

Psychological Sense of Community and Altruism of Gawad Kalinga Residents in Batangas, Philippines

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Abstract: This study sought to find out the relationship between the level of psychological sense of community and altruism of the Gawad Kalinga (GK) residents in the Province of Batangas, Philippines. Moreover this study determined the level of psychological sense of community and altruism will vary in terms of respondents' profile. The researcher used descriptive research design using correlational method of study. Standardized tools that are translated in Filipino language were utilized in the study to ensure the validity of the results gathered. Three hundred twenty-two (322) Gawad Kalinga residents from Batangas Province were selected to be the respondents of the study.

Analysis of data revealed that most of the respondents are female, 18-29 years old, married and have been living in their respective areas for 4-6 years. It also revealed that the residents in the selected GK Villages have a high level of psychological sense of community and average level of altruism. The results of the study revealed that psychological sense of community does not vary in terms of the profile of the respondents while altruism varies in terms of the respondents' age. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between the psychological sense of community and altruism of the respondents.

Keywords: psychological sense of community, altruism, Gawad Kalinga (GK) residents.

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Introduction

Humans by nature are social beings. Everyone seeks to be a part of a larger group to satisfy the never-ending needs for affiliation-the desire to establish and maintain an optimum balance of social contact. Consequently, this desire to affiliate with others gives a person the feeling of being united with a group and develops the psychological sense of community.

The psychological sense of community is vital for the existence of the community for it serves as an adhesive that binds the community members to stand as one and work toward a specific goal of mutual benefit. Sarason (1974) defined this term as the perception of similarity to others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure. In addition, McMillan and Chavis (1986) defined this term as a feeling of belongingness, a feeling that members matter to one another and a shared faith that members' needs will be met through their commitment to be together. Based on this definition, McMillan and Chavis created the four elements of the

sense of community: membership, influence, integration and fulfillment of needs and shared emotional connection.

When a person feels that he belongs to the community, would he be motivated to act prosocially? Prosocial behaviors are actions intended to benefit others. The study focused on the form of this behavior called altruism. Altruism is an action or behavior of a person that is intended to benefit another without any obvious benefit to the helper in return. It is an action motivated by the desire to improve another's welfare in the presence of empathy. Likewise, the Evolutionary and Genetic Similarity Theory of Altruism by Rushton *et al.*, (1981) explains three major factors that affect our motivation to help. These are kin selection, reciprocity and group selection. This study was expected to yield the results that will help the respondents to determine their altruistic behavior and psychological sense of community towards their locality-based community for them to create a healthier environment and improve their lifestyle despite of poverty.

The researcher aimed to determine the relationship between the psychological sense of community and altruism of the respondents. Specifically, the researcher seeks to identify the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of age, gender, length of residency and civil status. It also seeks to assess the respondents' level of altruism and the level of psychological sense of community in terms of membership, influence, integration and fulfilment of needs and shared emotional connection. In addition, the study determined the significant difference on the level of altruism and the level of psychological sense of community when the respondents are grouped according the respondents' profile.

Materials and Method

The researcher used descriptive research design using the correlational method of study. The profile, level of psychological sense of community and altruistic level of the respondents were identified with the use of descriptive method. Correlational method was used to determine the relationship between psychological sense of community and altruism of Gawad Kalinga (GK) village residents in the Province of Batangas. It was considered for brevity that all the respondents are mandated to answer Filipino translated questionnaires given by the researcher within the vicinity of GK villages in the Batangas province.

In measuring the level of psychological sense of community, the researcher used Sense of Community Index 2 (SCI-2) of David McMillan and David Chavis and for altruism; Self-report Altruism Scale (SRA-Scale) of Rushton *et al.*, (1981) was utilized. Considering that the respondents are more comfortable with the Filipino language, the questionnaires were translated for easy understanding and to gather more accurate data as well. Pilot testing was done right after to test for the instruments' reliability.

The researcher used proportional allocation sampling design. The researcher considered the total enumeration of respondents through the GK coordinators of each GK Villages in Batangas.

The respondents are composed of male and female ranging from 18 to 77 years old. Three hundred twenty-two (322) residents from the GK population were selected to be the respondents of the study. Ten GK Villages were selected to be part of the study. Five (5) of these villages are located in Lipa City namely Marawoy-Modesto I GK Village, Marawoy-Modesto II GK Village, Marawoy-Humbleking Wood Texas GK Village, Marawoy-San Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila GK Village and Kabihasanan '74 GK Village. Three (3) of these GK

villages are located in the Municipality of San Jose, Batangas namely Gloria GK Village found in Sitio Abra, Banay-Banay II, San Jose, Batangas; Kalayaan CFC GK Village and Bermuda CFC GK Village found in Balagtasin II, San Jose, Batangas. The study also covers San Juan Nepomuceno GK Village in Janao-Janao, San Juan, Batangas and Assumption GK Village in Banay-Banay, Padre Garcia, Batangas.

The Sense of Community Index-2 (SCI-2) was used as a quantitative tool to measure the level of psychological sense of community of the respondents. The SCI -2 is composed of 24 items in which the respondents are instructed to rate the frequency of their corresponding answer using the following categories: 'Not at all', 'Somewhat', 'Mostly' and 'Completely'. The instrument was translated in Filipino in which respondents were instructed to rate the frequency of their corresponding answer using the following categories: 'hindi kailanman', 'bahagya', 'madalas' and 'totoo sa lahat ng pagkakataon'. It was based on a theory of sense of community presented by McMillan and Chavis (1986). The Filipino version of SCI-2 was administered into 81 respondents for pilot testing. After analyzing in statistical software, the translated questionnaire was proved to be reliable obtaining a coefficient alpha of 0.935.

To assess the altruistic level, the Self-Report Altruism (SRA) Scale of Rushton and colleagues was used in the study. It is a self-report format consisting of 20 items in which the respondents are instructed to rate the frequency with which they have engage in the altruistic behaviors using categories 'Never', 'Once', 'More than Once', 'Often' and 'Very Often'.

The instrument was also translated in Filipino in which respondents were instructed to rate the frequency of their corresponding answer using the following categories: 'hindi kailanman', 'minsan', 'mahigit sa isang pagkakataon', 'madalas' and 'madalas na madalas'. The Filipino version of SRA- scale was administered into 81 respondents for pilot testing. After analyzing in the statistical software, the translated questionnaire was proven to be reliable obtaining a coefficient alpha of 0.902.

In gathering the data, the initial step that the researcher did was to seek the approval of the GK Village coordinators in the selected GK Villages in the Batangas province through sending them communication letters. The researcher prepared the instruments that will be used for test administration. After completing all the requirements, the dates of the test administration were scheduled.

The respondents were knowledgeable enough about the purpose of the study. In the process of data gathering the researcher also conducted interviews with the respondents and the GK administrators to support the data gathered. Likewise, the data that were obtained from the translated Sense of Community Index 2 and the Self Report Altruism Scale will be recorded, tallied, tabulated, statistically analyzed and interpreted.

Results and Discussion

This presents, analyzes and interprets data on the relationship of psychological sense of community and altruism of the GK village residents in the Province of Batangas.

Table 1. Profile of the respondents in terms of age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18–29	123	38.2
30–41	114	35.4
42–53	61	18.9
54–65	18	5.6
66–77	6	1.9
Total	322	100

The table 1 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of age. It can be gleaned from the table that majority or 38.3% of the respondents are early adults with the age of 18 to 29. On the other hand, least number of respondents comprises the 1.9% are senior citizens with the aged 66 to 77.

Table 2. Profile of the respondents in terms of gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	182	56.5
Male	140	43.5
Total	322	100

The table 2 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of gender. This shows that majority or 56.5% of the respondents are female. On the other hand, there were only 140 or 43.5% male respondents.

Table 3. Profile of the Respondents in terms of length of residency

Length	Frequency	Percentage
1–3	75	23.3
4–6	183	56.8
7–9	36	11.2
10–12	28	8.7
Total	322	100

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of length of residency. It can be gleaned from the table that majority or 56.8% of the respondents have been living in their respective area for about 4 to 6 years. On the other hand, 28 or 8.7% among the respondents stayed on their respective villages for 8 to 12 years.

Table 4. Profile of the respondents in terms of civil status

Civil Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	78	24.2
Married	236	73.3
Widow/Widower	8	2.5
Total	322	100

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents in terms of civil status. It can be gleaned from the table above that majority or 73.3% of the respondents are married. Seventy-eight or 24.2% of the respondents are single while the least are widow/widower which comprise the 2.5% of the respondents.

Table 5. Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents in terms of membership

Mean	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
0.0-0.49	Very Low	3	.9
0.50-1.49	Low	77	23.9
1.50-2.49	High	168	52.2
2.50-3.00	Very High	74	23.0
	Total	322	100

Table 5 shows that 168 or 52.2% of the GK village residents have high level of psychological sense of community in terms of membership. This implies that they have the feeling of belongingness and personal investment in the community. This finding indicates strong bonding among the GK village residents which convey their equal standing in the community. Similarly, they are knowledgeable about one another and have mutual trust. Considering that most of the residents are members of Couples for Christ (CFC), it can also be inferred that their sense of belongingness to the community is an outgrowth of varied socialization, religious and work activities they have participated in together as a group. They also developed common culture out of conforming to the norms and way of life inside the community (Christopher C. Sonn *et al.*, 1999).

Table 6. Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents in terms of influence

Mean	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
0.0-0.49	Very Low	1	.3
0.50-1.49	Low	71	22.0
1.50-2.49	High	178	55.3
2.50-3.00	Very High	72	22.4
	Total	322	100

Table 6 shows that 178 or 55.3% of the GK village residents have high level of psychological sense of community in terms of influence. It implies that the respondents can be able to influence and be influenced by the community. The respondents show sense of mattering or making difference to their group as to the group matters to its members. It is parallel to the residents' claim that although there are sets of officers in each village, they treat each other equally.

Table 7. Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents in terms of integration and fulfillment of needs

Mean	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
0.0-0.49	Very Low	3	.9
0.50-1.49	Low	88	27.3
1.50-2.49	High	183	56.8
2.50-3.00	Very High	48	14.9
	Total	322	100

Table 7 shows that 183 or 56.8% of the GK village residents have high level of psychological sense of community in terms of integration and fulfillment of needs. It implies that the respondents shared values and efficient exchange of resources among other members of the GK community. The findings concur with McMillan and Chavis as cited by Obst and White

(2007) contention that there is mutual feeling that the members' need will be met by the resources received through their membership in the group. The individual-group association are rewarding to the individual member that made them maintain a positive sense of togetherness. The study confirms that the motivators of behavior are present in the GK villages in which needs are met by the resources received through their membership in the community.

Table 8. Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents in terms of shared emotional connection

Mean	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
0.0-0.49	Very Low	2	.6
0.50-1.49	Low	73	22.7
1.50-2.49	High	145	45.0
2.50-3.00	Very High	102	31.7
	Total	322	100

Table 8 shows the level of psychological sense of community of the respondents in terms of shared emotional connection. One hundred forty-five or 45% of the residents feel high level of shared emotional connection on their community which implies that members recognize a share bond through behavior, speech and other cues. On the other hand, least or .6% of the respondents feel that they do not share emotional bond with the other members of the GK community.

The findings were supported by McMillan and Chavis (Obst and White, 2007) stating that members of community commit and believe that community members share history, common places, time together and similar experiences. Respondents claim that majority of them were displaced from their original residences due to several socio-economic factors and they believe that these experiences enable them to relate with the other members of the GK community.

Table 9. Respondents' Altruism level

Mean	Interpretation	Frequency	Percentage
1.00 - 1.49	Very Low	3	.9
1.50 - 2.49	Low	129	40.1
2.50 - 3.49	Average	142	44.1
3.50 - 4.49	High	42	13.0
4.50- 5.00	Very High	6	1.9
	Total	322	100

Table 9 shows the altruism level of the respondents. It can be gleaned from the table that majority or 44.1% of the respondents experienced average level of altruistic behavior from the other member of the community. In contrary, .9% of the respondents feels that there is a very low level of altruistic behavior on their community.

Result suggest that GK village residents have only an average level of altruism. In general, it implies that the residents in the villages engage in helping activities like giving directions to a stranger or helping an acquaintance in moving households but a moderate extent only. Some of them totally did not feel any help from the other member of their community. Some respondents claim that they do not mind other so long as they are not affected by the others'

activities. However, considering that the residents are mostly members of the Couples for Christ which is a religious organization also known for charity, this finding further confirms that the members have internalized the values of the organization.

Table 10. Difference on the total Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents when grouped according to age

Age	Psychological Sense of Community					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	949.486	4	237.371	1.362	.247	Not Significant
Within Groups	55245.334	317	174.276			
Total	56194.820	321				

Table 10 shows the difference on the psychological sense of community of the respondents when grouped according to their age. The table shows that there is no significant difference on the respondents' psychological sense of community level when grouped according to age. It implies that psychological sense of community level does not vary in terms of age.

Table 11. Difference on the total Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents when grouped according to gender

Gender	Psychological Sense of Community					
	N	Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Female	182	46.604	1.819	1.217	.225	Not Significant
Male	140	44.786				

Table 11 shows the difference on the psychological sense of community of the respondents when grouped according to gender. The table shows that there is no significant difference on the respondents' psychological sense of community level when grouped according to gender with a mean difference of 1.819. It implies that psychological sense of community is not gender-specific unlike any other psychological construct in the field of community and social psychology.

Table 12. Difference on the total Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents when grouped according to length of residency

Length of Residency	Psychological Sense of Community					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	1119.802	3	373.267	2.155	.093	Not Significant
Within Groups	55075.018	318	173.192			
Total	56194.820	321				

Table 12 shows the difference on the psychological sense of community of the respondents when grouped according to length of residency. The table shows that there is no significant difference on the respondents' level of psychological sense of community when grouped

according to length of residency. It implies that psychological sense of community does not differ whether how long or short an individual resides in an area or territory.

Table 13. Difference on the total Psychological Sense of Community level of the respondents when grouped according to civil status

Civil Status	Psychological Sense of Community					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	467.126	2	233.563	1.337	.264	Not Significant
Within Groups	55727.694	319	174.695			
Total	56194.820	321				

Table 13 presents the difference on the psychological sense of community of the respondents when grouped according to civil status. The table shows that there is no significant difference on the respondents’ level of psychological sense of community when grouped according to civil status. It implies that the psychological sense of community level does not vary in terms of civil status.

Table 14. Difference on the Altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to age

Age	Level of Altruism					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	5.065	4	1.266	2.434	.047	Significant
Within Groups	164.882	317	.520			
Total	169.946	321				

Table 14 shows the difference on the respondents’ altruism level when grouped according to age. The table shows that there is significant difference on the Altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to age. It implies that altruism level varies from one age group to another. Moreover, significant differences were specifically noted between the age groups of 30-41 and 54-65 as well as between age groups 66-77 and 30-41.

The result contradicts the study conducted by Johnson (2000) that claims that altruism level does not vary on age. The study compared the altruism of sixth graders, high school students and college students of United States showing that altruism is constantly low across age groups which argues with this research.

This can be explained in the view of cultural factors. Considering that Johnson’s study was made in a western country where individualism is highlighted, this study serves as an evidence that in Filipino context, altruism significantly differs between age groups.

Table 15. Difference on the Altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to gender

Gender	Level of Altruism					
	N	Mean	Mean Difference	t-value	p-value	Interpretation
Female	182	2.695	-.040	-.487	.627	Not Significant
Male	140	2.734				

Table 15 shows the difference on the altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to gender. The table shows that there is no significant difference in the Altruism level when the respondents are grouped according to age. It implies that altruism level does not vary in terms of gender.

This finding agreed with Sze (2007) in his study on gender and cultural differences in empathy-altruism hypothesis among University students in Hong Kong. The study shows that there is no significant difference between male and female levels of altruism. They only differ on the type of altruistic behavior they engage in as women are more likely to volunteer for a charity work like teaching while men are more likely to do heroic deeds like saving a drowning child.

Similarly, an experiment conducted by Johnson (2000) shows that altruistic behavior projected by a person depends on the price and either gender can be more altruistic. This was shown by the subjects of the experiments which are elementary and high school students. However, women happened in college are more altruistic regardless of cost although this was happened when the given price is low. On the other hand, male high school students are more altruistic when the given price is high. A similar study conducted by Andreoni and Vesterlund (2001) showed that altruistic behavior does not vary on gender. It depends on the price giving in which either gender can be found to be more altruistic. When the price giving is low, men appear more altruistic and when the price is high, women are more generous.

Table 16. Difference on the Altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to length of residency

Length of Residency	Level of Altruism					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	1.887	4	.472	.890	.470	Not Significant
Within Groups	168.060	317	.530			
Total	169.946	321				

Table 16 depicts the difference on the respondents' altruism level when grouped according to the length of residency. The table shows that there is no significant difference on altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to the length of residency. It implies that altruism level does not vary whether how long or short an individual has been living in a particular area.

Table 17. Difference on the Altruism level of the respondents when grouped according to civil status

Civil Status	Level of Altruism					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-value	p-value	Interpretation
Between Groups	1.313	2	.657	1.242	.290	Not Significant
Within Groups	168.633	319	.529			
Total	169.946	321				

Table 17 shows the difference on the respondents’ altruism level when grouped according to civil status. The table shows that there is no significant difference on the altruism of the respondents when grouped according to civil status. It implies that altruism level does not vary in terms of civil status.

Table 18. Relationship between the respondents’ Psychological Sense of Community and Altruism level

Psychological Sense of Community	Level of Altruism			
	r-value	Interpretation	p-value	Interpretation
Membership	.447**	Direct, Moderate Correlation	0.001	Significant
Influence	.491**	Direct, Moderate Correlation	0.001	Significant
Integration and Fulfillment	.439**	Direct, Moderate Correlation	0.001	Significant
Shared Emotional Connection	.367**	Direct, Low Correlation	0.001	Significant

Table 18 shows the relationship between the level of psychological sense of community and altruism of the respondents. The figure shows that the highest rated psychological sense of community element is influence with a correlation value of 0.491 and has a significant direct, moderate correlation with altruism. This implies that the more a person feels that he is influenced by and can influence other members of the community, the more likely he will be altruistic towards others.

The second highest rated psychological sense of community element is the integration and fulfillment of needs with a correlation value of 0.439 and has a significant direct, moderate correlation with Altruism. This denotes that when individual feels that his needs are met through mutual commitment with the community he or she has a higher tendency to be altruistic towards others.

The next high rated psychological sense of community element is membership with a correlation value of 0.447 and has a significant direct, moderate correlation with Altruism. This implies that the more a person recognizes and is recognized as member of the community, the more he tends to act altruistic towards others. Lastly, shared emotional

connection has a correlation value of 0.367 and has a significant direct low correlation with altruism. This implies that when an individual acknowledges a shared bond with other members of the community, he or she is more likely to be altruistic towards other people. Orford's (2008) show results stating that elements of psychological sense of community bind members forming a strong community that offers members a positive way to interact. This will also give them the opportunity to share important events as well as provide the way to help resolve problems in a positive manner.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is concluded that there is no significant difference on the level of psychological sense of community of the respondents when grouped according to their profile. This means that psychological sense of community does not vary in terms of age, gender, length of residency and civil status. In addition, there is no significant difference on the level of altruism of the respondents in terms of gender, length of residency and civil status. This implies that altruism does not vary according to the said profile. Moreover, a significant difference on altruism was noted in terms of age which means that altruism vary across age groups. Findings showed that there is a significant relationship between the level of Psychological sense of community and altruism of the respondents. This implies that the more a person feels that he or she belongs to a community the more likely he or she will become altruistic towards other people.

Considering the findings, it is recommended that the residents of Gawad Kalinga villages should maintain a high psychological sense of community towards other members of the community through continuous participation with the community's activities. Likewise, they should be advised to engage themselves on program developed and implemented by the local government as well as the GK administration for them to enhance or improve their altruistic behavior towards others. The residents are encouraged to improve their altruistic behavior by being more generous and engaging into more helpful activities like voluntary works and sharing. GK Village administration is suggested to develop more programs and activities for the residents that will maintain high psychological sense of community towards other and further improve altruism. They should also be the one responsible for encouraging and motivating the occupants to join these programs to help them become more sociable and closely tied with the other members of the community. With the findings of this study, residents of other communities in Batangas and even other locality-based communities outside the province will become more knowledgeable about the positive implications of having a community that promotes a good social environment. Thus, the researcher recommends other communities to devise programs that can develop their residents' psychological sense of community and altruism.

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