

# Communicative Behavior in Sharing COVID-19 Safety Health Protocols: The Filipino Mothers' Experience

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## ABSTRACT

This study explored the communicative behavior of Filipino mothers in sharing COVID-19 precautions with the members of their respective households. The objectives of this study are also presented in this paper highlighting the process of information sharing, through individuals' behavior, to their family members. This study utilized qualitative research design through focus interviews anchoring on the concept of Grounded Theory. The informants of this study were selected through a convenience sampling approach – these are five mothers based in Quezon City, Philippines.

The study revealed themes highlighting the significance of *Barangay* Communication in acquiring information; the practice of Personal Hygiene Observation and Vitamin Consumption in preventing/ minimizing COVID-19 contraction; the communicative behavior of mothers, highlighting the importance of Staying indoors instructions, Watching News as a Companion, Conveying COVID Repercussions, and Reading Friends' Admonition; and Responses and Actions stating the Adherence for Prevention done by their family members.

**Keywords:** Communication, Behavior, COVID-19, protocols, grounded theory, mothers

## INTRODUCTION

The author of this research paper's interest is to look at the communicative behavior of Filipinos during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. When practices are concerned, billions of people around the globe have implemented safety protocols among themselves and with the people around them and it is interesting to know if their personality, focusing on behavior, would be a factor. Individual's behavior affects how they want to transmit knowledge or information to other people and how they want to revert to others' responses.<sup>1</sup>

During the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, information about it had outpoured on various platforms, especially on what interventions and practices should people take in

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1 E. Marsh, "Personality and communication styles: do we ever really hear each other? *T-Three*."

order not to contract the virus. The media, through the primary efforts of the Philippine government, has communicated safety health protocols to the public through traditional media – news, press conferences, and social media through Facebook pages and posts, YouTube videos. One of the campaigns implemented by the Department of Health and Interagency Task Force for Emerging Infectious Disease (IATF-EID) is the BIDA Solusyon Plus sa COVID-19. BIDA Plus stands for “Bawal ang walang mask at face shield (Not wearing a mask and face shield is prohibited), I-sanitize ang kamay, iwas-hawak sa mga bagay (Always wash or sanitize and avoid touching things) Dumistansya ng isang metro (Maintain a distance of at least one meter), Alamin ang totoong impormasyon (Know the correct information), at Plus-Suportahan ang FDA-approved na bakuna (Support FDA-approved vaccines).<sup>2</sup>

Another campaign is also initiated by the Department of Health together with the Johns Hopkins for Communication Programs – Healthy Pilipinas carrying the campaign key message, “COVID Alis sa Pamilyang Wais” focusing on sharing knowledge to influence Filipino families on behaviors to prevent the spread of the said virus.<sup>3</sup> However, word-of-mouth will always be present; thus interpretation of information could differ and could spread widely even up to social media.<sup>4</sup>

Despite various campaigns implemented by various public and private organizations, which utilized both traditional and online media, records show that many Filipinos still violated safety health protocols. In 2020, the Philippine government advised the public and businesses to strictly observe health safety protocols due to reports that many Filipinos disregard social or physical distancing.<sup>5</sup> The following year in November, it was reported by the Department of Interior and Local Government that more than 107,000 Filipinos violated safety health protocols.<sup>6</sup> This picture continued in March 2022. It was reported, just in the case of Metro Manila, that more than 4,000 Filipinos violated safety health protocols in just one week.<sup>7</sup>

On the other hand, some studies focus on the behavior and personality traits of individuals and how are these related to their COVID-19 precautionary measures and post-

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2 Department of Health. 2021. “Bida Solusyon Plus”

3 Desmon, Stephanie. 2020. “Successful COVID Campaign in Philippines Wins Accolades” in *Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs*.

4 Yasir, Ammar, et.al. 2020, “Modeling Impact of Word of Mouth and E-Government on Online Social Presence during COVID-19 Outbreak: A Multi-Mediation Approach” in *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, no. 8:2954

5 Reuters, “Philippines police threatened social distancing violators with caning”

6 Fernandez, Daniza. 2021. “DILG records over 107,000 health protocol violations on first week of November” *The Philippine Daily Inquirer*

7 Servallas, Neil Jayson. 2022. “Health protocol violators increase” *The Philippine Star*

COVID-19 impacts. In Europe, it determined if the Big Five personality traits: neuroticism, openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, and agreeableness have a relationship to adults' COVID safety practices. The study found that the first three traits are connected with the adults' behavior in COVID-19 prevention.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, a study determined the relationship between personality factors and COVID-19 impacts. It also utilized the Big Five personality traits and it found out that those individuals with higher acceptance of COVID and its impacts are those who have higher extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness. Two traits are contrary or different from the study in Europe.<sup>9</sup>

Furthermore, in another study, in this case, the relationship of Big Five personality traits to the two factors of anxiety namely, fear and somatic concern determined that agreeableness had a negative relationship.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, in a study conducted by the American Psychological Association, through a survey in 55 countries, those people who are low on neuroticism and openness would most likely not be strict in following safety health protocols.<sup>11</sup>

Looking at the published studies and news focused on COVID-19 prevention and violations in the Philippine setting – which includes the developed crisis during the pandemic – misinformation, it is vital for this study to look at how families, in this case, Filipino mothers processed such information and how was this transmitted to their family members, especially to their children. Furthermore, the behavior and/or personality of these Filipino mothers or individuals might affect how they practice protocols, as well as how they transmit information based on the findings in the literature. The study intends to investigate the communicative behavior that will contribute to the body of knowledge – both in communication and psychology, but most importantly a guide for families and community leaders in communicating during a health crisis.

Given these, it could be a need and good opportunity to investigate and contextualize the communicative behavior of Filipinos in sharing safety health protocols with their families, specifically:

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8 Airakasinen, Jaako, et.al.. 2021. "Big Five personality traits and COVID-19 precautionary behaviors among older adults in Europe" *Aging and Health Research*. Vol 1, Issue 4

9 Al-Omiri, Mahmoud, et.al.. 2021. "COVID-19 and Personality: A Cross-Sectional Multicenter Study of the Relationship Between Personality Factors and COVID-19-Related Impacts, Concerns, and Behaviors" *Frontiers in Psychiatry*. Vol. 12.

10 Kumar Vineeth, and Tankha, Geetika. 2022. The Relationship between Personality Traits and COVID-19 Anxiety: A Mediating Model. *National Center for Biotechnology Information*, no. 12(2), 24

11 Götz, Friedrich, et.al. 2021. "How personality and policy predict pandemic behavior: Understanding sheltering-in-place in 54 countries at the onset of COVID-19" *American Psychologist*, no. 76(1), pp. 39–49.

1. To describe the process of information acquisition and practices of the informants on safety health protocols in preventing COVID-19;
2. To determine the communicative behavior of the informants in sharing safety health protocols with their family members; and
3. To assess how the information shared by the informants to their family members was processed and acted upon.

### **The COVID-19 Pandemic around the Globe and in the Philippines**

The COVID-19 pandemic which started in Wuhan City, Hubei, China has become a global health problem. This pandemic is caused by the virus from bats which is transmitted from people to people.<sup>12</sup> The spread started to people who had pneumonia with no identified reasons in the said city. In January 2020, it continued its transmission not only in China but to several countries around the globe; thus an outbreak had started and an emergency of international concern was declared by the World Health Organization (WHO).<sup>13</sup>

After reaching more than a hundred thousand cases in 114 countries, as continued to widely spread, the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic; thus health organizations, governments, and the general public were alarmed and eager to prevent the transmission of the said virus (Moore, 2021).<sup>14</sup> Globally, as of 23 January 2023, the total COVID-19 cases have reached 753,001,888 with 6,807,572 deaths.<sup>15</sup>

On 21 January 2020, the first COVID-19 case was reported in the United States, a man who traveled from Wuhan to Washington.<sup>16</sup> After a few days, another traveler from Wuhan to Illinois was infected by the virus, adding two more infections in Arizona and California. At the end of 2020, the cases in the American continent increased to 2,000,997 and almost doubled by the end of 2021 having more than 3.5 million confirmed cases. It decreased significantly by the end of 2023 to 830,674 cases.<sup>17</sup>

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12 Mohan B.S. and Nambiar, Vinod. 2020. "COVID-19: An Insight into SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic Originated at Wuhan City in Hubei Province of China" *Journal of Infectious Diseases and Epidemiology*, no. 6:146

13 Moore, "History of COVID-19"

14 Moore, "History of COVID-19"

15 World Health Organization. 2023. "COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern"

16 Taylor, Derrick Bryson. 2021. "A Timeline of the Coronavirus Pandemic" *The New York Times*.

17 World Health Organization, 2023

In the case of Europe, the cases of the virus reportedly increased rapidly in March 2020, to the point that WHO was the epicenter of the virus during this time.<sup>18</sup> It reported its first death in France – a Chinese who traveled from China to France in the second week of February. One of the countries which experience the deluge of COVID-19 cases is Italy wherein its cases increase from five to 150 cases in the third week of February.<sup>19</sup> The following month, March, there were 250 deaths recorded in one day from March 12-13.<sup>20</sup> Another worst thing that happened in the early time of the pandemic was the declaration of recession in Germany, which has the biggest economy in the continent.<sup>21</sup> As of February 1, 2023, Europe has a total of 271,613,930 cumulative COVID-19 cases with 2,180,373 deaths.<sup>22</sup>

At an earlier date, January 19, 2020, to be exact, cases of COVID-19 also occurred in Asia, specifically in Thailand, South Korea, and Japan. The same week, the origin of the virus, Wuhan City in China, had been placed under lockdown because of the outbreak. By the end of 2020, Southeast Asia had 208,726 cumulative cases, increasing to 209,163 when the year 2021 started.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, in August 2021, Southeast Asia recorded the highest number of COVID-19-related deaths which was recorded reaching 38,522.<sup>24</sup> In effect, this concern showed developmental challenges in the social, economic environmental progress of Asian countries.<sup>25</sup>

In the Philippines, the first cases of COVID-19 started in the third week of January, they were travelers from China to Manila. Due to increasing cases of the virus, the president of the Philippines declared a lockdown in the National Capital Region in March, then the whole of Luzon the following month.<sup>26</sup> The Philippines, on December 22, 2020, reported 462,815 cases, having 9,021 deaths. Fast forward to November 2021, the cases in the Philippines increased to more than 400% and had a total of 2,826,410 cases with 47,074 deaths on November 21, 2021. On January 10, 2022, the country reported the highest number of active cases reaching 231,502. It significantly decreased its cases

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18 Moore, "History of COVID-19"

19 Taylor, "A Timeline of the Coronavirus Pandemic"

20 Moore, "History of COVID-19"

21 Taylor, "A Timeline of the Coronavirus Pandemic"

22 World Health Organization, "COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern"

23 World Health Organization, "COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern"

24 International Federation of Red Cross, 2021

25 Abiad, A. et.al. 2020. "Navigating COVID-19 in Asia and the Pacific" in *Asian Development Bank*, pp. 17-42

26 Argosino, Faith. 2021. "COVID-19 response: A timeline of community quarantine, lockdowns, alert levels" in *Manila Bulletin*.

the following month and ended the year 2021 with more than 3,000 active cases. As of February 2023, the Philippines has 4,073,216 confirmed cases and 65,775 deaths.<sup>27</sup>

### **Misinformation on COVID-19 in the Philippines**

It was discussed that most countries including the Philippines had implemented various campaigns with the concern on the prevention behavior and awareness on COVID-19.<sup>28</sup> The Philippines has BIDA Solusyon Plus sa COVID-19, and Healthy Pilipinas, among others; however, actual prevention practices and communicative processes might differ among Filipinos, especially in believing from their sources.

Aside from the pandemic, the globe also needs to fight infodemic – the spread of false information about COVID-19 including the safety and health protocols for preventing the virus whether through online interactions or word-of-mouth.<sup>29</sup> Considering that individuals are being exposed to such information repeatedly, they feel that the information is credible enough to be applied or practiced,<sup>30</sup> especially when the person giving the information is perceived as trustworthy and knowledgeable.<sup>31</sup>

In the COVID-19 context, several myths on several categories were spread in the Philippines through online platforms or personal interaction with their friends, family members, to even colleagues. These myths were identified -- it states that for an individual to prevent the virus, one must take multivitamins or vitamin C, gargle hot water with salt, or take alcohol-based products.<sup>32</sup> In addition, there were also conspiracy theories about why COVID-19 started – that China or the United States did this to become the most powerful country in terms of economic strength. On 1 March 2021, the Philippines began administering vaccines to Filipinos to prevent the spread of the virus and protect the health of individuals;<sup>33</sup> however, in that year, in the study by the World Bank on reducing vaccine hesitancy in the Philippines, almost half of Filipinos were not convinced on the

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27 World Health Organization, 2021, 2023, “COVID-19 Public Health Emergency of International Concern”

28 Desmon, “Successful COVID Campaign in Philippines Wins Accolades”

29 The Lancet. 2020. Editorial.

30 Vasu, Norman, et al. 2018. “Human fallibility and cognitive predispositions” in *Policy Report, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies*.

31 Pornpitakpan, Chanthika 2004. “The persuasiveness of source credibility: A critical review of five decades’ evidence” *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, no. 34(2), pp. 243–281.

32 Siar, Sheila. .2021. “Fake news, its dangers, and how we can fight it” in *Philippine Institute of Development Studies Policy Notes*. No. 2021-06.

33 Tomacruz, Sofia. (2021) Philippines begins legally rolling out first COVID-19 vaccines. *Rappler*.

COVID-19 vaccine and were not willing to get one.<sup>34</sup> The assumption that could be derived is the common misconceptions about these vaccines – that in effect, these can cause you to death or can bring other illnesses.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, the Philippine government, through its Department of Health, also managed one of the myths on COVID-19 prevention or practice—steam inhalation also known as “suob” or to some, “tuob” which spread widely through various platforms and direct recommendations. However, the Department of Health disagreed with this practice as it may be harmful to Filipinos because instead of seeking proper medical procedures, they stick to this belief. These myths or misconceptions had truly spread, especially on Facebook and YouTube through the accounts of individuals, trolls, Facebook groups and pages, and even government officials.<sup>36</sup>

### **Information Campaigns on Health Safety Protocols and Fighting Misinformation**

Before the COVID-19 eruption in the Philippines, misinformation and disinformation were very rampant; thus the government, the academe, and concerned organizations need to address these issues, particularly concerning COVID-19 misconceptions and myths.

The Philippines' Department of Health established an information campaign on safety health protocols to prevent the COVID-19 virus which was discussed in the Introduction of this paper. Aside from this the Department also conducted infodemic management to counter-check, verify, and correct preventive practices being spread by Filipinos online and through their face-to-face interactions with their family members and friends. Steam inhalation, through mixing salt or vapor rub, was an alarming practice that was addressed through the press conference being done by the government and the publication of information materials such as the Department's COVID-19 virtual presser and cards on “Alamin” (be in the know) which were uploaded on its site and social media channels.<sup>37</sup>

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34 Cho, Yoonyoung, et al.. 2021. Reducing Vaccine Hesitancy in the Philippines, Findings from a Survey Experiment. *Philippines COVID-10 Monitoring Survey Policy Notes*, pp. 1-6

35 Siar, Sheila. .2021. “Fake news, its dangers, and how we can fight it” in *Philippine Institute of Development Studies Policy Notes*. No. 2021-06.

36 Sabonsolin, John Cavin. 2022. “Infodemic amidst the COVID-19 in the Philippines: Spotted by verafiles.org” in *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*. Vol. 3, No. 2, pp. 170-179

37 Samonte, Paoloregel, et al., n.d. “COVID-19 infodemic response overview Philippines” *Infodemic Management*, pp. 1-6

In addressing the infodemic, the University of the Philippines also launched a webinar series titled, “Stop COVID deaths” which aimed to provide discussion on the adoption of awareness and knowledge on COVID-19 treatment and practices. One of its episodes focused on consultation with medical and social media experts and checked content published on social media whether fact or fake through a game show approach.<sup>38</sup> Furthermore, a youth-led community in the Philippines launched Juan Health PH which aimed to fight the illiteracy of individuals concerning health and information being published on COVID-19. It also published medically-verified information to various platforms and approaches such as articles and feature stories through media and texts.<sup>39</sup>

Social media giants – Facebook, Google, TikTok, and Twitter partnered with the Philippines’ Department of Health and launched the #ChecktheFAQs to encourage Filipino social media users to scrutiny information on COVID and vaccines before practicing or doing such. Another campaign by Johns Hopkins for Communication Programs and the Department of Health was implemented through the Facebook page, Healthy Pilipinas with the tagline, “COVID Alis sa Pamilyang Wais” (Smart Families Keep COVID Away) which had a reach of 160 million users.<sup>40</sup>

### **Behavior of Filipinos during COVID-19 Pandemic**

There is a study about the behavior of Filipinos in seeking information online based on their needs. It found out that Filipinos searched for “face mask”, “hand wash, and “hand sanitizer” which, in terms of number, is higher than the daily cases of COVID in the Philippines. Furthermore, Filipinos also searched for details or information about social distancing and community quarantine, which was found to be correlated with the daily number of cases. They also searched for alternative ways of making or using personal protective equipment.<sup>41</sup>

In addition, the behavior of the Filipinos was also examined regarding their take on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines. The study on the behavior of Filipinos regarding health information-seeking, findings shows that Filipinos intended to be vaccinated, but there

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38 Blancaflor, Deina. (2021) Fact or fake? ‘Stop COVID Deaths’ hosts game show type webinar on COVID-19 infodemic. *University of the Philippines*.

39 Handoko, Tiffany Celine. 2021. “Combatting COVID-19 Misinformation in the Philippines with Jefson and Maria” *ASEAN Foundation*.

40 Desmon, “Successful COVID Campaign in Philippines Wins Accolades”

41 Galido, Adrian, et al.. 2021. “Exploring online search behavior for COVID-19 preventive measures: The Philippine case” in *PLOS ONE*, No. 10:1371



are still a number of them who refused to get a vaccine due to safety concerns.<sup>42</sup> This can be connected to the myths on vaccines which can lead to death or bring illnesses once inserted in the body.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, age and religion were also anchored on the behavior of the Filipinos towards being vaccinated considering that the information acquisition was done through social media channels.<sup>44</sup>

The perceptions of Filipinos in terms of acquiring and processing information, particularly the severity of the COVID-19 virus, affected their intention to follow the safety health protocols, especially during the peak of the pandemic when community quarantines were implemented<sup>45</sup>. Similarly, utilizing the Health Belief Model, the authors assert that positive behavior among Filipinos was observed through a quantitative study. Specifically, the respondents avoided touching other people's hands or even surfaces around.<sup>46</sup>

Considering that the behavior of the Filipinos in practicing the safety health protocols was studied; there are a few studies that focused specifically on communicating these protocols to the people around them – this is also in consideration of the community quarantines that were implemented; thus, most in-person communication was done at home.

Therefore, the focus of the study is communicative behavior -- in the Filipino context, refers to how they communicate differently and arguably about giving awareness or knowledge, influencing beliefs, opinions, and attitudes, and sharing of practices; thus, it is also a good opportunity, that aside from information seeking and vaccination, it is vital to address and identify the communicative behavior of Filipinos to safety health protocols or in a health crisis, in general, to mitigate and at the same time, lessen the negative effects to the receivers of such messages, particularly the interactions made to the mothers' family members, especially to their children.

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42 Berdida, Daniel Joseph, Grande, Rizal Angelo, & Lopez, Violeta. 2021. "Filipinos' health information-seeking behaviors and their implications for COVID-19 vaccination" in *Philippine Health Nursing Journal*. Vol. 39-3, pp. 553-561

43 Siar, Sheila. .2021. "Fake news, its dangers, and how we can fight it" in *Philippine Institute of Development Studies Policy Notes*. No. 2021-06.

44 Berdida, et. al.. 2021. "Filipinos' health information-seeking behaviors and their implications for COVID-19 vaccination"

45 Prasetyo, Yogi Tri, et. al. 2020. "Factors affecting perceived effectiveness of COVID-19 prevention measures among Filipinos during Enhanced Community Quarantine in Luzon, Philippines: Integrating Protection Motivation Theory and extended Theory of Planned Behavior"

46 Arceo, Engracia, et. al. 2021. "Understanding COVID-19 preventive behavior: An application of the health belief model in the Philippine setting"

## METHODOLOGY

This research study utilized Qualitative Research Design. It is an attempt to understand a phenomenon and how meanings are being created and shared through life stories, focus interviews, observations, and others, which could describe problems or challenges happening from personal and societal perspectives.<sup>47</sup> The researcher looked at the process of information sharing through direct interactions among family members and friends on COVID-19 safety health protocols – which has not been established well; thus, this study used Grounded Theory to develop an explanatory theory to uncover the said process.<sup>48</sup> This is why it adopted the systematic approach of Strauss and Corbin – it aimed to attain an “objective reality” based on the interviews or data collected from the informants then it is expected, through a more structured approach, as suggested, a theory will materialize.<sup>49</sup>

Grounded Theory was utilized in this study considering that the existing literature and the specific topic subject have little to no similarities in terms of their premises; thus, it also aimed at showing novel conceptualizations. Furthermore, it intended not to anchor the study to a specific psychological framework considering that it focused on the Filipino mothers’ experience.

This study conducted focus interviews, face-to-face, with five (5) mothers residing in Quezon City, Philippines who conformed to the researcher’s qualifications:

- Belongs to Generation X and Baby Boomers (39-73 years old);
- Belongs to the Poor, Low-Income, or Lower Middle Income class;
- Stayed in Quezon City, Philippines during the onset and peak (March 2020 – January 2022) of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To look for these informants, the researcher used the convenience sampling approach and personally searched for mothers in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City with the assistance of barangay officials/ officers.

The interviews were conducted in-person, individually, and asked where they were comfortable to conduct the said interview. The researcher made sure that he was more detached during the interview and did observations, as well, as suggested by Strauss Corbin.<sup>50</sup> They were given open-ended questions to determine if they have common or

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47 Denzin, Norman, and Lincoln, Yvonna 2003. “Introduction. The discipline and practice of qualitative research” in *Collecting and interpreting qualitative materials*, pp. 1-45

48 Chun Tie, Ylona, Briks, Melanie, Francis, Karen. 2019. “Grounded theory research: A design framework for novice researchers.” *National Library of Medicine*. Vol. 7

49 Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin. 1990. “Basics of Qualitative Research” *Sage*.

50 Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, “Basics of Qualitative Research”

contrasting practices about information acquisition, communication, and actions on safety health protocols during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Questions were pre-tested and modified based on the comments and suggestions. After that, the actual conduct of interviews took place and were voice-recorded. The qualified informants gave their consent for the interview to be audio recorded and the researcher reassured them that the data gathered would be treated confidentially in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. They were given a token of appreciation for their effort.

The method which was used for this study is thematic analysis – utilized for analyzing data in a qualitative approach. Considering that this focused on the Filipino mothers' experience thematic analysis is being deployed in understanding the experiences and behaviors of people through the acquired set of qualitative data.<sup>51</sup> That being said, the collected qualitative data, using the transcript of the interviews, was analyzed and arranged through the use of a repertory grid and was thematized using categorizations. The member-checking procedure was utilized during the data analysis to make this substantial and relevant. The responses of the Quezon City-based mothers were analyzed to come up with thematically related ideas by categorizing the responses in each question and were grouped to check the central theme of the answers.

Considering the nature of the topic and this study conducted focus interviews, there were ethical considerations that were planned and implemented by the researcher specifically on the following:

**Voluntary Participation.** Before the actual conduct of focus interviews, the researcher told the informants that it was voluntary participation, and in case they had doubts about participating, they may refuse for any reason by informing the researcher. When the informants agreed, they were asked about the location or venue and time convenient for them for the conduct of the interview, as suggested.<sup>52</sup> The researcher suggested a venue, in case, i.e., a coffee shop, park, or other conducive places so long as okay with each informant.

**Safety Health Protocols.** The focus interviews were conducted in February 2023 in which wearing of facemasks is no longer required based on Philippine Executive Order No., 7 signed 28 October 2023; however, the researcher and the informants still observed distancing and wearing of facemasks, since the Department of Health advises the citizens to “remain cautious and vigilant”

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51 Kiger, Michelle and Varpio, Lara. 2020. “Thematic analysis of qualitative data: AMEE Guide No. 131.” *Medical Teacher*, Vol. 42-8, pp. 846-854

52 Wa-Mbaleka, Safary. 2019. Ethics in Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide. *International Forum*. Vol. 22, No. 2.

(Vergeire, 2023).<sup>53</sup> In addition, one week before the scheduled interview of each informant, in avoidance of physical harm/ health problems, in case the researcher experiences any COVID-19-related symptoms, the interviews shall be postponed.

**Data Privacy and Anonymity.** During the actual conduct of the focus interviews, the researcher informed the informants on the purpose of the study, and the information gathered – their identity, demographics, experiences, insights, and practices are treated with confidentiality. The data will only be used solely for this study. Their full names, including their family members, exact addresses were not asked during the interview in compliance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012 in the Philippines. Furthermore, anonymity was also considered – the researcher did not use any video recording device and did not take photos during the conduct of the focus interviews. Voice recording using a mobile device was used only in recording the said interviews.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### The CBCS Theory: Communicative Behavior in Crisis Situation

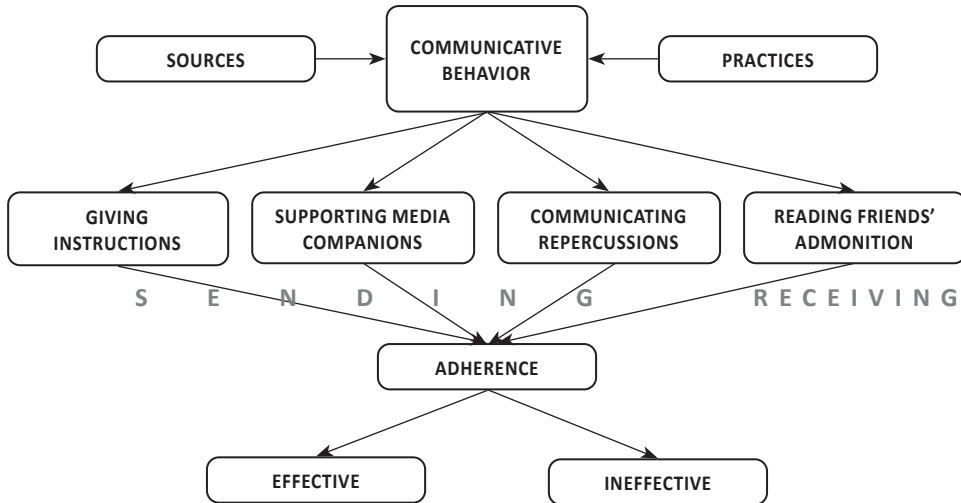
Utilizing focus interviews, this paper attempted to document the reflections of Quezon City-based mothers on their communicative behavior in sharing COVID-19 safety health protocols with their families. Anchoring on the objectives of the study, this study intended to determine first the sources where Filipino mothers acquire information about the COVID-19 safety health protocols. This study revealed that the Barangay served as their primary source of information during the pandemic specifically during the implementation of community quarantines. Moreover, this paper mainly inquired about the communicative behavior of the informants, specifically in sharing information with their family members.

Integrating the concept of Grounded Theory, the researcher of this study developed the CBC Model anchoring on the themes that prevailed in this study. *See Figure 1.*

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53 Vergeire, Ma. Rosario. 2023. Department of Health.

**Figure 1**  
Visperas' Theory on Communicative Behavior in Crisis Situation



The Filipino mothers provided actual statements and these various concepts were anchored on the objectives and themes that rely on the concept of Grounded Theory. In line with this, during the data analysis, various codes were extracted from the interview transcripts of the five informants and came up with these categories: communication being used in information acquisition (barangay communication), COVID-19 prevention protocols practiced (changing of clothes and taking of vitamins), communication they transfer to their children (telling them to stay indoors, letting them watch broadcast news, telling them the consequences of COVID once acquired) and communication they receive from friends (telling them to be extra careful).

It was reflected in the model that the communicative behavior will be determined if the sources and practices being done by the Filipino mothers, in the context of this study, have been carefully looked at. Then based on these, the researcher theorizes that for family members to adhere to safety health protocols, four manifestations should be considered giving instructions, supporting media companions, communicating repercussions, and reading friends' admonitions.

In terms of giving instructions, this action is usually done by mothers to their children, particularly in the Philippine setting/ culture, and follow them, specifically in doing household chores or in taking care of themselves. This theme of giving instructions anchors to the study which states that heads who are concerned with health and well-

being are most likely treated as important by their followers.<sup>54</sup> Given that families stayed in their homes, most of the mothers provided instructions verbally -- this thought anchors the study about the value of verbal utterances in teaching and in providing instructions to mothers to their children. The study mentioned that this process guides children in following the tasks or instructions correctly.<sup>55</sup>

The study also indicated that watching broadcast news is valuable for mothers to support their instructions and pieces of advice to their children. Similarly, it was suggested that broadcast is a tool in supporting the efforts to reduce health problems among children.<sup>56</sup> On another note, some parents are dependent on social media in looking for health-related information; thus limitations are present in terms of specific details in providing explanations to their children.<sup>57</sup> Thirdly, the theory emphasized communicating repercussions or in general, consequences if one of the family members acquired the virus; however, it was suggested in studies that communicating such should be considered with ethical means of influencing individuals<sup>58</sup>

Social support has been present, as well, in what is being theorized in this study. The Filipino mothers were able to communicate and cope by having the social support that they received from their friends – online. This supports the study on social support as something that strengthens mental health and lessens negative psychological effects on friends and family members.<sup>59</sup>

These manifestations were identified as ways of communicating to family members during a health crisis and the COVID-19 experience served also as the basis of the study. The CBCS Theory was developed through the results of the interviews conducted by the researcher. These will be presented below followed by a discussion.

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54 Laura Klebe, et al. 2021. "The Effectiveness of Health-Oriented Leadership in Crisis" *British Journal of Management*, pp. 1203-1218

55 Robert Moreno. 2000. "Teaching practices of Mexican American mothers with everyday and school-related tasks" *Merill-palmer Quarterly*, 46-6

56 Minsoo Jung, et al. 2015. "Effect of media use on mothers' vaccination of their children in sub-Saharan Africa" *Vaccine*, 33 22: 2551-7

57 Mersine Bryan, et al. (2019). "Parental Perceptions of the Internet and Social Media as a source of Pediatrics Health Information" *Academic Pediatrics*.

58 S. Ratzan, et al. 1996. "The status and scope of health communication" *Journal of Health Communication*, 11:25-41

59 E. Northfield "I get by with a little help from my friends: Posttraumatic growth in the COVID-19 pandemic" *Traumatology*.

## Sources

### ***Barangay Communication***

Based on the interview conducted among mothers in Barangay Bagong Pag-asa, Quezon City, their main source of information during the start and peak of the COVID-19 pandemic about safety health protocols and quarantine guidelines are initiatives of the barangay. The informants emphasized the action that barangay officials do in spreading the said information – through megaphone announcements, Facebook groups, and mobile patrols. Given these, the importance of the role of the lowest form of government in the Philippines in facilitating the needs of the citizens has been highlighted, as well. In their words, *“Sa mga barangay ganun, sila yung naghahatid ng information para mag-iingat, wag palabasin yung mga bata, lalong lalo na yung mga bata, pati mga senior”*. [The Barangays, they are the ones announcing to take care of ourselves. Let them stay indoors – the senior citizens, and especially the children.]

*Kasi dito, mayroong ano ang barangay, barangay (patrol) may mic dyan, dyan, yung ano po yung mga sinasabi ng barangay, yun nga proteksyunan, dahil nga lumalala ang COVID, dumadami ang may COVID.* [Here, the Barangay has a patrol, microphone, that tells you to protect yourselves since COVID-19 continues to worsen, cases are increasing.]

*Yung mga taga Barangay - ano, uhm, yung una lang yung pagbigay nila ng anong tawag dun, yung quarantine pass, ayun number one, kung sino ang pwedeng kumuha, sinong eligible, anong requirements. Doon, doon talaga sila yung maagap, masigasig na ano. (Sa barangay nagasabi din sila na) magmask, face shield, nauso pa satin yun, saka bawal lumabas saka dapat isa lang.* [Those who are working in the Barangay, what do you call that, the quarantine pass – that's number one, who is allowed to secure one, who is eligible, what are the requirements. There, they are prompt and eager to announce to wear face mask, and face shield, which was commonly used before, and we are not allowed to go outdoors, except for one.]

## Practices

### ***Personal Hygiene Observation***

The informants of the study were also asked about the protocols and practices they did during the peak of the pandemic to prevent contracting the contagious virus. Aside from mentioning that they were very extra careful and the most basic practice of wearing a face mask, they shared the common practice that they do once they get home and before they interact with their family members. They said:

*Kailangan ano, linisin yung sarili mo, tanggalin yung mga pinagusotan mo, kasi galing ka sa labas eh, para ingat di ba, para ano, para sa COVID. At saka pagdating hugas agad ng kamay, hilamos, linisan ang mukha, ganun. [It is a need to clean yourself, and remove the clothes you used outdoors, so you'll be safe from COVID. And as soon as you arrive home, wash your hands and face, there.]*

*Naliligo, lumalayo kami sa anak ko. Ang asawa ko, tricycle driver, opo, kapag hindi kami humanap buhay, eh nangungupahan kami. Ginawa namin nung una nagbalot balot pa kami tapos pag uwi, naliligo kami ng asawa ko na yung ano ko. [Taking a bath, observing social distancing between us and my child. My husband is a tricycle driver, yes, if we do not work, eh, we need to pay the house rent.*

*Tapos kung ano yung damit na sinuot namin outside namin diyan hubad sa CR agad diyan eh tapos meron kaming lalagyan nandun yung mga damit tapos ligo agad. [Then, we remove the clothes we used outdoors, then proceed to comfort room, there's a basket there to place the clothes, then take a bath right after.]*

### **Vitamin Consumption**

In addition to COVID-19 prevention, the informants shared during the focus interviews, they highlighted the importance of making and improving their body's resistance which could help from preventing the virus. Their statements were focused on the supplements they take. One respondent said that they were able to secure these through the help of the local government of Quezon City, specifically the Barangay Health Center; while the other one was provided by the informant's son. In their words:

*...bali ang vitamins na iniinom namin dalawang beses sa isang araw vitamin C kasi kailangan yun 'di ba, para lalo daw, pero hindi naman pala ano yun, para palakasin yung katawan, yung resistensya para 'di mahawa, 'di mahawa sa COVID. Lemon, ganun. [The vitamin that we take, twice in a day, is vitamin C since we need that, but it's not...But this is for strengthening the body and resistance so you will not contract COVID. We also take lemon juice.]*

*Kumakain kami ng mga gulay, prutas, baliktad nga eh, hirap eh, kain kami ng kain ng prutas, tapos may vitamins, kahit papaano may binibigay naman yung barangay. Kapag lumapit ka sa barangay, nagbibigay naman sila sa (Health) center, di ko kasi kayang bumili. [We were eating vegetables, fruits, its opposite actually, its difficult. Somehow, the Barangay gave us some. When you approach it, through the health center, it gives us (vitamins), which I cannot afford.]*



*Ano lang, vitamin C, daily, yun ang suport. Si kuya mo naman Centrum Silver. Ako vitamin C binibigay ng anak ko. [Just vitamin C, daily, that's the support. Then your brother (my husband) Centrum Silver. I take vitamin C which my child gives.]*

## **Communicative Behavior**

### ***Giving Instructions (to stay indoors)***

After asking about the mothers' way of acquiring information on safety health protocols, they were also asked by the researcher how they communicate this information to their family members. Considering that various levels of community quarantines were implemented during the pandemic, during its peak, these Filipino mothers personally told these protocols to their children; however, one of the informants did this through Messenger video call since she was staying in the laundry where she works. In their words:

*Ahm, lagi ko silang pinagsasabihan na huwag silang lumabas, dati nga kahit nga dito lang (garage) hindi ko sila pinapalabas eh. [Uhm, I always tell them to stay indoors. Before, I didn't even let them out even in the garage.]*

*Huwag munang lumapit sa amin kapag galing kami sa labas, na huwag silang lumabas, huwag sila makipag ano sa tao muna kasi hindi natin alam saan galing. [Don't move close to us when we go outside, and don't go out, don't physically interact to people because we do not know here it (virus) comes from.]*

*Turuan siya (mga anak) thru call, video call, every night and every now and then tinatawagan namin siila, wag kayong lalabas kahit kayo kayo na lang diyen. [Teach them through call, video call, every night and every now and then we are calling the, do not go out of home even if you are just (without us) there.]*

### ***Supporting Media Companions (Broadcast News)***

In addition to giving instructions to stay indoors, these Filipino mothers also advised their family members, especially their children to watch broadcast, straight news to support the advice that they give. One of the informants said that she was having difficulty in explaining the effects of the virus; while the other one said that she needed to support her statements so that her children would believe her. They said:

*(Nanunuod ng telebisyon) para maexplain ko sa anak ko, kasi kung ako lang, hindi ko totally mapaliwanag, kaya ang ginagawa ko sa TV, pinapakita ko ang balita na ganyan mangyayari sayo (kapag nagkaroon ka) COVID. [Watching television so I can explain to my child because if it's just me, I cannot totally explain it. So*

what I do, I let them watch television, I show them news then that would be the consequence if you'll contract COVID.]

*News talaga galing, sa YouTube, replay ng TV Patrol, 24 Oras, sinasadya ko. Nakita nila kung anong pwedeng mangyari sa kanila pag hindi tayo sumunod pwedeng mangyari sa atin 'pag nagkasakit tayo na sabay-sabay hiwa-hiwalay... Sa mga news siyempre, ganito yung nangyayari satin, lalo sila mga bata, 'di naman agad maniniwala sa nanay 'yan eh. Kailangan, yung mga anak ko kasi kailangan ng iba pang tadyan sa utak. Dagdag sa impormasyon from other people. From news ganun, para maniwala sila, para ma-eager sila maniwala. [News, really, on YouTube, replay of TV Patrol, 24 Oras (broadcast news in the Philippines) on purpose. They saw what could be the consequences in case that we all contract the virus, we will surely not be together. In the news, of course, this is what happening to us, especially to the kids, they will not believe to their mother immediately. It's a need to my children that someone will kick their brain or additional information from other people. From news, for example, so that they will believe, to be eager in believing.]*

### ***Communicating Repercussions***

Based on the focus interviews, the informants were asked, aside from safety health protocols, what they tell their family members for them to practice. They always highlighted the repercussions or the consequences if they acquired the virus. Three of the informants mentioned that many people die from the virus and they told their children about this. One of them gave an example of what happened to her grandfather, who was not with them during the pandemic and died because of the virus. Below are their statements:

*Ang dami ng namamatay na di ba, so natakot sila, kailangan nilang magtago sa loob ng bahay. [Many succumb to death, right, so in effect, they are afraid and they need to stay indoors, at home.]*

*Talagang nakakatakot kasi meron akong lolo na namatay ng COVID eh. Parang dinala sa ospital tapos inuwi siya sa bahay nila, ano nacremate na, so ang hirap. Parang namatay ang lolo ko na mag-isa. Ayun, kaya ayun, ayokong mangyari sa kanila (mga anak ko), kaya kinakausap ko sila. [It is terrifying because my grandfather died due to COVID. Like he was brought to the hospital then when he was brought home, he was already cremated, so it was really difficult. It's like my grandfather died alone. So there, I don't want that to happen to them (my children), that's why I talk to them.]*

*Pinanood ko siya sa TV na ganito yung COVID, ganito yung nangyayari. May mga na quarantine din dito kaya ako napilitan talaga kanina hindi na magpadede. [I let him/her watch on television that COVID is like this, and this is happening. Quarantine is also being implemented that's why I was forced to stop breastfeeding.]*

### **Reading Friends' Admonition**

Based on the focus interviews, the informants were asked that aside from traditional and social media and government entities, are there other people, aside from their immediate family members, who give them advice on protecting themselves and their families, vice-versa. One of the common answers they had about this topic is “doble ingat” or in English, “be extra careful.”—the advice they got from their friends through online chatting services, like Facebook Messenger. The Filipino mothers said during the interview:

*Oo, marami, halos lahat naman ganon. Nagtutulungan na lang kami nagpapayo sa bawat isa, kagaya po ng ano ng dobleng ingat po diyan. Sa mga kaibigan din... sa mga online na lang kasi bawal na yung face-to-face 'di ba ganun... [Yes, many, most of us are like that. We are helping and advising each other, like being extra careful there. With my friends, we do it online since face-to-face is not allowed...]*

*Oo, meron, talaga kasi lalo na, pag ka kunwari katulad nung isa, nung tenant doon sa itaas, ichachat ako niyan uy, delikado na pala sobra, so kailangan na talaga natin magdoble ingat, hindi mo na kailangan magpapasok diyan sa loob ng laundry. [Yes, I have, for example, just like the other one, the tenant upstairs, will chat me that it is no longer safe and we need to be extra careful, and I you should not let anyone enter the laundry shop.”]*

*Through ganun din Messenger, ayun lang din, na reminder lang, na may anak ka, meron ka pang maliit, kasi seven years old yung anak ko noon, ay ngayon. Eh yung bunso ko na yun ay sakitin yun eh, mahina ang lungs. [Through, same, Messenger, and reminder that I have a child, very young, because my son then was seven years old, I mean now. My youngest child usually gets sick with weak lungs.]*

## **Adherence**

### **Effective Communicative Behavior**

Considering that the mothers were able to communicate the effects and safety health protocols to their family members, they were also asked if the latter followed their

advice and instructions. All of the informants were affirmative mentioning that all their children followed. In their words:

*Oo, sumusunod din naman sila (mga anak) kasi alam naman na talaga nila na malakas yung virus.* [Yes, they (my children) follow because they know that the virus is strong.]

*Sumusunod naman actually sila. Sasabihin ko po na mag ingat, kayo din po mag-iingat din kayo diyang ganyan ganyan. So talagang kasi ano independent ang aking mga anak ko, actually.* [They (My children) actually follow. I tell them to keep safe, you, too, should take care, like that, like that. So really, my children are independent, actually.]

*Sumunod, saka hindi na talaga sila lumabas. Sa awa ng Diyos, hindi nman kami nagkasakit, thank you, Lord, walang nagkaCOVID. Siguro sabi ni Lord, mahirap na yan.* [Followed, and they did not go out. In the mercy of the Lord, we did not get sick, thank you, Lord, no one got COVID. I think the Lord said, we are already poor.]

## DISCUSSION

### Sources

**Barangay Communication.** The Filipino mothers based in Quezon City stated the importance of the role of the Barangay – the lowest form of government in the Philippines as a source of information on safety health protocols through megaphone/ patrol and online announcements and resources through provisions of food/ vitamin supplies and facilitation of granular lockdowns/ quarantines. This result supports the study on the functions of local government units, which barangays are part of, are pivotal in preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus across the country.<sup>60</sup> Expectedly, local government units should be more consistent and stricter with regard to enforcing safety health protocols to citizens.<sup>61</sup>

On the contrary, in Indonesia, the study on the role of community leaders in educating their community or neighbors revealed that efforts in promoting COVID-19 safety health protocols, isolation, and community quarantine were not maximized. Planning with regard to implementing quarantines were not also maximized; instead,

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60 Talabis, Dylan Antonio, et al. 2021 "Local government responses for COVID-19 management in the Philippines" in *BMC Public Health*, 21, No. 1711.

61 Fallesen, Ditte. (2021) How COVID-19 impacted vulnerable communities in the Philippines. *East Asia & Pacific on the Rise*.

these community leaders only promoted using billboards in information dissemination.<sup>62</sup> Furthermore, it was also revealed, in the study conducted in Australia on the role of community leaders during the pandemic, that these community leaders were not provided by the government agencies enough support and resources in managing the pandemic during its first year; thus it suggested and claimed that community leaders have a significant role on planning and implementing response to their respective communities to improve their involvement and services.<sup>63</sup>

## Practices

**Personal Hygiene Observation.** The mother informants mentioned their hygienic practices to prevent contraction of COVID, aside from wearing face masks when outdoors, most of them, once they got home, they immediately set aside their clothes and took a bath. This is similar to the study on Mothers' Knowledge and Practice on Prevention of COVID-19 in the Sinna Urani Area, Batticaloa in Sri Lanka, wherein almost all of them practiced wearing face masks when leaving; however, about hygienic practices, removing clothes immediately and taking a bath was not mentioned, but rather focusing on hand hygiene practices being done by Sri Lankan mothers.<sup>64</sup>

About the result of removing or changing clothes when these mothers went outdoors, UNICEF (2020) claimed that it is still uncertain if the COVID-19 virus stays on clothes or fabrics. But its study suggests, which supports the practices done by the informants, that changing clothes when returning home is a good caution in contracting the said virus.

On the contrary, it is not advised to take a shower or have clothes washed every time individuals go outdoors;<sup>65</sup> instead, it is recommended to regularly wash or sanitize hands after. Generally, if personal hygiene is not being observed, it can cause adverse effects like infection.<sup>66</sup> This shows that Filipino mothers were placing value on hygiene observation even though some were noted as not directly impacting the virus contraction.

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62 Pascawati, Nur Alvira, Satoto, Tri Baskoro, & Alamri, Annisa Rizqa. 2021. Role of Community Leaders in Managing Covid-19 Pandemic in Indonesia. *ASEAN Journal Community Engagement*, pp. 126-151.

63 Seale, Holly, et al. 2022. "The role of community leaders and other information intermediaries during the COVID-19 pandemic: insights from the multicultural sector in Australia" in *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*. No. 174

64 Anuradha, WPG, et al. 2022. "Mothers' Knowledge and Practice on Prevention of COVID-19 in Sinna Urani Area, Batticaloa in Sri Lanka" in *International Journal of Healthcare Sciences*, Vol. 10, pp. 77-83.

65 Booker, Curtis. 2020. "Should I take a shower after each time I'm out in public?" In *ABC4 News*.

66 Goldenhard, Allysa and Nagy, Hassan. 2022. Assisting Patients With Personal Hygiene. *StatPearls*.

**Vitamin Consumption.** One of the mother informants mentioned that aside from information acquisition, through the help of the Barangay, they were also getting vitamin supplies through its health center. This supports the study on how COVID-19 impacted vulnerable communities in the Philippines -- that women were identified as one of the groups most in need of assistance because of the virus.<sup>67</sup>

On the other note, all of these Quezon City-based mothers talked about the value of improving their body's resistance and immunity through intake of vitamins; however, it was mentioned that taking these vitamins is not a way of preventing the virus, but these could be beneficial to people who have respiratory-related infections or nutrient deficiency.<sup>68</sup> This supports the study conducted in African and Asian countries that food supplements increased people's usage during the peak of the pandemic.<sup>69</sup>

On the contrary, in the case of Poland, during the first wave of the pandemic, from the end of March 2020 to January 2021, a quantitative study, it was revealed that most of the respondents were not taking vitamins during this time.<sup>70</sup> This is also similar to the study conducted in Egypt where only around 27% of the residents took vitamin C during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic to maintain their immune system.<sup>71</sup> This reveals that Filipino mothers taking action to improve themselves and their family members are more immediate as compared to the other studies mentioned from other countries. Furthermore, it can be noted that these were highly mentioned in the Philippines in maintaining their immune system through taking such supplements.

### Communicative Behavior

**They are giving Instructions (to stay indoors).** The results of this study also revealed the communicative behavior of the informants about communicating safety health protocols to their family members, especially to their children. To be specific, these Filipino mothers instructed their children to stay indoors during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and community quarantines. Given this, children relied on their parents, to

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67 Fallesen, Ditte. 2021. How COVID-19 impacted vulnerable communities in the Philippines. *East Asia & Pacific on the Rise*

68 Coelho-Ravagnani, Christianne, et al.. 2020. Dietary recommendations during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Oxford University Press Public Health Emergency Collection*, Vol. 79-4, pp. 382-393

69 I. Sefah, et al. 2020. "Rapid Assessment of the Potential Paucity and Price Increases for Suggested Medicines and Protection Equipment for COVID-19 Across Developing Countries with a Particular Focus on Africa and the Implications" *Frontiers in Pharmacology*.

70 Puscion-Jakubik, Anna, et al.. 2021. "Consumption of Food Supplements during the Three COVID-19 Waves in Poland—Focus on Zinc and Vitamin D" in *Nutrients 2021*. No. 3361

71 O. Khabour, et al. 2021."Use of vitamins/zinc supplements, medicinal plants, and immune boosting drinks during COVID-19 pandemic: A pilot study from Benha City, Egypt" *Heliyon*, 7

know more about COVID-19 and understand what is currently happening, particularly in making everyone safe at home.<sup>72</sup> This supports the study that communicating and establishing daily routines while staying at home should continue and activities such as play and household chores are highly encouraged.<sup>73</sup> What the children hear about in making themselves safe during the pandemic is a significant thing to do, as added.

Furthermore, one of the informants who was then affected by the lockdown in a laundry shop and was not with her children who were staying at their home in another city instructed her children through video calls to stay indoors. In effect, types of computer-mediated communication had increased significantly and were used to communicate to family members during the community quarantines;<sup>74</sup> thus, positive outcomes in terms of its utilization were also revealed. Generally, the United Nations stated that in communicating with children, it is important to tell them that everyone in the family will be safe if they stay at home even if it is difficult.

***They are supporting Media Companions.*** To support information and instruction on safety health protocols, the study revealed that the mother informants let their family members watch broadcast news through television or the recorded ones uploaded on YouTube. Given this, this study came up with the theme Broadcast News as Companion as straight live news on television or the recorded versions are being used by the mother informants in supporting their teachings to their children.

This supports the study highlighting the utilization of broadcast media as an alternative means of providing educational content during the COVID-19 crisis. It has also been revealed in their study, through UNICEF, that radio and television could reach a lot of children globally;<sup>75</sup> however, this needs support by their parents considering that broadcast media lacks interactivity – which also supports the findings of this study. Similarly, in the United States, broadcast news, particularly on television, is still the most utilized media in acquiring news; thus, news content was produced which are intended for parents to promote children's protection and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. On the other hand, in the study on the effects of the pandemic news during the first year

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72 Chunfang, Lou and Xuefeng, Chen. 2021. Keeping your home healthy and safe: How families with children can keep their homes healthy and safe during the COVID-19 outbreak. *UNICEF China*.

73 Soma, Grace. 2020. "Communicating to children about the COVID-19 pandemic" in *South Sudan Medical Journal*. No. 13 (2) pp. 60-63

74 Brown, Genavee and Greenfield, Patricia. 2021. "Staying connected during stay-at-home: Communication with family and friends and its association with well-being" in *Human Behavior and Emerging Technologies*. No. 3

75 Bell, Sheena, et al. 2020. "Can broadcast media foster equitable learning amid the COVID-19 pandemic?" in *UNICEF Office of Research-Innocenti*.

of the pandemic, children who were watching or listening to more news also avoided news that was related to COVID-19 as this may bring more anxiety.<sup>76</sup>

About the usage of Social Media like YouTube in watching recorded straight news from broadcast companies, it was claimed that the social media reliance of families during the COVID-19 pandemic had various effects on children and parents. One of which is its use in acquiring information in executing social or physical distancing.<sup>77</sup>

Generally, the study by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation suggested that parents should share information with support from one or two sources.

**Communicating Repercussions.** The findings of this study revealed that mothers, aside from giving instructions to their children, also mentioned the COVID repercussions once one of them acquired the said virus – most of them said to their children that the virus could lead them to death. However, it was claimed that individuals received uncertain information from their family members about their experience’s justifiability on the illnesses or effects which were brought by COVID (Hernandez & Colaner, 2021).<sup>78</sup>

Furthermore, this contradicts the results of this study as the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (n.d.) suggested that before explaining the facts and risks of COVID-19, parents should listen to their children’s concerns and address the fears that they feel about the virus. This means that parents should avoid providing fear to their children; however, in the case of this study, most of the mothers’ told their children the worst thing that COVID-19 could bring – death.

**Reading Friends’ Admonition.** This study on mothers’ communicative behavior also revealed that they were acquiring information from their friends through Facebook Messenger; however, this does not specifically focus on safety health protocols, but a generic advice to be extra careful. The connection established through online communication lessens the feeling of loneliness among individuals.<sup>79</sup> Similarly, the Alcohol

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76 Ebbinkhuijsen Ming, et al. 2022. “Explaining Children’s News Avoidance During the COVID-19 Pandemic” in *Front Psycho*, No. 13

77 Sciacca, Beatrice, et al. 2022. “Parental mediation in pandemic: Predictors and relationship with children’s digital skills and time spent online in Ireland” in *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol. 127, 107081

78 Hernandez, Rachael and Colaner, Colleen. 2021. “This Is Not the Hill to Die on. Even if We Literally Could Die on This Hill”: Examining Communication Ecologies of Uncertainty and Family Communication About COVID-19. *American Behavioral Scientist*, No. 65 (7), pp. 956-975

79 Juvonen, Jaana, Schacter, Hannah, and Lessard, Leah. 2021. Connecting electronically with friends to cope with isolation during COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, No. 38 (6), pp. 1782-1799



and Drug Foundation in Australia highlights the value of staying connected with friends during the COVID-19 pandemic as it provides a feeling of being taken care of and valued.

The findings support the study which measured respondents' frequency of acquiring COVID-related information from friends using social media. It revealed that 21.2% and 24.3% of them received information from friends and colleagues, respectively; however, internet sources and healthcare workers topped the information sources of individuals in Taiwan.<sup>80</sup> In addition, it was suggested that is imperative to know facts first before communicating specific information to friends online.<sup>81</sup> Lastly, in talking or responding to friends' chats, it is important to consider the level of how individuals know each other and attempt to understand the information on COVID-19 and where it is coming from then ask questions. Then, the study suggested that the information should be based on reliable, scientific-based information.<sup>82</sup>

## Adherence

***Effective Communicative Behavior for Prevention.*** The results of this study revealed, based on the interview conducted by the researcher with the Filipino mothers, that their children adhered and affirmative to the communication made by their parents to prevent the contraction and spread of the contagious COVID-19 virus. This supports the study on the factors affecting adherence to COVID-19 prevention conducted in England that parents, together with their children, were motivated to follow the safety health protocols and policies considering the repercussions of COVID-19 which were given by the government.<sup>83</sup> It was also found that with regard to adherence, individuals have a higher level of observation in terms of social distancing than personal hygiene observation (Varghese, Sabat, Neumann-Bohme, 2021).<sup>84</sup>

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80 Wang, Peng-Wei, et al. 2020. "COVID-19-Related Information Sources and the Relationship with Confidence in People Coping with COVID-19: Facebook Survey Study in Taiwan" in *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, Vol 22, No. 6

81 UNICEF. 2021. "How to talk to your friends and classmates about COVID-19 and school reopening?"

82 Rogers, Lindsay Smith and Moran, Nick. 2020. "Talking to friends, family, kids, and coworkers about Covid-19 safety" in *Johns Hopkins University Hub*.

83 Woodland, Lisa, et al. 2022. "A Qualitative Study Evaluating the Factors Affecting Families' Adherence to the First COVID-19 Lockdown in England Using the COM-B Model and TDF" *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, No. 12:7305

84 Varghese, Nirosha, et al. 2021. "Risk communication during COVID-19: A descriptive study on familiarity with, adherence to and trust in the WHO preventive measures" in *PLOS ONE* 16 (4)

On the contrary, adherence was higher among adults; but this study revealed, considering that most of the informants have children and as mentioned, these children were able to adhere to the safety health protocols communicated by their mothers. Furthermore, contrary to the results of this study, in the United Kingdom, in terms of family influence on social distancing policy, mothers were compliant with this; however, their adolescent children had a low compliance rate. It also found that parents have a valuable influence on their children's compliance with safety health protocols. While in Missouri, United States, it revealed that students had a lower level of adherence to safety health protocols when the modified quarantine was declared in the state.<sup>85</sup>

## CONCLUSION

One study by UNICEF (n.d.) suggested that there are instances when parents find it challenging to communicate certain concerns or topics to their children. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this has brought stress to families and children due to the effects of isolation and uncertainty (California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, n.d.). This study came up with the following conclusions:

**The utilization of Grounded Theory is suitable for theorizing the communicative behavior of individuals during a health crisis.** In the context of the theory developed, CBCS is a good starting point in looking at communicative behavior during a health crisis, but it should be noted that variables or negative manifestations in theorizing should be taken into consideration. While in the context of this study, communication in the households was present during the peak of the pandemic in the Philippines, but at the same time, anchoring on the CBCS Theory, the informants continuously consume both traditional and online media to acquire information that they feed to their family members; however, attention shall be observed on communicating repercussions considering that it is imperative to psychologically address the fears that it could bring, particularly an adverse effect to the psychological and mental well-being of individuals.

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85 Worell, Mary Claire, et al. 2023. "Adherence to and experiences of K-12 students in modified and standard home quarantine during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in Missouri" in *PLOS ONE* 18 (1)

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