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Navigating Waters: Experiences of Filipino Canadian Identity Making in the Diaspora

By:

John Tolentino

THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Social Work

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

Master of Social Work

Wilfrid Laurier University

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ABSTRACT

Research states that while Filipino Canadians are the largest growing migrant population in Canada, they are the least represented and understudied subjects in the academy. The primary purpose of this qualitative study is to better understand the experiences of Filipino Canadians and how they create their identities in the diaspora. Since few studies take on a social work lens to explore these important stories, I attempt to unearth these experiences using these guiding questions: (1) How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora? (2) What are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities? Following Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory, data were generated from ten (10) Filipino Canadians across Vancouver, British Columbia and analyzed using codes, categories and turning them into themes. Six themes were found. Findings indicate that Filipino Canadians yearn to construct, deconstruct, and reconstructing identities that bring them back to their cultural and ancestral roots. Implications for social work practice and lessons are discussed.

Keywords: Filipino Canadian, Identity Making, Constructivist Grounded Theory, Diasporic Experiences, Asian Diaspora, Migration, Colonialism, Imperialism, Transnationalism

Navigating Waters: Experiences of Filipino Canadian Identity Making in the Diaspora

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to respectfully acknowledge that Wilfrid Laurier University is located on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabe, and Haudenosaunee peoples in so called “Kitchener-Waterloo”, Ontario. The Lyle S. Hallman Faculty of Social Work is specifically on the Haldimand Tract.

“[O]n October 25, 1784, after the American Revolutionary War of Independence, [the Land] was given to the Six Nations of the Grand River and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation by the British as compensation for their role in the war and for the loss of their traditional lands in Upstate New York (www.sixnations.ca, <http://mncfn.ca>). Of the 950,000 acres given to the Haudenosaunee (six miles on either side of the Grand River, all the way along its length), only 46,000 acres (less than 5 per cent) remain Six Nations land (www.sixnations.ca) and 6,100 acres remain Mississaugas of the Credit land” (Laurier Students' Public Interest Research Group. (n.d.)

As a Master of Social Work student, I have virtually gathered on this land for the past two years to, study, research, and collaborate with colleagues and scholars in academia. I would like to recognize the invaluable work of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island for their commitment to protect and heal the Land.

Currently, I live, work, and play on the unceded (i.e., stolen and never given to the Crown) territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations in so called “Vancouver”, British Columbia. As stated by Madill (2010) on the Canadian government and Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada website, the Douglas Treaties completed in the 1850s only covered Vancouver Island. Later, in 1989, Treaty 8 was expanded to

include part of northeastern British Columbia which was an agreement between Nations of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Northwest Territories. Indicated on the Treaty 8 Tribal Association (n.d.) website, it explains *Treaty 8* as the “Treaty of peace, co-existence and sharing, its signing was witnessed by the Creator through the smoking of the pipe.”

As a Settler-Immigrant, I would like to also recognize the many unearned privileges I receive simply for being a settler. This means that in the Common Water, I am part of The Ship and honor The Canoe. I commit to unlearning, learning, and re-learning how to ally. In the formal agreements of the treaties and the spirit of responsible relations, The Two Row Wampum friendship agreement is still in effect as long as if “the grass is still green, the water flows downhill and the sun rises in the east and sets in the west” (Hill, 2013, p. 5). I remember we are all Treaty peoples; I will do all I can to bravely strengthen that agreement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

To begin, I would like to give thanks to God for this incredible journey I call life. There were countless moments when I wanted to quit, and in those dark moments, prayer is what saved me. I give my utmost praise to the Creator for carrying me through this program in completing this thesis project.

To Dr. Anh Ngo, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University, my thesis supervisor, if it was not for your words of encouragement, gentle push, and extremely kind spirit, I would not have completed this project. Your reassurance meant the world and I do not take for granted your mentorship. You inspire me every day.

To my thesis internal committee member, Dr. Magnus Mfoafo-M'Carthy, Professor at the Faculty of Social Work at Wilfrid Laurier University, your guidance has not gone unnoticed. Thank you for your willingness to meet with me and for all the inputs that went from the beginning stages to the end stages. To my thesis external committee member, Dr. Fritz Pino, Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Social Work at University of Regina, thank you for taking the time and energy to invest into my work. I am grateful for your insights.

To the Faculty of Social Work professors, staff and organizers, Dr. Nancy Freymond, Dr. Charles Gyan, Dr. Bill O'Leary, Dr. Ginette Lafrenière (Associate Dean of the MSW program), Dr. Shoshana Pollack (my 2020 Faculty mentor), Ms. Amilah Baksh, Ms. Kate-Ross Rudow, the Equity Committee Members, the Community and Learning Subcommittee, N.I.R.E. (Normalizing Intercultural Relationships in Education) and the Queer Caucus, I am deeply blessed for the endless support.

To my lovely cohort and colleagues (special honors to Ms. Sheila Mirafzal, my first friend in the program, Ms. Claire Howarth for your allyship and editing support, and Ms. Segen

Mehreteab, my writing buddy) – there are many of you, thank you for the late-night study sessions and check-ins on ZOOM. I cannot wait to see you folks doing great work in the field!

To my research participants and the Filipino Canadian community at large, maraming, maraming salamat for your cultural knowledge and wisdom. This is my love letter to you all and I hope to make you all proud.

To my best friends Ms. Kayselynn Joanna Palattao, Ms. Jenny Truong, and Ms. Jemimah Eugenio, I am indebted to you both for your constant validations and affirmations. Thank you for lending me an ear when I needed one the most. You both stood by me through it all. I love you all immensely.

To my family, my younger sister, Angelica Tolentino, thank you for your overflowing humour and support! Though we are oceans away, I can hear your joyful soul. I love you very much. And lastly, to my mom, Mrs. Maria Catalina Millena Tolentino and dad, Mr. Raul Mane Tolentino thank you both for all the sacrifices you have made so that I could be here and live a worthy and humble life. I love you more than words can say. I honour you both. My deepest gratitude to my extended family for all the lessons. Mahal ko kayo lahat!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	i
Land Acknowledgments	ii
Acknowledgments	iv
List of Figures	ix
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTIO	1
1.1 Rationale for This Study	1
1.2 My Experiences of Racialization: Locating myself in the Project	3
1.3 Overview of the Thesis	4
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	6
2.1 The Process of the Literature Review / Approach	6
2.2 Literature Review on Filipino Canadians	9
2.3 Literature Review on Filipino Identity Making	13
2.4 Conclusion	15
CHAPTER 3 HISTORY	17
3.1 Introduction	17
3.2 Magellan Conquest and Commentary	19
3.3 Brief Political History on Contemporary Violence	22
3.4 Political Dynasties	23
3.5 Critical Analysis	24
3.6 Conclusion	28
CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY	29
4.1 The Research Paradigm	29

4.2 Conceptual Framework	31
4.3 Kathy Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory	32
4.4 Critical Race Theory (Intersectionality).....	33
4.5 Decolonized Methodologies	35
4.6 Ethics, Inclusion Criteria, Recruitment Procedures.....	36
4.7 Sampling Methods Utilized.....	39
4.8 Style of Interviews, Research Instrument Description	41
4.9 Data Collection, Interview Process, and Participant Profiles.....	42
4.10 Data Analysis	43
4.11 Conclusion	46
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS	48
5.1 Contesting Identity.....	48
Assimilating.....	49
Accommodating.....	49
Adapting.....	50
5.2 Exploring Identity	51
5.3 Deepening Identity.....	52
5.4 Affirming Identity	53
5.5 Conditions of Survival	55
5.6 Conditions of Revival	57

Through language	57
Through education	57
Through community.....	58
Through personal experiences	58
5.7 Discussion	59
5.8 Conclusion.....	61
CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION	62
6.1 Limitations.....	62
6.2 Future Directions	64
6.3 Implications as a Social Worker	66
6.4 Researcher Positionality.....	69
6.5 Researcher Reflections.....	71
6.6 Lessons	74
6.7 Conclusion.....	76
References	77
Appendix A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	92
Appendix B: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE	96
Appendix C: RESEARCH POSTER	97
Appendix D: COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN.....	99
APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANTS PROFILE	103

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. <i>Connected papers graph</i>	8
Figure 2. <i>Lapu Lapu, First Hero of The Philippines</i>	21
Figure 3. <i>Conceptualization of Colonial History and Impact on Filipino People</i>	27
Figure 4. <i>Levels of Coding</i>	45
Figure 5. <i>Code for Coding</i>	45
Figure 6. <i>Visualization of methodology and theories used</i>	47
Figure 7. <i>Integration Process of Cultural Identity</i>	55

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Rationale for This Study

Growing up in a Filipino household, my parents always asked me: “Who do you want to be when you grow up?”, “What do you want to be when you grow up?” While these questions pertained to a job classification or a future profession, the conversations turned to the exploration of shades and tints of identity. Each family member would contribute to these informal, familial talks and nothing was off limits. The diverse topics such as gender, race, class, age, spirituality, and skin tone (to name a few) piqued my interest to learn more about my family lineage, history, and culture. These early conversations in my family introduced elements of internalized racism and colonialism within my family spurred my interest to explore how the contextual history of the Philippines and the subsequent experiences of migration of Filipinos to Canada might shape our identity making.

Between 2011 to 2016, there were over one million and two hundred (1,212,075) new immigrants who settled in Canada (Republic of The Philippines, n.d.). The Philippines continues to be a top source of immigration with a total of 188,805 newcomers each year. Currently, Filipinos are the third largest ethnic community in Canada (the National Filipino Canadian Cultural Centre, n.d., para. 1). My family’s migration to Canada was part of a large global design that moved people across the globe. It was not until I came to Canada that my immediate family inadvertently put a pause to this educational outpouring due to the demands of immigration and job obligations and constraints.

It can be argued that many Filipinos have lost their connections to their cultural and personal histories, oral histories, and Filipino history itself due to the pressures of assimilation (M. Rito, personal communication, February 20, 2022). Much of what I saw in elementary and

high school was a systemic embeddedness to assimilation and the narrative of liberal multiculturalism that directly shapes the conditions in which people access opportunities and experience barriers to wellbeing. A study conducted by Statistics Canada (2012; as cited in Kelly, 2014) evidenced that Filipino immigrants, especially Filipino men in the early 2000s, graduated from post-secondary education at an alarming rate of 13.2 %, the lowest amongst other ethnic groups. Simply put, as a Filipino Canadian identifying male, I am a statistical anomaly in the academy. Given this stark realization, I locate myself in this project to bridge racialized experiences. In my continued journey of post-secondary education, especially in the progression to the Master of Social Work program, I learnt about the importance of self-reflexivity and critical analysis. Moreover, in these social work courses, I learnt how to name, differentiate, and categorize a person's lived experience. For example, I learnt how oppression, marginalization, discrimination, and division as processes impact people of color. In the truest spirit of social work, I centered connections through meaning making and solidarity building at the forefront of my work.

I want to explore the possibility of "loss in cultural identity." Like the family conversations I reminisced on earlier, I want to be in conversation with my community about what it means to be a Filipino Canadian within the context of Canada as a Settler Nation shaped by the social, political, and historical conditions. Therefore, to challenge the erasure of Filipino stories and identity making at large, and to contextualize the identity making process within the structures of colonialism and globalization that prompts mass migrations of Filipinos to Canada, I created this study to explore and reflect on the journeys of Filipinos in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

1.2 My Experiences of Racialization: Locating myself in the Project

I was born and raised in Umbria, Italy. I lived there for 10 years before moving to Canada in 2005. In a classroom filled of white people, I knew as a child that on some level, I felt inferior. Although I cannot pinpoint all the events that occurred, the earliest memory I can think of being “racialized” was in grade 2. My elementary school teacher asked me to translate for a new pupil in the school who was also Filipino. I believe they were in grade 3. In the classroom, I vividly remember speaking in Tagalog and asking her a question. Immediately, the whole classroom burst out into laughter, including the teacher. When I asked the teacher what was funny, she replied with: “Nothing, go on.” It was not until much later in life that I realized that they were laughing at me, perhaps because of the foreign way Tagalog sounded to them. I never once heard that Filipino pupil speak in Italian or Tagalog. She remained silent throughout the remainder of the school year. These racialized micro-assaults, while seemingly innocent and small, are harmful. I argue that they have a way of shaping the “unconsciousness” of a child. In this example, I broadly learnt more about how the world operated. Particularly, where Whiteness is made the norm and Asian-ness and specifically Filipino-ness is othered. Navigating these often “turbulent waters” has been at the center. I attempt to shift these dominant narratives of normativity through my project in hopes of loosening the constraints of racial, cultural, and ethnic identity making.

As a Filipino Canadian researcher, I name the complexity in my positionality as a *racialized researcher* working with racialized research participants. It is important to tread lightly in my additional role of an *insider outsider researcher*. There are many challenges at hand when it comes to assuming the role of an insider researcher. For instance, there is responsibility to remove potential biases. Kanuha (2000; as cited in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) and Asselin (2003;

as cited in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) defines an insider outsider researcher as someone who researches a population, they are also members of. The researcher shares identity, language, and an experiential base with the research participants. Given these added positions, without creating undue influence on the research participants, I considered accountability checks with my thesis supervisor and internal committee member. I also went through multiple rounds of research ethics approval with the Wilfrid Laurier University Research Ethics Board. Despite reservations, I believe the benefits of being an insider researcher outweigh the risks. In the words of “Joseph”, a Filipino youth research participant in Coloma’s (2012) article, “any academic work for Filipinos by other Filipinos is a good thing” (p.377). Ultimately, the purpose of this thesis project is to add to the fullness and multiplicities of Filipino Canadians.

1.3 Overview of the Thesis

Following the scientific method, my main research question is: How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora? and secondly, what are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities? The purpose of this study is to uncover how these phenomena occur. As explicated above, the rationale for this study is to bridge the gap of Filipino scholars producing cultural knowledge in the academy. The key ideas that I worked with were colonialism, imperialism, transnationalism, global migration, and its impacts on identity making. These concepts are highlighted in the literature review as well as the historical accounting. Furthermore, to explore the underlying functions of identity making, I used Constructivist Grounded Theory, Intersectionality, and Decolonized methodologies as my research tools. I interviewed 10 research participants who self-identified as Filipino Canadians. In these interviews, the “isms” are discussed. I found four themes related to identity making and two themes (i.e., conditions) that nuance the study. The implications for this study are abundant,

however, to keep my research succinct, I focused on knowledge production and knowledge mobilization within the Filipino Canadian community as well as generating learning value for social workers engaged in community practice. The details of the implications are further generated in the final conclusive report.

This thesis project is organized into six chapters. Within each chapter, there are interrelated subchapters. Chapter 1 (*Introduction*) encompasses my rationale and inspiration for the thesis. Chapter 2 (*Literature Review*) provides an in-depth systematic scholarly review done by insider researchers as well as outsider researchers. Chapter 3 (*History*) gives a glimpse into Filipino History and provides definitions that the reader may not be familiar with. The definitions aim to create a “common language” which unifies and clarifies the researcher’s and readers’ – composed of scholars, community members, and laypersons – understanding on the subject matter at hand. Chapter 4 (*The Methodology*) is broken down into four separate subsections: the research paradigm, conceptual framework, theoretical understandings, and methods. Chapter 5 (*Findings*) discusses the importance of the data analyzed, four themes, and two sub themes in the study and lastly, Chapter 6 (*Discussions*) divulges limitations, implications for social workers, future directions, conclusions, and reflections.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

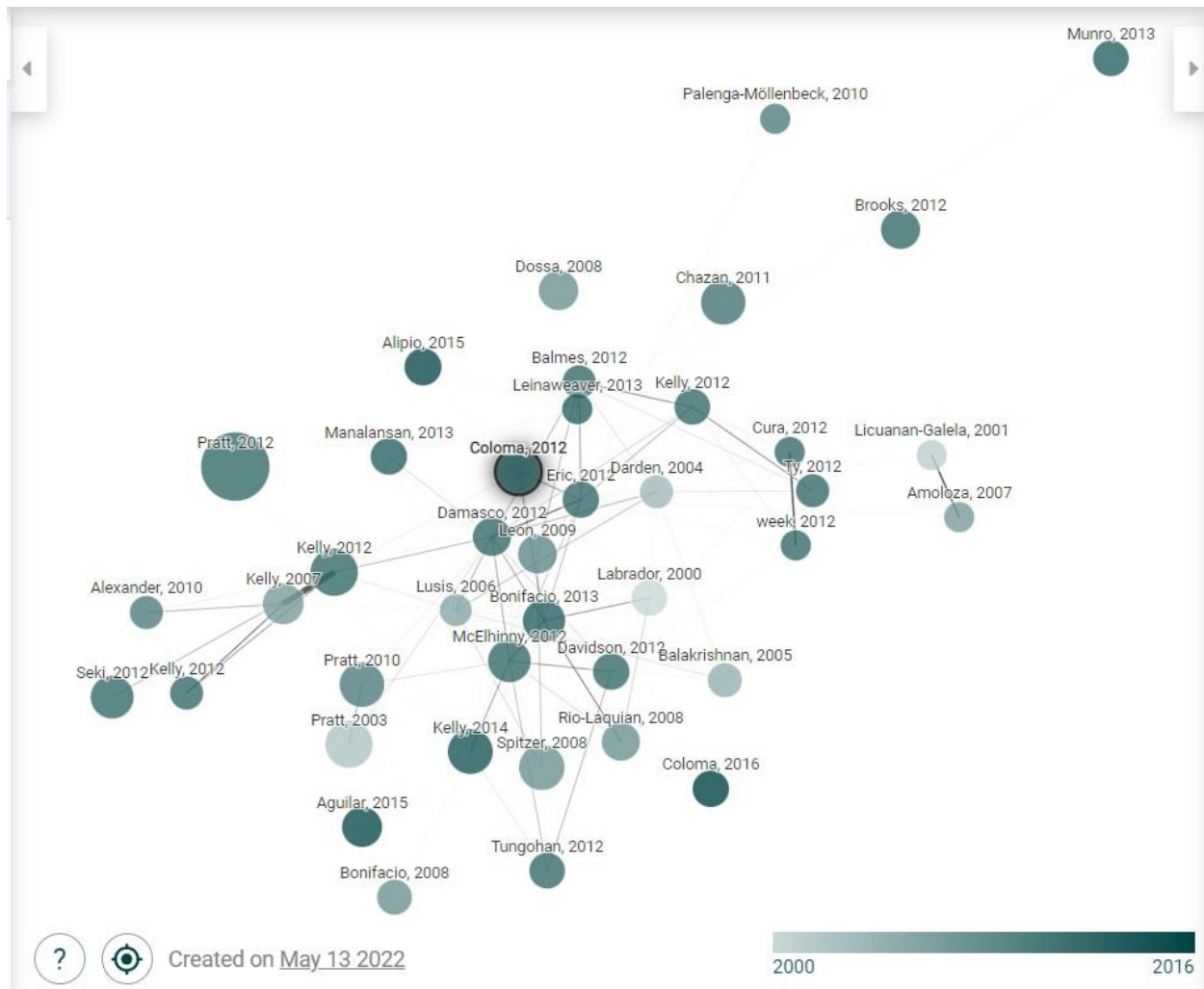
There continues to be a need to centre Filipino-Canadians in social sciences academic literature. In this chapter, I discuss the process of the literature review, the respective bodies of work retrieved, and I address the gaps in the literature.

2.1 The Process of the Literature Review / Approach

When I first wrote my research proposal in the fall semester of 2020, I simply entered the general key words ‘Filipino’ and ‘Canada’ to see what results came up. In this initial stage of the project, I wanted to gauge what had been published. Utilizing OMNI, Wilfrid Laurier’s primary academic research tool, I casted a broad net which allowed me to see bodies of literature such as scholarly articles, reviews, book chapters, graduate students’ major research papers, theses, and dissertations. From this broad net, I narrowed down my searches to locate the salient literature on my topic.

On this collection of databases composed of Laurier, Waterloo, and the Guelph libraries, the preliminary results were around 15,000 hits. Out of these 15,000 hits, not all were suitable to my research project as most scholarly works came from social science disciplines such as political science, history, and anthropology as well as allied disciplines such as sociology and psychology. Furthermore, under the main databases such as *Social Services Abstract* and *Social Work Abstracts*, there were significantly no major studies that centred on Filipino Canadian experiences as the primary subjects. Notably, when Filipinos were centered as subjects to the study, it was done so under the umbrella of global health and pan-Asian immigrants (Park et al, 2020). Therefore, I undertook a multimodal literature review process to create the foundational base of information and ultimately captured literature beyond social work to include those in the fields of social psychology, community psychology, and human geography.

I finetuned my literature review by conducting a more thorough investigation such as expanding the search terms to Filipino Canadians, FilCan (i.e., Filipino Canadian) subjects, pinoy/pinays in Canada, Filipinx diaspora, etc. I also refined the years to include literature from the 1950s to the time present. I explored ways to capture emerging literature outside of my search strategies of using the major social sciences databases. For example, utilizing social media. During this period, the influences of the COVID-19 global pandemic, the upsurge of social justice movements such as #StopAsianHate and increase of scholarship from emerging scholars such as graduate students further informed the literature review process. Moreover, I used grey literature and popular media (i.e., YouTube videos, magazines, public articles) discussing the topic to include community-created literature that were not restricted to the barriers of academic publishing. I also used a research tool called *Connected Papers* (i.e., a free online software to help researchers and applied scientists find academic papers relevant to their field of work) to visually see where old and new research on Filipino Canadians had been done, and additionally, how the papers were interconnected with different scholars given the interdisciplinary nature on Filipino Canadian as subjects of a research study. In Figure 1 below, one can see the cluster of scholars that in tandem reflect the preliminary themes I found. Rather than an exhaustive and complete picture, Figure 1 provides a full-er picture of the literature review in Filipino diasporic studies. Simultaneously, an additional advantage of *Connected Papers* is that it allowed me to see if I had missed any other relevant work for this research.

Figure 1.*Connected Papers Graph*

Note. Created by John Tolentino on the *Connected Papers* website.

This graph's starting point is from Coloma's book (*Disturbing Invisibility in Canada*, 2012) as indicated by the black circle outlining "Coloma, 2012". They are selected as the starting point because they are the first to publish a major book on Filipino Canadians as subjects. From there, it shows the most prominent researchers in the broader field of Asian Canadian studies. It is important to note that the limited range of publishing times (starting from the 2000s) as a caveat

– this indicates a limited number of scholarships on Filipino Canadians pre-2000s and a lack of scholarly works that are not digitalized.

2.2 Literature Review on Filipino Canadians

The three themes that emerged out of literature review on Filipino Canadians were: 1. History in the Philippines and the particular nature of their migration around the world (predominantly the United States and Canada), 2. Global labour migration policies, and 3. The psychological wellbeing of Filipinos with considerations for the impact of identity on health. For the purposes of my study on Filipino Canadian identity making, I will review the literature with a focus on cultural identity integration.

Juan (2001) states that there are over 7 million Filipino migrant workers predominantly situated in the Middle East, Asia, Europe, and North America with the majority of the Filipino migrant workers as female domestic helpers. This historical and current observation is in tandem with the migration pattern in Canada. Filipino emigration as tightly intertwined with economic, and labour needs of the receiving countries is a persistent common thread internationally. It is interesting to mention that the history of Filipino migration in Canada beginning in the 1960s account for the third largest migrant group in Canada (Coloma, 2012). As a result of this, there is considerable research examining the intersections between the supply and demand of care labour from foreign-born workers in industrialized countries (Lusis, 2010) and the way Canadian policy was hurriedly implemented to reflect this need of Filipinas distinctively in each Canadian province (Tungohan, 2018). Due to the distinct labour needs those Filipino migrants filled in the Canadian economy, there is extensive research on the nuances of the recruitment process and the ways it has undermined Filipinas in the caregiving sector. For example, England and Stiell

(1997) studied Filipinas under the L.C.P. (Live-In-Caregiver Program) in Toronto, Tungohan (2018) reviewed the hazardous implications of the T.F.W.P. (Temporary Foreign Workers Program) on Filipinos in Alberta, and Pratt (2001), detailed the hardship of Filipina domestic workers in Vancouver via a feminist lens. This has inevitably spotlighted attention to human geographers and scholars to understand reasons behind the de-professionalization and de-skilling of Filipino immigrants (Pratt & Pendakaur, 2008). All in all, the literature in this camp speaks to the historical complexities of social and economic process of pre-migrations/immigrations for Filipinos at large and the oppressive design of global labour migration policies.

In another body of the literature, there is academic writing that details the settlement trajectories of Filipinos in their host country or settled country. Much of the scholarly work here focuses on theories of transnationalism. Transnationalism is a concept that was formed by Linda Basch and their colleagues in 1994 (Lusis, 2010). In its essence, it serves to link economic, social, and cultural exchanges of the home country and host country in the immigrant experience (Lusis, 2010). Additionally, there are relations at hand which tie their society of origins and society of settlement, thereby intertwining and entangling cultural identity formation. For example, specific to Filipinos, close communications with relatives, financial remittances and travel/return visits are various forms and actions of transnationalism (Kelly, 2015). The research shows that Filipino Canadians highly subscribed to this effect. Allard and Caidi (2018) conducted a study in which they interviewed 14 newcomers to Canada in Winnipeg. They wanted to study and unpack the context of this phenomenon and found that the stage of “in-betweenness”, that is the transitory status of their immigration document (permanent residency vs. citizenship) was a critical factor to their personhood. Moreover, there is research in Filipino communities that strengthen transnationalism through social networks as evidenced by Lusis

(2010) on transnational networking. Chen's (1998) study illuminated the Filipino kinship systems in Thunder Bay. This literature shed importance on economic integration of Filipinos sharing resources such as job prospects and housing as a means of survival and success (England and Stiell, 1997).

Lastly, an additional set of literature has focused on Filipinos and their relationship with mental health. While most of the research has focused on Filipino Americans, there are notable similarities in trends for Filipinos in the diaspora. Namely, a recent systematic review conducted by Martinez et al (2020) concluded that Filipinos in seven different host countries generally have an unfavorable attitude towards formal mental health seeking. In another study, only 3% of Filipino immigrants and Filipino Americans used mental health services for emotional distress (Abe-Kim et al., 2004; as cited in Tuliao 2014). This is not in part due to an absence of mental hardship as the literature has also revealed that there are high rates of depression (Sanchez, 2007) amongst second generation Filipinos specifically in adolescents (Barrera et al., 2016). Though researchers have partly attributed this due to other ways of coping such as reliance of emotional support on family members and strong ties to religiosity; therefore, going to spiritual healers instead as the popular means of coping? (Sanchez, 2007). Some researchers have presently highlighted stigmatization attached to mental health within the wider Filipino community (Martinez et al., 2020). Moreover, research has unearthed the presence of substance use in the form of alcohol to cope with mental health strains (Barrera et al., 2016). Evidently, cultural, and societal conditions such as turning to family, spiritual practitioners, and alcohol have played a factor in the mental health challenges on Filipinos.

While this respective literature has informed and contributed to the overall experiences of Filipino immigrants, research has remained limited in understanding the impacts of major

sociopolitical and historical conditions on Filipino identity making and the integration of culture of Filipinos. Though in the last ten years, there has been a shift in the academic body as emerging scholarly work has started to incorporate how colonialism and imperialism have impacted Filipino Canadians. In one example, Tuazon et al. (2019) conducted a quantitative study using an electronic survey with 410 Filipino Americans. They wanted to investigate how the colonial mentality affected ethnic identity as well as mental health seeking. Colonial mentality here is defined as a form of internalized oppression and cultural inferiority (i.e., the denigration of the Filipino culture, language, physical characteristics, material products, and governments as inferior to anything White, European, or American perceived as superior); this colonial mentality includes an automatic and uncritical rejection of anything Filipino and an automatic and uncritical preference for anything American (David & Okazaki, 2006). The major findings of the research established that there was a negative link in ethnic identity development and higher levels of colonial mentality (Tuazon et al., 2019). In another example, David and Okazaki (2006) conceptualized the Colonial Mentality Scale-Initial (CMS-I) to quantitatively test the association and degree of internalized oppression in Filipino Americans and the direct causes of it to their psychological wellbeing. The results revealed that those who endorsed Colonial Mentality reported lower self-esteem and higher depression levels (David & Okazaki, 2006). These specific kinds of study are far and few, and at best, graze the surface of this occurrence.

Generally, these three themes, history in the Philippines and the particular nature of their migration around the world (predominantly the United States and Canada), global labour migration policies, and psychological wellbeing of Filipinos with considerations for the impact of identity on health outcomes have in due course informed the Filipino Canadian identity

making experience. Collectively, the literature paints Filipinos as “opportunistic migrants” that conform without concerns and at the cost of their personhood, therefore, rendering them as one dimensional. My primary thesis question: How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora? and secondary thesis question: “What are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities?” aim to explore the shades and tints of identity making in Filipino Canadians. In this next section, I take a deeper dive to find nuances which complicates and diversify Filipino Canadians.

2.3 Literature Review on Filipino Identity Making

I searched far and wide to understand the intersections of identity making and culture within the context of colonial economic migration. Given the limited literature on this topic in Canada, I included international literature. Gender, religion, and colonialism intertwined to have differing impacts on identity making among Filipinos in the Philippines and the diaspora. Geographically situated in the Philippines, Chong et al. (2019) sought to understand identity formation of Filipino Burlesque performers. In their study, they examined factors such as the performers’ presented identities as women, women’s sexuality in ‘Philippine culture’, and burlesque as a mode of empowerment as utilized despite the country’s collective and conservative culture. In another article by Ortiz and Costigan (2022), the researchers sought to examine the role of religion in identity formation of Filipino Canadian youth. Ortiz and Costigan (2022) conceptualized five religious identity statuses: internalized, ruminative moratorium, undifferentiated, foreclosed, and indifferent. Given the complicated and colonial history of Catholicism in the Philippines and its issues such as a strong stance on sex before marriage, sexual abuse by the clergy, abortion, and a male-only leadership (Alviar, 2020, as cited in Ortiz & Costigan, 2022), this important work delved into the nuanced relationship between identity

status, religiosity, and mental health. Ortiz and Costigan (2022) highlighted “the diverse experiences in a religiously homogenous ethnic group” to alleviate mental health concerns. Religion has long perpetuated the role of colonialism in identity making among Filipinos. Marshall (2016) unearthed a historical case study of “Hilary Pit-a-Pit Clapp”, an “uncivilized” Igorot boy (i.e., an Indigenous Filipino tribe) from the mountains region of the Philippines who was (indoctrinated by the Christian religion). He was Christianized in his identity through European education in Canada in 1907 (Marshall, 2016, p. 167). This meant that he was stripped of his native tongue and parts of his Igorot identity. Later, Hilary returned to the Philippines with his medical knowledge to help his village although he suffered a cultural loss. In the literature from the diaspora, studies of youths focused on the fraught ways in which youth negotiate belonging and the impact that has on their identity making.

Cann (2020) did an interview from an outsider researcher perspective on “Tom,” a 14-year-old Filipino boy in the diaspora in Norfolk, UK. They explored his race and how his different masculine presentation protected his boyhood. In this article, boyhood meant his boy childhood whereby he did not conform to the stereotypical notions of masculinity. For example, when it came to singing and dancing, this boy had no problem in partaking these “feminine” school activities given the rich culture of Filipino singing and dancing (Cann, 2020). Closer to home, Pratt (2004; 2010), an outsider researcher human geographer, explored displacement and belonging as an antidote for second generation Filipino Canadian youths and their transnational lives. Later, Farrales (2017), also a human geographer, further explored how the functions of displacement and belonging impacted Filipino Canadian youth and their secondary studies. Their studies supported other similar ones in revealing that Filipino youths in Canada fall short when it came to an educational benchmark and social mobility in Canadian society (Farrales, 2017;

Kelly, 2015). Other researchers in America discussed the assimilation of Filipino immigrants in San Diego and consequently, the multiple identities second generation Filipinos hold (Espiritu, 1994; Espiritu & Wolf, 2001). There is documentation and exploration of the Filipino American immigrant identity process such as family dynamic tensions and educational attainment (Hindin, 2005). Furthermore, the concept of Filipino American internalized racism has been studied by Alvarez and Juang (2010). Closer to home, Torres et al. (2021) theorize the Asian-Canadian exclusion and the challenges of identity formation which includes Filipino Canadians.

All in all, these significant writings which incorporate social conditions such as colonialism, gender, religion, and educational goals humanize Filipino Canadians. It addresses aspects to the problems of identity making by not excluding important political, societal, and cultural factors. Although the literature has grown over the last decade across various disciplines on Filipino Canadian identity making, it continues to install Filipino Canadians as static beings and fixed within a certain point in history. Few scholarly publications explore how Filipino identity making is shaped with *emerging adults* in Canada, or what I consider to be the “1.5” generation of Filipino Canadians (e.g., Add few citations here as examples).

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter composed of the literature on Filipino Canadians served as the basis for my scientific inquiry. Firstly, I illuminated my mechanistic literature review process by using a multimodal approach to sift through the literature. Secondly, I examined the literature review broadly within the context of Filipino Canadians and thirdly, I illuminated on what has been published on the different aspects of Filipino identity making and creating.

A Filipino Canadian journalist, Sapphire Sandalo (2021) once said: “Filipino Canadians lift as they climb, bringing their own and other like them up” (One down, 2022). On the same

wavelength of reasoning, I aim to address the literature gap by utilizing my insider researcher's status to delve further into this topic. As iterated, my goal is to tie into what previous Filipino scholars have said in the diaspora to create an open dialogue about the importance of cultural identity making *from a social work standpoint*. Rather than reinventing the wheel, I collect the stories of identity making in the geographic pocket of Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada *to further connect* this important knowledge gap in Filipino Canadian scholarship. Given this understanding, the next chapter serves as a tracing of historical events and its impacts on Filipinos presently.

CHAPTER 3 HISTORY

In this chapter, I briefly touch on the important events that have shaped the historical landscapes for Filipinos. These historical landscapes provide contexts which add to Filipino Canadian identity making. Through a critical analysis of the colonial Magellan conquest in the 16th century, contemporary political violence in the Philippines, and ongoing civil unrest, I will highlight the linkages to these politically and economically structured conditions to Filipino Canadians' identity making. For this project, my historical review serves as a necessary junction to understand how colonialism, imperialism, and transnationalism are embodied in Filipino Canadian experiences. Like a seafarer traversing bodies of ocean to reach a destination, my historical accounting provides a map of the past to the present: figure 3 illustrates this "map" as a visual recounting of these events. Lastly, I give a summary which imbue the next section of the project.

3.1 Introduction

In the words of Jose P. Rizal, a Filipino scholar and revolutionary, "*ang hindi luminingon sa pinanggalingan ay hindi makarating sa paroroonan*" which roughly translates in English to: "a person who does not look back to where he came from would not be able to reach his destination" (Romanos, 2020, p1). This famous quote has been interpreted to mean "know history, know self, no history, no self". I start this chapter with these words in mind to honour Filipino history to remember my lineage which guides my work on this project. While this chapter cannot describe the extent of Filipino history and its everchanging historical landscape, it offers an opportunity for myself as a researcher, and the readers to take a deep dive and create interest in Filipino history as it informs Filipino identity making. A key tenet of transnational

work is understanding linkages of history between the ancestral lands/homelands¹ and settled lands/host lands² of Filipinos. In the Filipino diasporic studies at large, few masters' thesis and PhD dissertations have sought to include historical resources. My main objective for this chapter is to provide colour to my thesis project (i.e., contextual, historical factors). Given my main research questions: "How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora?" I lay critical information where possible to highlight the ways Filipinos have integrated these events. Like Schirmer and Shalom (1987), I make it clear that my historical reports are not "impartial". To echo their sentiments:

[I] do not claim to have constructed a "neutral" [account]. [My] interpretations of U.S.-Philippine relations have obviously influenced what [I] have chosen to include in this volume [...] [I am] convinced that the best way to present the history of colonialism, neocolonialism, dictatorship, and resistance in the Philippines is to let the reader experience some of the range of material that exists. (p. 3).

In a similar fashion, I curated resources that were most relevant to my project thereby supporting the framing of my study.

¹ I use the term ancestral lands and homelands interchangeably to recognize that Filipino folks use these lands for residential and agricultural purposes. For further reading, see *Negotiating autonomy: Case studies on Philippine Indigenous peoples' land rights* by Augusto Gatmaytan (2007).

² I use the term settled lands and host lands interchangeably to acknowledge that the settled lands for settler-immigrants belong to the Indigenous people of Turtle Island in Vancouver British Columbia.

3.2 Magellan Conquest and Commentary

This story begins with Ferdinand Magellan, a Portuguese explorer and subject of the Hispanic monarchy (Blancaflor, 2018). He is credited as being the first to “claim” the islands as a colony for the Spanish Empire. On April 14, 1521, in the islands of Cebu, Magellan erected a huge cross, which acted as a gift to the converted Indigenous of that island. However, a local chieftain Lapu-Lapu refused to recognize Spanish authority and led a resistance against the foreign invaders. This historical event was famous as Magellan was killed by poisoned arrows on April 27, 1521. This event was named as the Battle of Mactan. Lapu-Lapu received a hero status shortly after (Ocampo, 2018). This starting point led to the ongoing efforts of Spain’s conquest of the Austronesian islands in Asia. Later, once the Spanish fleets returned in numbers and had control over the islands, they were named “Las Islas Filipinas” (The Philippine Islands) after King Philip the 2nd of Spain (Pedrosa, 2019). Systems of religion, education, and familial arrangements were upended and transformed by colonial Spain. This led to a 300-year colonial struggle for Philippine independence. It lasted until the Philippine Revolution in 1898 (Blancaflor, 2018). From here, the U.S. then fought Spain during the Spanish-American war. According to Coloma (2012), “Spain rather than surrendering to Filipina/o revolutionaries, ceded the Philippines to the United States for twenty million dollars” (p. 13). This was completed at the Treaty of Paris on December 10th, 1898 (Murray, 2023). The significance of this U.S. influence is found in the implementations of labour migration and military experiences and structures. Ultimately tired of being colonial subjects, this prompted the Philippine-American war that took place from 1899 to 1902 (Blancaflor, 2018) led by Emilio Aguinaldo y Famy³. The United States

³ For an in-depth historical account from the perspective of Filipino revolutionaries, look at Filipino historians and scholarly authors such as: Teodoro A. Angoncillo, F. Landa Jocana, Gergorio Zaide.

retained formal sovereignty until the end of the second world war (Coloma, 2012). Many historians such as Kramer (2006) record this part of history as U.S. imperialism (i.e., enforcing of the English language as well as the introduction of the K-12 U.S. system) as a separate record of history, however, in my interpretations, I see the U.S. imperialism as a continuation of colonization. Despite these oppressive attempts of colonial and imperial subjugation, Filipinos actively resisted. During the U.S. rule, William Howard Taft became the first U.S. governor of the Philippines in 1901. He westernized Filipino “tao” (fellow folks). From this moment in history, there were many other important US-Philippines relations and political events which shaped policies and procedures in the Philippines which and recreated the U.S. government body⁴.

Breaking away from this chronology and jumping to Leonora Angeles’s presentation titled: “*Filipino Migration to the Pacific Northwest*” at the Vancouver Historical Society (2019) in the present time, they divulged the erasure of how Filipinos were known as brave seafarers. Angeles discussed the forgotten history of the Manila to Acapulco Galleon Trade in the 16th century (Vancouver Historical Society, 2019) which occurred during Spanish rule. Indeed, the galleon trade that the Spanish inaugurated between China and Mexico undermined earlier networks of interisland and regional trade” (Kramer, 2006, p. 8). I make these linkages at the end of a chronological narration to draw attention to the correlated “causes and effects” of colonialism and imperialism on the Filipino economy. These main trade routes of the global economy were controlled by Spain which further shape the geopolitical history of the Philippines

⁴ For further historical narrations of the role of the U.S. in the Philippines, there is a poignant table at the beginning of Schirmer & Shalom (1987)’s book: *The Philippines reader: a history of colonialism, neocolonialism, dictatorship, and resistance* which critically detail and examine the formation and impact of this governing system on Philippine lands.

by undermining the local economy as well as by relegating Filipino global economy into a colonial economy. Furthermore, under the “benevolent” façade of American imperialism, the disruption of Indigenous Filipino way of being and doing (e.g., such as trading between groups) had detrimental impacts on the Filipino local economy, which resulted in the displacements of Filipinos to move to the northern parts of the archipelago (Kramer, 2006) and drove economic migration.

Figure 2.

Lapu Lapu, First Hero of the Philippines.



Note. Image by Grazio (2009). Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.0 Generic ([CC BY-NC-ND 2.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/)) License. Full citation in the references list.

In the abbreviated recount of the colonial and imperial history of the Philippines above, I illuminated the interplay of dominance and power from other countries over the lands and minds of Filipino people. Through overt colonialism and imperialism, it is possible to imagine how the Filipino identity making experience has changed over time. As echoed by a family member: “because The Philippines has been colonized by different superpowers over and over, it’s hard to trace the roots of where certain ideas in us came from” (R. Tolentino, personal communication, December 16th, 2021). While the origins of certain ideas for identity making cannot be fully flushed out, I argue that other countries, in particular the Spanish, the U.S. have segmented and interrupted with the ways of connecting to Filipino history and heritage that informs identity making. It is important to have a critical lens to understand the complicated relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Shedding light on how colonial mentality can harm the diasporic Filipinos is relevant to cultural identity creation. In this next section of history, I traverse to contemporary political history to demonstrate how the political system contained of violence and civil unrest in a nation devastated by colonialism and post-colonial economic imperialism significantly impacted the trajectory of Filipinos in their identity making.

3.3 Brief Political History on Contemporary Violence

I start this political history with the Marcos. Arguably, Marcos’s government was the most brutal since the formation of a colonial government. Violent enough that protestors stormed Malacañang Palace. During this protest, “it was famously discovered that more than 2,700 pairs of shoes had been left behind in Imelda [Marcos]’s wardrobe” (Escalante, 2016, p.1). At that time, Imelda Marcos was the first lady of Philippines who embezzled Philippines’s state money to live an extravagant lifestyle (Ray, 2021). Controversially, this historical discovery signaled a sign of opulence and consequently, abuse of power.

On December 30th, 1965, Ferdinand Marcos became the 10th president of the Philippines. His dictatorship was supposed to last eight years (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021). Yet, by means of violence, his rule lasted 21 years. Within these next paragraphs, I explore how the landscapes of colonial power permeated to high-ranking officials in government. My aim here is to analyze how the Marcos's regime and their violent tactics have created a ripple effect of problems for self-identified Filipinos in the Philippines and in the diaspora. Given the broad topic of violence, I apply the concept of "context-specificity of violence" to make sense of these events and how it has impacted Filipino people. "Context-specificity" violence refers to harm inflicted to civilians. These harms include but are not limited to direct violence such as physical acts and indirect violence/lateral violence (Sanaullah, 2021). It is worth noting that in this historical accounting, "context-specificity" violence is compounded by Spanish colonization and American Imperialism. Next, I generate a critical analysis to deepen the contextual learnings of this chapter and thesis project overall. Lastly, I reflect on the current political climate in the Philippines. I draw from Hanisch, 1969 (as cited in Lafrenière, 2022a), who stated, "the "personal is political" (p.2). Therefore, I write these sections from the perspective of a Filipino Canadian academic in the diaspora. In other words, I name my place of privilege, which is political freedom of persecution from the dangers of the Philippines state and the sociopolitical conditions of civil unrest.

3.4 Political Dynasties

Contrary to popular belief, the Marcos family were not always vilified as totalitarians. In the early days of Ferdinand's leadership, "he made progress in agriculture, industry and education" (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021, p.1) though his administration was vehemently challenged by uprising student protesters. His rule was also unsettled by the

oppressive tensions created in smaller Filipino Indigenous communities who did not fit into the political ideologies Ferdinand had envisioned. One of the most chilling and oppressive times in history was when he declared Martial Law in the Philippines from 1972 to 1981 (Schirmer & Shalom 1987) which meant military taking over, whereby military authority is supreme over civilians. Martial Law, albeit more extreme and severe in nature is reminiscent of a time when Spaniards enforced the Spanish last names to divide (Kramer, 2006). Nevertheless, both tactics exemplify the different degrees of violence that infringed the freedom of Filipino people.

Marcos' rule was fraught with oppression, violence, and corruption as it was widely exposed that he overextended his presidency through rigged elections while he silenced his critics through murder and imprisonment using the military and police (Escalante, 2016). One notable example of this violent and oppressive rule in Filipino history was the assassination of the Chief opposition leader, Benigno Ninoy Aquino Jr. (The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2021). Shortly after Ninoy landed in the Philippines from exile in the United States, he was shot dead within three minutes of descending the plane. This death marked the outrage of millions of Filipino peoples which ultimately was the catalyst for *the People Power Revolution*, a movement of civil resistance against Marcos's dictatorship (Ramirez, 2022). Overall, despite colonial and imperial divisions of violence inflicted, the Filipino perseverance to withstand and fight is poignant. Assumed that previous Filipino generations built their identity on these values of freedom, it is possible to imagine how Filipino Canadians identity making *also* parallel these strengths.

3.5 Critical Analysis

These two major events out of many speak to a direct tie to the retention of power for the rich and dangerous implications for the voice of the poor. According to Criminal Justice

Research (2015), political violence is “often committed by the powerful, those protected by the law. Their acts are directed at those with little power to maintain existing social arrangements. More broadly, their actions can be understood as a deprivation of basic human rights” (p. 1). In the documentary, “*The King Maker*” by ABS-CBN (2019), this is exemplified. Imelda Marcos mentions: “I miss the clout of being the first lady”. This is problematic as the messaging of class division further perpetuates inequalities on all levels. This has inevitably translated in further mistrust of the government and increased civilian unrest.

I criticize how these affluent families have served their self-interest rather than the people of the Philippines. It is saddening to see and hear how political dynasties (i.e., a family in which several members are involved in politics) have modelled and normalized corruption to present day. Unfortunately, this has meant the desensitization of crimes and flaws in the structure of government bodies. These rulers continued the deprivation, oppression, relations of power forged by colonialism and imperialism. The repercussions of these violent acts to advance the wealthy few are far beyond what can be described in this section. Though evidently, the concept of “context-specificity” of violence can be used to understand violence based on the historical factors that shape contemporary forms of violence enacted by the Philippines state. Simply put, Sanaullah (2021) states “harm as the fundamental characteristic of violence” (p.45). The history of the Marcos’s and Aquino’s is generally known as the “battle between political dynasties”. This history of violent struggle has had a direct impact on Filipino migration overseas with immediate effect on Filipino identities and wellbeing. Figure 3 illustrates these concepts.

After the assassination of Benigno Aquino Jr. (the oppositional leader), his wife Corazon Aquino became the president and later, her son, Benigno Aquino III became the 16th president (History.com Editors, 2010). The current 17th president is Rodrigo Duterte, whose

style of leadership has also been violent. Duterte's practice of shutting down main broadcasters and his "War on Drugs" policy killed Filipinos who are "drug pushers" are resonant of a previous era (Gavilan, 2022). This is another form of violence through laws. To my project, I want to explore how these "context-specific" acts of political violence have had an impact on Filipino cultural understandings of themselves. Furthermore, is there an impact in their messaging to identity making?

The current sociopolitical and historical climate in the Philippines is delicate and complex. Hence the hardship in pinpointing "context-specific" violence and all the effects on Filipino people. However, through Lafrenière's (2022a) definition of the specificity of violence – particularly shedding light on where power is – with the examples provided, I understand this phenomenon as a dynamic rather than static effect. In tandem with Kebede's work (2001), another layer to consider is the foundation of colonization and violence, "colonial discourse and rule have so dehumanized and degraded colonized peoples that they have to go through the whole process of relearning to be human" (p.540). Moreover, "Colonization [is] a violent phenomenon. Know the colonial history" (Torres (year), as cited in Lafrenière, 2022b). Through my brief analysis of the colonial and contemporary political history of the Philippines above, I have discussed specific acts of political violence that have directly informed and produced internalized colonization⁵, internalized oppression⁶, and lateral violence⁷ in identity making.

⁵ Internalized colonization also referred to as colonial mentality is when colonized groups value the norms and standards of colonizer while devaluing and negating their own norms and standards. For more extensive work on this in the Filipino Diaspora, see Dr. E.J.R. David's scholarship.

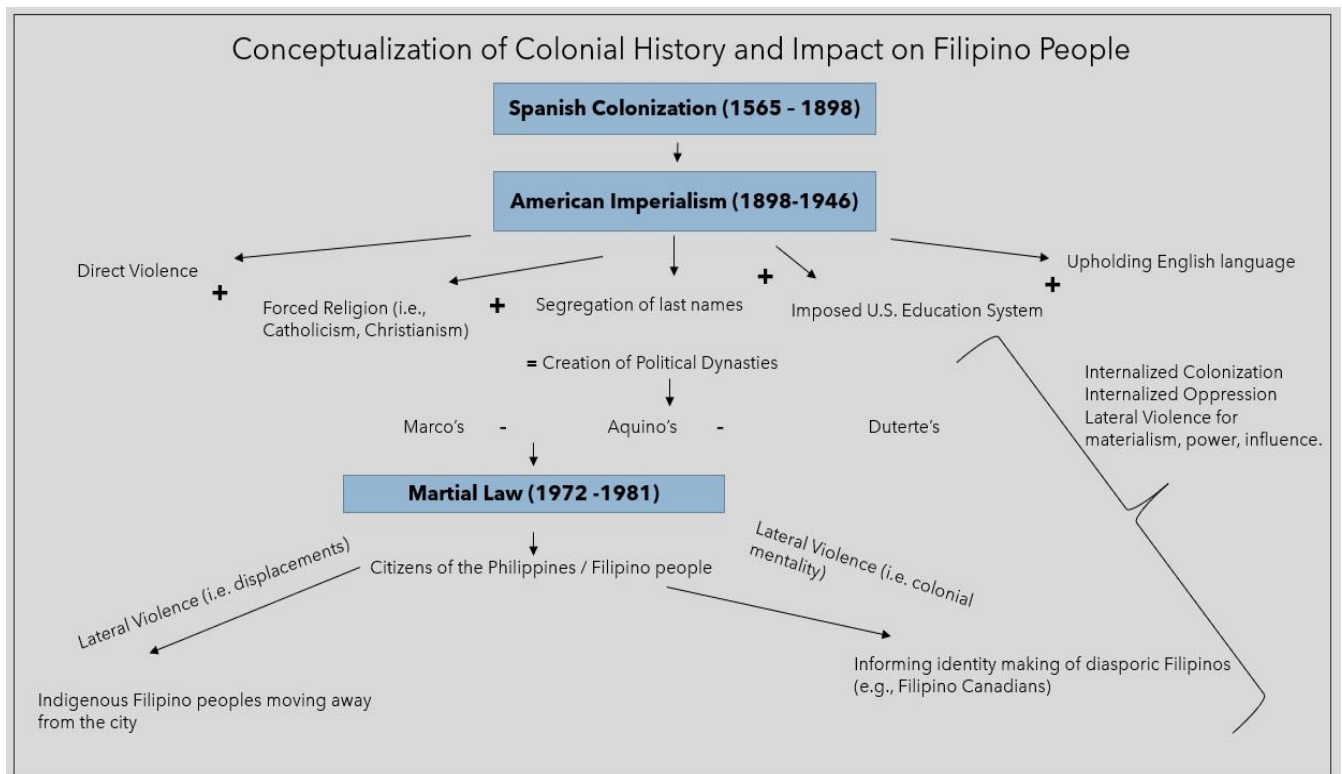
⁶ Internalized oppression refers to the process of maintaining negative beliefs about oneself or identity group (Nadal, 2022).

⁷ Lateral violence refers to dislocated violence that is usually anger and rage directed towards members of the oppressed community rather than towards the oppressors of the community (Moane, 2011).

While these nuances require deeper analysis, Figure 3 below gives them an important place in my conceptualization and critical analysis of historical factors retrieved. I believe this is one of the ways to humanize Filipinos: by understanding our histories. It is important to humanize Filipinos given the colonial waves against their livelihood and personhood. Moreover, this also serves a way to reclaim Filipino identity.

Figure 3.

Conceptualization of Colonial History and Impact on Filipino People.



Note. Image created by John Tolentino.

As stated with the Magellan conquest, in this visual one can see the top-down direct impacts of colonization and imperialism. Arguably, these ideologies created political dynasties which

further reinforced causes and effects on the identity making of Filipinos. As a result, these causes and effects are embodied in Filipinos in the homeland and in their settled lands.

3.6 Conclusion

Notwithstanding the extended periods of violent turmoil Filipinos have faced, this is not all there is to Filipino people. Against all odds, there have been efforts to create solidarity, honour victims, and envision a better future. For example, Marie Ressa, a Filipina American journalist who was jailed for reporting on the Duterte regime in 2020 did not stop publishing the disinformation of the government. As Diop (1974) states, “to become conscious [...] is perhaps the first step toward a genuine retrieval of themselves” (p.xv, as cited in Kebede 2001). When all is said and done, collective resistance, like the People’s Power Revolution to overthrow political dynasties is feasible. She eventually went on to become the first Filipina to win a Nobel Peace Prize (Isachenkov et al., 2021). In this chapter, an exploration of the brief history of the Magellan conquest and the oppressive ensuing local governments was provided to texturize and contextualize the project. A critical analysis and Figure 3 were also placed to expand on these historical accounts to initiate a conversation on Filipino Canadian identity making. It is noteworthy to add that these historical accounts were also important in shaping the research instruments in my methodology. The next chapter divulges into the methodological approach for this thesis project which includes a theoretical overview.

CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the different theories used for the thesis project. I begin with the essentials: my research paradigm which introduces the philosophies I used, the conceptual framework which involved a complimentary blend of Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory, Critical Race Theory – specifically Intersectionality within the racial, ethno space, and Decolonized Methodologies. The research paradigm and conceptual framework were the foundational ingredients that informed the ethics, inclusion criteria and recruitment procedures, sampling methods, the style of interviews, research instrument, data collection, interview process, participants profiles and data analysis. The conclusion of this chapter provides Figure 6, which recounts a visual of the methodology with a summary.

4.1 The Research Paradigm

According to Thomas Kuhn (1962), an American philosopher, in his book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, a paradigm is defined as a philosophical way of thinking. Though throughout the years, scholars have had different schools of thought on its everchanging explanation. In drawing inspiration for my research project and what would make the most sense to my inner researcher, I turned to Kivunja et al.'s (2017) work on understanding and applying a research paradigm in a higher educational context. Simply put, a research paradigm is a set of beliefs and worldviews that drive research action or an investigation (Guba & Lincoln (date if you have), as cited in Kivunja et al., 2017; Lee, 2012). These sets of beliefs are filled with the researcher's unique assumptions and constructions about how the world operates. I purposely start with the research paradigm to illuminate my philosophical orientation and the underlying reasons for my research design. Much like a compass which provides direction when lost, I chose to flesh out the research paradigm to focus and organize the research process.

Notably, there are four elements to a research paradigm, these are: epistemology, ontology, axiology, and methodology. I will explore these four philosophical pillars to show my understanding of and approach to my work. To add academic rigour, in these next respective sections, I give space to broadly define each category as well as specify my epistemological, ontological, and axiological stance which inform the methodological aspect of the paradigm.

Firstly, Cooksey and Macdonald (2011) defined epistemology as how one comes to know something such as reality or truth. It focuses on the origins of human knowledge and comprehension. Epistemology also looks at one's relationship to the established reality or truth. Under this camp, I consider the *subjectivist epistemology*, I make meaning of my data through my own thinking and cognitive processing of data through the interactions of my research participants. Secondly, Dolan et al. (2009) define ontology as how a researcher considers the nature of reality or truth as either external or internal; some believe that this reality or truth exist irrespective of human interaction, while others believe this reality or truth as (is) socially constructed. For this project, I embrace *relativist ontology* which signifies that there are multiple realities and that these realities can be explored and meaning made of them by form of deconstruction, construction and reconstruction with the researcher, research participants as well as between research participants (Chalmers, Manley & Wasserman, 2005, as cited in Kivunja et al 2017; Tan, 2008). Thirdly, axiology is defined as the role of values in the research and the researcher's stance in relation to the subject studied (Wahyuni, 2012). It involves ethics and morals. Here, I consider *balanced axiology*, which implies the outcome of the research will reflect the values of the researcher. In my instance, I uphold the value of equality by reporting the findings of the research through the research participants' contribution and my researcher interpretation. Fourthly, methodology is the connection between ontology, epistemology, and

axiology. It is the vehicle that moves the research forward. Building on this, I undertook a *naturalist methodology*, which utilises data gathered through interviews, discourses, [emails] and reflective sessions (Wahyuni, 2012) with the researcher creating a conceptual framework.

I highlight these philosophical dimensions not only to contextualize the research but also to create an understanding of collaboration between the research participants and the researcher. I am challenged by Shaw's (2007) critique that, "there is too much methodological thin social work research [...] the core problem may be an absence of methodological imagination" (p. 164). In responding to this critique, I imagine deeply about how the research participants are not mere passive pieces of the research design, rather, they are active knowledge holders. The idea is to co-create knowledge together to answer the research questions posed.

4.2 Conceptual Framework

Since this philosophical framework of subjectivist epistemology, relativist ontology, balanced axiology, and naturalist methodology has been laid out, it only seemed logical to incorporate a qualitative study with a qualitative approach. I distinctively name a qualitative study in nature and a qualitative approach as separate entities. These two are not mutually exclusive categories. For example, a qualitative approach can exist within a quantitative study (C. Gyan, September 17th, 2021). I purposely synonymize a qualitative study as an exploratory study and a qualitative approach with an inductive approach. An Inductive approach, specifically the inductive process, refers to:

[B]uilding from the data to broad themes to a generalized model or theory [...], the research begins by gathering detailed information from participants and then forms this information into categories or themes. These themes are developed into

broad patterns, theories, or generalizations that are then compared with personal experiences or with existing literature on the topic. (Creswell, 2014 p. 65)

Simply stated, I used the data from the interviews gathered to create themes. These themes were part of my findings which were compared with the literature review on Filipino Canadians as well as my reflexive memo journal to further make sense of the project. The following sections are the theoretical “blocks” built on each other to have a robust methodology.

4.3 Kathy Charmaz’s Constructivist Grounded Theory

Grounded theory has its roots in sociology, and it stems from the theorist Glaser and Straus who wanted to defend qualitative processes with a robust and structured form of theory in the 1960s (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). This type of grounded theory is known as Glasserian Grounded Theory, whereby the data formulates truth in a linear fashion using a methods-driven process. I make the distinction that I will be utilizing a contemporary version of grounded theory by Charmaz known as Constructivist Grounded Theory. In this camp of grounded theorists, there are many benefits that I believe will extend and make my research project more well-rounded. For example, this theory has a non-linear process and engages critical reflexivity throughout the research process (Charmaz, 2017) Furthermore, while one must state their starting points, make their research actions clear and have an objective in mind, constructive grounded theorists are not fixed in their position and their critical analysis can be revisited (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). Simply put, the engagement from the researcher and research participants can be arranged. The appeal in Charmaz’s grounded theory is the invitation of diverse perspectives, therefore, there is attention to shared production of language,

meanings, and actions (Charmaz, 2017). In addition to joining facts and values between the researcher and researched, this version of grounded theory provides a method of conducting social justice research whereby the analysis of power and powerlessness is present (Charmaz, 2017). This inevitably requires the researcher to also analyze their own possession of power not only as a researcher gatherer in conjunction with research participants but also as a research producer. It is of critical significance that engagement, familiarity with this factor is sought through to flatten the power dynamic. In Charmaz (2016)'s article, it is a requirement of grounded theory within critical inquiry to address the notions of power, inequality, social justice, and oppression. They called this action *methodological self-consciousness*.

4.4 Critical Race Theory (Intersectionality)

I drew inspiration for my use of Intersectionality as a theoretical “building” block from prominent critical race theorists. Initially, I read Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (*On Intersectionality: Essential Writings*, 2017) and Richard Delgado (*Critical Race Theory: An introduction*, 2017). The books exposed the origins of critical race theory and the need of critical thinking when working with folks with intersectional identities. The genesis of Critical Theory is founded on the commitment of structural analysis of issues on a broader sense, in the social, cultural, and personal realm (Freymond, 2020a). Since its inception, Critical Theory morphed to Critical Race Theory and was applied in legal studies (Crenshaw, 2017; Delgado, 2017) and presently, Intersectionality has expanded to a variety of disciplines. For example, Brantley et al. (2020) utilized intersectionality to investigate cultural and historical locations of knowledge in particular contextualizing intersectional contributions to social work by paying homage to the black feminists think tanks. Within the theory of Intersectionality, a non-monolithic stance on

culture is taken, intersectionality *encourages* regard of within-group differences and dynamics of intersectional identities (Dean, 2001; Williams, 2006; Este, 2007; Kohli et al., 2010; Nadan and Ben-Ari, 2013; as cited in Azzopardi, 2020). As seen in my historical accounting above, the intersections of race, gender, class, privilege, migration status are present. It was important to home in on Intersectionality theory in expectation of the different possibilities of how research participants would identify. As Cho et al. (2013) state: “attentiveness to identity, if simultaneously confronting power, need not be interpreted so narrowly” (p.797). Not only did I actively create this methodological awareness in the research design, I also consciously linked this to connect the research participants to their sociopolitical diasporic environment.

Crenshaw’s (1989) “prism of intersectionality and analysis of power, impact the ways in which each individual is seen, heard, understood and treated” (p. 465; as cited in Azzopardi, 2020). Given that Intersectionality questions why some voices are more privileged over others, it was sensible and fitting to add this second theoretical “building block” within the research design. Notably, the distinctiveness in Intersectionality is that it requires transformative action to be performed after injustices are uncovered (Daftary, 2018). In my methodological approach, I also use intersectionality to refer to the intersecting ways of ideas, how they fit, not fit, within the Filipino identity making. The intersections of colonialism and imperialism woven through the historical tracing of violence, transnationalism, global migration is at the center analysis of this project.

In summation, Constructivist Grounded Theory functioned as the first theoretical “building” block. In this section, I thoroughly discussed the significance of Intersectionality as the second “building” block of the project. The next section discusses the third “building” block, decolonized methodologies.

4.5 Decolonized Methodologies

June 21st annually marks National Indigenous Peoples Day. As a settler immigrant on unceded land, I made a commitment to myself to decolonizing my academic journey and ultimately, my thesis project. I borrow and integrate ideas from Indigenous scholarship across Turtle Island such as Leanne Simpson⁸ and Cindy Blackstock⁹. Since I am part of “The Ship”, I believed that it was essential to welcome into this work the diverse ways of constructing knowledge. As stated by Smith (2012), “decolonized methodologies [are] not a method for revolution in a political sense but provokes some revolutionary thinking about the roles that knowledge, knowledge production, knowledge hierarchies and knowledge institutions play in decolonization and social transformation” (p. xii). The construction of knowledge is not colonial rather relational and non-exploitative in nature. For example, during the “member check-in” phase, I made sure to ask my participants how they were doing (i.e., their mental health and families – especially during Filipino Heritage Month in June) before commenting on the analysis of the data and information seeking. I name the complexity and further confusion of this process, as often, research can inadvertently reproduce postcolonial harms to entities. Smith (2012) reminds researchers how control and ownership of ideas is itself a colonial construct. Therefore, I continue to thread lightly and softly as I build blocks of constructivist grounded theory, intersectionality, and decolonized methods to my project. Therefore, as Smith (2012) puts it, “ensuring that research reaches the people who have helped make it [ignites] a principle of

⁸ The article *Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation was my introduction to Indigenous worldviews* helped me make sense of Indigenous methodologies as valid and real. See *Land as Pedagogy* for a more in-depth methodology.

⁹ When conducting research, Cindy Blackstock encourages the inclusion of diverse human experiences. These include cultural context and multiple dimensions of reality as present and important. See *The Emergence of Breath of Life Theory* article for a detailed account.

reciprocity and feedback” (p. 16). Additionally, an article by Marsh et al. (2016), “Indigenous Healing and Seeking Safety” discussed a positive blend of Indigenous knowledge and Western knowledge to reclaim one’s identity. I aimed for this imperfect balance in the data analysis stage. I am inspired by the work of Mykelle Pacquing (2019) on indigenization of Filipino Canadians, particularly how traditional teachings from the motherland (Austronesia) can help contribute to identity making. Similarly in the same vein, Nadal (2021) and Strobel (2001)’s scholarship attest and exemplify the possibilities of Filipino methodologies in the academy within this postcolonial, modernized society. While I applaud the ways of doing and being of these academics, I humbly state this as a limitation due to the nature of my thesis and timeline. Nonetheless, this is noteworthy to mention as I see current trends in the literature and resurgence of indigeneity studies in the academy.

4.6 Ethics, Inclusion Criteria, Recruitment Procedures

I developed my research proposal over multiple stages and sought advice from multiple sources on the mechanistic aspect of the research, such as recruitment style, research format of interviews, and research environment. Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and being an out-of-province student doing remote learning, there were many peculiar challenges to recruitment. In one example, I was challenged with designing my procedures with participants to adhere with public health and safety measures of the provincial mandates of both Ontario and British Columbia. This was challenging as these two provinces saw different upsurges of COVID-19 cases which then impacted their public health and safety restrictions. As a result, my safety plan document continued to remain fluid and ongoing during the length of my study (see APPENDIX D: The COVID-19 Safety Plan). In another example, the challenge of choosing in-person meetings vs. online ZOOM platform meetings for social distancing purposes presented

me with different considerations required to balance health safety with comfortability in the interview and access for participants. With all the uncertainties of the declared state of emergency pandemic, a non-traditional route to recruiting participants was undertaken.

Following the traditional practice of in-person recruitment, I prepared the additional COVID-19 related health and safety paperwork to conduct research interviews at the Vancouver General Library (i.e., the off-campus activities – SHERM¹⁰ Review and Guidance). For these reasons, at the height of the different pandemic waves, my data collection process was significantly delayed as I prepared health and safety documents amidst the continuing changes in policies and procedures by my institutional Research Ethics Board in response to the rapidly changing national health context. I received approval (REB # 6953) from Wilfrid Laurier University's Research Ethic Board in the semester Fall of 2021.

The Research Ethics Board approval is essential to meet the standards of *The Canadian Tri-Council Research Ethics guidelines* on ethical research practices with human participants. The target population of the study were Filipino Canadians who lived in Vancouver, British Columbia or in the lower mainland. I aimed to recruit adult participants from the age of 18-45 years. However, I did not exclude older adult folks outside this range. The two main criteria were: self-identification and 18 and above. The criterion of self-identification was important to encapsulate a variety of cultural experiences. The criterion of 18 and above was to avoid further consent paperwork with youths/teens. Additionally, in choosing participants categorized at 18 and older, I believed that they would be able to make autonomous decisions based on their experiences.

¹⁰ Wilfrid Laurier University's Safety, Health, Environment and Risk Management office

I used snowball recruitment as the main way to find research participants. Given the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, like Leighton et al (2021), I turned to social media as a recruitment strategy for my research project. Snowball recruitment can be defined as a novel recruitment strategy whereby potential research participants are electronically recruited via blogs and websites (Leighton et al., 2021). I originally intended to recruit participants by posting flyers, created using the creative program CANVA in locations that are traditionally visited by Filipino Canadians. These are including but not limited to: places of worship such as Catholic and Christian churches in East Vancouver, coffee shops in predominantly Filipino neighborhoods, university campuses and community centers. However, due to the overwhelming nature of support from the community, e-distributing my posters was more than enough. I digitalized my flyers in January 2022 and e-distributed them via social media to ensure participants who were at home quarantining had a chance to participate. As per the recommendations of my institutional research office, I made two social media accounts representing Laurier. One was on Facebook and the other was on Instagram. Next, I contacted the following associations and organizations in February 2022: FilCan Social Workers Social Service Workers and Community Workers Network, Pinoy Pride Vancouver, Filipino Student Association of University of British Columbia (Okanagan Campus), Slice Mango Collective, Filipino Canadian Associations in British Columbia (UFCABC) to ask for permission to re-post and re-share my flyer on their respective platform and website. Moreover, I also asked the Wilfrid Laurier Faculty of Social Work Community Builders to send it to their listserv as well as the Graduate Student union commons. The Graduate Commons is the Graduate Students Association's exclusive online community for current graduate students (Masters/PhD) at Laurier. In streamlining and preparing for data collection, I organized all

participants who had initial interest through “direct messages” to communicate via email. In doing this, I kept a record of all interested participants for statistics which are further describe in the participant demographic of the findings. Moreover, The participants profiles are described in a chart in APPENDIX E: Participants Profile. Overall, my recruitment methods of snowballing were successful in capturing the ideal research participants.

4.7 Sampling Methods Utilized

Going through the recruitment process in an organic matter expedited the data collection process which spanned one month. I chose two *nonprobability sampling methods*. According to Engel and Schutt (2017), nonprobability sampling methods such as availability (or convenience sampling), purposive (or purposeful sampling), or snowball sampling are not concerned with probability of sampling participants to generalize. In other words, with nonprobability sampling methods, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader population of interest. The two nonprobability sampling methods used in my research were: snowball and purposeful sampling.

Snowball sampling is when a researcher asks a participant or member of a population to speak to another potential participant and so forth (Engel & Schutt, 2017). This process is repeated until the researcher’s desired participant target is met. One benefit that Engel and Schutt (2017) report in snowball sampling is how useful it is for interconnected populations. One caveat with snowball sampling technique is the risk in asking other participants of similar status to self-identify. For example, if a researcher working with a population of oppression such as the LGBIATQ2S+ community asked another participant to self-identify and contact another LGBIATQ2S+ participant they might “out” their community member to the researcher. Given that racialized people often live in the margins, I intentionally requested my research participants for potential participants to contact *me* rather than the other way around. In doing this, I made

sure that the participants had complete control in initiating research participation to reduce harm. Informed by the premise of snowball sampling, I used what I call “snowball recruiting,” described above, meaning that I asked other lead organizers and members to point me to other organizations and associations to advertise my poster. This snowball recruitment was successful in a sense that I did not have to “market” to my research participants. As shown by Lusi (2010), the concept of transnational network in immigrant communities played a key role in the snowballing that occurred, which indicates Filipino Canadians are talented in passing pertinent information to the community.

The willingness of Filipino Canadians is beyond measure, hence the reason I also chose purposeful sampling. According to Engel and Schutt, 2017, purposeful sampling is when participants are chosen for a *purpose*, usually because of their unique position. Purposeful sampling is sometimes also known as purposive sampling. Purposeful sampling can also include a subset of a population. Palinkas et al. (2015) note that a purposeful sampling method acknowledges that subjects are familiar and knowledgeable about the research topic due to their membership. In my case, I interviewed Filipino Canadians that belong to the “1.5” generation gap. Given the migration history and patterns of Filipino Canadians, this subpopulation composed of millennials and Gen Z provided cultural knowledge about their experiences of the “in between”. To give a glimpse into my data analysis, one participant discussed about what it meant to “live-in-the-hyphen”, that is as a Filipino-Canadian and what it means to them specifically as a 1.5 generation that belongs neither to first generation nor second generation category. Additionally, I looked to Rubin and Rubin (1995)’s three guidelines for how to select purposeful participants: 1. Knowledgeable about the cultural arena, situation, or experience being studied, 2. Willingness to talk, 3. Represent a range of points of view. One way that I ensured the

third guideline is to not exclude mixed race persons. For example, I included a participant who was half Filipino and half Peruvian which further added to the nuances of identity making for young adults. Rubin and Rubin (1995) also suggest selecting participants until *completeness* (i.e., what one hears gives an overall sense of the meaning of concept, theme, or process) and *saturation* (i.e., gain confidence that one is learning something new from subsequent interviews). This ensures that the purposeful sampling method represents the issue studied. Interestingly, I found *completeness* in the online interviews around the halfway point, however, when in-person interviews were conducted, it usually came around quicker – around one quarter of the interview. *Saturation* easily came after each interview, specifically when I journaled my reflections.

4.8 Style of Interviews, Research Instrument Description

I collected the primary data through semi-structured interviews (See Appendix B: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE). The nature of semi-structured interviews allowed interviewees to freely communicate their viewpoints, personal anecdotes and knowledge regarding a particular social phenomenon prompted by the interviewer (Wahyuni, 2012). I chose this qualitative style over structured interviews or nonstructured interviews because it brought the best of “both worlds.” Since it is non-standardised, this meant that I had a set of questions with pre-determined themes yet enough space for the participant to discuss any other themes that were not present. Eventually, this allowed alternative avenues of concepts and ideas to emerge that I did not produce. This also put further parameters around my data collection and analysis phases, given the extensive nature of conducting, transcribing, and analyzing the content of interviews.

The interview itself was composed of ten questions and six follow up questions. Some were open-ended questions (where participants will provide their own response) while others

were close-ended questions (to elicit a specific response and direction in the interview). It was advantageous to include close-ended questions as it minimized those who had a neutrality of opinion or those who “did not know” or were unsure of their stance (Freymond, 2020b). Firstly, I piloted the interview questions with close Filipino family members as a trial-run interview to see where there was ambiguity. Secondly, to evaluate the clarity of the interview questions, I consulted with my thesis committee to go over the questions. Thirdly, one piece of advice that I integrated was framing the interviews as a conversation. This was helpful to ease the mind of the participants and was significant in letting the raw data emerge naturally. Lastly, as per advice of one of the committee members, I further refined the research instrument by adding a technique called “probing.” Probing involved the participants to think about their answers in greater depth. I used Mitman Colker (n.d.)’s sub technique of silence. By simply waiting for several seconds after the participants finished an answer, I signalled to the participants additional time and space to elaborate on their thoughts. If the silence did not produce more responses, I used Mitman Colker (n.d.)’s sub technique of: “I would like to know more about X, how did X work?”. All in all, having a thorough methodological plan involving semi-structured interviews and the research instrument of ten questions and six follow-up questions with probing was important to be methodologically sound.

4.9 Data Collection, Interview Process, and Participant Profiles

Once the recruitment posters were in the online ether, sixteen people reached out to me via Facebook direct messages, Instagram direct messages and email. Over email, I requested participants to go over the consent form (see APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Form) and go over the day-of-study form (see APPENDIX D: Covid-19 Safety Plan). I conducted ten interviews. Three were in person and seven were on the ZOOM platform. This process was

“participant-centred” as I gave the participant the choice of what style of interview they preferred. For the three in-person interviews, two were conducted in the quiet section of the Vancouver Public Library and one was in a coffee shop in Downtown, Vancouver. Before formally starting the interviews, I made small talk with the participants not only to increase comfortability but also establish initial rapport. After a few minutes of introduction and informally gathering demographics information, I explained to them what to expect in the interview, the purpose of recording devices, and gave them a copy of the interview questions so they could follow along. If the interviews were conducted on ZOOM, a copy was presented via email. Specifically, I also created a loose script to follow in case there were any hiccups. Once the interviews were completed, I thanked the participants and ensured them via email that I would follow-up with them for a “member-check” of the data once it was sifted. I also encouraged the participants to reach out if they had any lingering questions or concerns and committed to being available until the project was put to fruition.

4.10 Data Analysis

Upon clearance of ethics approval from the Laurier Research Services Office, I made a distinct note on my journal to retain the data securely. For instance, I did not use a memory stick storage as per ethics recommendation, but the secure cloud storage OneDrive (as approved by Laurier) and a password protected laptop hard drive as back-up. During the interviews, I used both the ZOOM recording feature on my laptop as well as my password protected iPhone. I also notified participants that under the WLU REB (#6953), members retained research and scholarly activity materials within their personal control for five years. Shortly after data collection, I transcribed the interviews a week after to let my data “breathe”. I used the SONIX Editor, a word processor to transcribe the raw English data. Since I had previously utilized this software, I was

familiar with the word quality and accuracy it yielded. The data files were anonymized by using numbers autogenerated by ZOOM.

In the first round of data analysis, I transcribed. I listened to the audio recordings and went through each line to clean up the raw data. For example, if the word processor misspelled or mistook the word, I manually edited the word. During this first round, I strategically paid attention to the words and letters. In the SONIX program, the results would indicate whether “minimal edits” or “few edits” were required. Moreover, there was scoring provided of “very confident level”, “fairly confident level” and “slightly confident level” of the words processed. To no surprise, the recordings of the in-person interview required more edits than the ZOOM interviews. I believe that this is due to the quality of my recording device (i.e., an older iPhone) vs. technology built in my Dell laptop. However, I let ideas about potential codes, subcodes, themes, subthemes, emerge organically. I bracketed these preliminary research ideas in my memos and recorded journal.

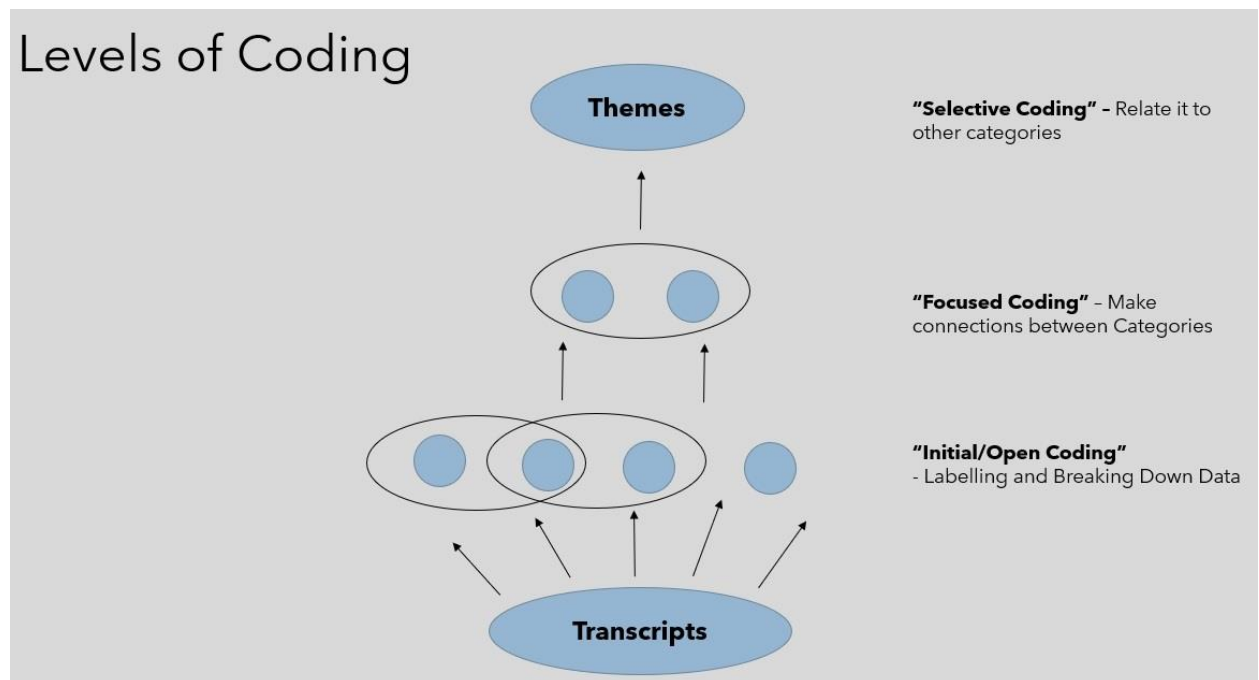
In the second round of data analysis, I coded. I undertook a more formal approach. I used Gyan (2021)’s data coding figure as a reference as well as Charmaz’s constructivist grounded theory checklist. Here, I listened to the emergent ideas and formal (i.e., “thought out”) ideas. I compared and constructed the codes. As Charmaz explained “by making and coding numerous comparisons, the analytical grasp of the data begins to take form” (2006, p.9). This reflected my experience as in the work of processing the participant interviews, I observed connections and relationships forming within the data.

In the third round of data analysis, I organized and revised. After I moved from initial/open coding to focused coding which involved connections between categories, I took the selective codes which generated “core” categories informing the themes. I continually went back

to the selective codes as suggested by Constructivist Grounded Theory to make constant comparisons and ensure identification and verification of relations between themes (Hallberg, 2006).

Figure 4.

Levels of Coding.



Note. Created by John Tolentino. This figure is adapted from Gyan's (2021) lecture on coding.

Full citation is in the References list. I made use of these levels of coding paired with Figure 5 to make sense of the codes.

Figure 5.

A Code for Coding.

A Code for Coding:

- Remain Open
- Stay close to the data
- Keep your codes simple and precise

- Construct short codes
- Preserve actions
- Compare data with data
- Move quickly through the data.

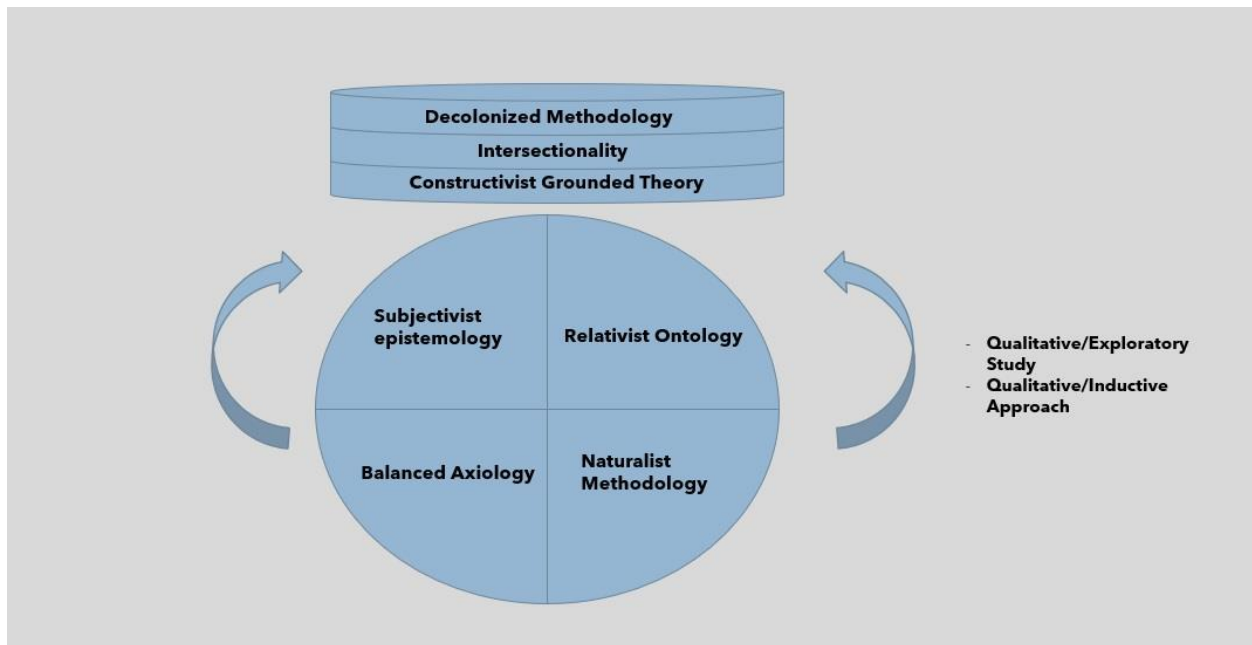
Note. Created by John Tolentino. This figure is adapted from Charmaz's (2006) coding section. Full citation is in the References list. The code of coding was particularly applied as reminder during the transcribing stage.

4.11 Conclusion

I end this chapter by reflecting on Shaw's (2007) words: "one of the core problems [in social work research] may be an absence of a methodological imagination, without which much-extolled "research-mindedness" is rudderless pragmatism" (p. 664). Pragmatism in philosophy is generally known to be an ideology whereby 'truth' is tested by practical approaches. Like Shaw (2007), I imagined deeply and explored different ways of conducting research *outside* this traditional 'practicality' of research. By starting with a strong philosophical groundwork of subjectivist epistemology, relativist ontology, balanced axiology, and naturalist methodology, I was able to envision the first theoretical building block, Constructivist Grounded Theory, the second, Intersectionality, and the third, Decolonized methodologies. As illustrated in Figure 6, the process that informed these building blocks were the exploratory nature of the study as well as the Inductive approach.

Figure 6.

Visualization of Methodology and Theories Used.



Note. Created by John Tolentino.

I continued the project with this visual foundation in mind. I paired the best fit research methods such as strategies, processes, and techniques, utilized in the collection of data and data analysis with Figure 6 in order to uncover new information and create a better understanding of Filipino Canadian Identity Making.

CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

In this chapter I present the findings. I further organized the findings into six sections which represent the six themes, namely, contesting, exploring, deepening, and affirming, as well as conditions of survival and conditions of revival that emerged from my “core” categories. Here these themes are intersecting/interconnected rather than stage-like. I use direct quotations to strengthen themes presented. The first four themes answer my main research question: How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora? The following two themes: conditions of survival and conditions of revival answer my secondary guiding question: What are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities? Moreover, the quotes that I use were across the interviews. I purposely do this to showcase the compatibility of the rich data. The quotes selected are based on their relevance to the major themes. The analysis from across the semi structured interviews in tandem with the member check-in are interwoven. Next, I discuss how my main research question: How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora? relate to the literature review and historical review which include memo notes. A conclusion is also provided.

5.1 Contesting Identity

Filipino Canadians integrated their cultural identity through contesting their identity. Within this contesting, there are three processes and means which are: assimilation, accommodation, and adaptation. These internal questioning regarded an intrapersonal discourse about their identity. For example, they came in the form of which behaviours, customs, speaking or not speaking their respective languages and dialects, mannerisms fit into their emerging state of identity. At the start of the interview, some participants stated they were made to assimilate to the host culture demanded by mainstream society.

Assimilating

I would say it's been a big intersection, a confusing one, a lot, which entails a lot of what's it called, imposter syndrome, where I grew up here. And I also didn't want to, I had a resistance to learning about the Filipino culture. I grew up in a Catholic school who once told my mom to stop speaking Tagalog to us. So if you can imagine the throughout the years, I just became more, I guess, Canadianized or Westernized. – Participant #8 “RM”, male, 30 years old

I get this from my parents. Basically, they say you're a Canadian, but with Filipino blood. So, in a way, I do identify as a Canadian because it's really, it's only been like the only lived experience I've had growing up. I'm born and raised in Vancouver and it's just that's all I've ever known – Participant #5, “DJM”, male, 22 years old

I feel my mom never spoke to me in Tagalog, I guess Visaya. She moved here when she was relatively young. So my parents, my grandparents, my Lolo and Lola didn't want to give her an accent because they associated, you know, not having a Filipino accent with success. And the further you get away from that, the more it meant that you had better chances in life to succeed.” – Participant #6, “GA”, male, 24 years old

I guess my migration experience was pretty interesting to see because I was so young, right? And then having to, I didn't realize how I had to quickly assimilate and adapt to the Canadian culture. I mean, not just a weather, but like language was a big part of it. When you're speaking Tagalog all the time and then all of a sudden, it's like: ‘oh, I have to start speaking English’. And my parents like wanted me, my sister to sound good for [our] English. So they kind of made us speak English, actually. So sure, there's like the benefits of assimilating so that we could be comfortable in Canada, but also kind of lost that connection to our culture. – Participant #7, “PJ”, female, 24 years old

In earlier schooling there, there certainly wasn't a sense of pride that that that I was told I should take. Right. A lot of what a lot of folks of color bipoc folks might experience around bullying, around, you know, finding differences in in the way you look in relation to whiteness. And, and yeah, really, I would say in high school wanted to be the farthest thing from being Filipino - Participant #10 “IJ”, male, 27 years old

Accommodating

Other participants were able to contest and accommodate both the host culture and home culture:

I would consider myself just as Filipino as I am Canadian. – Participant #3, “HO”, female, 22 years old

I was always trying to find out like, is there, I don't know, like, am I more white because I look white or am I more Filipino because I was raised primarily by Filipinos? Like so I think that that took me a bit of like soul seeking, I guess. But I think that being Filipino is just part of

just as much part of myself as being Canadian is. – Participant #3, “HO”, female, 22 years old

I've done it myself, identified myself to people as Canadian and then questioned, you know, what are you really? And, you know, you know, you kind of have to prepare yourself for how people are going to take that answer. So sometimes, you know, depending on the situation, depending on the scenario, you know, I might offer I'm Filipino just to get around that question.
– Participant #2, MK, female, 38 years old.

Adapting

Another set of participants were able to integrate the home culture without disruption from the host culture:

I was fortunate enough to not have any bad experiences like being who I am. You know, a lot of, a lot of my friends talk to me about like, oh, yeah, school people would make fun of me because of my lunch or because I'm Asian because of this or blah, blah [...] But for me, I never went through that and I never had any moments of my life that was like that made me feel bad about myself, you know? So, I was never like, “Oh, I wish I was somebody else or I wish I was bigger. I wish I was just...” you know, I never wish that upon myself because, like and it wasn't something that was taught to me. And for some reason, it just felt like very innate. You know, I just I loved being Filipino. – Participant #4, GD, male, 32 years old

I think the reason why I deliberately keep it as Filipina Canadian, because for me it's never changed, I's actually pretty consistent across the board. – Participant #9, “ZK”, female, 23 years old

I didn't think too much of it actually growing up. I was kind of just like, okay, that's just like knowledge, right [...] but then for me to kind of, I think a really big factor of like my identity and I guess like navigating my family dynamic and how that plays into my identity as well is the fact that I've never moved out of the house. Okay, so like there's. Exactly. Yeah. And like, we live in such small quarters, like, we live in. We've lived in the same apartment – Participant #9, “ZK”, female, 23 years old

Okay, I'm going to quote someone, but it's not like I have to paraphrase it. But yeah, there's [...] the organization that I was connected with Living Hyphen, this other group in Toronto. And yeah, this is like their whole preamble is that like they're focusing on telling stories from folks living in the hyphen, so it kind of like it centers on, what am I trying to say? Oh, it centers on like diasporic experiences. So not just Fil Cans, but also just anyone who's ever crossed Turtle Island. Yeah, I just love that phrasing of like living in the hyphen. I am very much in the center of being both Filipina and both Canadian. It's never fully one or the other. – Participant #9, “ZK”, female, 23 years old

All these internal valid negotiations represent the importance of cultural diversity within the experiences of Filipino Canadians. It is significant to distinguish these processes as interacting with one another symbiotically. Simply stated, rather than differentiating and having separate categories, these processes interact and give entry to further identity making.

5.2 Exploring Identity

Regardless of which category or grouping they belonged to, Filipino Canadians further integrated their cultural identity through journeying what names and definitions best fit for them. In an example by Participant #1, “RJ”, male, 24 years old questions the term Filipino. He also questions the superficiality of the thin layers of the Filipino identity:

Thoughts about even the term Filipino and if it's even... well... it's a term that our ancestors have like fought revolutions for, like claiming that as our own identity, but it is still like a colonial term [...]

The process even started in high school. Like, there was, like, a lack of resources to learn about identity then, even then, like, the resources were very superficial of, like, just talking about "the food" or talking about like slangs, like maybe like top level things...

The term that I saw on Twitter was "Lumpiang" being Filipino. So like Filipinos, who are always like focused on lumpia [i.e. a springroll] and that's it. Or like that jokingly, like very like superficial Filipino identity.

Participant #5, “DJM”, male, 22 years old:

Okay, so the Filipino Canadian blood, again, that's just me basically just regurgitating what my parents had told me. But over the years, as I started to get older, I had that I was kind of like trying to figure out what that definition really meant and I guess you could say there is a bit of an identity crisis in that matter because it's almost as if like what actually constitutes as a Filipino, right? Is it just based on your ancestry or is it based on like where you actually grew up for your formative years or where you are right now, so to speak?

In another example by Participant #6, Participant #6, “GA”, male, 24 years old:

Just wanting to sort of sort out in my mind, how Filipino am I? Will I ever be Filipino enough? Not only in terms of being half, but also just like no being born in the Philippines.

5.3 Deepening Identity

Nevertheless, regardless of people's cultural integration and exploration point. All ten research participants expressed interest in deepening their identity making. In another example by Participant #7, "PJ", female, 24 years old:

I would say identify with my culture through my family, through the foods I eat or the holidays we celebrate. But I wanted to go a bit more deeper. So that's why I joined organizations such as WBC and Sliced Mango Collective to kind of gain back community, youth, and community perspective within identifying my Filipino identity.

Similarly, by Participant #10, "IJ", male, 27 years old:

Professor Nora Angeles [...] they invited undergrads who were curious to learn about Philippine history and their I learned kind of yeah, everything beyond the Marcos dictatorship, the way in which indigeneity, the sense of indigenous people in the Philippines is relative to geography. I found it so, so fascinating. I would share with a lot of people that a lot of people don't understand that there or no, rather that there are indigenous peoples, you know, not just within what is known as Canada, but around the world.

in the Philippines context, the major indigenous peoples were were kept whole or kept their identity, their Filipino indigenous identity, because they were people that lived in mountainous regions. They were able to fight off the Spanish from from colonizing the mountaintops. And so having that really fascinating understanding, yeah, I think really enriches my, my identity and also puts into context the way in which I show up

For some, as noted above, this meant joining communities and collectives, for other research participants, this was done through formal learning of the language and of the history of the Philippines. Others discussed the importance of connection and ties to their ancestral/homelands and settled lands/host lands.

For example, Participant #5, "DJM", male, 22 years old mentioned:

One thing that I really wanted to touch on with that was my mother said, we're going home. And I just looked at her and I said, no, you're going home. I'm visiting [...] she took that part in stride because and she was like, why would you say something like that? And I said, I'm visiting my ancestry. My home is in Canada. I was born there. You raised me there.

Contrastingly, Participant #1, "RJ", male, 24 years old mentioned:

I was also, like feeling very homesick about the Philippines. And it was good because I was born here in Canada, but I was still feeling that homesickness and my mom was like laughing about it. Like: "You are not even, even from there. "Like, how are you homesick?" But it got to the point where I was like, also, like, feeling physically sick for it and, like, almost like, sense of belonging.

One important point to highlight in this theme of exploration are the participants relationships of geography. It is interesting to note "DJM"'s experience and particularly, his relationship of the ancestral lands to the settled lands and how that impacted his identity making. When compared to "RJ"'s experience who was *also* born and raised in Canada yet described "being home sick" and a desire to return to not just the ancestral lands but *homelands* from the settled lands, it is clear how "RJ" has deepened his cultural identity making. While these two selective codes can be seen as opposites, the commonality between them in their deepening of identity making is found in their intentionality of asking intrapersonal questions as well as interpersonal questions. Another important point to highlight here is how family dynamics influence the making of Filipino Canadian identities.

5.4 Affirming Identity

Giving the fact that all the research participants were part of the "1.5" generation and category of emerging adulthood, Filipino Canadians integrated their cultural identity by affirming one another. All research participant affirmed their identity by sharing their sociopolitical and historical locations provided by their parents. For example:

Obviously, knowing my, my family's histories and, and knowing, you know, the towns they came from and what not. I associate being Filipino with the color of my skin, with the food that I eat, with the language my parents speak, and how I the traditions I grew up with are the cultural norms that I grew up with. So, I guess when I combine all those things, that's how I identify with being Filipino. My mom is from Mindanao. She's from the south ... so she grew up in Iligan and my dad. Manila boy. City boy. Spent a little bit of time in Baguio, but for the most part was in the city. – Participant #2, MK, female, 38 years old

My parents immigrated here a number of years ago, close to, well, I guess now closer to 40 years ago. And had my my brother here with me. I've got a brother who's two years older and

yeah, my parents were my parents were or are from the Luzon region. So, they're both from Quezon City from Manila and came as immigrants and brought over. They were the first of our family, both my parents, and they subsequently brought the rest of their siblings. – Participant #10 “IJ”, male, 27 years old

Um to non-Filipinos, I would just say Filipino, but within a Filipino community I would say Batangueno or Tagalog and Ilocano. Batangueno, so from Batangas. Growing up, like Filipino identity was to me like very monolithic, like the Philippines as a whole, thinking that we all we all had the same cultures and values. But over these past few years, like I've noticed, I've realized that we're not a monolithic culture like we're so different in so many ways for like regions by different ethnic groups within the Philippines. – Participant #1, “RJ”, male, 24 years old questions

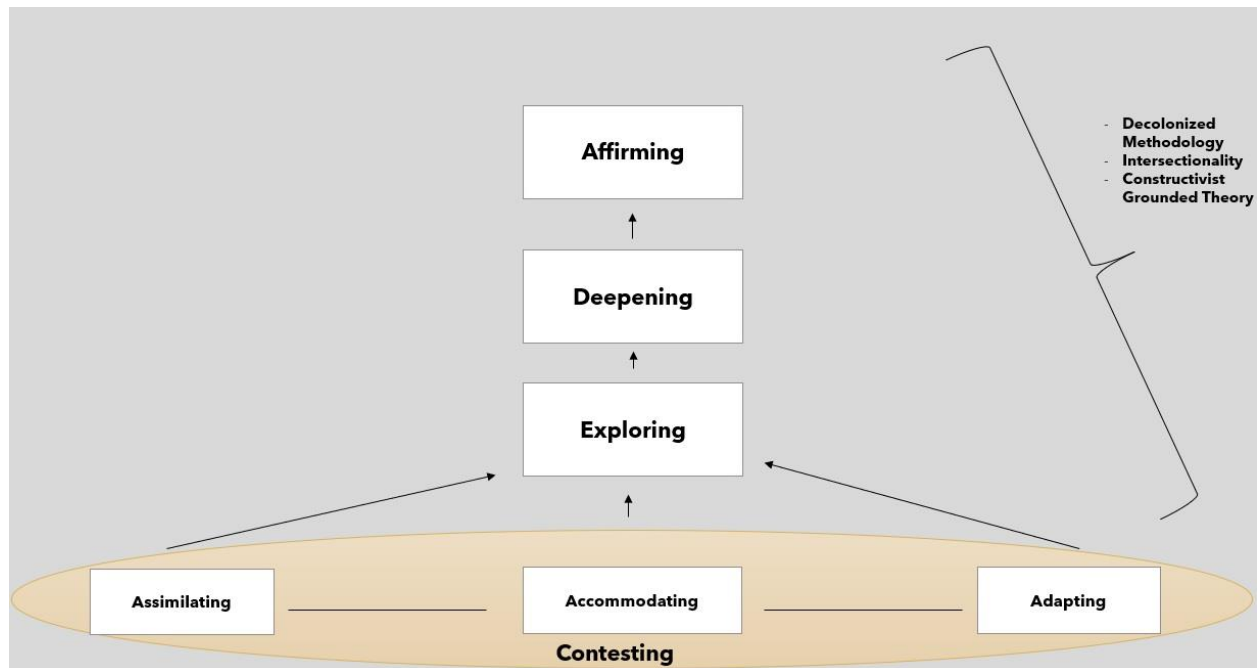
My parents are Southern Filipinos, so they don't speak, they don't speak any of the dialects from Luzon. They don't they don't, like um, their native dialect is not Tagalog. Ilongo. My parents speak Ilongo at home. So it is the... it is the dialect that I am most comprehensive to.” – Participant #5, “DJM”, male, 22 years old.

I think that I think it made me a very caring person in a way that maybe I wouldn't have been if I had grown up in a culture that wasn't like that. Because um, my like instinctually speaking and is not just for family. Like, I always find myself like always wanting people to be good, you know, like, you know, this kind of concept of communal living versus individualism, like the feelings of feeling like you're helping other people will make everything better in general. So this is something that is definitely fostered by my my, my mom's culture. My mother's from Quezon city. – Participant #3, “HO”, female, 22 years old

I should also add this context in which both sides of my family are from the same small town. They are from, their town is called Oas. It's in the Bicol region. You can see the Mayan Volcano from Central. Yeah. So they're from Oas. And I realized that, I feel like that's very it's very notable to say, because that's also how I was getting so much exposure at home. They weren't speaking Tagalog all the time. I would hear more Tagalog in church and then I'd hear more Oasnon at home, it's like a dialect from Oas. – Participant #9, “ZK”, female, 23 years old

This provides a thorough understanding of oral history and the tracing of familial genealogy.

These intergenerational and transnational connections provided by the research participants speaks to a “re-memembering”. Therefore, a presence of affirmation not just in their individualistic identity making but *collectivistic identity making* as well. As illustrated in Figure 7, all themes are interrelated. These acts of identity affirmation enable them to articulate and narrate their personal family genealogy.

Figure 7.*Integration Process of Cultural Identity.*

Note. Created by John Tolentino.

Starting from the bottom, notice how within the themes “contesting”, there are no ranks or hierarchical numbering between the processes of assimilating, accommodating, and adapting. Rather, the line between each process represents the connections between the subthemes of identity making. These are not ‘stages’ but are interconnected experience. From there, all arrows pointing up showcase the engagement of exploring, deepening, and affirming. Constructivist Grounded Theory, Intersectionality and Decolonized methodologies were used to analyze the themes.

5.5 Conditions of Survival

The first condition that informed identity making was the condition of survival. I define the condition of survival in the sense of necessities such as food, water, shelter, money:

I could say to, to the point in the way that I was raised, you know, it certainly wasn't out of a want. It was out of a need, you know, connected to survival, connected to sacrifice. And so some of the words that I chose to describe Filipinoness, Filipino identity was certainly connected to that. When I think about resilience and hard work, I think about the examples that my parents set for me, both of whom worked multiple jobs in order to raise me and my brother.

And it wasn't for a lack of trying to have better circumstances or to have more time spent with me. But certainly, both of my parents struggle to spend time with me and my brother because they were working as much as they were.

They had commitments and obligations to send money to their family back in the Philippines, but also pay to sponsor them to come here wanting to put their kids, me and my brother, through through a Catholic education. And and so certainly when when I think about the way in which I was raised a lot of the time was focused on, yeah, having to work, maximize the amount of time that you can make money and money being a big factor in, in, in life. Right. - Participant #10 "IJ", male, 27 years old

In this stark example, "IJ" not only discussed the uncertainties of his past livelihood but the nuanced struggles of economic migration and transnational linkages (i.e., remittances). He mentions how this swayed their identity development. In another example:

I can 100% identify it's the living and surviving here, trying to "make" it as immigrants. They had to kind of quickly figure out the language or like just. The practice, because if they practice Tagalog here, let's say in my school who like put it down or whatever the word is, then I don't think they would have had a smoother experience than they had. So, I would say it was a survival. Survival choice. Yes.

Like teachers were supportive of new students and where they came from, but I didn't have other things, like let's say they wouldn't have a day where we would celebrate or have like an informative day for culture or Filipino culture or whatever culture. We didn't have that and on top of that. I mean, I hate to point a finger towards our parents, but like they felt the pressure from the system to survive and in that, in turn, influence their way of upbringing, bringing us up. – Participant #8 "RM", male, 30 years old

This begs the question; how can cultural identity development be further developed when there are other pressing matters such as putting food on the table? Where do the priorities of parents lie when making the decision to share culture when they are in survival mode?

There's so much that you could say about survival mode and so much about like I think the phrasing I said earlier is like, we plant ourselves here, but what really happens is that we're struggling to stay afloat, and we don't even realize it. Liker we're just treading water because we

don't really know how to land and there's not really a good place for us to live, you know? – Participant #9, “ZK”, female, 23 years old

I name the conditions of survival in the settled lands to disrupt the narrative of Filipino Canadians as “hard working” migrants in the workforce at the expense of cultural identity formation. This normalization must continually be interrogated. Given this finding, what are the ways that Filipino Canadians question conditions of survival? The next section provides another finding.

5.6 Conditions of Revival

The second condition that informed identity making was the condition of revival. I define the condition of revival as the resurgence of cultural markers in Filipino Canadians. Despite the personal, familial, institutional, and structural conditions of survival faced, all ten research participants shared their conditions of revival: a deep desire to learn, unlearn, and re-learn about their identity.

Through language

recently I recently started taking a Tagalog beginner, Tagalog class online with the People's Forum in the United States. [...] you know, she's full Filipino American and she never learned it. So we're both so the first class was last Thursday and they talked about Philippines's histories.

[...] I didn't know that about the Spanish occupation, which was like 330 years, 333, I think, because it was like a specific number. It was a weird number like that.

[...] I learned about there's so many different so there's so many different indigenous groups in the Philippines like, like that's and it's, it's a very colonial mindset to think like dialect versus language because I think so many of the colonial occupiers started to think that every or every Philippine language, like Cebuano and stuff like that and Visayan languages were all just offshoots of Tagalog, which they're not. They're like their own languages. But the reason people start started referring to them as dialects was because of that misconception. – Participant #3, “HO”, female, 22 years old

Through education

It's my responsibility. Right. Get yourself educated. So, yes, there, is if you identify, like for me anyways that, that indigenous psychology course I took last semester had identified that

there are gaps in my knowledge about what it's like to be a Filipino and that Filipino culture. And I even said straight up to my professor, I said, I need to do a lot more research. I need to go to my I need to go into the university library and literally pull every single frickin book about the Philippines off of the bookshelf. Actually, I did look at I actually did look at the Filipino section.
– Participant #5, “DJM”, male, 22 years old.

Through community

“if you realize that we are like a diverse people, then you can better understand. Like, you can better understand like each other and how to like support each other and also just like be able to like have that, like, like have that communal, like, community thing where like if you see a Filipino person that you don't know at a party, like you should go and talk to them or you should say hi, you know what I mean?” – Participant #4, GD, male, 32 years old

Coming together as a collective, first and foremost, that could look like many other avenues. It can look like gathering together to celebrate [...] I feel like that's a good way to, like, refer, like, reaffirm one another and just, just gathering. – Participant #7, “PJ”, female, 24 years old

There's something about hanging out with people that have at least some level of shared experience with you, especially when it comes to being ethnic in Canada. That is comforting and I think that that's huge, like just having Filipino Canadian spaces. – Participant #3, “HO”, female, 22 years old

Through personal experiences

I remember when we went to Cebu and we went to Mactan and we saw the Magellan's cross, right? So that's like the point of Catholicism landing in the Philippines. Magellan brought his cross, and I remember my aunts presenting it to me and being thinking, "Oh, you want to just see historical pieces? This is a big piece of history." And I couldn't help but feel almost. Like saddened. You know, you think of all the things that happened from, you know. Colonization, the religion that it brought and what it meant, what it meant for, you know... people in the Philippines at that time. And. You know, they're thinking: "oh, let's light candles, let's put down flowers. This is like a celebratory thing." And in my head, I was I was like, I don't know if I like... it's happened... obviously, we can't undo what's already been done. But I wasn't I didn't share the same joy. I guess. I didn't share the same... I guess religion has a different place in my life than it does in, say, some of my older relatives. – Participant #2, MK, female, 38 years old

This experience from “MK” exemplifies an active resistance of colonial mentality. An awakening. This is a condition of revival in her identity making, a deep knowing and a deep feeling of her Filipino-ness because of how she constructed her reality. In this resistance, there is a need for MK to understand how contemporary Filipinos or her parents come to recognize religion. In another example:

I think what it means to be Filipino is [...] to be proud of my culture and where I came from. But within the diaspora, I think it should be ... Right? It should be going back to our roots, going back to our indigenous ancestry and being proud of all those years of resistance of colonization and being proud of that resilience. Right. Because I feel like a lot of Filipino people, especially in the diaspora, are all over the world have survived so much. And grow in different countries in different settings. - Participant #7, “PJ”, female, 24 years old

To end, it is important to note how these conditions of revival such as language, education, community participation and personal realizations have better shaped Filipino Canadians making of their identities. Furthermore, these quotes were a select few of the “core categories” in my analysis that demonstrate how Filipino Canadians flourish.

5.7 Discussion

In this section, I meta-analyze my findings and reflect on whether the literature review and historical accounting add and/or negate the data results. By using previous memos, I further tie the themes together.

Initially, when I first developed my research question: “How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora?” I had research expectations that the data would point towards new(er) identifications of terminology such as research participants identifying as Filipinx, pilipinx, pin@y, FilCan (i.e., Filipino Canadian), FilAm (i.e., Filipino American), Canadian-Filipino, etc. Often, these newer cultural identities are sites of discourse for further inquiry, pointing to a person’s sociopolitical and historical alignment. None of these identifiers were present in the interviews. With this absence, I was reminded of Asselin (2003, as cited in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009) suggestion that it is best for the insider researcher to gather data with his or her “eyes open” but assuming that he or she knows nothing about the phenomenon being studied. They indicate that although the researcher might be part of the culture under study, he or she might not understand the subculture, which points to the need for bracketing assumption (Asselin 2003, as cited in Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). Given this, I pivoted once more to

Constructivist Grounded Theory where the researcher takes a reflexive stance and studies how, and sometimes why, participants construct meanings and actions in specific situations (Charmaz 2006, as cited in Hallberg, 2006). In this sense, the intersections, and interconnections of identity through the process of assimilating, accommodating, and adapting match. Furthermore, the exploring, deepening, and affirming of Filipino Canadians identity is multidimensional.

Similarly with the second research question: What are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities? The data from focused coding and selective coding yielded increased weight on personal histories and oral histories rather than the general history of the Philippines. Some research participants did discuss the basic history of Spanish colonial legacies. Though majority of the research participants did not discuss the sociopolitical and historical conditions in a traditional sense of social integration and current political conflicts, all research participants were acutely and astutely aware of their conditions of survival and conditions of revival in the nation-state of Canada and how it informed their identity. In recalling the historical review of my thesis, I consider this absence of Filipino historical tracing with the research participants also as one the lingering effects of colonial and imperial displacements in the homelands and settled lands. Arguably, while “context-specific” violence as a concept is unsuitable, “context-specific” silence of colonialism and imperialism is a possible explanation that rendered participants unable to fully elaborate on Philippines historical and contemporary violence. I do not claim a causation rather a correlation of these “isms”. Moreover, the participants expressed in their own way through their answers what it meant to be impacted by these macro-systems. Lastly, the contribution of compounded global labour migration policies as evidenced from the literature review and the inequitable systemic forces such as deskilling, de-professionalizing and de-historicizing (Pratt, 2008; Laquian et al, 1998) in identity making

remains limited. These inferences are worthwhile to further research and investigate, however, are beyond the scope of this project.

In ending, I quote from my journal entry from April 25th, 2022: “I welcome and accept the variety of definitions. I embrace the identities and Filipino Canadian communities in the plural form as valid.” At its essence, cultural identity making allows the person to identify in the “now”, the present. Cultural identity making allows for the interconnection or bridging between the personal and sociopolitical histories/experiences in the past and those of the conditions and observations of the now by the participants.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter divulged into the research findings which were composed of the six themes. Through contesting, exploring, deepening, affirming identity as well as the conditions of survival and conditions of revival about how identity making was integrated, I revealed how emerging Filipino Canadians in Vancouver experienced their cultural identity development. Next, I discussed and considered previous literature and history which supported and/or resisted the themes discovered. In the next chapter, I “disembark” from the waters to the destination: the conclusion.

CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I explored Filipino Canadian identity making. As a complex topic, my project added a small piece to the rapidly growing literature on Filipino Canadian studies and the broad field of Asian Diasporic studies in Canada. I examined the importance of identity-making as connected to colonial history and global migration, and its nuances. This final chapter includes the limitations, future directions, implications as a social worker, positionality, and reflections.

6.1 Limitations

There were many limitations to this study. Firstly, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, there were additional layers of research restrictions, procedural steps, and health and safety considerations (e.g., The COVID-19 Safety Plan, The Off-Campus Activities SHERM Review Guidance, etc.). These measures delayed the recruitment process as well as the collection of the data. As examined in this study, I chose semi-structured interviews with individual research participants. However, I believe it would have been advantageous to also hold focus groups to diversify and strengthen my data analysis. According to Engel and Schutt (2017) focus groups involve group interviews in which the focus group leader encourages discussion among participants on the topic of interest. This allows collective meaning making. Secondly, while I included qualitative research criteria, I also missed opportunities to refine the thesis through *transferability* and *confirmability*. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985, as cited in Loh, 2015), transferability is synonymized with external validity in quantitative research. Transferability refers to the study's finding applicability to other contexts, situations, times, and populations (Loh, 2015). For example, this study's population was Filipino Canadians in their adulthood living in British Columbia. A potential way to have increased transferability is to ask: Would this

study's theme of identity making make sense in other Asian or ethnic minority groups? This exploration may be a question for future research.

Meanwhile, *confirmability* is concerned with the “end results” or the product which attests the findings, interpretations, and recommendations are supported by the research data presented. A widely disseminated idea on increasing *confirmability* is to have the thesis committee's correction. Known as “devil's advocate”, usually this begins from data collection through to the end of data analysis. While I did not engage in this procedure, I did actively search for differences (i.e., the diverse recruitment of people from different means) and opposing instances that contradicted prior observations (e.g., in the themes of the findings as well as the findings discussion). Thirdly, related to temporality, I did not design further considerations of heightened anti-Asian racism during this COVID-19 Pandemic period. Inevitably this period of hyper Asian focused impacted how the research participants created meaning in the Filipino Canadian identity making. These temporal effects remain unknown. Unlike full time researchers who can devote prolonged attention and detail to research changes, I was constrained, by the due dates of the research project as well as the overall graduate program timeline.

I name these limitations to be transparent about the research study and its imperfections. As an emerging researcher, I also utilize the limitations for accountability measures. Given the unexpected obstacles of the COVID-19 Pandemic, my expanding knowledge of qualitative research criteria, as well as the scarce yet increasing body of literature in Filipino Canadians, I established my research claims and findings to the best of my research capabilities. While I account these limitations, I believe these can be successfully remedied in future studies. In the next section, I provide possible solutions to the limitations and future directions.

6.2 Future Directions

In asking, “How do Filipino Canadians integrate their cultural identity in the diaspora?”, my main research question assumed that there is an interest in the upsurge of Filipinos living outside of the motherland who would like to consciously learn about their history and their culture in an effort to deepen their “Filipinoness”. To this regard, a *confirmability audit* (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, as cited in Loh, 2015) through member checking was conducted. Not only was the benefit of member checking a formal way to add rigour and solidify research congruence (Birt et al., 2016), but it also acted as evidence that the research participants had further interest and personal investments in the results. I state this given the fact that there were no external incentives such as honoraria. Therefore, I observed that their curiosity to learn about other people’s Filipino Canadian identity making was present. This project then, can be the start of further inquiries and engagement with the research participants for future expansion of the research project.

In the future, I could design a study in which participants reflexively discuss how their identity making has evolved to add nuance. Questions such as: “How has your identity involved since learning more about your Filipinoness over X amount of time”? Moreover, I could add focus groups in which the participants share space to collectively create meaningful dialogue with the intent to challenge dominant narratives and harmful stereotypes of Filipinos in Canada. Under the scholarship of Participatory Action Research (PAR) which “democratize the decision-making process by working with migrant communities on determining research aims, choosing a data collection method, designing a recruitment plan, and conducting and analyzing research” (Francisco-Menchavez & Tungohan, 2020, p.258) this would bring forth more equitable participation thereby flattening power dynamics between researcher and research participants in

the production of a tool for social change. Another possible research avenue is to explore how current professional representations impact the identity making and career trajectory of Filipino through the use of singular case studies analyses. While there is some literature in this regard (see Collymore, 2012; Mais, 2013), often the focus is on the individual's self-determination masking the systems and conditions that play a role in hindering or benefiting the Filipino Canadians. In naming the conditions of survival and conditions of revival, the next generations of Filipinos may aspire to dream different ways of being or different career routes such as illustrated in my opening reflection at the start of this thesis. In summation, focus groups, Participatory Action Research (PAR), and the role of Filipino Canadian professional representations combined with the conditions of survival and revival and themes of contesting, exploring, deepening, and affirming in identity making can encourage new sites of future research.

One final consideration to future expansion of this work reflects the limitation of language used. My study was conducted primarily in English which implied that the primary mode of thinking and being was influenced by the English vernacular. Future studies can ask the research questions in Tagalog to see if there are any differences or similarities to the themes unearthed here. Like Abdel's story in (Elkchirid et al., 2020), they unsettle their understandings of colonization by engaging in an internal dialogue. In this internal dialogue composed of critical reflection, they wrestle with the idea of not just asking questions in their native language but also publishing in African journals though the unspoken goals of Academia is to publish in Western journals given their broader potential to distribute and disseminate knowledge.

6.3 Implications as a Social Worker

The *OCSWSSW*¹¹ (2008) Code of Ethics Section 11 states that a “social worker” shall advocate in the best interest of the client. It is to no surprise that social justice is one of the pillars of social work. Given the themes of Filipino Canadians provided herewith, I believe one important implication for a social worker is to practice *cultural humility*. According to the University of Oregon Equity and Inclusion Website (n.d), cultural humility is “a going process of self-exploration and self-critique with a willingness to learn from others. It means entering a relationship with another person with the intention of honouring their beliefs, customs, and values. It means acknowledging differences and accepting that person for who they are.” (p.1) The dominant practice of social work has been to engage in the opposite: cultural competence. Simplistically put, social workers were trained to understand cultural and racial groups by achieving a “competent” perspective (K. Rudow, personal communication, March 26, 2021). There were many scholarly debates as to whether cultural competency was feasible for a social worker and as the discourse evolved, there was a striving towards cultural sensitivity (A. Baksh, personal communication, November 3, 2021). However, within the context of this study, I see cultural humility as the best fit when engaging with this population. My research insights and findings reveal that the intersectionality and complexities of identity making render Filipino Canadians as dynamic beings which do not follow a static chronology or stages. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge how the cultural fabric of Filipino Canadians shift and will continue to shift in this Canadian society. By understanding that Filipino Canadian identity making is highly shaped by historical and current sociopolitical forces and conditions, a social worker can emerge with a different praxis. Furthermore, recognizing that Filipino Canadians are not a monolith

¹¹ Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers

through my research and utilizing cultural humility can give social workers an advantage to engage in better practices with supporting the Filipino Canadian community.

Another implication for a social worker relevant to this study is the need for unpacking the identity construction of social workers as “professional helpers”. Nobe-Ghelani and Ngo (2020) discuss the way social work practices “othering” marginalized communities, as one retains the status of a helper. In addition to a culturally humble praxis by “meeting people where they are at”, another implication for a social worker is to integrate a relationally-oriented practice. Rather than solely focus on the traditional pieces of documentation, such as intervention and prevention, building a relationship that begs curiosity can enhance interpersonal rapport. A relational practice moves out of distant, and often “cold” professional-client relationship to a more genuine, balanced, and ethical engagement. As Laurila’s (2019) social work article state, ethical space is portrayed as not something that simply exists, it is an intentional choice to enter this space to deepen the knowing relationally.

Ostensibly, without the relationality and automatic embracing of the “professional” role, it would be a comfortable stance for a social worker to have an expert mentality. A “professional” in this sense can possibly psychologize and pathologize. For example, to a clinical social worker, a Filipino who is continuously “contesting” their identity might come across as a person in an identity crisis¹² or labelled as confused. However, as recently evidenced by Tuazon (2019), there is a disconnect with how Filipinos in the diaspora mental health seek or seldomly seek professional mental health services. Moreover, Filipinos in the diaspora prefer to seek support from friends, family, and community leaders because of cultural barriers (Litam & Chan,

¹² Respectfully, I critique prominent Western theorists and psychologist like James Marcia who created “the four stages of identity development” or Erik Erikson’s “eight psychosocial stages” of development which incorporate these maladaptive attributes.

2022). Given this, I draw on my key findings of participants demonstrating agency in their identity making. In particular, the ways the Filipinos enter the processes of “affirming” and “re-affirming” one another. As Strobel (2001) eloquently describes,

to be a Filipino is to feel, in the depths of one’s being, where words are not enough, that one is Filipino. Oftentimes it is difficult to articulate just what it means to be Filipino because the name itself was imposed from the outside. To be Filipino is to feel a deep connectedness to one’s fellow being, to the Creator, to the country, to oneself, and to everything else outside of the self. To be Filipino is to feel connected to the country’s history – past, present, and future. This connectedness remains even when the Filipino leaves the Philippines. In fact, this connection deepens more so on foreign soil where its authenticity is often challenged. Sometimes, it is other Filipinos who challenge this identity, especially those who have not yet escaped their colonized consciousness, and therefore continue to believe that Filipinos come from an impoverished culture, without hope or progress or change (p. 14)

Provided this culturally information, a social worker must not be quick to decide and act in the name of their profession, rather they must pay close attention to the multiplicity of Filipino Canadian autonomy for deep identification. Where there may be incongruence, normalizing the phenomenon of contesting is key.

As all the above points demonstrate, tools such as cultural humility, relational frameworks, ethical spaces, and allowance for the “use of community” connections for mental health is important. Additionally, through my findings, I enrich the implications for social

workers by remembering how Filipino Canadians affirm one another. Moving forward, incorporating these approaches can further produce a capable social worker.

6.4 Research Positionality

In my own search of identity making, I had thought to myself that I found an entry of answers through decolonization and indigenization of the mind. I asked myself: “What would this identity making look like in this neoliberal society?” While I think that these answers were pointing me on the right track, they were partial answers as to complete the bigger question I asked myself. Through the research and knowledge gained throughout the Master of Social Work program, I have realized how my research positionality in relation to the larger discourse has shifted once again.

To start, prior to the commencement of the program, I had an opportunity to work closely with Indigenous Elders. At my workplace, I was taught to challenge Western ways of being and doing such as dominance and control (D. Easter, personal communication, June 25th, 2020). This came in the form of de-mystifying the Westernized identity of a student and worker who participated in the separation of the “professional” and “personal”, owning ideas, and “competing” in the human service field. Thus, in my dialogues with Indigenous Peoples of Turtle Island and reflexive papers of positionality, I arrived at this presumptive thought: “I am also an Indigenous Austronesian of Malay, Indo-Filipino Descent who is a settler to Turtle Island. I am appreciative of these identifying marks as they are words part of the pre-colonial Philippines era” (Tolentino, 2021). Paralleled to the scholarship of Indigenous pedagogy (Smith, 2012; Simpson, 2014) I was certain that retrieving my own history and claiming indigeneity of Austronesian descent by privilege of research would shield me of settler colonial complicity. However, like

Ngo's critical reflexivity in Nobe-Ghelani and Ngo (2020) article, I pause here to unsettle my positionality and complexify my subjectivity.

Looking back, while I had the intent to further build bridges of connection and relationships, I recognize the problem in locating myself this way. As De Leon (2022), a Filipino American historian puts it, a journey of self-discovery of a Filipino migrant that revolves around the romantic reconnection to a native identity is problematic as "indigeneity" itself acts as a "(re)fashioning of diasporic and national identity—in other words, it is an extractive relationship between non-Indigenous Filipinos and Indigenous people in the archipelago known as the Philippines". Given the time I recently spent in the Philippines with my family in my village, Mayondon, in Los Banos, Laguna, and learning my family genealogy and geography I cannot definitively claim my indigeneity since they were also displaced. Therefore, how can I keep good honest relations with Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous people with the cultural indicators of identity I carry today?

In summation, it can be construed that on one side of the argument there is a need and resurgence for diasporic folks to connect with their cultural history. However, on the other side, there is also a real need to critique the glamorization of "enlightened" Asian diasporic scholars returning to atavism¹³ as to not reproduce colonial practices of extractions. My secondary research question: "What are the sociopolitical and historical conditions that inform these identities?" was meant to continue this thoughtful dialogue between me and the research participants to analyze cultural markers. All in all, I do believe that these collaborated ideas offer a helpful framing that diversifies the lived or living experiences of not just Filipino Canadians

¹³ Atavism is the tendency to revert to something ancient or ancestral (Merriam-Webster. (n.d.))

but Filipinos across the diaspora. I end with Stuart Hall (1990, as cited in Wong, 2019)'s words that cultural identity

is a matter of 'becoming' as well as of 'being.' It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history, and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything that is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power. (p.225)

In other words, as global migration and transnationalism continue for Filipinos, it is important to understand the origins of "home" critically and relationally for identity creating and making.

6.5 Researcher Reflections

Reflecting on Pino (2021)'s work, I am aware and agree that research has historically been used as a colonial instrument to subjugate and divide. Naming this original hidden purpose helps to dissolve possible contentions. In their point of advocacy in Filipino communities, she states that research can also act as an instrument that subverts and allows people in the community to make more informed choices. In the book, *Critical Research Methodologies: Ethics and Responsibilities*, I empathize with Pino (2021)'s feelings of guilt and shame of "embracing colonial embodiments and legacies", although unlike the idea of resulting these into pain and anger, I contest that the feelings I experience are honor and joy. Without by passing the intricate processes it takes to get to this endpoint for me, like Pino (2021), I also acknowledge the emotional labour racialized researchers undergo. In sharing this, I reflexively ask: Who is expected to have these feelings? Why is the standard on people of colour to carry this work?

How do these feelings act as barriers or protections in the West? Along the same thread, Willis (2022) discusses the concept of “forced resilience”, which makes me think about the ways racialized bodies and researchers operate in the world-at-large. I refuse to sit in that space of contemplation because I have a duty as well as the ability to enact change within the academy. Therefore, it is my conclusion that this qualitative production of knowledge can yield further anti-colonial discourses that subvert the nation-state agenda of racial division and suppression of knowledges and feelings.

Continuing with this thread, I struggled to home in on absolute Theory, only now to realize at the end of my degree and project that there is no need to subscribe to traditional research methods of the Enlightenment period (Pino, 2021) – hence the hybridity of “old” and “new” philosophies and methodologies. Going forward, I will make sure to cite new(er) generation of FilCan (i.e., Filipino Canadian) scholars – I tried as much as I could to absorb Filipino knowledges to better shape my discussion sections. Engaging with critical refugee and migration scholars in North America, I became opened to another world of ideas and languages that extended beyond my intellectual capabilities. I believe this was important to do justice to Filipino Canadian communities and Filipino Diasporic communities I am a part of. Aligning myself with fellow critical emerging scholars¹⁴ whose Filipinx, Filipina ‘peminist’ (i.e., a combination of the word pinay – a female Filipino and feminist) praxis meant a significant shift in approaching this work (Wilson et al., 2022). Being part of an academic writing group gave me valuable insight and information as to different ways of conducting research. Precisely, I critique individualistic western methodologies. Firstly, member checking at the end of the data analysis

¹⁴ In particular, Doctoral candidate such as Monica Batac. See their scholarly work called from *Paperback to Praxis in the book in A Love Letter to This Bridge Called My Back* by Wilson et al (2022).

to make sense of the themes is not enough, rather a collectivistic approach from the beginning of the research, including collaboration on creating a research question is in better alignment with community work. Secondly, the structure of a polished paper is limiting as it speaks to a particular academic audience and flattens the richness and spirits of research participants (A. Ngo, personal communication, December 11, 2022). Thirdly, it does not exhibit the researcher's emerging process or allow room for methodological changes, in the article *"Failing" and Finding a Filipina Diasporic Scholarly "Home": A De/Colonizing Autoethnography* by Batac (2022), I learned about nonwestern methods and epistemologies outside of my Euro western education).

Lastly, as an emerging researcher, I have become freer to be a critical thinker without the needing to arrive at a definitive answer. In the beginning of my journal entries, it was clear that I was preoccupied with the retrieval of "ground-breaking" data and themes. It can be argued that the underlying current of the academy is to instigate researchers to seek this retrieve and "Eureka" moment at all costs, however, in my researcher journey, I question this assumption and parallel other critical Asian scholar's stance to my research findings. On January 26th, 2021, I journaled:

"In anticipation of what I will gather in the data, and in the interviews, I begin to wonder what parts of me are curious to understand what collective belonging looks like in the diaspora. Some can say that we have our love for food, music, basketball, the stereotypes that are often positively highlighted in the media. I wonder about the "spaces of exceptionality", in which Filipino Canadians subscribe to. The idea that the only way to be seen and be affirmed in one's identity is through these exceptionalities. Lately, I have been influenced by Pratt (2010)'s work on "spaces of ordinariness" with Filipino Canadian youths, in which she discusses the ways that

her participants partake in self-agency through every day, ordinary, activity. In summation, she mentions how these spaces of ordinariness are equally as valuable as other spaces. I too, wonder about what it would mean to live outside of these exceptional spaces created by the nation-state.”

Does it make me a “bad” researcher if I don’t follow the scientific method meticulously step by step and discuss the Filipino Canadian identity in ordinary ways? Or does it make me a critical researcher to step outside of what constitutes the rules of research? In tandem with Pino’s (2021) theorization of knowledges and feelings as data points and a praxis of collaboration between different research roles, I believe a critique of the research process itself is important to understand how to move forward in an equitable fashion. As Lee (2019) puts it, the task of researching and teaching the Asian diasporas lies in balancing various poles –theory-experience, global-local, universal-particular— to produce new intellectual projects responsible to histories and experiences” (p. 32). To sum up, a researcher’s knowledge production and knowledge dissemination must be continually rooted and centered in the community that they are conducting research with.

6.6 Lessons

In Tagalog, there is an ancient proverb that goes, “*Kung may itinanim, may aanihin*” which translates to: “if something is planted, there will be harvest”. Over the past two years and a half, I have had eye opening experiences. In completing this thesis project, I planted and immersed myself fully in the world of research. This has resulted in harvesting the lessons of accountability, commitment, and ethical responsibilities. First, I learned about being accountable to myself. One important lesson is to remember how to maximize research resources such as the thesis advisor, internal committee members and asking for feedback and suggestions early. This

would then inform how to manage the time between reading the literature, writing original content, and scaling back methods of research to make deadlines. Secondly, outside of the “researcher hat”, I learned about my commitments to my writing, navigating professional and personal relationships, and applying what I was learning with my community. In this sense, my research was extended to informal conversations which further shaped my ideas. Moreover, I learned the importance of finding a “happy medium” between other commitments such as conferences, workshops, research and teaching assistantships – not only how to time keep overall – but also seek to understand how it could be interconnected to the research project. For example, I used inspiration from academic keynote speakers which I turned into memo journals. In this process, I was also committed to using “gray” literature (i.e., magazines, newspapers, YouTube videos, as well as Filipino podcasts) to further substantiate and make sense of the project. Thirdly, as extensively discussed in this section, I learned about my ethical and moral responsibilities not just as a researcher but also a pre-license social worker. I learned to check-in with other researchers and social workers about best practices for the integration of knowledge production, consumption, and distribution. R. Radhakirshman (as cited in Lee, 2019) exposes the researchers position of privilege inhabited by the diasporic intellectual and argues for a vigilant stance against the idealization of the third world from the western metropole (p. 31). In other words, the potential risks of intellectual hegemony. My research on Filipino Canadian identity making had caveats and parameters in place that I believe properly created ethical boundaries as to *how* and *where* knowledge production and mobilization should be disseminated. Boiled down, I named and engaged in research ideologies and values of Strength, Kindness, Honesty, and Sharing (Banakonda Kennedy-Kish (Bell) et al. 2017). These indigenous ideas borrowed from decolonized methodologies helped to make sense of Filipino Canadian cultural identity making.

6.7 Conclusion

In this project, I was able to research a topic that I was passionate about: this study explored the experiences of ten adult Filipino Canadians and how they created meaning out of their identities in the diaspora in Vancouver, British Columbia. To summarize, Chapter 1 introduced the project guided by my rationale and my experiences of racialization which was followed by an overview of subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 encompassed the literature review and my approach to organizing the different systemic bodies of Filipino Diaspora knowledge. Chapter 3 gave an introductory history and account of colonialism and imperialism in the islands known today as the Philippines. It also included modern political tensions and a critical analysis of migration patterns outside of the homeland. Chapter 4 included the methodology, the research paradigm, the conceptual framework (i.e., Charmaz's Constructivist Grounded Theory, Critical Race Theory, and Decolonized Methodologies) as well as the nuts and bolts of the processes (i.e., inclusion criteria, sampling methods, research instrument, data collection and data analysis). Chapter 5 gave a comprehensive list of themes of the findings composed of six themes. Lastly, Chapter 6 synthesized the project by having a discussion on the findings, limitations, future directions, implications as a social worker, researcher reflections, and overall lessons gained. Through the respective chapters, I interwove stories to render Filipino Canadians in a better light. Furthermore, the purpose of this study was also to increase Filipino Canadians personhood *no matter their journey in identity making*. In conclusion, as Indigenous Elder Kennedy-Kish (Bell et al. (2017) puts it, "there is unending work ahead, we must first re-imagine together before we re-build" (p. 149). It is with complete faith and hopefulness that I too, with this thesis project can now start to re-imagine and re-build a more just world whereby the navigation of identity in the "common waters" are calm and peaceful.

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APPENDIX A: INFORMED CONSENT FORM**WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT**

“Navigating new waters: Filipino-Canadian Identity Making in the Diaspora”

Principal Investigator: John Tolentino

faculty advisor(s)/supervisor(s): Anh Ngo Assistant Professor, Magnus Mfoafo-M’Carthy, Associate Professor at the Faculty of Social Work

You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore the lived experiences of Filipino-Canadians and how they create identity in the diaspora. The researcher is a Laurier graduate student in the Faculty of Social Work working under the supervision of Dr. Anh Ngo

INFORMATION

Participants will be asked to do an interview with the researcher. The study will take about 60-90-minutes to complete. Data from approximately 8-10 research participants who identify as Filipino-Canadians in Vancouver will be collected for this study.

- As a part of this study, you will be audio-recorded for data coding purposes. You have the right to refuse being taped. Only John Tolentino will have access to these recordings and information will be kept confidential. You will/will not be able to preview these tapes/films/photos. The tapes/films will be transcribed by March 2022.
- The tapes will not be used for any additional purposes without your additional permission.
- In order to participate in this study, you will need to pay for transport to the research site, unless the interview is alternatively done online. You will not be reimbursed for these costs.

RISKS

COVID-19 can result in severe illness. Leaving your home to participate in research does increase the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and subsequent transmission to you and other members of your household. To mitigate this risk, we are following guidelines set forth by Ontario Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety/ British Columbia PHO Orders & Guidelines. During your study visit, we are following the following guidelines during the interviews:

- You and the researchers will be masked at all times
- Physical distancing will be maintained at all times
- Required PPE if taking public transportation
- Hand washing / sanitizing upon arrival at study location.

You will be asked to attend the study alone, if possible, stay at least six feet away from anyone else, including the researchers, wear a mask to cover your mouth and nose or a face shield if you are unable to wear a mask unless you have a medical exemption.

If you are not already taking these steps to avoid exposure to COVID-19, then having to do these things during this study may not be comfortable for you and may cause worry or distress. If you are not comfortable with these precautions, you should not participate in this study.

If you consider yourself or someone in your household to be vulnerable with respect to COVID-19 (e.g. if you or someone you live with are an older adult (60+), immune-compromised, are living with obesity, or have a chronic health condition), it may be best that you do not participate in the study. Please consult the attached handout from Ontario Public Health/ BC Public Health regarding vulnerable populations and COVID-19. You are under no obligation to participate and nothing bad will happen if you change your mind about participating in the research.

If you fall within a vulnerable population described above, but are fully vaccinated (i.e., you received a complete vaccine series ≥ 2 weeks ago), you are not considered a high-risk population in the context of COVID-19. All COVID-19 safety precautions listed above must be followed, even if you are fully vaccinated.

As a result of your participation in this study you may experience some slight discomfort in sharing your lived experiences. The following safeguards will be used to minimize any risk or discomfort, the recording session will take place in a semi-private safe place, such as the Vancouver Public Library Room or at the back of a coffee shop where the area is sheltered. You are free to discontinue the study at any time and to choose not to respond to any question.

BENEFITS

Participants may benefit from the participation in this research project by learning about certain histories or develop new personal insights as well as a strengthening of connections to their identity. The research will contribute to the body of literature/knowledge at large on Filipino immigrant studies and mental health.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will collect and retain personal contact information in order to conduct contact tracing if there is any possibility that you may have been exposed to COVID-19 while taking part in this research study. Because we are retaining personal information for the purposes of contact tracing, we cannot guarantee anonymity in this study. Contact information will be kept separate from data collected during the study. The data collected during the study will be de-identified.

The confidentiality/anonymity of your data will be ensured by assigning a code name to your comments. The data will be stored in a locked office /on a password protected computer/ on a password-protected recording device located at the researcher's house.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, and request that your data be destroyed, we will continue to maintain your contact information and will only use it for the purposes of contact tracing should there be any risk that you were exposed to COVID-19 while taking part in this research study.

If applicable:

- The de-identified data will be kept for five years and will then be destroyed by the principal investigator.

- Identifying information will be stored separately from the data and will be kept for five years and will then be destroyed by the principal investigator.
- While in transmission on the internet, the confidentiality of data cannot be guaranteed.
- The privacy and confidentiality of information submitted through SurveyMonkey cannot be guaranteed. Laurier is not able to restrict access to, or use of data by SurveyMonkey. Participation in this survey is voluntary.
- Only aggregate results will be published/presented.
- If you consent, quotations will be used in write-ups/presentations and will/will not contain information that allows you to be identified.

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study you may contact the researcher, John Tolentino, at [email] or [telephone].

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Board (REB# 6953), which receives funding from the [Research Support Fund](#). If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Jayne Kalmar, PhD, Chair, University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-1970, extension 3131 or REBChair@wlu.ca.

PARTICIPATION

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You have the right to refuse to answer any question or participate in any activity you choose.

If you withdraw from the study, you can request to have your data removed/destroyed by emailing the researcher directly.

FEEDBACK AND PUBLICATION

The results of this research might be published/presented in a thesis, course project report, book, journal article, conference presentation, class presentation.

- Only aggregate findings and no individual responses will be reported.
- The results of this research may be made available through Open Access resources.
- An executive summary of the findings from this study will be available by June 2021.
- You can request the executive summary by e-mailing at [email].

CONSENT

It is advised that you print or save this consent form and/or record the researcher contact information in the case that you have any questions or concerns.

COVID-19 CONSENT:

- ☐ I have read and understand the new risks associated with COVID-19 and I still wish to participate in this study.
- ☐ I wish to withdraw from this study
- ☐ I do not consent to the use of my data collected up to this point
- ☐ I consent to the use of my data collected up to this point

CONSENT:

- ☐ I have read and understand the above information. I agree to participate in this study.
- ☐ I agree to have my interview audio and video recorded.
- ☐ I agree to have excerpts of my interview quoted.
- ☐ I have read and understand the above information. I do not want to participate in this study.

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

APPENDIX B: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Beginning interview prompt: “Hello, thank you for participating in this study. Is it okay for me to start recording the interview? I will begin now.”

2. How do you identify your ethnic background? What does it mean to you to be [what participants says]?
3. At what age did you start identifying this way? What made it so? Are there any moments/events/messages from your childhood that reinforced how you felt about your cultural identity?
4. How were you raised culturally? Can you give me examples? Why do you think you were raised this way?
5. What is your understanding of Filipino history?
6. What is your understanding of the Filipino culture?
7. How do you think your understanding of this history and culture has influenced your sense of identity and yourself?
8. What role does the Canadian system play in [...] ? How did this impact your identity making?
9. How has the perception by others in the Filipino-Canadian community impacted how you felt about yourself?
10. Lastly, what are some ways Filipino-Canadian can reaffirm one another?

Ending interview prompt: “Thank you once more for taking a part in this study. I will end the recording now. Is that okay with you?”

Potential follow-up questions:

Have there been times when you were proud of your identity?

Have there been times when you were ashamed of your identity because of this?

Do you speak any other languages beside English? Did your parents teach you Filipino? What dialect/Filipino languages do you speak?

What have you learned about identifying as ... []?

Are Filipino-Canadians in Vancouver different and or the same from say Filipino-Canadians in

You talked about [X] ... can you tell me more about this in relations to your identity?

APPENDIX C: RESEARCH POSTER



01/31/2021

RESEARCH VOLUNTEERS WANTED!

Are you a Filipino/a/x-Canadian? Are you between the ages of 18-45 years old? Is English your first language?

If yes, you are invited to participate in a research project studying the Filipino/a/x-Canadian identity and the lived experience in the diaspora.

Research participants will be asked to complete a one-time semi-structured interview (approximately between 60mins to 90mins) In Vancouver, British Columbia regarding their identity and their cultural upbringing.

For more information and to see if you qualify, please contact: John Tolentino (Principal Investigator and Master of Social Work Student at Wilfrid Laurier University) at tole6590@mylaurier.ca or call (+1) 778-237-7306, thank you!

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Board (REB#6953).



Filipino/a/x-Canadian Research Participants wanted – contact John Tolentino @ tole6590@mylaurier.ca / (+1) 778-237-7306 for more information
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APPENDIX D: COVID-19 SAFETY PLAN**DAY OF STUDY***Wilfrid Laurier University Community Research*
Effective at Step 3 of BC Restart Plan

Note: At the start of Step 4 of the BC Restart Plan, this research project with WLU will transition to a communicable disease plan.

Scope

WLU is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment. This safety plan details the COVID-19 measures and controls required for research conducted outside of the WLU Campus as per Phase 3C-Permitted Research form. This plan is in alignment with Step 3 of BC's Restart Plan and the criteria outlined by Public Health Government in British Columbia. Beyond COVID-19, this plan includes strategies to prevent the spread of communicable diseases outside of campus and in the community at large.

Rationale

As per WLU's Research Ethic Board, the rationale for this COVID-19 safety plan is to maximize the safety of the researcher and the participants for this study. Above and beyond immunizations, infectious contacts throughout the participants in the community can be reduced using the prevention and control measures outlined in this plan. It is important to note that this COVID-19 Safety Plan was modelled after the UBC's COVID-19 Safety Plan, Section 7: Workshops and Research Laboratories to account for the local context in which this study will be conducted in BC.

Engagement and Review

This COVID-19 Safety Plan created by the Principal Investigator has been informed by documents presented on the Public Health and WorkSafeBC website. This plan has also been reviewed by the Principal Investigator's Supervisor. Please see relevant documents linked below.

Regulatory Context[BC Restart Plan](#)[Provincial Health Office Orders](#)[Post-Secondary Go-Forward Guidelines](#)[WorkSafeBC](#)Responsibility

All folks can contribute to an appropriate pandemic response and keep safety at the forefront of our communities by getting vaccinated (when possible), following on campus and off campus

safety plans, performing/monitoring our personal health, staying home when having symptoms, following handwashing and hygiene etiquette as well as public health orders and guidelines on and off campus. All of us have a role to play, it is our collective efforts that will make the difference.

Managing Contacts and Limiting Close Interactions

Throughout campus, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to limit the number of close sustained contacts with others, which includes avoiding situations where individuals congregate in shared areas. Participants are expected to not linger, wait, or loiter in hallways, corridors, foyers, and other spaces that are intended for travel.

Communication Strategy

The general Safety Plan from the University and its policies can be found on:

Outline the physical distancing plan for your research location

Research activities will be conducted at the Central Vancouver Public Library, physical distancing will be practiced by maintaining 2 metres between people to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. Since the library is considered a public space in relationship with the City of Vancouver, all participants are expected to follow the universal instructions. All participants are required to follow signage in all spaces. This includes, following the directional arrows for walking through the library book scanners, having a limit of 4 people in the elevator and wearing a mask, which is advised/recommended. The bookable office rooms/spaces will be re-arranged and will allocate to always ensure 2 meters of physical distancing.

Use of Masks

I will ask the participants to bring their own masks and/or request one from the Vancouver Public Library which comes free of charge. If the participant bypasses this step, I will also bring my own disposable masks and provide these to the participants should they want one. To give participant's agency, since masks are no longer mandatory and recommended, I will have a conversation with each participant to gauge their level of comfort of them wearing a mask, and of the researcher wearing a mask. For participants who are not able to wear a mask (due to medical reasons), I will physical and social distance in the room booked and wear a mask.

Sick policy and screening plan for research and participants

The researcher will self-monitor for any adverse health symptoms and like the participants, they will also follow the protocols on the Day of Study Visit Information Sheet. Specifically on the document, they will take the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#). Participants and research personnel will be instructed not to come to the research site if sick; participants in addition to

researchers attending the research site for research purposes must complete the BC COVID 19 Health Self-Assessment form daily. I will not request screening data from participants, however IF the results of the assessment indicate COVID-19 like symptoms, those persons must avoid coming to the research site and seek further medical attention as instructed by the assessment.

Contact Tracing

I will maintain the participant records on a password protected word document for contact tracing purposes. The privacy and confidentiality of research participants is of utmost value and the research site visit dates will be encrypted securely and separately from the research data on that word document. Moreover, I will also comply with Public Health Contact Tracers and take directions from them.

Handwashing and Hygiene

The Vancouver Public Library (General) continues to clean their spaces and booking rooms at regularly scheduled intervals. For further information, visit VPL:

<https://www.vpl.ca/sites/vpl/public/VPLCOVID-19SafetyPlan.pdf>

Participants are expected to practice respiratory etiquette by coughing/sneezing into their mask, a tissue or into the sleeve of their shirt. Participants are also expected to regularly wash their hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds or make use of hand sanitizer stations. Hand sanitizer stations managed by the VPL available in the main building entrance/elevator entering. Everyone will be encouraged to carry their own hand sanitizer. Moreover, hand sanitizing will be asked when entering the research site/room.

Cleaning and disinfecting:

After each participant visit, the research will clean and disinfect the table, the chair, and the door handles. Moreover, this will also be done with writing utensils (i.e., pens). A word document will be created with established times for when the cleaning and disinfecting is done.

Offsite research considerations

- a. The research will monitor the current active COVID-19 case numbers in the Lower Mainland in BC
- b. The research will plan to monitor the government website for further instructions on the Last Phase in BC and any new lockdowns, and travel restrictions over the duration of the study.
- c. Site-specific guidelines or protocols that participants will be asked to follow will be added on the Day of Study Information Sheet

- d. Travel to and from the site in relation to reducing the spread of COVID-19 lies at the hand of the participant: As per BC mandate, masks are no longer required on public transport though if using vehicle services such as Uber and Lyft, masks are currently required.
- e. Travel plan and travel risks for the researcher and participants.
- f. At the research site, there will also be hand gloves and adequate and appropriate PPE such as masks.
- g. Since nearing Step 4 in BC, currently, there is no need to demonstrate approval from the community to resume or initiate research in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, under BC's restart plan, "personal gatherings (which includes researcher-participant relationships) return to normal for indoor and outdoor personal gatherings.

APPENDIX E: PARTICIPANTS PROFILE**Participants Profile**

Name (Pseudo name given)	Age	Gender	Identity
1. RJ	24 years old	male	"Filipino Canadian"
2. MK	38 years old	female	"Filipina Canadian"
3. HO	22 years old	female	"Filipina" and "Canadian"
4. GD	32 years old	male	"Filipino Canadian"
5. DJM	22 years old	male	"Canadian with Filipino blood"
6. GA	26 years old	male	"Half Filipino, Half Peruvian"
7. PJ	24 years	female	Filipino Canadian, Filipina Canadian
8. RM	30 years old	male	"Canadian Filipino"
9. ZK	23 years old	female	"Filipina-Canadian"
10. IJ	27 years old	male	"Filipino Canadian"