals, the main countries are the U.S. first, then India and then the U.K. Did you hear about the project sweetie?

**Resp:** No, I have not.

**Intvr:** You haven't? So, project sweetie, was developed by an NGO called the Terre des Hommes Netherlands. It was one of the first NGOs and international level to actually research the live streaming in the Philippines. They have a different name for it, but they change it. And what they created is this little girl that looked like a Filipino young girl, and they have people working on several different shots where they try to communicate with men who were looking for Filipino girls. The project lasted a few months. It was shut down because Europol was not happy, because Europol was not aware of the project, they believe that for it to work, it really needed to be completely anonymous. But in just a few months, they gathered the information of over 1000 men like they would give credit card, real credit card information. They would give real names, real address. Everything was really easy to gather. But unfortunately, so far, they only prosecuted like five or six of those people. But there's actually another project being said that Sweetie 2.0, which will follow the same lines, but now Europol and Interpol will be involved. So let's hope this one lasts a little longer. It's actually a very interesting project. If you have time to look it up

**Resp:** I'm going to look it up later.

**Intvr:** So, regarding government entities, are they are they open about this subject? Do you think that they are well informed about it and how to face it?

**Resp:** Ok, I am... How do I say this? So we have the Philippine Commission on Women. We also have lots of laws on violence against women and children. So we have these things right. We have these we have a lot of NGOs for the benefit of children in different aspects. We also have the Department of Social Welfare and Development. But the problem is that we always have- as part of a community who helps people with people who have been sexually abused, I believe it's not just the fact that there's really not much budget for the government to be able to help take care of kids, because you will see a lot of kids living in the streets, actually, or kids hanging out in the

streets. They're very vulnerable to all sorts of abuse. It's also the fact that, like I was telling you, just- this is very expensive. Sorry, I just have to turn off the camera just for a bit.

**Intvr:** Sure! Sure!

**Resp:** Yeah, Ok. So it's a combination of different factors. I guess they are aware, but lack of budget, lack of training. What else? Lack of budget, lack of training and when I mean training. Sorry, just give me one quick second.

**Intvr:** Sure! Sure!

**Resp:** So what I mean by training is- Ok, so sorry, Ok, for us to be able to prevent these types of crimes from happening, of course we have to empower our children, right.

**Intvr:** Yes of course.

**Resp:** For example, in my home, we don't just hug my child. Even if he's my child, I don't own him. We have this rule that if you want to hug somebody, you have to ask first.

**Intvr:** Ok..

**Resp:** So sorry, I, I have so many thoughts in my head right now because your question was- are the authorities aware? I can't say just yes, because when you say aware, then you it means that there is an expectation that they will address the issue.

**Intvr:** Yes! Exactly...

**Resp:** So I want to say yes, but there is a but there are so many problems for them to be completely aware that this problem needs addressing. I believe that they know that this problem exists. I also believe that they don't know how to address the problem that exists.

**Intvr:** Ok..

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Then this issue of not knowing how to address the, well, issue is related to the fact that they lack training like you said?

**Resp:** Yes, because and this is just my personal belief as an advocate, we have to change a lot of things. It's not just, you know, being able to figure out where the crime is happening. It's being

able to actually prevent it and to prevent children from being abused. We have to unlearn a lot of things that have long existed in our communities like number one, a lot of parents think that they own their children. So, you know, like desperate measures, desperate times call for desperate measures. And you know... say you are in a group, you are with your friends all same age or around the same age all with similar capacities of thinking, be able to do things physically. What if you're stuck in a plane and the plane is like going down and there's only one parachute, of course, you know, that survival instinct would kick in and it would be very hypocritical of a person to fully sacrifice him or herself without thinking maybe I should take the parachute myself and survive. So it's something like that. I believe that kids are abused because they are weaker than their elders. And it's also because of the fact that their elders see them as... not really objects, but more like I have power over you because I'm older than you are. So it's- I don't know. But it's something that we have to address from the very... it's- sorry, it's not just even financial anymore, that even if you give them like money or, you know, if you allow them financial independence, it's- it's here that if something bad really happens and we really need to survive, the weakest person is sacrificed. Yeah. So I was- Ok. So there is this new law that was passed, It's about gender based electronic violence.

**Intvr:** Ok-

**Resp:** And when I went to the Senate hearing while it was being deliberated, so a lot of us advocates and government offices and NGOs, we were all in agreement that we need to train not just the authorities, but the communities that, you know, like- you need to be able to let your children say no, you need to be able to tell your children that they can say no to physical contact. But it was somebody from the police force who couldn't understand that need. So you see what I mean? Like a person in power. A person in authority. This may be a minor issue for you because here in the Philippines, we have this. It's part of our culture that if you're meeting your elders, you have to do the *mano*. So you take their hand and you put it on your head as a sign of respect. It's also common for a lot of kids to sit on their elders lap to please the elders.

**Intvr:** Oh...

**Resp:** So it's not- those things are not sexual in nature, but the fact that kids could not say no to these instances. Yes. It can then lead to like so many things in the future, like if what if a person



who's much older than them was an actual predator telling them? - Ok, you sit on my lap and I will give you money - They will do that because they think that they have to do it to show respect to that other person. So that's what we were trying to talk about. I'm not sure if it's going to be considered, but I think that was a point that really mattered for a lot of us in in that group. So...

**Intvr:** Ok, so just to make like a catch up, to make sure I'm not confusing, actually, most of the times, what I heard was that in order to face this problem, the root issue was the economy. If you give money to the parent, if you give them jobs, this will not happen. But your perspective is wider than that. We have to actually face the beliefs and give power to the children to say no in small things in order for them to then apply it in the more predictable occurrences, you know. So that's the root issue, not just the economic issue.

**Resp:** It's not just economic, it's not just money, it's how we see our children as people we own. It's how we exercise authority over them. Because, like, for example, we tell them that it's wrong to say penis and breasts in that part of our world.

**Intvr:** Yeah I heard about that.

**Resp:** Yes. So, like, how are children going to tell you that they are being touched inappropriately?

**Intvr:** If they cannot...

**Resp:** If they don't know. Yes. If they don't know what these words are, they don't know that like- it's those very simple things. It's not just economic really. It's I think overall it has it has to- to change from how we think it's from here, like putting money in our pockets. That's also very important. Yeah. And also the reason why I said that it has to be more than money because not everyone can be financially independent at the same time.

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** So and, you know, there are times that you will really help. How do I say this? You're not always going to be financially independent. You're not always going to earn a lot of money. So we can't have them go back to their old ways because they need that money. So I guess, yes, it is important for them to be able to financially support themselves so that they- you know, don't resort to these things. But right now, how much do you need to earn for you to live comfortably? In the Philippines the minimum wage is, I think, about two hundred dollars. It's not enough. It's never

going to be enough. Even if you're a solo person, if you're supporting just yourself, it's never going to be enough. So, yeah

**Intvr:** OK, that's very interesting because no one ever went that far. The importance of changing the mind and how we see children.

**Resp:** I guess it has something to do with my work for End Rape culture PH. We tracked it down because a lot of the victims that I've spoken to. They couldn't say no, actually, because they were afraid of disrespecting the person or I am in a relationship with this person, I shouldn't question him or I shouldn't question her or their intent. So we- and also based on the research that I've done on Google. So we tracked it down through the fact that a lot of kids, Filipino children in particular, because we're talking about the Philippines, never thought to say no. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** We don't actually have the concept of consent here in the Philippines. It's something that you would see widely debated on when you see an article about somebody being sexually abused, try to go to the comment section. The victim is always blamed for not saying yes, yes, yes. So, yeah, that- that's why- that's why I told you that it's not just money. Money is a big part, but it's not alone. Yes.

**Intvr:** So, hmm, you already mentioned that there are laws in place, but, uh, well, not the means to carry them on. And what about the people's awareness, like the general population? Given that the cases have risen, the laws have well, gained more notoriety, let's say. Do you think that people are aware of this? Compared to all of what's happening and how much this is an issue in the Philippines, like compared to- if we spoke in 2010, but now speaking in 2019, do you think there is a visible change in people's awareness?

**Resp:** of child abuse online?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** I would like to think so. We actually banned a porn site, one of our Internet providers and a porn site. So if you are using this Internet provider, I'm not sure if you are familiar with Pornhub?

**Intvr:** I am.

**Resp:** So if you are with a certain provider, you cannot go to that Website.

**Intvr:** Oh, Ok.

**Resp:** So I'd like to think that with the advent of technology, there is access to pornographic materials. So I'm- I will not I, I don't think there is a statistic that can measure the awareness of people when it comes to child abuse videos. I don't want to call them child porn because it's different. Yeah, it's different. But I believe, like, for 2010 versus 2009, there should be with- my page alone, I'm just setting it as a baseline. OK, here. When we started the page in 2016, most of the people agreeing that rape culture exists in the Philippines and is wrong and is harmful are women. But right now in 2019, you will see a lot of men trying to say that, hey, we are men, we are not born rapists. This is not normal behavior. So, you know, from point A to point B, it just took 3 years for us to... it wasn't that long. So from 2010, 2019, I'd like to believe that we have a certain amount of knowledge enough for us to be able to, you know, like if there's material available to raise awareness ourselves on child abuse, because we really need to- we really need to raise awareness on this particular issue. When you say child abuse here in the Philippines, though, they would think its physical harm.

**Intvr:** They never associate it with the online abuse then, right?

**Resp:** Yes. It always has to be physical for them. And like mental health, they don't really believe in mental health because it's not physical. So I guess you really have to push that idea to them that child abuse is not just physical, it's not just words that can be shared online.

**Intvr:** Ok, uhm...this one you already answered.

**Resp:** Do I talk a lot? I'm sorry.

**Intvr:** No, no. It's just that because we began talking there are questions that you already answered so I don't have to be making them again. Ok. So going back to the fact that you just mentioned that mental health is not recognized as well as physical health let's say, according to a lot of the interviews that I was able to access to Filipino families that were involved in exploitation cases online, the families would often claim that the children were free of harm because there was no direct contact between the child and the predator. So I believe it's clear that you do not share this perspective?

**Resp:** No, I do not.

**Intvr:** Ok, can you envision what sort of repercussions will unfold on the children when they are submitted to this type of abuse, other than the fact we already discussed that they are unable to say no because of the well, the cultural traits What about the mental issues that might arise from being under this type of abuse?

**Resp:** Ok, what I imagine is like if I were a three-year-old and I'm being subjected to this kind of abuse, maybe now I wouldn't. It depends on the kind of abuse, because I know that. It varies, like. I have never seen any material, but I'm just trying to imagine that maybe there's the reason why they say it's harmless is because they are not doing much to the child in terms of, like, the physical pain and inflict physical pain. I'm sorry. I don't know, but maybe, like-

**Intvr:** Can I describe a few cases? Will that help?

**Resp:** Can you? Describe, like, one where the child did not experience physical pain versus one which she did?

**Intvr:** Ok, one where the child doesn't experience physical pain, the most common is when the child is just asked to remove her clothes in a certain way to touch herself with, like, very lightly. You know, she follows the instructions of the perpetrator. If she doesn't understand her mother or her sister will be next to her and explaining what she has to do, then you have the other cases. Let's take an extreme one, which is the more expensive type of case that I have encountered so far that happened, which is they involve animals. They make a toddler, well, be abused by a dog. As you can imagine, physically, there's a lot of pain in the child. And if she has it, depending on the age she was, I think she was around five. So I'm not sure how much she will remember in the future. But remembering all the repercussions, I think it's very heavy. It was a very heavy case.

**Resp:** So, Ok, so I guess for the first one and I'd like to think that the mental pull would not start right away, but will probably, if the child still remembers and the child grows older and the child starts doing it with the person she actually consents to doing it with, that's when it probably will come back to her and holy crap. Why was I being asked to do these things? Yeah, so I think that's the delay, you know, like emotional mental effect. I'm just imagining.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** The second part is, has to do with the pain. So I guess the trauma of being subjected to pain is in itself like they're- Ok, let's just call them problems. There are no problems too big or too small.

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** That's it. There are no stressors too big or too small. It depends on how the person copes really. But as a child, children don't have the same coping mechanisms as a lot of adults. Adults, even adults, have a hard time coping with their own stressors in life. And considering that adults already know what to do, they have their own money. They are at the capacity to be able to change things in their lives. What more the children... So we cannot dismiss. Sorry, I just wanted to know- because I was just trying to figure out when the trauma might actually materialize itself. I guess as if I were that child and I was asked to take my clothes off in front of the camera and the person is looking at me because- I don't know that it is sexual in nature. I wouldn't really think of much of it as a child. But when I start being intimate with somebody I like, that's when I probably will think - hey, that was wrong.

**Intvr:** Do you think that even in social relationships, this child who is growing under this type of work, won't she have like difficulties when dealing with other children that let's say we're not ever involved with this type of work?

**Resp:** I'm pretty sure I don't like calling it daddy issues or mommy issues. You've heard of those? Right?

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** But something like that. Some children [...] I'm sorry- I've read of some accounts of children turning into doing criminal stuff, children becoming criminals. And it always has something to do with trauma that was inflicted unto them as children. It doesn't matter if it's mental-

**Intvr:** -or physical.

**Resp:** Yes, but they... there is a possibility that they will end up unable to cope with the world. So that includes social, being social, establishing relationships with people. So I would assume it's the same for children or victims. Yes.

**Intvr:** So personally, do you believe that these families or these peers who leave the children to do this type of work are truly unaware of the harm inflicted upon the child? Or is this just an excuse that they tell themselves?

**Resp:** if they aren't aware that it's wrong? Number one, why would they need cubicles or curtains? Why would they need to hide it? That's number one for me. If you think it's not wrong to strip a child and you put your child on video to an adult, then you wouldn't have any trouble doing that in front of other people. But the fact that they have to hide it means that they know that it's wrong. I guess they just have to say it like that because, I don't know, and for you to be able to do that, I believe there's some sort of- like, you know, we are a very conservative country, like, you know, we still believe in if you dress this way, you're a very loose person. So why would you do the same to a child and say that you didn't know that it was wrong? So, no, for me, no, I don't believe that you don't know that you were doing something wrong.

**Intvr:** Ok, given that besides conservative, you are a religious country. And let's assume that in the poorest communities, the religion is very present. Don't you think that this should be this should act as a deterrent to prevent the people from submitting child to this?

**Resp:** So there's a conflict here we're very religious country. But we do these things.

**Intvr:** Yeah..

**Resp:** I will say that desperate times call for desperate measures. It's... I've gotten hungry before, and the mood that I'm in when I'm hungry, that's my example. That's how I think of it. Like sometimes I miss a meal because I'm busy working. The moment that hunger hits me, I'm like, don't talk to me. So I believe it's the same thing. These are people who may or may not have had regular meals in the past couple of weeks. They are aware, but like their capacity to do the right thing is impaired because there's nothing else that's available for them. So they will definitely set religion aside. The fact that they were able to set aside, you know, the children as things for them to be able to earn money off from. I, I doubt that religion still plays in that particular frame of mind. Yes.

**Intvr:** Ok, so before I was often told, when I asked about this conflict with the religion that what would come to mind is that the Bible or God, let's say, forgives everything If you assume your sins, you will be forgiven and you will still go to heaven and this will be the hell. They will justify

that there is no actual conflict with religion. Do you think that this is a decent, let's say, an appropriate deduction? Do you agree with them?

**Resp:** I guess it has something to do with the fact that I'm not religious and I really believe that. I have drawn a line, it's not so much the forgiveness that I seek, I still pray, but it's not so much the forgiveness that I seek. But it's thanking God for allowing me to receive blessings or for allowing me to succeed in certain things. So I'm probably influenced by that thinking. I don't I'm not a big fan of, you know, I want to pray right now because I need help. It's more of I'm going to do the best that I can for me to get through this. And if I do get through this, I should probably think of something like that. So I cannot agree or disagree with what they said because, yes, that's like the victim card that a lot of people use. Oh, God will forgive me anyway.

**Intvr:** Right, that makes sense.

**Resp:** Yeah. So- but what I think of, like probably what's going on in their heads right now is they are no longer thinking of religion. It's really the immediate need to address the hunger or that need for money, because it's not just food that they need to buy. Actually, they need money for rent. They need money for electricity. So, you know, when you have all these things in your head, you're not going to think of other things anymore. You're not going to think of karma. You're not going to think of heaven. You're already living in hell.

**Intvr:** So the basic needs that you need to address, to respond to. Ok. So this is already said as well, ah- ok. Child prostitution is prohibited in the Philippines and in most countries around the world, but according to the reports, it's actually still very visible and frequent in the streets of some Filipino cities. Is that true?

**Resp:** Yes

**Intvr:** So even if it remains visible, why do you think it continues to happen? do you think the society is turning a blind eye to the issue?

**Resp:** It could be turning a blind eye or we're just not equipped to actually see that it's happening. Turning a blind eye, because we also have this belief that we shouldn't meddle in other people's business. That's why I was laughing when you said are very hospitable to foreigners, but not our own.

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** That's why I laugh, because whenever is happening to your neighbors, you just don't- just don't meddle. Mind your own business. We're very big on that, although we gossip a lot. Filipinos are known for gossiping. Yes, it's funny. We just gossip, but we don't do any action.

**Intvr:** Ok. Do you think that, um, especially because this there is this not meddling, uh, ideal, that in the future society will behave towards online sexual abuse, like live streaming the same way that they behave towards prostitution?

**Resp:** Ok, so there is a trend of people taking videos of something that they find peculiar or wrong, posting it on social media and using certain hashtags so that they can reach out, because here in the Philippines, there are two shows, I think every Sunday at around the same time, like I said, I don't really watch local TV. Right. But I try to catch up with the news online. So there's these two shows and they tag these two shows. So that shows could send their research team and do a segment about these topics. We also have another show. It's hosted by this man. And if you have an issue with your neighbor, with your teacher or whoever, you can go to him. And he is basically taking over the role of the police or the authorities, although he still has to work with authorities to legally sort out the mess of his clients. But basically, there's these shows. So, for example, if I see a child being abused, I will take a video posted online and then I will hashtag these shows and then other people will do the same. I just have to make sure that they actually think it's worth looking into. If it's not, then it's just another viral post. So it's not that we are indifferent. It's more like we don't want to involve ourselves because if we have to report something, then we have to go there. We have to stand witness. We have to sign papers. Of course, we are afraid of what the defendant might do, because justice is very expensive here in the Philippines. It takes forever to get somebody proven guilty of a crime. - So what if this person manages to get out, what will this person do to me? - So I think that's something that a lot of people consider. That's why we always say - don't meddle in other people's business. - It's too much of a sacrifice. But with the advent of technology, that's what a lot of people do. They make viral videos. But I would also like to point out what I said earlier about we are not sure what child prostitution should look like at times. I wouldn't know because these are done in, if not in the confines of their home like private places that I do not have access to. These may be done in places that I do not go to, like the red-light district. I do not have any reason to be there. So I wouldn't really know



**Intvr:** Ok, let's move the topic a little now and discuss a little about local and transnational knowledge.

**Resp:** Sorry, I'm stepping out. It's just so I can drink water. But I can hear you.

**Intvr:** No problem, so you mentioned that you don't often watch the local media, that you find your sources more online and international news, right?

**Resp:** Yeah, I don't watch like I don't have cable TV, so I just go on Facebook or online so I can read the news because I don't like sitting in front of the TV and watching the news for an entire hour or I want to be able to read the article. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Ok. So in the Philippines, the media, does it like pay close attention to these type of issues, these this type of criminality? Do they have an important role among the community to raise awareness or are they just to focus on other issues?

**Resp:** No, I like to think that- despite the censorship that the media is receiving from, I'm not sure if you're aware, but because of the president, I think that the media is not much free speech as it should be. But I think in both cases they're not. Indifferent. I just think that they just need to find material for them to be able to report on it because they report on a lot of things, like are you familiar with Kris Aquino?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes.

**Resp:** So they report on the most mundane of things happening in her home. So I doubt that they would turn a blind eye on reports of a child being molested. It's just that. Not a lot of the victims go like go forward and tell the authorities or the people about it, so they play a big role, but it's the material that it's not getting to them. And they are very busy, I see, like, for example, we have two major networks, they constantly post articles, sometimes every hour there's something new happening. So if they can get their hands on the material, it would definitely.

**Intvr:** I was actually told that one of the reasons why maybe this issue is not covered is because the news focused a lot on corruption or LGBTQ issues?

**Resp:** Yeah, there's. There are. It was eradicated in 2009, I think. I don't know, 2000 or 1999. It was eradicated about 20 years ago, but now it's back. So yes, there should definitely be focus on that. We should also consider the fact that, like I said, there's not much material to go by with the

report. And I don't even know like there will if- Ok, if a victim goes to the authorities or maybe the teacher and tells them I am being molested by this person, then of course news is made of it. But normally after that, not so much coverage anymore. It's I guess it has to do with the fact that as a victim of sexual abuse, it takes a toll on them to the authorities because authorities also tend to victim blame

**Intvr:** Ok-

**Resp:** -and then especially if the other person has money and yeah, they remember the game of influences, yes, yes and money. So, yeah, there's really not much to go on with if the case is dropped because, you know, there's really nothing to report. But yeah, I don't really know if there are documentaries about these things, to be honest. I'm not sure if there are any local documentaries about online abuse.

**Intvr:** I mean made by Philippine Filipino news. I didn't find any. I found a few that pass on Al Jazeera and then I found something from the UK, but not originally from the Philippines so far.

**Resp:** So, yeah, I guess, my gosh, this is really heartbreaking for me because it's an epidemic, but it's not an epidemic at the same time, because you don't know who is part of- you know, how much it's happening in the way or so [...]

**Resp:** But you don't know where you don't know who to talk to.

**Intvr:** Yeah, Ok. So we already mentioned that this judicial system is actually very expensive, which I did not know. I did hear that it was kind of slow. But I mean, this is a problem in a lot of countries. There's also the issue that the child testimony which still plays a major role in a conviction in this type of criminality in the Philippines and around the world. I think it's mostly the same. But overall, do you think that the judicial system with this flaws that it has is still trustworthy?

**Resp:** So the system itself, not the people?

**Intvr:** No, not the people. The system.

**Resp:** ...The system. Yes, I trust our system, our judicial system. I trust the laws that are being made and revised at this point. But just the system, not the people involved in the process. But well, it can be revised, actually it can be revised because a lot of our laws are actually outdated.

We have a law where in- if you are a rape victim and your rapist decides to marry you and you agree, then it's no longer rape.

**Intvr:** I did not know...

**Resp:** Yes, you can undo the rape if you ever get married to the person you raped. I think they're trying to repeal the law, but I'm not sure.

**Intvr:** Ok, I will look into it, actually, correct me if I'm wrong, but the age of sexual consent in the Philippines, is it still 12?

**Resp:** Yes, I believe it's still 12. There is a petition to raise it to I can't remember if it was 16 or 18, but yes, age of sexual content is 12. Age student license for driving is 16. For you to be able to buy cigarettes and alcohol, it's 18 and as well as to vote.

**Intvr:** Oh, OK. So when are you considered an adult? Is it when you're 18?

**Resp:** Yes. Now you are considered an adult here when you're 40, by your parents now it's the way they treat you.

**Intvr:** Ok, so when it comes to the age of consent you say there is a petition to raise it to 16 or 18. Ok, so you do agree that they should be trying to change it, the age of consent?

**Resp:** Yes it need to be changed.

**Intvr:** Ok, do you have any idea why it has remained the 12 years?

**Resp:** I actually don't know, to be honest, I was surprised I only learned about it the past couple of years because I didn't think...I was under the impression that it was the same as the age of, you know, like when you are allowed to buy cigarettes and to vote I thought they were all set at 18. I didn't realize that they were set at a much younger age. Age of criminal liability is not 9 years old. I cannot remember at this point what age, but it's older. But I think it was 15. I think it was 15 years old. But they want to push it down to 9. But yeah, the reason why I didn't bother is because I was under the impression that everything was at a flat line of 18 years old. So when I learned that it was at 12, I was like, why? At 12 years old, you're in between wanting to play with dolls and wanting to dress up. I mean, that's my that's my idea of, you know, like you're trying to figure out if you want to continue playing or if you want to have a crush on a person. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Do you have any idea why they would try to lower the stage of criminal responsibility to 9?

**Resp:** Because there are a lot of kids who are turning into criminal activity to survive and they did not want to see that it is because of the need for economic reform, they want Filipino's, like band-aid solutions, they want it solved now it doesn't matter if it's sustainable or if it actually is logical. If they see a solution that can be done now, they will do it. That's how we are.

**Intvr:** Ok.

**Resp:** It's not that we don't have long term goals but we want short term solutions, it's not something that we consciously say, oh no, I don't want them both. It's more- we're not- I'm [...] I don't know. I like reading studies about this, but yeah, a lot of Filipinos were found to not have long term goals they're not very keen on. Yeah

**Intvr:** Ok.

**Resp:** They have these dreams Yes. But it's not important to focus on the now

**Intvr:** Ok, uh, now let me see, Ok, when it comes to international actors such as NGOs, uh, there has been a significant interest towards preventing and tackling this type of criminality that we discussed. Are you aware of any organization acting in the Philippines to address the issue?

**Resp:** I cannot name a particular NGO, but I know that there are a lot of NGOs, foreign NGOs in the Philippines right now aiming to empower children and young girls, especially, and women, I believe in different aspects of life and like body, autonomy or livelihood, things like that. Yes. An NGO from the US actually contacted me and I just didn't get back to them anymore because I got so busy with End Rape Culture, they wanted to donate mattresses. I think they are a mattress company and they provide mattresses to shelters in the US and they wanted to do it here in the Philippines. Yeah

**Intvr:** Ok. Uh. So even if you cannot name the international actors, can you give me, like, examples of both international and local actors of how they try to either tackle or prevent the issue? Like, is it through you mentioned the shelters? The shelters are an initiative, but what other type of projects or missions are taking place?

**Resp:** Uhm [pause]

**Intvr:** Like, for example, there was an NGO. I don't recall the name now, but what they did do, they would go school to school and they would perform small theaters with the children in order to explain them to the harms of the online sexual abuse and how people could pretend to be someone else and so on.

**Resp:** In terms of like- if you are going to be particular about the aim of the NGOs, I'm not aware of and I'm not aware if there is an NGO that aims to raise awareness on the dangers of children being exploited online. But I don't think that... I'm sorry, but I believe that there are existing NGOs here in the Philippines just not NGOs that I know of. I guess they are focusing on physical abuse.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** Yeah. So like, for example, there's this NGO from Thailand and it's called Don't Tell Me How to Dress. So they're trying to raise awareness that it's not it's not in the way a woman is dressed. It's not consent. So they recreated the clothes of the victims here in the Philippines. So there's, you know, like regular party clothes, very sexy. There's a school uniform. And then there's the highlight of that exhibit was a small a little dress for a baby and diapers, so, yeah, something like that. But this NGO actually tackles a lot of things, economic empowerment for women. So I don't think that this is not something that they've been thinking about. They work in cooperation with different embassies, Embassy of Sweden, Embassy of Austria, Embassy of Australia. So a lot of countries, not just NGOs, but also embassies are focusing or, you know, like really exerting effort into helping the Philippines in all aspects, especially when it comes to abuse on women and children.

**Intvr:** Ok.

**Resp:** I should probably talk to the person from that organization about, you know, digital abuse, something about it. Yeah, I'm sorry. I just I don't think it ever crossed my mind because of the fact that I don't see much of it in the news. Like, I know that it's happening, but the lack of-

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** Like tangible proof for me. No, no, it's not tangible proof, but anything tangible that I can hold on to, even if it's visual, it just it's just here. But I'm not really consciously thinking about it. So yeah, this is good I will tell them about this.

**Intvr:** Actually, there are the two organizations that currently I know they are tackling this particular issue, one is ECPAC international. I'm still waiting to talk to them, but I know that they are now developing the initiatives to really focus on live streaming exploitation in the Philippines. And then there's another agency that's called Thorn, which is an American one. It's led by a famous actor, Ashton Kutcher.

**Resp:** Ashton Kutcher? Yeah.

**Intvr:** Yes. So he created the organization and the organization just focus on a digital abuse, including live streaming. And he's helping the authorities to embody certain tools that would either block the streams or that will find child pornography through the identification. That's like a print that the images leave behind. And so they go and they train the police to use this this technology for free. And it's actually been very, very successful. I'm not sure what the report will say, but they have began to work with the Philippines this year since the development of the new department there. I don't know the name, but there's a new team there that was created with the help of the Australian government. So, yes, that one is very active as well.

**Resp:** Ok, I researched. I didn't know I know that Ashton Kutcher has a foundation. I didn't know that they were already working here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's good. I think the next report that they make, they should already start to tell their results that they have in the in the Philippines. Uh, Ok. So when it comes to international organizations that you know of, regardless of facing this issue or other issues, uh, do you think that their approach is standardize or do you think that they take into consideration the values and social dynamics in the Philippines before they start to establish their projects?

**Resp:** Um, based on what I'm seeing, they consider the culture here in the Philippines. They are very big on, you know, like ensuring that it is very relevant to us, although at times I feel like it speaks to people from a certain level. And like, for example, I- I am not rich, but I come from a family who can afford education and really good schools. So, you know, I have that capability and they have the capacity, I have the opportunity to spend my time learning these things. So of course, I will be interested in these things and I will be interested in attending. And my networking is directed toward that goal. Some of the events that I've attended to and this is not a criticism against them, but it's just an observation

**Intvr:** Ok...thank you.

**Resp:** Like this particular organization that I really like working with because I attended there just as a background. I attended a lot of their events and when it comes to sexual abuse and fighting sexual abuse and I was also a speaker at one of their mental health box or seminars. So more often than not, people in the audience are people in the same level as I don't know if that's the right word to use level as I am, or even higher. So I want to see these programs reach the masses, for the communities that are actually in dire need of understanding because they are the ones who are more who are at risk. Because their programs- they also have programs for economic empowerment. And that's the time that they go to these communities. So you see there's a big difference when it comes to the audiences that they target. So I- I do hope and I believe that the like in the near future, because they are going to have a huge celebration and they're going to put all this advocacies in one place. So I guess that's the time that people from different walks of life will be able to mingle with each other. I think that's one thing that a lot of our NGOs have to consider, because if you are a foreign NGO, you go to the Philippines. Of course, the people that you will contact are the people with, the resources that will allow them to establish contact with you, like you wouldn't just talk to a person in the street and tell them - Hey i'm an NGO can you work with me? - You're going to look- you're going to look for someone in the Philippine Embassy. - Ok, can you connect me to someone from the Philippines? - Of course they will connect you to someone that they know. People working in embassies would most likely be friends with somebody in this particular level of society. So, yeah, that's, I think, something that needs to be addressed and it needs to be addressed right away because this particular type of crime really affects those who are in need of finances. So, I mean, I guess I'm sure it happens even to people who have all the money in the world because abuse does not discriminate. It does not choose its victims. And definitely anyone can be a predator. But all I'm saying is we keep talking to people from this level, but the victims are over here. So [...]

**Intvr:** We need to close the gap.

**Resp:** Yes, we need to close the gap. Yes. Does that answer?

**Intvr:** Yes. Yes.

**Resp:** It's not the criticism, but it's more of like logistically that is bound to happen before you reach them. You need somebody in power. And usually the people in power are those who have the opportunity and the resources to actually be in that level.

**Intvr:** So when we discussed the particularities of live streaming exploitation in the Philippines and how it happens in communities and family communities and how they have economic issues, obviously, but also you raised the importance of raising awareness in the more deeper level and how the cultural belief system is and the importance of the child to say no. So do you have any ideas of how organizations could actually let's say how they could, after gaining access to these communities, how they could actually put in place measures that would reach the point that you spoke of?

**Resp:** Ok, we have- Ok, so we have the police, right? Are you aware of the barangay level?

**Intvr:** Like the local police, like there is in Japan in the smaller small offices in small towns?

**Resp:** Yes. It's like there's a city and in the city it's divided into smaller divisions, which are the barangays. Ok. So there's this city police, there's subsidy police and then the barangay police. So the barangay police, they're not really police-police. It's just they're voted into office or they apply for barangay level employment. And so- what I'm trying to say is in police stations there is women and children's division. It's the same with barangay offices. If a woman or a child goes there to complain of some sort of abuse against them based on their gender, then they are dealt with in the women and children office.

**Intvr:** Ok...

**Resp:** So we already have that kind of system in place. What the organizations can do is to strengthen the role of these offices. A lot of barangays hold, especially in low income communities. They have programs. They either go from home to home or they invite people to go to the halls to the to the community halls to talk about certain topics. There's also we also have free health services. So, you know, like in the mornings, you will see a lot of them in municipal health centers. They're in line for checkups, for free checkups, free medication. So I think, like, we already have that system.

**Intvr:** Yes



**Resp:** We already have a system. We just need to insert the process of raising awareness on these things because we also have very high cases of marital abuse or marital rape. It's just that they never see a day in court because, you know, like family, you need to keep the family together. So I will sacrifice. I'm the mom. I will sacrifice everything for the family. Even If- i have two friends on my Facebook list. Even if they're pregnant, their husbands would physically abuse them, would punch them in the face, stick them in their thumbs while pregnant. But they're not doing anything

**Intvr:** Because it's their husbands.

**Resp:** Yes. And they would post about it online. And, you know, like they've already given birth, but nobody in their friends list - And I'm not really friends with them. We just happened to add each other because of business. And no one in their families or their very close set of friends even bothered to go to the police and tell the police that - Hey this heavily pregnant woman, she was punched in the face by her husband - Nobody did. They just imagine that? Yeah. Yes, she posted about it. They post about it online. They post pictures, actually, they post screenshots of texts that they get from their husbands, calling them bad names, telling them bad words. But nobody knew who he was. All you will see in the comments is just rest. Well, it will be bad for the baby. It's really a sacrifice of a woman. So you get what I mean. Like.... So I think what the NGOs can do is make use of these systems already in place and maximize it. They really have to maximize it. The problem they will have is the people they will send to do these trainings, because we have a big population in the Philippines, they're probably going to have to be talking to like tens of millions of people. You have to be able to talk to the husbands, to the wives, to the women, to the men, to the elders. You have to be able to convince them that this isn't- that the culture that we have isn't as harmless as we think it is. So, yeah, there is an option. They just have to maximize that option. I don't think that they have to build it from the ground up because the foundation is already there.

**Intvr:** You have the system. You just need to take advantage of it.

**Resp:** You're right! Definitely. We also have gender- gender development offices in our city homes. So, you know, like so many people to work with, just have probably- probably to train these people for the next two years to handle these cases and then go into the communities and spend then what is 10 years, if you can.

**Intvr:** But in the long term, you can fight against it.

**Resp:** In the long term. Yes. Because they will talk, the victims, the people in in very sensitive situations will talk if someone will talk to them.

**Intvr:** Ok

**Resp:** That's how I believe it. Somebody has to talk to them and tell them - Hey, this is wrong. If it's happening to you, this is wrong. It's happening to you -

**Intvr:** You believe that if there is the initiative, there will be a positive, a positive response from the people... Ok, that's very important because one of the main issues is, how will we do this and use so many resources and then get no response from the communities?

**Resp:** Yes. Because like, for example, what they... there's this it's always point A to point B for a lot of us. If I'm being abused, then I have to tell the police. What they don't realize is, you know, you don't have to tell the police right away if you're not comfortable, but you have to go through counselling.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** And maybe after that, when you feel strong enough, then you can go to the police because like, for example, for rape, the statute of limitations is at seven years. So, you know, if I was raped that day I have the next seven years to go to counseling before I actually go to the authorities and tell them about what happened to me, it's going to be a long ordeal. So I guess a lot of Filipinos, one of the reasons why they don't tell people that something wrong is happening is because they're also afraid of that. They're already jumping into the conclusion that I have to talk to the authorities, right away.

**Intvr:** Yes, when they actually have a long time to do so.

**Resp:** Yeah. We have NGOs for women and reproductive health. Like if you are a victim, you can go to them for counseling first. They will help you realize that you have the power to take control of the situation and go to the authorities after. But before that, they have to make sure that you are counseled. Right. This is an NGO. This is a small NGO. So, yeah, I think I'm actually very hopeful right now just thinking about it. If there is an NGO willing to invest time in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** That's great to hear because I was not aware that there were such good foundations there because often that's the main issue, is how to start, where to build. And if you have that in place, then to develop the actually project, since it's much easier

**Resp:** You just need experts to lead...

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:**...the team and the material you have. And with these two you can start right away.

**Intvr:** Ok, that's really good. I will be sure to pass this along because I was asked via a member of the- I'm not going to say the organization otherwise I'm going to say their name wrong. But I was in touch with an International Organization, which also works in Indonesia and the director there in Indonesia. He was trying to find a way to develop a mission to take place in the Philippines. And one of his main questions was how to start, you know, because in the in the Indonesian, they don't have that big system. And they are struggling a lot, especially the new laws that are coming up. And the fact that you have all this already on the ground. I let them know because it could actually help.

**Resp:** I'm not like- for example, I am advocating against rape culture in the Philippines. There are tons of other online advocacy in the Philippines trying to do the same things. We just don't have enough money, because we're doing it like- we're doing it during our free time. But if an organization needs people, we're definitely willing to spend time. So please tell that organization. Oh, my gosh, you're making me I don't know. It's sad and happy because you- like the fact that you need this means that we failed as a society. But the fact that there is someone who's already thinking of doing something and just needs to know if it is possible is just amazing.

**Intvr:** it's important to know that there is people and there is a foundation to start with

**Resp:** Private, public individuals, groups, the organization will not run out of people to work with.

**Intvr:** Ok, don't worry. I will sure to let them know. So hopefully some something good will happen.

**Resp:** Yes. and who knows. You might. Be able to work with them and come here.

**Intvr:** Oh, I wish, I wish. That's my aim, is if I am able to pursue my doctors, I intend to go to the Philippines and develop a ground project to explore more about this and to raise international awareness so that we can bring the big organizations to tackle the issue. Ok, my questions are about it.

**Resp:** Yeah?

**Intvr:** I'm pretty much done. Yes.

**Resp:** I'm sorry. Did talk too much?

**Intvr:** No, no, no. For me. The more you talk, the better.

**Resp:** Yes and the more- I also realize that that's why I didn't want to answer beforehand. Because sometimes the thoughts are- the ideas are at the back of my head and I need to be able to talk to the person asking me the questions.

**Intvr:** Yeah, it's much better. Um, I just wanted you to ask if you have any questions for me.

**Resp:** Oh, none really. Uhm, If you need to use my name, I am completely ok.

**Intvr:** No that won't that will not happen because of the strict ethics committee things.

**Resp:** I was actually surprised with that part. Will we ever- will you ever share with us a copy of the work?

**Intvr:** Yes, of course. Everyone who participates. I will send a copy back once it's approved by the um, by the university. So it will still take some time because I need to process everything and then I will have a public defense. And if everything is approved, then I will send a copy to everyone because it will be a published work. And hopefully I will be able to pass it on to certain people that I've come to know and maybe raise more awareness and help somehow in my own way.

**Resp:** Do still need people to talk to?

**Intvr:** Yes, I still need people to talk to.

**Resp:** I just realized that I will be asking some people for their permission and then I will pass them on to you. Um, yes. I have several people in mind

**Intvr:** That's great because I still need quite a few because it's hard actually to find people because well you just have to approach them. And not everyone is so open to talk about this as you were.

**Resp:** I was actually quite excited to have this interview with you because this is a very important topic. And I know that I should be paying attention to this as well and as part of the advocacy that we have. So thank you so much. You made me really, really think and it is helping me right now. So I hope I hope to hear from you again, especially about your future.

**Intvr:** Of course, thank you so much.

**Resp:** You know, your doctorate and being able to come here and as well as organization, if they need contacts, I can give you my contact...

**Intvr:** If I am able to get in contact them and they really want to pursue this. I will direct them to you because it's better. They just- they just asked me and then, you know, I'll just give them your information if that's ok, and they will connect with you. Ok?

**Resp:** Ok. Thank you so much, Patricia. Thank you. So good luck.

**Intvr:** Thank you so much and thank you for the contacts that you are helping me with. It's a huge help.

**Resp:** Ok. Alright that's good. Thank you so much Patricia. I enjoyed the interview today

**Intvr:** Thank you

**Resp:** Thank you so much for all your sacrifice and hard work

**Intvr:** Thank you that's much appreciated.

**Resp:** I can only imagine everything that you're going through. I don't think I can. Thank you

**Intvr:** Thank you

**Resp:** Thank you. Bye bye.

## **Interview VII**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 7] [0709a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [09/10/2019] [07:10] (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview VII] [01:17:21]

**Intvr:** Thank you so much for agreeing to participate in this study, it's a great help.

**Resp:** Yeah. would love to help you.

**Intvr:** Oh, thank you so much. Really, because, well it's important I think to explore the topic and to call attention with the society for what's happening there, because so far, as I've heard, you actually have foundations to carry-on the missions. So, NGO's shouldn't have as much problem in the training to prepare people there, to intervene, in the issue? than they are claiming to have.

**Resp:** You know the problem with the NGO's, they don't really have any support... They don't really have any support a lot don't have funding, a lot of them, there's only few that have private funding. The government doesn't really support them. Even the government's factions that are supposed to be helping, don't do much, you know? like I've been in there to campaign, a nationwide campaign in school to promote an anti-sexual violence atmosphere in all schools. So, there are time privacy in all schools that I wanted to take nationwide, but you know, even though I talked to them about it, they haven't move on anything. You know, it's, you don't need very simple actually to educate the country you just have to go to the schools to teach them and they haven't taken this initiative. You know, so, it's very difficult here and also the NGO's here don't want to be publicized because they cannot handle the sheer number of people that would come to them. They don't have the facility, they don't have the volunteer, they don't have the money, they don't have the space.

**Intvr:** Oh!

**Resp:** And there are literally millions of victims of this country I mean, I recently found out there's something like 75,000 children being trafficked online everyday here.

**Intvr:** Yeah. I've heard it something about it as well but I wasn't aware that the NGO's and the police locally are facing such issues. I thought that the funding was more available than they claim but you still have international organizations that focus on this issue when it seems that they are letting go of it and it's important to remind them that it's important not just in the paper and to raise awareness once but to actually continue the work, that's what I'm trying to...I was trying to keep in touch with Terre de Homme

**Resp:** What sorry? What do they call?

**Intvr:** Terre des Hommes

**Resp:** Oh, yes, yes, I heard of that. I met their outgoing head, Donald, I think? They may have better funding actually. They are French organization.

**Intvr:** Yes. They are very international and they had projects that focus on the issue in the Philippines and I hope to have a meeting with them soon and remind them of what is happening there and my work so that's maybe they pushed forward the next project that they have in mind which is Sweetie 2.0, I'm not sure if you heard of the first one?

**Resp:** No, what is that? I'm sorry?

**Intvr:** Sweetie, you didn't hear of a project called Sweetie?

**Resp:** Is that the one where they bait the pedophiles with the computer-generated child? Is that the one?

**Intvr:** Yes, that's the one. So, they have pledge to make another one so the issue here is really not the funding for them, it's that the Europol and the Interpol are making it harder this time to implement it.

**Resp:** Right. Yeah, so how do you want to go about this? Where do you want us to start?

**Intvr:** Okay, I have actually a preset of questions to guide me, but before I start I actually need to ask you something as you know, when we do this type of interviews, we need a signature from the person but from this type, but given the context instead of a written consent, people give me a verbal consent before I start the interview saying that they were aware of their rights and that they

are participating voluntarily, given that they received and read the Plain Statement Letter I previously sent about it and the aim of the study and of course that the interview is being recorded.

**Resp:** Okay, you want me to do that now?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes, please.

**Resp:** My name is \*\*\*\*\*, and I'm aware of my rights and I'm participating in this interview in my own free will.

**Intvr:** Okay, thank you! The first part of the interview is just like a few demographic data that I meant to collect like you age.

**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 34 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: High School
- Profession: Vice CEO for Media Company
- Marital Status: Single
- Children: Yes (1)

**Intvr:** Okay. That's the first part and then I like to approach the cultural and personal traits of the Filipino, if that's okay. If you don't mind, I would to ask you to share a few values and beliefs of your culture that you believe are significant.

**Resp:** I'm sorry, can you repeat the question?

**Intvr:** Yes, if you would share values and cultural aspect that you find important in the Philippines.



**Resp:** Just in general or in localities?

**Intvr:** No, no, first just in general and then if you can, you can be more detailed about those related to child abuse.

**Resp:** Right. Okay, the Philippines is a very family-oriented place. Family is very, very important for Filipinos, it comes before anything else. The Filipinos are very welcoming even to strangers. If they are friends with their friends, they'll take them in. Filipinos are very good natured in general, they're just really poor, a lot of them, which makes it more difficult but they're very strong and they're very tough, they're very resilient and they are, for the most part, they are super-duper, contentious about each other. They have a very community-based feel because we used to be a tribal culture so, that idea of protecting your tribe and leading one of the communities is very strong here as long as you take religion out of the equation and stuff like that. That's the thing that disconnects people as if their religious beliefs are different and they feel somehow that they're segregated from each other, but if you catch someone in a good time and in a good place. Really, they're very community-oriented and they believe in helping each other and they are very friendly.

**Intvr:** I also heard that, you're very hospitable to foreigners? Is that true?

**Resp:** Yes, absolutely! Very. there is the occasional, people wanting to get money from people from abroad, I think that's in every country, but for the most part they welcome foreigners. There is a tiny element of racism but I think that's in every country, there's a little bit of personal bias but for the most part, this is a very good place for foreigners to come, they are very welcome. Filipinos travel all over the world to take care of people, we are the caregiver nation. We are helpers, nurses, all over the world. We take care of other people and that's because, how we are as people, we are good at being caring, taking care of people.

**Intvr:** Okay, what about public image? Is that important?

**Resp:** Public image of the country or public image for the personal? The people care about their public image?

**Intvr:** Yes, how people care about their public image towards others.

**Resp:** Yeah. I think there's a large aspect to that because in the Philippines, there's a saying, always keeping the family name clean and having pride in yourself. There's a lot of shame in doing bad

things or if you are seen to be [inaudible] for something, they really have high pride, a lot of pride, for this and so public image is very important to a lot of Filipinos. They like to be seen to be well mannered and well respected, they're not very keen on being seen as being at fault for something.

**Intvr:** Okay. Do you find that over all families these days are more open minded to certain issues like child abuse or LGBT issues, for example?

**Resp:** You know, a lot more open minded than the 80's because I remember when the LGBT was terrible here, they got ridiculed on the streets, beaten up. I saw that happened before when I was a child but now, the atmosphere is different, it's because it's the change in generation. Because we were colonized by the Spanish for a long time and also the Japanese and the American also. It was like 500 years of colonization; our own culture was watered down by a lot of other factors that international thing that didn't have anything to do with us? There's been a lot of mixed up of what's happened here. I'm sorry, can you repeat the question again so I can answer it better for you.

**Intvr:** The question was basically; the families are more open minded towards issues like child abuse or LGBTQ?

**Resp:** Yes, yes, yes, the older generations were treated like they were colonized. It was a very hard generation, they would all go abroad to make money for their families, you didn't have a choice, you had to make money for your family and send it back so a lot of our grandparents and our parents were very hard. They have a very hard nature because they had to be tough, they had to be the ones who were the bread winners, they have to leave their families for years. Some people left their families 10 years at a time but those generations are now, I don't want to say obsolete, but they're getting older and the younger generations are much more aware because of the internet, because of media of outside factors and they're much more open to especially with anything to do with abuse because they're actually experiencing the abuse so a lot of the kids that I speak to in colleges or in high school, a lot of them knows someone who's been abused or has been abused themselves repeatedly and this is why they are more open minded because they actually know that issues exists and they're more willing to have these conversation. It's like in Hong Kong, you know what's happened in Hong Kong right now?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. I know that.

**Resp:** The people fighting now are really the kids. The teenagers, the 20-year old's, this is the same thing that's happening in the Philippines. There is a revolution of education, I mean, at least the educated youth are more willing to discuss these topics because they're aware that they affect the society and they don't want to live with it like they don't want to live in this abusive society anymore. They want freedom, they want choice, they want to be able to be themselves without fear, without being abused, without being hurt, without violence, so it is a changing atmosphere, it's definitely, more progressive even 5 years ago. When I started this fight against rape here. It was very close minded. I was attacked online. I lost my job. I was blacklisted from the industry because I spoke about being raped by a celebrity here and it was very public, it was very disturbing, it was very distrusting for me because the whole country pretty much was bashing me saying it was my fault, it was an attempt because I wanted to be famous things like this. In 5 years, that attitude has now shifted, it helped that there was a movement after I came out so there's a lot more information for people just so you are aware I found out after what happened to me, I was so curious, because I'm half British and I grew up in Hong Kong, Canada and UK. I have a kind of a wider world view. Half-Filipino, Half-British so I have a cultural understanding of both worlds and I questioned why everyone was blaming me for my own rape and I mean, apart from the fact the he's a celebrity so there's this fan based, there's just a social ignorance. I also found out that our law on rape before 1997, used to state that rape was a crime against chastity which means if you were not a virgin and you were raped before 1997, you will be blamed for your own rape.

**Intvr:** I read about that as well. It makes very little sense but...

**Resp:** Yes! Right? but it was beneficial for people who wanted to rape people especially our age of consent is 12 years old here.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** So, you have to think about who put these laws into place? and it was the UN who changed the law not the Philippine government and there were only briefings about the law when the law is changed so in 1997 there were briefings on the law but now there are no longer briefings so there are a lot of people who do not know that the law has actually been changed and they still roll cases up to now saying that if you didn't scream, you didn't fight back, there was no this, you didn't file a case within, however long, even though the status of limitations is 20 years? They're like, if

you didn't file it in a few days then it didn't happen, you know, all of these things, they're very uneducated about our own laws which is ridiculous and this was led to this cultural things so say, if my grandmother was raped, she would have been told, it was her fault, if she wasn't a virgin, or if she'd been wearing a short skirt or if she's been out late or something like this, ridiculous stuff like that and this culture has permeated throughout the generations because this is what they keep telling them, - Oh, don't talk about it, don't talk about it, don't talk about it because it is shameful blah, blah, blah...- I actually did a video, an education video that I can send you if you like.

**Intvr:** Yes, that would be great.

**Resp:** It's about sexual education actually, I think you'll love it, I'll send it to you so you can have a look at a better understanding at about what people say over here but that's part of the issue is that the law was beneficial for rapist and that cultural mindset is still here. I'm combatting that with education, trying to teach people that this is not right anymore that according to the law, this is what's really correct and we have rights as victims, blah, blah, blah but it takes a while but like I said, in the past 5 years that I've been doing this there's definitely a difference in perception, to what I'm saying now, 5 years ago where I was shamed and blasted, and now it's more like, "Oh my gosh, I think she's actually, unto something."

**Intvr:** People are now actually listening to you instead of judging you.

**Resp:** I know the bad guy for a long time, you know?

**Intvr:** It's not a long time, 5 years.

**Resp:** Yeah, it's not a long time but I've been really fighting against it. I've been speaking at schools a lot. I'm very open about it on social media and because of the public nature of my case it was heard across the country because the guy is a celebrity and he's still on TV now. I mean actually, there are 3 guys who are on a noon time show that admitted that they raped someone back in the 70's on national tv and nothing happened to them. They're still on tv now, they're still worshipped as the most watched tv hosts in the country.

**Intvr:** That's awful.

**Resp:** You know what I'm saying? What are we really saying to kids? That you can act like this and it's fine, you know?

**Intvr:** If I can ask you, in a more personal point, since you are so open about your case, when did you decide to share it? To be open about what happened about you?

**Resp:** What happened was, it was 9 years after I was actually raped. I had kept it to myself because I was by myself in Manila. I was only 19, and I knew already that the cultural attitude towards this would have been that it was my fault and all this stuff that had happened. What happened was there was another girl who was raped by the same guy and she beat him up, it was very public, I can actually send you some links to it if you like.

**Intvr:** Yes, yes, please.

**Resp:** ...and they beat him up in public, it came out in the news but because they let him go, the victim had a change of heart, consciousness that she didn't want to put him on jail and so they turned it around on her, the media made her looked guilty. She went to jail, so was her friends who beat him up. There were 2 other girls who also came out because they were also raped by him. They had no association previously but because they had gone to that girl and they had made him look guilty then all of them look guilty by association and they were blasted in the public eye, they all lost their jobs, they were all shamed mercilessly by the press, there were articles that came out and everything was very twisted you know, one sided to make them look guilty and like they were only seeking money and fame and they honestly, it really destroyed their lives and that one girl is still facing a case of serious bodily harm, I think, because they beat him up and she might go to jail for 6 years, potentially.

**Intvr:** That's insane, really.

**Resp:** Yeah. It's really, really terrible. I can't even explain to you so when that came out, when the issue came out and everybody was bashing this girl saying, "It's not true, you're a liar etc. etc." I came out to publicly support her but I didn't admit what had happened to me except privately on my Facebook like my Facebook is private but somebody who works for the radio, whose a friend of mine, leaked my statement to the press, so, there was an automatic connections between me and them and I was blasted, you know, by thousands of people, telling me all these horrible, horrible stuff. I even received death threats, I went into severe depression, it was really awful but I kept on fighting back because I knew the media company that he works for used to be the media company that I used to work for so, I know their style, I know what they're like, I know that they wait and I

know they wanted to file a case against me so I never said his name in public but I came out on my friend's podcast who has millions of followers and I said my entire story on a live podcast that couldn't be edited so nobody could change my story and I can send you out a link to that as well if you like?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** ... it's very emotional but you know, I tell the whole story on there so you can see it but that was when I actually came out because I said to my friend, and I lost everybody, by the way, my friends, family, nobody wanted to talk to me. I was like a social pariah, nobody wanted to touch me because they were like, "Oh my gosh! because she's saying this", a lot of my friends who were telling people it wasn't true, even my family were saying it wasn't true even like I haven't spoken it to them about it they were just, they didn't want to be associated with me if it was true and it was a very painful time for me and but I knew, I said, look, all the of the cases that they filed against this guy will be dismissed, I know it already, sure enough, all 3, I waited. 1 dismissed, 2 dismissed, 3 dismissed and then I came out, I was like, this is what happened to me, this guy is really a rapist blah, blah, blah, we never said his name so they couldn't do anything to me but they were waiting. They had an entire media campaign where they smeared my name but they didn't use my name either but it was very obvious who they were talking about. That was why I came out because for me, I felt like it was almost my fault that these girls had been raped, I know that it's not my fault because I didn't do the raping but I felt like if I had done something previously there would've been less of them and I actually heard there's about 6 or 7 other girls who came out to my defense who were victims of the same guy so this is a serial rapist that we're talking about here.

**Intvr:** and he's still at work?

**Resp:** Yeah, he's still on a noon time show every single day, makes millions, he's idolized by children. Yeah.

**Intvr:** That's a part that makes no sense. I mean, I don't know here. In my country, whenever a celebrity is accused of that, there's always a big ordeal against them. If not all, they ended up being in jail. We are not that good, let say but, they're usually the celebrity gets pretty ruined at least you know,

**Resp:** Yes

**Intvr:** They don't want to go to national TV and people don't want to talk about them, but at same time there is this hypocrisy in the west which is that, we are so open-minded and we accept that these things happen but whenever it happens to the family, to someone in your own family, the family, itself, they, failed to understand it. For example, in my case, I was also abused about 4 years ago.

**Resp:** Ok, 4 years ago only?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** Oh my gosh! I'm so sorry.

**Intvr:** I actually, have been in treatment because of that and because of I have a depression and so on because of it. and I was dating at the time and my own boyfriend convinced me that if something happened, it was my fault so...

**Resp:** Wow!

**Intvr:** It would be shameful for me to come out and say it and would be a ruin for him because he was not able to, let say, protect me.

**Resp:** Oh my gosh...

**Intvr:** You know, he went as far as destroy the evidence, you know, because...

**Resp:** What!

**Intvr:** I was so messed up that day and I have like a cut. It was full of blood and so on and he just washed everything and he threw away like my private clothing and stuff like that and...

**Resp:** You're joking! Oh my gosh!

**Intvr:** And no, I was so altered and he affect me so much because...

**Resp:** Oh my gosh! I'm so sorry, that so terrible... oh my gosh....

**Intvr:** Yeah... He was like so manipulative that it took me so much time to finally speak to someone. So, finally I speak-up to my mom which well, understood and she cried a lot and she

still tries to deal with it but when I spoke-up to my father, which is the guy that you imagine as, well, here, when you meet him like as, open-minded guy, he is cool guy you know. He said to me that I have no right to be outside that such hours, I have no right to go out without have warning him. And that I put myself out there, so now I have to deal with the consequences and a place that I wasn't not dead.

**Resp:** Wow...

**Intvr:** So, yeah that's usually, that's actually very common in my country.

**Resp:** You know can I tell you...

**Intvr:** There's this idea that we set and when it comes to it, people don't really understand or try to.

**Resp:** Can I tell what we have in common? You? The Philippines and Spain, you're in Madrid, right?

**Intvr:** No, no I'm from Portugal.

**Resp:** Is it Catholic in Portugal?

**Intvr:** Yes. We are mostly Catholic.

**Resp:** There you go. See, same as here. It's the same thing, you know what I mean like it's this Catholic culture that we have that makes the shame-thing and you know this hypocrisy that you're of God-fearing-person but it just happened. It's your call. You know? Which I find ridiculous. Yes. I'm so sorry that happened to you. That's so awful. My gosh! Yeah, I can't even imagine that your boyfriend... I hope you're not with him anymore.

**Intvr:** No. No. I'm not. I'm not. Thankfully I'm not.

**Resp:** Ok good. Thank God.

**Intvr:** But yeah, he was an insane guy. It took me awhile to understand but after that, you know. It was like a mission call for me that what the hell is he saying? And...

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** Well, it was dark times, let's say.



**Resp:** I really do understand.

**Intvr:** Anyhow, now that we spoke about religion a few times both in your country and while in my country and many others, religions still play major roles in societies. What can you tell me about how religion affects the Filipino people?

**Resp:** My gosh! Where do I start? I was raised as a Catholic not a strict Catholic but I'm very familiar with the Catholic religion, Christian, I believe in God and everything but there's supposed to be a separation of the church and state but that is not happening over here. There are so many issues that are being hindered because of the Catholic churches' involvement in the government affairs, like for example, our reproductive health bill has been passed already but it's not being implemented. Access to contraceptive is hindered by the church, they don't want it around. I even went to mass one time during Christmas time and the priest was talking to the congregation about how the contraceptive pills cause cancer, you know?

**Intvr:** Oh my gosh!

**Resp:** In Christmas eve! What happened with Jesus? why are talking about contraceptive pills? I walked out of the mass. I was like, I'm not sitting in through this, you know? They have hindered everything, there's no sex education, there's no reproductive health, there are teenagers getting pregnant, they don't care about this, they want more people in the church, obviously more congregation is better for them so they don't want them to stop having sex, they say it's against God, if you use contraceptive. My argument is always, all contraceptives have a percentage of failure, that failure is called God. If God wants you to get pregnant, you will still get pregnant.

**Intvr:** That's a good argument actually.

**Resp:** 97% preventive? yep and that 3% is God. I was like, what are you talking about? You're still going to get pregnant. That will still make you pregnant but this is the problem. They always use the bible, they always use God against people, saying, that they are shaming themselves, that they are going against God if they try to protect themselves or if they are poor and have a lot of children, this is part of why a lot of children get raped because they have so many children at homes. Number one, they're already experiencing sexual abuse because they're witnessing their parents having sex, because they live in one room and there's like 10 of them in one room. A lot of the time, these men will go and deal their urges on their children. This is part of the problem

because where do they go? and the wives, I know this is beyond religion now but...there's also one thing about religion, is there's no divorce. We are the only country in the world that still does not have divorce, we still don't have divorce and the Catholic church does not want us to have divorce law and so there are so many women, who stay with their husbands who are abusive, they can't leave and men are the breadwinners, you know, so where do they go? They can't do anything and a lot of the times, even when they abuse their children, they don't want their children to go and file cases against their husbands because it will bring shame to the family and if the husbands gets taken away, who will take care of them?

**Intvr:** Do you think that the impact of the population is higher in communities with lower income? than in the communities that are more educated, I say?

**Resp:** Yes, yes absolutely because the only education that a lot these poor communities have is TV? It's one channel in particular that doesn't have anything educational for them and then they go to church and like said in the mass on Christmas eve, they're talking about contraceptive pills causing cancer. I mean if that's the only education that you have, of course, it's all you know, so that's what you believe. That's what they have. The more educated people, have access to the internet, they can actually afford to buy contraceptives. A lot of the poor areas can't afford it, it's expensive.

**Intvr:** Oh, it's expensive there?

**Resp:** Yes. There was supposed to be a budget sent by Europe to us for free access to contraceptive but I don't know what happened to it because as far as I'm aware, but I'm not sure if this is changing in the past few years, but contraceptives are not free in the provinces, they're hard to come by. It's expensive for them to buy, they have very little money and they can't spend it on contraceptives. They have to buy food. That's part of the issue.

**Intvr:** Do you think that if there was a bigger separation from the church and the state that such processed and bills would move forward? That the possibility of giving of the contraceptive pills would be possible in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Yes, absolutely. If the church just stayed in its own realm and just dealt with people's spiritual journeys and their own connection with God? that would be great because there are things that people needed to be educated about their bodies. This is not about God; this is about their

livelihood. The quality of life. There's so many people with such a poor quality of life because they can't afford anything and they have so many children, say, give their money to the church, I mean, in a lot of areas, not the Catholic church per se, but there's another church here that takes 30% of their income or 40% of their income and if they don't give it. They chase them down for it. They take money from these poor people and they guilt them saying that's it's for God.

**Intvr:** I did not know that that the church has that massive amount of power.

**Resp:** Yeah. There's one church that only take 10%, but still 10% of about very little amount of money is still a lot of money.

**Intvr:** They shouldn't be taking money at all. It should be a donation not by forcefully taken money from people.

**Resp:** Absolutely!

**Intvr:** Given the relationship between the Philippines and the international communities like the United States. Do you think that these western societies affect somehow your society?

**Resp:** Absolutely! Yeah because number one, is because we were colonized by the Americans and there was this whole Hollywood culture put in and we still receive western movies and everything here, like Netflix is all over the place. We have all this western culture coming in which have sex in it and you know, whatever, rape and everything but because we have no formal education about these subjects, this is the only education they're getting. The international influence on us is good in a way because, like I said, the need-to movement in the States helped get people better understanding, you- for what's going on, but in a lot of ways, it's also very dangerous because we don't have any supporting education to guide the children. You know like the PG 13 warning; we don't have the PG right now. We don't have the parental guidance for that, even the parents don't have the education. I'm talking about a lot kids watch stuff and nobody is monitoring them like they're just watching whatever they want to watch in their phones and their parents are not talking to them about it. Parents here will not talk about sex, they're very few, more progressive, younger parents who will talk to their kids about sex but the older generations will not discuss sex. It's shameful, it's taboo. You shouldn't talk about that. You know, when they watch a movie and there's sex happening, then these 10-year old will try to have sex with each other and will be wondering

why they trying to do this because nobody told them that they're not supposed to, or what it is, or what happens if you do it. How are they supposed to know?

**Intvr:** Right, because the parents don't speak about it, the school doesn't speak about because they have educational about it. So, they have no source of information.

**Resp:** Yes. Except the movies or the TV shows or whatever it is you know? Even our own movies here. Have these topics in them. Our "Teleserye". I don't know what should in Portugal. TV series. You know the, "Telenovelas" like the ultra-dramatic stuff that they have?

**Intvr:** It's telenovelas, yes.

**Resp:** Yeah! Yeah! So, they have a lot of those. Lot of drama, lot of sex, lot of rape, a lot of mistresses and you know all these things. How? it's just idiotic thing that nobody is putting 2 and 2 together and say, well how we really show them this if they don't really understand what does mean? You know? We're giving them values that they don't understand how to process... and porn, also porn. We are the highest, I think, on Pornhub, there are the lowest views of virgin sex porn videos.

**Intvr:** Is it easy to access it?

**Resp:** Is it easy to what? Sorry?

**Intvr:** Is it easy to access the porn movie?

**Resp:** Yes!!!

**Intvr:** Yes??

**Resp:** As long as they have the internet, they can get on to porn sites very easily...very, very easily, very easily yeah and you know that's also part of the problem like they see this porn things and that's why a lot of the time, the children who are being abused by their families. They know that this online porn thing is a very, very big business and because of the internet, they have far more access to people in you know. The provinces that don't have you know, police or anybody around to really help.

**Intvr:** Yeah

**Resp:** I mean, I've heard of, areas in the provinces for every single child and every household is being molested or raped by their families. I've heard that on more than one occasion. So, a lot of the time it's the parents who are doing the abusing and filming it for people abroad. Who would've paid to come here to have sex with the child or you know, there was this Australian pedophile called Peter Scully who's captured recently?

**Intvr:** Yes. Yes.

**Resp:** He was burning babies on cameras and nobody was stopping him because he is a foreigner who had money and of course, in poor area, any foreigner with money is king. You know? Like if he's giving people money, nobody going to question his actions.

**Intvr:** Okay, but what about if it's not a foreigner rich man, what if it's a Filipino rich man, would that change?

**Resp:** Same, same thing. They'll still do it. I mean with the foreigners it's different a little bit because there is this colonized mentality of like the white man this boss type thing. There is still that attitude because obviously, Filipinos were treated like slaves for a long time. Treated like they were below other people that's why there's a lot of, kind of crab mentality that they try to push each other down because the only way to get above everybody when they're colonized, was to be in with the Americans or in with the Spanish you know? To reject you own heritage and act like you were a Spaniard or an American so that you would be accepted in the society as somebody who are more important than you were you know? and that's still happens now. Where the white man, even if he's a pervert, even if he's a whatever, if he has money. They'll still worship him. But, even with Filipinos, it's a little bit different but still the same like money changes a lot. Like if somebody came to a poor person, and said "I will give you \$10,000 if I rape your child?" Are they going to say no? If they have 10 other children? Are they going to say no to \$10,000? Absolutely not. I can't blame them for the education that they have or for how they poor they are. How can I say, "Holy hit! never do that, because you should never take money for your children.". They're not educated in that way.

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** You know? What's one child if you have 15?

**Intvr:** It's a lot of money, you know, so they have the possibilities of...

**Resp:** And they also have this attitude of, kind of possession of the children like - You are mine, I own you. You belong to me because you are my child - A lot of children are, you know, are born because they supposed to support their families or take care of their families when they're older. There is even a thing were women will try and get pregnant by foreigners so that their baby can be either superstar, a celebrity or basketball player.

**Intvr:** Ohhh...

**Resp:** You know? Because that's how they want to make it famous, you know?

**Intvr:** Well, let's say, the parents think like that, that the child is their possession and that she should help them but once the child begins growing up, Does the child think the same way? That she's supposed to help the family or does she start thinking, "Well, maybe I should be more independent and I shouldn't be taught about that?", and so on.

**Resp:** Well, only the few that ever get out of the country for are exposed to that kind of mentality but for the most part, the ones who are raised like that, that's what they know. They don't have a choice.

**Intvr:** Yeah.

**Resp:** Their parents paid for their education. They can only study what their parents want them to study.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** So, they don't have a choice. And a lot of them like, I don't know if you ever watched movies, comedies, like this guy, he's called 'Jokoy'? He's a Filipino comedian and in his jokes, he talks about how in the States, there are lot of nurses because there are a lot of Filipino nurses there that actually wanted to be dancers, so you know, he's joking about how there are very good dancers in the hospitals because their parents would've let them be dancers, they wanted them to be doctors, or nurses, or lawyers you know? and that's what happened. They just do whatever it is that can get them out of the country and make the money.

**Intvr:** Make sense. Let's talk a little about technology?

**Resp:** Okay.

**Intvr:** What's your opinion so far, in the day or in the age that we are now, Internet access been causing more harm than good?

**Resp:** I think that the fact that people can educate themselves on the internet is great and there should be more access to it for that purpose but at the moment, you know, there is a poor person who had a little bit of money to spend on the internet, they would want to entertainment themselves. They don't learn. They're going to use it for gaming or for porn or for Facebook This what the younger generations are looking on the internet and, in that way,, it is harmful because they're not educating themselves, they're just reading the opinions of whoever is on social media, they're just watching TV or whatever but they're not actually using it for actual potential. There probably, like a very small percentage of people who use the internet to actually study courses or things that they can't get access to. There are some very hard-working Filipinos who would've absolutely use it for that but for the most part, I mean there is still a lot of areas that don't even have internet access. In a lot of areas, its used for gaming. The online gaming community here is massive. So, yeah, they use a lot of their internet time for gaming.

**Intvr:** Okay. If you got to ask before, since you mentioned celebrities, are they have obligations to the Filipino community?

**Resp:** Yes. It's ridiculous how influential they are. It's stupid. Our recent election few months ago. For mayors and stuff, we had an election and there are some people here who were convicted of plunder, who are in senate again because a lot of people who voted for them are like, "Oh you're so good looking". They don't care about the fact that they stole their tax money or anything like that. It's like "Oh, you're such a good-looking guy and I see him in movies so I'm going to vote for him." and that's where we at, not for their education, only celebrity fandom is what people see and worship and that's what's happening. They're voting for people who are stealing from them and they don't even care.

**Intvr:** That's not good. It's like in Brazil.

**Resp:** Yeah! Our election campaigns are not debates, are not intelligent conversations. They are dance numbers and song numbers and comedy show. You know? They go out into the province and it's a popularity contest. It's not about intelligence, or changing the country or values. There

are a very few candidates who didn't make very much attraction at all because they wanted to make a difference. and to the one's that won, it's a little different because, they're all in these camps and you know what that means right?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** For the most part those who want to change things are tossed aside, because what's more entertaining? A guy who's going to pay you a little money to come to his concert and watch him sing and dance and you vote for him, or the guy who's going to come and talk to you about something boring, that you don't want to listen to about change etc. Of course, the people have a very short attention span for that's stuff and they don't even understand the problems of the country. Their concerns are purely about their own families and how they're going to eat.

**Intvr:** Hearing about it, about the issues of your country. It exactly doesn't sound very appealing...

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** According to statistics that I recovered. The Philippines has been one of the countries where the internet access has been growing faster in the latest years due to a large number of users. Do you think that the access they talk about is as easy as it's going through the statistics or is it actually limited?

**Resp:** To be honest with you, I haven't done any research into it. I know there are factions that are working on getting more widespread internet across the country. I do know, there has been a lot of cheaper smart phones available to people so they're a lot more people do have access to the internet because of that. I honestly, wouldn't know too much about how widespread the internet is already unlike before in the provinces it wasn't too available and some of the farther reach places. I think, it's getting more accessible now because of these smartphone things. Yeah, I think there's been a lot more coverage, absolutely, than before.

**Intvr:** Okay. When it comes to accessing the internet, what do you think is the most common method to use? Is it a cellphone, tablet, supposed to computers?

**Resp:** I think, mostly cellphones, the smart phone because they're so cheap and actually tablets, because they have these cheap tablets from China now as well, so those are the 2 things they seem to be buying in the province, it's because they're very cheap.



**Intvr:** Do you think that people use mostly the free Wi-Fi spots or those prepaid cards?

**Resp:** They have this thing, where they can just load a little bit at a time in little stores across the country so that's what they usually do, they load their phones up with P100, P10, P30 and that's what they use and they get their load sent to them. If they have access to it, because in the provinces they don't have a lot of access to that, but in Manila, absolutely, they go to the mall, and they have access to it and they use the free Wi-Fi.

**Intvr:** What about the internet computer shops?

**Resp:** Yeah, they have a lot of the internet shops here especially in the provinces, there's been a lot of those for a long time actually, that where the kids got into the gaming? Sometimes, they sit in there like the whole day, one of boyfriend's cousin, his mom because he'll come home 2 in the morning and he's like 10 years old. He just spent all afternoon in the computer shop.

**Intvr:** So, they're still very popular?

**Resp:** Yes. In Manila, there are still a few, I think but mostly in the provinces, there are a lot. In a more rural areas, there are definitely computer shops that are still very popular for gaming, mainly.

**Intvr:** Now, worldwide, we have many treaties and laws that have been adopted to protect digital users. The Philippines, from what I hear, have a good cover of data privacy law? I think that's what it's called. Have you heard about them?

**Resp:** Data privacy law? No. I haven't really looked into data privacy laws.

**Intvr:** They are actually more strict than other countries. In a way, you are better at protecting your people than here in Portugal but that is also an issue when it comes to law enforcement because it doesn't help them to prosecute on crimes easily because they have don't have access.

**Resp:** Right.

**Intvr:** Do you think that people, if they are aware of this privacy law, that they would open up someone's privacy if they knew that it could truly help the authorities?

**Resp:** Honestly, the problem with that, is also the corruption in this country. The fact that they will have access to people's privacy could also mean that if that was in the wrong hands they could use it against you which could potentially be very dangerous and it's one of our issues here honestly,

that there's a lot of corruption here in the country and if there's information available, people can be abused to target innocent people, things like this. It's complicated, I do know that NCA, National Crime Authority from the UK, is over here at the moment, they just put money in one of the main police stations here in the Philippines to up their computers and stuff and their system so they can catch sex tourist from Europe. I think this is a collaboration from the Australian government as well. There's a lot of Australian and British sex tourist here and they've been doing a really good job. They even caught a guy in Cebu, a Filipino, who was selling child pornography on the internet for a long time. If it's something like that, people could be- but that's because it's being means by a foreign entity. It's a bit complicated because we are not sure who would use that data and for what. If people can be guaranteed that people would be safe with it then yeah. People will be much more open to it but it's very scary in a place where you could be targeted for the wrong reasons, I had friends because they spoke about a rapist, have been targeted and framed for being drug dealers, things like this. A friend of mine, went to a jail for a week because she was being framed as a drug dealer because she was trying to go against a rapist who had raped 19 women and he works for the government.

**Intvr:** She went against the government and immediately they had to shut it down.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** You mentioned, I mentioned, computer cafes? That's how it's called?

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** Okay, I always confuse the terms because in here, we call them cyber cafes. Given they're still popular, have you ever been to one?

**Resp:** A long time ago.

**Intvr:** Do you know how the spaces these days?

**Resp:** How it looks like?

**Intvr:** Yeah, how it looks like.

**Resp:** They're still pretty much the same. There are some that are higher tech but usually, it's just a small room with a bunch of old computers and just a bunch of chairs. It's very simple setup

because for a lot of the time, these are for the poor kids, you know? for people who don't have access to computers at home or at schools, so they go into the computer shops for their homework or to games, mainly to games. It's very cheap, something like that, I don't know, P45 an hour or something? it's super-duper cheap.

**Intvr:** How about those that are customized where you will insert coins and it will give you time that they could play into it. Is that how it works?

**Resp:** Not all of them, a lot of the time, they just have a timer on the computers so when you log in, log off, they just shut the time and that's how much you pay. I've heard of the ones with the coins, I've never seen them so I'm not sure if they still exist now but I do know that they did exist before. I'm not sure, that's still the case. I haven't seen recently any though.

**Intvr:** Do you think that when they prohibited the use of cubicles and the use of curtains in those places, that it affected the users or type of users...

**Resp:** Sorry, I couldn't understand that...because it's about the use of curtains, did you say?

**Intvr:** Yes, curtains and cubicles.

**Resp:** Oh, so it's more open. I think that in terms of what they're looking at or the possibility of abuse in a computer shops is much less now because there's definitely more of a view of what you can see but it doesn't take much to also coerce somebody do on the computer shop to be your partner in something that makes them a lot of money.

**Intvr:** But you are aware that this is a law in the Philippines?

**Resp:** That they're no longer allowed to use curtains and cubicles in computer shops?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** I wasn't aware that it was a law.

**Intvr:** Yes, it is an actual law. It was a good thing.

**Resp:** Yeah, I guess but that kind of abuse is happening at home. It's very easy for them to get an internet connection if they have money. It's very easy for them to get a small, like a, a portable Wi-Fi thing? and then just load it up and then you have video access. That's part of the problem with

the internet here is that, it made it so easy to reach poor people who are willing to abuse their children.

**Intvr:** Let's get in to the main part which we are already getting with information. Have you ever found any child-related pornography material while you were online?

**Resp:** No. I've never looked up to anything that had any reference to that. I've try to avoid it very much. No, I've never cross any like that.

**Intvr:** You mentioned earlier about Phil, the Australian, who was arrested. That means you are familiar with the videos that he uploaded, they call them, here in Europe, Daisy's Destruction?

**Resp:** The videos they made?

**Intvr:** Yes, they stream it and made videos that he sold with the 2 girls and the...

**Resp:** I never saw the actual videos. I never saw the actual videos but I do read about the cases. I'm aware of what they were doing and everything. I always do my research on to what these people are doing, you know?

**Intvr:** Yes. This was a major news in Europe and in the United States for example. Was this a news in the Philippines? did people usually learn about it?

**Resp:** It was on the online platforms and on the mainstream news, I believe, they like to make an example of the foreigners that they catch doing these stuffs because it makes them look good, there's outrage but it's only for about 5 minutes.

**Intvr:** So, it was very small then?

**Resp:** You know, it's like, "Oh, you know, that Australian needs to blah, blah, blah", but then they're on to the next issue.

**Intvr:** Okay. Does the news focus a lot on other issues rather than situations like this?

**Resp:** I think that because there's so much of these going on that people became a little bit desensitized? and the thing is, because there is abuse in the provinces, people know, this stuff happens but because they've been taught that they're not supposed to talk about it and that it's your fault, they don't think there's anything wrong. They think that it should just be hidden and I mean,

there's news about being raped all the time here. There has been a few of women who have been murdered after being raped and they've all been in the news and there was a baby that was raped and killed, a few years ago and that was on the news as well and people get upset but not upset enough to do anything because they still think that rape is only bad if it's a child and if you're a grown up, it's your fault. I mean the age of consent is 12, I said that earlier, you know what I mean?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** There are men here who would look at a 12-year-old with sexual desire. I mean, what's the difference between a 12-year-old and a 10-year-old? Very, very little.

**Intvr:** Exactly. Okay. How easily do you think, it would be for a child to, like when they're browsing online not looking for pornography but it happened to pop out, just like that?

**Resp:** Sorry, I didn't quite hear that. If they had pop ups or something, how easy for them to access these stuffs?

**Intvr:** Yes, how is it easy to find it? even if you are not looking for it?

**Resp:** I think it's probably very easy to find it, especially if you're on YouTube all the time, or just scrolling thru the internet. For example, I did a search on something one time and my filters were off and I had a bunch of naked pictures pop up of sexual poses and stuff, it was nothing to do with that, with what I was looking for and I was like, why did this come up? I don't even know why there are pictures of people on my screen right now. This is not relevant to my search. I absolutely, think that for kids, even, by accident, it will be very easy for them to come across and unfortunately here, it's not even considered taboo to show your kids that kind of stuff, for example, my boyfriend, when he was 3 years old, his father who was a Filipino, even though they were in London, they're watching pornography in front of them and that's very common. like the older brothers, uncles, because it was very macho culture here. If you have a lot of women, you're a man and you know, virgins are the best and if you devirginized a woman, you're like the winner you know? This is very, very unhealthy culture about women here that stems from Maria Clara, I don't know if you ever heard of Jose Rizal and the Maria Clara complex. Have you had any reading on to Maria Clara? Maria Clara was a rape victim of a priest in Jose Rizal's story but she was a very prevaginal, very demure, very thing. It's like the mother Mary. This is what they tell women they should be like; they should be very virginal and demure and pure even if she was raped it was not even

considered...you know what I mean? Like this is the purity that they should have...Sorry, I lost my train of thought but looking at the Maria Clara thing, because this is a social issue... oh yeah, the pornography...They have this idea that when you conquer women, it's a good thing. I was in a beach one time in a bikini, and there was an eleven year old, a nine year old and maybe a little bit, or maybe thirteen year old and they were talking about how they should touch my vagina, "That's what you do with vaginas, you touch vaginas and you molest women with vaginas", that kind of thing and these are kids.

**Intvr:** So, they're being taught about sex especially male child, they are exposed to it actually very earlier.

**Resp:** Yes, absolutely and that's the part what I'm saying to you is that they have the access to it, they're seeing it but nobody's explaining it to them. The parental guidance is absolutely zero or it's terrible advice, it's like, "This is what you should do son", Where they bring him to strip clubs, or they bring him to see hookers or something like this, it's considered a man thing.

**Intvr:** Studies nowadays stated that children prefer to spend more time online, speaking with other people than speaking face to face. Do you think that it will be very easy for a predator to impersonate a child and become a friend, a known one friend, ordinary friend?

**Resp:** Yes, yes, very easy.

**Intvr:** Do you have a common idea of the most common platforms where children ended up meeting these kinds of men?

**Resp:** From what I heard, just a research that I've done, Snapchat was very dangerous because it has location application to it, like you can see where your friends are at Snapchats and Instagram, Facebook...actually, all of them, it's so easy to access children because they're not aware of security issues, they're not aware of predators, they don't know. I mean, even when I was a kid, when I was like 14 years old, I was ICQd, do you remember ICQd? Do you ever used ICQd?

**Intvr:** It wasn't very common here.

**Resp:** Right, it was this online thing, it was the Twitter before there was Flickr. I used to get weirdos all the time in their 30s, 40s, 50s, messaging me, asking me and knowing I was a 14 year old girl, asking me to do sexual things for them and this was in the 90's. I can only imagine how

much further that's come since then since it's much more accessible now. How do you know? How do you tell if there's a predator behind a picture of this 14-year-old girl on Facebook or not? How can you tell?

**Intvr:** It is basically impossible even if you don't think about it, if someone talks to us like a 14-year-old, well we think they are 14. Regarding the specific subject that I'm studying that is livestreaming child sex abuse in the Philippines. Can you share with me what you know about them?

**Resp:** I did an interview a few years ago with some children urban traffic, an organization called the Visayan Form Foundation and I interviewed several children from the ages of 9 to 14 and they were telling me that all of them were rescued from prostitution, either abroad or locally and one of them told me that she was about 13 years old, she was recruited by a family member or a family friend, they said they're going to take her somewhere to work and they sent her off to work very early because she needed the money and she was taken to a very high profile area here actually, a very wealthy area, locked in a room for 3 months or something and forced to do online sexual things every day and when she escaped, they beat her up so badly that she ended up in the hospital, when she was about 15 at that time.

**Intvr:** Did she escape again?

**Resp:** Well they just beat her up. I don't think they took her back there. I think they just did a lot of damage to her when they left her. She managed to escape somehow, she managed to be rescued, she managed to be in this place. There were even the 9-year olds that I interviewed and I'm talking about 9-year olds. These are not grown up 9-year olds, some girls are very well developed? These are baby 9 year olds, very young and I interviewed them and they said that they went to a computer shop down the road from them that was ran by a gay guy and they used to go there and they will pay them a 100 php each to dance naked in front of a foreigner who would come and watch them and when they told their parents about it, their parents were just like - Oh, just don't do it again - , but they would still do it and then the parents will still take the money and like I said I did hear from the NCA that it's 75,000 children a day that are being trafficked online here and I'm very aware the fact it is family were doing it, that the parents are allowing the foreigners to fly into the country to have sex with their children if they pay them enough money.

**Intvr:** Do you have any idea how much these children are paid for these shows? In the Philippines, they call this as show-shows because according to the research when you repeat the word twice, it makes it sound less serious. The children are taught to referred to, what they do as, show shows.

**Resp:** Oh, like a baby term for it. I understand. Just like I said, the kids from Cebu are paid 100php for the time that they went there and a lot of the time, I don't think these children are being paid for anything. They are being trafficked, they're trap, they're slaves, they're not doing it willingly. The one girl that I knew was trafficked abroad, she was sent to Malaysia and she was chained to a bed and drugged every day, they would drug her and she was forced to have sex with men after men and they waited. She would count the condoms in her trash cans at the end of the day and I forgot how much money she said she was paid for it and it was nothing. It was really nothing, these people don't have to pay them anything.

**Intvr:** That is awful.

**Resp:** I heard things, but I couldn't confirm it because I haven't heard it from the themselves and I heard numbers like \$10, 000, \$1,000, \$2, 000 because this is the online stuff. Even 40, 000 which is barely anything will get you super far with a child if you really wanted to because they're poor. The minimum wage here is 16,000, which is like... I don't even know how much dollars that is. What's 16,000 divided it by 51? It's barely anything and anything on top of that, they're going to take it.

**Intvr:** You don't think that this particular type of exploitation is a well-known issue?

**Resp:** I don't believe that people are aware of how widespread it is. Do they know that it happens? But like, if you tell somebody here, or I say someone that I know, 75,000 children a day, they won't even know what to say to me, they'll be like - Are you serious? - and I'm like, - Yeah - because people don't care why would you care? unless you are a rape victim or been assaulted or you have children or whatever it is. They don't care, if it's not me, it's not my problem. It's an attitude that they have, that's part of the problem is that, they don't care because they have their own problems, they have to feed their families, so how can they really go out and do anything that's for the greater good if they're still concern about their own good, you know?

**Intvr:** From what I gather so far about the issue, it's very common that children end up in this kind of business, normally through the family and friends but by peer influence. Friends know how to



do this so they teach the other kids and sometime the family don't even know or ask where the money comes from.

**Resp:** That's right, those kids in Cebu, they were rescued and brought to a shelter but they wanted to go back. They want to keep doing it because they would make them a bit of money and some of them needed money for tuition and we're not even talking online here. There are some schools here that I know that they have this thing where during tuition season, these men go on sit on this place near the school in one of the provinces and they throw coins at girls that walk by and if the girls pick up the coins, it means she's willing to have sex with him to pay for her tuition.

**Intvr:** Oh, I didn't know about that.

**Resp:** And these are just things that you hear like on the ground and this is something that you will not find on the internet. These are things that I heard from people that who live, who have seen it, who've been there so this is the kinds of stuff that happen, the kids are poor, they want to go to school. They don't have it. It's easy to go online and support yourself. I mean, even now, there are these women who do it all over the world, when they go online and they just do things for men that ask them and they send them money, right? I can only imagine, how many girls, I mean, I don't even know how young they would be, I'm sure a lot teenagers are doing it but, I can even imagine here, how many would do it because they want more money.

**Intvr:** Well, I don't have specific numbers on that but I do have specific numbers of predators online. There was a study last year done by Interpol and they're monitoring the issue they have like around 755,000 pedophiles online every hour.

**Resp:** Oh my gosh! Here? Locally?

**Intvr:** No, Internationally.

**Resp:** Oh, okay.

**Intvr:** But even so, I mean, imagine just on Facebook, regardless of where we are, there's 755,000 people that are finding children to victimize.

**Resp:** And they're children, right? I saw a figure, the other day, something like 48 million child pornography pictures on the internet.

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** You know?

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** There was a major website in the Dark Web, it was called Wonderland. I'm not sure if you have heard about it? On that website alone, they had over 50 million pictures so when they closed it down, it was a big deal because it was very hard to close it down but it's like they closed it down but the images are still out there circulating in other websites, you know...

**[It was not possible to conclude the interview due to technical issues and the impossibility to reschedule it]**

## **Interview VIII**

**Interviewee (Resp):** [Interview 8] [0812a]

**Interviewer (Intvr):** [Patrícia Silva]

**Date and Time:** [02/12/2019] [19:25 (+00:00 WET, Lisbon Time)]

**Audio File Information:** [Interview VIII] [01:52:39]

**Intvr:** Good afternoon. Can you hear me?

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Before we begin. I would like to ask you if you read the ‘Statement Letter’ I sent you explaining the objective of the study, and all your rights as a voluntary participant.

**Resp:** Yeah yes. I read it. I understand.

**Intvr:** Ok great, so as you may be aware, I need your voluntary consent before we continue with the interview, which may I remind you will be recorded for the purposes of this study only while taking into account the protection of your identity. So before we start I need you to give me your verbal consent that you are fully aware of your rights and voluntarily participating in this interview.

**Resp:** Sure. I am participating in this interview voluntarily and I am aware of my rights and if I have questions, I can ask you and I feel uncomfortable with any of the questions I can opt not to answer it. Is that correct?

**Intvr:** Yes, that’s exactly it.

**Resp:** Ok.

**Intvr:** So to begin i would like to ask a few basic demographic questions.

**Resp:** Ok.

**Demographic Data:**

- Age: 49 years old
- Gender: Feminine
- Nationality: Filipino
- Language: Filipino/English
- Highest Degree of Education: Doctorated in Social Development
- Profession: University Teacher, NGO Consultant
- Marital Status: Married
- Children: Two Children

**Intvr:** Okay. So now we can start with the first part of the interview that focus on the values and beliefs of the Filipino people. So, I would like you to share what some of those values are.

**Resp:** Ok so basically Filipinos are very family oriented, we value the family very well and we are a very closely-knit family. Usually an extended family composed of about three to four generations is common in the Philippines even in urban or rural areas. Even when a-a children have their own families they live nearby within ten kilometers or five kilometers; even with families that are abroad to work they always have this constant communication through Facebook, chat, Messenger, basically Filipinos love to communicate with each other. We are very religious as well. In South-East Asia we are the only Catholic country so we are very, very religious and we also love the universe, we have a very close relationship with the universe as well. So we love being near people, we value togetherness, friendship. Also [pause] Yeah basically that's how Filipinos are. Also we love to eat as well, to celebrate special occasions, we have the longest Christmas celebration in the world.

**Intvr:** Really? I wasn't aware of that...how long does it last?

**Resp:** Yeah. Oh well it starts September; we start playing Christmas songs. I already have my Christmas tree and its only October and we set it up this month.

**Intvr:** I had really no idea. That's impressive. Through my research I also gathered that you are seen as a very hospitable people including to foreigners.

**Resp:** Yes. We are. We are very hospitable people, we entertain a lot of guests and we even go beyond offering our, what do you call this? Our rooms, our bedrooms, and people sleep in our house, and we love entertaining people as well. And then the fine china will be offered to the guests as well. We are very hospitable.

**Intvr:** Okay, what about Public Image is that important for the Filipinos?

[Minor Interruption requested by the Interviewed to arrange a better signal]

**Resp:** Can you hear me?

**Intvr:** Yes, I can hear you clearly.

**Resp:** Okay so what was the question again?

**Intvr:** It was about Public Image, If how others perceive you is important for the Filipinos.

**Resp:** Oh yes. Yes, public image is very important for Filipinos. Very, very important for us. Like, hum, public humiliations is really something else so we don't like to be humiliated. And Filipinos value smooth interpersonal relationship as much as possible we don't want to get into conflict with other people. So public image is very important. That being said Filipinos tend to be shy over a lot of things and we Filipinos, most Filipinos, would you know, wear, how do you call this? Put fake or pretend that something is good about that person. So even if you are suffering from something, for example, from poverty or illness, you wouldn't want to show that to the public because public image is very, very important for us.

**Intvr:** Okay I believe you covered most of the topics I usually ask about, [pause] I have also encountered a few references about patriarchy and the importance of a man's virility.

**Resp:** Yeah, in fact we even have a high incidence of violence against woman in the Philippines and even at the low social economic status or even at the upper social economic statues, violence against woman is still very common here in the Philippines. Of course, that is also because we also tend to be very religious here in the Philippines, we follow the Catholic values, we tend to value woman as subordinates to men. You see, most woman would be valuing the efforts of their

husbands, it would be biblical in a sense that you have to follow your husbands' orders, you have to follow what husbands tell you and all. And even if the woman are earning more than the man, their income is still secondary. We still have those beliefs somehow when it comes to the relationship of man and woman

**Intvr:** Ok I think when it comes to cultural values that's about all I have to ask you. You already mentioned that the Philippines is the major Catholic country in Asia.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** When it comes to religion, as you must be aware, this aspect still plays a major role in many societies across the globe. Is this also true in the Philippines for all generations?

**Resp:** Yes. Well even now I mean yes. Religion still plays a big role in how we conduct our daily lives. Like for example, we do not have a divorce, we are the only country that doesn't have divorce. We do not have divorce in the Philippines. We also, abortion it is not legal in the Philippines for medical reasons or whatever not you're not allowed to have abortion. And also same sex marriage or marriage equality is not, we do not have marriage equality in the Philippines as well. Because even our Constitution is saying that marriage is a contract between a man and a woman or a male and a female, so it is specifically there in the Constitution so it would take somehow a lifetime for us to convince our Government to provide marriage equality and also divorce in the Philippines. Although we have a Congress, some of our representatives would file bills for a long time but it's not approved. It's not being- you know. We do not have those things. And our reproductive bill we do have one but it took us fifteen years for it to be approved by the Congress as well.

**Intvr:** That is, without a doubt a long time indeed. I also took notice that there is still a lot of issues that are not attended in the reproductive health bill such as the use of contraceptives because the Church does not approve it.

**Resp:** Of course, of course. You are committing actually a mortal sin when you are using artificial contraception, even condom. The Church does not allow us to use the condom and because of that we have a high incidence now of HIV infections, in fact it increased about 209%. It surpassed the record of Thailand because in South East Asia Thailand it used to be-it has been the highest incidence of HIV in South East Asia but now we have surpassed the record of South East Asia

simply because we are not—we do not—we don't talk about that. It's a taboo to talk about, about condom, about contraception and we have also high incidence of teenage pregnancy in the urban area.

**Intvr:** Another thing I encountered in my research is that recently there was a law passed, and knowing there is a strong family connection within the country, that still surprised me a little since I haven't heard of other countries approving of such. But if I understood correctly the law would held the children or rather son's and daughter's responsible for their elders, am I correct? Have you heard about this?

**Resp:** Yes. That is still true at this point in time because we value family. We have this Utang na Loob meaning to say it's a lifelong reciprocity. So since your parents took care of you when you were younger so you are expected to take care of them during their twilight as well. We can this in Filipino Utang na Loob.

**Intvr:** Okay, hmm, just by curiosity does the Philippines provide something like a retirement when people reach a certain age? Is there any government support or does it befall all upon the family?

**Resp:** Yes we do have We have retirement system here but if you work for the government you get something called GSI or Government Service Insurance which provides your pension so you get a pension every month and then you get some increase every year as well but when you have worked for corporations or private companies you call SSI, Social Security System and our social security system because we were colonized by the United States for a long time, it was patterned after the United States model. So we have pension but there is a very big difference between those coming from, retiring from public office and retiring from a private offices. Those who work for a private corporations or private offices would then get lower pension compared to those working for the government. And our compulsory retirement age in the government is 65 years old.

**Intvr:** It's actually similar to what we have in Portugal then.

**Intvr:** Ok, going back a little, do you think that when it comes to religion and all these cultural beliefs that we have been discussing do they affect the population differently when it comes to-

[interruption by Interviewee]

**Resp:** Yeah! Yeah! Definitely we are, we still have one of the highest fertility rate like according to our Philippine Statistics Authority we have about 1.8 million babies born each year. That's a lot, it's a lot of babies actually. 1.8 million babies and we have one of the highest fertility rates. Our fertility is very high actually here in the Philippines. And of course, because we love children a lot of new married couples would be pressured to have their own children. But now there is an emerging trend where new couples would not would not want to, you know, have children right away or would tend to have very few children compared to about a generation ago.

**Intvr:** Okay. What about the influence of the same values on families from different social statuses, more educated families and less, poorer families? Is there a significant difference when it comes to the attachment to the cultural values and religion itself?

**Resp:** I don't think there's no difference between upper and lower socioeconomic status. Even the rich people here in the Philippines are very prayerful they go to church every Sunday well even though for five minutes of people coming from low socioeconomic status they are even more prayerful. But I think the rich people here in the Philippines since they are also a prayerful and very religious, they donate huge amounts of money to the Catholic Church, to charity works. I know a lot of rich people who donate a lot of money to the Catholic Church and to the Day Center for Children to finish school or even college. So when it comes to religion I don't think there is much difference between the rich and the poor.

**Intvr:** Do you find that there are values in the Philippines that are similar to the Western values?

**Resp:** Yeah of course! Capitalism is everywhere, actually coming from a socially development point of view is really the culprit of all these things like inequality, structural violence that we have in the Philippines. This is basically because of, you know, the neoliberal framework of profit earning and all without sharing it to the to the poor people. In fact we have a very huge problem about legal flex. Do you know about it?

**Intvr:** No actually I haven't heard about it.

**Resp:** Legal flex meaning to say that companies would hire, you know, employees from a third party. We have this end of contract because there is a law in the Philippines after working continuously for six months you have to be regular employees. They have to give you a permanent position but a lot of companies in the Philippines, the private ones, would only hire you for five



months so they wouldn't have to make you a regular employee of the company and then for example, I am the employer of a big, huge company so for example a department store, a huge department store and I will hire you as a sales lady or a food crew or, you know, something like that. So I will hire you asking someone to hire you for me. I will give my payment to you through a third party and that's the flex that I am talking about. An that's very common in the Philippines, in the urban area we have a huge informal economy and mostly, well, those people engage in the informal economy are engaged in a lot of precarious work like they are laborers for the day and then they work again at night so they could earn. Yeah so we have a huge informal economy specially in the urban area. And we have also documented that there are family members who are, what you call this? Who are- unpaid workers, family workers who are unpaid.

**Intvr:** Okay. So now I would like us to discuss a little about the role of communication and technology in the modern age. In your opinion has technology and more particularly internet access caused more harm or good in people's life's?

**Resp:** Well I would say both. I would say, you know, our internet connection and even our cell phone access provided us both positive and negative impacts. Positively because Filipinos love to communicate Filipinos love to talk to our family members whether they are here in the Philippines or abroad the modern technology makes us closer to each other. Like me, for example, my daughter is studying now in Paris for her Master's so we just keep chatting and using messenger and all but I also grew up in a 'OFW' family, meaning to say I have a father who worked first in Saudi Arabia for a long, long time so we needed to communicate but we used to have the snail mail when I was younger when I was a teenager so we made sure that we write to him every week because if we stop writing to him we won't be able to receive anything and he wouldn't be able to know what's going on in the Philippines. We would wait for about one week to receive our letter and then when someone would travel to Saudi Arabia where he was, we would record our voices using the tape and he would listen to it endlessly. Then he would also send some cassette tapes with his voice telling us a lot of stories about his work place. But you know, right now with modern technology we don't need to wait for a week or someone would come in order for us to see to see each other. Videoconferencing and modern technology keep helping us in a lot of ways. So those are the positive things, one thing is also very good about modern technology is, you know, with the texting, with video calls and with phone calls. Our, you know, as a revolution in the 1990s when

wanted to remove Joseph Estrada who was one of the most corrupt presidents in the Philippines, we just did not texted each other and all of us decided in less than one hour that we were all in you know. So that's the power of modern technology and then, for example, we have many routes also in the Philippines and you know right where you are on your computer or your cellphone and you know where to go and those are very, very important contributions of modern technology. In my many years of service in the University even the checking off the papers of my students they are all uploaded in the Google Drive. It's more practical and then the students would not have any more reason that I forgot to print you know, my printer jammed while I was printing it, because you know... And they are also saving a lot of money and also the photocopying thing you know in the Philippines have to say because books from the West are very expensive some of my students would have to photocopy them and... But of course, we don't like doing that but it's very expensive and there is copyright issues which is also in consideration. Our library now can provide e-copies of the books and they have access to all these journals and, you know, piracy and photocopying thing are lessen because it's all in your computer or in your cloud. So I think it has also changed the way modern communication and technology shape the way we are communicating with each other, deliver messages as well but you know it has also its downside. Because, like for example, in Facebook a lot of our the younger generation tend to measure their self-image based on the number of likes that they have on Facebook and also you know you can sugarcoat a lot of things you post, what's beautiful in you, you know, what's fabulous in you, the places you've been to. I think that the pressure that it is creating to a lot of people, not only the younger people, is somewhat enormous is not all so positive about it. And then very recently, because we have nice, generous President... I hate him so much; I don't like him. I mean, I just- I don't like him. He is like Trump actually, he is like President Trump of the US, he is very, very terrible and I really, really don't like him, both of them actually. I think we had a lot of trolls in Facebook I'm not sure if you heard about it.

**Intvr:** I heard about it in my countries and several others as well, it's been quite complicated to address.

**Resp:** Yeah so those are the negative things about having social media or having modern communication as well.

**Intvr:** So what about-

[Interruption by Interviewee]

**Resp:** One thing. One thing more.

**Intvr:** -Yes of course, please go ahead.

**Resp:** A lot of Filipino's are becoming impersonal now because everything is on the internet. Instead of asking your father or your friends or your neighbors you just go to the Internet and ask Google. So it lessens more the human contact as well.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's quite unfortunate actually. Hmm, so accordingly to the statistics I saw the Philippines has actually one of the countries where the internet access has grown more rapidly.

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** In fact, according to the data, as well, you have a large number of users of online user, particularly on Facebook.

**Resp:** Yes, yes of course.

**Intvr:** Do you think that accompanying this rapid growth of the Internet outreach is also as easy as they claim it to be? What I mean is, it isn't just available but it is also easy to access it?

**Resp:** Well that's true that a lot of Filipinos have access to the internet even my house-my housemaid, because Filipino's have housemaids. Are you aware of that?

**Intvr:** I was aware of that but you are the first person I spoke to that actually has one.

**Resp:** I have two housemaids, yeah, I have. So, we have Magna Carta for housemaids actually, they have rights. We paid them based on the basic salary and then we provide them with social services as well, we pay for their health insurance, so I pay for those things. So even they have a Facebook account. Even the driver of my neighbor, the house driver of my neighbor he has a Facebook account so you know. We have those access but there are still those who do not have or cannot afford to buy internet access as well.

**Intvr:** Is it expensive?

**Resp:** In the Philippines? No they are not very- Well I don't have a comparison like- because Filipinos would like- We have this thingy DING so you buy that, but not in bulk, you buy that by

pieces, small ones. Like for example when you go to the United States or you go to Europe you have these huge bottles of shampoo, you have these huge bottles of cooking oil but Filipino's do not like that. A lot of Filipino's do not like that. We want to buy things in sachets, you see, that is also why we also have problems with garbage. The sachets, so even our pre-paid cards, or pre-paid load we call it pre-load we can buy it for 20 pesos in Philippine pesos, I don't know how much is it in dollars but we can buy 20 pesos worth of load so you can text and you can have internet access for 20 pesos a day right? So if you like buy 50 pesos, like for example we have these mobile, I have my mobile which is of course wi-fi enable and also LTE enable you have those services in Europe right?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. We have both wi-fi and, we call it data access or mobile data that is charged directly from the telecommunication company we are associated to.

**Resp:** In the Philippines we have those services as well but we the post-paid and the pre-paid. I don't know if you have pre-paid access in the Internet there.

**Intvr:** It's not very common here to hear about them.

**Resp:** Yeah so we have pre-paid and post-paid, if you have a post-paid account it's more expensive. Like me, all my family members including my younger daughter she has a post-paid account which I pay. My husband has a post-paid account, this phone has a post-paid account. But I know also of some professionals who would want to use pre-paid. We have more pre-paid subscribers. It's more affordable for Filipino's to have a pre-paid because a SIM card is worth

[brief crash in the connection leading to an interruption between 29:10min to 29:59min]

**Intvr:** Can you hear me again?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. I was just fixing my wi-fi connection.

**Intvr:** That's ok, I could actually hear you the whole time.

**Resp:** So, yeah it's more affordable to have those pre-paid.

**Intvr:** Okay, so what about when it comes to the most common method to access the internet. Is it the computer, the smartphone?

**Resp:** I think it's more of the cellphone. Because a computer in the Philippines is very expensive but yeah, yeah I think it's still the cellphone based on my observation its still the cellphone that is most common.

**Intvr:** Is it true that there are a lot of free Wi-Fi hotspots around the cities?

**Resp:** Well in...in a-a- restaurants we have, also malls we also have but we are not like Singapore or Korea where Internet is faster, very fast and accessible anywhere you go. Here you need to rely... When you're not in a restaurant or when you're not in a library or what do you call- in the mall, you do not have access except for LTE services.

**Intvr:** Oh ok, and the connection then it's actually not very fast, is actually rather slow when compared to other countries?

**Resp:** It's not very fast. Sometimes is very frustrating because you LTE services and all of sudden you only have 3G.

**Intvr:** I'm not sure if you may be aware of this but the Philippines have one of the strictest Privacy Laws around the world when it comes to the access given to an internet user information.

**Resp:** Yeah, yes I know that.

**Intvr:** Ok, do you actually feel more protected thanks to those Privacy Laws?

**Resp:** Well, yeah I think so but it's difficult to share information as well. You have to think wise because I think you know that share of information has been an abuse as well because we like to talk about each other private life, we want to share videos and I feel more protected. We had a lot of cases where data was violated before because we didn't have the Privacy Law before, I like having the data Privacy Law because, you know, we get to talk more about our life. Unlike before we cannot share information about our employees to anyone without their permission, I like that. In the university we can't just simply share the telephone numbers of our colleagues without asking them or my students sharing my telephone number without asking my permission so I like the idea. Yeah.

**Intvr:** Overall, I can see how this has in fact improved and protected the Filipino people from your references just now but do you think if there was a request from the Government to share a little

more of the data in order to help authorities persecute online crimes do you think the Filipino's would be open to the idea?

**Resp:** That is a difficult question...(laugh) yeah but you know I'm sure Rodrigo he goes around. Rodrigo is our president by the way. I think they are violating a lot so even with the Privacy Laws themselves they are picking on our cellphones you know, like Facebook did to us for a long time, it depends, I think. But if it's a matter of, you know, national security I think the Government must do something about it as well.

**Intvr:** Okay. Is the terminology 'computer shops' familiar to you?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. We have a lot of computer shops.

**Intvr:** Ok. I was just checking again because I used to think the term was 'cyber-café' and that seemed to cause some confusion during other interviews.

**Resp:** Oh we don't call them 'cyber-café's we call them 'computer-shops'.

**Intvr:** Okay and have you ever been to one?

**Resp:** Yeah yes I've been to computer shops we have a lot of that in our University because not all our students have access to a laptop computer.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** So if they couldn't afford to buy themselves a personal laptops they go to internet-sometimes they call themselves internet-shops. They go to do their assignments, to download, to copy and paste, look up some things you know.

**Intvr:** Right, so could you describe me what it looks like inside a common computer shop?

**Resp:** Okay, when you go in the computer shop is like a room you know? Full of computers, like you have about 10 computers or 20 computers it depends on how much money the investor, the owner has. But usually there are several computers, those are desktop computers and they have numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, something like that. So when you enter the Internet Shop or the Computer-Shop you will approach the owner or the attendant there and then you would say 'I will use the computer, I will type something but I need also internet access' and then the moment you sit down there is a meter, or-or there's a control panel in the reception area where- that records

what time you actually started the use of the computer. So if you use I don't know how much anymore because the last time I was there was about ten years ago. But i think it's 20 pesos per hour at the time, I'm not very sure now because I haven't been to a computer shop recently. So you rent it for less than one hour, you pay about 20 pesos, Philippine Pesos with internet.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** Yeah so yes. So- When you want to print something you pay 5 pesos if it's only black and white but when you print color would be 30 pesos per page. So those are- you know...

**Intvr:** The common ones.

**Resp:** Yes, The common ones.

**Intvr:** Ok, so everything is on an open space. You have the computers on desks in an open space?

**Resp:** Yes it is open. So somebody can read what you're typing in that computer.

**Intvr:** Right, that's where I was trying to get. Have you ever seen one with cubicles?

[pause]

**Resp:** No. I haven't seen one.

**Intvr:** Did you know that they were forbidden?

**Resp:** Which one?

**Intvr:** Computer shops that have cubicles in them, there is a law in the Philippines that forbids that now.

**Resp:** Yes. Yes, because that's very prone to cybersex- that's why they want to make that very open. Because we have cases where it is used also for cybersex so- Yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay. I'll start with the questions about the main subject of my research. When it comes to live-streaming child sexual abuse in the Philippines what have you heard about it?

**Resp:** Well, what's there to say, it's happening in the Philippines. Like there is this case now, I don't know, I'm sure you've heard about Cordova Cebu.

**Intvr:** Yes, I have.

**Resp:** In Cordova Cebu that's ah- South of Manila, cybersex, especially juvenile's pornography for children they were very common. They put pressure on the local government unit to do something about it because these were very young children, as young as five-years-old, ah- were lured into committing or participating into this life, cybersex. It's very sad that even their neighbors were the ones, you know, tricking them that "I will give you something", "I'll give you a dollar", "I will bring you to Jollibee". Just you know "take off your shirt" or "take off take off your underwear" and I'm very much aware of that as well. This friend, my classmate in the Doctorate Social Development, his work is against trafficking of children, that's really his work and ah-sometimes even parents are the ones encouraging their children to do that because that's easy money. You know? That's easy money so ah- our government, our department of social welfare and development is working very, very hard to, you know, curb these things to stop all of these things. And educate also the parents that you know "you're not supposed to do this to your children" and "to your adolescent children", "you have to protect them because they have rights as children and they need to be protected against exploitation and abuse as well". So, yeah, it's also- we have ah- we are aware that this happens in the Philippines specially in very poor families and very poor communities as well.

**Intvr:** Do you find it to be a well-known issue across the society in the Philippines?

**Resp:** Yes I think so, people are aware that it is happening that's why we are educating you know our adolescence as well, parents as well and then yeah. It's-it's a well-known thing that's, but there is a lot, a lot- some communities are already identified as hotspot these things, this kind of activities.

**Intvr:** Did you ever hear anything related with 'Daisy's Destruction'?

**Resp:** With what? Sorry?

**Intvr:** "Daisy's Destruction", it's the name of a couple of videos that were actually made in the Philippines involving three Filipino children.

**Resp:** Oh...I haven't heard about that.

**Intvr:** This was actually under the attention of the news in Europe, Australia even the United States when it happened. The responsible for it was an Australian man, named Phil.



**Resp:** When was this?

**Intvr:** It was a couple of years ago, around 2008 that the story surfaced.

**Resp:** Ah yeah, yeah. That's the one, I remember. He would encourage children to come to his house to film and then sell them to pedophiles in Europe for thousands of dollars and then he only gave very very little to the children and he got caught... Yeah I remember that.

**Intvr:** Yes he was caught, charged and currently is in jail. The case was actually very publicized online. But so far, from what I could gather from other interviews it isn't as well-known there. So, may I ask you where did you get information? Was it on social media? The tv?

**Resp:** Yeah, ok. I read it online but I also heard it from my friend. I have that friend who is working with children, with survivals of sex trafficking and sex abuse as well.

**Intvr:** Right, right, you mentioned him.

**Resp:** But your right is not very well known here in the Philippines. See I didn't even remember the title and I've heard about it as well.

**Intvr:** Maybe the name there is different or translated, so that could be why you didn't remember right away.

**Resp:** Yeah, yes, maybe.

**Intvr:** Overall, in a daily basis do you find it easy for a child who has access to the internet to 'bump' into pornographic material?

**Resp:** Come again?

**Intvr:** For example, a child who has internet access, do you think that it is easy for her to accidentally find pornographic material?

**Resp:** Yeah. Yes, of course. Of course, definitely. Specially those child proofing in the Internet they could easily, you know, ah- find pornographic material as well. And sometimes, our 'yayas', our nannies, the one's looking after our children have access to those things and perhaps accidentally show these to the child without realizing the child does not understand what it is and then will be exposed accidentally to all this, you know, pornographic materials as well so in a-

computer shop we have a lot of children ah- who play games. They play DOTA, online games and so on and so forth but it doesn't mean that they do not have or will not have access to pornographic materials when using this computer shops. And you know, some owners sometimes are also responsible in a sense that it wouldn't even monitor if the user of the computer is a minor or not. So, you know for a fact that when you're on the internet you can access practically anything. Everything that you used to ask from your parents or from your teacher now you ask the Internet, just type it on google. This I think something that is horrible about misuse of computers today as well.

**Intvr:** Do you think that parents, or at least most parents, are aware of the restrictive tools we can use to-

[Interruption by the interviewee]

**Resp:** No. No. I don't think all parents are aware of it, especially those- well you known, when children go to the computer-shops parents are no longer aware of what it's going on. So that is something very risky that is why in the Philippines we have a curfew for children.

**Intvr:** Oh okay I hadn't heard about that.

**Resp:** They're not supposed to be- They are supposed to be home at 10pm. Otherwise they will be ah- they will not jail but they will be detained by the 'barangay'. The 'barangay'...you know the 'barangay'?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. It's the name given to the local police, right?

**Resp:** Yes, that's the one. So they will be detained by the local police and their parents will be called to, you know, fetch them from the local police station...

[Interruption by Interviewer]

**Intvr:** Which will actually be a bad thing right? Because of the public image the Filipino's value so much?

**Resp:** Precisely, precisely the point. And they will be labelled by the 'barangay' as "ah look at these parents he or she does not know how to raise the children very well" so that's it.

**Intvr:** Right. Okay, as you've mentioned earlier to me, children and teenagers spend far too much time online, they often seem to prefer to be online instead of spending time with their local friends.

[overlapping speech]

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** So do you think this actually ends up raising more opportunities for predators, and it's far more likely for a child to be approached these days?

**Resp:** Yes. Yeah. We have documented cases about the child it's just, you know, chatting to someone and he thought or she thought it's an adolescent but it's not. It happens to be a pedophile as well. We have already documents about that ah- And they before they know they are asked to "take off your shirt, your pants and I'm going to send you something, I'm going to send you beautiful clothes" "just want to see how your breasts are so I can send you nice clothes" something like that. So, yeah, we have- you know, reported cases about these incidents.

**Intvr:** I also read that is very common for children or teenagers to try and get foreigners as boyfriends, precisely to get such gifts from them.

**Resp:** Well those perhaps online but it's not generalizable because lot of our teenagers would want to, you know, still have face-to-face are- you know, boyfriends or girlfriends that are their friends as well. Ah-

**Intvr:** Right. But in the case of children who are involved in online exploitation cases this would be more common? That they would seek a foreign and that the parents would accept this?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. Some cases are like that as well. Some of their parents are the pimps.

**Intvr:** Yes, that is in fact one of the factors I take into consideration in my study.

**Resp:** Yeah but we do not have you know, I'm not aware of how- the number of incidents. I do not have, we do not have reported cases about those things. Just you know, very few reported cases but we know that it's happening.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** Right. And, well, most teenagers, some, some teenagers would try to, you know, join dating sites. dating sites that's how they choose they mates now, in dating sites.

**Intvr:** When it comes to online 'predators' I'm not sure if you know the data of the average number you can find internationally?

**Resp:** No I don't know.

**Intvr:** Okay, according to my research the numbers state that at any time of the day you find over 750 thousand online.

**Resp:** Uau. That's huge.

**Intvr:** Yes it's quite a terrifying number.

**Resp:** Uau, it's-it's al-almost a million.

**Intvr:** Yes...hopefully we will see the numbers declining in the future. Hum, when it comes to the Philippines what social platform do you think they mostly use to try and get in touch with a child?

**Resp:** Well because- Well it's just a guess I don't have a data about it. I think it's still Facebook or Viber.

**Intvr:** Okay so Facebook, sorry, Viber is still very popular there?

**Resp:** Yeah. Facebook, Facebook is- Twitter I well it's just you just have to things but you cannot directly communicate so Viber you can communicate like ah- like messenger. So messenger and still Facebook I think and Viber. A lot of children now have Viber accounts okay Yeah...

**Intvr:** Okay. So as you are probably aware throughout the years there has been a wide spread of international treaties and laws to protect children and to fight these type of crimes. In the Philippines, for example, do you think that there are laws properly being carried out to protect the children? I mean I know they exist but are they enforced?

**Resp:** Yes we have. We have a lot of laws in the Philippines on Children. You know that we were the 31rst country to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, The United States hasn't ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. And also in our constitution children are given specific importance. Their given important in our constitution the

basic law of the land and you have a lot of ah- you know, laws including a presidential decrees, we have a lot of policies, we have a lot of ARs or Republic Acts about children from their protection to their education and health and nutrition as well.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** So we have a huge like, for example, the Commission on Human Rights because we have a Commission on Human Rights here. We have a book this thick-

[during the video call the interviewee tries to demonstrate the thickness of the book with her hands, demonstrating that it is in fact quite thick book] -on Children's laws in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** Okay. That is a lot in fact.

**Resp:** Yeah we have a lot actually.

**Intvr:** Okay this actually brings me to a conflict whenever I carry out this interview that is often from the research I've done and what I've been told. Which is that often children, especially those from the poorest families where they are exploited, they are almost seen as property rather than human beings with rights. So in a country when you have so many laws to protect the children how is there still mentality of the family to exploit the child?

**Resp:** Well... What we can see is that the family is also you know, a haven of love and protection and care and all but on the one hand you can also see that it's also a source of violence, it's also a source of exploitation, it's also a source of heartaches and all. Well perhaps again there's the idea that you're only my son or your only my daughter and then I'm superior than you because you only came from me, something like that. Some parents would still have that kind of mentality in the Philippines and ah- and I think that many parents are aware that children have rights. That they have the right to participation, that they have the right to voice out their voices in relation to the things that matter to them including their choice of career, including the choice of their, ah- you know, their school. So they are not asked that. Mostly they are dismissed because they are simply children. They have this belief that you are child and they cannot fend for themselves and you are not capable of doing many things. We still have those types of beliefs about children but ah- there are efforts now that ah- are going on, the children need to be consulted on, for example, if they are undergoing chemo or medical treatment, they have to be informed of what the doctors will do

them. So we have those types of movements as well in the Philippines. Because UNCRC is now 30 years old and we ah- we are due to report as a part of one of the signatories of the UNCRC we're supposed to report to the commission, ah- to the committee on the UNCRC about our ah- achievements as in regard to our implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The government usually wouldn't say ah- would! Would always say that what we did is very good, we achieve this and we have this and are looking forward to achieve what's in the UNCRC but in the NGO, the non-organization where I work with a coalition of the ah-, coalition we call it the coalition. So we found out that our children are not given what they deserve based on their human rights and one thing that is good about this is that children are the ones who made the report.

**Intvr:** Oh that's good, yes.

**Resp:** Yeah they're the ones who need the report, part of the report actually did come from adults, part of the report actually was made by the children.

**Intvr:** That's good. They are speaking up for themselves.

**Resp:** Little by little we are, you know, helping Filipinos realize if you think the parents that, you know, children are capable of making sense of what's going on and they know what they want for themselves, what career to pursue so let us ask them. But you know, it's difficult. It's really a very difficult job to convince parents to listen to their children as well. Because they-

[interruption by the interviewer]

**Intvr:** They not seen for those capabilities.

**Resp:** Yeah, yes. But there's efforts. We are promoting it, so the report to the UNCRC would be, would include ah- ideas of children about their rights as children.

**Intvr:** That's great. Really great. Okay, now let me see...like you mentioned before that you are aware often what happens when it comes to live streaming exploitation in the Philippines is the family and the neighbors that are involved-

[Overlapping speech]

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr** – Why do you think this happens this way in the Philippines? Because that’s the major difference against other countries and one of the reasons why I chose to the Philippines in specific as a focus of my study. Why the families, why the neighbors, the parents, brothers and sister…?

**Resp:** Because there’s money in it.

**Intvr:** Right…so it does come down to that.

**Resp:** It comes down to… Well, resources, lack of resources. For example, the case in Cordova, in Cordova Cebu, ah- it’s the neighbor and ah- he’s receiving a lot of money from the foreigners and what did the children, actually

sex workers if you can think about it were out there because sex work is work regardless, you know, is considered that is work and they have to be, well, paid. It’s necessary for them to be paid but you know, they are exploited because they are not paid, number one, first and foremost is does not have their consent, right? It violates their human rights, yeah it’s a major thing. They weren’t aware they are doing it, they aren’t aware that it’s against the violation of their rights and that they’re not paid. They are not compensated fully. But you know those who are running this business or receiving a lot of money from the foreigners so ah- and also because it’s easy money. You don’t need to go to the office you just do not tell your child or tell your neighbor “Oh your get undressed, you dance a little” and that’s easy money. It’s just, you know, transfer it by wire or- you know, we have this, the online money-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Intvr:** Yes.

**Resp:** -You get it from online as well. Bank transfer are very easy now because of technology like ah- in Cordova it’s happening where these foreigners pay, they notice that they pay through ah- Western Union or through bank so the municipal government of Cordova actually made something about it, to police on the, the remittances from these foreigners from video files so every day at the end of the day they have to report to the local governments how much money they received.

**Intvr:** Oh…okay.

**Resp:** Right? So like, for example I’m an owner of ah- money, what you call that? Where we send the money? Because there’s an operator…

**Intvr:** Ah- I'm actually not sure...

**Resp:** Like there on Western Union, right? I'm the owner of Western Union in Cordova Cebu so I receive money transfers for example from you. So ah- an operator of you know, a cybersex Den would get money from me, from Western Union. So the local governments of Cebu is now requiring me to report every single transaction and how much and where it came from.

**Intvr:** I didn't know that. That's a great measure actually.

**Resp:** Right well, and then and then like for example, he Mr. A is running this type of business and goes to my Western Union five times a day and then I receive one thousand Euros for example, for the day. So Cordova Cebu, the local government of Cordova will now investigate Mr. A "why are you receiving so much money from Western Union? You have relatives in Europe? Where are they? Where are they located? What is their work? What are they doing? Why are they sending so much money?" So that's- that's what Cordova Cebu did to ah- stop, you know, all of these remittances as well. And then, since I am a Western Union there is a municipal ordinance, and I need to report the local government twice a day at the end of the day, I have to report all of the money that came in, who got it, how much money, where did it come from and then they tag now Mr. A for example, and then they start at, you know, sending social workers, investigating quietly and all, and then that's it. And then those they rescued from all of these things, the children that they identified were victims of these types of crimes [unable to transcribe 01:05:00-01:05:06] they provide psychological services both to the families and to the children as well. So that's what Cordova Cebu has been doing.

**Intvr:** That's good, it's a great initiative and hopefully it can serve as example for other regions of the Philippines.

**Resp:** Yeah. Correct, correct. So that's one case that I am very familiar with. I visited Cordova last year, and you know, investigated or heard all the stories from the local government and also from the social workers with the DSW, the Department of Social Welfare.

**Intvr:** Okay.

**Resp:** And by the way I- it's both male and females, boys and girls.

**Intvr:** Oh yes, I have observed that, but there's a larger number of girls over boys, right?



**Resp:** Come again?

**Intvr:** The number of exploited girls is still superior to the number of boys?

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Okay, just to be sure. So, do you have a general idea as to how old they tend to be when they get ‘called’ let’s say, to this type of jobs?

**Resp:** Well I do not have an exact ah- age but I’m sure that as earlier as 4 or 5 years old. We have cases as young as five years old.

**Intvr:** So according to interviews that I have read about that were done to Filipino families that were involved in this type of business they call it a ‘cottage business’, some of the NGO’s here in Europe...

**Resp:** ‘Cottage’ yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** So what the families would say is that they placed the child under this situation because they needed the money, of course, but also because the child was ‘free of harm’ given that there is no physical contact between the child and the perpetrator. Do you think that the parents are really unaware that there are repercussions suffered by the child or is this just how they attempt to justify their action?

**Resp:** Well I think they’re not very much aware. I think they said “oh it’s because there’s no social contact or whatever is just okay, they can’t attack my child, they’re just seeing it, it’s okay’. But ah- we know for a fact that even if there is no physical contact there is psychological scar, that’s a psychological, you know hurt that the child is saying. Because you know for a fact that why would you do that in front of someone? Why would you undress in front of someone? Undress and touch your body and your private parts?

**Intvr:** Yeah...and if you hide it, then it’s because there’s something wrong going on.

**Resp:** Right, correct.

**Intvr:** Otherwise why would you have the need to hide what you are doing... Well you did mention the psychological effects on the child specially as she grows up and there is no intervention but they’re also cases where the families take it too far. These are reported cases,

where, well the show is not just about undressing and touching themselves but they involve multiple children and actual violation-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Resp:** Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** -of their bodies, I'm not sure what's the worst case you have heard about mine was with the involvement of an animal because it seems to be a growing fetish among Indian man to ask for sex between animals and children so-

[Interruption by the Interviewee]

**Resp:** That it's my first-time hearing about it. The worst that I heard was: they were forced to have sex live. That's the- That's the worst that I've heard.

**Intvr:** Right...When this happens there is a physical action involved even if it's not between the child and the perpetrator. So how do these families continue to use this type of excuse you know because something has happened to their children so why do they keep saying the same?

**Resp:** Because I think that it's still, it goes down again it's easy money, it's very easy money and you know it would be, they could buy the things that they like, like toys or expensive things, you know. I think it goes down again to-

[Interruption by Interviewer]

**Intvr:** In the end is about the money.

**Resp:** Money, easy money, yes. That's easy money we can you know, travel you know, you can, you know...I mean its still, again, money because I know a lot, a lot of people who are poor who wouldn't go into these types of activities.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** They would, you know, wash clothes for other people or you know, engage in a lot of informal work but they wouldn't you know, ah- let their children into these types of pornographic activities. So again, it comes down to the values that they have. So yeah...

**Intvr:** So nowadays do you think that online exploitation is addressed more lightly than when it happens like ‘offline’ like cases of teenage prostitution or cases of rape for example?

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Yes? You think it’s still addressed more lightly?

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah.

**Intvr:** Do you think that this happens because of the lack of awareness of the people or because there’s still some misunderstandings about what happens offline and what can happen online?

**Resp:** I think both. Both. Some people are not aware but mostly they are not ah- they’re misinformed about all of these things.

**Intvr:** Okay so...child prostitution I've read a lot about it when it comes to the he Philippines, how there are areas where it's very visible and very frequent to happen and-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Resp:** Yes.

**Intvr:** -people are aware of it in the Philippines obviously-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Resp:** Very much.

**Intvr:** -so it's like, I don't want to use the wrong words so forgive me for the expression, it's like they turn a 'blind eye' to what's happening. Do you think that if this type of criminality, live streaming child exploitation was to continue to grow that people will turn a 'blind eye' to it as well and- why would they do this? Why such behaviour?

**Resp:** You know as I told you Filipinos would value smooth interpersonal relation, and they don't want to meddle into other's affairs because they want to maintain good interpersonal relationship. We don't want to offend other people. That is something that ah- you know, something funny or, you know, weird about us Filipinos. Many Filipinos even if they are the ones who have been deprived of something or being abused, they would be just apologetic because they want to maintain ah-, you know, good interpersonal relationship.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** They don't want confront- We don't like confrontation; we are not a very front people in general.

**Intvr:** So it leads to these type of situations...

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** With the younger generations given they are more open minded, and hopefully more aware and willing to face these issues. Do you think the situation might be changing?

**Resp:** I have hope also, even- not only for the young people but also for the older generations as well. I think that both generations are necessary and you know, ah- putting all these things into a stop to all of these things. We don't need just one generation but I think we need the whole operation of all generations, we need the old ones, the younger ones, ah- because while many, you know, older people or you know, the older generation are not aware of all of these things; many younger generations or many people of the younger generation they are not also aware of what is going on-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** -and they are also misinformed about the use Internet, the practices that can happen to them on the Internet so I don't think that one generation should be, you know, be responsible for putting a stop to this. All of us should be working together to stop all of these things. In fact, in the case, for example in ah- Cordova, for example, it was the grandfather that noticed something was wrong with the granddaughter. You see, why is the granddaughter like this, being like this and then, it was the grandfather who noticed there was something wrong. Another one in Pampanga, that is North of Manila, that's about...I'm sure you've heard about Pampanga.

**Intvr:** Yes. I've heard about it.

**Resp:** So we have those cases as well. Also some parts there are also hotspots for cybersex as well. So in these cases it was the aunt who noticed it, it was the classmates who noticed there was something wrong, all these things, sometimes a social worker noticed it. So we need the

collaboration of everyone, the awareness of everyone whether you're old or young or whether you are a grandmother or a child to do something about it.

**Intvr:** It has to be a community effort.

**Resp:** Yeah yeah and the children need to be educated, that they have to be aware of what is ah-comfortable and not comfortable to do.

**Intvr:** I've been told that this is something that fails to be done, the part of educating, being able to talk to their parents openly and ask questions openly about sex and things like that. Is it true? You agree?

**Resp:** It is, it is true, because the ah- the term 'sex' is a taboo, because they feel is only about copulation, is only about the act itself. Like for example, is very funny here in the Philippines that the ah- Catholic church has a say on how we will educate our children, because a lot of ah- schools in the Philippines, private schools in the Philippines are run by priests and nuns and pastors.

**Intvr:** Oh. Okay...

**Resp:** You know, we have ah- like for example, the UST, University of Santo Tomas it is the pontifical university of- it's one of the oldest universities in the world. You know? It was established by ah- by Spain in the sixteen hundred's when they came, they came ah- to educate only the rich so we have attend either the Manilla University, we have Miriam College, we have ah- what you call this... These are colleges run by Jesuit priests but Jesuit priests I think are more, you know, liberal-minded, more open, easy to talk to, they are more tolerant and all compared to the Dominicans. But we have a lot of universities that are being run by priests and nuns. And ah- the Christian denomination like the pastors. So our Department of Education tried its best to hide the topic on sex and sexuality under Family Health.

**Intvr:** Oh...okay, okay.

**Resp:** Because when they see the word sex in the curriculum they will freak out, there will be "Ah you're teaching that; Ah you're teaching our younger generations to be promiscuous" something like this and you have to remove that from the curriculum. Can you imagine? The church has a say on how the government, you know, decide on our curriculum.

**Intvr:** That's ah- it definitely shows a major influence of the church and religion itself even in education.

**Resp:** Correct. Even in Education it's just- even in politics, in who you're going vote. I'm not sure if you heard about it or read about it. But there is this denomination the 'Iglesia ni Cristo', have you heard about it?

**Intvr:** No, I don't think I have.

**Resp:** It's ah- 'Iglesia ni Cristo' that's the denomination, they are not Catholics they are also not born Christians but they call themselves- it's actually an indigenous religion in the Philippines, they have millions of ah-, you know, members and they have what we call the block voting 'bloc voting'. A lot of politicians would go to their Head Minister, there it's like the Pope, the Head Minister, and then they would, you know, tell him" Can you endorse me?"

**Intvr:** Oh...right i did read about the endorsements of religion in politics.

**Resp:** Yeah, you know, every single 'Iglesia ni Cristo' will vote for you. So, you know, even our politics it's really not democracy because it's being dictated by the Minister. So religion really it's ah- it's something else in the Philippines. But you see, I still believe in God, I still go to the Catholic Church on Sunday but it's something that is ah- you know, something not very acceptable to a lot of people perhaps a lot of people ah- outside the Philippines wouldn't understand this type of thing. I myself wouldn't understand why 'Iglesia ni Cristo' would not practice their democratic rights.

**Intvr:** Right, it's quite strange.

**Resp:** Yeah it's very strange but it's happening in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** Yes but I guess, it does happen a little bit across Democracies, in different ways I guess.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** I mean, the votes are easily manipulated by simple messages. In my country for example before the elections everyone is excited about change and getting a new party in charge so the country gets in better shape and we can stop the lobbyism but then, the current Prime Minister says I will give another ten dollars to the retired people. My country's population is mostly elderly's so, after that statement all of them were very, very happy and had completely forgotten that he did

the same the previous election, gave 10 but ended up taking 15 or 20 dollars away with taxes, yet he still won, they all voted for him.

**Resp:** It's the same here. We have- It's the same here, basically, 'it's the same banana'.

**Intvr:** Yes, exactly.

**Resp:** We have a dictator, you know? Marcos?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. Of course.

**Resp:** Well his daughter Imee Marcos is now in the Senate.

**Intvr:** Oh I wasn't aware of that.

**Resp:** Yeah she's now in the Senate and his son Bongbong Marcos, his only son, was protesting at the Supreme Court saying that he was cheated by our current VP [vice president] Robredo "I was cheated, I was cheated" without realizing that the same machine was used to count Rodrigo's votes, you know, the president's votes. You know these people are crazy, even if we fight against them a lot of, you know, our students at the time at the University of the Philippines were tortured by the Marco's soldiers. That's why they never set foot in the Universities because we will throw, we will throw them rotten tomatoes. Because we really don't like them, the moment we found that they set foot- any Marco's would to set foot on the campus we were ready to mop them. And I remember, just very recently his ah- younger daughter, Irene Marcos went to watch a play in UP [University of the Philippines] you know, a lot of UP Faculty and a lot of ah- students from my University went out, waited for her after the show, and you know, and you know what? They told her: "Why are you here? You're, you're a thief! Your father is the greatest thief! You better return what you stole from us!" things like that. I, you know, we can only do so much.

**Intvr:** Exactly, because the rest population just ends up placing them in power again so...

**Resp:** Yeah, and they-they keep forgetting that the Marco's stole a lot of billions of dollars from offers.

**Intvr:** Yeah people forget that very fast, I don't know why but it seems to be common.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay... Sorry, just give me a moment I just lost a little track of the order of my questions...

**Resp:** That's okay.

**Intvr:** So now I will ask you a bit of the role of NGO's and International Organizations in the Philippines.

**Resp:** Correct. Okay.

**Intvr:** So...Ah- First the media, we haven't really spoke about it, so the media is often associated with the idea of free speech at least here in Europe. In the Philippines do you think that they have an important role when it comes to raising awareness for this type of cases?

**Resp:** Yes- Yes we have a very free media, we're actually one of the freest in all of Asia.

**Intvr:** Okay...

**Resp:** We have several newspapers we have ah- our television shows, although we do have a regulatory board that regulate the type of shows and the types of ah- what amount of violence or amount of- you know, we have a MTRCB [Movie and Television Review and Classification Board], that's the regulatory board for our media, television shows and even radio and they really punish or they put enormous fines on violating ah- media network or television shows or even suspend you know. Even the most popular media personality or broadcaster in the Philippines. I think our MTRCB has teeth in the Philippines ah- and I believe since Filipinos also love to watch TV, especially primetime ah- yeah, the media, I mean the tv and the radio they are very powerful tools to advocate the general public.

**Intvr:** Okay. Then do you think that they are being a positive influence let's say.

**Resp:** Yes, well not all the time. Because I think, ah- well on a positive note our media would report what is...current! But sometimes they have the tendency to sensationalize also.

**Intvr:** Right.



**Resp:** I think it's a tendency of a lot of media people do. Sensationalize a lot of things and one thing that I also do not like about our primetime shows is that they objectify women. You know? They objectify woman and then our soap operas will tend to show traditional ah-, you know, traditional ideas about woman, that woman are weak, woman are a nag, woman are, you know, vain, while male's are bullying, they are, you know, perhaps because these are the types of shows that provide higher ratings.

**Intvr:** Probably, yes.

**Resp:** Yeah but if they want to be, you know, ah- be influential on how to change the way people think, about the way people are educated or raise awareness on certain issues our media can be very, very helpful in that aspect. Bold print and broadcast.

**Intvr:** Okay... Ah...are you aware of the legal age for sexual consent in the country?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. It's twelve.

**Intvr:** Okay there is a proposal to...change it if I'm not wrong.

**Resp:** Yes, there is a proposal to change it.

**Intvr:** Do you know to what age they intend to change it?

**Resp:** I think it's fifteen I'm not very sure.

**Intvr:** At the same time there is a proposal to change the legal age of criminal responsibility-

[Interruption by Interviewee]

**Resp:** Oh-Ohhh yeah. I don't like that idea as well.

**Intvr:** - That one I was actually surprised to hear about.

**Resp:** I don't like. It's because of Digong. Because of the president.

**Intvr:** Oh...Okay so it's connected with the drug issue, right?

**Resp:** Yeah it's connected to the drug issue, it's connected to the idea that children you know, are-well, it's because of our president, it's because of our stupid president. And ah- I don't like that idea as well. Number one it's a violation of the UNCRC.

**Intvr:** Right.

**Resp:** And children are children, you know, and we need to always guide them and all, and according to research right? Our brains aren't fully developed until we are twenty-five years old.

**Intvr:** They want to lower it to nine, is that right?

**Resp:** Nine, nine.

**Intvr:** Is that related to the English law that was applied in the past where they lowered the age of criminal responsibility given the increase rates of violence among children at a certain period? Or was this a new proposal all together?

**Resp:** It was just ah- a proposal, before it was twelve, I think.

**Intvr:** Okay. I was just asking because during a period of time the rates of criminal violence among children did lead to the United Kingdom government to lower the age of criminal responsibility and I thought maybe they could be supporting their proposal on such laws.

**Resp:** Well, they are actually citing the proponents of the bill, are citing a lot of laws in different countries. Including England, I think including Bangladesh, I think they're citing that as well. But I know for a fact that during the discussion they are citing also a lot of laws, a lot of decisions from other countries, that's why they need to lower the age of criminality, because they have this impression that a lot of Filipinos are becoming, you know, a nuisance actually, they are committing a lot of crimes so they need to be disciplined, without realizing that children need to be more guided, they need to be more educated from both parents and the community and their school as well, and I don't think lowering the age of criminality will solve here in the Philippines. Including our drug use, because ah- they're saying that children are being used by drug lords to deliver. They are, they are the ones delivering the drugs.

**Intvr:** Right. Because police wouldn't usually not suspect that a child is carrying around drugs.

**Resp:** Yes. They just want to use the children because they are not penalized in that aspect, but why-why penalize the children? Why not penalize the dealers, the drug lords? Even the police, why not penalize the police? Why penalize the children? Right?

**Intvr:** Exactly. It makes no sense. What about the judicial system in the Philippines? Do you trust in the system?

**Resp:** Yeah I do trust the system. But it takes a long, long while for us to get the cases resolved.

**Intvr:** It's very slow then? The system?

**Resp:** It's a very, very slow one. It's a very, very slow process in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** I was also told before that it's quite expensive as well.

**Resp:** It's very expensive, yes. But you have Public Attorney's Office and it's working but it's handling a lot of work as well. Specially, we have a lot of cases related to drugs so those coming from poor families would resort to go to see PAO, the Public Attorney's Office, because the services there are free.

**Intvr:** That's still great... Okay, when it comes to child testimonies, I'm not absolutely if this still functions this way in the Philippines but, for example, in Portugal and other European countries the child testimony in cases of exploitation is often the most important or even the only evidence available to carry out the case in court. Is it the same there?

**Resp:** Yes, yeah. It's the same here in the Philippines.

**Intvr:** That's always a problem since it brings out issues of further victimization of the child but it turns into an even bigger issue in cases where the one's responsible are the family, basically placing the child in a position where she had to testify against her parents for example.

**Resp:** Yeah. In-in cases like that where the children need to testify In court they are guided by a social worker and they also undergo counseling. They are also guided by their legal counselor as well.

**Intvr:** Is there any group of psychiatrist or psychologist that help evaluate the state of the child and of the family during the trials? And do these cases tend to be prosecuted faster?

**Resp:** Well usually it's the social worker that comes in first and recommends further assessment. It's the social worker, they are licensed professionals here in the Philippines, dealing with distressed families, with ah- you know...

**Intvr:** So they are actually well prepared to deal with these type of cases?

**Resp:** Yes, yes. They are provided counseling as well and when they cannot afford this the government usually provides them through the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

**Intvr:** Okay...Do you have any suggestions of alternative paths to conduct these prosecution's in other for them to actually lead to something. Because usually they end up being dropped because the child doesn't want to testify against the family and there isn't sufficient evidence, especially in cases like those of live streaming child exploitation.

**Resp:** Well, you know, our DSWD, the Department of Social Welfare and Development would rescue children. They have the right to take the children from the custody of the parents. And then we have nine government organizations and ah- like, the example, o I seat at the board of a foundation, it's a foundation it's a Family Foundation of a friend of mine; they put about a million pesos a year to send poor children to school and we are funders actually, we're funding the education of four ah- yeah four students, high school students, two girls and two boys. But they live with French nuns who are based in the Philippines, but DSWD rescued them from drug and sex trafficking. So when- like for example, one of the other girls, when the DSWD rescued her ah- she was caught selling drugs. Right? So DSWD rescued her and since the parents were the ones who asked the child to sell the drugs the custody of the child was taken out from them. And then she was rehabilitated by the DSWD and finally turned over to the nuns, ah- it's a foundation established by- it's an NGO established by French nun together with Filipino nuns in the Philippines and then they are sent to school; our Foundation sends them to School. We provide them tuition fee and the living allowances and, you know, they are graduate's already of high school-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Intvr:** That's great...

**Resp:** -And they are now ah- in to vocational course. So after this year they will graduate earning a vocational degree from TESDA, it's a government agency, TESDA, Technological Education something, something. I don't remember what TESDA stands for. You know, we have those efforts as well, because the government when-when we see that ah- children be taken care off well

by their parents they can be considered at ward of the state. So that kind of arrangement applies to us.

**Intvr:** Okay... So when it comes to International Organizations they also have been raising awareness of what's happening the Philippines and some have tried to help.

**Resp:** Yeah.

**Intvr:** Are you aware of any International Agency or NGO that is currently helping children in the Philippines?

**Resp:** A lot, a lot of NGO's not necessarily focused only on what you call this sex trafficking but we have 'Save the Children', we have 'Oxfam' ah- what else... I'm going to send you a list of the International NGO's for children that we here. We have 'World Vision Philippines', ah- those are very big organizations. We have 'Plan International Philippines' but of course all of them are working for child's rights here in the Philippines. What else...I'm going to send you the list...there is a coalition, a CR coalition, Convention on the Child's of the Child Coalition, I'm sorry International. Most of them are International as well.

**Intvr:** Okay, that's great thank you. From what you know do these International Organizations appear to adopt an approach that respects both Filipino values and the social dynamics there, the needs there or is there-

[Interruption by the Interviewee]

**Resp:** Yeah!

**Intvr:** Yes? Okay, I was just asking because, otherwise we often see missions of International Organization fail because they adopt a standardized approach for different countries without taking their differences into consideration.

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah. Well, I've worked with 'Save the Children Philippines' for a long time, I'm still their technical consultant on aspects education, early child development workers... I also work with 'OXFAM Philippines' also 'Plan International' and ah- what else? 'World Vision' organization as well. We had another one...I forgot the name, yeah. So they try to adapt but, of course, the funding comes from ah- their mother agencies, like 'Save the Children' would receive funding from the UK, right?

**Intvr:** Right...

**Resp:** And sometimes UK has its own, you know, agenda. So they have to somehow tweak a little bit but mostly it concerns about the provision of funding for, for example, material for children, training of the teachers; but of course, ah- we tend to indigenize and tailor the needs, tailor our intervention based on the needs of the community. So we do a lot of ah- people's organizations consultations, we consult the mother's we consult the children and ah- like for example, 'World Vision' receives a lot of funding from Bill Gates Foundation, so we conducted a series of research to see whether this particular program or approach would be applicable to the Philippines. We try to adjust a bit or enormously, depending on how, depending on the needs of the communities.

**Intvr:** That's great. So given the particularities of the child sexual abuse in the Philippines as we have been discussing-

[Overlapping Speech]

**Resp:** Yeah...

**Intvr:** - what do you think would be ah- good approaches? Good examples of approaches that could be done, or were done in your experience to be successful in tackling this particular issue?

**Resp:** Strategies. Well, of course, one is, well we can educate the parents. The local government unit like Cordova Cebu did. And also we have to educate our police, because the police are the ones, you know, when DSWD officers rescues children you always have the police, and we have to- In the Philippines we have a women's desk, by the way, you know that?

**Intvr:** Yes, yes I've read about it.

**Resp:** Yeah we have a women's desk ah- that's ah- one of the contribution of the Feminist Movement in the Philippines because we used to have only male police. But now we have female police and when there are concerns regarding children and women are brought to the police station it's the women, the female police will attend to the needs of this. So, yeah, that one, educate the police and then using the media to create awareness and, you know, combat ah- what you call this? Ah- cyber-

**Intvr:** Cybersex, Live streaming child sexual exploitation.

**Resp:** Yeah, those things. And basically, it's really the parents and the children who need to be educated I think that it needs to be in a part of ah-, part of ah-, of the curriculum, how to protect yourself from harm and from exploitation as well, yeah.

**Intvr:** Okay...So, something I didn't ask earlier, I was told that celebrities have a big influence in the Philippines do you agree?

**Resp:** Yes, of course. Yes, yes.

**Intvr:** Do you think that 'using them', well that's not the right expression but, do you think their presence and intervention could help reach people?

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah. Of course. Involve the celebrities as well, I will give you one example. The Philippines had the lowest ah- you know, incidents of breastfeeding, we were tagged by World Health Organization as one of the countries that have no cases of exclusive breastfeeding; because, you know the milk industry, it's a huge industry, it's a billion Pesos industry in the Philippines. So they are able to, you know, buy or provide a lots of benefits to the pediatricians, to the midwives, you know, they buy them cars, they book them to first class accommodation's, they give them first class ah- what do you call this? Tickets to a Conference abroad, in Europe with all expenses paid in order for them to prescribe formula milk. So breastfeeding becomes now, a problem, right?

**Intvr:** Yes, definitely.

**Resp:** So one of the things that the DOH, the Department of Health, you know, ah- ask celebrities, the very, very popular one's in the Philippines who are breastfeeding to convince ah- the public to breastfeed. And hey openly shared that are breastfeeding and they are not using any formula milk.

**Intvr:** And it was a good idea then? It's a good strategy?

**Resp:** It worked well, it worked well, but we still have problems you know? The celebrities could help them... For example, the awareness regarding HIV, we have celebrities who are doing this campaign well. So with regard to the awareness about cybersex, yeah it can help you know, and there are celebrities, you know, I'm sure who would be open to join a campaign.

**Intvr:** Okay, so that's about it. That's all the question's I had. Thank you so much for sharing your time with me and answering. Ah- unless you have anything else you would like to add, or anything you would like to ask me?

**Resp:** You're having your thesis, right? This is for your Master's or for-

**Intvr:** This is for my Master's degree.

**Resp:** Yeah, well, why are you interested with the topic of child exploitation?

**Intvr:** Actually, I was exposed to it very young, when I was in high school. I used to be very curious about the internet I think too much. And I would go a lot on the dark web or the deep web and I encountered sites like 'Wonderland' where there was a lot of child pornography, I was very shocked. So by then, in high school, I was very confused at what I had to do to help. And in Portugal there was a big gap, at least now it's better, because even if we communicated to the authorities, they wouldn't do anything because they didn't have the power to do anything. So me and a group of colleagues who knew a lot about the Internet and stuff like that, we were able to shut down a few of the smaller websites.

**Resp:** Really?! That's wonderful.

**Intvr:** Yes, yes. I was very motivated for what happened so all my course after that, it was involving cybercrimes and online exploitation. I went to criminology, I was able to study more about cybercrime, even get in touch with some ethic hackers and then I went on with my Master's to understand International Law and why something works in a country and fails in another, and the complications of tracing crimes across the online space, and- I don't know if you are familiar with the project, it's from an NGO called Terre des Hommes from the Netherlands. They created ah- virtual girl that looks like a Filipino girl, 'Sweetie' and they would use it to address online predators and they actually detected a lot of them, it was a major operation and I was very, very moved by what they were doing but was also very shocked by what was happening in the Philippines in particular because of my idea as a Catholic, of the family as a place where I'm safe.

**Resp:** Yeah, yes...

**Intvr:** So from then on, I discovered this on my first year in the Master's and I just worked on it for the rest of the years. My teachers were very impressed, they always supported me a lot so I just decided this is what I wanted to do, I want to help these children. I have to start somewhere and I thought this was a very good place to start with.



**Resp:** Yeah, that's wonderful.

**Intvr:** Okay, again thank you so much for the help and all the information you were able to share with me. Hmm- if you want once the thesis is finalized, I can share it with you.

**Resp:** Sure. I am glad that you have this interest because we also need to, well that's basically another problem with our police. We do not have the technology to run after ah- this this.

**Intvr:** Yes, it's very complex.

**Resp:** Yes, we do not have that kind of people at this point in time so even if we want to shut down a lot of sites as well, our police, our technical site they can't do it in the Philippines as well.

**Intvr:** Right, that's why I think it's so important that we show what is happening at an International level.

**Resp:** Correct.

**Intvr:** That way a country will be able to help one another, or there will be an NGO with the training and the techniques to support the development of what is needed.

**Resp:** Yeah, yeah. Correct. Coincidentally I work for the UP Center for Women's and Gender Studies as well. And we have a lot of studies about woman and gender in the Philippines, studies about LGBT and expedition and discrimination that they have and trans, we have some studies of them as well in my center.

**Intvr:** That's amazing, you have an amazing job.

**Resp:** Thank you.

**Intvr:** Once again, thank you; thank you so much for your time. And have a nice evening.

**Resp:** Okay, thank you too. See you, bye bye.