

# Gender Imagery in Philippine Psychology: A Critique of the Literature

AMARYLLIS TIGLAO TORRES

College of Social Work and Community Development  
University of the Philippines

The present study attempts to describe the gender roles, behaviors and concepts attributed to Filipino men and women by psychologists. It also seeks to determine the nature of the theoretical framework used in interpreting sex-related behavior, within the context of gender-fair perspectives.

As a social science, psychology has always been guided by theory. Purportedly, the pervading empiricism in this discipline renders its theories as value-free, objective and reflective of data. Yet, a fuller examination of some of its major theories would reveal that gender bias has crept into psychological explanations (Parlee, 1975).

Evidences concerning the masculine bias in social science (including psychology) have been described amply by women's studies (Parlee, 1975, Gilligan, 1982, among them). Inasmuch as Western theories have had tremendous influence on Philippine psychology, it is likely that these androcentric (male-centered) norms have also been used to explain the behavior of Filipinos. Hence, it is the general objective of this paper to re-examine gender behavior and explanations within the framework of gender ideology.

The specific purposes for which this paper is written are threefold:

1. To examine a sample of Philippine psychological literature in terms of what information they provide concerning gender differences in behavior;
2. To assess the assumptions behind given explanations for behavior in terms of gender ideology;
3. To identify research gaps in psychological research and to suggest gender-balanced methods and theoretical perspectives.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### *Sex, Gender-Roles and Gender Discrimination*

The literature of behavioral sciences is replete with both theoretical assumptions and interpretations of empirical data revolving around what are often termed "sex-roles" and "sex differences." The use of the word sex implies that the observed social roles, relationships and behavior differences among males and females are universal, to the same extent that biological sex differences are true for all members of humanity.

Nonetheless, studies of various cultures have provided ample proof that "masculinity" and "femininity" are defined differently across societies and cultures, and sometimes even within ethnic sub-groupings within the same society. Hence, it is a misnomer to term as sex-roles observed differences in the behaviors, attitudes and traits of males and females. Rather, these should more aptly be called "gender differences" expressed in ideas, attitudes and concepts of "gender-roles," where gender refers to social and cultural constructions of masculinity and femininity (Daedalus, 1987).

The sociocultural constructions of gender lead to the emergence of gender ideology, or to a set of assumptions, beliefs, and expectations that males and females in society are differentiated in their roles, positions of power, and behaviors. This ideology has oftentimes resulted in the polarization of the roles of men and women, where one gender may be ascendant or dominant while the other is subordinate and oppressed. Most societies today may thus be characterized as patriarchal (male-dominated), where the pervading gender ideology ascribes strength, power and prerogatives to males, while prescribing subordinate and powerless roles for females (Frye, 1983).

Inasmuch as gender roles are defined socially rather than genetically, there is no reason to think that these differences are immutable or that the roles of males and females are inflexible. In fact, the impetus to change hierarchical gender differences lies at the heart of the women's movement, because the patriarchal orientation has led to women's "oppression."

The oppression of women is expressed in various ways, and is often reinforced across generations by social institutions. For instance, the overriding feature of gender ideology is that women are meant to fulfill roles within the home while the men are to be the providers and breadwinners. Because of this, women in the Philippines have become 'invisible' in the economic sphere while men are divested of homemaking roles. As a result of her domestic role, women are at a disadvantage in terms of educational and occupational opportunities. Even the participation of females in Philippine political life has been restricted and often times limited to those who have passed their childbearing years (Licuanan, 1986; NCRFW, 1985). To veer away from these expectations may be considered deviations from the norms, and both males and females are socialized early in life (through the family, the educational system, and other reference groups) to accept gender discrimination as "given."

Existing developments and trends in most societies in the world today render the patriarchal view as obsolete. The ideology, however, persists, and much of humanity continues to accept as fact the patterns of gender discrimination ingrained by male-dominated culture through the centuries.

Theoretical perspectives in the social sciences have not been immune to gender bias. In psychology, for example, Freud goes at length to discuss the development and resolution of the Oedipal complex, and concludes that females likewise have an Electra complex. Piaget observed that boys through childhood become increasingly fascinated with rules of games and the development of fair procedures for resolving conflicts while girls are pragmatic. He thus concluded that the "legal sense," which is essential in moral

development is “less developed in little girls than boys” (as quoted by Gilligan, 1982). Similarly, McClelland conceived of the achievement motive as having two components. Yet, from her studies of American women, Horner (1972) identified a third possible motive—the avoidance of success by females.

Social science in the eighties is currently engaged in the arduous task of reviewing its concepts, theories and explanations within gender-balanced perspectives. This is unavoidable if the disciplines are to remain faithful to reality, considering both its subtle and more manifests changes. Since psychology is concerned with conative, cognitive and affective processes among humans—focusing on the behaviors of individual males and females—this task is imperative. A starting point for self-examination within the discipline is the body of psychological literature.

#### SCOPE AND METHOD OF REVIEW

For purposes of this critical review, all issues of the *Philippine Journal of Psychology (PJP)* were examined. Volumes from 1968 to 1986 were reviewed to determine which selections within each of these focused on sex and gender differences, or contained data relevant to masculine and feminine concepts and behaviors in the Philippines. Since the PJP is the official journal of the Psychological Association of the Philippines, the association of professional psychologists in this country, it is assumed that the articles in this journal reflect the perspectives and research concerns of the discipline through the years. Aside from PJP, the *IPC Paper on Modernization in the Philippines* were reviewed, as well as *Proceedings of the Annual Conventions of the Psychological Association*.

In conducting the review, the following steps were generally followed:

First, the objectives of the selected articles were listed, in order to be able to categorize the general themes of reported studies on gender in psychology since 1968;

Second, the methods and results of each of the printed studies were read, outlined and summarized within each of the themes earlier identified;

Third, the interpretations of reported findings were reinterpreted from the standpoint of gender ideology.

Admittedly, the sources of psychological research included in this review compose only a limited sample of psychological literature in the Philippines. These, dissertations, and other research publications would have added more data on gender themes in Philippine psychology. Moreover, it was assumed that the methods used in the reported studies were comparably acceptable in quality. The present interpretations, therefore, should be viewed within these limitations.

#### FINDINGS: GENDER THEMES IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The research materials included for review examined “sex differences,” or presented data for either or both male and female behavior, in terms of the followed psychological categories:

1. Personal traits and/or qualities of the subjects included in the study,
2. Processes of learning observed for males and females at varying developmental stages,
3. Interpersonal dynamics, and
4. Analysis of the development of masculinity and femininity roles.

Findings from the literature concerning each of these psychological concepts will be presented in the following discussion.

### **Characteristics of Males and Females**

#### *1. Nutrition, Physical and Intellectual Development*

Guthrie and her colleagues at the Philippine Normal College studied the nutritional status and Intellectual performance of children in urban and rural settings (1968). They found a significant positive relationship between head circumference (as a measure of nutrition) and scores on an intelligence test but no sex differences.

Apart from this result, their tables indicate that (a) girls from ages 8 to 11 tended to be taller than boys within the same age groups, and (b) that girls in different communities had differing average heights, such that those from urban private schools were taller than those from urban public schools, who were taller than girls from rural public schools. If the schools are considered surrogate measures for socioeconomic status (SES), then it is apparent that SES affects the nutritional status of young girls. The height differences between boys and girls at these ages, however, are predictable from developmental norms. By puberty, the boys are expected to overtake the girls' heights.

#### *2. Traits Associated with Delinquent Behaviors*

The study of Carlota (1982-1983) on the characteristics of female juvenile delinquents and nondelinquents demonstrates that even individuals of the same sex can have differences in characteristics. She describes these differences as follows:

- (a) Female delinquents scored lower than nondelinquents on an intelligence test;
- (b) In a personality test, the two groups were found to differ on 5 factors: sizothymia vs. affectothymia, intelligence, temperament, superego strength, and harria versus parmia.

In simpler terms, delinquent girls were found to be more critical and distrustful of people while the nondelinquents were good-natured, trusting, and warmhearted (sizothymia vs. affectothymia). Nondelinquents were impatient, demanding, nervous and excitable while delinquents tended to be stoic, undermonstrative and complacent (temperament). In terms of superego strength, delinquents were fickle while nondelinquents were deliberate, frivolous rather than responsible, undependable sentimentalist, self-reliant, and hard, even cynical. Nondelinquents, in contrast, were more kindly, gentle, sentimental and affectionate (harria vs. parmia).

Given these characteristics, Carlota concludes that the delinquents have had "faulty development ... in moral and socio-emotional development and in the development of

a positive self-concept." The question arises, therefore— what life experiences have these delinquent girls undergone that contribute to the development of these "undesirable characteristics?" Furthermore, why are these traits (stoicism, frivolity, low intelligence, and cynicism) considered maladaptive traits in a society?

### *3. Media Preferences of the Youth*

Dealing with another aspect of adolescent behavior, Torres (1982–1983) describes the media preferences of out-of-school youth (OSY). Her findings reveal that the radio is the most accessible and most frequently used mass media facility in rural communities. Besides this, more female OSY said they had time to listen to the radio because their free hours were usually spent at home while more boys chose to play sports for their leisure.

In terms of program format, girls expressed a preference for drama stories, horror, comedy, or fantasy while boys liked action and adventure stories. When listening to or viewing these programs, the girls tended to empathize with the story characters, thus awakening more of their emotions.

These findings indicate that boys and girls react differently to story lines, and that the latter "live" the stories more intensely than the former. No wonder that girls prefer programs that explore highly emotional themes—be it through drama, comedy, horror, or fantasy.

Girls, moreover, are portrayed to be "at home" for longer periods than the boys, indicating differences in expectations for gender behavior. In fact, the study describes how parents exercised control over the manner in which the leisure time of their daughters was to be spent, while boys were given relative freedom of movement.

### *Learning Process*

Studies concerning the acquisition of various types of behavior are contained in the literature. These can be subdivided as investigations into imitative dynamics, concept attainment, moral development and academic performance.

#### *1. Imitation and Social Facilitation*

Adversario (1978) examined the accuracy and latency of imitated behaviors among kindergarten children when exposed to aggressive and altruistic "models." She found that altruistic behaviors were more easily learned than aggressive actions, and that there were no sex differences in the nature of the imitated actions of the children.

In interpreting her findings, Adversario speculates that non-aggressive actions are easier to learn because they are socially desirable in the culture. Unlike the classic Bandura experiment on imitation of aggression, she found that boys did not imitate the aggressive actions more frequently than did the girls. These results, therefore, indicate that early socialization in the Philippine setting does not reinforce expressions of aggression even in boys. This conclusion will be examined again later.

In another interesting report, interactive conditions were seen to facilitate the expression of laughter in children (Dela Cruz, 1981). Total time spent smiling and laughing while

listening to a "funny" material was highest in a co-action situation (two children listening to the same thing), followed by that in an audience situation (other child not listening), and least in an alone condition. There were no sex differences found in the social facilitation of laughter.

## 2. *Concept Attainment*

Another area of concern in developmental psychology deals with the processes by which concepts and cognitions are learned by children. The cognitive learning studies in PJP deal with the following: processes of attaining concept conservation and classification, concepts of psychological health and predictions of college performance. In addition, Dautz-Williams (n.d.) looked into children's concepts of body organs and illnesses.

Emily Miao (1971 and 1974–1975) documented her learning intervention experiments at the University of the Philippines. These techniques were employed in order to train children in concept formation. In the first study (1971), Miao and her associates tested the extent to which training, or practice with various materials, would lead to "substance conservation." She demonstrated that children would easily acquire the concepts of substance identity or equivalence if the training sessions allow crucial aspects of the cognitive principle to be presented in ways understood by the child.

Similarly, a sequential learning model was used to train children in developing either class inclusion or classificatory skills (1974–1975). Both experiments showed the usefulness of practice in acquiring cognitive skills. Both experiments also failed to identify sex differences among the preschool children in concept attainment.

The two experiments by Miao were undertaken to operationalize Piaget's theory of intellectual development. The findings are significant to gender analysis because they give evidence that intellectual functions are developed in boys and girls along similar dimensions. These results indicate that, within the same social class, the development of thinking in young children results in no obvious gender differences.

Dautz-William (n.d.) studied children's concepts of body organs and illnesses. She found no differences between non-hospitalized boys and girls in terms of their abilities to correctly identify body organs and illness. Hospitalized boys, however, had better "illness scores" than the hospitalized girls.

This study also described maternal influence on concept development. Children with mothers of higher educational attainment had better illness and organ scores, indicating the role of maternal training in attaining the concepts.

Instead of young children, Church and his colleagues at De La Salle University (1984–1985) investigated students' conceptions of "psychological health" using multi-methods: critical incidence technique, free response, in-depth interviews, and ratings. Analysis of obtained responses delineated fifty-four (54) categories of healthy (and unhealthy) Filipino personality.

Gender differences emerged in conceptions of psychological health, such that females emphasized the dimensions of psychic integration and social relations, while males

stressed alert and logical thinking. In particular, both sexes described as healthy the traits of being helpful, kind, honest and generous. However, more females expressed the idea that psychological health is associated with kindness, thoughtfulness, patience and being loving while more males mentioned “intelligent.” Females, moreover, rated “shy/bashful” as unhealthy.

Thus, while the process of developing concepts was seen to be equivalent among male and female children, gender differences emerge in later years. These findings suggest that there are intervening socialization processes which lead to differential behaviors in concept attainment.

### *3. Moral Development*

Piaget postulated that, as children matured, their judgments about situations also shifts—from using an egocentric perspective in earlier years, to a social viewpoint (recognizing rules of behavior) in later years. Consequently, he predicted that children will also change their perspective in judging situations. Younger ones are expected to attribute punishments for misdeeds because of the consequences of actions, while older children are expected to evaluate intentions.

Three separate studies attempted to test these hypotheses. All produced results which indicate that Filipino children of different ages judge situations in terms of intentions rather than consequences (Ilan and Tan 1969; Jimenez, 1976; Esleta, 1978). Two of the researches, moreover (the first two), describe gender differences in the attribution of punishment: it appears that girls recommend punishment for misdeeds more frequently than do the boys.

Since the judgments were passed for misdemeanors committed by imaginary children in stories, it could be that these little girls are already modeling their own mothers' behaviors. After all, it is the mother who is the usual disciplinarian in a family.

### *4. Academic Performance*

Sex differences were also examined in terms of identifying predictors of college achievement. Gumban (1972–1973) studied the associations between high school subject area averages, scores on the College Entrance Test (prototype of the NCEE) and the academic achievement of male and female freshmen. Interestingly, he found that these measures predicted female achievement in Mathematics and in English with “greater precision” than corresponding male achievement. However, the overall college achievement of students was predicted equally for both sexes well by the CET and high school performance for both sexes.

It appears, therefore, that learning processes for Mathematics and English “stabilize” in high school among girls, so that their achievements in the tertiary level can be predicted from their performance on these subjects. The same is not true among males. Unfortunately, the study fails to indicate whether the observed performance of females is better than, equal to, or inferior to, that of males.

## *Interpersonal Behaviors*

An area of investigation wherein gender differences may predictably be identified is in the realm of interpersonal relationships. In the psychological literature, these behaviors were studied by observing actual situations, or through paper-and-pencil inquiries into attitudes and expected actions.

### *1. Modernizing Attitudes and Values*

In 1970, Guthrie and his associates (IPC Papers No. 8) reported on the modernizing attitudes of rural men and women. They found insignificant differences between the sexes, indicating that both groups had similar views on social change in the nation.

Earlier (1969), Taylor and his colleagues asked female students to rate eight ethnic groups on a semantic differential scale. They found that more positive evaluations were given for the "Tagalog people" when the scales were presented in this language, but no differences were evident in ethnic attitudes expressed in English. They concluded that the female subjects were evaluatively more expressive when responding in their native language.

In 1971, Licuanan reported that adolescents in urban and rural communities consider their parents as an important reference group. Girls, moreover, thought so more than the boys. Findings by Torres (1982-1983) on decision-making patterns in families with adolescent youth confirm these results. The OSY in different rural communities reportedly turned to their parents for decisions on school and work options, even regarding their peers. Parents also intervened more frequently in decisions concerning how girls were to spend their leisure hours.

Licuanan (1971) and Torres (1982-1983) also examined the adolescents' aspirations. The latter found that both male and female OSY aspired to continue their education. The in-school respondents of Licuanan likewise desired further education, to eventually become professionals. Interestingly, Licuanan also observed that female adolescents and higher level of achievements than the males, contradictory to McClelland's findings. They also expressed aspirations to become leaders, achievers and extroverts, indicating that high school girls had a grasp of their potentials for self-actualization.

### *2. Marital Behaviors*

Researches on married subjects demonstrate various male-female differences. In 1968, for example, Gutierrez-Gonzales showed how congruence in the self-perceptions of husbands, and their wives' perception of them, increased with length of marriage. However, the opposite was untrue: increasing years of marriage did not make the husbands' perceptions of their wives more congruent with the latter's self perceptions: in fact, congruence decreased with years of marriage. In addition, added years decreased the extent to which wives viewed themselves as similar to their husbands.

Gonzalez interprets these changing views of married couples in terms of their roles. Wives, as homemakers, get to know their husbands better through the years. Husbands, apparently, do not exert similar efforts to keep apace with their wives' values and feelings.



Thus, their perceptions of their spouses become less like the latter's self-concepts as they move through marriage, especially because the women develop new self-concepts as they grow older.

Gender differences are also reported in terms of couple's motives for having children (Jurilla, 1986). In a projective test, husbands revealed that a covert motive for their desire to have children was "the need to compensate for personal inadequacies" or the failure to be "the stronger sex and more capable partner in the marital relationship."

Wives, on their part, desired children in order to establish their sense of self worth as equal to men, and in order to obtain the love and approval of their husbands. Women held the expectation that children would later be a source of assistance more frequently than did their husbands. They also considered children to be a source of pride and honor and a means to ensuring their immortality.

It is interesting note that both husbands and wives find childbearing to be a source of personal gratification. However, for some men, having children is a compensatory goal, while for women, it enhances self esteem. Women, however, see their self-worth mirrored only in their husbands' approval for their actions. Such is the nature of sexual politics in marriage.

## **Masculine-Feminine Roles and Expectations**

### *1. Gender Imagery*

Jimenez (1983) undertook an extensive study to ascertain concepts of masculinity and femininity in the country. Masculinity (*pagkalalaki*) was generally conceived of in terms of traits connoting 'strength,' and as: *malakas, matipuno, malaki ang katawan, masulado, malusog*. In the agricultural sector, however, masculinity was associated with actions rather than traits—*may prinsipyo, matatag ang loob, may determinasyon, agresibo*.

Males considered femininity to be associated with interpersonal traits such as *mabihhin, maunawain, mahiyain, mapagmahal, at malambing*. Females gave concepts such as *mahina ang loob, mahina ang katawan, iyakin, at pabagu-bago ang isip*, obviously judging themselves from a masculine perspective.

Interviews with Filipino college women in 1961 surfaced the interpersonal basis for feminine values. These women emphasized the following behavior patterns to be important: modesty, respect for elders and their advice, concern with criticism and sensitivity to the opinions of others. The importance of family also emerged from the interviews and projective stories—a person who had no respect for her family was deemed to have a low status (Guthrie, 1961). A decade later, Licuanan observed similar self-concepts expressed by high school girls (1971). However, boys also considered pleasant interactions as part of their self-concepts, while girls fancied themselves to be adventurous and more modern. Traits related to strength were not mentioned at all by the boys as part of their self-concepts.

The prevalence of a male-oriented consciousness is revealed in projective tests. Using PTAT, Ventura (1976) observed that cards with male figures elicited richer stories with

respect to the aspect of "why"? Besides this, stories by females tended to be more stimulus bound while those by males had more ambiguous endings, indicating associations with more varied situations. In another study (Guthrie, 1970) unmarried women expressed concern over the fact that they had no husbands as yet, while the wives worried over losing their spouses to other women. Males failed to mention being concerned about their wives. Instead, they worried about their work, natural calamities, and the plight of their children.

Nonetheless, an interesting finding is reported by Jurilla (1986). Through projective testing she found that men expressed themes with nurturance/affiliation motives more frequently than did women. However, they sought companionship with their children and with other men, but not with their wives. The secondary position of wives thus becomes apparent through apperceptive techniques.

The gender bias in Philippine culture attached to bearing sons and daughters was confirmed by Jurilla. Both husbands and wives more frequently mentioned giving birth to sons in their stores. Favoritism for male children was also conveyed in the narratives.

## 2. *Socialization into Roles*

Evidence on socialization processes, and its effects on gender expectations are found in various ways in the literature. Child-rearing studies, per se, fail to document child training practices peculiar to each sex. Socialization for aggression, dominance, nurturance, achievement, and interpersonal skills have been reported as child-rearing practices but reports give no data on gender specific aspects (Guthrie, 1961-1970; Hare, 1969; Domingo, 1977). More recently, Razon (1981) reported that urban mothers were loving to their children but tended to be more controlling than permissive. This attitude was expressed to both sons and daughters equally often.

A richer source of data on gender socialization are the researchers of Flores and Gonzales (1968) and of Pablo (1971). In the first study, Flores and Gonzales determined that children whose fathers were physically absent enacted "feminine" actions in doll play with father-dolls more than did children whose fathers were present. In fact, none of the girls who had fathers around acted out any feminine behaviors with the dolls. In addition, no feminine actions were attributed to brother-dolls.

Pablo (1971) looked into the attitudes of children towards their peers and parents. Results from a sentence completion test demonstrate that, while children expressed preference for peers of the same sex, both boys and girls had more positive evaluations of females. Preference for same-sex peers, moreover, reversed with the onset of adolescence. Interestingly, this study also found out that boys are more willing to accept girls in their games, than girls are willing to include boys in feminine games.

From these observations, we infer that children are socialized into gender roles, since they assign masculine and feminine actions in consistent fashion. Thus, father-dolls and brother-dolls are made to act out only "masculine" behaviors, girls are treated with diffidence, and boys are barred from feminine role play.

Socialization of children concerning distinct mother and father roles are not evident in the literature. Pablo (1971) describes the attitudes of children towards their parents to be generally positive. Daughters expressed more positive responses, though, than the sons. Robles (1986) reports that children perceived their mothers to be the powerful parent. Neither parent was perceived to be highly punitive. These results were similarly obtained from boys and girls. In another recent investigation (Du-Lagrosa, 1986), the effects of father-absence on the adjustments of adolescents were determined. The results indicate that father-absence has negligible effects on the adolescents' behavior. Evidently, these studies indicate that stereotypes about distinct mother and father roles do not apply in Filipino families.

### 3. *Gender Roles in Marriage*

"Marriage was considered to be the normal and most natural state for males and females, and children the most essential part of this union." This is what Jimenez determined from her study (1983). But, what are expected by men and women from, and within, marriage?

Males tended to associate marriage with having children, while females perceived it to be "a commitment to responsibility, an act of independence, a severance of parental ties, a great learning experience, and only lastly, as a reason for having children" (Jimenez, 1983). Both sexes, though expected partnership, sharing, understanding cooperation and love from their marital partners.

These findings differ slightly from Jurilla's (1986) who found that maternal fulfillment dominated the motive for having children. Despite this "idea," men expressed fears related to their paternal roles, especially in terms of being economic providers. This results in valuing prolificity in marriage as an assertion of masculine strength and capability, and even as an evidence of their immortality.

Although mother and father roles are not distinct in terms of relationships with children, adult males and females do have separate expectations of their roles in marriage (Jimenez, 1983). Males are expected to be the *ama ng tahanan*—the economic providers in the home. Females are expected to be home makers, primarily responsible for keeping it clean, doing household chores and caring for the children. A married woman is expected to work only if economic expediency demands it. Work for self-fulfillment is not even part of the consciousness of most Filipino men and women.

A woman's self-fulfillment, moreover, is usually perceived in relation to men's values. Jurilla (1986) describes the need of wives to establish their own "sense of worth vis-à-vis their husband's love and approval." Thus, it is not enough that she is competent in her various domestic roles—as a wife, mother, housekeeper, teacher, motivator and even as bread winner. The husband and society must show approval. For this reason, women themselves consider self fulfillment—as individuals—to be secondary to their roles in the family.

In her dissertation, Alma Santiago de la Cruz (1986) shows that the most favorable attitudes towards working women were expressed by others in similar circumstances.

Unemployed women and men looked less positively at women who worked. Yet, she goes on to show that no differences were found in the mother-child relationships of employed and unemployed women, indicating that working wives coped with their domestic responsibilities adequately. To have done otherwise was unthinkable. Similar attitudinal patterns are described by Ventura and her associates (1979).

The traditional division of labor in the family, however, is being eroded by the phenomenon of overseas employment. Women whose husbands are working abroad state that single parenting, while a difficult situation, enhances their personal growth and development (Go, 1983; Johnson, 1981). Solo parenting has forced the traditional Filipino wife to become more independent, to be stronger as a person, to develop new interests and to discover hidden potentials. Her fears in undertaking added roles and responsibilities are still evident, however, such that it is not uncommon for these women to wait for their husband's decisions on important family matters rather than act by themselves.

When wives are forced into circumstances outside of the traditional mold, she falls back on the family and herself to cope with the situation (Go, 1983; Sycip, 1982; De la Cruz, 1986). Close family ties in rural communities provides wives with "a built-in support system" that makes adjustment to their husbands' absence easier to bear. Sycip (1982) describes working mothers to be less emotional in the face of problems, make decisions independently of their husbands, and consult other people. De la Cruz (1986) also cites the mitigating effects on maternal employment of substitute-care for children, good relationships between mother and children and efficiency in managing the home. Thus, employment teaches women to rely on their own resources, with familial support as an underlying phenomenon.

## GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS IN PHILIPPINE PSYCHOLOGY

The lengthy presentation which we have just concluded describes the nature of data on men and women which is found in Philippine psychological literature. These materials will now be re-examined in terms of gender perspectives.

The question to be answered is thus: to what extent do researches on men and women in the Philippine provide insights on gender differences? Furthermore, what explanatory tools are used to interpret observations of behavior?

### *Patterns and Perspectives of Gender Behavior*

The male norm is quite evident in the literature of Philippine psychology. For instance, the evaluative meanings attached to concepts of masculinity are positive (strength), while those of femininity are negative (weakness) (Jimenez, 1983). Next, as was discussed in the previous section, Filipino women apparently hinge their self-fulfillment on male approbation, rather than in terms of internalized (or even gender) values (Jurilla, 1986). Also, whenever sex differences have been described, it has always been terms of "how girls are similar to/different from boys."

If the original psychological theory used by the research was male-biased to begin with, then such a comparison merely wishes to determine the deviation of female behavior

from that of males. Hence, knowing that Piaget and McClelland use masculine propositions, to find out that girls do not differ from boys in their moral judgments, or that women are in fact higher achievers than men, merely caters again to the Adam-and-Eve outlook in social science.

To sum up the situation, psychological explanations of gender behaviors in Philippine psychology are generally tied-up to patriarchal perspectives. The only research report which attempts to move away from this framework is that of Jurilla's (1986) which attempts to explain the projective themes of women in terms of their actual experiences. By and large, the psychologist-as-researcher has "passively" accepted findings that working women are regarded with disfavor, or that wives accept their double burden—to be homemakers and economic providers—without rancor or regret.

The domestication of women is affirmed by the literature—in observations, in instrumentation and even in explanations. Studies of child-rearing practices, of attitudes and perceptions of males and females, describe the centrality of the home to women (Domingo, 1977; Hare, 1969; Guthrie et al. 1969; Jimenez, 1983; Jurilla, 1986). However, more information on gender-related socialization training would have emerged if the studies had consciously dealt with this matter. Except for the research of Robles (1986), for example, no data is reported on mother-child relationship with sons and daughters. Yet, both male and female children were included in the investigations. It would have been interesting to find out when, and how, boys and girls learn male-appropriate behaviors, so that by adolescence they have marked gender biases in judging interpersonal concepts (Church et al., 1984–1985; Licuanan, 1971).

Instrumentation and research designs have also been androcentric. Why didn't Flores and Gonzales (1968) and even Du-Lagrosa (1986) study the effects on behavior of both father-absence and mother-absence? Is it because they assumed that mothers are invariably present for their children? Why do child-rearing studies focus on the mother's roles alone? Aren't fathers expected to have any share in the upbringing of children? In studies of modernizing attitudes, why did Guthrie inquire about the respondents' aspirations for their sons and not for their daughters? Moreover, why was a "modern attitude" concerning women represented in his scale in terms of how she dressed herself?

Ironically, despite these biases for the domestic role of women, the researches take efforts to prove that fathers are the decision-makers and power wielders in the home. Hence, it is an unexpected revelation to discover that children have apperceived family politics differently—they consider their mothers to be the source of power in their homes (Robles, 1968). It was also an unexpected insight that men crave for companionship as much as, if not more than women (Jurilla, 1986). However, their projections fail to include the need for the companionship of their wives, again indicating that—even in their subconscious—most Filipino men do not consider their wives as friends or companions.

Explanations in the literature have reinforced women's domestication also. For instance, the increased congruence in wives' perceptions of their husbands and the latter's own perceptions is explained thus:

“as the ... marriage relationship develops into familiarity and routine, the ... husband (becomes) decreasingly concerned over his wife as he becomes increasingly preoccupied with ... his occupational world, while the role expectations drive her to be more perceptive of her husband’s qualities and needs” (Gutierrez-Gonzales, 1968, p. 58).

Interpretations concerning gender differentiations in family life fail to transcend patriarchy, but rather accept it. Jimenez, for example, concludes:

“... masculinity and femininity for the Filipino are both defined and described by specific roles within the family ... The most telling mark of the truly masculine male and truly feminine female is the satisfactory performance of the father/provider role for the male and the mother/homemaker role for the female” (1983, p. 99).

Robles avers “In Filipino homes, it is expected that mothers take charge of raising children ... while fathers almost always need to go to work” (1986, p. 24).

While these observations are probably reflective of the respondents’ own thinking, they fail to question the assumptions behind women’s domestic role, or even the discrepancy between these “ideals” and the realities of contemporary Philippine life. In fact, the dichotomy between spouses in terms of the provided role is a diminishing reality across all socioeconomic classes. Thus, the expectation that mothers should continue to take charge of the children—especially if father no longer goes to work—is not fair to women who have become breadwinners or sources of second income in their families.

Besides this, there is no reason to accept as fact that women should be motivated solely by concern for her family’s welfare. As individuals in their own right, with their own talents and achievements, women have as much rights as men to aspire to “go out into the world” and to receive recognition independent of their homemakers’ role. The world was not created solely for men’s benefit.

Despite the preponderance of gender ideology in our culture, it is heartening to note that children express equal affection for both parents, perceiving them as equally authoritative in decision situations and essential to home life. These orientations reinforce the observation that the Filipino family system is bilateral and lineal, that relationships with both parents are reckoned to be of equal importance, and that authority emanates from the elders of both sides. Given this cultural peculiarity, it is not surprising that children fail to perceive father-only or mother-only types of relationship. Instead, “parents” are perceived and experienced as a unit, despite actual distinctions in their own role expectations.

Differentiations in gender behavior are most apparent in interpersonal situations. Moreover, females tend to behave within interpersonal norms more than do men. For instance, the attitudes elicited by Guthrie (1961) among college women reflect strict codes of conduct for females when dealing with others. Concepts of femininity reported by Jimenez are also oriented towards interpersonal norms. Even the positive traits of juvenile delinquents have to do with interpersonal dealings (Carlota, 1982–1983).

In contrast, no sex differences were seen in concept attainment related to conservation, classification, and morality. In the latter case, gender thinking became evident only when the children were asked to "act in relation to the deed" (Ilan and Tan, 1969; Jimenez, 1976). These findings give weight to the feminist outlook that gender is a social construction. Only behavior elicited in an interactive situation would be affected by gender ideology.

Finally, the surveyed literature provides contradictory findings to theoretical assumptions. These are represented by Licuanan's report on adolescent girls with higher achievement strivings than boys (1971), the observation that boys do not imitate aggressive behaviors more frequently than girls (Adversario, 1978), or that moral judgments of both younger and older children are premised on intentions, supposedly a mature response in Piaget's formulation.

#### RESEARCH GAPS

The psychological literature is being questioned in this paper using premises which were absent in the past. Hence, it is but expected that feminist views fail to pervade available data and explanation.

New thinking, however, calls for rethinking and reformulating psychological investigations. Interested psychologists should now examine the appropriateness of gender-fair perspectives and apply them to existing or newly collected data.

As indicated earlier, studies which document socialization into gender roles are sorely needed. Research concerning the effects of domestication on women should now be treated psychologically by asking appropriate questions and devising adequate tools. Scholars in economics, sociology, history, and even in literature are already doing this. Studies focused on women's thought and behavioral process should also be undertaken, but outside of a framework which uses male behaviors as standards. Gilligan (1982) provides examples in this respect. Finally, participatory research should be attempted by the psychologist, so that the use-value of her studies can be enhanced—not only for the women participants, but also for the development of her own consciousness, and the advancement of the frontiers of social science.

## REFERENCES

- Adversario, Peñafrancia (1978). Some factors affecting nature of imitative stimulus, verbalization and sex of subject. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 11 (1 & 2), 15-27.
- Carlota, Annadaisy. (1983). Filipino female juvenile delinquents: an explanatory study of their levels of Intelligence personality and attitudes towards the self and selected social figures. *Journal of Philippine Psychology*, 15-16, 3-27.
- Church, T., M. Katigbak & I. Castañeda. (1984-1985). Conceptions of good psychological health and Personality functioning of Filipino college students: a multimethod investigation. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 17-18, 15-43.
- Dauz-William, Phoebe. (n.d.). *Filipino children's concepts of body organs and illnesses*. Q.C.: NSTA-UPS Integrated Research Program.
- Dela Cruz, Alma. (1986). The impact of maternal employment on family members' perceptions and attitudes towards the maternal role. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 19, 29-40.
- Domingo, Fe. (1977). Child rearing practices in barrio Cruz-na-Ligas. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 10(2), 3-66.
- Du-Lagrosa, Milagros. (1986). Some family related factors and personality variables affecting the adjustment of the father-absent adolescents. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 19, 61-77.
- Esleta, Addona. (1978). The effect of storytelling and group interaction on the moral judgment of Children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology II*, (1 & 2), 28-39.
- Fenix, Yolanda. (1969). Correlates of counseling appropriateness in Manila college students. *Philippine Journal of Psychology II*, 23-34.
- Flores, Pura & Michaela Gonzales. (1968). Thematic responses in father-absent children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 7-10.
- Frye, Marilyn. (1983). *The Politics of Reality: essays in feminist theory*. New York: The Crossing Press.
- Gilligan, Carol. (1982). *In a Different Voice*. Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Go, Stella. (1983). Some psychological dimensions of international contract labor. *Developments in Philippine Psychology*. Manila, August 16-18, 113-128.
- Gumban, Remigio. (1972-1973). Sex differences in predictability of some measures of college achievement from the College Entrance Test and/or some measures of high school achievement. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 5-6, 43-48.
- Guthrie, George. (1961). *The Filipino child and Philippine Society*. Manila: Philippine Normal College Press.
- Guthrie, George, et al. (1970). *The Psychology of Modernization in the Rural Philippines: IPC Papers #8*. Q.C.: Ateneo de Manila University Press.
- Guthrie, Helen, et al. (1968). Nutritional Status and intellectual performance in a rural Philippine Community. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 53-61.
- Hare, Rachel. (1969). Autonomy, dependence of problem-solving in Filipino children. *Modernization its impact in the Philippines IV. IPC Papers #7*. Q.C.: Ateneo de Manila University Press. 46-59.
- Ilan, Leila and Allen Tan. (1969). Attribution of punishment among Filipino children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 8-10.
- Jimenez, Ma. Carmen. (1976). The development of moral judgment in Filipino urban children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*.
- Jimenez, Ma. Carmen. (1983). Masculinity/Femininity concepts of the Filipino man and woman. *Development in Philippine Psychology*. Manila, August 16-18, 91-100.
- Johnson, Norine. (1981). The plight of single-parent families. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 19, 5-17.
- Jurilla, Lina. (1986). An explanatory study of the motivational system for parenthood of rural married couples. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 19, 5-17.



- Licuanan, Patricia. (1971). The Impact of modernization on Filipino adolescents. *Modernization: Its impact in the Philippines V*. IPC Papers #10. Q.C.: Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1-30.
- Licuanan, Patricia. (1986). A situational analysis of low-income women. (Typescript)
- Miao, Emily. (1974-1975). An explanatory intervention experiment on development of class inclusion concept among some Filipino pre-schoolers. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 7-8, 13-19.
- Miao, Emily. (1971). An explanatory intervention on substance conservation: a Philippine experience. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 4(1), 53-58.
- National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. 1985. *Filipino Women in Education*. Manila: NCRFW.
- Pablo, Renato. (1971). Study of Filipino children's attitudes towards peers and parents. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 4(1), 31-36.
- Parlee, Mary Brown. (1975). Review essay: Psychology Signs: *Journal of Women in culture and society* (1).
- Razon, Perpetua. (1981). Child-rearing practices of Filipino mothers: relationships to children's cognitive development. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 14, 8-15.
- Robles, Amelia. (1986). Perception of parental nurturance, punitiveness and power by selected Filipino Primary school children. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 19, 18-28.
- Taylor, D. M., et al. (1969). The use of semantic differential in cross-cultural research. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, II (1), 43-51.
- Torres, Amaryllis. (1982-1983). Decisions, aspirations and media preferences of rural out-of-school youth. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 15-16, 28-55.
- Ventura, Elizabeth. (1976). Ambiguity of the Philippine Thematic Apperception Test. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 9, 35-38.
- Ventura, Elizabeth. (1979). Attitudes towards working wives in urban settings. *Philippine Journal of Psychology*, 1(2), 3-9.2.