Exploring Filipino teachers' identity and community engagements

by

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Glossary

Agency (or reflexivity) – the notion that individuals possess the capacity and ability to influence their community engagements

Bayanihan – key Filipino cultural value and/or custom, the root operative word is *'bayan'* or community, thus referring to a deep sense of community spirit that impels a member to voluntarily participate in any worthwhile activity to achieve a goal that promotes the general welfare of the community.

Brigada Eskwela – annual program developed by the Department of Education wherein different sectors of the community participate, by invoking the spirit of *bayanihan*, in the preparation of (i.e., by repairing, repainting and cleaning) public schools and classrooms for the incoming school year.

Commoditization – refers to a valuation of something in economic terms

Consecration – a process in which teachers' positions or practices within a field become endowed with a special aura and sense of distinction

Construction – a process emerging from a relation between teachers' habitus, capital and field

Cultural arbitrary – subjective basis of ascribing ascendant position to group

Cultural capital – a non-material resource whose value is derived from the affordances of culture mediated individually or collectively through various institutions. In the field of Filipino teachers, academic degrees and cultural knowledge of the community constitutes cultural capital.

Cultural literacy – a distinct understanding of a specific field whereby teachers are able to strategize their actions in a given field

Disinterestedness – the appearance of being above and removed from areas of economic and social interest

Diskarte – means street-smart skill, a capacity and ability to work and to strategize with the cards one is dealt with. In this study, this refers to teachers' skill to configure their multiple literacies and capitals as a way of navigating their professional and personal challenges

Doxa – 'a set of fundamental beliefs which does not even need to be asserted in the form of an explicit, self-conscious dogma' (Bourdieu 2000, p.15)

Field – a partially autonomous structure of forces characterized by struggle for positions that can either transform or conserve the *status quo*.

Habitus – primarily refers to historically constituted dispositions and practices. This fundamental human property is durable and both structured and structuring. Together with capital and field is the principle upon which identity is constructed.

Illusio – a state where one unconditionally believes in the worthiness of an endeavour.

Legitimization – a process according an individual or group with official recognition either by force of law or through cultural norms

Misrecognition – a process and state of forgetting that agents are historically constituted based on interests

Orthodoxy – refers to official narratives (e.g., traditions, cultural norms, etc.).

Pakikibaka – collective cooperative action to resist social domination, to challenge the status quo and to fight for what is rightfully theirs

Pakiki-isa – process of being in solidarity with *kapwa* (fellowman) based on what communally binds to attain a common object

Pakikipag-kapwa – process of establishing authentic relationship based on shared identity

Pakikiramdam – or shared inner perception, a value that allows one to have a sense (non verbal) of understanding about a particular situation.

Pakikiramay – a Filipino value that straddles between sympathy and empathy, it highlights a strong sense of community impelling one to reach out particularly in times loss, calamity or disaster

Practical sense – a capacity and ability to understand and navigate specific fields, also a knowledge and literacy to utilize resources in the social world

Reproduction – the act of recreating social and cultural practices that maintains the status quo of social things including the condition required for that reproduction

Social Capital – resource acquired through network of institutionalized relationships and social rituals

Symbolic capital – form of cultural, economic and social capitals whose value depends mainly on how institutions of power, including communities, appreciate and perceive such capital (e.g., prestige, nobility)

Symbolic violence – a subtle and non-physical violence exercised upon individuals generally resulting in their subjugation

Trapos – Literal meaning is dishrag but when used in reference to traditional politicians, the term is associated with political dynasties whose main political objective is to cling to power

Utang na loob – often loosely but inadequately translated as debt of gratitude. While the word debt always involve a mercantile exchange, *utang na loob* refers more authentically to a disposition of gratitude

Abstract

In the Philippines, it is incumbent upon all teachers to participate in their respective communities' social, cultural, civic, political and religious activities. While studies on the identities of teachers abound in relation to their role as professionals, there is a lack of academic exploration of how teachers' community engagements influence their identity. The purpose of this dissertation is to explore contemporary Filipino teachers' identity through their multiple and overlapping community engagements. The central question of this research is *how do teachers' community engagements help construct a contemporary Filipino teacher's social identity?*

Drawing from the probative and constructive value of Bourdieu's theory and method, I operationalize the notion that identity may be constructed by studying the intersections between Filipino teachers' *habitus*, capital and field. I apply Bourdieu's theoretical framework to data gathered from focus group discussions (FGDs), key informant interviews (KII), and observations. While Bourdieu's theory and method explain the social and collective dimension of identity formation when applied in concert, their efficacy is stretched in understanding identities' transformative and liberating possibilities as well as in accounting for gender and religious beliefs. FGD participants, comprised of teachers from eight public and private schools, discussed the modalities of their community engagements. Four key informants were interviewed to deepen the understanding of specific dimensions of their community engagements.

The findings show that to the community, teacher identity in the Philippines is multi-faceted and influenced by historical factors, social and political structures, economic resources, as well as cultural and religious practices and expectations. Generally, it is characterized as *heterogeneous, indicative of relative agency, historically conditioned, configured through limited economic but abundant cultural and social resources, and continuously forged within the crucible of relations of power.* However, when culturally specified, this identity is distinguished, straddling the following identity markers in the community: *community leader, moral personality, culturally and socially literate, community intellectual, a female profession,* and in some sectors *activist, religious lay leader and worker.* In this study, the different modes of legitimating contemporary

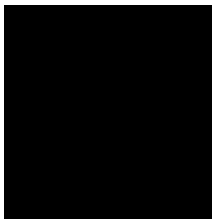
Filipino teachers' identity in and with the community produce multiple identity markers with diverse characteristics.

This study concludes that Filipino teachers' identity in the community is forged through fluctuating subordinated and ascendant positions where they are both structurally determined and agentic. Finally, exploring how community engagements critically constitute teachers' identity reveals that teachers can creatively imagine ways to socially and culturally contextualize learning.

Declaration

This thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, are clearly acknowledged.

Stephen Redillas

Signed: 

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Part I - Setting the stage

The first part contains the first four chapters of my research. In Chapter 1, I introduce the aims of the study and identify the research questions. This chapter also provides the cultural context and identifies the subject matter of the research. In this chapter, I also outline and discuss how teachers' role is intertwined with the relationship between school and community. With this background and context, I propose the central hypothesis of this research that Filipino teachers' identity in the community may be constructed through their multiple and overlapping engagements therein. Chapter 2, the literature review, deliberates on the importance of anchoring this research to correlative studies. This is done through a survey and evaluation of studies around teachers' identity and community engagements. This chapter also explores the researchable gaps that underscore the relevance of this study. After presenting the context, parameters and subject matter of this research, I discuss the lens through which I analyse this social phenomenon. Thus, Chapter 3 discusses Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method – particularly their probative and constructive value. Finally, the preliminary part concludes with my research methodology and methods in Chapter 4. In this chapter, I discuss qualitative research as the overall methodology that informs how I selected the research locales, chose the participants for the focus groups and key informant interviews, and how I coded, organized and analysed the data. This chapter also describes how I utilized indigenous cultural approaches to mitigate the colonizing impact of utilizing a foreign theory to understand a culturally distinct social phenomenon.

Chapter 1: Introduction, aims of the study and research questions

1.1 Introduction

This research study on Filipino teachers' community engagements and identity emerged from my engagement with teachers who often discussed their multiple leadership roles in the community. I observed that at the very least, a Filipino teacher is unquestionably indefatigable, resilient and creative. Typically, they work in a school for almost eight hours a day from Monday to Friday. They also attend to domestic responsibilities (e.g., preparing meals for their family, doing household chores) or engage in other economic activities (e.g., farming, fishing or managing a small business) to augment their salary. For Filipino teachers, the day is not over until pupils' assignments are patiently checked, test papers judiciously marked, and lesson plans for the next day, prepared. Even as their teaching profession demands that they juggle several responsibilities at home and in the school, they are still expected to be regularly and actively involved in community affairs and assume critical roles in its various undertakings. This description liberally categorizes teachers' overlapping activities into: domestic (as a parent, spouse, etc.), professional (as teachers and mentors), and civic (as social actors in community activities). Moreover, Filipino teachers have long engaged in the community, figuring prominently in various customary social and cultural, as well as, traditional religious and official civil occasions. This prolonged visibility and regularity of teachers' participation socialize most locals to the many active roles of teachers in their respective communities.

In this study, my interest centres on teachers' multiple and overlapping involvement in community activities, particularly on how they may have contributed to the construction of their identity through these engagements. Given this wider dimension of engagements, that is, outside of the classroom and in the community, I begin to ponder on the literacies required of them to function meaningfully in this context and the social processes involved in the interaction with other individuals and institutions in this field. This rumination also directs my thoughts into communities' perception of who these teachers are in the performance of these community-relevant practices. In other words, I began to inquire about Filipino teachers' identity through their practices in the many

interrelated episodic and continuous community-centred activities. In this dissertation, I argue that teachers' community engagements contribute to the construction of their identity in the community.

Western literature narrowly refers to 'teachers as those persons who regularly instruct pupils […] at the primary and secondary levels' (Hoyle 1995, p.58). In the local context, and for the purposes of this research, Filipino teachers are conceptualized as those professionally engaged in basic education, that is, in primary (elementary) and secondary (high school) levels, in both public and private institutions. This description, in essence, is how a 'teacher' is legally constituted in Republic Act 7836 (*An Act to Strengthen the Regulation and Supervision of the Practice of Teaching in the Philippines*). However, a teacher's work goes well beyond formally defined boundaries. While the classroom serves as the natural domain of teachers' professional activities, in this study, I set forth to research the same cohort in their larger social space, their life in and with the community. In other words, this research seeks to explore contemporary Filipino teachers' identity beyond the confines of their traditional and professional enclave. I intend to draw upon Pierre Bourdieu's sociology to understand how teachers' multiple, prolonged and overlapping community engagements contribute to the construction of their identity in the community. Although Filipino teachers are engaged with the civic education of their pupils – primarily in the classroom – their community engagements position them to potentially 'educate' a wider population in their respective communities, albeit in an informal and indirect manner.

The steady stream of literature from multiple academic disciplines and generated from different cultures has appraised Bourdieu's theory and method, arguing that it straddles and struggles between sociological sufficiency (Grenfell 2008; Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990; Reay 2004; Swartz 1997) and inadequacy in particular social contexts and when applied to various areas of social life. For example, Skeggs (1997, 2004a) noted its conceptual struggles in accounting for critical role of gender while Mellor and Schilling (2010) and Thumala Olave (2012) observe its shortcomings to sufficiently explain how faith dynamics influences the notion of an agentic individual beyond mercantile exchange relations. While cognizant of these tensions, I am also emboldened by the sustained but critical application of Bourdieu's optics to different social phenomena across cultures and academic disciplines. This positive development provides a further basis for utilizing this theory and method in critically constructing contemporary

Filipino teachers' identity. Organizing these introductory reflections on the subject matter helped generate the title of this thesis, namely, *Exploring Filipino teachers' identity and community engagements*. Contained in the title are the key concepts and their mutually affecting relations. As exploratory research, this study also includes 'interrogation on why this phenomena occurs, the forces and influences that drive their occurrence and the emerging generated meaning' (Ritchie et al. 2014, p.32).

The concept and study of identity is fraught with challenges due to its complex nature. Nonetheless, its social and educational significance continues to increase across disciplines and cultures (Burke et al. 2003; McCarthey & Moje 2002; Wetherell & Mohanty 2012). Identity studies is one of the fastest growing areas of sustained interest in the social sciences (Côté 2006). Since the concept of identity is a cardinal theme in this research, this study subscribes to the observation that the development of this notion requires multiple historical pathways (Wetherell & Mohanty 2012). Notwithstanding the nuances and challenges in understanding identity, the multiple conceptual bifurcations surrounding identity can be generally deduced from Holland et al.'s (1998, p.4) notion of identity as the

> Figurative combination of the intimate and personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations […] through which people care about and care for what is going on around leading them to create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being.

Highlighting that identity is a product of the configurations of multiple historical social factors in a given context supports the notion that this concept fundamentally reflects a collective facet of who teachers are. Thus, the intricacies of the construction of identity reflect the impact of multiple contributing factors and forces. For example, Skeggs (2010, p.339) proposes that 'the conditions of possibility for [class] identity are always shaped by forms of capital, types of governance and claims for legitimacy'. Shifting the discourse beyond school parameters motivates the provocation of the link between teachers' profession and the space beyond school setting, that is, the community whereby both the demographics of location and how the space is constructed (Kubota 2016) facilitates a construction of teachers' identity. This understanding positions the notion of identity both as a principle and recipient of action 'gradually forming and re-forming in relation to historically specific contexts' (Holland et al. 1998, p.284).

Calibrating further Holland et al.'s notion of identity towards one that emerges out of '*praxis* or practical action in the world, while vigilant of the possibility of illusion or

false perceptions of one's real social position' (Wetherell & Mohanty 2012, p.9) seminally relates to how identity may be critically constructed through multifarious community engagements. In other words, teachers' practical action (i.e., engagements or practices) in the social world (specifically in their respective communities) provides the principle upon which their identity in the community may be constructed. As a consequence, the positive appraisal of Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method rests on its potential to provide a social schema for exploring contemporary Filipino teachers' identity through their practices in the community. In particular, Diane Reay (2010, p. 284) proposed that 'Bourdieu's concepts of field, *habitus* and capitals provide an analytic lens for understanding identities'. When evaluated from another perspective, the relations between the concepts of *habitus*, field and capital prescribe a framework to see 'identity as intertwined, shaping and shaped' (Twiselton 2004, p. 163). Thus, to propose an operational and contextual definition for this study, Filipino teachers' identity is a social construct emergent from intersections between field, *habitus* and capital perceived through teachers' community engagements. Simultaneously, the product of these historical relations distinguishes agents (individuals, groups and institutions) from each other, thereby expounding on the notion of identity (and identity formation) in terms of difference, where 'difference is asserted against what is closest' (Bourdieu 1984, p.479). This identity is historically constituted and forged through layers and modalities of relations in any given social field. What emerges from this discussion is a configuration of a more dynamic and non-essentialist notion of identity.

In this study I argue that the overall objective to understand and construct Filipino teachers' identity in the community through their engagements therein can be critically pursued through Pierre Bourdieu's sociology. The probative and constructive value of this sociology provides a critical yet more cohesive research 'tool kit' on two counts. At one end, the correlative concepts of '"field", "capital" and "*habitus*" [when utilized relationally/in concert] have provided a systematic way of re-working the social construction of identity in line with the traditions of critical analyses' (Wetherell & Mohanty 2012, p. 10). This means that critical analysis through these key concepts allows for a more dynamic notion of identity, one that is emergent from relations, in contrast to a static notion of an essentialist identity. Anchoring exploration of identity on relational dynamics magnified the relevance of drawing from the historicity of both the social phenomena and the sociological tool (Steinmetz 2011) helps ensure

correlation to a wider cultural history and offers a conceptual possibility for the interrogation of other constitutive social and cultural factors.

In the next section, I discuss samples of contemporary studies focused on Filipino teachers' classroom and school professional functions as practices through which their professional identity is constructed. The core criteria in selecting what studies are to be evaluated in relation to this research includes the following: studies on teachers' classroom literacies that can also be useful in community settings, such as classroom management and leadership in the community, students' perceptions and expectations in the classroom and in the community, and teachers' professional identity and their identity in the community. Since in this study the analysis of teachers' professional identity includes the potentiality of how they may be extended beyond the classroom/school setting to the community, subsequent section enables an interrogation of how teachers' school-honed literacies and skills may be utilized in their community engagements.

1.2 School and classroom: teachers' natural professional environment

In the Philippine context, historically speaking, the notion of what schools are has been entangled with Spanish and American colonial objectives (see Aldana 1949; Bazaco 1936). In this manner, school systems are enterprises operating with a primary educational purpose – from their goals and operation to how they are evaluated (Goodlad 1979). Since schools are indubitably entangled with the interests of those who wield considerable power in Philippine society (e.g. the state, private corporations and the individual owners of these academic institutions) teachers inevitably plays a pivotal role in operationalizing the mission and vision (or worldview) of these entities. This interconnection between worldview, school and teachers underscores the need to understand its impact in configuring Filipino teachers' identity.

An increasing quantity of literature on the relations between Filipino teachers' classroom effectiveness, teachers' roles and professional identity within the classroom, and the school setting indicates a consistent interest in identity studies (Abulon 2014; Agarao-Fernandez & de Guzman 2005; De Leon-Carillo 2008; Savellano 1999). Local research on teachers' identity typically centres on evaluating their professional development and 'always at the core of such endeavours is the understanding that

professional development is about teachers' learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their student's growth' (Avalos 2011, p. 10; see also Janer et al. 2015). For instance, Abulon (2014, p. 38) cited four intersecting conditions that, according to research, influence good and effective teaching in the Philippine context: 'personality-based dispositions, content mastery and expertise, teaching competence traits and pedagogical knowledge'.

Although articulated in a different cultural setting, Tuinamuana (2007) rationalizes the prevalence of teacher classroom research by arguing that school and classroom spaces are teachers' natural field and pupils are the primary stakeholder in and centrepiece of this learning space. Although this argument indicating that school/classroom as teachers' natural habitat, in my view, limits the manner through which teachers' identity may be understood, the abovementioned contemporary body of research connected to teachers' professional practices in the classroom reflects the bulk of the content and prevailing direction of research on teachers' identity in the Philippine context. What is lacking, however, is a study focused on teachers as socially constructed agents operating both in schools and outside schools, particularly in assuming a role similar to a 'social worker' (Bourdieu 1998c, p.2) that Filipino teachers had been called on to play from colonial past until contemporary times.

Without omitting the unquestionable importance of classroom-centred research, an integral study on teachers' identity – particularly in the Philippine social context – requires an investigation of their typical and sustained engagements in the larger social space, that is, the community. While teachers' community engagements have long been practiced and cemented in Philippine society, this social phenomenon remains unexplored despite the positive impacts of school–community relations (Frederico & Whiteside 2016; Sanders 2001) for teachers and learners. Specifically, Biddle (1995, p.64) observed that 'there are relatively few studies of teachers' prestige and even rarer studies of teachers' authority [in a non-school setting] as this is normally confined to pupils, the school and curricular matters'. For him, the primary reason is that 'it remains difficult to observe these behaviours elsewhere in school and much more difficult still to study teachers' activities in non-school contexts' (p.63). Almost a decade after Biddle's observation, Tuinamuana (2007, p. 111) articulates a similar sentiment. For her, there is a 'tendency to overlook the conceptual and ideological underpinnings to various approaches [and] practices.' This observation suggests that teachers' role is apolitical.

This indirectly suggests that teachers refrain from engaging in fields where their sacrosanct role could be compromised and their influence as teachers emaciated.

Historically constituted tools (see Gorski 2013; Steinmetz 2011) help expose the ill effects of this disregard for the sociologically obvious. While Bourdieu's tools have been used in understanding social factors related to teacher education (Grenfell 1996; Tuinamuana 2007), for instance, teaching as a gendered practice (Brown 2005) and educational space as a venue for the reproduction of practices (Hunter 2004), these have yet to be tested in understanding Filipino teachers' practices in the community. The relevance of contextual understanding of teachers' practices in Philippine communities flows from the uniqueness of this social phenomenon. In other words, since schools and teachers originate from and exist in a particular socio-historical context, they also see and engage the social world distinctively and differently. This argument appears to be self-evident in Filipino teachers' pervasive and multiple community engagements as well as in the flexibility and unending evolution of the modalities of these social involvements. Hence, while the complexity of teachers' community engagements may deter scholars – for practical reasons – from more animated research on teacher–community relations, the conception of teachers as apolitical and a profession simply bounded by the four walls of the classroom requires deeper provocation.

Researching teachers' professional identity and its development (Avalos 2011) presents certain challenges, especially since the relative manageability of the classroom research environment and 'captured' participants (students and teachers) renders studies of teachers' professional identity in school setting more appealing and convenient. Notwithstanding such constraints, more research needs to be conducted surrounding 'the role of the context [e.g., the community] in professional identity formation' (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop 2004, p.107). Therefore, since it appears insufficient to rely only on contexts directly related to schooling in accounting for contextual factors in the formation of teachers' identity, further interrogation demands consideration of an expanded context including family, community and state. For this reason, in this exploration of the relationship between contemporary Filipino teachers' identity and community engagement I recognize the 'need to challenge any taken-for-granted assumptions of a society/nation homology in research and theorizing, yet also recognize the specificities of local and national educational systems' (Lingard, Hardy & Heimans 2011, p. 211). In Bourdieu's sociology, we find a tool kit for evaluating the critical role

of context in identity formation (see Hilgers & Mangez 2015; Swartz 1997; Thomson 2008). Notwithstanding the scarcity of research on Filipino teachers' identity, much less their identity in the community, the next section discusses how some contemporary local studies provide glimpses of identity research in a community context.

1.3 From classroom to community: teachers as community workers?

Developing countries 'have in various ways stressed the need to involve teachers more directly in efforts to improve conditions of life in rural areas – in addition to their core task of classroom teaching' (Lauglo 1982, p. 233). With this in mind, 'educational institutions' [are] always called upon to serve other purposes in addition to educational goals' (Goodlad 1979, p. 8). Hence, even if teachers' primary professional role is to enact the curriculum in a designated space, namely the classroom, Lauglo (1982) and Goodlad (1979) suggests rationale for teachers' functions that extend beyond school boundaries into the community. Therefore, the relevance of 'teacherly' functions may also be extended in various circumstances of community life. As roles and functions relate to how teachers' identity may be constructed, the same practices are potentially meaningful both in classroom and community contexts. In the community, teachers are forced to confront the wider existential demands of social life.

The focus on teachers' engagement in the community allows a deeper exploration of the notion of what productive pedagogies means and how good teachers and exemplary schools make a difference in society (Hayes et al. 2006). Teachers' community engagement is institutionalized in the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers in the Philippines where they are required to be leaders in the community. The community context expands the space where leaders, that is, 'individual, a team of people or an institution, generally thought of as acting as a coherent whole' (Eacott 2013a, p. 94), may be trained and deployed rendering possible a diverse configuration of leadership modalities. The subsequent leadership practices in the community foreground the possibility not only of teachers as individual leaders but of teachers as a collective or a class exercising culturally grounded leadership functions in different aspects of community circumstances. Indeed teachers' community-oriented leadership does not depend on modalities of distance or differences in economic or educational attainment, social position, and so on, as much as on the similarities with people in the community. In other words, teachers' school-centred leadership can be extended beyond the school

setting by using the same understanding of 'leadership actions on a micro level as going about [the quotidian business] of leading schools' (Eacott 2011b, p. 135) but this time in a wider community setting addressing more complex social situations.

Expansion of teachers' identity and roles from the school setting to the community context can be juxtaposed alongside arguments supporting the need to strengthen school–society relationships. The teachers' cardinal role in strengthening teacher–community relations rests on the urgent 'need to become more deeply informed about community forces and structures and more directly involved in efforts to strengthen community organizations' (Schutz 2006, p. 691). In the Philippines, this academe–community relationship has been a feature of the country's development aimed at developing 'civic conscience and teach[ing] the duties of citizenship, love of country, patriotism, and nationalism' (Almonte-Acosta 2011, p.175). Since these aims are contained in the current basic education curriculum, it falls upon teachers' creativity to enact them through their professional practices (p.175). In this study, citizenship education extends beyond the school/classroom setting and overflows to the community amidst calls to 'deparochialize education and redesign pedagogies that "teach and learn beyond the nation"' (Koh 2007, p.179). This means that teachers become entangled with aims of educating students for local, national and global competencies. However, the uncritical acquisition of global skills and literacies for the purposes of satisfying global markets risk further disadvantaging local communities. Hence, 'despite the increasing modernization and internationalization of services in education, [it remains critical that] the perennial but modified issues of quality, access and equity' (Symaco 2013, pp.191–192) remains at the forefront of the radical discourse of teachers' identity construction.

The focus of this research is on Filipino teachers' identity in the community. However, due to the absence of studies in this field, this introductory section starts by exploring how Filipino teachers' professional identity in general has been explored including suggested areas for teachers' professional development, has been substantially explored (e.g., Bustos-Orosa 2008; De Leon-Carillo 2008; Janer et al. 2015). These studies provide a potential conceptual link for transposing this school-configured identity to the community. De Leon-Carillo (2008, p.197) concludes that teachers' roles converge into clusters, namely: 'knowledge source, direction-setter, character formatter, change agent and learner'. In another study, Bustos-Orosa (2008, p.170) has argued that 'personality-

based disposition, content mastery, and pedagogical knowledge are the usual factors that account for good teaching'. Although both studies tackled teachers' roles and identity within the school setting, the same roles appear to be cognitively and practically valuable in the community. Janer et al. (2015, pp. 31-32) further recommend areas for teachers' professional development in the classroom, namely, 'Effective communication skills and public speaking enhancement, Computer application skills enhancement, Visual Arts Skills Enhancement, LET *(Licensure Examination for Teachers)* pre-coaching activity, and Job Hunting Simulation'. Conspicuously omitted from the proposed areas are skills related to teachers' literacy to navigate the community they are expected to engage. In Philippine education research in basic education, this conspicuous – but not unexpected – omission only strengthens the observation that teachers' community engagement is of marginal concern or a 'taken-for-granted' social phenomenon. However, related studies in other cultural contexts can help provide insights into how professional teachers' identities and pedagogies may be utilized beyond the classroom setting (Lingard 2009) by as an instance of the necessity to deparochialize educational research (Lingard, Hardy & Heimans 2011).

This shift of focus from the classroom to the community further presents an opportunity to inquire about historically, socially and culturally constructed dispositions in another field. One schema that can explain how such dispositions are formed within a particular context is through the dynamics of *habitus*, capital and field (see Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Grenfell 2008; McNay 2001). This argument indicates the conceptual and heuristic suitability of Bourdieu's 'tool kit' in studying Filipino teachers' identity in the community through their practices therein.

Efforts to widen the discourse on teacher's identity, to include the larger domain of the community, are not arbitrary. On the contrary, the long existing and continued intensification of teachers' community engagements increases the importance of a more systemic analysis of this social phenomenon. In other words, the *ipso facto* proof from history (i.e., perennial community involvements) and prevailing legislations (i.e., contemporary state laws requiring teachers to participate in almost all aspects of community life) supports the persistence of this social phenomenon.

In the next section, I discuss first how the state sustains teachers' community engagement before presenting the fluctuating (dominated and ascendant) perceptions of teachers in Philippine society.

1.4 Teacher identity in the classroom and the community

Legislated and structured community engagements. Teachers' community engagements are defined and organized in the Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers (Professional Regulatory Commission 1977). They are specifically articulated in the module on *School and Community Partnership Teacher Induction Program* discussed in the orientation for all pre-service teachers prior to their deployment to their first teaching assignments. Losada (2010, p. ii) itemizes the objectives of the module on teacher–community relationships:

- to identify and utilize community resources as the context of learning and teaching;
- to identify and establish areas of linkages between the school and community for mutual benefits;
- to describe the various roles of teachers in the community where the school is situated; and
- to recognize the roles and harness the support of the Local School Board, PTCA and other organizations and institutions, both government organizations and NGOs (non-government organizations).

The *School and Community Partnership* induction module is intended to prepare teachers for the performance of their duties in their respective assigned communities. Initiation of pre-service teachers into the formal encounter with the community begins through their practice teaching or field study (CHED Memorandum No. 30 Series 2004) and is sustained when they are deployed as student teachers (DepED Memorandum No. 39 Series 2005) in their respective school communities. I personally witnessed how pre-service teachers were involved in the community extension services of their university where they taught pre-school children (how to read, count and pray) while their mentors

conducted seminars for parents and other more senior out-of-school youths.[1] Hence, these immersions in the community require them to develop their cultural literacies (e.g., *pakikipag-kapwa tao*, the process of establishing authentic relationships based on shared identity), which serve as tools for navigating the social intricacies of their communities.

An ascendant and subordinated social position. Filipino teachers appear to have a position that is both prestigious and denigrated (ACT Teachers 2014; Glorioso 2012; Tubeza 2009). This perception is further sustained by an observation that, while they appear vested with honour and respectability, they remain condemned to a life of unrequited service. This almost iconic and tragic image of the Filipino teacher can be gleaned from Filipino columnist Conrado de Quiros' (2014) sarcastic declaration that the Filipino teacher is 'still the national animal'. Juxtaposing the Philippine national animal (carabao – water buffalo) to the contemporary Filipino teacher means that teachers have assumed both the symbolic and literal reference as the 'beast of burden' of Philippine society. According to De Quiros the comparison is apt because:

> Like that beast of burden [the carabao], they were being worked to death with little reward. Their plight had become so desperate they've had to resort to all sorts of ways to supplement income, chiefly selling underwear and tocino [cured meat] to each other, if not indeed to their students, payable in 'four gives.' I don't know if they still do this or if their wares have been replaced by items – cell phone load? – more in keeping with the times.

A Filipino teacher – in general – is a living paradox, suspended between – on the one hand – a portrayal of economic deficiency and, on the other hand, a perceived nobility grounded in self-sacrifice, resilience and altruism. Despite teachers' unenviable salary (Php. 18,000.00/month (roughly equivalent to 500.00 AuD/month) and perennial vulnerability to multiple forms of violence collateral to their mandated and voluntary community engagements, the Philippine population generally has a high regard for teachers. Teaching remains generally perceived as a 'noble profession' (Sison 2013) and Filipino teachers continue to be canonized in Philippine media as 'modern-day heroes' (Glorioso 2012). The economic disadvantage classification of Filipino teachers typifies most public and private school teachers particularly those living and teaching in the provinces and rural areas.

[1] In January 14–27, 2017, I accompanied 10 pre-service teachers from the University of South Australia in their Study Tour (immersion activity) at Cebu Normal University, Philippines. Our host institution brought us to their adopted community where both teachers and pre-service teachers engaged with the community as teachers of various literacies.

While such culturally specific notions of respect indicate a general perception of teachers' credibility, it also holds them to a higher bar of social and cultural accountability (see Acedo 2007). Not to mention that teachers are still subject to formal accountability exercised by their respective principals or heads of schools. Particularly in the Philippine provinces, the respectful salutation 'Sir or Ma'am' is traditionally used to address teachers both in school and in the community. At another level, the respect aligns with a perception and expectation of teachers as progenitors and moulds of good students, and later better professionals. That is, if a student is taught well by a good teacher, chances are that student will also be a reliable and functional citizen contributing to the welfare of society. Conversely, if a student becomes a social liability, there is always a teacher to blame. Bustos-Orosa (2008, p.167) articulates this link in her proposal that 'constructions of good teaching among Filipinos may be rooted in a cultural conception of a good person or [one possessing] ideal values'. A good person is one who possesses '*mabuting asal*' (moral uprightness). According to Bustos-Orosa, '*asal* is a construct that is highly valued in Filipino culture [that] pertains to ethical ways of acting and good character' (2008, p.167). Furthermore, '*asal*' also represents a configuration of social and cultural values that are initially formed, manifested and challenged within the domestic field (family) and subsequently forged in the larger field (community).

Generally speaking, in Philippine communities, students and parents' esteem for teachers, as well as respect from their colleagues, begins, accumulates and are operationalized in the classroom. However, it is in the community that the respect for teachers is deployed, appraised, challenged and even negated. In the classroom, teachers typically occupy an ascendant position, but in the community this position is often disputed. Hence, the community liberally functions as a space where teachers' respect is accorded and denied, credibility is believed and doubted, and authority obeyed and subverted. In this study, the community is a social field where teachers' '*asal*' is constructed, appraised and used as social currency. As such, the community serves as a site for a constant struggle for position and where '*asal*' functions as a resource to significantly increase teachers' chances of accumulating various resources or capitals (Bourdieu 1993a; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992).

Conclusion. The initial ensemble of cultural, political, religious, economic and other historically situated conditions are foundations upon which contemporary Filipino

teachers' identity may be constructed. In subsequent chapters, the influence of the geographic location of schools and teachers will also be considered as a crucial factor in understanding the complexity of their community engagements and their identity. The scholarly literature appraising teacher–community relations is indeed relatively scarce and this topic can still be considered a frontier in educational research. However, one cannot dismiss the importance of this relationship particularly because teachers engage with the community on a regular and yearlong basis during special celebrations and even in daily community activities. Thus, for one who comes from a family of teachers and has long worked professionally with teachers, it is inevitable for me to casually wonder and ruminate on why there seems to be an over-reliance on teachers to fulfil civic roles other citizens and institutions should actually be doing. That the Filipino teacher is continuously touted as a 'modern-day hero' in Philippine society despite their marginalized and dominated status in terms of salaries and benefits (De Quiros 2014; Glorioso 2012; Sison 2013) illustrates what may be referred to as a *doxic*[2] existence due to their vulnerability to instances of symbolic violence[3] (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, pp.73, 167). I shall explore this notion further in subsequent parts of this research.

1.5 Purpose of the study

With the above discussion as context, the purpose of this study is to analyse how *habitus*, field and capital, constructed through Filipino teachers' community engagements, configure their identity. Bourdieu's sociological theory and approach to methods will serve as the key conceptual lens in this study. This research adheres to an assumption that 'reality is socially constructed [whereby it is incumbent upon] the sociology of knowledge [to] analyse the processes in which this occurs' (Berger & Luckmann 1991, p.vi). With this ontological position, Bourdieu provides heuristic tools – particularly his concepts of *habitus*, field and capital – through which such constructed social reality may be understood (Grenfell 2014, p.221). As a construct, Bourdieu views social reality as a contingent ongoing accomplishment (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.9), a major dimension of political power that is capable of reproducing a particular political order (Bourdieu 1977, pp.165, 189). In line with Bourdieu's theorizing, this study therefore refrains from envisioning a grand narrative

[2] From *'doxa'* or the uncontested acceptance of the daily lifeworld.
[3] Symbolic violence is exercised upon a social agent (individual or group) with his/her/their complicity (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.167).

of Filipino teachers' identity. Quite to the contrary, my aim is to use Bourdieu's theory and method to construct facets arising from possible relations of multiple modalities of teachers' *habitus*, distinct fields and varying capital valuation. By recognizing the possible generated facets and by understanding their generative potential, the construction of an integral contemporary Filipino teachers' identity may be critically and historically examined.

In this study, identity is operationally defined as that which emerges from the relations of *habitus*, capital and field (see Bourdieu 1984; Reay 2004; Twiselton 2004). Here I offer an introductory understanding of these key concepts vis-à-vis their contextual application in this study before a more thorough analysis in Chapter 3. *Habitus* here relates to teachers' dispositions and actions in their civic engagements. Its relevance rests on *habitus*' capacity to inform identity, as it is 'the way we know about our position in social structures and appreciate our cultural tastes' (Miles 2000, p.25). Field refers to any specific structure of relational and differential space 'endowed with a specific gravity which it imposes on all the objects and agents which enter it' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.17; see also Hilgers & Mangez 2015, p. 16). This research identifies fields of interest around, but is not limited to, political, religious, educational and community. The understanding of field as a 'set of objective, historical relations between positions anchored in certain forms of power (or capital)' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 16) is crucial to this study. Through this understanding of *habitus* and field, the importance of the concept of capital as any accruable resource becomes evident since its value is largely determined in a correlative field through the *habitus* of interested individuals. For Bourdieu (2000), the relationship between *habitus* and field generates what he terms the stake of the game or what every agent, in any related field, deems worth pursuing and obtaining. How Bourdieu conceptualizes capital provides the impetus for framing the 'culture-identity link' (Côté 1996, p. 417). These cardinal concepts (as well as other key concepts) and the dynamics of their relations will be defined more thoroughly as they emerge from the discussion.

I will attain the general aim of this thesis by addressing several intermediate aims, namely, to construct modalities of teachers' *habitus*, fields and capitals in teachers' community engagements. The first to be analysed are teachers' mandatory engagements, that is, civic participation based mainly on legal obligations. Then, the same analytical structure is applied to teachers' voluntary engagement in the religious

and political fields. The analysis and construction of *habitus*, field and capital treads along what I refer to as classic tensions in appraising Bourdieu's key concepts. For instance, the construction of teachers' *habitus* straddles discourses on the concepts of reflexivity and reproduction. This interrogation is followed by an analysis of how field legitimizes teachers' disposition (as capacities, literacies and powers) within a structure of ascendant and subordinated positions. Finally, an analysis of various relevant capitals gravitates around their utility both as stake and resource in various economies of exchange, in configuring the relationship between *habitus* and field, and in establishing teachers' position, which determines their position-taking strategies. The next section provides a logical articulation and sequencing of the research questions.

1.6 Research questions

Drawing from the stated purpose, the main question of this research is: ***how do teachers' community engagements help construct contemporary Filipino teachers' identity?*** Explorations in this study draw from insight that 'the goal of Bourdieu's sociological research is "to uncover the most deeply buried structures of the different social worlds that make up the social universe as well as the mechanisms that tend to ensure the reproduction or transformation"' (Bourdieu, cited in Reay 2004, p. 431). In a sense, Bourdieu provides a distinct operative process to Berger and Luckmann's (1991) notion of reality as a social construct by focusing the analytical optic on the set of relations (Bourdieu, Wacquant & Farage 1994) and dispositions – individual, group and institutional (Bourdieu 1990a; Reay 1998). In other words, the dynamism of how social reality is constructed only shows that this reality is not passively recorded but rather constructed as expressions of agency (Bourdieu 1990a, p.52).

The main research objective can be achieved within a three-pronged structure: (1) an interrogation of how *habitus* is constituted and, in turn, constitutes, (2) an analysis of how struggles in the field sustain or shift the ascendant and dominated power relations, and (3) an evaluation of how capital functions both as a stake and resource in every relation of power. By opting for what I refer to as a 'trinitarian' approach to the study of identity construction, I refute suggestions that identity can be interchangeable with *habitus* alone (Shepherd 2010) nor with any other key concepts independently. This strategy also skirts the contentious introduction of conceptual 'hybridization' (Adams 2006) and other similar attempt to fundamentally alter Bourdieu's key concepts in order

to address the incapacity of individual concepts to sufficiently account for identity. Hence, in this study, there is a consistent effort to apply these concepts *in toto*. More importantly, relations of power only emerge when these key concepts are concurrently operational.

The primary question of this study is subdivided into three fundamental sub-questions whose findings are positioned to critically configure the construction of Filipino teachers' identity. Congruent with the dynamism of social reality and to avoid regression into causal assumptions in the social order, the analysis of these sub-questions is not chronologically arranged and treated. The rationale is that there are community engagements where legal underpinnings and structuring lend the field an overwhelming influence over teachers' dispositions (*habitus*) and capital. In these cases, field investigation precedes the study of *habitus* and capital. In other engagements, particularly when the practice has been unquestionably cemented into teachers' *habitus* (dispositions), field interrogation is strategically backgrounded. In other words, the presentation and analysis follows a foregrounding and backgrounding structure based on pre-eminence in a given community engagement.

How teachers' community engagements help construct a contemporary Filipino teachers' identity can be investigated through the following questions:

1. ***Through which social processes is the field of Filipino teachers constituted?*** This question will be answered both from a contemporary and historical analysis of Philippine society (including the colonial period) particularly in terms of economy, politics, religion and other social indicators in terms of Pierre Bourdieu's understanding of field as well as from the perspective of current practitioners. The following sub-questions constitute the inquiry on Filipino teachers' field:

    a. *What consequential historical moments contributed to the construction of Filipino teachers' identity?*

    b. *How does the field function as a space of community engagements that help constitute a specific teacher's identity?*

    c. *How do teachers' multiple community engagements in various fields legitimize their identity in the community and configure their legitimizing role therein?*

Although education and teaching antedates the arrival of Spanish and American colonizers, I argue that formal education – in the manner of our current understanding – traces its roots from these colonial periods (see Aldana 1949; Bazaco 1936). Hence, this study commences with the investigation of teachers' community engagements during the colonial period to set a historical context for the analysis of their contemporary practices in the community.

2. ***How do Filipino teachers' capitals contribute to the formation of dispositions in the habitus essential to the realization of their community engagements?*** This cardinal inquiry is accessed through the following sub-questions:

    a. *As a group, how do Filipino teachers acquire and deploy their capitals in the field?*

    b. *What are the social processes involved in the acquisition and utilization of Filipino teachers' capitals that influence their various community engagements?*

    c. *How are these capitals meaningful in teachers' social positioning and position-taking strategies?*

3. How do teachers' dispositions, constituted through their community engagements, contribute to the construction of Filipino teachers as social actors and/or as reproducers of cultural practices in the community?

When the above questions are responded to in a critical manner, that is, by foregrounding the relations and processes involved therein, including the interrogation of its historicity, they will generate the principles and social strands upon which contemporary Filipino teachers' identity may be configured.

Notwithstanding the scarcity of scholarly data on how teachers' identity may be constructed relative to their community engagements, my own personal experience or practical knowledge inclines me to wager – in a Pascalian sense – that such a project is possible. At this stage, my assumption is based on an understanding that 'one cannot grasp the most profound logic of the social world unless one becomes immersed in the specificity of an empirical reality' (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 271). It is precisely because of my immersion in this empirical reality, that is, my familiarity with teachers' community

engagements that I commence with the objective of responding to the above questions. In the next section, I further elaborate the bases of this assumption.

1.7 Personal context: my optics and interests

Exploring the identity of Filipino teachers is meaningful to me both on the personal and professional plane. My grandfather, Ismael Redillas, was a teacher and trained under the teacher education system introduced by American Thomasites. He would later insist on eight of his ten children, my father included, pursuing the teaching profession. Often, he regaled us with stories of people and places where he taught. The most elaborate and colourful of these stories were his participation in community activities. Interspersed within those stories is the importance and joy of being educated, punctuated with the constant refrain that ignorance leads to the most abject experience of poverty. It is also from him that I discovered that learning entails hard work. Education and knowledge, particularly in the field of mathematics and science, is not only an avenue to open multiple social and economic trajectories and improve life situations, but it is also – in my appreciation – a discrete classifying tool within Ismael Redillas' family.

Growing up, I witnessed how both of my parents persevered with their passion for teaching and with engaging with the community of their various assignations. I have seen them working as poll officers, census enumerators, mediators in the community, as civic leaders and in other community engagements. On more than a few occasions, they stood as sponsors or godparents (*ninongs* and *ninangs*) at their students' weddings. Through their ongoing community engagements, I assumed that civic involvement was an essential component of their teacher identity, both professional and social.

Even then, I already noted the ambivalence of this teacher–community link intensified by contrasting experiences. For instance, as my father is also a farmer, one source of family income is renting out agricultural implements. One day, our rice threshing machine was stolen; my father reported the incident to the police. The days passed, and with them the hope of recovering the stolen implement began to fade. Only when my father sought the assistance of a former student who belongs to the revolutionary movement (New Peoples' Army) was the thresher returned by the very thief who stole it. The thief was profusely apologetic and made a promise that he would never steal again. One of the many indelible election-related experiences was narrated by my

mother. She was then serving as an election officer at her own school, which the military then considered an election hot spot (i.e., with a high probability of violence). The voting process proceeded without any untoward incidents. But as the voting precinct closed and election officers were preparing to tabulate the results, an armed member of the revolutionary group politely asked for the ballot box: '*Ma'am may we have the ballot box and you can now go home*'.

These incidents were indelibly etched in my memory, particularly when the police, the leftists, and even the thief addressed my father as 'sir' and my mother as 'ma'am'. These are terms of respect often addressed to teachers (and people worthy of respect) inside the school premises or in the community where they live and serve. While teachers do not have a monopoly on this title of respect, these salutations are almost synonymous with teachers in general. These experiences provided seminal thoughts in reflecting on Filipino teachers' identity through their community engagements. The same experiences also became bases in differentiating them (as a class) from other professionals.

Although I am lecturing at the tertiary level, I regularly encounter Filipino teachers as a facilitator, conference resource person and so on. Furthermore, Filipino teachers' ubiquitous presence is experienced both personally and through the media, because there is nary a day that teachers are not mentioned in the news. My context provided me with a very distinct 'sense of the game' to imagine and re-imagine their field. This background situates me on a particular perch where I am allowed a vantage point to understand both from afar and from within (objectively and subjectively) the context and relevance of their immediate communities.

1.8 Thesis organization

This dissertation is divided into four parts. Part 1 is composed of four chapters. In the introductory chapter, I provide the context, purpose, research questions and key concepts related to teachers' identity construction through their community engagements. By also identifying the specific analytical optics deployed in this research, I recognize the perspectival character of this endeavour. In other words, should teachers' community engagements be subjected to other analytical tools, a different construct is likely to arise. The impact of social relativity also extends to other

considerations. For example, if instead of focus groups I had utilized different methods, the quality and quantity of data would also be different. The same is to be expected should there be significant modification in policies and policy enactment. These nuances will be discussed further in the methodology chapter.

The introductory chapter is followed by a literature review (Chapter 2), locating this current research in the context of previous related fields. This chapter also describes the researchable gaps and impetus for this undertaking. While the review is focused on literature that utilizes *habitus*, capital and field, I made a conscious effort to favour studies that utilized these concepts *in toto* or in concert (see Edgerton & Roberts 2014; Mills 2008b; Wacquant 2014, among others). The literature review also lays down the argument that Bourdieu's theory and method can serve as heuristic devices in attainment of the overall goals of this research. In Chapter 3, I explore the probative value of Bourdieu's sociology as well as its capacity to serve as a framework for a study of identity construction and reproduction. The characteristics of Bourdieu's sociology contextualize the utilization of key concepts by foregrounding the ever-shifting relations that constitute sociological reality (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Grenfell 2008; McNay 2001). Through this structure, my research focus is trained on the constitutive forces and factors, as well as the 'push' and 'pull' relations (Ingram 2011) evident in teachers' various community engagements. The first part culminates with a discussion of my research methodology (Chapter 4). Included in this chapter are discussions on qualitative research, critical theory and critical constructivism, culturally sensitive approaches, research methods, and other procedures that ensure rigor in this study.

In Part 2, I evaluate how teachers' identity may have been constructed through community engagements during the colonial periods. Through these engagements, an understanding of teachers' identity during colonial times is unravelled. The same historically constituted engagements and identity also provide a glimpse of how they contribute to the configuration of teachers' present identity. The historical exploration is followed by the analysis of the data drawn from the focus group discussions and interviews. Part 3 is composed of three chapters. In Chapter 6, I analyse teachers' mandatory community engagements. In Chapter 7, I interrogate how their voluntary engagements in the religious field help construct their identity. Then, in Chapter 8 I analyse teachers' participation in the political field. Part 4 contains Chapter 9 where I present the overall findings of my study. It is also in this chapter that I respond to the

four research questions set out in Chapter 1. To obtain these goals, this chapter also presents a general discussion of the findings, implications and limitations of this research and future research directions.

Chapter 2: Review of related literature

2.1 Introduction

My primary aspiration for this research was to understand how contemporary Filipino teachers' identities are forged through their community engagements. The optics through which this understanding was obtained were drawn from Bourdieu's sociology. The main concepts then in this research are identity, community engagements and Bourdieu's theory and method. These concepts orient how the review of related literature, Bourdieu's theory and method, and the research methodology are organized in this study. In this chapter I discuss the literature related to my research.

2.1.1 Purpose and strategy

In this chapter I aim to demonstrate how this current study is linked to the previous corpus of research. I not only provide a theoretical anchoring for my study but also examine possible researchable gaps. The areas I will examine in this chapter are: school–community relations, teachers' identities, and the religious and political fields. I conclude this chapter by summarizing the links between these areas and pointing out possible gaps in the research.

In Chapter 1, I devoted two sections to reviewing local literature that helped provide an understanding of teachers' professional identities and classroom functions in the Philippine context. This current chapter not only complements the above sections but also offers a critical review of literature related to how teachers' identities may be constructed in various fields. Another difference is that this review focuses on literature by researchers who have deployed Bourdieu's theory and method.

2.2 School–community relations

In most Western societies, studies of school–community relations remain at the stage of posturing, or at most only offer a 'piecemeal' experience of the school–community link (Butcher et al. 2003; Dikkers 2013; Frederico & Whiteside 2016). Hence, the dynamics and benefits of the school–community link are worth exploring. Consequently, since the construction of a community evolves continuously, so does the nature of teachers'

engagement therein. Regardless of the nature of this evolution, what persist are communities' core components such as membership, influence, integration, and fulfilment of needs defined either in territorial or relational terms.

Contemporary discourses on school and community relationships include differing assessments of their value. On the one hand Almgren (2000, p.363) observed that some community activities are perceived to interfere with school-based activities. On the other hand, despite these complications, perspectives that 'schools are not simply part of the community […] they actively constitute it' (Lindsay 2014, p.117) reinforce the benefits of 'blending school programs and community resources' (McShane, Watkins & Meredyth 2012, p.3). The benefits of school–community relationships draw from 'real connections with parents, local cultural groups, the local council, and the local business community as schools have the potential to become a central point of connection with the community' (Burridge 2009, p.81). Fiore (2011, p.4) added that, in this information age, misinformation is increasingly rampant and stronger school–community relations can ameliorate its ill effects. In this sense, teachers are positioned to play a pivotal role in strengthening school–community linkages, particularly in their role as 'family resource and advocate' (Agnew-Tally et al. 2010; see also Gestwicki 2015).

The notion that the community is a reservoir of resources that are vital for transformation in developing countries (Dove 1980; Lauglo 1982) further magnifies the significance of a stronger school–community partnership to teachers' professional development. For instance, since teachers source their cultural values from the community (Dove 1980), by deploying these same values back to the community, teachers inevitably facilitate the restructuring of the same community. This school–community partnership helps broaden the understanding of what constitutes teachers' productive educational practices (Collinson 2012). Hence, the literature suggests that the reasons behind teachers' presence in the community could determine the nature of their engagements and practices therein. Furthermore, since teachers participate in various socio-cultural activities in the community, whether mandated in complex situations (Hardy & Grootenboer 2015) or voluntary, the role of community service learning must be at the centre of debates about how teacher education should be reformed (Losada 2010). Lastly, positive school–community relations have a positive impact on teachers' personal lives since 'volunteers actively engaged in their community have been found to positively correlate with life satisfaction, self-esteem,

self-rated health, educational and occupational achievement, functional ability, and mortality' (Butcher et al. 2003, p.109). However, the argument that the necessity for a stronger school-community link is felt more in developing countries resonates in Jacksons' (1970, p.488) observation that 'teachers are as unused in the communities as school buildings [where] collectively, and often individually [they have] little or nothing to do with the town in which they teach'.

Despite its argued significance, school–community relations remain a marginal note in most education programs. Warburton and Oppenheimer (2000) suggest that there is an overwhelming need to draw community engagements from marginal importance to mainstream education programs. However, this suggestion could be discipline specific in the sense that the sociology of education will unquestionably recognize the benefits from this suggestion although other education disciplines may only appraise its tangential value. Nonetheless, integrating community engagement into teacher education programs provides an avenue for those preparing to teach to gain a deep and extensive knowledge of the contexts of their students' lives (Butcher et al. 2003, pp.109–110). Furthermore, Rigney (2010) noted that stronger school–community partnerships build confidence among marginalized sectors. Hence, the literature supports the educational advantage of investing in the potential positive impact of school–community relations. These community-based experiences can help student teachers appreciate the complexities of schooling, including the tensions between school and community values, the differences between life in rural and urban contexts, and the importance of understanding students and their families (Dunkin 1996). While literature on the need to prepare pre-service teachers for more engaged pedagogical practices in the community abounds (Duesterberg 1998), little is known about how the multitude of pre and in-service teachers acquire skills to form meaningful community engagements.

Summary. The reviewed literature on school–community relationships reflects a generally positive appraisal of this link. The above studies show that this link is mutually beneficial for the school (including the teachers) and the community. However, while the literature identifies teachers as facilitators of this link, there is no study yet around teachers' community engagement neither is there a study on what identity is forged through their community participation. If a stronger school–community link is to be imagined, teachers' role in this relationship needs to be better

understood, which involves an exploration of teachers' identities in the community. The next section evaluates literature around teachers' identity construction.

2.3 Understanding identity: constitution and relations

In this section, I assess the general field of identity studies before tapering to an examination of how Bourdieu's concepts have been utilized and critiqued in identity discourses. This section will also describe how identity is constructed in this research.

Simply on the basis of the amount of research on teachers' identities (e.g., Barkhuizen 2016; Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop 2004; Le Roux 2011; Morrison 2009), one can already conclude that it is unambiguously relevant to education in general and teacher development in particular. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009, p. 175) observed that challenges to teacher identity discourse centre on 'the problem of defining the concept; place of the self, and related issues of agency, emotion, narrative and discourse, the role of reflection, and the influence of contextual factors'. While most literature on teachers' identities aligns with Johnson et al.'s (2015, p.103) understanding that this concept 'refers to the development of one's awareness and understanding of self as a teacher', others expand this by looking into external environments and practices as equally constitutive of teachers' identities (Edwards & Edwards 2017; Hong, Greene & Lowery 2016; Sakamoto 2015). In other words, teachers' identity formation is both a process of becoming a teacher and a state – including functions – of being a teacher (see Abulon 2014; De Leon-Carillo 2008; Friesen & Besley 2013; Morrison 2012).

The focus on the social component of identity construction facilitated a distinct interrogation of how 'social contexts and cultural tools [that helps] shape the development of human beliefs, values and ways of acting' (Wertsch, cited in Lasky 2005, p. 900) is entangled in identity construction. The same social focus highlights how ethical agency relates to the variability of teachers' identities (Trent, Gao & Gu 2014), and how culture is implicated in shaping both teachers' ideas and praxis (Edwards & Edwards 2017; Sakamoto 2015), just to name a few. In more recent literature, this inclusive structure helped explore teachers' identity discourse in relation to contemporary education-related issues. For instance contemporary identity discourses include exploration of the relationship between identity and emerging classroom (space and technology) structure (Olsen 2016), and its potency to elevate race consciousness

among teachers (Kraehe 2015) and to develop critical language (Kubota 2016). This literature proves that identity discourse continues to be concentrated on the classroom and teachers' professional identities. Nonetheless, these studies continue to underscore the sustained interest in teacher identity research.

The sustained exploration of identity within the professional domain is at the same time the basis for interrogating what may constitute professional development to support teachers' professional identities (Jourdan et al. 2016; Olsen 2016; Avraamidou 2014). For instance, Loughran (2014, pp. 257-258) argued that continuously growing recognition of the importance of 'pedagogy between teaching and learning and teachers' role in mediating relationships that constitute their identities as professional teachers' requires a corresponding professional development program. Understandably then, a typical setting of a teacher's identity is the school (classroom) setting. Thus, in studies where the social environment is explored in relation to identity construction (Hong, Greene & Lowery 2016), this context typically refers to 'school community', that is, parents, teachers, administrators and students (Beauchamp & Thomas 2009) and not the social world beyond school borders.

The above literature indicates that, while analyses of teachers' identity construction are often accompanied by an exploration of the social environment, collaborative process and cultural inputs, these do not include a structure for understanding it beyond the school setting and outside of what is typically labelled as professional identity. In other words, this typical manner of organizing identity does not cover other socio-cultural contexts where teachers – as a group – are also involved. In Philippine society, teachers' practices extend to their respective communities, constituting – according to James, a FGD participant – '20 per cent' of their work. Therefore, the development of one's awareness and understanding of one's self as a teacher does not only happen while dispensing 'teacherly' functions in a school setting. Teachers' identities then may also be constituted through their multiple, contiguous, longstanding participation in activities in and with the community. This context also allows, and even requires, a shift from psychological (i.e., individual) to a more sociological (i.e., collective) optic in exploring this concept.

A sociological articulation of identity argues that this concept is not a property of the person but rather of interactional processes (Côté 2006; Rattansi & Phoenix 2005). In

exploring Filipino teachers' identity, this study subscribes to this sociological construct due to its rigorous attention to relations and social, cultural and historical inputs. For Reay (2010, p. 284) the 'dynamic relationship between *habitus* and field allows us to understand identity as always in process, influenced by context but simultaneously influencing and having an impact on that context'. The partiality on relational aspect of identity construction foregrounded Bourdieu's investment in a relational and historical conception of social reality (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The distinct relational configuration of Bourdieu's key concepts (i.e., *habitus*, field and capital) provided both the impetus and frame in constructing Filipino teachers' identity through their community engagements. Furthermore, the interaction between agent's dispositions and field provides a framework to see 'identity and context as intertwined, shaping and shaped by' (Twiselton 2004, p. 163). More importantly, the sociological construct of identity necessarily includes an understanding of social factors accessible through community engagements.

The multiple criticisms of Bourdieu's theory and method (see Susen & Turner 2011; Yang 2014) affect the manner in which this lens is utilized in studies of teachers' identity construction. Debates surrounding identity discourse include tensions between teachers' roles as social actors and reproducers. Difficulty in expounding on the notion of teachers' agency may be related to absence of clarity about the notion of reflexivity that makes it vulnerable to extreme charges of, one the one hand, excessive volunteerism (Adams 2006) and, on the other hand, the tendency to regress to favour the overwhelming influence of structure (King 2000). In this study, the impact of this critique of teachers' identity construction is mitigated through concerted use of Bourdieu's 'tool kits' (see Edgerton & Roberts 2014; Mills 2008a; Wacquant 2014, among others) and by deploying indigenous research approaches (see Enriquez 2013b; Pe-Pua 1982). As an example, the concerted use of Bourdieu's 'tool kits' has been found to be adequate in the study of the transnational identities of migrant students (Darvin & Norton 2014) and in considering how identity is legitimized in social movements (Husu 2013).

Habitus, an incomplete notion of identity. While teachers' practices have been perceived as affected by and explained in terms of *habitus* (Belland 2009, 2012; Pearce & Morrison 2011; Twiselton 2004), it cannot be disentangled from field and capital (see Edgerton & Roberts 2014; Husu 2013; Reay 2004). Ergo, an integral appreciation of

teachers' *habitus* involves looking at all the constitutive 'forces that shaped […] values and beliefs' (Dwyer 2015, p. 93). For this reason, I argue that a cultural understanding of *habitus* cannot be obtained without recognizing the influence of field and capital. When this occurs, identity becomes recognized as the by-product of these relations. Only then can it be possible to understand how a social agent – not just *habitus* – possesses the energy to resist change (Adam & Wright 2014) or to be a catalyst for transformation (Mills 2008a). In addition, although referring to non-teacher groups, interplay between *habitus* and capital can foreground the moral aspects of *habitus* and demonstrate how these morals are enacted in the social 'consumption practices and social evaluation within everyday communities' (Saatcioglu & Ozanne 2013, p. 692).

I explained above why *habitus* appears interchangeable with identity. This incomplete correspondence between identity and *habitus* can be deduced from an understanding that 'while *habitus* allows for individual agency it also predisposes individuals towards certain ways of behaving' (Reay 2004, p.433). This tension between agency and predisposition cannot be accounted by *habitus* alone for this is tantamount to cognitive and heuristic solipsism. In other words, the diversity of possible practices, including the variability of its intensity, suggests other correlative principles of configuration and action. Couldry (2005, p.367) noted the insufficiency of this concept alone to 'determine the full ranges of practices available to the individual'. This inadequate notion of *habitus* as identity is also a consequence of a purely functionalist understanding of identity. For instance, teachers' identities are forged, albeit inadequately identified, with *habitus* through the process of inhabiting a 'teacherly body' [as an] engaged body (Reid & Mitchell 2015, p. 99) that performs 'teacherly' practices. Proof that *habitus* alone cannot determine identity is the constant reference to other correlative factors underscored in various studies. For instance, field and capital are referenced in the argument that *habitus* informs identity because it is the 'way we know about our position in social structures and appreciate our cultural tastes' (Miles 2000, p.25). Finally, the view that 'beyond schools, identity is also subject to social and historical practices, including discourses around work and teaching' (Pearce & Morrison 2011, p. 49) highlights a notion of *habitus* informed by capital and field.

Having argued along Reay's (2004) position that identity is configured through the intersection of these three key concepts, a more critical and historical notion of identity demands collaboration between field and capital. What I have observed here is that,

while Reay (2004) and Twiselton (2004) draw attention to identity formation as emergent from intersectional relations, this formula leaves the door open for the implication of social and cultural factors in this process. Hence, this study proposes an interrogation of this unexplored avenue of identity formation in the context of Filipino teachers. In the absence of literature directly addressing the process of identity formation as a relation of factors and forces, I evaluate alternative literature focused on the nature of the relations between these elements.

A relational identity. The consistency of the argument that Bourdieu's sociology and method privileges relations indicates that this characteristic is reflected at the core of his key concepts. For instance, the relational dimension may be mirrored in the notion that *habitus* is constituted by 'cognitive, conative and emotive' elements that underscores its 'diverse modes of acquisition and malleability (Wacquant 2014, p.119). This relational dynamics is also indicated when *habitus* orients 'collective and individual trajectories' (Reay 2004, p. 434) and generates a 'complex interplay between past and present' (p. 434). For these reasons both individual and class moves – oscillates and progresses – in bounded but living dialectics. When conceived relationally, these concepts increase the tenability of extending individual identity to possible class identity through further interaction with class-oriented identity factors such as 'forms of capital, types of governance and claims for legitimacy' (Skeggs 2010, p.339).

When particularly dealing with teachers' identities, 'bodily recognition' [serves as an indicator that teachers are] ready and prepared for "teaching"' (Reid & Mitchell 2015, p.89). The same notion of bodily identification may be extended to other activities like teachers' multiple community engagements. Thus, relational processes are key components of identity formation. Proofs of this are Wacquant's (2005, 2011) exposition of voluntary 'carnal entanglement' among pugilists and Green's (2008) notion of 'coerced' *habitus*, which in my study may serve as a jumping board for the mandatory and voluntary modalities of identity construction. The agency of time allows a social agent to gradually acquire 'practical mastery' and a very particular (in the sense of directly related to the body) cognitive expertise (Wacquant 2011) building an indubitable identity marker. Therefore, identity construction grows incrementally. From the foregoing, using Bourdieu's language, what provides context and particularity to this mastery are the impacts of field and capital.

Summary. In many studies, there remains a tendency to equate identity with a single concept, particularly *habitus*. However, critical identity formation recognizes that identities are by-products of relational processes. Highlighted further in the above literature reviews are the relational and historical characters of Bourdieu's key concepts, rendering it possible to construct a more dynamic and fluid identity. Lastly, while identity formation has been studied in education settings, there is no work directly correlating identity and community engagements. This lacuna underpins the necessity for this exploratory research.

In this research, teachers' community engagements transpire in the political and socio-cultural (specifically, religious) fields. The next two sections review literature on these fields where teachers' identities may be constructed.

2.4 The religious field: a domain of rarefied struggles

Researchers utilizing Bourdieu's sociology in relation to the religious field – specifically, Christianity – constantly reference his thoughts in 'Genesis and structure of the religious field' (1991b). The religious field as a contested site of identity formation has been referenced in several studies (Caputo 2009; Shepherd 2010; Ugur 2007). Fundamentally, these studies straddle the tension between social agents' (believers') reflexivity (Thumala Olave 2012; Sayer 2005; Stone 2001) and determination (as a general critique of Bourdieu). While the studies diverge on how reflexivity – or the lack of it – is constituted in the religious field, they concur in characterizing religious capital as positively correlated with civic engagements (Caputo 2009) especially as community volunteers (Park & Smith 2000). Although, strictly speaking, religious capital is that which is particularly valuable to the religious field (Rey 2007; Stone 2001), however, its value extends beyond this realm. My understanding of religious capital in this study specifically aligns with Iannaccone's (1990, p.299) notion of 'skills and experience specific to one's religion including religious knowledge, familiarity with the church rituals and doctrines, and friendship with fellow worshipers'. Aside from being inclusive, this definition unquestionably requires a relation with *habitus* and field.

The religious field: economic or beyond economic logic? The religious field presents a robust challenge to Bourdieu's sociology and particularly Rey's (2014, p. 57) position that religion's ultimate social function is to help people 'make sense of their respective

position in the social order'. The impact of Bourdieu's incursion into the sociology of religion is limited by his predisposition to prioritise economic structure and the logic of the social realm (Turner 2011). On the one hand, Bourdieu appreciates the seminal value of investigating the objective relations of power in this domain and its generic sociological structure (Lee 2010; Mellor & Schilling 2014; Rey 2014; Schafer 2015). On the other hand, critiques centre on the rigid essentialism of his key concepts (Mellor & Shilling 2010; Thumala Olave 2012), in treating 'religion as *illusio'* (Turner 2013, p. 289), and in undervaluing the cultural dynamism of religion (Dillon 2001, p.413). Perspectives continue to bifurcate as to how such concepts develop in the religious field. Dianteill (2004 p.544) suggests that the 'notion of *habitus* […] associates with a specific field a type of specific interest that is irreducible to the interests of other fields – in particular, economic ones'. In contrast, the works of Rey (2004) and Flere (2012) suggest that, since the religious field is an arena of competition just like any other social field, it is subject to the same economic logic with corresponding economic rewards. These multiple and, at times, opposing perspectives articulate the diverse modalities in configuring a distinct and critical identity even in the religious field.

Appreciating reflexivity in an essentialist field. In most of the reviewed literature, where researchers encounter difficulty in applying Bourdieu's concepts to particular social phenomena, their solution is to propose a conceptual alteration. For instance, to mitigate the perceived homogenizing practices in religion, Mellor and Schilling (2014, p. 289) suggest 'conceiving […] religious *habitus* as a series of reflexively informed acts involving the instauring of orientations towards the transcendent.' The importance of aligning *habitus* with a creative transcendent 'allows us to avoid any sense that religion is acquired and maintained merely through unthinking processes of acculturation or socialisation' (p. 289) devoid of reflexivity and aimed only at reproducing the conditions for reproduction. Other modifications in this field include Verter's (2003) proposal to modify the understanding of individual agency, cultural reproduction and relative autonomy of the field. Lee (2010), on the other hand, seeks a strategic middle way, for example between intentionality (reflexivity) and materialism (determinism), suggesting that tension between these concepts is inevitable.

Continuing with how reflexivity manifests in this religious domain, Mellor and Schilling (2014) insist that, unlike other social realities, God is not a construct and as such is the ultimate principle of reflexivity and creativity. Ergo, adequate interrogation

of religious practices and belief system defies a constricting economic logic (Thumala Olave 2012; see Willey 2016, particularly on the concept of liminality) since what is at stake extends beyond material value (Iannaccone 1990). Ascribing dynamic reflexivity to the social agent in this field is possible by 'locating human action, feeling and thought at the embodied intersection of worldly and other-worldly realities' (Mellor & Schilling 2014, p.275). Schol (n.d., p.8) further suggests that one should be cognizant that liberation proceeds from a *habitus* of resistance, through a *habitus* of protest. This strategy hurdles both the colonizing tendencies of religion and the passive transmission of a metanarrative. In this field, other typical themes central to religious discourses are symbolic power, consecration, legitimization and symbolic violence (Bourdieu 1991b; Pellandini-Simányi 2014; Schafer 2015; Stone 2001).

Summary. The literature reviewed in this section shows that the limitation of the notion of reflexivity in this field is problematic. The difficulty in establishing agency in this field extends to the configuration of this concept to teachers' identity. However, its benefits outweigh the challenge, as this faith-based reflexivity can become a potent liberating force by exposing modalities of domination. However, when uncritically deployed, this reflexivity only appears as a veneer cloaking a deep-seated social reproduction and perpetuation of the *status quo*. In conclusion, the reviewed studies identify crevices open to the interrogation of religious capitals as currency in navigating the social and religious world, as a legitimating resource therein (Bourdieu 1991a) and as an obtainable stake. Lastly, the same research guides the interrogation on how religious membership positions and provides the energy for position-taking activities in the religious field. The second pertinent field of community engagement, discussed in the next section, relates to teachers' participation in political exercises.

2.5 The political Field: a domain of subversive reflexivity

Parallel to the literature in the religious field, oscillations surrounding the notion of reflexivity and determination rest at the core of the evaluated literature in the political field. McNay (2001, p.146) suggests that it is in the political field that agents expose a facet aptly named 'tormented *habitus*' driven by the tension and contradictions of social marginalization, which may ultimately form the source of social transformation. This dynamic field appreciation is regarded by some as a form of 'exaggerated enthusiasm about the emancipatory force of reflection' (Mihai 2016, p.22). Husu (2013) takes a

contrary position by suggesting that this dynamism is warranted in this field when applied to the study of social movements. In other words, reflexivity is exhibited more collectively than individually. The reason given is that there is strength in numbers and individuals occupy a position of strength in challenging the official narrative of the status quo. This facilitates the understanding of how the political field helps construct *habitus* as dispositions forming peoples' world views (Tejada-Pena et al. 2010) that translate *habitus* into a 'power to', that is, geared towards action (Haugaard 2008). Further explorations of *habitus*' role in the political field also include its evaluation as 'the inertial character of reflective judgement […] that define the political common sense' (Mihai 2016, p.22), as a 'principle of ideological division, competition and conflict' (Ibrahim 2015, p.13), or as a guide to how 'social actors orient themselves to different futures through their actions' (Scollon 2001, p. 97).

Legitimation in the political field. While a significant corpus of reviewed studies in the political field focused on individual concepts as its driving force (e.g., *habitus* or field), there is no greater appreciation for the role that field plays than in the political domain. For instance, Maton (2000, p.148) asserts that Bourdieu's notion of field offers a means of describing intellectual fields in terms of relationally positioned struggles over status and resources. This is also referred to as a legitimating function of the field (p.164). Legitimation is a key process in the political field particularly when perceived as a 'key mechanism in the conversion to power' (Skeggs 1997, p. 128). Ieţcu-Fairclough (2008, p.399) explored views of 'legitimation as a political strategy or strategic manoeuvring oriented to meeting the contradictory demands of the political field'.

Aside from *habitus* and field, the role of capital in various processes in the political field cannot be underestimated. Singh (2015, 2016) argues that contests among field actors over the symbolic capital of their field help construct, reproduce or alter the structure of the field itself. This further sustains the relational nature of capital since 'an object becomes a capital when it establishes a social relation of power that differentiates the holder from the non-holder' (Swartz 2013, p. 51). Different processes in the field, particularly various position-taking processes, help correlate symbolic capital to symbolic power and violence (Harrits 2011). Therefore, although *habitus* might be a predominant concept in understanding agency, it is not the sole principle of how reflexivity is configured and operates. In other words, this construct is not produced simply by force of *habitus*, but relationally as an effect of both social fields and capital

(Crossley 2003). This position is evident in Stokke's (2002) suggestion that, through an agent's *habitus* and capital, they become social actors in local politics.

In the political field, Engström and Carlhed (2014, p.716) suggest that a social agent, through cultural capital and dispositions, functions as a 'democratic and intellectual "challenger" characterized by engagement in society and political issues'. Ibrahim (2015) developed this argument further, proposing that when *habitus* is assessed alongside capital and field it can be relied upon to demonstrate the basis of ideological divisions, such as between challenger and challenged, between legitimized and legitimizing. Therefore, in the political field, the dynamics and mechanics of political engagements are not assumed by a single or even by a dual concept, but an interconnected negotiation and engagement using the three key concepts. The probative value of Bourdieu's theory and method increases in proportion to the collaboration between the key concepts. As a proof, Edgerton and Roberts (2014), in explaining enduring educational inequality, conclude that the concerted use of the core concepts can generate practical, actionable knowledge of the mechanisms underlying persistent socioeconomic disparities.

Summary. The reviewed literature shows that the political field is the most dynamic field for legitimation. Social actors manifest reflexivity not only in the typical position-taking processes or struggles but also in challenging or even subverting establishments. Through the lens of Bourdieu's key concepts and their processes, one can observe that social agents in this field are naturally positioned for critical engagements. Hence, social agents' identities in this field can be configured through the same processes, such as legitimation, position taking and challenging.

2.6 Conclusion

The reviewed literature allows a glimpse of the possibility of probing teachers' identities through their community engagements in the religious (cultural) and political fields. In this chapter, I have described studies that have shown both the positive and negative implications of school–community linkages. What is indubitable from the studies is that this linkage provides an opportunity for teachers' engagements in community activities. These engagements, in turn, provide an opportunity to understand how identity is constructed and deployed. However, each publication only describes a

fraction of what constitutes identity. However, left unexplored in the reviewed literature (including the studies interrogated in Sections 1.1 and 1.2) is the possibility of teachers' identities being constructed outside of the school setting, specifically through their community engagements.

Nonetheless, through the related literature, a critical and relational notion of identity can be potentially understood through Bourdieu's theory and method. Specifically, this can be achieved by interrogating further the argument that identity is a by-product of intersectional relations of *habitus*, capital and field. In other words, the identified limitations and strengths of the reviewed literature both provide theoretical anchoring and point to possible research gaps. Therefore, I argue that Bourdieu's theory and method, when critically deployed and deployed in concert, possess adequate probative value to interrogate the relational elements that help constitute an identity. The next chapter interrogates this capacity more deeply through rearticulation of Bourdieu's key concepts.

Chapter 3: Probative value of Bourdieu's sociology: a framework for identity construction and reproduction

3.1 Introduction and purpose

My research on Filipino teachers' identity oscillates within the discipline of sociology. The overall purpose of this chapter is to argue that Bourdieu's theory and method can be used to probe and construct a distinct identity in a different cultural context. I intend to attain this objective by rearticulating his key concepts through interrogating their constitutions and functions. Foregrounded in this presentation is the potential use of these concepts to analyse modalities of power relations in the social world. Second, drawn from this rearticulation, I discuss key characteristics of his sociology. These characteristics function as a guide in various stages of this research. This chapter is significant in this research as it informs my understanding of the optics, that is, Bourdieu's theory and method that I utilize to further the aims of this study. Furthermore, in studies underpinned by one theory, a clear articulation of the theoretical framework is expedient (Parahoo 2006). This articulation functions as map that subsequently directs how research questions may be developed (Fulton & Krainovich-Miller 2010).

As one of the most discussed, supported and critiqued sociologist of the twenty-first century, characterization of Pierre Bourdieu's sociology is as numerous as his prolific publications (see Grenfell 2008, 2014; Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990; Jenkins 1992;; Swartz 1997; Webb et al. 2002). My understanding of Bourdieu's conceptual tools focuses on the nature of and processes contained in the concepts. This structure helps foreground the typical, relational and recurring themes imbedded in Bourdieu's voluminous works (Grenfell 2008). Lastly, my articulation of Bourdieu's concepts and relational themes plus the context of the study informed my selection of literature and the manner in which I reviewed it.

3.2 An understanding of *habitus*, capital and field in identity construction

In my articulation of key concepts such as *habitus*, capital and field in this research I will privilege relational dimensions, discursive practices (e.g., between theory and

method, and between objectivism and subjectivism) and historicity. This strategy foreground the collective and concerted use of these concepts particularly in interrogating the processes (e.g., legitimation, struggles, conversion) involved in critically constructing identity. In a sense, this strategy reveals my particular disposition or *habitus* as that 'orients [a] way of constructing objects of study, highlighting issues of significance and providing a means of thinking relationally about those issues' (Maton 2008, p.50).

3.2.1 Habitus: semblance of mis/recognized identity

In this section, I endeavour to present the fundamental definition of *habitus* followed by a discussion of some of its key characteristics. Heuristically, *habitus* was initially referred to as a 'signal concept', which can be used at once as 'the anchor, the compass, and the course of ethnographic journey' (Wacquant 2011, p.81). More importantly, this concept functions as a 'conceptual linchpin' that can translate concepts with highly economic connotations into non-economic paradigms (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.120). This understanding helps direct identity beyond economic relations.

The definition of this ancient concept appears more clearly in Bourdieu's work *Outline of a theory of practice* (Bourdieu 1977) and *The logic of practice* (Bourdieu 1990b, p.53). In *Outline of a theory of practice*, Bourdieu offered a protracted definition of *habitus* in his desire to capture the entirety of its dynamics:

> The habitus, the durably installed generative principle of regulated improvisations, produces practices which tend to reproduce the regularities immanent in the objective conditions of the production of their generative principle, while adjusting the demands inscribed as objective potentialities in the situation, as defined by the cognitive and motivating structures making up the habitus. (Bourdieu 1977, pp.77–78)

It is easier to understand this concept by noting that the definition is divided into its constitutive elements. Highlighted herein are key characteristics and properties that determine my understanding of this concept, and guide how I plan to deploy them in various aspects of my research. While it is easy to get lost in the length of this definition, what needs to be emphasized is that the constitutive components and processes of this concept potentially function as partial conceptual markers of identity.

How Pierre Bourdieu defines and describes *habitus* varies in terms of the emphasis given to key constitutive properties of this concept. This particular definition contains

the key elements of *habitus*, namely, dispositions, durability, generative, reproduction, objective conditions (structured), and ability to adjust (reflexivity and historicity). However, the fact that this concept varies in some of Bourdieu's works reveals a strategic shift of emphasis rather than a conceptual change. For instance, its transposability, reflexivity, dynamics of relations and the concept of field are more pronounced in the definition rendered in his work *An invitation to reflexive sociology* (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). The definition in the book *The logic of practice* (Bourdieu 1990b, p.53) foregrounds the necessary conditions for the production of such *habitus*. In another opus, *The field of cultural production*, the debatable nature of agency in the form of structuring structure is accentuated and more laboriously explained (Bourdieu 1993a).

An initial conjecture accounting for these shifts points to the incessant struggle for stakes in the field, coupled with an either residual or magnifying effect of the fluctuation in capital's value. For instance, the transposability of dispositions is tenable within the dynamics of social reproduction where 'the *habitus* of every socializing agent […] is in turn the product of the previous reproductive cycle' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.11). Also cocooned in this magnification is the capacity of this concept to be used as a tool to describe cultural reproduction. This, however, seems to contradict the aspiration to argue for the agency and reflexivity of social actors. Most of the definitions also insist on an embodied notion of *habitus* rather than an abstract principle. Embodied *habitus* is consistently emphasized as a fundamental property of the agent, whether as an individual, in groups or as institutions (see Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013; Grenfell 2008). Continued re-articulation of *habitus*' definition may be indicative of two directions. On the one hand, this only shows that the concept continues to unfold its rich 'explanatory potentiality' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) or, on the other hand, it is just exposing its natural conceptual limitations due, for example, to culture's differentiating influence. Aside from the constitutive properties of *habitus*, one of its key characteristics is that it is historically constituted.

Historicity as Habitus' core property. *Habitus*, and other key concepts, are 'inherently historical [in the sense that they] designate objects or structures that exist in a specific time and place' (Steinmetz 2011, p. 51). Embedded in this conception is a possible understanding that, as *habitus* is being temporally and spatially constructed, it also gathers sufficient social inertia, allowing itself to be transformed across time and social

space. *Habitus*, as historically constituted, is strongly influenced by family upbringing and educational experiences (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013; Grenfell 2008; Lareau & Horvat 1999; Reay 1998). Its formation therefore is time-specific in many aspects. As an example, the various socialization processes involved in the formative years like what is valued within the family, the ideas of right or wrong, socially acceptable or unacceptable behaviours or attitudes, and daily routines and celebrations, provide a blueprint similar to an identity (Bourdieu 1990b). Hence, this 'primary socialization experiences are indeed foundational' (Edgerton & Roberts 2014, p.199) and they introduce agents to relational aspects of the social world. However, even the earliest of individual's relational experience is influenced by social 'categories already constructed by prior relational experiences' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.133). In other words, the accumulated significances of socialization experiences influence the continuous construction of the lenses used to perceive evolving social realities of this world.

The historicity of *habitus*, and other key concepts, indicates that the social phenomena under study and the sociological tools are both contextually and temporally constructed. This understanding suggests that Bourdieu's key concepts can be applied in diverse different cultural contexts particularly since these concepts require the interrogation of the factors influencing the genesis of social phenomenon. *Habitus*' historical constitution lends it power to perceive social phenomena in a dispositional yet critical manner. Therefore, the weight of historicity in understanding *habitus* extends to every social phenomenon to which the concept is applied.

Habitus, a dispositional optic. *Habitus* as a tool is acquired 'through works of inculcation and appropriation', and develops across time and through socialization (Bourdieu 1990b, p. 57). In this study, this optic guides the inquiry into the constitutive elements and construction process of Filipino teachers' *habitus* as central to the construction of their identities. Bourdieu (1977, 1990b; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) insists that *habitus* is a disposition with 'generative capacities' and he uses it extensively in relation to, among other things, 'taste' (Bourdieu 1984) and 'class' (Bourdieu 1987) as a tool for practices like classifying and positioning. The emphasis on the generative capacity of *habitus* lends weight to its classificatory capacity where the power to classify is extended as a capacity to identify (Bourdieu 1984). The fact that this optic evolves through time suggests that it is subject to the modifying impacts of external factors. That this optic resist absolute modification also suggests that some

dispositions are more primal/durable and thus more resistant to change. Hence, it can be argued that both the social phenomena under scrutiny and the analytical optics undergoes different degrees of modifications.

Primary and secondary habitus. The distinction between primary and secondary *habitus* will have an impact on the understanding of reflexivity and determinism, formation and the generative practices of *habitus*, and the acquisition and deployment of capital. This differentiation also explains why some identities are easier to construct than others. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990 quoted in Wacquant 2014, p. 7) define primary *habitus* as:

> The set of dispositions one acquires in early childhood, slowly and imperceptibly, through familial osmosis and familiar immersion; it is fashioned by tacit and diffuse 'pedagogical labour with no precedent'; it constitutes our baseline social personality as well as 'the basis for the ulterior constitution of any other habitus.

'Secondary *habitus* is any system of transposable schemata that becomes grafted subsequently, through specialized pedagogical labour that is typically shortened in duration, accelerated in pace, and explicit in organization' (2014b, p.7). While both reflexivity and determinism can be manifested in primary and secondary *habitus*, determinism seems particularly to characterize the primary *habitus*, while reflexivity is more of a property exhibited through secondary *habitus*. Hence, in relation to identity construction, what has been formed (values, practices, attitudes, etc.) during childhood is more likely to persist than what has been forged as secondary *habitus*.

Habitus and class. One of the immediate actions of *habitus* is the 'awakening of class consciousness' (Bourdieu 1984, p.172) since one's experiences are immediately 'shared in terms of their structure with others of the same class, gender, occupation, nationality, region and so forth' (Maton 2008, p. 53). Furthermore, as *habitus* is collectively structured, one becomes automatically disposed to structure, that is, it is generative of class and class practices. One of the manifestations and importance of class practices occur when the 'schemes of perception, appreciation and action […] function as practical operators through which the objective structures of which they are the product tend to reproduce themselves in (Bourdieu 1977, p.97). For instance, the moment of human birth is the moment of classification according to nationality, parental heritage, gender and other social categories. The moment of identification and belongingness to a class automatically distinguishes one group from other groups (Bourdieu 1984), thus the

awakening to the existence of variability of classes is, at the same time, the beginning of inquiry into distinction and identification.

Mediating and generating construct. Another characteristic of *habitus* is that it is a mediating construct that 'changes with each sequence or iteration, in a direction which attempts a compromise with material conditions' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p. 12; see also Bourdieu 1990b). The intermediary quality of *habitus* accentuates agents' capacity to position and to re-position themselves and others in the field by facilitating the distribution of capitals therein. This affinity, referred to as 'being the social embodied, [whereby] it is "at home" in the field it inhabits, [allowing it to] immediately perceives meaning and interest' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 128), strengthens its intermediary capacity further. Thus, the study of *habitus*, together with field and capital, is fundamental in accounting for both structuring conditions and reflective actions when invoking this particular sociological gaze for the project of identity construction. The mediating function of *habitus* helps determine an individual's position and position-taking strategy in the social field. In other words, through this characteristic, it becomes possible to evaluate both reflexivity and the influence of structure in the agent's identity.

By virtue of *habitus*' social and historical construction, and through mediating and generating capacity, it becomes a possible, albeit partial, marker of a distinct identity. However, simply equating identity with *habitus* while ignoring its 'relations' with capital and field positions *habitus* further in the objective and deterministic domain. Consequently, it runs the risk of constructing an identity that is emaciated of relational and generative possibilities.

3.2.2 Capital: a stake and resource of identity

The introduction to this research included a narrative of the subordinated social positioning of Filipino teachers as overworked and grossly underpaid professionals (see ACT Teachers 2014; De Quiros 2014). However, the paradox is that, despite these deficits, teachers continue to enjoy a distinct measure of respectability and credibility in the community. This observation can be translated into the sociological language of Pierre Bourdieu as a poverty of economic capital compensated for by the abundance of symbolic and cultural capital. Cultural capital then serves as currency to navigate the various fields of Philippine society. Discourse on capital in this section relates to how it

contributes to the construction of a distinct identity whereby each form of capital has particular manner of influencing how identity may be constructed. A link between capital and identity is evident from the notion of 'an embodied perspective of social capital [that] synthesizes Bourdieu's capitals and performative theorizations of identity' (Holt 2008, p. 227). My exploration of Bourdieu's notion of capital will centre on its nature (subtypes and manner of acquisition), and relation to identity and differentiation.

Accumulated labour and subtypes. Bourdieu defines capital as 'accumulated labour […] which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labour' (Bourdieu 1986b, p.280). Capital appears in three fundamental species:

> As economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights; cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility (Bourdieu 1986b, p. 281)

That capitals can be acquired and/or inherited both individually and collectively indicates a corresponding diversity in how capital is implicated in identity constructs. The relational and relative nature of capital can be traced to the influence of the different fields in which they appear (Bourdieu 1986a) resulting in difference in value and in plurality of its configuration. Convertibility to an economic state is one of the core characteristics of capital that endows it with desirability particularly as a currency in the 'instrumental and self-interested nature of exchange' (Grenfell 2008, p.103). This natural regression to an economic state and the understanding of relations through an economic logic has been largely criticized (see Thumala Olave 2012; Turner 2011) on the one hand and appreciated (see Skeggs 1997). This inevitable regression to economic form seems to be odd since one of Bourdieu's (1986a) sociological novelties is his expansion of Karl Marx's (1906) notion of capital – which is purely economic – into other socially valuable forms or sub-types. In other words, this inevitable tendency to re-convert to economic form suggests that durability of the material nature and economic value of capital. Nonetheless, capital still functions both as currency for multiple conversions and accumulation of more resources and as an instrument of symbolic violence, domination, consecration and legitimation.

Capital and identity. Like *habitus*, capital 'takes time to accumulate and … as a potential capacity to produce profits and to reproduce itself in identical or expanded form, contains a tendency to persist in its being' (Bourdieu 1986b, p.280). The relation of capital, specifically cultural capital, to *habitus* where one can be liberally forwarded in place of the other, means that an alteration in one concept results in a proportionate modification of other correlative concepts. However, this does not mean that capital and habitus can be conflated (Edgerton 2014) or that an alteration in capital results in an automatic modification of identity. The reason is that, if identity is constructed through relations, identity can only be altered through modification of relations between the key concepts. Thus, historical specificity, dynamics and *doxa* of the field, and the position and disposition of the agent, are factors that affect not only the valuation of capitals but also how these are utilized as social currency, as a resource and in configuring a distinct identity.

The argument that capital is also a potential but incomplete marker of identity can be traced to the blurring of conceptual distinctions between capital and *habitus* that occurs when capital is 'objectified as *habitus*, and is embodied and realized in practice' (Grenfell 2008, p.111; see also Bourdieu 1986b). Furthermore, capital cannot be obtained beyond the capacity of an individual to allocate nor can the same individual deploy and convert beyond his ability to do so. Furthermore, the notion that capital 'declines and dies with its bearer' (Bourdieu 1986b, p. 283) suggests its material and economic nature. The diversity of the manner through which capital may be accumulated, utilized, converted and deployed does not only suggest a plurality of appropriating capacities or unique individuals. For this reason, capital functions as basis for distinction of forms and bearers of capital, or in other words, as potential markers of identity.

Capital and class differentiation. The notion of capital in its 'variety of forms is indispensable to explain the structure and dynamics of differentiated societies' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.119). Likewise, it has been utilized to differentiate class and class identities (see Bourdieu 1984). For instance, the amount and quality of capital present in the agent, coupled with the literacy to deploy it, determines the agent's capacity and ability to identify what is at stake (capitals) in the social world. Therefore, capital also help ferret out the competing interests therein and in the process obtain a practical sense that ensures favourable acquisition of what is at stake. Therefore, capital

possesses a differentiating capacity that when viewed as 'set of actually usable resources and powers' (Bourdieu 1984, p. 114) becomes a principle of class and self-classification.

Finally, the notion of group-accumulated capital as 'that energy of social physics' (Bourdieu 1990b p.122) relates it to generative practices, helps determines social mobility and orients the social trajectory of agents. Therefore, social mobility is related to capital where the amount and quality of capital correlates proportionally to an agent's social mobility and how the corresponding field is structured. Since the time of Marx (1906), capital has always been associated with the language of power and politics, and the same is true with Bourdieu (1986a), albeit in a more sophisticated and diverse sense. However, whether in Marx or in Bourdieu, it is obvious that capital's optimal value is measured against the ease or difficulty of eventual conversion to its economic state. The value of capital is not solely determined by the social agent, that is, by agents' literacy ('know-how' that resides in the *habitus*) and position in the social world, but including the entire socially configured factors such as social structures and individual or institutional interests. As a consequence, the manner of its distribution or positioning 'at a given moment in time represents the immanent [power] structure of the social world […] which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices' (Bourdieu 1986b, p. 280). Therefore, even capital is historically constituted and therefore its value is also temporally and spatially configured.

The above argument suggests that capital fluctuation may be ascribed to its entanglement with the field. Therefore the notions that capital 'confers a power over the field' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.101) and the 'logic, which orders the struggles in the field is the logic of capital,' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.13) shows that capital fluctuation is not an absolute or unidirectional process. On the contrary, the fact that the differentiation in the value of capital can be traced to the structure of the field reflects the alternating inverse process of the mutually affecting relation between field and capital.

3.2.3 Field structure and identity

Among Pierre Bourdieu's sociological tools, the concept of field is better understood through description rather than definition by reason of its porosity, multidimensionality and unending immanent struggles. By echoing a persistent critic on the overwhelming

reproductive effect of field on everything that enters its domain, 'as a result of sustained influence of structure and the limited opportunity of social change', Burke (2015, pp.57–58) did not only underscore the social gravity of field but he also invites a more conscious but cautious application of this sociological tool. The way of thinking is that *habitus* and capital can only be adequately grasped through the logic of the field. In addition, the reflexive character of field only emerges when field is cast alongside *habitus* and capital. This section interrogates the nature of field and its functions, thereby providing a certain vista on how agents are positioned in and navigate a social field.

Reconnoitring the field. Central to various notions of field is the emphasis that it is a 'field of possible forces [where it] presents itself … as a *space of possibles*, which is defined in the relationship between the structure of average chances of access to the different positions' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.64, original emphasis). This description emphasizes field being constituted by struggles that open up limited possibilities for social agents. In other words, field potentially limits agency. This is significant as the impact of natural struggles in the field extends to everything that can be constructed or deconstructed in the field – including identity. To be more specific, the struggles emerging from relations of power in the field intensify when 'social agents occupy positions that statistically determine the positions they take with respect to the field' (Bourdieu 2005, p.39). In other words, each position an agent takes in the field is a position-for, that is, a position-taking stance. There are only two possible categories of these struggles: conservation (i.e., reproduction) (Bourdieu 1973, 1993) or 'transformation of the structure of power relations that is constitutive of the field' (Bourdieu 2005, p.30). Thus, a particular position and position-taking strategy in the field of forces opens up the field of 'possibles' – albeit, in a limited way.

While the same 'field of forces' is the main description of the field in 'The social space and the genesis of groups' (Bourdieu 1985), the emphasis here is on the overwhelming determinative power of the field. This determinacy is unmistakable in the description that field refers to 'objective power relations that impose themselves on all who enter […] that are irreducible to the intentions of the individual agents or even to the direct interactions among the agents' (p.724). This early definition of the field of forces eschews the transcendence of power and *doxa* that affects, by 'imposition', the social

agents therein. In the publication *On television and journalism* (1998b), Bourdieu summarized the salient components of field:

> A structured social space, a field of forces, a force field [where] it contains people who dominate and people who are dominated, [immersed in] constant, permanent relationships of inequality [that] operate inside this space, which at the same time becomes a space in which various actors struggle for the transformation or preservation of the field. Asymmetrical relations of power are to be expected in every field since all individuals in this universe bring to the competition all the (relative) power at their disposal [and] it is this power that defines their position in the field and, as a result, their strategies (Bourdieu 1998b, quoted in Thomson 2008, p.74)

Structured and structuring power of the field. The structure of the field is defined by, among other things, the capital of the social agent and their disposition in the *habitus* that endows them with the literacy to strategically deploy their resources in competition with other agents. This whole dynamic in turn determines their position in pursuit of what is at stake in a given field. Thus, the structure follows 'a politically oriented economic logic where members and products are assessed in terms of market demands, interests, profits, enterprise, hierarchy of positions, relations of power, etc.' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.46). As a consequence, field structure is constituted by rules or *doxa* (with oral tradition and legislated acts), histories (including legends and myths, official or popular narratives), agents (individual or group, conditioned or free), class (ruling or ruled), diversity of fields (political, academic, religious, etc.), capital (in terms of different modalities, as currency and commodity), relations (interactions, tensions, struggle, conflict, competition), and positions (hierarchy, trajectory and mobility). The rituals, practices, and 'power plays' and the patently economic logic in the field is 'aimed at the accumulation of capitals: they are both the process within, and the product of, a field' (Thomson 2008, p. 69). In turn, whether an agent acquires capitals is influenced by 'positions' 'seen as a sense of investment, a sense of possible direction' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.64) and by 'position-taking' strategies. Agents' position in any social field, as well as their navigational skills, are 'determined by the allocation of specific capital to actors […] located in the field' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.8). The reason why the process of the field seems familiar is that it follows the same economic logic found in both capital and *habitus*.

A historical field. Through time, a specific field develops a particular logic, which provides a way of constructing meaning or making sense of the social world particularly the relations, therein. This focus on relations and historicity of the field help in

'explaining its extreme dispersion and the conflicts between rival principles of legitimacy [due to the] extreme permeability of its frontiers and, consequently, the extreme diversity of the "posts" it offers, which defy any unilinear hierarchization' (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 43). In assessing how a social agent is positioned and the manner of position taking, field takes into account the importance of social history, that is, the socio-historical genesis and genealogy of conditions of production and of social agents as well as its structures and functions (p. 37). Reminiscent of Hegelian dialectics, the history of the field arises from the struggle among and between social agents, for instance, between established figures (the old/status quo) and young challengers (the new/the incoming – those with new sets of capital and different *habitus*) (p. 59). Lastly, the relative and arbitrary power of the field is underscored in the position that 'the concept of field is […] not universally relevant independently of historical nature of the social configurations that social actors form among themselves' (Lahire 2015, p. 63). This notion of historical field does not lessen the structuring capacity of the field, it simply draws into the equation the significance of its correlative concepts as organizing principles and signals the possibility of creative tensions between the key concepts.

Field as a tool. The conception of field is not pure theory and therefore is immediately disposed for practice and 'must be understood as a scholastic device – an epistemological heuristic – which helps researchers to devise methods to make sense of the world' (Thomson 2008, p. 74). Making sense of the social world begins with a balanced view of the world where it 'would be wrong to impute everything to position or solely to disposition' (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 64). This argument is further supported by an aspiration for a balance position that while 'the space of available positions conditions the determination of expectations *(i.e. possibles)* [social agents also] depends on dispositions' (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 65) as they navigate their social world. Thus, because field organizes agents in a society according to their history, capitals and literacies, it is not difficult to imagine the capacity of the same field to construct identity.

Within the field, different classes are formed, various relations are established, capitals are valued and devalued, and agents' practices are evaluated as conscious or conditioned, produced or reproduced. More importantly, the imposing power of the field influences how identity may be constructed relationally. Thus, the value of Bourdieu's field theory rests in its capacity 'to understand interactions between people,

or to explain an event or social phenomenon [by rendering] it necessary to examine the social space in which interactions, transactions and events occurred' (Thomson 2008, p. 67). The following sections provide a discussion on specific activities in the field in relation to identity construction.

In-field dynamics. Practice-generating relations are constants in the threefold conception of field as 'a structured social space, a field of forces, or a force field' (Bourdieu 1998a, p. 40). These generative relations are characterized as a 'struggle in the field of cultural production' between and among dominant and dominated social agents, between those with most against those with least capital in the field (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 41). The relation between the position in the field and the disposition configured in the *habitus* constitutes the degree of agents' social mobility. Furthermore, the structure and forces in the field also guides the social trajectory of these actors. Therefore, the mechanics of the field follow a logic of interconnection where 'change in the power relations which constitutes the space of positions can result in a modification in the space of "possibles"' (p. 32).

Grenfell (2014) noted that the relation between field and *habitus* is so entangled that Bourdieu referred to this as 'ontological complicity'. Specifically this relation operates on two levels:

> On the one side, it is a relation of conditioning: the field structures the habitus … On the other side, it is a relation of knowledge or cognitive construction: 'habitus contributes to constituting the field as a meaningful world, a world endowed with sense and with value, in which it is worth investing one's practice' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 127).

What is evident from this description is that the field–*habitus* relationship constitutes dialectic through which 'specific practices produce and reproduce the social world that at the same time is making them' (Thomson 2008, p. 75).

Field is also related to a larger construct, the social space, which refers to an 'overall conception of the social world' wherein 'social space is conceived as comprising multiple fields which have some relationship to each other, and points of contact' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.9), p.9). While agents may relate to different fields, their position-taking strategies may reflect their worldview or their entanglement in the worldview of dominant agents in that space. Thus, in this social space, social agents constantly compete with one another over what is legitimate, what capitals have more or

less value, and so on. In relation to the construction of identity, one of the possible products of multiple relations in the field is critical 'knowledge articulated as new ways of representing (naming and framing) the social and material world' (Thomson 2008, p. 77). In this way, fields do not just reproduce identity; they also instigate the formation of new ones.

Legitimacy through and in the field. The same field that mediates, transforms, reproduces, generate practices and constructs knowledge is the same field that confers (or negates) legitimacy on everything that is at stake therein (Jenkins 1992, p. 53). If we have to locate where determinism is most apparent, it is in the field where 'position-takings arise quasi-mechanistically – that is, almost independently of the agents' consciousness and wills' (Bourdieu 1993a, p. 59). This autonomy of the field, seemingly having a life of its own, is the principle upon which Bourdieu has been condemned as a determinist, obscuring the possibility of a reflexive social agent. Challenges to Bourdieu's field theory as a method include the following: the problem of borders, that is, where to draw the line of application and how to find out where the field effects stop (if they ever do), the problem of too many fields, that is, the difficulty in determining the terminal point of the field effect, the 'ironic' problem of change, and the problem of inter-field connection – which questions how domination is actually enacted (Friedland 2009; Thomson 2008). These challenges can be restated interrogatively by asking, on the one hand, whether there are episodes wherein the influence of the field recedes due to the degree of sedimentation of dispositions and practices of the *habitus*? On the other hand, a question can be raised on whether up to what degree of durability must *habitus* possess to resist the onslaught of field influence? These are questions that resonate throughout this study.

While I have presented Bourdieu's key concepts individually, I have discussed them in a manner that sheds light on their relational characteristics and positions them as potential principles of identity constructs. This critical presentation of key concepts that privileges their relational component has made it possible to identify a typical characterization of Bourdieu's sociology. It is important to identify these key characteristics as they function as a guide in the analysis section.

3.3 A characterization of Bourdieu's sociology

This section dovetails from the previous discussion of Bourdieu's key concepts. My purpose in this part is to deduce key characteristics –also referred to as themes – that can potentially inform the various parts of this research. These themes, labelled by Harker, Mahar and Wilkes (1990) as basic theoretical positions, situate Bourdieu's locus in the field of contemporary sociology. From my elaboration of key concepts, the following characteristics emerge: (1) his sociology is a dialectics of theory and method, (2) his conceptions of ontology and epistemology are relational, (3) his concepts are historically positioned and, (4) there is a perpetual tension between reflexivity and determinism. These are by no means an exhaustive and comprehensive list, but simply the aspects that are central to my aspirations in this research.

The foremost characteristic of Bourdieu's sociology is that it is always predisposed to praxis, which resonates to his key concepts and social processes. For instance, Reay (2004, p. 439) suggested that 'difficulties, inconsistencies, risks of determinism, and aspects of circularity inherent in *habitus* can be viewed as far less problematic if *habitus* is viewed more fluidly as both method and theory; a way of understanding the world'. This position is not exclusive of habitus alone but of field and capital as well. Second, it is unmistakable that the capacity for relational processes is contained in every concept. This flows from an ontology and epistemology that defines real as relational (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Vandenberghe 1999). Specifically, *habitus*, capital and field are at the same time both theory and method, and therefore are positioned for action and foregrounding relations (Bourdieu 1993a, p.14; Friedland 2009; Grenfell & James 2004; Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990). Third, the relational conception of Bourdieu's theory of being and theory of knowledge can only be possible if its components, that is, 'key concepts – *habitus*, field, cultural and symbolic capital – are all inherently historical' (Steinmetz 2011, p. 46). Thus, historicity is another main characteristic of his concepts. Finally, all these concepts are perpetually sustained within the tension between reflexivity and determinism. This fourth characteristic is evident from most critiques of his sociology as a whole. In other words, what sustains the dynamic processes in these concepts is the natural tension between agents as social actors or as products of a deterministic structure. In my research, these characteristics were important particularly in the data gathering and data analysis stage. In other words, these characteristics direct my attention to relational processes, historicity, and particular tensions between

reflexivity and determinism in teachers' community engagements. More importantly, identification and articulation of these characteristics is beneficial in two ways. On the one side, it helps keep the integrity of Bourdieu's theory and method when applied to a social phenomenon that is culturally distinct from the context in which he developed and originally applied his sociology. On the other side, these characteristics enhance cultural sensitivity through notions of historicity and by primarily focusing on relations rather than essential positions, which most ethnocentric tendencies are derived from.

3.4 The context of affordances and critiques

A consistent motion of 'ebb and flow' characterizes the general appreciation and critique of Bourdieu's sociology. In this section, I summarize the core of these critiques while discussing their context and limitations. Most of the criticism of Bourdieu's theory and method gravitates around tensions between reflexivity and determinism. These tensions extend to all his concepts. For instance, *habitus* has been accused of over-reaching reflexivity (Knafo 2016) on the one hand, while it has also been critiqued for its limited account of change (Mutch 2003). King (2000, p.418) encapsulates a general critique into an accusation that 'the *habitus* relapses against Bourdieu's intentions into the very objectivism which he rejects' (also cf. DiMaggio & DiMaggio 1979; Jenkins 1992; Schatzki 1997). In appreciating the impact of gender in social processes, Bourdieu has been accused for its ambiguity and failure to recognize the creativity of those who have been subjugated because of gender as a form of navigating the social world (McNay 1999; Skeggs 2004a). The limitation of Bourdieu's theory to critically expound on the influence of agents' moral dimension has been well documented (Ignatow 2009; Saatcioglu & Ozanne 2013; Setten 2004). To bridge the conceptual and heuristic gap, solutions have been proposed to hybridize (Adams 2006), remap (Hanna 2014), reconstruct (Vorderobermeier & Vorderobermeier 2014) and reconceptualise (Mellor & Schilling 2014) Bourdieu's key concepts.

Capital is likewise plagued with criticisms, especially surrounding the difficulty of measuring social capital (Tzanakis 2013) and its propensity to be reduced to economic capital (Thumala Olave 2012; Swartz 1997). However, the multi-dimensionality of Bourdieu's forms of capitals have been appreciated for their widespread application, for example in family studies (Aydemir & Tecim 2012; Waithaka 2014), and in navigating faith-related aspects of human existence (Caputo 2009; Flere 2012). Although studied in

another setting, Pryor et al. (2005) discovered the energy of social capital to animate community participation in order to improve schooling of those in the rural area.

Lastly, a perennial suspicion of determinism in Bourdieu's theory of field is at the core of critiques of this concept (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 2016; Hilgers & Mangez 2014; Jenkins 1992). Mutch (2006) however presents a more balanced view of field: on the one hand, it is functionalist (where individuals can be reduced to positions) but at the same time it is not prescriptive (but flexible and porous). It appears that Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method receive less opposition when applied to fields that are connatural to his sociology, for example the political field (Dubois 2014; Mihai 2016; Costa & Murphy 2015). On the contrary, he has received significant critiques in specific areas like the religious field (Mellor & Shilling 2010; Thumala Olave 2012) and gender studies (Skeggs 2004a, 2004b, 2007).

A challenge to the pursuit of relationality was evident when Burke (2015, pp. 57) echoed Jenkins' (2002, p. 91) critique that 'environments tend to reproduce rather than question *habitus'*. In other words, 'the sustained influence of structure and the limited opportunity for social change' (p. 91) is a major misgiving of Bourdieu's sociology. However, the fields' encompassing tendency is not absolute. While the odds may be stacked against reflexivity, individual's agency is not absolutely annihilated. Hence, the debate continues between what aspects of social phenomenon can be predicated to structure and what may be ascribed to human agency. Hence the exploration on how reflexivity may be sustained amidst structuring tendencies of the fields continues to dominate the discourse. For instance, for Mouzelis (2007) increasing *habitus*' reflexive capacity is possible by proposing that it is generally enhanced by 'intra-*habitus* tension' and not merely as a result of field–*habitus* dissonance (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Grenfell 2008).

Bourdieu's supporters have found a more constructive approach to address these criticisms. He accomplished this by arguing that conceptual limitations flow from conservative versions of Bourdieu's concepts and therefore can be surmounted by looking for other influences. For instance, after taking note of Basil Bernstein's critique that Bourdieu is 'essentially concerned with relations to legitimacy in a social context rather than relations *within* it', Grenfell (2014, p. 222) suggested that this can be remedied by 'looking more intently at the internal workings of the field'. In other

words, legitimacy can be critically established when historicity is considered. I argue further that failure to utilize Bourdieu's concept *in toto* weakens the conceptual and heuristic capacity of his sociology. This leads to researchers wanting to modify Bourdieu's concepts. Furthermore, the shift of analytical focus from relations (e.g., ascendant and dominated, legitimized and legitimating, etc.) to categories (e.g., capital, *habitus*, field per se) undermines the robustness and resiliency of his sociology.

Bourdieu's insistence on concerted deployment of his key concepts in exploring social phenomena proceeds from his position that authentic and critical understanding of identity only occurs when theory and method are not only employed concomitantly but also utilized to mutually inform each other (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Rawolle and Lingard (2013, p.117) refers to this as 'the necessity of putting both theory and data to work together [that] emphasise the social word as being the product of social constructions, yet also more than such constructions'. The caveat 'more than such constructions' is instructive that any attempt at critical construction of the social world must be both inclusive of possible culture-specific aspects and anticipates possible (future) iterations in social phenomenon. For this matter, failure to utilize key concepts in *toto* and the inability to establish mutually affecting relations between theory and method risk researchers wanting to modify Bourdieu's concepts to adjust to the demands of social phenomena to be critically understood within its social and cultural context. Finally, some criticisms proceed from forgetfulness that Bourdieu's theory and methods are also contextual and therefore fundamentally limited by the sociological status of historically relevant issues in Algiers and France as the sites where his sociology was first developed and deployed.

In this study I discover and address the limitations arising from the contextual construction of Bourdieu's theory and methods on two levels. First, I consistently apply Bourdieu's key concepts in concert, giving due weight to the significance of each concept (evident in the manner in which I analyse teachers' community engagements in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8). Second, I deploy culturally sensitive research methodologies (see Section 4.3).

While these only represent the 'tip of the iceberg' of critiques of Bourdieu's theory and method, the aforementioned guides how Bourdieu's theory and method may be

critically applied to a social phenomenon situated in a different social, historical and cultural context.

3.5 Theoretical and heuristic benefits

The research opportunities presented by 'gaps in knowledge' revealed and highlighted in the review of related literature is also an occasion to explore the adequacy of Bourdieu's sociology in understanding this social phenomenon, that is, the link between Filipino teachers' identity and community engagements. In this section I intend to clarify further the potential advantages of utilizing this particular sociological approach. The choice of Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method as optics in this research arises from three inter-related rationales, namely, personal familiarity, they are rigorous yet can account for contexts, and they focus on process and relations. First, the general subject matter of teachers' community engagement is a familiar theme in my life, capturing what Marshall (1996, p. 523) refers to as 'the researchers' practical knowledge of the area'. This familiarity engenders a particular way of 'thinking and behaving in particular patterns in accordance with social categories, such as, class, gender, race and region' (Li 2015, p.126). Bourdieu's emphasis on historicity (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Steinmetz 2011) allows his 'tool kits' to account for these factors. Second, the sociological appeal of this approach in relation to studying the identities of Filipino teachers rests on its competence to provide a theoretical and methodological framework that is resilient and dynamic enough to account for modifications and iterations due to evolutions and fluctuations in the social world and culturally informed differentiation (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Skeggs 2004a; Steinmetz 2011). Thus, the cognitive and practical framework characterized by the interconnectivity and interdependency of Pierre Bourdieu's *habitus*, capital and field facilitates the effort to understand the identities of Filipino teachers by unravelling the mechanics involved therein. Third, another benefit is the tool kits' capacity to account for key social relations in the social world. Burke (2015) established this in his study, arguing for the capacity of Bourdieu's sociological theory to bridge structure and agency, highlighting in particular the processes and relations in the formation of practices. What this focus on social relations highlights is the affordance of a generative tension between determinism and agency rather than its natural limitations in constructing the social world – and in this study Filipino teachers' identities.

The above reasoning is significant particularly in a country continuously struggling with the complex residues of its colonial past, the stigma of an oppressive dictatorial regime, the unabated influx of foreign cultures and the unabated diaspora of generations of Filipinos in search of greener pastures elsewhere, and in the perennial quest for a distinct socio-cultural identity. At the core of this threefold argument is an understanding that Bourdieu's theory provides both concepts and methods to probe multiple relations involved in this social phenomenon.

This approach links the current research to previous studies and also helps explore possible gaps in previous research. Pierre Bourdieu's sociological theory and method as articulated in the theoretical framework, coupled with connections to previous scholarship, and the knowledge gaps identified in the review of related literature, provides the conceptual tools and the social contexts to forge a framework for my analysis of the construction of the social identities of Filipino teachers.

In the next chapter, I discuss both the methodology and methods of research.

Chapter 4: Research methodology

4.1 Introduction and purpose

In constructing Filipino teachers' identity through their community engagements, it is important to recognize how Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the 'sense of the game' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.5; also Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.118) can be utilized as a kind of 'water diviner's rod' in the initial identification of an appropriate research methodology. As a method, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p.36) insist on reflexivity as a 'theory of intellectual practice as an integral component and necessary condition of a critical theory of society'. In other words, a reflexive method demands that a researcher recognizes his subjective position in the research and is capable of recursive motion or reflective back and forth dynamics on the subjectivities' impact on the method, the research topic and conduct of the research. With this in mind, in this chapter, I discuss the research methodology I employed to attain the main research objective.

In my search for a suitable methodology I considered both Bourdieu's theory and method as discussed in the previous chapter and the socio-cultural context of teachers' community engagements. This perspective draws from the understanding that 'the term methodology refers to the way in which we approach problems and seek answers' (Taylor & Bogdan 1998, p. 3). Furthermore, my search for a suitable methodology was informed by my own historically constituted identity as a Filipino researcher and educator.

In this chapter, I present and argued for the methodology I chose, including the design, epistemology, plan of action and methods, that is, the 'techniques used to gather and analyse data' (Crotty 1998, p.3). The chapter covers the following topics: first, an introduction (discussing the purpose and organization) and an explanation of the methodology (critical theory as a theoretical perspective and critical constructivism as an epistemology); second, a discussion of culturally sensitive approaches; third, my data-gathering methods (focus group discussions, narrative inquiry and observation); fourth, my research strategies in entering the field (identifying and locating the field, selecting and inviting participants, my procedure for collecting and storing the data, data

coding and data analysis); fifth, research limitations; sixth, the significance of the study; seventh, ethical considerations; and finally eighth, logistic requirements.

In my methodology section, I will first discuss the nature of critical theory before shedding light on critical constructivism. In this study, critical theory served as a principle that guided the in-depth analysis. Critical constructivism provided the scaffolding upon which I constructed the notion of identity. The pillars of a social research project are underscored by, though not exclusive to, the following elements, namely; ontology, epistemology, culturally sensitive approaches, methodology and methods. In Table 1, I presented first the definitions of these concepts before locating the particular position I assumed for each of the categories. These pillars and my methodological positions are further unpacked by specifying its relation to my study. For instance, a central question to my study is what constitutes social reality, that is, ontology (first column). In this research, I take the position that social reality is a social construct (second column). When further specified, this socially constructed reality emerged from multiple relations of power in the social world (third column).

Table 1: Theoretical positions and processes of the research methodology

Theories underpinning my research methodology	**My methodological position**	**Specific relation to my research**
Ontology Ontological assumptions are concerned with what constitutes reality, in other words *what is* (Scotland 2012 p.9)	Reality is a social and historical construct (Berger & Luckmann 1991; Bourdieu 1990a). This assumption is deduced through critical theory.	As a construct, reality is borne or forged out of relations. This notion extends to the construction of teachers' identities as constructed through their community engagements.
Epistemology Epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated, in other words *what it means to know* (Scotland 2012; see also Denzin & Lincoln 2000)	Critical constructivism and critical theory – since the mode of being is at the same time the manner of knowing (Grenfell 2014; Vandenberghe 1999)	Principles of critical theory probe the relations of power in teachers' community engagements. Critical constructivism facilitates the configuration of relations of power that are generative of identity.
Culturally sensitive research approach Recognizing that each culture has a distinct	Indigenous research method using cultural values, e.g., *pakikipag-kapwa* and *pakiramdam*	Use of cultural dynamics amplifies quality (reliability, validity and even amount) of data.

approach to social phenomena	(Enriquez 2013)	
Methodology Refers to the overall approach or plan of action in a particular research project (Ritchie et al. 2014)	Qualitative research using a critical paradigm – critical constructivism	Choice of the methodology and methods are based on what tool can best provide a critical answer to the research questions.
Methods The manner in which data was collected, coded and analysed.	Focus group discussion and, within this method, narrative inquiry. Key informant interview. Observation	

4.2 Adequacy of a qualitative research methodology

Methodology refers to the 'design, strategy or plan of action behind the choice and use of a particular method and linking the choice and use of methods to the desired outcomes' (Crotty 1998, p.3). The notion that research methodology is a 'pragmatic exercise guided by direction set both by the research question and the underpinning epistemological assumptions' (Harper 2011, p.83) underscored the importance of clarifying my ontological and epistemological positions. This argument is supported by a position that every social science research project reflects both the social conditions of a society and the perceived appropriate theory for examining these (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen 2008, p.3). In this research, I chose a qualitative research methodology to consider the social phenomenon of interest (teachers' community engagements), the nature of the discipline (sociology of education), and a methodology congenial to the sociological tradition of Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method.

The aims and objectives of qualitative research are directed at providing a structure that makes the social world visible (Denzin & Lincoln 2011, p.3) by learning about 'how people make sense of their social and material circumstances' (Ritchie et al. 2014, p.4). This was accomplished in this research through a 'methodical study of socially organized settings' (Miller & Dingwall 1997, p.3), whether in larger social contexts (Ritchie et al. 2014) or in specific areas like education (Delamont 2012; Donnelly 2015). However, while Delamont (2012, p. 13) positioned qualitative research as a weapon in the 'fight for familiarity', I argue here that the same methodology can be employed to make sense of what Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) call the 'taken for

granted' social phenomena in perceived appropriate theory (Alasuutari, Bickman & Brannen 2008, p.1). In other words, I relied on the understanding that the methodological strength of qualitative research lies in its capacity to provide 'ways of transcribing and analysing the discursive construction of everyday events, […] and of exploring the historical nature of life within a social group of local setting' (Putney et al. 1999, p. 374). Hence, a qualitative research approach allowed me 'to examine people's experiences in detail, by using a specific set of research methods such as in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, observation', and so on, articulating issues from the perspective of the participants and interpreting and constructing meanings within 'their natural settings' (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011, pp. 8–9).

Although 'the earliest phase of the development of qualitative traditions within education can be characterized as a struggle for recognition for the value of qualitative research' (Putney et al. 1999, p. 370), a consistent production of social researches using this methodology suggests that it has progressed as a reliable tool in critically understanding social phenomena. In the next section I argue for critical theory and critical constructivism as the theoretical anchoring of my research methodology.

4.3 Philosophical anchoring of the research methodology: a case for critical theory and critical constructivism

The philosophical anchoring of the qualitative research methodology employed in this study took its lineage from critical theory and critical constructivism. Careful comparison and analysis of the basic beliefs, in both theory and method, of these two paradigms reveals that they complement each other (Denzin & Lincoln 2000, pp.98–100). What is more significant is that the probative value of critical theory and the capacity of critical constructivism allows me to 'go beyond the self-understanding of the agents [i.e., FGD participants by] offer(ing) a critique of current practice so that the [these teachers] can liberate themselves from the grip of the legitimated social classification (Kim 2004, p.363). Organizationally, in my study, critical theory and critical constructivism were lenses utilized one after another in this research. These theories also underpinned the deconstruction and construction stages. While the critical theory application phase furnished me with a critical lens to uncover deep-seated structures, relations and dispositions, critical constructivism provided the principle upon which *habitus*, capital and field were configured.

4.3.1 Epistemology based on critical theory

Qualitative research methods offer a variety of 'optics' through which the social world can be evaluated and constructed. Prasad (2005, p.iv) referred to qualitative optics as the research discipline to which critical theory belongs. At its core, critical theory seeks to restore human dignity through integral human development, liberation from oppressive social conditions and re-enfranchising the individual of their rights (see Bronner 2011). Horkheimer (1982) distinguished critical theory from traditional theory. The latter favors the maintenance of the *status quo* whereas critical theory questions the existing order of things and provokes strategies to bridge equity gaps in view of a more democratic society. It is particularly concerned the social positions of individuals in the society as they grapple with issues/aspects that influences the configuration of power relations within society. These elements include race, class, gender, education, economy, religion and other social institutions that contribute to a social system.

The significance of critical theory in this research is three pronged. First, it provided a conceptual link to Pierre Bourdieu's theory and methods. Second, it contained a natural and heuristic affinity to the subject matter of this research, which was a prerequisite to the process of critical constructivism employed in this research. It is important to remember that critical theory originated from the provocation of Socrates where he 'subjected long-standing beliefs to rational scrutiny and speculated about concerns that projected beyond the existing order' (Bronner 2011, p.1). I trekked along this tradition as I explored substantive problems of domination including 'the ways social relations also mediate power relations to create various forms of *alienation* and inhibit the realization of human possibilities' (Morrow & Brown 1994, p.6, original emphasis).

As an epistemological form, that is, what can be known and how reality can be known through critical theory, authentic knowledge begins with critical questioning of the accepted social order, relations and positions (see Kincheloe & McLaren 2002). This critical inquiry unravels the nature, interests and dispositions of agents and institutions in the social order but, more importantly, it scrutinizes resulting modes of relations of power therein. My desire to establish a seamless epistemological link between Bourdieu's sociology and critical theory became complicated by the fact that at times Bourdieu conflates epistemology and ontology. As Grenfell (2014, p.59) suggested, 'his epistemology is an ontology', that is, his way of knowing is intimately entangled with

what can be known; he rarely separates epistemology, theory and practices (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.261). However, this notion is understandable within the context of his project of freeing the vagueness of epistemology from scientific and scholastic notions (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.159; Grenfell 2014). In other words, Bourdieu seems to suggest that how the world is constructed provides the manner upon which social things may be understood. I saw in Vandenberghe's (1999, p. 32) discussion how the confusion and complication due to this theoretical conflation can be beneficial. First, it highlighted the internal relations between Bourdieu's concepts (*habitus*, capital and field together with their theoretical paraphernalia; *illusio*, etc.) in such a way that Bourdieu's theory and method clearly appeared either as practical mediums (*modus operandi* and therefore epistemology) and/or as consequences (*opus operatum* and therefore an ontology). Second, in a heuristic manner, this conflation organized a structure for a more seamless transition from critique (i.e., probative) to identity construction.

Bourdieu's sociology, with its focus on the impacts of uneven relations of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Swartz 1997) is aligned with the tradition of critical theory. Ballantine and Spade (2007, p.14) suggested that Bourdieu's theory is a 'branch of conflict theory called cultural reproduction and resistance theories [which] argues, very generally, that those who dominate capitalistic systems mold individuals to suit their own purposes'. Furthermore, radically removing the illusion of necessity (Gorski 2013, p. loc. 1323) and exposing disproportionate interests, as Bourdieu's theory can, constitute basic acts of critical theory. As a critical theory, Bourdieu's sociology carries a methodological capacity both to question the *status quo* and to interrogate reasons for inequality in the social order (Horkheimer 1982; Redding 2005). Correlative with its capacity are imbedded limitations of how its practiced and even imagined (Karakayali 2004), one of which is an enduring perception that critical theory lacks a standard to evaluate both the quality (Mays & Pope 2000) and the validity of produced knowledge in social research (Hammersley 2008). Notwithstanding these limitations, critical theory's methodological potentiality lies in its capacity to critically unmask modalities of relations of power (e.g., dominated and dominating, legitimizing and legitimated, position and position taking). While there is much clarity to the probative value of Bourdieu's theory and method, its liberating and transformative capacity remain to be established.

In relation to the subject matter of this research, critical theory provided a framework that not only interrogated the 'conditions of the world today through multiple perspectives of class, race, gender, and other group affiliations' (Creswell 2013, p.27) but also critiqued legitimating (and legitimated) relations of power as the natural order of things (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Bourdieu 1990a, p.112). In other words, critical theory helped 'illuminate hidden sources of repression and neglected transformative possibilities' (Bronner 2011, p.100). This probative capacity indicates that at its core critical theory is 'suspicious of the constructed meanings that culture bequeaths to us' (Crotty 1998, p.59).

To summarize this section, in this research, critical theory provided an epistemology that critically unravelled the different modalities and relations of power in a socially constructed world. It is an evaluative tool; a prerequisite; a framework that interrogates and offers an epistemology that crucially unravels the different modalities of power particularly as an evaluative tool in ensuring criticality in the construction of an authentic identity of Filipino teachers. From this understanding of critical theory, I established that its primary relevance rests on its critical probative value and on its ancillary capacity as a link to critical constructivism.

4.3.2 Constructing ontology through critical constructivism

Von Glasersfeld (1984, p. 18) traced constructivism to the eighteenth-century philosopher Gianbattista Vico's battle cry '*verum ipsum factum*'. Loosely translated, this means that truth is the same as fact. The ontological and, by extension, the epistemological implication of this is that truth is a construct (is made). This notion suggests that the only authentic way of apprehending this truth is by way of construction, 'for only then do we know what its components are and how they were put together' (p. 18). Most of my reviewed references regard critical constructivism as an epistemology (Crotty 1998, p.5; Denzin & Lincoln 2000), emphasizing that 'knowledge is actively constructed by human beings, rather than passively received by them' (Ritchie et al. 2014, p.13). However, it appears that the degree of entanglement between ontology and epistemology is more intimate in critical constructivism than in critical theory. The reason for this is that critical theory is more probative and deconstructive than critical constructivism.

By suggesting that 'objects are made and not found' and 'the means by which they are made are social and conventional', Fish (1980, p.186) also implicitly shows how ontology and epistemology coincide. Providing clarity to this argument, Denzin and Lincoln (2000, p.21) suggested a functional distinction where 'constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (there are multiple realities), a subjectivist epistemology (knower and respondent co-create understandings), and a naturalistic set of methodological procedures'. Again this position indicates that, in as much as there are multiple ways to probe a social phenomenon, there are also varieties of ways to construct them. Furthermore, while critical constructivism straddles with ease being referenced as a way of knowing the social world (epistemology) or as a product of this process (ontology), in this study I opted to strategically tap its usefulness as an ontology or as a way of constructing social reality. This privileging aligns with the overall objective of this research, namely, to critically construct a contemporary Filipino teachers' identity from the social strands (relations of power) unmasked through critical theory.

In other words, an authentic process of critical constructivism requires that there must be something to be constructed from, that is, social strands to weave from. In this research, these strands are teachers' habitus (practices), capitals (resources and literacies) and field, whose relations through various community engagements help construct their identities in the community. Consistent with the aims of critical theory, 'critical constructivism also seeks to render the contingency of construction and the play of power as visible as possible' (Fleury & Garrison 2014, p.32). Kincheloe's (2005) appraisal of critical constructivism suggested a continuation of or even an overlapping of aims and functions between critical theory and critical constructivism. Critical constructivism 'involves an ability to step back from the world as we are accustomed to perceiving it and to see the ways our perception is constructed via linguistic codes, cultural signs, race, class, gender and sexual ideologies, and other often hidden modes of power' (p. 11). I have to reiterate however that, more importantly, critical constructivism is capable of critically exploring not only modes of power but also how relations of powers are organized. In other words, in this research, while critical theory probed the relations of power, critical constructivism re-constructed these relations by highlighting where and how they intersect, and by uncovering the reasons why they interact.

By highlighting constructivism's capacity to locate and understand the intersections of power relations, I argue that this methodology not only aligns with Bourdieu's sociology but also assists in the attainment of my research objectives. Nonetheless, critical constructivism manifested a limitation that flowed from its relativistic epistemology and ontology wherein most of the critiques centre around issues of reliability and validity (Ritchie et al. 2014). Notwithstanding these critiques, I leaned towards its benefits while always being cautious of the possible pitfalls of this methodology. For instance, the relativism of critical constructivism encountered resistance from the essentialist anchoring of teachers' religious practices. To overcome this impasse, I continued to apply critical constructivism until it reached its saturation point. As a result, in the religious field, teachers can only exhibit agency or construct practices to a certain degree. Beyond this, the overpowering logic of the religious belief system takes over. Through this process, I acquired an insight into what may be constructed through Bourdieu's sociology and what cultural elements of a particular social phenomenon resist a relativistic construct based mainly on relations of power.

To summarize these two sections, critical theory and critical constructivism are two methodological lenses in my research. I looked to critical theory for its probative value, specifically, its capacity to identify relations of power in the social world, and teachers' positions and position-taking strategies. I relied on critical constructivism for a structure in constructing first Filipino teachers' *habitus*, capital and field and then subsequently their identities in the community. In the next section, I discuss how culturally sensitive (or indigenous) research approaches elevate the level of validity and reliability of this research.

4.4 Culturally sensitive approaches

The significance of Bourdieu's 'sense of the game' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 118; Bourdieu 1993, p. 5) underscored the importance of every qualitative researcher striving to 'imagine the field' (Massey 2003, p. 71) or constructing a mental map prior to the conduct of fieldwork. The weight of this position in the methodology of this research relates to a recognition that Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method are contextual, that is, inorganic to the Philippine setting. Hence, disregard of this context constitutes what is referred to as a 'condition of intellectual imperialism' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.170), and results into a 'delusion of those who misrecognize their

own position of privilege as evidence of their superior capacity for enlightened thoughts' (McNay 2001, p.139). This is sadly true in the Philippine educational context, where Western thought (in terms of both curriculum and pedagogy) continue to influence educational practices and sustain social classification and hierarchy based on intellectual literacy.

This heavy reliance on foreign concepts often leads to uncritical application of both theories and methods in various social research projects (see Enriquez 1994, 2013; Pe-Pua 1982). The notion of 'bending' Bourdieu's sociology to accommodate the cultural context of the social phenomenon under study is just as denigrating as the uncritical application of the same theory. Aside from deploying culturally sensitive methodologies (Enriquez 1994, 2013; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino 2000) to mitigate the impact of the cultural distance between the theory and the social phenomenon, I decided to follow Bourdieu's innovation exemplified when he expanded Marx's notion of capital to include cultural, social and symbolic forms (Bourdieu 1986b). This innovation was precipitated by Bourdieu's personal experience of the French educational system (see Bourdieu's history in Grenfell 2014; Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990; Swartz 1997). In this study, the application of Bourdieu's theory and method – *in toto* and filtered through indigenous research methods – unmasked both its strength and limitations.

To further mitigate the ill-effects of this misrecognized social privilege or 'superior capacity for enlightened thought' (McNay 2001, p.139), I integrated culturally sensitive (or indigenous) approaches into my methodology. While on the one hand, this strategy maintained the integrity of Bourdieu's sociology; on the other hand it protected my study from denigration of the cultural social phenomenon upon which the former was applied as an optic.

The *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino Indigenous Psychology) academic area of the University of the Philippines pioneered the development and deployment of culture-based research methods and approaches to ensure reliability and validity of data. At the core of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* as a research approach is that it 'encourages cross-indigenous methods, multi-method and multi-language approaches, and appropriate field methods' (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino 2000, p.53). This 'triangulation' method helped decolonize a foreign theory and forced it to be cognizant of cultural context (e.g., Filipino world views, values and social processes). This integral approach to

understanding social phenomena is also cocooned in Enriquez's (2013, p.116) position that 'indigenous research methods can only be utilized as a shared cultural responsibility'. In this research, I heeded this cultural responsibility by utilizing culture-based approaches not only to ensure the validity and reliability of the data but also to acclimatize Bourdieu's theory and method to the cultural specificity of the Philippine context.

From here on, I will elaborate further on these approaches and their benefits for the objectives of this research. Pe-pua and Protacio-Marcelino (2000, p.56) regard Filipinos' cultural 'propensity for indirect communication' to be an identifying aspect of the Filipino personality and dispositions both in the field of social psychology and sociology. As such, part of Filipino's culturally constituted socialization 'is being sensitive to non-verbal cues, having concern for the feelings of others, being truthful but not at the expense of hurting others' feelings' (ibid). The primary form of cultural sensitivity that corresponds to this socialization is the value and skill of *pakikiramdam* (shared inner perception). Shared inner perception is a 'request to feel or to be sensitive to' (Enriquez 2013, p.168) and it is an important skill whose structure and dynamics can be immensely useful in the conduct of socio-cultural research. *Pakikiramdam* is made operational in the outsider (*ibang-tao*) and insider (*hindi ibang-tao*) social dynamics in the initial appreciation of persons, agents or class that is inherent in Filipino culture (p.49). I as a researcher initially belonged to an outsider category to most of my FGD participants. However, my sensitivity, that is, my knowledge of how it operates, to the insider and outsider social categories ensured the quality and truthfulness of the gathered data. Specifically, reliability and veracity is increased when research participants consider the researcher as an insider (*hindi-ibang tao*) or consider that the researcher shares something in common with the participants in terms of ethnicity, language, profession, and so on. Hence, in every FGD session, part of the orientation was to introduce myself as a son of a teacher and one who had been involved in teacher training for quite some time. The orientation was conducted in an informal setting, emphasized the lighter side of the discussion, and involved the provision of meals, the use of the Filipino language, and other cultural elements that made the participants more comfortable both with the activity and the researcher.

In the research implementation, the cultural value of *pakikiramdam* allowed the FGD participants to collectively move from outsider to insider positions. *Pakikiramdam* also

provided the capacity to locate us on the social interpersonal and inter-group spectrum and it provided cues about appropriate and prudent actions necessary to navigate smoothly the Filipino social world. Utilizing *pakikiramdam* in this research helped create a more spontaneous atmosphere and relaxed environment during data gathering methods like focus group discussions, interviews and narrative inquiry. Furthermore, *pakikiramdam* granted me access to the following ancillary research approaches as I collected data from teacher participants: '*pagtatanong-tanong* (improvised informal, unstructured interview) …, *pakikipagkuwentuhan* ("story-telling" or "informal conversations"), *ginabayang talakayan* (collective indigenous discussion), *nakikiugaling pagmamasid* (participant observation) …, [and] *pakikisama* ("getting along with")' (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino 2000, p.60).

To summarize, I recognized that Pierre Bourdieu's theory and method is highly contextual. Uncritical application of his sociology to a culturally contextual social phenomenon risks sustaining the imperialism and universalism of Western thought. To bridge the disjuncture in the data-gathering phase, I applied culturally sensitive approaches. Central to this approach was *pakikiramdam*, which served as both a value and a skill that allowed all FGD participants a passage to a space of trust so that the data collected was characterized by an elevated degree of validity and reliability. For example, through *pakikiramdaman* (or mutual sensitivity), I gained practical knowledge of what question to pursue, a sense of proper timing about when to ask a sensitive question, and a sense of when to intervene should arguments become heated and when to rephrase or withdraw the question when I sensed discomfort.

4.5 Data-gathering methods

The analogical relationship between methodology and methods is similar to the tool box and tools of a skilled person. As a methodology, critical theory and critical constructivism organized the cognitive methodological framework of this research, providing a distinct disposition that assisted me to choose the most suitable tools for gathering, coding, analysing and reconstructing the data. My familiarity or 'sense of the game', the nature of the subject matter (the relation between teachers' community engagements and their identities) and my critical appreciation of Bourdieu's sociology informed my decision to choose focus group discussions (FGDs), narrative inquiry (NI) and key informant interviews (KII) as the appropriate data collection methods. The

strategy of sequentially utilizing these data-gathering methods capitalized on Filipinos' penchant for storytelling (Jocson 2008; Ogdoc-Gascon 2015; Secillano & Custodio 2014). This was accomplished by pairing narrative inquiry with both focus group discussions and key informant interviews.

This study also included a historical understanding of teachers' community engagements during the Spanish and American colonial periods (see Chapter 5: Unravelling the colonial threads of Filipino teachers' identities). This goal was attained through a textual analysis of literature on the history of Philippine education, particularly where teachers' community engagements were referenced. Analysis of the colonial antecedent of teachers' identities began by identifying who were regarded as teachers during these colonial periods. This was followed by an interrogation of their functions in the community, which revealed the worldview of the colonizers and the educational aims during these periods. Subsequently, I analysed the forms, influences, goals and implications of teachers' community engagements. In other words, I analysed teachers' practices and dispositions (*habitus*), resources (capitals) and various fields of involvement during the colonial period. In the end, this textual analysis unravelled teachers' identities during those periods and their involvement in the community. Some of these practices survived the vicissitudes of time and remain popular, albeit in modified forms, in the contemporary period.

In the succeeding sections, I elaborated on the data-gathering methods deployed in this research. I begin with a discussion of focus group discussions, followed by narrative inquiry and key informant interviews.

4.5.1 Probing through focus group discussions (FGDs)

Focus group discussion is defined as a 'particular form of group interview intended to exploit group dynamics' [by exploring meanings and interpretations] of 'people's lived experiences and perspectives in context' (Freeman 2006, p.491; see also Liamputtong 2009; Sim 1998). As a research technique, the aim of FGDs is 'to collect data through informal group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher' (Morgan 1996, p.6). In other words, its importance includes its probative value, inclusive character, and its capacity to invite participants to move from the safety of their initial responses to a disposition where they can collectively explore critical ideas. This movement includes 'interaction between the moderator and group members and also between the members

themselves' (Kolb 2008, p.125) that goes beyond their role as participants. Just like other qualitative research methods, FGD has its strengths and weaknesses. On the one hand, FGD's relevance lies in its 'often-stated advantage [where] researchers are permitted to observe a large amount of interaction on a specific topic in a short time' (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey 2011, p.358). Furthermore, this interaction, where 'participants have a more active role in the discussion' (Liamputtong 2011, p.186), 'involves collective engagement designed to promote dialogue and to achieve higher levels of understanding of issues critical to the development of a group's interests and/or the transformation of conditions of its existence' (Kambrelis & Dimitriadis 2013, pp.310–311). In other words, it has the ability to include by 'raising the voices of the less heard populations about the less heard topics' (Kulavuz-Onal 2011, p. 1713), not only voices of consensus but even echoes of dissent. For reasons cited above, focus group discussion offers a structure that is suited for subsequent thematic analysis (Massey 2003).

On the other hand, FGD's limitations included 'token representation' (Ritchie et al. 2014, p. 232), heavy reliance on interaction which may sway participants' opinions (Morgan 1996), and an inability to address sensitive topics (Liamputtong 2011), just to name a few. However, similar to other data gathering methods, FGD also possesses both strength and limitations. As strength, it forces participants to focus on the topic of discussion in a particular space and time suitable for relatively in-depth exploration. However, its weakness centres around FGD formats' intentional and less natural setting where the questions asked in order to obtain the data often involves railroading of the discussion (Morgan 1996). Cognizant of this weakness, I noted topics where teachers were reluctant to probe deeper (e.g., gender-based promotion and policies, teachers' involvement in the political field and weaknesses of the famous *Brigada Eskwela* program). For these impasses, I utilized key informant interviews to seek in-depth understanding about these topics.

My aims in utilizing FGD as the backbone of my research methods were: to provide a democratic space where teacher participants could openly discuss introduced topics and to allow me to collect (record) their perspectives that emerged from the discussion. The creation of a space that aspires to be democratic and egalitarian, that is where participants have the liberty to articulate their opinions, begin with assurance that their identities are protected and that in the course of the session all voices will be heard and

respected. In this orientation, democratic space is characterized as a space that allows participants to be more involved in in-depth discussion (Colucci 2007) and where both consensus (Mouffe 2000) and disagreement (Smithson 2008) are appreciated.

As indicated above – see Section 4.4 – I utilized culturally sensitive approaches to mitigate the structural limitations of FGD. For instance, to mitigate FGD's vulnerability to railroading, the Filipino cultural interpersonal value of *pakiramdam* (shared inner perception) and *pakikiramdam* (the operationalization of shared inner perception) helped me to sense whether the discussion was being dominated by a few participants or by a topic. Furthermore, through *pakiramdam*, both my participants and myself deciphered linguistic and non-verbal cues when a particular topic was too sensitive for them to discuss publicly. My role as a facilitator of the FGDs was crucial since I did not only facilitate the discussion (Smithson 2008) but this role also required me to rephrase questions according to cultural demands, informed me how to ask questions neutrally and instructed me when to pose and when to withdraw a particular (follow-up) question.

I observed that FGD is highly regarded as an appropriate research method when 'exploring new topics, gaining a range of views about specific issues, understanding socio-cultural norms, and in understanding group processes' (Hennink, Utter & Bailey 2011, p. 138). During this 'interactive discussion about specific issues by a predetermined group of people' (p.136), I was responsible not only for being cognizant of the dynamics within the group but also to be more sensitive to the external environment (e.g., the socio-political atmosphere). Notwithstanding FGD's limitations, through the cultural value of *pakikiramdam* and other attendant culturally sensitive approaches, even 'sensitive' topics were discussed. This happened when participants felt they were in a relatively 'relatively safe space [where they can] "let slip", or casually introduce, potentially sensitive information to other group members' (Farquhar & Das 1999, p.61). While I recognized that indigenous research approaches helped in creating and ensuring a democratic and safe space, a one-off FGD session can still potentially stifle discussion around sensitive topics. To address these sensitive issues (e.g., political involvement), I discussed them with experts during key informant interviews.

Within the FGD sessions, some discussions gave way to narrative inquiry. The multi-directionality of the FGD process, the diversity of personalities involved, and the

unpredictability of responses prolonged the discussion and limited the time to address other questions. When at times participants were digressing into unrelated areas for a significant period of time, I gradually and prudently slid from discussion to narrative inquiry not only to maintain focus on the aims of the research but also to sustain the flow of data. This process affirmed the methodological affinity between these two methods. If a situation during a FGD session called for narrative inquiry intervention, I shifted my role from being a discussion facilitator to a moderator-interviewer whereby I asked a more directed question the 'same way each time' (i.e., to each participant) with an altered sequence in order 'to probe for more information' (Leonard 2003, p.167). The advantages of interviews – particularly when paired with FGD – are drawn from the some of its characteristics; 'flexibility, high response rate, check on questions, probes, clarification, confirmation, prompts, connecting, non-verbal, and timing of interview' (pp.168-169). When these characteristics are woven together, the resulting interview tapestry indicates that its flexibility helps generate high response rate, provides space where non-verbal communication is articulated, allows check-on and probing questions, it is easy to prompt the resources person, to connect with previous topics, confirm what was articulated and even clarify vague responses. To further deepen the discussion on topics that necessitate a more focused response, I organized key informant interviews with experts on the topic. Through this, I was able to clarify and corroborate what was articulated in narrative inquiry and FGDs. Thus, the laborious and time-consuming character of group interviews and FGD processes were compensated for by the wide spectrum of responses, which generated voluminous unqualified data.

The basis for choosing the FGD participants and locations is discussed in Section 4.6. Furthermore, the schedule and questions for the focus group discussions is located in Appendix G. In the next section, I discuss how both narrative inquiry and key informant interviews helped obtain the aims of the FGDs and increased the quality of the data I collected.

4.5.2 FGDs strengthened by narrative inquiry

While FGD was the main data-gathering method, the nature of the subject matter of my research and my cultural knowledge of the participants informed a conclusion that this method would work best in conjunction with other methods. That is, when discussions were stalled during a FGD session, narrative inquiry helped sustain the activity. Hence,

narrative inquiry in this research served as an ancillary and complementary method to FGD. In this section, I discuss the nature and methodological value of narrative inquiry and argue that this method deepened a critical understanding of teachers' community engagements.

In this research, teachers' familiar stories echoed common sentiments usually drawn from shared experiences, suggesting that they affected teachers' lives in the community. These stories functioned not only as a centrepiece of conversations but also as a non-formal, social, interpersonal tool for connecting and re-connecting with people in the community and as evidence of teachers' collective memory of their community engagement experiences. This was evident in the conversation that I observed where teachers began the discussion with notions of collective experience such as: '*isn't it that last election was more peaceful*' or '*isn't it that we were both praying for the early release of our mid-year bonus so that we have financial resource for Brigada Eskwela?*' Drawing from various theorists, Hyvärinen (2008, p.448) presented the basic structure of an evolved conception of narrative as 'someone telling somebody else (some people) on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened'. Narratives have an 'implicit "invitation to participate", which allows listeners to play a role in what the outcome is going to be' (John Hagel quoted in Corman 2013). Hence, participants were able to construct their own version of the story, deciding what events to foreground and what events of the same story were to be backgrounded. How a participant arrived at this decision was largely influenced by his/her *habitus* and capital and by the correlative field. Although there are multiple forms of narrative and narrative inquiries, 'what narrative researchers hold in common is the study of stories or narrative as descriptions of a series of events' (Pinnegar & Daynes 2007, p.4). In narrative inquiry, this particular description of events 'involves the reconstruction of a person's experience in relationship both to the other and to a social milieu' (p.5) and, therefore, all narratives happen in time. It was Ricœur (quoted in Dobson 2005, p.5) who emphasized that 'time becomes human to the extent that it is articulated through narrative mode and narrative attains its full meaning when it becomes a condition of temporal existence'. Relating this concept to this research, narrative inquiry heightened the contextual/historical sense, located the site of the events, and therefore positioned the researcher and the participants in a specific instance and stance that enabled them to critically apprehend and construct their social world. Thus, far from being static, Gubrium and Holstein

(2008, p. 250) highlight that a critical form of narrative exposes and espouses its socio-political dimensions by inquiring about

> the production, distribution, and circulation of stories in society [and] … questions such as who produces particular stories, where they are likely to be encountered, what their consequences are, under what circumstances particular narratives are more or less accountable, what interests publicise them, how they gain popularity, and how they are challenged.

Dobson's (2005, p.4) understanding that narratives are best understood as 'multi-directional, multi-punctual and multi-accented' opened their strategic usage as a form of inquiry in multiple ways and in different periods of FGD. For example, a discussion of a particular topic typically commences with a narrative inquiry of each of the participants (e.g., What is your most memorable story as a Board of Election Officer?). As a consequence, when Dobson's conception was operationalized in this study, there were moments when a FGD session was transformed into a storytelling session where teachers dovetailed their own story to their co-teachers' story, affirming and challenging, at times concordant and other times discordant, sometimes free, at other times constrained, and so on. Thus, 'both the stories and the humans [storyteller, listeners and researcher] were continuously visible [and audible] in the studies' (Clandinin & Connelly 2007, quoted in Pinnegar & Daynes 2007, p.7), and they were also consciously and unconsciously constructing, reconstructing and co-constructing different relations in their social world with their own voices and in their own words.

Both at the level of concept and methodology, narrative inquiry was suited to the culturally constituted Filipino penchant for stories, both storytelling and listening (Jocson 2008; Ogdoc-Gascon 2015; Secillano & Custodio 2014). Affinity between narrative inquiry and Filipino culture lies in the common denominator that both were temporally constituted, and functioned as objects and subjects of discourse, and that both admitted pluriformity and multiplicity of voices. However, during this study I recognized that, even if narrative inquiry thrives in a familiar and relaxed environment, as a retrospective storytelling it is also vulnerable to criticism in relation to accuracy of the shared information. To address this pitfall, I provoked the participants to discover whether they shared a particular perspective they had just heard or whether they had an alternative position. In this manner, I was able to draw out and to extrapolate further responses within the given space and period of time.

In this research, I observed that narrative inquiry did not only help reveal the shape of the participants' experiences, but they also organized events 'into a meaningful whole, … connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time' (Chase 2013, p. 56). In more concrete terms, narrative inquiry provided a jumping board for discussions, a verbal and non-verbal catalyst of possibilities in FGD. More importantly, this strategy increased the quality of data drawn from focus group sessions since through narrative inquiry teachers were able to tell their stories from their own perspectives. In this research, I explored the capacity of narrative inquiry to assist in exploring contemporary Filipino teachers' identities through their own stories of how they actuate their community engagements. This conclusion was supported by Gubrium and Holstein's (2008, p. 246) argument that storytellers – or social agents – 'shape their accounts, [and] in addition to communicating information, stories represent our identities and our social worlds'. The choice therefore of what narratives to tell or to withhold, what elements of the stories are foregrounded (or accented) or backgrounded, or how these stories were narrated revealed a distinct identity of the narrator/storyteller. It was in this sense that narrative inquiry played a critical role in fulfilling the objectives of this research.

Finally, allowing teachers to tell and to hear stories from each other disposed them to a relaxed posture and beckoned them to a familiar environment conducive for follow-up and more probing questions. Again I relied on Filipinos' natural penchant for storytelling (Jocson 2008; Ogdoc-Gascon 2015; Secillano & Custodio 2014). Two critical factors that help determine the success or failure of narrative inquiry are the facilitator's capacity to encourage participants to begin to tell a story and the disposition (openness) of participants to sharing their experiences.

4.5.3 An ancillary role of key informant interviews

The complexity of the social world and the plurality of factors involved in its constitution mean that no single research method could critically and integrally account for all social factors. Thus, social scientists often resort to 'multi-method [that] results in "different images of understanding" thus increasing the "potency" of evaluation findings' (Smith & Kline, cited in Mathison 1988, p.13).

In the conduct of FGD and even with the intervention of narrative inquiry, I encountered issues that required further elaboration. I explored these issues more deeply

through key informant interviews. This technique was premised on a recognition that 'some individuals in the community […] who is thought to have familiarity with the setting from experience, is asked to supply information to an investigator orally or in writing' (Poggie Jr 1972, p.24).

In my study, I organized key informant interviews halfway through most of the FGD sessions for only then was it apparent which issues (e.g., policies, practices, interests) and domains (e.g., gender dimension, political participation, *Brigada Eskwela* activities) needed to be clarified by experts. Here, 'experts' refers to individuals who have occupied – some continue to occupy – positions of authority in areas related to specific community engagements. For instance, the experts I consulted for teachers' engagement in *Brigada Eskwela* were those designated by the local school district to oversee this activity in their municipality. In another case, my understanding of teachers' collective involvement in the political field was deepened via an interview with an officer of the most politically active teacher-based party list (Alliance of Concerned Teachers or ACT) in the Philippines. Since, as key informants, they were recognized not only as gatekeepers but also possessors of practical knowledge, it was from them that the 'interviewer elicited information about the meaning of observed behaviours, interactions, artefacts and rituals, with questions emerging over time' (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006, p. 315). In addition, 'strength of using qualitative key informant interviews [included the interrogation of] 'subtleties in community dynamics' (Chazdon & Lott 2010, p. 174) that were not clearly discussed during the FGD sessions. It is important to remember that key informant interviews, at least in this study, only functioned in an ancillary capacity, that is, to deepen an understanding of and to corroborate findings from FGD and NI.

To summarize the points in this section, this research on community engagements as fields of contemporary Filipino teachers' identities utilized a multi-method data-gathering technique. I have argued that the probative value of critical theory and the constructive capability of critical constructivism were best reflected in the concerted deployment of these methods. Furthermore, I have highlighted the flexibility and complementarity of these methods, thus providing a structure that generated culturally sensitive, highly reliable and verifiable findings. The data on teachers' contemporary civic practices were drawn mainly from focus group discussions. In the conduct of FGD, I also deployed narrative inquiry as a strategy to open topics or as a catalyst for

discussion. To deepen an understanding of emergent key issues, I resorted to key informant interviews where I drew from various experts on the subject matter that emerged during the FGD sessions.

4.6 Entering the field of Inquiry

In entering the field of inquiry, again I recognize that my possession of practical knowledge of the terrain and the subject matter or the 'sense of the game' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 118, Bourdieu 1993, p. 5) organized my optics as an insider. This was relevant in two ways. First, through reflexive knowledge of this insider position, I became cautious of hegemonic perceptions of reality and practices. Second, this practical sense provided me with a socially and historically informed ability to grasp the intricacies and nuances of the participants' life situations affected by various social demographics. Mindful that practical knowledge is historically constituted and informed by my insider cultural knowledge, in this section I discuss the following: identification and location of the research field, selection and invitation of research participants, and drafting a typical program for the focus group discussions (including the collection and recording of data). In the rest of this chapter I will discuss the coding and analysis of the data, and articulate the limitations and significance (benefits) of the study. Finally, I will explain how I ensured that the research complied with ethical norms.

4.6.1 Criteria in identifying and locating the research field

In this section, I lay down the criteria upon which I selected the areas from which I drew participants for the focus group discussions. In general, the FGD participants were teachers representing diverse areas and occasions of teachers' community engagements. In other words, there was diversity in the geographical, social, religious, political and cultural characterizations of the teachers' appointments and activities.

Philippine society is extremely heterogeneous. Schools can be located in an urban or rural setting, city or municipality, metropolitan or provincial, mainland or island, traditional or modern. The geographic and social location of schools affects teachers' lives in terms of opportunities (e.g., those near universities/colleges are able to pursue further study and professional development), social mobility (e.g., those assigned in mountainous areas or islands tend to be more closely involved in community activities in comparison to teachers in urban areas), additional perks and benefits (e.g., those who

are teaching in more affluent municipalities usually receive extra incentives from the local government), and religious involvement (e.g., those who teach near religious centres are more involved in faith-based celebrations on a regular basis). The following categories were structured to account for the influence of social demography and geography in selecting a research locale.

a. *Traditional municipalities or cities whose religious and civil celebrations were closely intertwined with one another*. In this category, schools were typically located in the provinces or rural centres where teachers usually live in the same community. Teachers in this category have the opportunity to participate in both religious and civil activities since most social structures (church, schools, town halls and markets) were built proximate to each other. Traditional municipalities typically reflect how institutions (e.g., church, municipal hall, market) were geographically located during the Spanish colonial period.

   In this study, this category is represented by teachers from Pilar Elementary and High School and Colegio de San Luis.

b. *Urban municipalities or cities whose religious and civil celebrations are closely intertwined with one another*. In this category, schools are located in urban centres. In this locality, only major civil and religious activities are jointly celebrated due to relatively high socio-cultural differentiation. Furthermore, there is a considerable distance between basic social institutions and structures. Unlike in traditional municipalities where teachers usually live in the community and commonly walk to their schools, teachers in urban municipalities usually take public transport to travel to their schools.

   Teachers from Los Angeles College, Centro Elementary and High School and St Catherine School represented this category.

c. *Island municipalities*. In island municipalities, civil and faith-based celebrations and activities are intertwined. Island municipalities are also bounded by a body of water so weather conditions restrict not only physical mobility but even the influx of basic goods, medicines and educational materials. In these island municipalities, teachers are the most respected professionals and their lives are deeply entangled with the life of the community where indigenous culture and practices are still very much recognized and accepted.

   Teachers from Isla de Norte Elementary and HS and San Vicente Academy constitute two FGD groups in this category.

Both private and public schools are present in every research locale in this research where public schools are non-sectarian and most of all of the participants from private schools are from Catholic institutions. However, focus group participants are not faith specific. Utilizing the above categorizations, FGD participants in this study represented the following social and geographical differentiations: urban and rural settings, mainland and island, city and provinces (municipalities), and private and public schools. Some FGD groups had multiple characterizations. For instance, Isla de Norte

Elementary/HS was characterized as rural, island, public and municipality. On the other hand, Los Angeles College was mainly characterized as city, private (religious) and urban. In this study, the categorizations of research locales were not mutually exclusive. As a consequence, teachers' community engagements also overlapped.

Special FGD sessions were conducted for groups who could further discuss themes that emerged from previous FGD sessions. For these groups, since the main consideration was a specific subject matter, the primary consideration was what group, in any locality, could provide a deeper understanding of the issue. In this study, there were three FGD sessions on specific areas of community engagement. To interrogate the intricacies and issues related to *Brigada Eskwela* activities, teachers from Bangusan Elementary School constituted the FGD group. To inquire about teachers' leadership role in the religious domain, I invited educators from Santo Domingo National Elementary and High School to an FGD on this topic. The participation of these teachers came about through the mediation of a parish priest from one of the rural and provincial parishes where the officers of the Parish Pastoral Council were mostly active and retired teachers. Lastly, some teachers from Centro Elementary and High School provided a more focused discussion of their involvement in the political field though their membership of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers. A general description of the focus groups and key informants as well as the research locales is contained in Table2.

Table 2: Clusters of Focus Group and Key Informant Interview sessions

Schools/groups	**Social/ geography**	**Public or private**	**Urban or rural**	**No. of participants**
Focus group discussions				
Pilar Elementary and HS (Pangasinan)	Province	Public	Semi-rural and urban	9
Colegio de San Luis (Pangasinan)	Province	Private	Semi-rural and urban	8
Los Angeles College (Quezon City)	National capital region	Private	Urban	7
Centro Elementary and High School (Manila)	National capital region	Public	Urban	7
Isla de Norte Elementary and HS (Cagayan)	Island	Private	Rural	8
San Vicente Academy (Cagayan)	Island	Public	Rural	9
St Catherine School (Cebu)	City	Private	Urban	5
Bangusan Elem. School	Province	Public	Urban	5

(Cavite)				
Sto. Domingo Nat. Elem. and HS (Isabela)	Province	Public/ private	Rural	6
Key informant interviews				
JunJun Cruz	Bikol West Elem. School	Project Development Officer in charge of Dept Ed Risk Reduction Programs		
Awit Rosal		Senior Education Specialist for Social Mobilization		
Arcia Makiling	Colegio de Santo Tomas	Professor of Culture and head of the Culture Department of Colegio de Santo Tomas. Lecturer on culture education initiative.		
Bernardo Makabayan	Quirino Science HS	Bernardo is a teacher, head of school cooperative, officer of party list of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers		

In all there were nine groups for the FGD sessions. Three groups were from urban centres while the rest were from rural areas. Two school groups from the provinces were from an island, which takes at least five hours to reach by boat. Four groups were from public schools, while the other four were mostly from private schools. The groups of volunteers in a parish were composed of both public and private school teachers. Each group had an average of 7 members with the largest 9 and the smallest 5. Also included in Table 2 are experts in various areas of teachers' community engagement. While the participants in the FGD sessions were invited through gatekeepers (i.e., school principals/heads), the experts were recommended by colleagues after the FGD sessions to shed more light on topics that emerged as critical to teachers' identities. Lastly, in compliance with ethics requirements of anonymity, all participants and schools' names have been replaced by pseudonyms.

After laying down the basis for the identification of research sites where I held focus groups, the next section outlines the selection and invitation procedures for the FGD participants.

4.6.2 Selecting and inviting participants

Qualitative research allowed for a more 'purposive and flexible' sampling strategy (Flick 2007, p.4) while at the same time demanding a deeper rationale behind these

choices. My sampling strategy exposed the research to questions related to data reliability and typical representation issues. Participating teachers in this study were chosen from both the elementary and secondary levels, from public schools nearest to the municipal centres and private schools owned or administered by clerics or religious congregations. The 'stratified purposeful sampling' (p.7) technique was suitable for this study since demographic features, such as age, gender and economic standing, were significant determinants of the length, nature and quality of teacher–community relations. Thus, it was imperative to discuss the choice of participants with school personnel, such as the school principal, since they hold legal authority to decide whether teachers can participate on behalf of the school.

The letter of request for schools and teachers to participate was approved by the school principal or director. The letter contained the following (see Appendices B, C and D):

- a general idea of the research (title, aims, general research questions, methodology and data-gathering methods)
- the nature of teachers' participation
- procedures for the narrative inquiry and focus group discussions and the key questions
- the program of activities (schedule)
- ethics approval from the University of South Australia (UniSA)
- approval from higher authorities, e.g., superintendent or president, where necessary
- a consent letter.

Smithson (2008) presented the evolution of sampling and selecting participants in focus groups as well as the benefits of both homogeneous and heterogeneous groupings. She noted that focus groups are 'typically homogeneous [whereby] participants are chosen to fit in with group's demographics' (p.359). However, she also argued that 'heterogeneous can produce very interesting discussions' (p. 359). Ergo, on the one hand, homogeneous groupings are important in establishing commonalities based on class, practices and identity, heterogeneous groupings provides an opportunity to understand the diversity of participants' views, dispositions and practices. In this study, the only common denominator of all participants is that they are all teachers. To account for teachers' diverse community engagement experiences, this study employed heterogeneous membership in selecting both the school and teacher participants (see

Table 2). Heterogeneity was concretized in this study through the following categories in school and teacher selection for FGD.

- *Schools*: One private and one public school with both elementary and secondary levels in four pre-identified research locales.
- *No. of Teachers*: Four (4) teachers each from the elementary and secondary levels of both private and public schools. A total of 8 teachers per school/district were invited. On average, each FGD session consisted of 7 teachers.
- *Gender*: The average male to female ratio per FGD session was 3 male to 5 female.
- *Age*: The age range included both early career and senior career teachers. The rationale for this stratification was to ensure that participants had had opportunities to engage with their community.

This demographic differentiation across time allowed for comparisons between how teachers from different periods and localities with different genders and school affiliations conducted their community engagement activities. This strategy, when coupled with culturally sensitive approaches, ensured the heterogeneity and complexity of the data from the FGD sessions.

4.6.3 Procedure for collecting and recording the data

My FGD sessions typically began with identification and preparation of the venue, including setting up audio-video recording and LCD projectors. The introductory phase included an orientation segment explaining the aims and importance of conducting this research as well as the FGD schedule. In this study, I drew from Hennink, Hutter and Bailey's (2011, pp.155–157) general guidelines on typical tasks for FGD sessions.[4] These guidelines grouped FGD tasks into introductory, ethical, group cohesion, facilitating and closing tasks. To ensure cultural sensitivity, culturally sensitive approaches were deployed at every phase.

After the preliminaries, I projected the questions/topics and the participants started to narrate their stories or discuss their responses to particular questions. Interaction was important in the FGDs (Sim 1998) and this came in the form of probing questions to the facilitator (researcher) and more importantly to their colleagues. For instance, one evidence of interaction in relation to the question posed in the research came from a participant inquiring whether it is more credible to ask the members of the community

[4] The table of procedures for collecting and recording the data is in Appendix H.

for their views and recognition of teachers' participation in community activities. This particular clarification helped set the parameters of this research and provided direction for future research. Everything that transpired during the FGD sessions was collected through audio and video recording.

The process immediately following the FGD sessions involved 'compiling information from videotapes, audiotapes, and field notes into one aggregate format that is the basis for the analysis' (Beyea & Nicoll 2000, p.1278). Participants conversed in the Filipino language as the main medium of discussion and storytelling. In a few instances participants talked in their local dialect and in English. Thus, prior to coding, I first transcribed and translated all FGD sessions into the English language. In the very few sections where participants discussed something in their local language (Pangasinense, Cebuano or Ilokano), I sought the assistance of my teacher contacts to help translate and to understand the discussion.

4.7 Data coding

Matters related to handling of data occurred on several levels, from storage to transcription and then from translation to coding. At every level, measures were set in place to protect the integrity of the data and to ensure that the transition from raw data to a codified state was aligned with the sociological tradition and aims of this study.

Coding data is the thematic categorization of compiled data structured as a 'formal representation of analytical thinking' (Marshall & Rossman 2011, p.212). This process is typically accomplished through construction of categories of 'clusters, hierarchies, networks, linkages, matrices, typologies, data saturation and search for negative instances' (2011, p.207). In this research, the coding process initially involved grouping the raw data according to its affinity to concepts related to power, politics, economics, authority, control and so on, and recurring patterns such as domination, subversion, compliance, and legitimation. These sub-categories later constituted what I referred to as teachers' capital, *habitus* and field whose interaction generated facets of identity in the community. Aside from coding teachers' engagements according to these three key concepts, the ways in which they carry out these civic activities were coded in accordance with concepts like *doxa*, symbolic violence, misrecognition, orthodoxy, legitimation, and so on. These ancillary concepts helped identify teachers' position and

position-taking strategies in the community, the level of teachers' agency and the impact of structure on their identities.

The coding system utilized in this research is also referred to as open coding, that is, 'conceptual identification and axial coding, namely, the clustering of codes around points of intersection or axes' (Marshall & Rossman 2011, pp.214–215). The sequential nature of open and axial coding aligns with the objective of this research by first identifying conceptual elements that constituted teachers' habitus, capital and field (through open coding) and then unravelling points of intersections between these three key concepts (axial coding). It was at the axial coding phase that the notion that teachers' identities result from an intersection of these three concepts became apparent. These initially coded data were juxtaposed according to their conceptual affinity to the research questions. Allowing the data to classify itself is a central character of qualitative methods since the subsequent steps and 'choices will be made based on the significance of the emergent themes' (Morrison 2009, p.45). The themes that emerged from this manner of coding not only identified teachers' community engagements but also described the manner in which they implement them, located their position in the field of engagement, and indicated the degree of their reflexivity and the impact of multiple structures of power. This strategy indicated how teachers' identities are legitimated and it also unmasked the fundamental characteristics of teachers' identities in terms of their level of agency and the intensity of influence of structures.

After the transcribed data were coded, common themes emergent from the multiple data-gathering methods were subjected to analysis. Due to the multiple layers (transcription, translation and coding) of processes applied to the raw data, I had to ensure data integrity and reliability by crosschecking my translation with native speakers of local languages other than Filipino. This practice is consistent with the notion that within the discipline of qualitative research 'reliability means *the ability to rely on known interpretations by others*' (Krippendorff 2011, p. 95 original emphasis). Ensuring that the coded data mirrors the views of the participants is a prerequisite for meaningful analysis.

4.8 Data analysis

While the heterogeneity of teachers' views on community engagements was an expected by-product of FGD and narrative inquiry sessions, 'commonality' was valued more (McElroy, Corben & McLeish 1995). Hence, in this study, while teachers' community engagements differed at the personal level, what is of more interest are the common or typical practices that can be ascribed to teachers as a group or class. This focus on the typical and common reflects the sociological approach of this research. However, while the focus is on typical community engagements (i.e., that which constituted the mandated and voluntary engagements discussed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8), critical analysis includes interrogation of factors that affected both the commonalities and differentiation of these engagements. For instance, since in this exploratory study the thematic data analysis was focused on teachers' entanglement with relations of power at the group level, I also analysed how such entanglements are differentiated vis-à-vis the degree of resistance to (i.e., agency) or compliance with structures of power.

It was evident that my analysis of the group discussions involved choices between categories of consensus or disagreement, between questions answered with ease or those deliberated with difficulty. In other words, 'all research methods have in-built omissions – things that a specific methodology is unlikely to pick up on' (Smithson 2008, pp. 365). Furthermore, when narratives articulated in FGD sessions were coded similarly, this codification facilitated the analysis of the narrative content and environment according to modalities of power relations. Gubrium and Holstein (2008) opined that analysis is typically implemented in two ways: first, via comparison of contents, plotlines, experiences, key words and themes, and key stages of progression of stories in the social field where the stories are experienced; and second, via interrogation the' details and working conditions of narrative occasions […] to understand narrative practice' (p. 247).

In this research, I also applied this twofold level. Specifically, my data analysis first interrogated teachers' *habitus*, capital and field in the identified community engagements, namely, *what are teachers' practices and dispositions (habitus) in the community, what are their capitals and what are the fields relevant to teachers' community engagements?* The analyses of these key concepts included interrogation of

their genesis or how they were historically constituted both during the colonial (see Chapter 5) and contemporary period.

The critical level of analysis occurred in the interrogation of these three concepts against notions of reflexivity and determinism as well as their tendencies to reproduce or capacity to generate alternative cultural practices. To further deepen the analysis, I utilized these threefold concepts to probe teachers' social position (ascendant or subordinated) as well as their position-taking strategies. The by-products of these levels of analysis helped unravel how community engagements were implicated in the construction of teachers' identities.

Specific attention was also afforded to the relational elements of all factors implicated in constructing Filipino teachers' *habitus*, capital and field. For instance, in community engagements supported by a particular law, the analysis included *how this legislation influences teachers' practices, how it reveals the nature of the field and how this law can be utilized in successfully carrying out this mandate.* Then the analysis turned into *whether teachers manifest agency in the performance of this engagement or whether they are simply compliant with the legal demand.* The analysis concluded with an exploration of *how this particular engagement legitimizes or delegitimizes their identities through such engagement*. In other words, the end product of this analysis was a construct of facets of Filipino teachers' identities through their community engagements. That this mode of analysis was focused on all possible relations of power is aligned with Bourdieu's ontology that 'what exist in the social world are relations' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.97; see also Vandenberghe 1999, p. 44).

4.9 Research limitations and delimitations

Research limitations and delimitations were reflected on two levels, theoretical and practical. At a theoretical level, the primary limitation flowed from the fact that I was applying Bourdieu's historically and culturally constituted sociology (emerging from the French context and intellectual tradition) to a social phenomenon in the Philippines. Second, the critiques of Bourdieu's theory and method articulated by various researchers were the same challenges encountered in this research. Furthermore, since the study is focused on teachers' identities in relation to their community engagements,

direct exploration of their professional development is outside of the parameters of the study.

Among the theories and methods available within the sociological tradition, I utilized principles drawn from Pierre Bourdieu to explore Filipino teacher's identities reflected through their community engagements.[5] Thus, as a researcher I was predisposed to sense structures and relations of power surrounding the social world of Filipino teachers. In foregrounding this optics, this study is entangled with its strengths (e.g., probative value) and constrained by its limitations (e.g., the theory has a Western genesis, enduring tensions around the notion of reflexivity, structural tendency for social and cultural reproduction, emaciated capacity to explore notions of liberation). Socially and culturally fermented research carries along with it strengths as well as limitations influenced by the subject matter, research locale and research methodology. Nonetheless, I addressed these limitations by focusing on Bourdieu's probative value, by applying his concepts and processes *in toto* – particularly in constructing identity – and more importantly, by utilizing indigenous approaches to decolonize this theory and method.

The complexity of the particular social phenomenon coupled with time constraints also determined the parameters of this research, and in a sense these are also limitations. Hence, while gender intricacies affect teachers' community engagement and identities in the community, this study refrained from interrogating gender dynamics for four reasons. First, during the FGD sessions, teachers often cited biology and naturalism as the basis of their view that the teaching profession is fundamentally a female profession. To support this orthodox position, teachers cited practical situations where it is culturally acceptable for female teachers to assist both male and female pupils in matters of hygiene while it is taboo for male teachers to do so. Second, there were such diverse opinions on the gender basis of teachers' professional growth and social mobility that it would requires a method other than a one-off FGD to interrogate this aspect. Third, assumptions about the gendered nature of the teaching profession appeared to originate from childhood and within their own families. Thus, this necessitates a more longitudinal study. Fourth, teachers focused their gender discourse

[5] Confer Section 3.5 for arguments on the adequacy and benefits of Bourdieu's theory and method as optics in this particular research and Section 3.4 for critiques and limitations of Bourdieu's theory.

not on differences between male and female but on the emergence of gay teachers as a class among teachers. Therefore, this delimitation is carried forward as one of the recommendations of this research, that is, to interrogate the influence of gender in teachers' community engagements and in their identities.

In this study, the choice of research methodology and methods of data collection were designed to gain insight rather than establish generalizability. However, the rigor of the research design ensured credible results and a transposable research structure. Nonetheless, if Filipino teachers' identities are studied in another discipline or tradition, using another research methodology, it is expected that the resulting construct will be different.

At the practical level, the boundaries or the parameters of this research have been delineated alongside the understanding that 'limitations are matters and occurrences that arise in a study which are out of the researcher's control' (Simon & Goes 2013, p.1). For instance, I acknowledge a significant culturally informed practical limitation in this study. While qualitative research ensured greater sensitivity to context, language competency can either facilitate or negate this advantage. In other words, while I am fluent in the Filipino and Bikol languages, and have a decent literacy in some other Philippine languages (e.g., Cebuano and Ilonggo), my lack of conversational competency in some dialects spoken by the participants (e.g., Ilokano and Pangasinense) limited my access to the fullness of meaning in terms of nuances that were hidden and exposed in the intonation, accent, pauses and non-verbal cues. Language proficiency limitations were addressed through the assistance of native speakers to translate the narrative or the discussion during FGD sessions into Filipino or English.

4.10 Significance of the study

Filipino teachers, in general, seem to be at the same time blessed and condemned to higher standards of accountability than other professions. Sometimes the gravity of these expectations induces the community to forget that these teachers are people too, subject to the same ordinary doubts and follies. From my conversations with them, these teachers were not actually asking for much, only for what would allow them to live decently as professionals and family members. They sought very small improvements in

their working conditions, such as supported professional development and a reasonable increase in their salary, which gets thinned out to every member of their family – and sometimes to their pupils as well. Hence, a modicum of recognition for the conditions under which they fulfil their multi-faceted mandates will go a long way. It is within this context that this study is significant, for this research facilitated a critical understanding not only of who teachers are in the community but what they have contributed to the same community.

Filipino teachers perform a critical role in Philippine society, where education is generally viewed as a narrow road out of poverty and a means to a better life (Fuwa 2007; Maligalig & Albert 2008). While teachers are often subjected to scrutiny by parents of their pupils and other agents in the community, their ability to encourage parents and children to avail themselves of free public education is significantly enhanced through proper training on how to engage with their respective communities. If the full potential of close to 700,000 Filipino teachers strategically deployed in every community throughout the whole archipelago is to be harnessed, then a critical exploration of their identities in these communities can serve as a foundation. Underscored in this argument is the assumption that integral to teachers' identities are untapped resources and underdeveloped dispositions and practices whose benefits to their community remain unexplored. Therefore, the community is better served by equipping teachers with social and cultural literacies (e.g., leadership skills, capacity to conduct cultural mapping, skills in relating with different entities in the community). 'The preparation of educational leaders is a global phenomenon' (Eacott 2011a, p.49). In this study, I intend to promote the notion that educational leadership extends beyond the school setting and may overlap into the community.

My analysis of the construction of teachers' identity privileges the mutually beneficial relation between school and community. This interrogation also highlights the centrality of teachers' role in the community through their multiple community engagements. More broadly, this study also helps expose the implications of relevant legislation, policies, programs and activities and has provided insight into how these can be made more equitable and egalitarian.

4.11 Ethics approval

The underlying principle of every ethical consideration is expressed in the principle that

> ethical reflexivity [is] a matter of awareness and sensitivity and is reflected in the degree of honesty and truthfulness in their dealings with others. These values are a measure of researchers' integrity and professionalism and are increasingly a requirement of research institutions and funding bodies aspiring for excellence (Clark, Prosser & Wiles 2010, p.90).

The very nature of this research demanded a careful consideration of the research design to ensure that participants were treated not only ethically but humanely. The ethical tenets of the research were drawn internally both from the research design and participants' socio-cultural norms. Externally, the ethical standard was mandated by the researcher's academic institution (the University of South Australia) and gleaned from typical ethical standards governing educational institutions in the Philippines. Barbour (2013, p.79) observed that the main ethical 'tenet in qualitative research is that a badly designed research is unethical'. The research design, along with the subject matter of the research and level of maturity of the participants, supported by the permissions obtained, increased the ethical standard of this research. The other internal factor that affected the ethical standard was the culture of the participants. The inclusion of cultural approaches in the research methodology ensured that cultural values and norms were respected and employed in entering the research field, in approaching the participants (schools and teachers), and in gathering the data through narrative inquiry and FGD.[6] Furthermore, the research was sanctioned by the University of South Australia's (UniSA) Ethics Committee in compliance with the rigorous ethical standard of the academic institution.

The areas under which ethical considerations were applied and evaluated were the following: 'research design, how to identify and to approach potential participants, what is expected of the participants, consent, reciprocity and remuneration, confidentiality and anonymity, impact on the participants, engagement and participatory methods and impact on researchers' (Barbour 2013, p.85). In the succeeding sections, I discuss how these ethical categories were addressed in this research.

[6] See Section 4.4 to understand how culturally sensitive approaches were integrated into this research.

4.11.1 Ethics in research design

The quality of a research's ethical standard is primarily reflected in the overall research design. Specifically, subscription to a higher ethical standard primarily concerns how culturally sensitive approaches were utilized in this study (see Section 4.4). Second, research integrity across every research dimension ensured that the participants were adequately representative of the population of teachers based on relevant key categories in terms of social demographics (gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) and economic/geographic classifications (community classification as rural or urban). This concern was addressed in Sections 4.6.1 and 4.6.2. An important ethical component of research design relates to transparency about the various limitations of the research, in terms of its theory, methodology, research biases and so on. All these components have been adequately presented and discussed in various sections of this thesis.

4.11.2 Informed consent

No data-gathering activity proceeded without explicit approval of the participants through informed written and verbal (recorded) consent.[7] Informed consent principles were based on the premise that concurrence is 'knowable, exercised in a non-coercive situation, and made by competent individuals' (Milne 2005, p.12). In this study, consent was sought both from possible participant schools and from individual teachers through a signed consent form. Detailed in the consent form, among other things, were: (1) the research abstract, (2) a request for the involvement of teachers in the narrative inquiry and focus group discussions, (3) an emphasis on confidentiality, anonymity and an opt-out clause, and (4) the manner in which the data would be gathered, recorded and used.

After obtaining the consent of authorized persons (e.g., school principals and directors), the date and time for an initial visit to the school was set to meet with the school authority to further discuss the objectives and schedule of the FGD sessions. Specifically, in the initial visit I discussed with the principal and/or other school authorities the nature of the research, secured a signature for informed consent at the institutional level, and identified – with the help of relevant school officials – possible teacher participants. After securing the approval of the school, letters of invitation were distributed to possible participants. Through the assistance of the school heads and other contact persons, teachers' participation was secured. Thus, 90 per cent of the pre-

[7] Consent forms were secured in designated lockers at Magill Campus, UniSA.

identified teachers attended. Again, the letter included among other things the program of activities, data-gathering methods, the technology to be used in recording the sessions, namely that the researcher would use video and audio recorders, and the date/time and place of the FGD sessions as well as the main questions and confidentiality, anonymity and opt-out clauses. Teachers' participation in the research was confirmed upon submission of a signed consent form.[8] During discussion with the gatekeepers and at the beginning of the FGD sessions, participants were again informed that the session would be recorded (audio and video). Assurance was also reiterated that the recordings would be kept securely and the data would be treated as confidential.

4.11.3 Impact on the participants

Impact does not only refer to how the research affects the participants but also includes the effect of their participation during the data-gathering sessions. In terms of physical safety, FGD sessions were held in classrooms designated by principals/directors/superintendents. For some groups, FGD sessions were held at the parish hall and retreat centre. All FGD sessions were conducted close to the teachers' homes so they did not need to spend money on transportation. Since the FGD session was typically a day-long activity, I provided them with simple meals and refreshments. Upon the suggestion of contact persons, most FGD sessions were held on Saturdays when teachers were free from teaching duties. In the FGD conducted on the island, the data-gathering session was organized after teachers had attended to their religious activities.

In most instances, I also recorded socialization and conversations during mealtimes, as oftentimes the discussions during break periods overlapped with the more formal discussions. Aside from the impact of the research itemized in the significance of the study, the research exercise also provided teachers with an opportunity to collectively reflect on their various engagements in the community.

4.11.4 Reciprocity

The concept of reciprocity in the Filipino context is contained in the cultural concept of *utang na loob*, which is loosely and inadequately translated as 'debt of gratitude'. However, a culturally sound understanding of '*utang na loob*' refers to a strong sense of

[8] See Appendix C and D for the invitation letter and consent form.

gratitude that predisposes the recipient of a good action to act generously not just to the doer of the act but to other people as well. *Utang na loob* is not a debt that can be repaid in a transaction and by monetary means; it is, however, repaid (for lack of an adequate term) by means of *pagtanaw* (*tanaw* means to gaze at). At the core of the concept of *pagtanaw* is a disposition to express gratitude 'as far as the eye can see', which in this context is boundless. I raise this point here since, just as the ethics of research demands reasonable reciprocity, the culture of the research locale provided a specific manner of expressing these concepts. In this particular research project, reciprocity was expressed in terms of acknowledgement and appreciation, availability and accessibility of the research results to participants, provision of the usual meals during the data-gathering sessions and by being always on the lookout for an opportunity to help Filipino teachers. Reciprocity will also be expressed through presentation of my research findings at various conferences for teachers.

4.11.5 Confidentiality and anonymity

Part of the orientation in every FGD session was a discussion of confidentiality and anonymity. In the letter and in the FGD orientation, teachers were assured of confidentiality and anonymity. In this study all FGD participants and key informants were given pseudonyms. The same process was applied to the names of schools and parishes where teachers were involved.

All ethical considerations boiled down to the diligence of the researcher and belief in the conviction that '*to act ethically is to value integrity, inclusiveness, personal security, privacy and dignity*' (Clark, Prosser & Wiles 2010, p.90 italics mine).

4.12 Research resource requirements and budget

Data gathering in this research required the use of an audio and video recorder and other equipment. All narrative inquiry and focus group discussion proceedings were documented both by audio and video recording. The hard drive memory for the equipment was adequate for an 8-hour data-gathering session per research locale. After each FGD session, the data were transferred into a computer and external hard drive. The orientation module, FGD schedule and questions for narrative inquiry and focus groups were projected through an LCD projector. Since a typical FGD session lasted for 6 to 7 hours, simple meals (snacks and lunch) were provided to all participants.

Part 2 - The influence of colonial past

Understanding of Filipino teachers' identity through their community engagements is chronologically divided between colonial and contemporary period. Distinguishing these two epochs foregrounds the importance of social genesis of teachers' community engagements in relation to their identity in the community. In Chapter 5, the analysis helps unmask the colonial threads of teachers' community engagements in relation to how their identity is constructed. This chapter also provides understanding of how education and teachers' role is implicated in colonizing and imperialist project of world powers. The significance of this part is further appreciated when it provides historical background and link to contemporary Filipino teachers' practices analysed in the three chapters of Part 3.

Chapter 5: Unravelling the colonial threads of the identity of Filipino teachers

5.1 Introduction and purpose

Historical beginnings are often taken for granted for it is in the very nature of the genesis of practice to be forgotten over time as it acquires the illusion of innateness – 'genesis implies the amnesia of genesis' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.50). With this observation, it is therefore important to remember and to understand how teachers engaged with their communities during the two most influential colonial periods in Philippine history. In turn, this understanding of teachers' engagements during these eras provides an avenue towards an understanding of who teachers were at those times. It is important to maintain that this historical positioning does not discount the pre-colonial genesis of some contemporary practices of Filipino teachers. Furthermore, its coverage is limited to geographical areas in the Philippines that were thoroughly colonized. Therefore, this chapter does not explore the identities of teachers from indigenous people and the Muslim population, which have been relatively free from colonial domination.

The significance of this chapter in understanding Filipino teachers' community engagements in relation to their identity is underpinned by the understanding that the formal and systematic education system traces its roots to the Spanish colonial period and intensified during the American occupation (see Aldana 1949; Bazaco 1953; Hardacker 2012). It is important to note that, from the beginning of the formal educational system in the Philippines, the identity of teachers, as Filipinos has not been duly recognized due to the entanglement of professional teaching with Spanish and American educators. Thus, in this chapter, unless indicated otherwise, 'teachers' generally refers to those who practice the teaching profession whether in basic or tertiary education regardless of whether they are native Filipino or colonizers.

The central aim of this chapter is to interrogate teachers' identity and community engagement practices during the Spanish and American periods. To obtain this aim, this study analyses historical text that reflect on the social and cultural world in relation to educational systems, and teachers' practices and identity have been reflected. On the one hand, the image of teachers during the Spanish period has been extracted mainly

from *History of education in the Philippines* (1953), a compendium on Spanish colonial education by Fr. Evergisto Bazaco, OP, and other documentary sources. On the other hand, information about teachers' identity during the American regime has generally been extracted from the published accounts by the American 'Thomasites' themselves in *Tales of American teachers in the Philippines* by Geronima T. Pecson and Maria Racelis Hollnsteiner (1959) and *Bearers of benevolence* by Maria Racelis Hollnsteiner and Judy Celine A. Ick (2001). Benigno Aldana's (1949) comprehensive historical account in his book *The educational system of the Philippines* differentiated between Spanish and American education and tracked the early development of Philippine education after the colonial periods. These texts, of course, are by no means the only possible sources of historical narratives on this matter, nor are they unequivocally asserted as the most authoritative or historically accurate. However, these texts are what is 'out there' (published and legitimized), thus, it can be argued that they are representative of the mainstream discourses on colonial education in the Philippines, including teachers' practices.

The originating point of the critical exploration of teachers' identity during the Spanish and American colonial regimes is the 'remembered' narratives of encounters between the natives of the islands and the Spanish missionaries and, later on, between the Filipinos and remnant Spanish missionaries, and the American 'Thomasites'. In the next two major sections, I intend to discuss the following: how the colonizers' aims and world views influenced teachers' practices and identity in the community, how teachers as Filipinos gradually emerged, and how some teachers' community engagements during these colonial periods have been transposed to contemporary times.

5.2 Spanish religious missionaries, the Catholic faith and private education

5.2.1 World view and initial contact

Colonists' discourses on Spanish missionary work typically amplify the nobility of the colonizers' aspirations, pointing to Miguel Lopez de Legaspi's petition for 'religious missionaries and clergyman to preach and to teach the Christian religion to these people' (Bazaco 1953, p.32). The request to King Philip II for missionaries was cocooned by a wider world view contained in the Papal Bull *Inter Caetera*, which ordered the colonizers 'to instruct the inhabitants and residents in the Catholic faith and

train them in good morals' (Alexander VI 1493, p.63). Through the mediation of the church's hierarchy, Domingo de Salazar (1579), the first bishop of the Philippines, transmitted this world view to the colony by urging the governor to compel all *encomenderos* 'to support the parochial schools in their *encomienda* so that the inhabitants might receive religious instruction and also in the fundamentals', that is, numeracy and literacy (Aldana 1949, p.3). At the core of this world view is the belief that an excellent government is founded on Christian education; thus, accordingly, the colonizers immediately established schools on reaching the islands (Bazaco 1953, p.64). These pronouncements offer a view on how the church, the government, education system and teachers are interconnected. The latter's inclusion affected how teachers engaged with their community and how their identity was constructed during the Spanish colonial period since these missionaries also functioned as teachers. For Bazaco (1953, p.35), Spanish missionaries functioned as the 'captain-general of the King of Spain […] and were in truth the real conquerors of the Philippine Archipelago for Christ and indirectly for Spain'.

To corroborate the claim that education became a tool of Spanish colonial aspirations, the historian Karl Schwartz (1971, p. 203) describes Spanish education as 'designed to convert the population to Catholicism and then to maintain them in that faith'. These aims were imbedded in the curriculum of liberal education during the Spanish period, which was primarily accessible to the upper class or *gente ilustrada* (Aldana 1949, p.4). Therefore, it is evident that during the Spanish period one of the functions of formal education was as a classifying structure available only to the wealthy and privileged. Within this structure of power, teachers sustained the worldview of the Spanish colonizers and therefore were inevitably entangled with the practices and identities of the missionaries where education was mainly accessible only to colonizers and rich native Filipinos. In the next section, I discuss how teachers' practices were entangled with missionaries' proselytizing activities.

5.2.2 The genesis of villages, visitas and schools

Bazaco (1953, p.2) conjectured that, although there were 'no traces of popular schools before the coming of the Spaniards; nevertheless, to learn the alphabet […] a certain class or schools had to exist'. Indeed there must have been some form of schools and teachers who taught people how to write in the pre-colonial language *alibata* or

baybayin (1953, p.18) or in the Sanskrit language of the recently discovered *Laguna Copperplate Inscription*, a document from 900 A.D. (Poostma 1992). This deficit report on the formal schooling system and infrastructure provided a rationale 'to bring the people together into villages, which they called *cristiandades*, both for protection and catechizing' (Bazaco 1953, p.92). This process is infamously known as *reduccion*, which was regarded as a pivotal tool utilized by the Spaniards to baptise native inhabitants of Philippine islands to (see Hernandez 2010). The main goal of *reduccion* was to relocate the early inhabitants, using a variety of not so subtle methods, into a suitable area identified by the missionaries, where governance and instruction could be imposed in a constructed space.

Contemporary and critical discourses on *reduccion* argue that the conquest was anything but amicable. To describe the process as 'peaceful persuasion' is not only inaccurate but a symbolic perpetuation of the violence of the colonial regime (see Ileto 1979). In the new settlement, one of the first edifices to be built was the *visita*. The *visita*, or temporary shed, is where the missionaries taught men, women and children the catechism as well as reading, writing, arithmetic and sacred songs (Aldana 1949, p.2). Although primarily a religious space, the *visita* was also the first formal space for any form of instruction, thus alluding to the practice of conflating social spaces and of multiple functions of infrastructure. Hence, since missionaries were the primary architects of *visitas*, and considering how these were constructed and to what end, teachers during the Spanish period were likewise implicated in these activities.

Aside from constructing *visitas*, missionaries were also the primary builders of churches, schools, bridges and roads. The missionaries were also agriculturists; they introduced crops, like pineapple from Mexico. They were pioneers in industry; they taught brick-making and how to use lime stones for construction; they introduced the production of cheese, *jusi* and silk; they expanded the mines discovered by the natives; and they were educators. They instructed men, women and children in the fundamentals of the Catholic faith, thus teaching them to read and to write in Roman characters (Bazaco 1936, p.39; 1953). Hence, it is not difficult to argue that through missionaries' multiple roles in the formation of villages and subsequent activities in the life of the people, teachers' identity was indirectly entangled with those of missionaries.

5.2.3 From religious apprentice to native Filipino teachers

This section describes the historical emergence of the teacher as a native of the islands and the construction of their identity. The claim by the historian Schwartz (1971, p. 211) that 'the beginning of private education coincided with the emergence of Filipino teachers' is questionable due to the belated and contentious association of the term Filipino with the natives of the islands. Filipino historian Fr Rolando De la Rosa (1990) argued that this term began as a class concept of inclusion and exclusion, whose analogous meaning and application painfully evolved from one race or group of inhabitants of the islands to another before becoming a term of national identification. Based on this assertion, it can be argued that 'teacherly' functions had long been practised by native inhabitants of the islands long before they were call Filipinos.

The emergence and participation of native Filipino teachers in the education work (i.e., catechism) of the missionaries was articulated by the Spanish historian Antonio de Morga (Blair & Robertson 1903, p.153). In his account he referred to the natives as teachers and identified their functions:

> In many districts, the religious makes use of their *visitas*, of certain of the natives who are clever, and well instructed, so that they may teach the others to pray daily, instruct them in other matters touching religion, and see that they come to mass at the central missions; and in this way they succeed in preserving and maintaining their converts.

From these accounts, the clever and well-instructed natives became the first apprentices of the missionaries. Early on, they were already reproducing the practices of the missionaries. In a way this is a clear recognition of what may constitute the cultural capital of native Filipino teachers. I suspect that these native teachers did not only acquire cultural capital, for along with this literacy came opportunities to increase other forms of capital (economic and symbolic), enabling them to 'establish [their own] private schools, imitating how' (Schwartz 1971, p. 216) the missionaries administered their educational institutions.

Another typical variety of teacher during the Spanish period was 'a stern gentleman with Spanish blood in his veins with the patience of an exacting music teacher and (in the community) he occupied a position second in rank to the priest in the pueblo' (Encarnacion 1959, p.17). This social positioning is important since it points to teachers' ascendant position during this period. A more official description of teachers was reflected in the expectations, qualifications and roles of teachers articulated in

various decrees, such as *Decree V of the Provincial Council of Manila convened in 1771, Article 2 and Decreto by Gen. Aguilar 1800* (see Fox 1965, pp.209–215). In these decrees, moral rectitude was a pre-eminent qualification of teachers. Their duties included enforcing the use of the Spanish language in schools and their salary was to be drawn from the treasury or *caja de comunidad* whereby one of the privileges was to be included in the town's *principalia* (upper-class). These documents prove that teachers' ascendant position in the community had a moral and financial basis and implications.

The conception of public education for the masses emerged only towards the twilight of the Spanish regime (Aldana 1949, p.5). The historical book of German ethnologist Feodor Jagor entitled *Travels in the Philippines* (cited by Fox 1965, p. 228) contains a brief but clear description of popular education during this period:

> There is a school in every town. The teachers, paid by the government, generally receive two dollars a month without board or lodging. In large towns the salary amounts to three and one-half dollars, but out of this sum an assistant must be recompensed. The clergy supervise the schools. Reading and writing are taught, the writing copies being Spanish … a kind of religious hornbook serves as a primer. After that, come Christian Doctrine and a reader called Casaysayan (history).

Popular and public education was belatedly established during the Spanish period as evidenced by the publication of *Education Decree of 1863* during the twilight of this colonial period. The 'absence of law governing public education for the masses until 1863' provided the condition for the association of formal 'education commensurate with the wealth, status, and geographic location of [Filipino] families' (Hardacker 2012, p. 9). For this reason, the relevance of *Education Decree of 1863*' is often contentious. Estimations of this decrees significance bifurcate between Bazaco (1953), who argued it strongly promoted public education, and Aldana (1949), who saw it simply as too late – seemingly an afterthought – and regrettably inconsequential. The latter's view is sustained in a study arguing that 'the Royal decree had a limited impact on the quality of the Philippine *public* education system and those able to attend, although, it did mark an important shift from religious to state control over public education' (Hardacker 2012, p.9). Notwithstanding its imperceptible impact, efforts to implement this Royal Decree expose the lack of professional teachers distinct from those in the parochial schools, colleges and universities of the Religious orders and congregations. In the end, one unintended effect is that the Royal Decree magnified the distance between private and public education and justified the urgency for the training qualified Filipino

teachers. In other words, this decree became instrumental in further classification of teachers' identity, between as public or private school teachers.

Summary. As the educational curriculum and teachers' pedagogy were deeply informed by religion, teachers' community engagements revolve around practices as expressions of their religious beliefs. Teachers' professional practices during this period include involvement in the religious activities in their respective churches, such as processions, novenas, fiestas and catechisms. In fact, the space for and content of learning is conflated with the locus to express their faith. This indicates that teachers facilitate the notion that learning is acquired through conversion to Christianity. In general, teachers during the Spanish colonial period belonged to the upper class due mainly to their cultural capital (i.e., they were learned and clever), and social capital (i.e., they worked hand in hand with missionaries and religious leaders). This class identity was further sustained by the fact that only those who belonged to the upper class had access to formal education. However, this collective identity, when critically interrogated, reveals a veneer where native Filipino teachers succumbs to symbolic violence (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.112) when their teaching practices were structured through the colonizing world view of the Spaniards. In terms of relations of power, native Filipino teachers occupied an ascendant position in relation to other people in the community due to their affiliation with religious leaders, their acquisition of various cultural literacies and their assumption of leadership roles in religious rituals. However, these teachers also occupied a subordinated position since they were compelled to structure their world view ancillary to the colonizers' objectives (i.e., evangelization and conquest) whereby they became instruments in perpetuating colonization through reproducing religious practices in schools and in the community.

Spanish colonial rule did not end with liberation; it was simply a deceitful transfer of the rein to another imperial master, the United States of America. If teachers' participation in sustaining the tides of Spanish colonization was peripheral and prefixed on religious leaders' identity and community functions, the opposite was true in the case of the American colonizers. In other words, teachers played a central role not only in educating Filipinos, but also in colonizing the farthest communities throughout the whole archipelago. Following the same structure of articulation, the next section discusses how teachers promoted the American colonial world view, their strategies of

engagements in schools and communities, and the manner through which they perpetuated teachers' role as reproducers of the American brand of democracy.

5.3 American 'Thomasites': public school teachers, education for democracy

President McKinley articulated the role of education in advancing the American imperial worldview in his *Instruction to the Philippine Commission* (April 7, 1900). In this instruction, education was to be popular and free for all, and it aimed to prepare the people for citizenship duties in their communities mediated by English language. Teachers – both Americans and later Filipino public school teachers – played a critical role in establishing and sustaining American colonial rule. These American teachers were popularly called 'Thomasites'.[9] This band of imported teachers 'eventually took over the soldiers [and] were deployed in far-flung islands to instruct the Filipinos on the rudiments of egalitarian education' (Roma-Sianturi 2009, p. 8). Thus, while the Spanish missionaries and local teachers focused on the grammar of faith in the curriculum, American teaching centred on the rudiments of democratic government. American teachers were considered 'the best salesman of democracy in the Philippines' (Lardizabal 1959, p.99) and 'must rouse zeal […] in others who are now under the same flag' (Deputy Division Superintendent of Cebu 1959, p.123). In this case, teachers played a crucial role in the conceptual and instrumental adjustment from 'conversion', which is in the realm of religious proselytism, to 'selling', which is replete with economic and negotiating strategy in a capitalist society. Furthermore, the marketing of this new Western ideology employed not only a new language but also a new strategy. In an article 'The American teacher', these Thomasites were characterized as 'quiet mediators of modern ideas' (Pecson & Hollnsteiner 1959, p.75) who used the English language as the vessel of foreign ideology. While the Spanish colonizers viewed literacy in the Spanish language as a capital that was too precious to share with the Filipino masses, the Americans saw literacy in the English language as a perfect tool to sustain Filipinos' dominated status. In other words, teachers facilitated the promotion of education as public and popular mainly through the widespread use of the English language both in school and community settings.

[9] The first American public school teachers, sent by the US Government to assist in the assimilation and pacification of the Filipinos through education, were collectively known as the Thomasites.

The succeeding section explores the narratives of American teachers' practices in the community that contributed to the construction of their identity.

5.3.1 American teachers in the community: 'para capturar la simpatia del pueblo'

An unquestionable objective of teachers' community involvement, particularly the American Thomasites, is to win the sympathy of the people. As one municipal secretary put it, in the language of the former colonizer, '*para capturar la simpatia del pueblo*' (Aldana 1949, p.11). The engaging effect and novelty of the pedagogical strategy, namely, 'teachers living in the community and involving themselves with the people, framed the people to succumb to a thorough Americanization' (Kimuell-Gabriel 1999, pp.267–268). The 1903 article 'Census of the Philippine Islands' captured teachers' multi-dimensional practices in the community where the plenitude of 'his work cannot be understood unless he is thought of as discharging the many sided functions, other than religious' (Pecson & Hollnsteiner 1959, p.75). One of the impacts of the pervasiveness of American teachers' multiple community engagements was that it posed a threat to the old order of things. For instance, a 'priest announced, from the pulpit, that the public school, as conducted by American teachers, was the school of the devil and he advised parents not to send their children any longer' (Hollnsteiner & Ick 2001, p.157). The community then became a field of continuous struggle for relevance between the established religious authorities (priests, *principales*, etc.) and the new colonizers (American and Filipino teachers).

A Thomasite by the name of Fred Atkinson, in his book *The Philippine Islands* (Atkinson, FW 1905, pp.261–262) summarized the community roles of the American teachers:

> Conciliators of religious leaders, advisers to civil servants, advertisers of education, playwright, organizers, advocates, builders and a litany more [in order] to secure the loyalty of the inhabitants to the sovereignty of the United States by implanting the ideals of western civilization.

In addition to the roles listed in Atkinson's account, American teachers in the community were health inspectors, members of municipal boards of health, interpreters in municipal affairs, initiators of cemetery cleaning and village improvement, instructors on sanitation, introducers of looms and promoters of the weaving industry, godfathers during baptisms and weddings, and guests of honour during town festivities (Hollnsteiner & Ick 2001; Pecson & Hollnsteiner1959).

These narratives of multiple practices suggest a conscious effort from American colonizers to frame teachers' identities with successful engagement in the community by conflating school and community spaces into a singular field to sustain their colonizing process. The success of teachers' multiple community engagements indicates another strategy of utilizing cultural capital to aid colonization through conversion, intensification and application in different fields. Gradually, these community engagements became part of teachers' identity, both Americans and Filipinos. In other words, through these engagements teachers probed their way into, and left their enduring influence on, the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of Filipino community life during the American period. In the next section I provide examples of how American teachers inserted themselves into different community practices.

5.3.2 Rituals: identifying class and negotiating colonial societies' contested fields

Since American teachers are outsiders and, as mentioned above, threatened the old order constructed by previous outsiders, they needed to earn social acceptance through social negotiation with the religious leaders, the baptized Filipinos and with indigenous people (Lardizabal 1959). In order for them to carry out these social negotiations, they first needed to identify where they stood in the existing social order. For instance, William Freer (1959, pp.158–159) noted their auspicious position among the devotees, town officials, and religious leaders in an ambulant ritual around the pueblo. The ritual began inside the church, organized in a particular order:

> The magnificently dressed image of the patron saint – the parish priest, in heavy white robe, richly embroidered with gold – we Americans – behind us marched in straggling procession the principal personages of the town.

Inside the church, 'the Americans were given one of the two seats at the front of the men's side' (p.159). American teachers' position in the procession and inside the church reflected their upper-class status and their ascendant position in the eyes of the religious leaders who organized these events. However, by asking these teachers to participate, the religious leader showed to the people that, in the religious field, American teachers were still subordinate to the religious structure. By accepting the invitation to participate in religious activities and through their capacity to critically assess their position in community activities, teachers showed a modicum of reflexivity expressed through their capacity to critically assess their social position.

From my experience, the bulk of the participants in religious processions are the laity or the masses. However in Freer's (1959) narrative, these masses were not even mentioned, suggesting how they were classified in these rituals. They were around and everywhere, at the periphery of these activities and therefore not worth mentioning. In Freer's narratives, only prominent personalities – including teachers – were worth identifying. Furthermore, Freer's ethnographic description exposes the hegemonic documentary frame of American teachers as authors of narratives in the community.

The intellectual and social capital emphasized in Freer's accounts create a distinct image of teachers as a class possessing the capacity to navigate successfully the various social fields in the community. What is also evident here is, while Philippine communities are fields of struggle where teachers play an indispensable role, these struggles are aggravated or mitigated by how agents strategize to maintain the social order. Hence, when American teachers accepted the Catholic priest's invitation to participate in religious activities or acquiesced to a local chieftain's invitation to participate in indigenous rituals such as *cañao*, these teachers were simply strategizing their way into people's hearts, *para capturer la simpatia del pueblo.* In the next section, I evaluate how teachers' multiple education-based literacies functioned as capital and currency in navigating the community.

5.3.3 Respectability and credibility: a capital for survival and expanding social relations

The convertibility of educational capital to social and economic capital was critical for teachers' survival in far-flung areas in the Philippines. The salaries of these teachers often did not arrive regularly and they had to purchase goods at the local store on credit. I am quite certain that, as is customary, these teachers often received goods for free from their neighbours in the community. During the American period, perceptions in the community that teachers were honourable and would not abscond from debt were reflected in their capacity to 'obtain jawbone (credit) at the Chino store [which] could offer a "chit" for whatever supplies the Chinese trader had in his dilapidated store' (Perez 1959, p.34). This form of navigating through the financial deficits and other monetary predicaments still exists and continues to economically sustain underpaid Filipino teachers. From another angle, this practice is an example of how cultural capital can be successfully converted to economic capital.

Cultural capital can also be converted to social capital. For instance, American teachers were often invited to stand as sponsors in baptisms or weddings (Freer 1959, p.34), often of their students or neighbours. Through these social, cultural and religious rituals, teachers became part of an extended Filipino family structure alongside the prominent personalities in the village. Through these rituals, teachers were drawn into a complex web of social relationships particularly where newly minted social relationships could be used as symbolic capital in exchange for favours. To date, asking teachers to stand as sponsors in baptism and weddings remains an important socio-cultural practice in the community. While this practice strengthens the bond between teachers and the community, it also makes them vulnerable to the subordinating strategies of other agents in the community. In other words, colliding interests between teachers and politicians are not new: 'once in a while [a teacher] had regrettable brushes with politicians […] who tried to bamboozle her into accepting unqualified protégés and giving them jobs in [the teachers'] department … she fought them not too successfully but as best as she could' (Stewart 1959, p.213). This clash between teachers and politicians exposes competing agents employing various capitals in intersecting fields of power where teachers often occupy a disadvantaged position.

Teachers' respectability transcends geographic boundaries and maintains durability across time. American teachers found that they were 'once a teacher, always a teacher wherever and in whatever circumstances'. For instance, the Thomasite teacher Sarah England (Molina 1959, p.153) recounted numerous stories of former students she met on the streets of Manila, in conventions in America and even in airplanes, 'telling me that they were once my students'. Thus, teachers are 'sir or ma'am' (a salutation of respect) in the community long after their professional days are over. These reports magnify the capacity of teachers' community engagements to construct and sustain teachers' unique identity. Therefore, the success of American colonial rule depended on how teachers utilized their literacies to increase the quality of their community engagements, particularly 'upon how well the American teachers won over the confidence of the local priest and the parents' (Lardizabal 1959, p.91). In other words, how teachers navigated the community related to a 'social strategy defined by its position in a system of strategies oriented towards maximizing of material and symbolic profit'(Bourdieu 1990a, p.16). In this case, the profit refers to teachers' success not only

in the classroom but also in the community, not only in educating the people but also in sustaining colonial domination.

Filipino teachers who were trained by the Thomasites have argued that 'the success of the American experiment is largely due to the success achieved by the first American teachers in winning the hearts of the Filipino people' (Encarnacion 1959, p.20). In the next section, I discuss how American Thomasites provided a structure that perpetuated a colonial mentality long after the last American teacher had left the country.

5.3.4 Teachers' role in the perpetuation of an American colonial mentality

'Captured sympathy' or the American colonial mentality was perpetuated through the agency of educational institutions, and through the training of Filipino teachers. This structural approach to reproduction is linked to the establishment of tertiary schools for teacher training, known as 'normal schools'. In order to perpetuate a Western world view, almost simultaneously with the implementation of public education, 'the normal school for Filipino teachers had been established in Manila and many of the American teachers were assigned to this school' (Perez 1959, p.32). In these normal schools, the imperialist objective of perpetuating a democratic society was attained, with democracy-centred curricula, and more importantly, with well-trained successors, namely Filipino teachers (Bolton, Bautista & Lourdes 2004; Kimuell-Gabriel 1999). From the perspective of Thomasite teacher Gilbert Perez (1959, p.33), the first group of Filipino teachers trained by the Americans was particularly 'significant for it was from that group that American teachers had to mould the future Filipino teachers in educational work'. Thus, American teachers did not only leave an icon or a model of what a teacher is, they also left the frame for the reproduction of this social and professional identity by installing the conditions that could ensure its reproduction (Bourdieu 1973, 1977). As the number of Filipino teachers increased, the quality of incoming Filipino teachers needed to be safeguarded. This was ensured by compelling pre-service teachers 'to take and to pass the examination for appointment to the position of insular teacher where one can receive at least forty pesos a month' (Freer 1959, p.170). At present this examination is referred to as the Licensure Examination for Teachers. Hence, this evaluation structure has legitimized Filipino teachers' professional identity from the American period to the present. The corresponding significant increase in salary when teachers pass this examination and gain employment

in public schools is one of the economic gains of this legitimation. However, while this legitimation has become an inevitable step towards confirmation of their identity as professional teachers, attaining it involves other cultural and religious literacies. This argument is sustained in the observation that these examinations are occasions where the professional and religious fields are conflated. As Borja observed, 'the week prior to the examinations, it was common sight to find groups of boys and girls on their way to *Dauis* to pray to the Virgin Mary for help during the examinations' (1959, p.206).

Summary. The imposition of the colonizers' worldview was an unmistakable goal of American education in the Philippines. This period saw a transition from private to public and popular education, where teachers replaced the missionaries as the primary educators both in schools and in the community. The colonization of the Filipinos became a field of multiple struggles with the goal of 'capturing the sympathy of the people'. American teachers navigated their way into Philippine communities through strategic positioning, by acceding to requests from different agents of interest or interested agents in the field. During the American colonial period teachers' identity was legitimized professionally through examinations. The community also legitimized teachers' ascendant position through invitations to stand as sponsors during religious rituals, by granting them privileged positions in processions and by allowing them to obtain goods from stores on credit.

Despite the multiple practices of American teachers in the community, their primary identification is that they were first and foremost teachers in public schools. The identity of an American 'Thomasite' leaves an image of a teacher who practiced democratic ideals, who was accessible, who interacted and involved themselves in the daily events of the people, and who used their educational cultural capital in negotiating the social field in the colony.

5.4 Discussion

Spanish missionary teachers and American 'Thomasites' came with different world views or 'overall conception[s] of the social world' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p. 9) providing rationales for the conquest and determining colonial practices. While teachers' identity during the protracted Spanish period were identified with religious objectives of conversion and maintenance of the faith, promotion of democratic ideals

largely defined teachers' identity during the American period. Historical narratives reveal that, through engagement in the community, these teachers argued for the nobility of the colonial objectives in terms of what Bourdieu (1993a) would call 'interest in disinterestedness'. In the process, teachers' identity was constructed and endowed with social gravitas and social inertia. Colonial interests then were cloaked with noble intentions – whether a veneer or genuine. For instance, Spanish interests were cloaked with the nobility of religious intentions while American interests were hidden behind the veneer of the egalitarian dimension of democratic education. Nonetheless, in both colonial periods it is evident that teachers' identity was a product of the material conditionings and point of view structured by colonial world views (Bourdieu 1990a). In other words, while overall the colonizers' worldview structured the program of colonization, this alone cannot provide an integral conception of who teachers were in those eras. Nonetheless the colonizers' worldview inevitably intersected with multiple fields during the colonial period. Through these encounters, worldviews were sustained or subverted, magnified or mitigated.

From its very nature field is characterized by multiple and unending struggles, indicating asymmetrical relations of power (Grenfell 2014; Swartz 1997). This notion helps us to understand colonial societies where various forces always struggle for a dominant position. However, struggle is not a perpetual occurrence in all areas of community life. For instance, efforts to minimize struggles (conflicts) through compromise are evidenced by Filipino teachers' successful management of the demands of – at times –conflicting religious and professional fields without prejudice to their stature in both. Although, at one level, this might be construed as a form of symbolic violence exerted upon the teachers, at another level, the strategizing is actually a manifestation of a greater degree of reflexivity as a way of navigating the social world. Hence, the notion of field theory alone is inadequate to account for practices wherein teachers conflate the religious and professional fields.

Teachers' identity may also be implied from the nature of their community engagement due to acquired cultural capital. Through these cultural capitals, teachers during the colonial period wielded power in the geographical and social fields. However, this ascendant position was a veneer and arbitrary since it was primarily attached to the position of the powerful colonizers. Hence, structures of power suggest that teachers' authority in the community proceeded from an *illusio* (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) in

the sense of being invested with, in this case, religious and intellectual superiority over the inhabitants of the islands.

The evaluated documents are conspicuously silent about issues of race and gender, rendering it difficult to assess their impact on relations of power, legitimation and other position-taking strategies in the colonial fields. This silence suggests the need for a deeper interrogation of these elements. Hence, the *illusio* of superiority may not only flow from the overwhelming influence of brute power or from intellectual superiority, but from typical coercion (symbolic violence) influenced by gender and race. As a consequence, since teachers were so entangled in this *illusio*-generating worldview of the colonizers, the authenticity of teachers' legitimated identity is called into question.

The *habitus* of teachers during the colonial period and their practices in the field were further defined by the capital they possessed and continued to acquire. Teachers' cultural capital, that is, their education and fluency in the language of the colonizers, categorized them among the elite in the community. This was reflected, for instance, in their positions in the various rituals of the community. Bourdieu (1986b) recognized that, among the capitals, cultural capital is the most challenging to convert. However, in the context of these colonial periods, teachers' ability to address their perennial economic deficit by using cultural capital as a currency provides an argument to the contrary. Thus, while the definitions of *habitus* and field contain deterministic implications, teachers' capacity to negotiate their way to social acceptance (participation in rituals and social functions) and their ability to convert cultural capital to economic capital (loans, credit) suggests a more reflexive identity.

Although Bourdieu argues against 'spontaneous disposition' and only accepts 'quasi-conscious actions' (Bourdieu 1977, p.77), teachers' consistent but diverse engagement in and with the community in the colonial period reflected a more rational and self-conscious activity. This reflexive action became a necessity particularly since 'between the generality of the classification and the particularity of life, there is always a gap' (Friedland 2009, p.889) that requires recognizing and bridging. Teachers' ability to negotiate these 'gaps' is unmistakable in their capacity to convert their cultural capital to other forms of capitals utilized as currency in a particular social situation. Finally, the importance of teachers' reflexive engagements in the community resided at the core of

egalitarian and public education, providing access to democratic distribution of knowledge and a more democratic distribution of social functions (Pelletier 2009).

5.5 Conclusion

In summary, historical narratives reveal that teachers' distinct identity during the Spanish and American colonial periods were forged through multiple community engagements. Colonial and indigenous teachers' practices during these periods were informed by contrasting worldviews. However, teachers' multiple roles and various engagements specified the embodiment of these worldviews in the community. The field or the community is where the teachers' identity was socially constructed. Teachers' social field during the colonial periods also transpired to be extremely dynamic, evidenced by continuous movement from one colonial field to another, from Spanish to American, from religious aims to democratic objectives, from private to public, and so on. These field movements affected teachers' practices, the value of their capitals and therefore the nature and functions of their identity.

In this section, teachers' disposition (*habitus*) to engage in the community, their multiple literacies (capitals) and the fields of engagements appear to indicate Filipino teachers' identity. At the early part of each colonial period, this identity is intimately woven through the identity of religious missionaries as teachers and as cadre of democratic ideals. The formation of local Filipino teachers progressed alongside the national aspiration for independence from colonial rule. Therefore, the construction of a distinct Filipino teachers' identity straddles between perpetuation of vestiges of colonial rule, that is, Christianity by the Spaniards and democratic ideals by the Americans and the birth of an independent republic. Hence, the construction of Filipino teachers' identity that is entangled with the ebb and flow of Philippine colonial history sustains the understanding that the 'dynamic relationship between *habitus* and field allows us to understand identity as always in process, influenced by context but simultaneously influencing and having an impact on that context' (Reay 2010, p. 284). To reframe this argument; it is only through the intersection of the 'mutually affecting' and 'dynamic relationship between habitus and field' that identity is constructed.

Finally, teachers' prolonged, intense and multiple practices in the community constructed a distinct identity with both social gravitas to affect the community and with

social inertia that ensured its reproduction in the future. As Skeggs (2004b, p. 77) described it, the 'legacy of this colonial formation of [identity] generates the possibility of a self that can conceive of a *future* in which value can be realized'. To put it more in context, the strategic unravelling of teachers' identity during the Spanish and American colonial periods provided particular historical narratives or 'strands' that can be woven into a critical discourse to understand how contemporary Filipino teachers' identity may be constructed through their current and multiple community engagement activities.

Part 3 - Identity construction and contemporary community engagements

After analysing how teachers' identity and community engagement is intertwined with the worldview of the Spanish and American colonizers, Part 3 looks into how their contemporary identity is constructed through their current and evolving participations in community affairs. As a prologue to the succeeding three chapters in this part, the purpose and strategy is first stated before presenting a table of teachers' community engagements that emerged during Focus Groups and Key Informant Interview sessions. From these data gathering activities, it became clear that teachers' engagement is differentiated into mandatory and voluntary. A further analysis reveals that teachers' voluntary engagements appear to be concentrated around religious-cultural nature of engagement and involvement in political activities. Inquiry into teachers' contemporary mandatory civic participations is the main focus of the analysis in Chapter 6. I analysed their current voluntary engagements in religious/ cultural fields in Chapter 7 and their involvement in the political field in Chapter 8.

Introduction: purpose and strategy

In the previous chapter I analysed teachers' multiple engagements in and with the community during the Spanish and American colonial times in view of how they may have constituted a distinct identity during those periods. This discussion was beneficial in establishing a critical and historical connectivity with Filipino teachers' contemporary forms of community engagements attainable only through a 'historical analysis of the constitution of 'fields' as sites of tensions' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.90). Furthermore, this historical linkage lends a sense of familiarity to contemporary Filipino teachers' involvement in the activities and events of their respective communities. If there is a sense that teachers' community engagements form part of their contemporary functions and identities, one reason is that this has been the case for a long period of time. For this reason, teachers' mandated and voluntary activities in the community are recognized as common practices defined in historical terms as 'temporal

activities, a living through of the embodied potentialities of the *habitus*' (McNay 2001, p.149).

My main purpose in all three chapters of Part 3 is to uncover various dispositions in the *habitus* through which facets of teachers' contemporary identities are constructed (see Table 3 for modalities of teachers' community engagements, peoples' perceptions and expectations of teachers, and how schools are utilized by the community outside educational activities). To attain this aim, I investigate teachers' multiple civic practices, both mandated and voluntary. These engagements, differentiated by the degree of agency or lack of it, constitute the two major divisions of teachers' community engagements as avenues through which their identity is constructed in the community. The concept of identity in this study emerged as a product of the mutually affecting relations between *habitus*, field and capital. Within this conceptual framework, the notion of critical construction of identity recognizes the need to account all constitutive social, cultural and historical factors including the multiple relations of power involve in this process. In other words, the relations between the concepts of *habitus*, field and capital provide a framework to see 'identity as intertwined, shaping and shaped' (Twiselton 2004, p. 163). In this study, the social context of this identity is the community where teachers live, teach and participate in multiple activities throughout the year. Accordingly, the proper historical context of contemporary Filipino teachers' identities is the community.

Table 3: Modalities of Filipino teachers' contemporary community engagements

Events, occasions, phenomena, programs	**Frequency**	**Roles and functions**
Mandated engagements		
Local and national elections	Every three or six years	Mandated election duty as poll officer (chair or member of Board of Inspectors or Board of Tellers). Election-related social-cultural roles (information dissemination, education of voters, election observers).
Census	Every ten years	Census enumerator (conduct house visits, interview, and collect data).
Brigada Eskwela	Annual	Prepare the school/classroom for the coming school year (solicit materials and assistance from the community, coordinate with other agencies for volunteer work, etc.)

Educational mapping	Annual	Conduct house-to-house campaign to promote enrolment.
Community extension services	Regular activity	Join in private institutions' community extension program, e.g., medical missions, relief operations, and teaching in the villages.
Education and training	Regular activity	Conduct literacy programs, skills development to out-of-school youths and senior citizens.
Community consultant or adviser	Regular activity	Adviser to youth groups, community sport programs, beautification and development of the locality.
Voluntary engagements		
'Fiesta' (local celebrations)	Annual	In charge or part of program planning, decorate, train participants, emcee, judge pageants and contests, etc.
Local politics	Occasional	Member of *Lupon ng Barangay* (village council)
Officers and members of local church organizations and committees	Regular activity	Officers of Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and other organizations of different religious affiliations.
Social movement	Regular activity	As members of party list organizations, work for teachers' welfare and improvement of educational system through political actions
Communication and liaison	Occasional	Coordinate with local agencies and organizations during election, *Brigada Eskwela*, fiestas and other celebrations.
Weddings and baptisms	Occasional	Stand as sponsor to former students and people in the community during socio-religious rites like weddings and baptisms.
Financial resource	Occasional	Source of financial aid, no matter how meagre, and human resource in the community.
Perceptions		***Expectations***
Role model		Uphold socio-cultural and ethical values and expected to transmit and instil the same to their students in the classroom and in the community. As role models, teachers are often invited to be a sponsor during social and religious rites like baptisms and weddings. Expected to extend help no matter how meagre.
Local intellectual		Expected to be relatively knowledgeable about matters in the community. As critical agents (for members of unions and Alliance of Concerned Teachers), an enlightened teacher is expected to possess the skills to analyse and act on the socio-political situation of and challenges in the country.
Use of school		
Evacuation centre		Teachers perform various voluntary functions to assist evacuees or refugees using the classrooms as temporary shelters.

Voting precincts	Elections of government officials are typically held in the school classrooms.

In line with the wider objectives of this study, which is a construction of contemporary Filipino teachers' identity through their community engagements, Bourdieu's signature concepts of field, *habitus* and field are utilized in these three chapters. This means that analyses of the coded data are structured around these concepts. Specifically, Chapter 6 focuses on analyses of three contemporary civic engagements: election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* activities. Chapter 7 investigates teachers' voluntary engagements in the religious field (e.g., roles during fiestas, faith-based involvement, and participation in community extension services). Finally, Chapter 8 explores teachers' individual and collective participation in the political field (as individual politicians or members of a party list organization). While community involvements in these three chapters do not constitute the entirety of their practices, these are the activities I will subject to analysis since they were the most commonly discussed (both contested and concurred with) during the data-gathering sessions. Nonetheless, I have also presented here, albeit in the appendix, all possible teacher–community engagements that emerged from the data-gathering episodes.[10] Concentrating the analysis on these core engagements that were discussed by the majority of participants helps 'increase understanding of how the social universe operates' (Turner 2010, p. 4). Finally, the by-products of these analyses are the building blocks upon which I attempt to construct contemporary Filipino teachers' identity. I intend to obtain this overall objective aided by the lens of Bourdieu's theory and method and coupled with my own 'sense of the game' or experiential understanding of Filipino teachers' practices, particularly the culture and structure of Philippine communities.

[10] See Table 3 and Appendix A

Chapter 6: Compelled to serve: field, capital and *habitus* in mandated community engagements

Equipped with a critical understanding of Filipino teachers' identity during the colonial period, this chapter constructs a narrative of contemporary Filipino teachers' field, capital and *habitus* through an analysis of their mandated civic practices. The first segment briefly describes election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* as fields of teachers' obligatory engagements in the community. The ensuing analysis of these mandated fields of civic participation provides a contrast to how voluntary engagements help construct teachers' identity. While the segments are structured separately, every discussion implicates the Bourdieusian tool kit since its sociological value can only be adequately harnessed when the tools are applied in concert (Edgerton & Roberts 2014; Ikin, Johns & Hayes 2012).

6.1 A description of teachers' mandated civic engagements

From the collated data, election duties, census enumeration work and *Brigada Eskwela* activities emerged as the most discussed and most complex mandatory community engagements. This section provides a brief description of teachers' civic involvement based upon the following categories: (1) definition of the activity and teachers' roles therein, (2) legal basis, (3) location of engagement, and (4) frequency and duration. These engagements differ in objectives for all stakeholders, context of activities and configuration of teachers' practices, forms of compensation and weight of legal determination. For instance, election duty is part of the political exercise, census enumeration relates to social responsibility and *Brigada Eskwela* centres on educational objectives. In terms of compensation, while there is a standard national monetary remuneration for election duty and census enumeration, *Brigada Eskwela* was organized as part of teachers' professional function without needing to be compensated. The varying impacts of these differentiations on teachers' practices in and how they are subsequently identified in the community are expounded in the following subsequent discussions.

Election duties. The *Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines* (*Batas Pambansa* No. 881) and the *Electoral Reforms Act of 1987* are the keystone pieces of legislation that

determine Filipino teachers' election duties. These laws designate teachers as members of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) and/or as members of the Board of Tellers (BOT). In particular, the *Electoral Reforms Act of 1987* prescribes that:

> The Board of Inspectors shall be composed of a chairman and two (2) members, one of whom shall be designated as poll clerk, all of whom shall be public school teachers. In case there are not enough public school teachers, teachers in private schools […] may be appointed for election duty.

As election officers, teachers' key responsibilities are: (1) to prepare the classroom for voting, (2) to facilitate an orderly, peaceful and credible voting process and tabulation of results, and (3) to transmit the ballots to the next level of scrutiny. Typically, Philippine elections are conducted in the classroom of designated schools wherein work lasts for a day or may be extended by several days depending on the location and situation in the community. Teachers perform other activities related to their election duties that may commence way before the election proper and extend beyond the three-day period. While the law specifies teachers' election duties and how they should be carried out (*Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines 1985*; *Republic Act No. 6646*; *Electoral Reforms Law of 1987*), the provisions do not fully account for all the ancillary election-related practices and activities by teachers. Elections in the Philippines are held every 3 or 6 years, depending on whether they are national or local, and teachers receive an average of Php. 4,500 pesos for the three-day activity (Sy 2016).

Census enumeration. In addition to election duties, some FGD participants recalled working as census enumerators. The legal basis for this function is *Batas Pambansa* No. 72, *An Act Providing for the taking of an Integrated Census every 10 years beginning in the year 1980, and for other purposes*. This law stipulates that 'public school teachers shall be employed for enumeration work and for such service shall be paid an honorarium as may be determined by the National Census Coordinating Board'. The Department of Education (DepEd) further specifies that personnel (particularly teachers) shall 'obtain a complete account of population and its size, composition, demographic characteristics, and geographic distribution in the Philippines' (DepEd Order No. 21, s. 2010). In the 2010 census, teachers received between Php. 11,550 and 15,175 for this month-long work.

In recent years, census enumeration duties have been gradually divested from teachers' mandated engagements in areas where the local government and the National Census and Statistics Office nominate other personnel for census functions. Nonetheless,

significant numbers of teachers are still required for this work in municipalities where teachers remain the most available and adequately trained professionals. The uniqueness of this duty rests on its capacity to increase mutual familiarity between involved teachers and household members, particularly because census enumeration is typically conducted in respondents' homes.

Brigada Eskwela. The legal basis and definition of the *Brigada Eskwela* program is contained in *Department of Education Order 24, s. 2008*. This order defines this program as:

> A nationwide maintenance program that engages all education stakeholders to contribute their time, efforts and resources in ensuring that public schools are all set in time for class opening. It is a week-long event where local communities, parents, alumni, civic groups, local businesses, NGOs, private individuals and even teachers and students volunteer their time, skills to do minor to medium repairs and maintenance work in the schools (DepED Order 24, s. 2008).

The *Brigada Eskwela* program relies on the spirit of *bayanihan* (communal solidarity) as its animating principle. Teachers' key responsibilities include: (1) soliciting materials from business establishments, politicians or members of the community, (2) encouraging the community to participate in the annual activity, (3) managing the repair and repainting of classrooms and cleaning of school premises, and (4) conducting meetings with the parents of their would-be pupils.

The ensuing analysis focuses on how Bourdieu's key concepts relate to community engagements. Aside from the constitutive processes, I also interrogate relations of power, position and position-taking moves, and their impacts.

6.2 Election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela:* a legally determined and consecrated field

Pertinent laws provide legal bases for the mandatory character of teachers' multiple engagements in these fields, authorizing them as legitimate personnel to conduct the mandated functions. In other words, the imperative character of these engagements is primarily 'actualized by designation and conferment of authority and responsibility [through] the process of consecration and legitimation' (Grenfell 2010, p.90). Thus, regardless of their geographical location and social demographics, all FGD participants from public schools confirmed their previous participation as election polling officers and as facilitators of *Brigada Eskwela*, while some were also designated to work as

census enumerators. The legal force behind these engagements appears to support a deterministic notion of field. This deterministic tendency can be traced to the notion that dispositions and actions in the field – in this case, teachers' engagements – are 'irreducible to the intentions of the individual agents or to the direct interactions among the agents' (Bourdieu 1985, p.724). As FGD participants would say, '*nasa batas*' (it is prescribed by law). However, determinism can only be sustained through a conception of a homogenized field. In this field, Friedland (2009, p. 888), it is easy to understand the why 'Bourdieu aligns all practices through the logic of domination, which allows […] homologization of group relations in every field'. For this reason, teachers participation in mandated engagements is an opportunity to understand how they are subjected not only to the logic of domination but also to interrogate the manner through which this attempt to escape this subordinated position. Furthermore, the notion of reflexivity arising from the *habitus*–field disjuncture (Stahl 2013) and the proposition that 'not every action context is a field' (Hilgers & Mangez 2015, p.27) both suggest that teachers' actions in these activities are not purely legally driven. Hence, this point and counterpoint argument indicates a nuanced conception of field that suggests cautious utilization of field in this study.

The obligatory natures of these three legally constituted community engagements help us understand field as 'the structure of the social setting in which *habitus* operates' (Swartz 1997, p. 117). In this context, the ensuing relation between teachers' *habitus* and multiple fields of mandated community engagements relates to how a facet of teachers' identity may be constructed. Field, in the Bourdeusian discipline, refers to a 'relational configuration endowed with a specific gravity which it imposes on all the objects and agents which enter it' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.17). This definition contains three key concepts ancillary to a critical understanding of contemporary Filipino teachers' field. First, the relational configuration of field indicates that it is constituted by objective power relations (Bourdieu 1985). Nestled within the context of objective power relations is the significance of teachers' position and position-taking strategies capable of 'grasping the interests attached to the different positions' (Bourdieu 1984, p.12). Second, the meaning, significance and influence of various capitals to teachers' community engagements can only be appraised within the context of the field structure. Specifically, teachers' value are weighed along the 'asymmetrical

structure of distribution of capital, especially the cultural capital' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.278).

Bourdieu's notion of field provides a structure for a critical understanding of 'field as a site of struggle, structured, in part, through an unequal distribution of capital pertinent to them' (Crossley 2003, p.55). In other words, this field is constantly restructured in every significant act of struggle when agents compete for various interests and stakes and interests, specifically the ability to legitimize (Grenfell 2014). The notion that 'legitimation is the key mechanism in the conversion to power' (Skeggs 2010, p. 347) is central to an understanding of how teachers' identity is constructed through community engagements constituted by multiple modes of struggles. Finally, appraising teachers' practices in terms of the notion of legitimation sets up a frame for understanding the field in terms of teachers' ascendant and dominated position through the economy of exchange of capitals in the field.

This chapter proceeds by operationalizing Bourdieu's concept of field theory to teachers' mandated community engagements. The succeeding fragments of their narratives reflect teachers' understanding and appraisal of the mandatory character of these fields of engagements.

Chia, an early career public school teacher from Isla de Norte, described the imperatives of election participation in this manner: '*You cannot refuse to serve during elections because according to the law that is your service as a teacher*'. In another FGD session, Reggie, a senior public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS, illustrated how the force of the law is negatively, but effectively, reinforced:

> *There was even a time when teachers who refused to serve are even fetched by the police from their homes and escorted to the voting precincts. So, if you are really unable to serve then you have to inform your supervisor beforehand.*

Teachers' unequivocal acceptance of this obligatoriness points to an embodiment of these practices in the identity of contemporary Filipino teachers. An examination of the field of teachers' election duties indicates that its embodiment traces back both to an institutional principle (Reay 1998), which in this particular engagement is legislation, and to the community expectation that teachers will serve during the election period. Hence, both formal (government agencies and schools) and informal institutions (e.g., family and community) all contribute to the configuration of teachers' election duties.

The extent of teachers' understanding of the legality of this engagement is proportional to the embodiment of corresponding dispositions in their *habitus*.

In the educational context, community engagement is an essential component of teachers' professional mandate. This is contained in *The Code of Ethics for Professional Teachers* (Professional Regulatory Commission 1977) and articulated in the module on *School and Community Partnership Teacher Induction Program.* The module utilized particularly in the pre-service orientation of neophyte teachers includes discussion of their election duties, census enumerators, drug education campaign, campaigns on behalf of the government, and organizer/host of government-initiated activities' (Losada 2010). In this orientation, these community engagements are inculcated as practices constitutive of teachers' professional identity. The objectification of these practices in the pre-service education program and structure shows that, even before contemporary Filipino teachers commence their teaching jobs, community engagement is already constituted into their (class and institutional) identity inscribed through continuous and diversity of practices in and with the community. In this interpretation of Losada (2010), Filipino teachers' community engagements are contiguous to their identity as professional teachers. For this reason, the embodiment of teachers' civic engagements may be viewed as an 'incorporation of temporal structures of regularities and tendencies of the world into the body' (McNay 2001, p.149). When teachers consistently reiterate the inevitability – '*hindi ka makakatakas*' – of these engagements, they recognize the 'full weight of the law' (in and through the field) as 'the form par excellence of the symbolic power of naming and classifying that creates the things named' (Bourdieu, cited in Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.167). To be a Filipino teacher then is to engage with the community through these community engagements. Therefore, teachers' election duties, *Brigada Eskwela* and to a lesser extent census enumeration help construct teachers' identity in the community.

6.2.1 'Called to being, naming into being': the impact of legally constituted engagements

Lawful engagement and legitimate identity. In this section, I will examine how pertinent laws help legitimize teachers' engagement, and consequently their identity, in these mandatory activities. As far as teachers are concerned, it is clear that their engagements in these fields are legally based and enforced. For them, the successful implementation of these activities is proportional to the quality of teachers' participation

therein, so much so that these activities may be regarded as interchangeable with teachers' identity. For example, in their narratives Chia and Reggie implied that one couldn't talk about elections without calling to mind teachers' involvement. In this way the law served as the principle that constructed teachers into a particular class existence. The same legal basis confirms their engagements in these fields by granting them with infallible and 'formidable social power' (Bourdieu 1985, p.729), for example to name, to classify and to legitimize. However, this social power is neither absolute nor immutable. On the contrary this capacity (openness to legitimation) and ability (disposed to legitimize) is mediated and differentiated by 'the array of capitals, cultural, social, economic, and symbolic, individuals have access to [that] make a difference to the choices and options available to them' (Reay 2010, p.284). In other words, there are a plethora of social factors that contribute to teachers' legitimation in these activities. For instance, a successful election exercise in their respective precincts requires more than just legal capital. Of equal importance are teachers' cultural and social capitals or how teachers personally dispense their duties in these engagements.

While this diverse set of teachers' available capitals differentiates the modalities of struggles in these fields, the legal basis remains the primary and authoritative reference for their legitimate engagements therein. Nonetheless, the multiple struggles in these fields indicate both a plurality of unequally valued and distributed stakes as well as disproportionate capacities to acquire these resources. For instance, most FGD participants decry the paltry remuneration and often delayed payment for their physically stressful election duties. In some areas (e.g., Bangusan Elem. School), where communities are extremely differentiated and heterogeneous, teachers complained about communities' indifference to *Brigada Eskwela* activities, leaving them to personally purchase materials for the repair and preparation of their classrooms. Teachers' contrasting appreciation of these engagements indicates that the success of their performance in *Brigada Eskwela* is determined by the social structure of and interests of agents in the community. The different appreciation of this community engagement is the reason for the difficulty in constructing a collective structure of identity. In other words, the contrasting experiences of *Brigada Eskwela* is to be expected since the social world is

> A space (with several dimensions) constructed on the basis of principles of differentiation or distribution constituted by the set of properties active within the social universe in question, i.e., capable of conferring strength,

> power within that universe, on their holder. Agents and groups of agents are thus defined by their relative positions within that space (Bourdieu 1985, p.724).

Even if there is a common, namely legal, basis of teachers' involvement in these obligatory engagements, teachers often presented contrasting opinions on the exigency of this engagement. For instance, younger teachers and those in more urban settings are more 'avant-garde, i.e., a collective movement that challenges the status quo' (Grenfell & James 2004, p.510). More senior teachers, particularly in more provincial and rural settings, exhibit a more 'rear-guard' position, that is, they are more immediately assimilated into the typical practices (ibid). Younger teachers often take an avant-garde position in these mandated fields whether in terms of participation or opposition. They are more vocal and often offer resistance and even challenge the imposing power of other agents in this field (e.g., politicians, police). On the other hand, teachers that are more senior exhibit a tendency to maintain the *status quo*. This differentiation indicates that what was previously an 'avant-garde' practice can gradually evolve into a 'rear-guard position'. When this happens, it signifies that that the field is successful in sedimenting these practices into teachers' disposition and even in the field of legitimated practices. This means that every community engagement, through the agency of time, evolves into 'a set of fundamental beliefs which does not even need to be asserted in the form of an explicit, self-conscious dogma' (Bourdieu 2000, p.15), thus acquiring a *doxic* state. In other words, the experience of time provided the space for the movement from an avant-garde condition to status quo position.

Impact of evolution of laws on community engagement and identity. In recent years, there have been significant modifications to the legal bases of teachers' election duties, where the movement is generally from mandatory to voluntary engagement. In effect, this evolution has tended to modify their practices in this field. This means that, despite a tendency to naturally regress towards a *doxic* existence, the social world and 'everything about a field, including its very existence, is open to revision on the basis of struggles and changes inside and outside the field' (Steinmetz 2014, p. 2). This inevitable evolution is the result of the continuous modification to pertinent laws that determine teachers' mandatory engagements. In this section, I will analyse teachers' perspectives on the evolution of these laws and their influence on the mandatory dispositions in their *habitus*. The following accounts express teachers' typical opinions regarding the impact of the evolution of laws affecting their electoral duties. Edith, a

public school teacher from Consolation National HS, suggested that legal evolution will not have an immediate impact on teachers' participation as election officers. This position is evident in how she summarized the reasons for teachers' continuing involvement as Board of Election Officers:

> *Mobilizing teachers [is] always advantageous to the state as it lessens the logistical burden in managing elections since teachers are the biggest manpower that government has at its disposal. Where else can the state find a sizable, highly trained and competent workforce? Furthermore, classrooms, which are the natural workplace of teachers, have long been used as polling precincts.*

Hence, the sustainability of teachers' involvement in elections (as well as in census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela*) indicates that these civic engagements have been mutually imprinted on the minds both of teachers and community members as an embodied 'durable and transposable disposition' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.5). The regularity of involvement in these activities leads to a progressive dispositional sedimentation into the identity of Filipino teachers. Thus, 'institutional *habituses* are capable of change but through dint of their collective nature are less fluid than individual *habitus*' (Reay 1998, p. 521). Therefore, as habitus takes on a more collective appearance (e.g., family, group, class and institution), it increasingly becomes more resistant to change. Nonetheless, altering laws upon which mandatory practices are based will gradually influence how these engagements are deployed and perceived. In this sense, teachers' *habitus* is permeable and malleable.

The possibility of change discussed in the previous section is also a consequence of the presence of levels of intensity or a hierarchy of what is mandatory. Thus, this level of arbitrariness suggests a correlative alterable nature of these concepts and practices. To illustrate this point, among the mandatory engagements, the consensus is that census enumeration duties are the least obligatory in terms of the number of public school teachers required. On the other hand, election duties maintain their unassailable obligatory character, in spite of impending legislation to make this voluntary among teachers. However, even if teachers' engagement as election officers may no longer be mandated, the opportunity to earn extra income, the lighter duties due to the computerization of the election system, the decrease in instances of reported violence, the additional support given by the government and the cemented sense of duty may help sustain the durability of this practice. Juan Miguel, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS, gave assurance of continued teachers' involvement:

> *For practical reasons – on the part of teachers, it's an added source of income and for the government, where else can they get a highly literate workforce of this size that is already familiar with the process and with the community?*

Hence, this is a case of *habitus*' durability being sustained by economic and political capital as well as strategic position in the field.

In the past several decades these civic engagements endured because of the incontrovertible weight of laws in these fields, thereby legitimizing civic participations into a *doxa* as 'the unwritten "rules of the game" underlying practices' (Grenfell 2008, p.57). For this reason even arbitrary modification in the nature of engagements from mandatory to voluntary will not have an immediate impact in teachers' collective disposition in relation to these practices. In a sense, these practices are expected to continue, despite the voluntary option, since they have been normalized into an 'uncontested acceptance of the daily lifeworld' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.73). Edith and Juan Miguel's position, articulated above, that election duties will remain at the core of teachers' functions is evidence of how the state has prevailed in shaping teachers' cognitive structures and organizing their practices. In other words, the state has succeeded in utilizing teachers as agents of social and cultural reproduction through these engagements. As Chopra (2016, p.1) argued, agents 'empowered to act in the name of the state routinely perform and reinforce the authority of the state as do citizens by following state orders'.

While Edith was discussing election duties, her arguments are also illustrative of similar dynamics in census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* activities. The confluence of practicality (teachers and schools are already strategically located in every community) and capacity (teachers are equipped with multiple necessary literacies for these engagements) plus the reality that no other group can immediately dispose of these functions augurs well for the continuation of these mandated practices. This argument supports the following conclusions. First, these practices have been legitimized and normalized into a form of orthodoxy (Bourdieu 1984). Second, the dynamics of these engagements have been 'accepted as ordinary usual order' or *doxa* (p.424). Third, these coordinated practices have been embodied into a collective *habitus'* (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, p.166). While Reay (1998) described collective *habitus* in terms of institutional and family *habitus*, my research has provided a basis for the notion of

community *habitus* as the common perception of the community of teachers both as a class and as individuals.

Indeed, one of the immediate effects of pertinent laws in relation to election functions, census duties and *Brigada Eskwela* activities is the constitution of teachers' identity, wherein their functions are delineated and differentiated. In the next section, I discuss how other forms of capital and dispositions help teachers manage the multiple struggles in the performance of their mandated functions.

6.2.2 Cultural affordances in the field of struggle

Successful enactment of mandated practices through utilization of cultural resources is evident from FGD participants' stories. In this section, I will investigate the impacts of the interaction between law and culture in mandated engagements.

Teachers' vulnerability to forms of violence. The narratives below illustrate how teachers experience both ends of the spectrum of 'objective relations of power'. At the extreme end, the narrative below describes the harrowing election-related experiences of Jean, a public school teacher from Isla de Norte:

> *I was almost incarcerated for a measly honorarium of 2,500. I was charged in court where I personally spent more than 100,000 pesos to defend my case. I have to endure the danger and exhausting five to eight hour boat ride from the island to the mainland just to be present during court hearing. On top of that, I still have to borrow money from relatives for the trip and to pay the services of my lawyer. It really sapped my energy and our family resources. With a very slow process of justice here in our country, it took a long time before the case was resolved. By that time we were already buried in debts. Of course, the case was dismissed and I was exonerated but I was not interested in filing a counter charge. It will just be another headache.*

Another example is the account of Tita, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary and HS, who continue to suffer from lingering trauma after she was harassed, handcuffed and accused of connivance with the winning politician. The chilling experiences of Jean and Tita expose teachers' vulnerability despite legal and cultural legitimation particularly when set against the overwhelming interests of other agents (politicians). Jean and Tita's stories may be viewed as deviation to regular official press release of the state where election is generally painted as peaceful or that election-related violence statistics has dipped from previous years. However, these official pronouncements only mask the continuing teachers' vulnerability to multiple forms of violence during election period (see Conde 2007; Ruiz DB 2010; Mateo 2016). For both

politicians and supporters, the stakes are high; winning means leadership and control of public funds, while losing for most traditional politicians mean loss of access to position-related privileges. Hence, what is obvious is that politically valuable stakes are obtainable only through an inevitable collision of fields. The prevalence of violence against teachers, as a result of being 'confirmed by law into the network or configuration of objective power relations of the field' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.97), illustrates how legal weight is emaciated against unmitigated interests of agents endowed with other forms of capitals. Therefore, ironically, the law that vests teachers with legitimating authority also exposes them to the machinations of interested parties. As teachers carry out their election duties they may be perceived as a challenge to the legitimacy of those in power. Jean and Tita felt that they were perceived as capable of tilting the bar of power and for that they were subjected to multiple forms of violence. To some extent this particular experience suggests that politicians, that is, those running for public office, perceives that the chance of election success depends on how teachers conduct their election function in their respective polling precincts. The impact of this perception appears to reverberate across Philippine society particularly that Jean and Tita's experiences are typical of the ordeals of a significant number of FGD participants in my study.

Minimizing tension through cultural literacy. The general tenor of most FGD participants suggests a positive experience or a relatively ascendant position in these mandated activities. The peaceful and successful conduct of these activities not only indicates the success of teachers' legitimized identity, it is also evidence that teachers were able to deploy their cultural and social literacies and utilize their familiarity with the dynamics of their community. As an example, the account of Racquel, a public school teacher from Sto. Domingo National HS, typifies how FGD participants normally manage election activities through cultural literacy:

> *During an election we ask voters to fall in line, to follow instructions and to be disciplined – just like we ask our students in school. In the same way that our pupils listen to us, the voters also listen and obey our instructions when inside the voting precincts. I feel that my being a teacher has a way of affecting the conduct of the election in our own assigned precincts. Plus, the fact that often, their [voters'] children are or have been our students in school.*

Racquel's strategy for a successful election engagement is primarily anchored on the utilization of her cultural capital as a professional teacher. She ensures performance of election responsibilities by taking advantage of here multiple community-valuable

capitals particularly social capital (i.e., close relations to the voters as neighbours in the community and parents of her students). This account also illustrates a correspondence between law and culture which is beneficial in two ways: first, it facilitates an understanding of this particular 'bundles of relations' where there is often a struggle over different types of capital, whether economic, social, cultural or symbolic (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, 1986b), and second, it provides 'strategies to produce and reproduce the conditions of their collective existence' (Swartz 1997, p. 7). This shows how culture can be beneficial in locating teachers' historical position in the social world, in facilitating the audit of available practices and lastly in providing both energy and structure for the reproduction of practices in the community.

Benefits of teacher–community familiarity in teachers' social position. Interrogating further the impacts of the field can deepen discussion on teachers' social position in he community. Mirrored in Racquel's description are the following dimensions of teachers' fluctuating positions in the field. First, it shows that teachers' 'structural properties are embedded in everyday events' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.8) or at the very least homologous to their regular activities. Second, the contiguity between exercises of mandated engagements and regular professional activity results in the eventual configuration of field into a set of taken-for-granted fundamental beliefs. In short, teachers' community engagement is contiguous with their community's rhyme and rhythm. However, when this stage is reached, this teacher–community familiarity is more prone to reproduce practices rather than be a catalyst for conscious struggles. Third, the successful shift of the structure of typical teacher–student relations of power from education to a political context indicates that, when struggles are dissimulated in the field, teachers occupy a relative and momentary ascendant position therein. The effect of this configuration is that, as the field is characterized by struggle (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.9), the intensity of the ensuing competition due to an array of factors also determine whether the attendant practices conserve or transform the field of forces (Bourdieu 1993a).

Another mode of assessing teachers' relative and fluid ascendant or subordinated positions in the field is through an understanding of the multi-dimensional struggles in the election engagement field. From an obviously dominated position, teachers symbolically challenge *status quo* by protecting the sanctity of the ballots in their own respective polling precincts. When all interested agents in these mandated civic

engagements are caught up in and by the game (*illusio*), particularly in election exercises, the intensified competition challenges teachers' fragile ascendant position. In particular, Jean and Tita's resolve to resist and even to fight the dominant political entities even at their own expense undermines the notion that the 'unconscious submission to conditions is in fact quite arbitrary' (Webb, Schirato & Danaher 2002, p. xi). The escalation of struggle in the mandated civic engagement field further exposes the position of opposing agents and their position-taking strategies in their pursuit of the stakes available therein. That Jean had to endure a perilous channel crossing just to attend a hearing and that Tita has to continuously move residence following her traumatic election experience is evidence that unmask teachers' largely dominated position in the political life of the community. What is significant is that they also showed how the influence of the field could be resisted.

Brigada Eskwela: an emergent vehicle of cultural reproduction. Compared to election and census enumeration duties, the stake and interests in *Brigada Eskwela* activities are quite different. Nonetheless, the necessity for culturally informed agency is unchanged. Emma, a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School, explained how cultural literacy contributes to the success of *Brigada Eskwela*:

> *It is a necessity for teachers to have good public relations skills (dapat marunong kang makisama), which come in handy when asking for donations from the governor, mayor and business establishments. It is from them that we solicit materials - paints, nails, woods and others, for the repair of our classrooms.*

The same cultural literacy is utilized in convincing other agents, such as parents, private institutions and other members of the community, to participate in *Brigada Eskwela* activities. From the outset, this seems to be an unproblematic portrayal of the typical symbiosis between politicians and possible voters. Furthermore, this activity even suggests agency (i.e., teachers control the narratives of how to prepare the school) and ascendancy (i.e., teachers are able to engage multiple agents in the community). However, when understood through the ramifications of cultural dynamics, the act of asking politicians for donations renders teachers vulnerable to the dynamics of cultural and social indebtedness (*utang na loob*). The mercantile exchange is in effect wherein politician can collect the returns of the favour they have invested in the form of votes during election period. This practice traces its roots to how teachers were entangled with politicians' *quid pro quo* expectations even during the colonial period (see Section 5.2.3), where politicians cashed in their social capital forged during wedding and

baptism rituals. In a similar way, *Brigada Eskwela* exposes teachers to the risks of cultural indebtedness.

The notion that teachers occupy an ascendant position in *Brigada Eskwela* since they wield control on how their classroom is repaired and refurbished is indeed problematic when we consider why they are burdened with this physical responsibility in the first place (as this is obviously a function of the state). While it is commendable that teachers utilize cultural values like *bayanihan*, this again masks the complication of being ingratiated to patronage politics. When mediated through an interested and strategic utilization of the cultural value *utang na loob* (loosely debt of gratitude), politicians can expect teachers to amortize their debt of gratitude come election period (e.g., through votes). Since *Brigada Eskwela* is yearly practice, teachers accrue this debt of gratitude annually each time increasing their vulnerability to the mercantile nature of patronage politics. It is in this context that 'domination is manifested not as a direct and simple action […] but as the indirect effect of a complex set of actions engendered within the network of intersecting constraints' (Bourdieu 1998b, p.34). How *Brigada Eskwela* activities are organized and how cultural values are utilized reflect their sustained dependence to structures of power in communities (e.g., politicians and owners of business establishments). Therefore, while this activity may be laudable it also provides the vehicle upon which teachers are implicated in the reproduction of social and cultural structures in their communities.

6.2.3 Conclusion

In this section, by analysing the nature of the objective relations of power in teachers' mandated community engagements, I was able to grasp a glimpse of teachers' ascendant and subordinated position in the field. This glimpse was obtained through a critical understanding of the mandated community engagement field as 'spaces between people, the medium within which living takes place, the context of action and interaction' (Gill 2003, p.3). I have also shown how a multitude of factors (particularly law and culture) influence teachers' legitimation, social position and position-taking strategies. Furthermore, when teachers participate in this field where they become vulnerable to unending struggles, they are unconsciously reined in (or allow themselves to be taken in) by the bureaucratic field in the sense of 'being taken over by a thought of the state' (Bourdieu, Wacquant & Farage 1994, p.1). Finally, through this analysis, the

understanding that Filipino teachers' mandated community engagements are fields where their identity is constructed indicates that 'social selves are always situated at the intersection of multiple and competing social locations (or field positions)' (Decoteau 2015, p.303).

This critical understanding of the role of field in influencing teachers' experiences further directs my investigation of teachers' capacity (cultural and symbolic capital) and their ability (disposition) to manage their legally and culturally informed civic practices. The rationale is based on a twofold understanding: first, that 'fields and field practices can be defined in terms of the configuration of their capital' (Grenfell 2014, loc. 1101), and second, that field is the foundation of *habitus*' social embodiment (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.128) and vice versa. This differentiation is underscored in my observation that while some teachers seem to manage successfully their mandated community engagements, other teachers continue to struggle in their practices. While this differentiation may be traced to variations of their dispositions, it is not the sole principle of identity configuration. In other words, *habitus* does not operate similarly for all people and neither does it act in isolation. On the contrary, habitus action is characterized by diversity and pluriformity through its collusion with capitals and fields. The discussion in the next section centres on the value of capital in teachers' mandated civic activities.

6.3 The weight of capital in teachers' mandated engagements

This section explores how teachers' capitals, deployed and valued in their mandated civic engagements, help structure their social field and form the various dispositions in their *habitus*. I accomplish this by analysing a representative perspective on how teachers make use of their capitals in their election duties. Crisanto's (public school teacher from Centro Elementary-A High School) response to the question '*how do you gauge your authority in the polling precinct?*' revealed that the successful conduct of election duties rests on multiple sets of capitals and literacies on how to deploy them strategically.

> *Well, the voters follow our instructions and they are aware that we (teachers) are the ones in charge of the election process inside the precinct. Even if we know that a voter or a complainant is a lawyer, they still have to follow us. To make things easier to manage, I noticed that for as long as I know how to deal with them respectfully (marunong makisama at makiusap), people normally respect our authority.*

From Crisanto's account, the law help determines teachers' ascendant position in the election field. However, from this discussion, it is clear that their authority is not only realized on account of the underpinning law. By issuing a caveat – *basta marunong kang makisama at makiusap* (roughly, for as long as my approach to them is respectful), Crisanto illustrated how cultural dynamics when melded into inflexible law can help dissimulate the natural conflicts in this field of struggle. From this perspective, the amalgamated capital is constitutive of the field both as a 'unifying principle' that effects homogenization (Bourdieu, Wacquant & Farage 1994, p.7) and as 'reproducing structures' (Grenfell 2014, p.195) that are immanent in this field. In other words, the legal capital acquires more energy when supported by cultural capital, and vice versa. The characterization of teachers' capital in this manner also indicates their 'presuppose(d) dispositions and competences' (Bourdieu 1984, p.228), that is, their *habitus*. This means that, even if teachers are cloaked with legal capital, if the same teacher is illiterate on how to creatively use this capital, its value is diminished. However, when teachers are literate in the use of cultural capital – as currency – then the amalgamation of cultural and legal capital results in a more successful practice.

Furthermore, Crisanto's account reflects Bourdieu's description of capital as (1) accumulated labour, (2) which is individually or collectively appropriated and dispensed, and (3) which functions as a currency in the economy of social exchange (Bourdieu 1986b). How teachers strategically convert one capital to another during their election duties only indicates the level of their literacy for conversion process. Such literacy to convert flows from a deep understanding that capital is not a static conception but rather a dynamic 'social relations' (Bourdieu 1984, p.113). As such, this relation-based capital follows the logic of the field in the sense that the 'ecology of fields' is also the 'economy of fields' (Grenfell 2014, p.loc 1094). This means that an authentic appreciation of capital is only made possible through a critical understanding of the correlative field. Hence, when Crisanto said that *marunong kang makisama at makiusap*, he was not only offering a genuine understanding of cultural capital but he was also unravelling the structure of the field wherein these capitals are valued.

In the same way that the 'force of law' (Terdiman 1987) or mandate of national policy (Grenfell 2010) helps configure teachers' engagements, the same energy also structures the field. This suggests certain determinism when it comes to valuation implemented by 'force of law'. From Crisanto's account, even when community engagement is legally

constituted, its successful implementation depends on teachers' capitals and literacies. The potentiality of capital and literacies to influence the outcome of teachers' practices in the community suggests a considerable degree of agency. Hence, even if the field is hierarchical, 'dominated by social agents and institutions wielding considerable power to determine what happens within it, there is still agency and change' (Thomson 2008, p.73). What can further the argument in favour of greater agency is the dynamics of culture, that is, values and processes, particularly when utilized as mediating and differentiating capital in the field (Reay 2010, p.284). Furthermore, the value of capital is recognized in agents who were historically perceived as incapable of acquiring and utilizing them in the absence of the arbitrarily perceived natural possessors and benefactors of these capitals (Ikin, Johns & Hayes 2012). Thus, although the legal element is the foundation upon which teachers perform election duties, the success of this engagement does not merely hinge on a stand-alone principle but on multiple social, cultural and historical scaffoldings.

6.3.1 Economy of exchange in the election field

At this point, I will attempt to illustrate the economy of capital exchange in the election duty field. This illustration is premised on the understanding that the logic of economy that governs the dynamics of capital requires that teachers' capital be primarily apprehended in terms of possibility of profit, advancing and protecting interests, ability to utilize as currency (mercantile exchange) and convert into other forms of resources (see Bourdieu 1986b). Three separate but related accounts mirror the economy of capital exchange in this field.

Edith, a public school teacher from Consolation National High School, established the practicality of designating teachers for election duties:

> *Mobilizing teachers is always advantageous to the government as it lessens the logistical burden in managing elections since teachers are the largest competent and adequately trained manpower suitable for election duty.*

Crisanto, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary-A and HS, proposed another advantage of utilizing teachers:

> *Teachers are familiar with the people in the community and vice versa. If the Board of Election Inspector is a teacher who works in the same school, it is easy to approach that person for any required assistance or any question at all. This includes helping the elderly locate their names in the list or maintaining order outside of the polling booths.*

For Juan Miguel, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-B, the continued involvement of teachers as Board of Election Inspectors, even if this practice becomes voluntary, can be sustained through its economic affordance. According to this teacher:

> *The increased incentive will convince teachers to continue serving during election. To make things more enticing, election process is already automated and therefore less tedious. Because of this automation the number of votes are easily generated allowing us to go home early.*

On the one hand, the accounts of Edith and Crisanto indicate the significance of teachers' cultural capital (educated, highly trained, familiarity) and symbolic capital (network of relations). On the other hand, Juan Miguel's reasoning foregrounds the tangible impact of economic capital which betrays the strategy and 'interest of the dominant class in defending the integrity of the *doxa*' (Bourdieu, cited in Grenfell 2014, p. loc 1030). By increasing the stakes and dangling legal assistance should teachers are subjected to legal complaints; the State intends to keep teachers as the main work force for this function. This shows how the structures of power sustain the *status quo* through heightened commoditization of election duties. This strategy is a sort of panacea for cash-strapped teachers that compels them to 'trade the symbolic capital they represent for a way of making a living' (Webb, Schirato & Danaher 2002, p. 178). In this case, the state intends to sustain the *status quo* by increasing teachers' benefits while attempting to minimize the risks to teachers as Board of Election Officers. The foregoing illustrates a manner of establishing the 'conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a given capital' (Bourdieu 1986b, p.285). From this perspective, reliance on cultural dynamics as 'adaptive cultural and social competencies' that were indicative of a more 'strategic conception of agency' (Lareau & Weininger 2003, pp.588–589) morphed into a veneer or an *illusio* camouflaging the interest of the State. In this sense, election duties regressed to the language of interest, commodification of teachers and mercantile exchange of capitals. The manner by which teachers are compelled (externally by the state and internally by reason of financial constraints) to utilize their literacies connotes two social realities. On the one hand, the distribution of 'cultural and economic capitals' indicates a field perpetually made up of 'opposing forces, that is as chiasmatic as two hierarchized poles in the social field' (Thomson 2008, p. 71). On the other hand, when the state takes advantage of the confluence of teachers' financial need (economic

capital) and their literacy (cultural capital) to facilitate these mandated activities, it reveals that these hierarchized poles can be complicit in subjecting teachers to political process that entails being subjected to symbolic violence.

6.3.2 Capital as currency: convertible and extendable

From this point onwards, I will analyse how capitals are appraised in the performance of teachers' election duty by arguing that teachers' capitals are not only convertible but also extendable. For the whole duration of teachers' electoral duties, it is necessary that they be indubitably perceived as authorized by law to perform this function. Paradoxically, to sustain the value of legal capital, teachers need to utilize the 'array of 'other' capitals they have access to, as these capitals make a difference to the choices and options available to them' (Reay 2010, p. 284). This equation is easily translated into the election field in this manner. From Crisanto's account, the integrity of the election rests on a faithful implementation of legally constituted engagement mediated by culturally empowered interpersonal skills (cultural capital). In this context, the effectiveness of cultural processes, for example *pakiusap* (a culture-based plea or request), is operationalized because the teacher is able to recognize its symbolic value. At the same time, voters are able to recognize the teacher not only as a legally constituted authority during an election but as a *kapwa* (fellow Filipino) and often as their neighbour. This is an example of an understanding that the efficacy of symbolic capital is based upon social agents' ability 'to know and to recognize it and to give it value' (Bourdieu, Wacquant & Farage 1994, p.8).

Through *pakiusap*, teachers entreat voters regardless of their social and cultural position to recognize both the seriousness of the political exercise and teachers' authority in the polling precinct. In this manner, the potentiality of capital for multiple conversions (e.g., from one capital to another species and from one cultural capital to another mode of the same cultural capital) is proportionate to voters' appreciation of teachers' identity in the community. For example, the cultural process of *pakiusap* is only successful when the person who makes the request is perceived as a respectable person. In this case both the capacity to entreat *(pakiusap)* and respectability are distinct but related forms of cultural capital. For teachers, this is not difficult to imagine as people in the community often hold them to a higher standard of respectability and accountability. For instance, in Racquel's earlier account, she ascribed the success of elections in her precinct to her

capacity to extend the dynamics of her cultural capital (derived from her professional identity as a teacher) from the formal learning setting to the community during election period. Racquel's account illustrates how teachers' capital drawn from their professional identity retains its value in another field. This phenomenon further indicates that her present, useful *habitus* carries with it 'residue of specific cultural, social, and personal histories' (Atencio, Beal & Wilson 2009, p.5). Therefore, the analysis indicates that teachers' capital is not only convertible; its value is also extendable for the very reason that field is also a 'homologous reflection of the structure of the field of power' (Grenfell 2014, p. loc 2248). In other words, the traits that are valued of teachers as teachers in the classrooms (e.g., honest, in good moral standing and with greater facility for pro-social behaviours) are also valued of teachers in the performance of their mandated duties in the community. What I have observed here is that capital conversion is not uni-directional but multi-directional. This is due to the plurality of school–community relations whereby teachers' familiarity with the community (and vice versa) results in continuous conversions and reconversions of capitals.

While law enforces *Brigada Eskwela*, it relies on cultural capital (*bayanihan* – solidarity or dependence on voluntary communal action) as the animating value upon which it is constructed and implemented. In addition, election duties require monetary remuneration. On the contrary, the performance of *Brigada Eskwela,* with its dependence on *bayanihan* is a 'denial of the system of mercantile exchange' (Moore 2004, p.455). However, teachers noted that even the cultural value of the practice of *bayanihan* depends on the constitution of the field. For the teachers of Bangusan Elementary School, the configuration of their community as highly heterogeneous dissipates the relevance of *bayanihan*. For this reason if they want to have a successful *Brigada Eskwela*, they themselves must purchase the materials for repair and they have to seek the help of their own families in preparing their respective classrooms.

The force of law further diminishes in census enumeration duties. While this duty is sanctioned by corresponding government institutions (the Department of Education and National Census and Statistics Office), teachers' involvement is no longer considered mandatory for all. Nonetheless, teachers who are involved in this activity still rely on their legal identity in carrying out this mandate. Among the three mandated teachers' community engagements, census enumeration is unique in the sense that teachers

encounter the community in the privacy of their homes. In this encounter, it is important for teachers to utilize the whole array of cultural literacies (language, social skills, how they might be related to the family, etc.).

The above discourse indicates that the appraisal of teachers' capital in the field of struggle is not only affected by the dynamics of competition (e.g., the available stakes), nor by the disposition of the multiple agents but their relevance is also temporally and contextually contingent. For example, while *bayanihan* (solidarity) might be highly relevant in *Brigada Eskwela*, it is not equally meaningful or valuable in the other engagements. While law is a necessary capital for election duties, it does not reverberate equally in *Brigada Eskwela* and census enumeration. Furthermore, the utilization of *bayanihan* is only relevant within a particular phase of the program and *pakiusap* is only meaningful in specific contexts. Therefore, this indicates how field structure mediates value fluctuation.

The analysis of teachers' practices unmasks the underpinning economic logic of these mandated engagements. For instance, in *Brigada Eskwela*, culture is uncritically employed as a practical solution to the perennial lack of sufficient public funding for public education. For election duties, the state continues to entice teachers' participation by promises of increased remuneration. This economy of mandated civic engagements reveals a commoditization of culture wherein 'cultural capital [appears] as a transubstantiated form of economic capital' (Moore 2004, p.455). In other words, what are unmasked are the modalities of how culture's intrinsic economic value may be converted to economic form and how the value of cultural capital fluctuates under the heterogeneity of the field. Ironically, Bourdieu utilized the notion of transubstantiation, a process steep with deep spiritual connotation, and applied it to the social and economic realm.

In Bourdieu's sociology, transubstantiation refers to 'qualitatively changing understandings of the world, and thus perceived realities' (Sofaer 2007, p. 2; Bourdieu 1990;). The effect of transubstantiation in this case is to camouflage teachers' interests as they express their disinterestedness in naked economism. I observed that more senior teachers, particularly those from the provinces and rural setting laments what according to them is the tendency of younger teachers to gauge their worth in economic value. The argument that although economic value is important, it is not the only factor that

ensures success of their practices. For instance, teachers generally ascribed the success of *Brigada Eskwela* to their cognitive and non-cognitive skills (multiple cultural literacies) embodied as a form of cultural capital (Lareau & Weininger 2003). The interrelated notions of cognitive and non-cognitive skills point to the importance of 'wider (and more dynamic) social relations and structures' (Connolly 2006) to facilitate capital conversion. While this was the case in most FGD groups, teachers from Bangusan Elementary School, whose community is extremely differentiated both socially and culturally, contradicted the benefits of *habitus* and capital-based multiple literacies. These teachers struggle to convert their cultural capital to a *Brigada Eskwela*-usable capital due to the abrupt change in the demographics of the place, the fluidity of the population and their unfamiliarity with members of the community. In this field, the core value of *bayanihan* (solidarity) has lost its meaning and value. And in the emaciation of this cultural capital, the only thing that will enable them to comply with *Brigada Eskwela* is the early distribution of their mid-year bonus. What is indicated by the experiences of these teachers from Bangusan Elementary Schools is that the structure of the field instigates the regression of forms of capitals to its economic state.

6.3.3 Conclusion

My analysis of teachers' capitals in their mandated community engagement stories leads to the following conclusions.

First, teachers derive the relevant capital both from legal mandate and from cultural factors. The fluctuation in the significance of capitals in teachers' mandated civic engagements lies in capital's natural capacity to 'mediate social practices by connecting people and groups to institutionalized hierarchies' (Navarro 2006, p.15) and to act as a 'medium of communication between them' (Grenfell 2010, p.89). Hence, capital is not a static resource devoid of immanent critical capacity to alter both the field and the *habitus*. On the contrary, teachers' experiences show that multiple forms of pertinent capitals help unravel the 'practical and temporal relation between production and circulation' (Friedland 2009, p.904), that is, between generation and reproduction.

Second, each mandated engagement valorises capitals differently where 'the network of power is only relevant in relation to the capital available in specific fields' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.4). Thus, capital does not have an absolute and perennial value since

the ‘relative weight of the factors which constitute it varies from one field to another’ (Bourdieu 1984, p.113).

Third, teachers’ performance of these mandated engagements result not only in the commoditization of teachers’ capitals but also in their politicization. While the commoditization process may indicate reduction to an economic form, ‘politicization helps alter the hierarchy of capital values’ (Grenfell 2010, p.90). This conclusion implies that indeed there are authentic moments where teachers occupy an ascendant position in the community due mainly to the alignment of the value of their cultural capital to the objectives of these mandated community engagements. However, when critically appraised what is eventually exposed is how teachers are subordinated, that is, utilized and commoditized, in these mandated community engagements.

In the next section, I will discuss these mandatory engagements from dispositional optics, in other words, using *habitus* as a lens and structure of analysis.

6.4 *Habitus*: a mandated disposition to serve

In this section, I intend to construct an understanding of contemporary Filipino teachers’ practices/dispositions in the community or *habitus* through an analysis of the performance of their mandated functions. This analysis treads along Reay’s (2010) argument that the concept of *habitus* is an essential component of identity formation with capital and field as correlative elements. In this structure, the properties involved including the debates surrounding these key concepts are also extended to the dynamics of constructing an identity. For this reason, reflexivity or agency has been implicated as constitutive of self-identity (Adams 2006, p.512; Holland et al. 1998; Husu 2013; Reay 2010). However, an important question is how can it be possible to even imagine notions of reflexivity in these mandated activities?

In addition to the accounts I analysed in the previous section, I include the following fragments of stories to help illustrate teachers’ dispositions behind these obligatory activities. FGD participants described their participation in obligatory activities in various ways:

> *For me, I just consider our participation as election officer as part of our community service (Grace, public school teacher from Isla de Norte).*

Even if my election assignment is considered a 'hot spot', which means that violence is more likely to happen between competing political groups, I have to serve since it is a call of duty (Sandro, public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-A).

I teach in private school so I am not primarily involved in election as officers. But if there is a lack of teachers for this duty then we are asked to serve that is why even if we are in private sector we also have experience serving as election officers (Carmen, private school teacher from Quirino Memorial HS).

What is immediately evident from these accounts is that election duties are a constituent of their professional practice or responsibility as teachers regardless of whether you are a public or private school teacher. The above accounts also indicate that its assimilation into the identity of Filipino teachers comes as a 'product of (*continuous*) inculcation and appropriation' (Bourdieu 1977, p.85, emphasis added). Grace's account, in particular, supports the notion that community participation is integral to teachers' professional practices. Sandro's view emphasized the inevitability of this function regardless of the social and political characteristics of the community. Carmen's articulation shows the inclusive nature of this practice by demonstrating how private school teachers are implicated in this mandatory duty as a back-up. This means that, although election duties are primordially a function of public school teachers, Carmen's disposition of availability for this duty should the need arises represents private school teachers' collective readiness to fulfill this function during election periods. Therefore, serving during an election can be appreciated as teachers' collective disposition and a marker of their group identity.

While election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* are obligatory in nature; the accounts of all the FGD participants in this chapter indicate that they are not totally emaciated of agency. This means that they can exhibit forms of agency along the spectrum of practices under election duties. For instance, their knowledge not only of their duties and how they ought to implement them, but also how they can ensure successful implementation through cultural mediation (e.g., *pakiusap*) stands as a testament to teachers' creative and sustaining reflexivity. This practical knowledge informs their facility to culturally enact these duties, which grows through continuous performance of these engagements. For this reason, teachers' *habitus* in relation to these community engagements is formed through practice (Reid & Mitchell 2015) or from the very act itself. While the accounts of Grace, Sandro and Carmen emphasized the inevitability of this function that led to a formation of a more homogenized class

habitus, the manner in which Crisanto and Emma utilized their cultural capital, as well as how Jean and Tita managed their harrowing election experiences, indicates a more reflexive and fluid *habitus* (Bourdieu 1990b; Decoteau 2015; Stahl 2013). In other words, from this angle, while homogenization of teachers' *habitus* occurs at a class level, it is differentiated – through culturally informed reflexive actions – on an individual level.

6.4.1 Engaging the community as teachers' collective obligation

The mandatory character of election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* ushered in the potentiality of these engagements as a class obligation. For instance, Carmen's account above illustrates how private school teachers become collectively involved in election duties. An indication that teachers can be collectively considered experts in dispensing election duties can be further deduced from the account of Eva, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary HS-B:

> *Each of us is familiar with our responsibilities come election day. Even when there are unexpected events like brown outs or any eventualities – it is already automatic in us – what to secure, what to lock, what to bind. It is clear to us that can lose everything else except that paper provided by the commission on election (i.e., referring to the forms where votes are tabulated).*

Eva's familiarity with specific functions during elections and preparedness for possible unexpected scenarios indicates that election duties have long been inscribed into teachers' collective *habitus* as a 'system of dispositions' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.77). The understanding that this is not an ordinary disposition but a system – a network of organized practices – suggests both that teachers have been dispensing this duty for a significant period of time and that the voting community has been accustomed to teachers engaging in this political exercise. This familiarity is not only inscribed into teachers' *habitus* but also even into the perception of the community. This notion suggests that the community itself acts as one of the legitimating principle of teachers' identity in the community. The incremental embodiment of this system into teachers' collective habitus is indicative of the 'layers of temporal sedimentation within the *habitus*' (Decoteau 2015, p.316). Reggie, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary HS-B, encapsulated this argument:

> *We feel that the community (during elections) trusts us … it has become part of tradition that teachers serve during elections. I feel that trust and respect reflect people's perception that the teacher is fair.*

Reggie's account shows how a positive correlation between teachers' dispositions and community perspectives is translated into a successful election exercise in her specific voting precinct. This also shows that teachers' '*habitus* [formation] may yet be occurring unselfconsciously' (Grenfell 2014, p. loc 1081) whereby it instinctually generates specific and expected actions (Coles 2009). In this context, a successful and orderly election, in the voting precinct assigned to them, reflects a 'conjuncture of structures and personal history' (Harker, Mahar & Wilkes 1990, p.11). In other words, all those who have stakes in the election process – from teachers to politicians, from voters to election watchers – have developed a disposition on how to conduct elections properly and fairly. When these individuals and entities reached this degree of understanding, what emerged is a correspondence between teachers' *habitus* and the political field [that in the long run] generates a more static *habitus* (Mellor & Schilling 2014) and therefore is more prone to reproduction. One possible consequence of teachers' collective acquisition of the facility to carry out their election duties successfully is the perpetuation of their election practice. This argument is further supported by voters' respect and recognition of teachers' skills to successfully carry out this function. Expressed differently, this argument speaks of multiple levels of complicity between teachers' *habitus* and the field of engagement where the continued performance of this engagement led Reggie to say that election duties have become a traditional teachers' function in the community. Only when alteration in the election process, like for instance, the automation of the casting and counting of votes, that teachers' experience a dissonance between sedimented disposition and modification in the field.

When probed deeply, it is possible to understand that the complicity between *habitus* and field is not absolute. This means that teachers' engagement in election duties is also at times arbitrary, that is, open to the possibility of change. The constant iteration in the field of election duties (e.g., in the laws and in the computerization of the election process) helps increase both the permeability of the field and *habitus*' responsiveness to the social world through a process of shaping and reshaping (Stahl 2013, p.2). It is through this process that reflexivity emerges as a fundamental property of *habitus*. Increases in teachers' reflexivity do not automatically destroy what has been cemented through decades of practices. As a consequence of the frequency of mandatory election duties and the length of time that they have dispensed this practice, teachers' election

duty-related *habitus* currently now functions 'below the level of unconsciousness and language, beyond the reach of introspective scrutiny or control by the will' (Bourdieu 1984, p.466). Still, some FGD responses reiterated the relative condition of sedimented and reflexive *habituses*. As evidence, while *habitus*–field complicity is apparent in Eva and Reggie's account, a disjuncture that instigates agency is unquestionable in the accounts of Jean and Tita. Furthermore, the violence that Jean and Tita experienced in the field of election duties led to 'inevitable conflicts and disjuncture' (Reay, cited in Stahl 2013, p.2) where teachers' *habitus* and field (e.g., election duties) are misaligned. This helps set the stage for more innovative strategies.

Again, while teachers' mandated engagements are intended to have a structural and collective impact, in the actual implementation of these activities what the community encounters are individual teachers' *habituses* as a generative disposition (Bourdieu 1977, p.77). For it is at the individual level that teachers felt the need for multiple literacies which they can utilize as a 'technology of strategic game-playing accrual' (Skeggs 2004b, p. 84) for corresponding values. Teachers' agency is unmistakable in the variety of responses this question I posed to FGD participants; '*how do you manage the polling precinct during election day?*' Racquel, a public school teacher from Santo Domingo National HS, stated that *'I deal with them, that is, voters, watchers and volunteers, just like how I manage my students and keep order in my class. This is easy for me since I know most of them anyway.'* Cristanto, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary-A and HS, said: *'I simply follow what is stipulated in the law but I also entreat them [pakiusap] to follow the rules when inside the polling precinct and to be more orderly.'* Two public schoolteachers from Isla de Norte provided contrary strategies for managing volatile situations. While Gracia offered the opinion, '*I do not allow them to do what they want in the polling booth. I make it clear to them from the very start that once they enter the room; they have to follow the instructions we give to them*', Patricia took a more indifferent approach: '*I simply ignore the threat and proceed with what I need to do as Board of Election Officer*.' Thus whether teachers opt to deploy their cultural literacies or simply adhere to the legal basis of their functions constitutes their reflexive strategies in complying with this particular mandate.

These differentiated strategies open the door for a possible understanding of *habitus* both on an individual and collective level. On the one hand, the diversity of individual strategies in carrying out their mandated civic engagements indicates multiple

configurations of *habitus* and also the diversity of how teachers' agency is manifested. As a consequence, this diversity implies a relational or 'dialogical conception of habitus [that increases the possibility of] human freedom' (Akrivou & Di San Giorgio 2014, p.77). On another plane, when teachers assert their authority in these mandated engagements, it illustrates how law configures their mandated practices, foregrounding a legally, and therefore institutionally, constituted 'collective *habitus*' (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, p.165). The specification that law brings to the determination of a group or entity sustains an understanding of collective habitus as the 'impact of a cultural group or social class on an individual's behaviour as it is mediated through an organization' (Reay 1998, p. 521 referencing McDonaugh 1996) or 'institution such as family or school' (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, p. 165).

The debate in the conceptualization and operationalization of 'collective *habitus*' is well documented. While the notion of forms of collective *habitus* has been both sustained ((Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, Ingram 2009; Reay 1998) and challenged (Atkinson, W 2011), it also reflects the creative tension between collective and individual *habitus*. Such understanding is evident in the finding of this research that, while the law constitutes teachers' collective *habitus*, culture differentiates and individualizes their dispositions and practices. This shows that the understanding of a diversely constituted relational *habitus* cannot simply stem from a shift of focus from the individual to the collective. The dialogic nature of relations demands that the collective be differently expressed in individual strategies. This argument is reflected in how teachers' stamp their authority in the polling both, in how they access familial and social relations in requiring order during voting, etc. Lastly, shifting the optics from an individual to a collective *habitus* opens to a deeper understanding, not only of '*habitus*' relationship to the social field, but also the interconnections that exist between *habitus* within those fields that are constituted by collective practices' (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, p.166).

The continuous flux and reflux motion between individual and collective *habitus* is discernible not only in election duties but also in *Brigada Eskwela* and census enumeration work. In *Brigada Eskwela* activities, teachers' *habitus* manifests itself in the narrative of Emma, a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School:

> *It is a necessity for teachers to have good public relations skills, which come in handy when asking for donations from the governor, mayor [for paints and other*

> *materials]. The community might provide the labour but it's the teacher who organizes these things. We do this every year, every beginning of classes we go around the community to solicit for materials. In fact, most often we dip into our pockets to purchase the material. That is why we often look forward to the early release of our mid-year bonus. If no members of the community come to assist us – as is often the case in my community – I ask my husband, my son and my relatives to do the repairs.*

Heart, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-C, is one of the teachers who had a vivid recollection of their activities in taking the census.

> *When we take the census, we go from house to house in the community, talk with the head of the family or whoever can provide us basic information about the household. We ask them regarding how many people are staying in the house and their means of livelihood. We also encourage their children to go to school and we inquire if they are receiving assistance from the government. In this activity, we just walk wherein sometimes we have to cross a river, balance along rice paddies, just to reach a family living in the far reaches of the community.*

Emma imputes teachers' success in soliciting materials for repair and seeking voluntary help from members of the community to participate in *Brigada Eskwela* activity not only to individual literacy but also to their professional identity. In this case, for Emma, having good 'public relations' skills becomes a *sine qua non* disposition for every teacher obligated to carry out *Brigada Eskwela* activities. However, the value of good PR skills in a more homogeneous field, that is, in provinces and rural areas where *bayanihan* remains a value. Therefore, teachers' successful performance of this mandated activity also depend on how the field is configured, as much as it depends on teachers' individual or collective dispositions. What I have shown in this section is that, while these mandated community engagements draw mainly from a legal basis, which enables the conception of a collective *habitus*, these principles do not ensure a successful activity. In the end, individual *habitus* and literacies not only complement the depersonalized law and structure, but also provide differentiation into the intensity of success or failure in the performance of these duties. However, the tendency to compel teachers' *habitus* to succumb to the overwhelming weight of the field due to the legal anchoring of these practices suggests a structural attempt to constrict teachers' reflexivity or agency. The next section discusses how this irony was evaluated in FGD accounts.

6.4.2 The irony of reflexivity in mandated civic engagements

To discuss the concept of reflexive *habitus* in the context of mandated civic engagements sounds like an obvious contradiction or at the very least an overextension

of the notion of agency. The question of how teachers can be reflexive in dispensing community practices that are by nature mandatory illustrates the irony in this analysis. Reflexivity is a concept that is critical in understanding identity, particularly as a 'sociologically adequate account of the relationship between reflexive practices and the social construction of identity' (Farrugia 2013, p. 284). The notion of teacher's reflexive action emerged from the data in a twofold manner. First, reflexivity is evidenced in moments of field–*habitus* disjuncture (e.g., in the case of Tita and Jean). Second, as a consequence of the former, reflexivity oscillates within the continuum of innovative action and habitual disposition (Archer 2010) as a general strategy when teachers enact their legal mandate.

The notion that reflexivity arises from a disjuncture insinuates that the concept appears as a 'vacillation between a desire to change and a desire to maintain' (Stahl 2013, p.8). Specifically, this 'to and fro' movement helps unmask the twofold direction of disjuncture: 'horizontal disjuncture, i.e., between fields, and vertical disjuncture, i.e., 'across layers of temporal sedimentation' (Decoteau 2015, p.316). In this research, horizontal disjuncture is obvious in the tension between teachers and other agents during election periods (e.g., between teachers and watchers of politicians, between teachers' assumption of authority and constant threat from supporters of politicians). Temporal disjuncture is mirrored in the divergent views of early career and senior teachers, and between teachers in the province and those in urban centres. The premise rests on an argument that vacillation implies reflexivity in the sense that tentativeness requires rumination or 'practical reflection' (Bourdieu, 2000, p. 162) not simply on whether to simply comply with the demands of the field or generate innovative action but more significantly in the planning of strategies to ensure success in these community engagements. To further this argument, teachers as 'self-referring [and] sense-constituting' (Threadgold & Nilan 2009, p. 51) reflexive agents are imbedded in the assertion of their identity as the authority in the voting precinct, census enumeration and in *Brigada Eskwela* activities. That teachers need to assert their identity in some voting precincts indicates that there is a significant amount of resistance. I argue that, while the field exerts an incontrovertible influence on the *habitus*, the various moments of disjuncture presents an opportunity for reflexive action not so much about whether to comply or not but about rumination of specific strategy to ensure successful engagement.

From the foregoing, reflexivity emerges as a configured property of teachers' identity that informs their strategies on how to access and to utilize cultural values and practices in complying with what the law requires them to accomplish. Strategizing becomes a necessary condition when teachers' *habitus* and the *habitus* of other agents (politicians, other election officials, members of the community, etc.) collide, thereby catalysing teachers towards a reflexive disposition. Aside from disjuncture-induced reflexivity, this notion is also 'enhanced by intra-*habitus* tensions, by more general incongruences between dispositions, positions, and interactive/figurational structures, as well as by situations unrelated to them' (Mouzelis 2007, p.1). While intra-habitus tension, in this sense, tension between individual teachers, arising from the performance of their mandated community engagement is minimized due to the homogenizing impact of law, reflexivity borne out of this tension is magnified as the principle of action diversifies. While some are of the opinion that 'reflexivity is best understood as a collective' (Schirato & Webb 2003, p. 551), others, speaks more of reflexivity in terms of individual practices of creativity rather than 'an imposing category (such as class) which they do not operationalize personally' (Stahl 2013, p. 8). In teachers mandated community engagements reflexivity is more recognizable at the individual level particularly in the manner by which they access and deploy cultural values and practices. In the analysis of these mandated duties, although reflexivity may underscore teachers as social actors, as a property that adheres more to the *habitus*, it cannot be divorced from the influence of capital and field. For this reason, it is impossible to conjure absolute reflexivity as much as it is impossible to imagine a totally determined subject. The significance of teachers' agentic disposition is magnified further when teachers utilize such reflexivity in questioning the very necessity of their involvement in these community engagements.

The push and pull between reflexivity and determinism could not be made clearer particularly when teachers' *habitus*, capital and field, as well as their community engagements, are put under the lens of historicity. The significance of the historical construction of teachers' community engagements, that is, they can be traced back to specific periods, leads to a deeper understanding of the social genesis of these engagements. The notion of historicity of community engagement also allows an appreciation of the evolution of teachers' community engagement since the time of its conception. The understanding of the impact of this historical evolution relates to the

following; how sedimented these practices are in teachers' individual and collective *habitus*, how teachers acquire and utilize capitals valuable to ensure successful community engagements and how the influence of the field have ebbed and flowed through constant iteration in its structures.

After exposing how teachers, through their mandatory community engagements, are entangled in the debate between subjectivism and objectivism, I will continue analysing reflexivity in relation to time (historicity) and possible social trajectories (social change). Adhering closely to the notion of reflexivity that hinges on the relation between *habitus* and field, Bourdieu conjectures that critical consciousness and attendant social change can emerge from the disjunction between *habitus* and the field (McNay 2001, p.146; see also Stahl 2013). Reay (2004, p. 433) observed further that the 'addendum on Bourdieu's work is always an emphasis on the constraints and demands that impose themselves on people'. Therefore, while there is a creative tension that generates agency, there is a lingering perception that eventually '*habitus* structurally tends to adapt or to accommodate itself to the field' (Adkins 2003, p.36). While this is both logically and empirically tenable, I emphasize that the reconciliatory process is neither immediate nor causal and at the same time extremely differentiated (individualized). This means that *habitus* sedimentation takes time since this process requires an understanding of the 'interpenetration of the social and personal' (Decoteau 2015, p.318). The inclusion of time and space into the equation further complicates the notion of agency relative to the understanding that *habitus* goes hand in hand with 'vagueness and uncertainty' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.102). This argument is supported by the fact that election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* are time-bound activities whereby the constraints of limited time and space challenge teachers' *habitus* to adjust to the field either habitually or innovatively. Habitual actions here means simple compliance to the letter of the law or that their actions are clearly delineated according to what is legally stipulated. Innovative or creative actions refer to teachers' actual operationalization of their capacity and ability to access their multiple cultural literacies to ensure successful engagements. Furthermore, a social formula that emerged from this analysis defines that the possibility for disjuncture (therefore of reflexivity) or conjuncture (therefore reproduction) proportionately increases or decreases depending on the result of the collision or collusion between a gradually sedimented *habitus* and multiple demands of the field. Hence, the challenge for teacher's reflexive action

revolves around time, space and literacies as a practical response to a current and concrete situation. For instance, the experiences of Reggie, Racquel and Crisanto (see above narratives) illustrate the success of their reflexive actions through strategic utilization of their capitals (cultural, professional and legal). In contrast, the experiences of Jean and Tita illustrate disjuncture and expose both the limitations and affordances of reflexivity. On the one hand, reflexivity reaches its limits when the ambit of its power is disproportionate to the objective relations of power in the field. On the other hand, the same reflexivity afforded these two educators the capacity to 'negotiate [present and] future risks, both real and perceived, [thereby constituting] privileged cultural capital (Threadgold & Nilan 2009, p. 48). An example of teachers' risks where privileging cultural capital is a reflexive strategy is the threat of politically motivated post-election legal action against them. Through their collective (social) and cultural capital teachers lobby not only for better pay and legal assistance but even for rescinding the mandatory character of election duties (this will be analysed further in Chapter 8 on teachers' engagement in the political field).

The data further suggests that reflexivity operates discursively on two correlative levels. First, reflexivity presides in the level of knowledge in terms of teachers' assertion of their legally constituted identity as election officers, as census enumerators and as facilitators during *Brigada Eskwela*. At this level, teachers wield these legal bases in all activities related to their mandate. Second, agency operates and is actually more discernible at the *praxis* level, that is, in the actual practice of dispensing their duty through various culturally informed strategies. This means that what is more reflective of agency is the manner in which teachers carry out the legal mandate. It is on this level that cultural affordances (language, familiarity with cultural nuances, social and symbolic capitals, etc.) accentuate teachers' capacity as social actors. The second level is reminiscent of an embodied *habitus* conceived as a 'temporal activity or a living through of the embodied potentialities of the *habitus*' (McNay 2001, p.149). While, at the first level, reflexivity may be gleaned by simply reiterating the legality of their actions; it is at the second level that teachers' multiple cultural literacies become useful in negotiating with other agents in these fields.

Nonetheless, when evaluated from both levels, teachers' reflexive practices are situated between the continuum of conscious deliberations, in the form of typical decisions and justifications suggesting a an 'often overlooked normative character of everyday

experiences' (Sayer 2005, p. 949), and innovative action arising from a 'lack of fit between habitus and field' (Adkins 2003, p.21). Innovative actions become necessary in managing the competitions and struggles between historically constituted – and differentiated – *habituses* (Mouzelis 2007). In other words, variability in teachers' negotiating styles as they perform their mandated civic engagements indicates that reflexivity is an essential 'part of *habitus* to varying degrees' (Stahl 2013, p.8) and acts as a creative response to local structural conditions (Farrugia 2013, p.296). When understood as historical and creative, reflexivity assumes the position of capital (Stahl 2013), affording teachers the required currency to navigate the challenges of their mandatory community engagements.

6.4.3 Conclusion

The analysis of teachers' *habitus* seen through mandated civic engagements reveals that field and capital are in every part of the construction of collective and individual *habitus*. This means that the emerging *habitus* follows the logic of how field is constructed and capitals appraised. Hence, as law is the origin of teachers' mandatory community engagements it is also the primary principle of dispositions in their collective *habitus* and individual *habituses*. However, in negotiating the field of objective relations of power, teachers do not only rely on legal legitimation, they equally depend on affordances of culture. While law constitutes and legitimizes their class *habitus*, culture endows *habitus* with 'a power of adaptation' (Bourdieu 1993b, p.88). This section also provided an explanation of how teachers' *habitus* is able to adapt, negotiate and innovate through their reflexive *habitus*. However, *habitus* alone cannot account for reflexivity, nor can the field be the exclusive principle of determinism. In this study, when *habitus* is appraised with capital and field along with the understanding of how temporal (historical) and cultural elements are implicated in every interaction/intersection, the possibility of reflexive action is magnified and the determining effect of field is put into perspective.

A critical understanding of teachers' voluntary civic participation

In the next two chapters I will explore teachers' *voluntary* engagements in the community. The primary consideration here is the voluntary nature of the engagements. Without the force of law as the principle of mandated engagement, it becomes expedient to search for an alternative principle upon which teachers' engagements may be critically understood. In the course of data gathering sessions, it became clear that Filipino culture provides principle of teachers' participation in community activities. I begin this introduction to the next two chapters by introspectively searching into the elements, processes and dynamics of Filipino culture for clues on how this may serve as possible principle of teachers' voluntary community engagements.

Introduction: *pakiki-isa* as a cultural foundation of teachers' community engagements

In conversations with teachers and during FGD sessions, they ascribed the voluntary basis of their community engagements to the spirit (cultural value) of *pakiki-isa* (solidarity). FGD participants often cited their *pakiki-isa* with people in their respective communities as an essential component of their community life as a teacher (professional), believer (religious person) and as ordinary good citizens. The ubiquitous reference to this value indicates that *pakiki-isa* is ensconced in varying degrees of intensity in every voluntary and even mandated teacher's engagements in the community. Among the social and cultural values, for Filipinos, the highest [aspirational] cultural relational value in Philippine society is '*pakiki-isa* [referred to] as a level of fusion oneness and [also indicating] full trust [with fellowmen/women]' (Enriquez 2013, p.51). It is the ultimate attainable cultural value in the deeply relational Filipino culture contained in and mediated through the process of *pakikipag-kapwa*, with *kapwa* being the 'unity of self and others' (p. 161) or 'shared inner self' (p. 51). The accent on commonality over differences contained in the *kapwa* rests at the core of the nature of *pakiki-isa* where one is enabled to engage with another with empathy and to act in solidarity. *Pakiki-isa* is a recognition of common experience and shared history cardinal to how collectively work for the general welfare of the members of the community. Thus, it can be argued that the magnitude and intensity of teachers'

community engagement is proportional to their degree of appreciation of and commitment to the value of *pakiki-isa*. The account of Art, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary-B and High School, illustrates the affordances of community engagement as *pakiki-isa*:

> *Our involvement in the community affects the way we relate with our students in school. Through our pakiki-isa (beginning with pakiki-halubilo – purposeful mingling), we learn about their situations both at home and in their community. Also, the relational skills we learn through pakiki-isa help us in building our school community.*

In this narrative, Art identifies the importance of *pakiki-isa* as a pivotal tool in strengthening the link between school and community. The FGD sessions revealed a variety of strands and concrete manifestations of *pakiki-isa* by teachers in the public sphere. This value of communal solidarity is appreciated and deployed differently in teachers' participation in civil (e.g., local and national anniversaries), religious (e.g., fiestas, novenas) and cultural events (e.g., community pageants and games), during challenging times (e.g., natural disasters and death of a neighbour) and in teachers' overall everyday life in the community. Teachers' involvement in or *pakiki-isa* in the life activities of the community typically begins when they are young is strengthened during their student days and extends way beyond their retirement from active service.

Nationalist and eminent contemporary Filipino scholars of local culture have always presented Filipino social and cultural values as interconnected (see Covar 1993; Enriquez 2014; Jocano 1997; Miranda 1992). Thus, it is not surprising to observe that the value of *pakiki-isa*, in its different modalities, is referenced, or acquired and dispensed, by these teachers in their multiple engagements in the community. For instance, the value of *bayanihan* – communal voluntary help in undertaking a social task that benefits the community – that is at the core of *Brigada Eskwela* can only be attained if the spirit of *pakiki-isa* (solidarity) lives among the members of the community. When disaster visits a community, those spared are expected to exhibit *pakiki-isa* expressed as *pakikiramay* (empathy or oneness in times of grief). The same *pakiki-isa* expressed as *pakikiraramay* is operative when teachers share their meagre finances as *abuloy* or financial help to families of deceased neighbours. During fiestas and community celebrations, when people solicit any amount from teachers in support of programs and activities, it is the teachers' sense of *pakiki-isa* that in a way compels them to share. In order for teachers to gain success in the political field, the value of

pakiki-isa requires the activation of *paninindigan* (active conviction) and *pakikibaka* (cooperative resistance) in fighting for their rights and demanding what is due to them. Teachers exhibit the same value of *paninindigan*, sustained by *tapang* (courage), during election periods, rallies and public demonstrations (e.g., militant and progression actions of party-list groups). Thus, the importance of *pakiki-isa* in teachers' community engagement lies not only in its capacity to dispose them towards a meaningful involvement but also in its power to serve as a lynchpin or cardinal value in accessing and deploying correlative values.

The FGD responses revealed that cultural values do not only dispose teachers to engage agents in multiple fields, but they also serve as the very thread that allows them to weave both correlative and contrary fields. For instance, through the value of *pakiki-isa*, teachers view their engagements as their responsibility to the community through which one can courageously frame their participation within the wider picture of their social life. The same cultural value also motivates teachers to participate in faith-based celebrations (e.g., fiestas in the religious field), civil activities (e.g., elections in the political field), and socio-cultural celebrations (e.g., local and national anniversaries in the social and cultural fields).

From the above discussion, although it can be confidently argued that Filipino cultural values, particularly *pakiki-isa* (solidarity), draw teachers' community engagements towards a more voluntary involvement, it is within the nature of these values to be eventually perceived as normative – *doxic* and orthodox. This configuration is further negatively reinforced by the social sanction meted to a person lacking the capacity and initiative to act in solidarity with others or *walang pakiki-isa*. Hence, what teachers label as voluntary is not, in actuality, absolutely devoid of social obligation and cultural pressure. Nonetheless, between the cultural confines and legal stipulations, the former allows a greater possibility of reflexivity or agency in teachers' community engagements. The rationale behind this is that as a principle of action, the value of *pakiki-isa* also magnifies the voluntary nature of teachers' community engagements. During FGD sessions, it was irrefutable that *pakiki-isa* is ingrained in teachers' practices in the community by determining the nature and extent of their participations. The relationship between this core value of *pakiki-isa* and teachers' community engagements resonates as a relation between field and *habitus*. Hence, the mediation of this core value assists in the critical assessment of the relation between field and *habitus*

as a ‘relation of conditioning’ [and at the same time a] ‘relation of knowledge’ (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.127) in teachers’ voluntary civic participation.

With this particular cultural background and positioning, the following two chapters explore teachers’ voluntary engagements through the key concepts of reflexivity, reproduction, legitimation and consecration, limits of the field and weight of capital, among others.

Purpose and strategy

Parallel to the aims of the previous chapter, the main purpose here is to analyse teachers’ voluntary community participation in their two most accessed fields of engagements, the religious and political domains. The previous chapter on teachers’ mandatory engagements revealed that the process of collective recognition/misrecognition is never total but rather typically partial and selective (Calhoun 2003; Dillon 2001). Hence, what emerged are facets of teachers’ identity both at the collective and individual levels. My investigation of teachers’ voluntary community engagements in Chapters 7 and 8 will reveal other spaces and occasions which potentially construct other facets of their identity in the community. This parallel critical analysis aligns with the overall objective of this study albeit from the voluntary engagement angle.

Aside from the absence or presence of legal determination, another factor that differentiates mandatory from voluntary engagements is that the latter refers more use of the value of *pakiki-isa* as the principle of their involvement. In other words, while teachers’ mandatory engagements are implemented on account of an underpinning legal force, teachers’ voluntary civic engagements thrive – without being compelled by any law – due to the influence of *pakiki-isa*. Moving forward, this genetic differentiation calls for an analysis of public and private school teachers’ collective *habitus* first, and *post hoc* an investigation of the field within which teachers’ activities operate, as well as assessing how capitals are valued and utilized therein.

In this part, teachers’ collective discretionary engagements occur mainly in two domains, the religious and political. On the one hand, teachers are drawn into the religious domain through affiliation with religious institutions (e.g., as volunteers for their respective parishes or other faith-based organizations) and by virtue of their

employment in private sectarian academic institutions. Affiliation with religious institutions also serves as an avenue for involvement in cultural, religious and civic celebrations such as fiestas, community anniversaries and various advocacy programs. In this study, since most FGD participants belong to the Catholic religion, most of the engagements they discussed involved participation in Catholic religious activities.[11] On the other hand, teachers' involvement in the political domain often occurs in pursuit of their individual political aspirations (e.g., election to a public office or appointment to a village council) or collectively through their membership in party-list organizations.

To help lay bare teachers' activities in these domains, I will present sections of narratives by the FGD participants. These accounts represent both the dominant and collective as well as contradictory voices that resonated in every FGD sessions. Organizing the descriptive understanding of teachers' voluntary engagement in this manner provides a logical structure for the subsequent application of Bourdieu's tool kit. It also allows for differentiation in terms of *habitus*, field and capital occasioned by their voluntary engagements.

In Chapter 7, I shall analyse teachers' community engagements in the religious domain before turning the same analytical optics on their engagements in the political domain in the succeeding chapter. Analysis of teachers' civic engagements in the religious domain means interrogating their involvement as volunteer religious workers in their respective parishes and as volunteers in their schools' institutional community extension initiatives.

[11] Although the Philippines are predominantly Catholic in religion, it is heterogeneously composed of Islam (mostly in the southernmost part of the country) and of other Christian denominations. Due to multiple constraints (logistics, time, safety and security), the research is confined to areas where Catholics and Christians are predominant.

Chapter 7: Engaging the community in the religious domain

Why and what are the affordances foregrounding teachers' praxis in the religious domain? The response to this question is provided in this introductory section explaining the context of this particular analysis and the connection to some Bourdieusian research in this domain. The section concludes by establishing the purposes of my analysis as well as the approaches or methodology through which I pursued these aims.

Context and connectivity. Throughout the FGD sessions, participants reiterated their voluntary, customary and habitual engagements in their communities' religious activities regardless of geographic and demographic differentiation. In the Bourdieusian sense, teachers' participation in religious activities illustrates how religion attains its ultimate social function to help people 'make sense of their respective position in the social order' (Rey 2014, p. 57). This motherhood principle has been the source of much debate among scholars, and Bourdieu's incursion into the sociology of religion has generated both support and critiques. On the one hand, there is an appreciation of the seminal value of investigating the objective relations of power in this domain and of what this reveals about sociological structures (Lee 2010; Mellor & Schilling 2014; Rey 2014; Schafer 2015). On the other hand, critiques centre around the rigid essentialism of key concepts (Mellor & Shilling 2010; Thumala Olave 2012), in treating religion largely as *illusio* (Turner 2013), and in undervaluing the cultural dynamism of religion (Dillon 2001).

At the core of these critiques is the perception that Bourdieu's tool kit leaves little room for imagining lay people as social actors capable, for example, of 'manipulating religious symbols on their own behalf' (Verter 2003, p. 151). Underpinned in the critique is the implication that it is within the sole purview of dominant institutions to define religious symbols and, ergo, their meaning for the consumption of those dominated in this domain. To counter this argument, Thumala Olave (2012, p.52) strongly suggests that 'individuals may pursue (i.e., invest in) religious aims because they value them *in themselves* and have true commitments to religious norms'. Thumala Olave's position appears to counter Bourdieu's insistence that the only way to conceive

of a critical social world is to think in terms of ever-shifting relations of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). In other words, the critique is a provocation that the social world is not always a struggle between positions as much as finding one's position therein.

Section purpose and approach. Cognizant of these debates, I intend to further the discourse on teachers as lay social actors through their discretionary civic engagements in the religious domain. To attain this aim, I invest in Bourdieu's tool kit for three reasons. First, Bourdieu offers a 'non-specific social theory with the capacity to explain specific *praxis'* (Schafer 2015, p. 354). As such, the method is extendable to multiple social domains including the religious field in assessing its dynamics in terms of economic exchange and objective relations of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Bourdieu 1991, 2000). But to what extent teachers' involvement in the religious domain can be assessed through this structure is a pivotal question in this section. Therefore, as a caveat, this argument holds water only if one accepts that religion is a 'system of symbolic power with properties analogous to other cultural domains' (Swartz 1996, p. 71), such as the political and economic, which is presumed in Bourdieu's sociology. Second, his tool kit potentially holds the capacity to 'relate religious interpretation to non-religious experience and social processes, i.e. making it similar' (Schafer 2015, p.358). This is beneficial in considering the tenability of analogously employing Bourdieu's economic logic in the religious domain. Third, the same method can help 'reveal the causes and buttresses of unjust social orders, and the misrecognitions that underlie them' (Rey 2014, p. 58) in the religious domain. On the basis of these threefold complex rationales, I commence to lay down the foundation, that is, the narratives, upon which the ensuing analyses are focused.

7.1 Stories of lay force: teachers as volunteers in religious institutions

In this section, I articulate teachers' descriptions of their participation in the religious field, as religious volunteers for their parish organizations and in their school's community extension programs. The stories presented here articulate the collective perceptions of FGD participants on teachers' involvement in religious activities in the community. These narratives, when evaluated through Bourdieu's tool kit, serve as the foundation upon which a facet of teachers' identity may be understood.

Teachers as parish volunteers. A discussion principally led by Carmen, a private school teacher from Quirino Memorial HS, provided a generic description of teachers' voluntary practices in their respective parishes:

> *As officers of the parish pastoral council, we plan and implement church activities. In our case, we also head the W.E.S.T.Y. committees of the parish.12 As lay officers, one of our key roles is to help build the Basic Ecclesial Community13 in every area under the jurisdiction of the parish. This activity requires us to engage with the members of the community whereby they know us not just a teacher in the nearby school but as officers in the church (taong simbahan). Because of this, we are regularly visible to the people in the community. This visibility when mixed with our identity (as teachers and lay church leaders) helps us convince people to participate in various church activities – be it attending catechism, bible study, participating in religious celebrations and attending seminars on various social issues like when we were fighting against the proposed Reproductive Health Bill. We can even persuade people to become volunteers on the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV). We are involved in so many activities that people expect us to be a kind of 'jack of all trades' from the school to the parish and then to the community. However, even if we plan these activities, we always seek the guidance and approval of the parish priest.*

FGD participants' engagement with San Vicente Parish is an example of how teachers may engage in the community through the faith they are affiliated to, in this case, through the Catholic religion. Aside from the possibility that this form of engagement (as a church lay leader) may be repeated in most parts of the country, the modalities of their participation in this field are varied. Carmen's description of her deployment in the WESTY committees illustrates both the spectrum – or fields – of teachers' possible actions and the corresponding multiple literacies ascribed to them. In a very concrete way, this community-bounded literacy is best encapsulated by the term 'parochial' (i.e., limited to the territory of a particular parish church). Furthermore, while teachers' involvement in the WESTY and other religious committees and activities indicates a certain position of prestige and power, this position is located within the very hierarchical social organization of the parish. For this reason, the legitimacy of their actions requires the 'blessing' of the consecrated religious head of the parish – the parish priest. In other words, while teachers' classification as '*taong simbahan*' (church person) when amalgamated with teachers' professional identity increases the value of their cultural capital within the community, their configuration within the church's

[12] Worship, Education, Service, Temporalities and Youth (WESTY) are the basic committees in all parishes where a significant number of FGD participants function as chairperson or as members as a common way of aiding the spread of ministries.
[13] Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC) refers to the smallest church unit in the community.

hierarchical structure also indicates the limits of their value where their actions require the imprimatur of the parish priest.

A further analysis of Carmen's description suggests that, because of teachers' morally and culturally based ascendant position, they are held to a higher standard of respectability, credibility and accountability in the community. When teachers' social position is evaluated through this structure of power, the stability of this ascendant position is only sustained for as long as their actions adhere to the morality, faith and social teachings of the church. In addition, the commitment of these teachers to support the position of the church on matters of faith and morals, even if they are contrary to a position of the state, reveals the inter-field struggle. Furthermore, this also illustrates how the church taps into teachers' capitals (education, leadership, social) in organizing the lay community and in sustaining its dominant institutional position. This situation and dynamics of relations between teachers and parish priests (as church representative) is reminiscent of the tensions between American Thomasite teachers and the local clergy during the American colonial period (see Section 5.3.2).

In the same FGD session, Lagring (a public school teacher from Sto. Domingo Nat. High School) illustrated how teachers straddle the field of their professional identity as teachers and the field of their identity as volunteer church lay leaders.

> *The Department of Education never requested us to discuss with our students the controversial Reproductive Health Bill. Nevertheless, I am convinced that I have to discuss with my students the moral aspects not only of this topic but including other important social issues. Hence, I discuss these issues in my English and science classes. Outside of the classroom, the church asks us to discuss with the community the moral consequences of the bill. When election time comes, we discuss with the parishioners the principles in choosing a good political candidate. We call these principles as the Decalogue [Ten Commandments] in choosing a political candidate.*

In this narrative, Lagring shows not only her capacity to convert her cultural capital but also how she can utilize the same capital in subverting the field that legitimizes her professional identity as a teacher in favour of another institution that legitimize her identity as a believer. This account shows teachers' reflexivity in several ways. While it is obvious that they can be partial to their religious affiliation, they know what strategy to utilize so that they will not be accused of undermining the state's stand. Aligning with the church's stand rather than the state's is evidence of teachers' view that state-constructed legislation is arbitrary while the religious basis for their moral stand is

immutable. The former is based on the objectives of those who sit in power and therefore arbitrary and temporary while the latter is based on an immutable principle. Therefore teachers even in the religious domain are not neutral. More senior teachers, like Lagring and Carmen, are more intent on aligning with the church's teaching than sustaining the state's position (e.g., on the death penalty and reproductive health).

Teachers are caught up in the tension between church and state and they are often bereft of the capacity and ability to manage impacts of these tensions. In such situation teachers can seek to strategize and find a ground where they can both satisfy the demands of both fields. Specifically in Lagring's account, what is palpable is her cautiousness to at least comply with some of the requirements of the Department of Education regarding their neutrality in the classroom. But for Lagring and Carmen, the community is a different space where their identity is not just as professional teachers but also as faithful Catholics and church workers. In addition to the activities described by Carmen and Lagring, affiliation with religious institutions also opens the door for teachers' involvement in various cultural and civil celebrations, such as town and parish fiestas and civil anniversary celebrations like Rizal Day.

In the next description, Linda, a private school teacher from San Vicente Academy (a school on an island), unmasks the capacity of political power to influence the structure of a religious celebration:

> *During fiesta, we prepare the cultural presentations in the community, coordinate the parlour games, manage the sports activities, and join the choir during liturgical activities. Recently we were all involved in welcoming the image of Our Lady of Piat when she recently visited us. In fact, all teachers from private and public schools were there, all the boats of the fisher folks sailed to welcome the image – even teachers from the other side of the island. The mayor instructed all of us to be there and, from what I heard, he threatened to fine boat owners who fail to welcome the image.*

While Linda praised the sense of solidarity among inhabitants of the island, she was also conscious that this communal participation required the approval of two protagonists of power, the mayor and the priest. This particular activity illustrates how multiple agents appear to coalesce, compromise and occupy their social positions through a religious event. As a consequence, a particular event helps align the *habitus* of all (competing) agents to the religious field. Furthermore, in a homogenous and enclosed community like Isla de Norte, the dominant power of the state (represented by the mayor) and the church (represented by the priest) is extremely palpable as they both

provide the logistics and structure the various activities for the ensuing events (i.e., the fluvial procession where the boat carrying the pilgrim image of the Blessed Virgin Mary was fetched by all available fishing and passenger boats of residents in the island until it reached the shores, the novena masses and processions around the municipality as well as the cultural programs that ensued). Connecting this to a particular colonial practice, Freer's account of social position during processions is reminiscent of this practice (see Section 5.3.2).

A discussion between James, Patricia and Janet, public schoolteachers from Isla de Norte Elementary and HS, revealed the intertwined life activities of people in the community:

> *On the island, teachers are involved in multiple community activities where we coordinate with the local government in the planning and implementation of municipal festivities including the celebration of Rizal Day, National Hero's Day, and other civil and religious activities. In these activities (aside from what was mentioned above), we act as choreographers, emcees, judge beauty pageants, are in charge of decorations, etc.*

In a close geographical field like Isla de Norte – which is similar to other islands in the archipelagic Philippine territory – this necessary involvement and interplay of agents and groups in celebrating cultural, social and religious events positions teachers to experience power in different ways depending which field they are in at a given moment.

Crisanto, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary/HS, illustrated teachers' capacity to transpose cultural practices not only from one geographical field to another (i.e., from the provinces to the National Capital Region), but also from a religious and cultural context to the civil and political arena:

> *In my school [in Manila], we have teachers who perform the 'buling-buling'. The dance originated from Antique [province] in honour of our patron saint Senor Sto. Nino. Here in Pandacan, since the parish also has the same patron saint, we also dance the buling-buling during the procession. However, sometimes even during municipal parades we also perform the dance even if it is not the feast day of our patron saint.*

This fragment not only shows that culture embodies power relations but it reveals how teachers mediate cultural practices 'by connecting individuals and groups to institutionalized hierarchies' (Swartz 1997, p. 1). Furthermore, teachers' capacity to translate and transpose cultural practices across fields (at times conflicting and at times cohabiting) indicates their 'interpretive autonomy, which allows them to recast the

official discourse of the church hierarchy in ways that advance alternative interpretations' (Dillon 2001, p.411).

The next section discusses teachers' voluntary community engagements through participation in the schools' community extension service program.

Community extension services: private school teachers' voluntary civic engagements. For FGD participants from private schools, community engagement means something different. For these educators, collective community engagement is accomplished via involvement in the community service programs of their respective institutions. For these private school teachers institutional policies and programs define the nature of their community involvement. As required by the Department of Education (DepEd) and the Commission for Higher Education (CHED), all private institutions are required to develop and implement community outreach programs. Teachers' participation is required to implement this directive. In this study, I evaluate the Re-entry Education Program for the Poor (REAP) of Los Angeles College of Quezon City as a typical example of a school-based community extension service program. The school describes REAP as:

> A home study program that caters to out-of-school learners who are determined to finish primary and secondary education without attending regular classes. It requires strong involvement of partner communities. Los Angeles College volunteer teachers conduct tutorial sessions, monitor progress and conduct assessment to learners in their own respective communities (REAP Program 2012)

The above description illustrates how REAP volunteer teachers engage with the community as teachers and as representatives of a religious institution. Bela, a volunteer teacher in the REAP program, further clarified their typical involvement:

> *In choosing a REAP site, we coordinate with the leaders of the community. It is important to view the community as partners and for them to understand that we are volunteer teachers. Upon signifying intent, we assess the level of learning of the would-be participants. Then, our counterpart community requests specific teachers for particular subjects (e.g., maths, social studies, Filipino, etc.). Then the institution seeks teachers who are willing and available to respond to this particular request.*

Palpable in Bela's description is the reliance on teachers' social and cultural (education) capital for the success of the REAP program. The value of these (social and cultural) capitals is further increased by the fact that participation is voluntary or when these capitals acquire a symbolic value. However, camouflaged in the insistence on the

voluntary nature of teachers' participation is the institutional tendency to apply structural pressure to their teachers to ensure their involvement. The transposition of teachers' *habitus* and cultural capital from the school field to the community field is evident in the descriptive rejoinder of Dana, another teacher from the same institution:

> *We teach them skills that will enable them to contribute positively to the community. We attain this by providing, for example, a seminar on how to care for the environment. Then we teach them various livelihood skills. We provide them with an opportunity to learn different skills so that when they graduate they can use these skills to earn a living. We do not stay forever in one community. As soon as we have the students certified, we move to another community.*

To further deepen the analysis on teachers' voluntary engagements in religious activities, the succeeding section illustrates how their participation therein helps configure what may be termed their religious *habitus.*

7.2 'Marketing the goods of salvation': teachers' dispositions as volunteers in religious organizations

The bottom line of teachers' participation in the activities of their respective religious organizations – be it parish or school – to use Bourdieu's economic language involves what is metaphorically labelled 'marketing of goods of salvation' (Rey 2004, p. 331). The term 'marketing' when utilized metaphorically in the religious field, suggests that teachers' religious activities may be critically evaluated through Bourdieu's sociological optics. In particular, this social phenomenon can be understood as relations of power, economic logic, and so on. Teachers' collective and regular participation in religious activities defines religious *habitus* as 'the specifically religious dimension of an individual actor's *habitus* that manifests itself most apparently, though not exclusively, in the religious field' (Green 2012, p.399). In this section, I aim to construct a contemporary Filipino teachers' religious *habitus* through an analysis of the performance of their voluntary civic engagements. I intend to attain this by evaluating their capacity or limitation to act as lay social actors (i.e., reflexive agents) in the religious field.

The context of identity formation in this chapter differs from previous analyses due to shifts and particular emphases. The alteration occurs in three ways: first, in terms of a shift from the mandatory to the voluntary nature of teachers' community engagements. Second, the alteration comes through recognition of a distinct religious field in teachers' voluntary community engagements. Third, the modification results from foregrounding

the religious dimension of *habitus*. It is important to understand that the usage of the term religious *habitus* in this study does not connote a separate *habitus* of the social actor. It only means that it is a facet of the integral *habitus* of teachers with a distinct religious disposition and religious function. This clarification is necessary to avoid the notion of split and/or multiple *habituses* in one social actor. It is within the context of these iterations that religious *habitus* is defined as 'the specifically religious dimension of an individual agent's *habitus* that manifests itself most apparently, though not exclusively, in the religious field' (Rey 2004, p. 337). The genetic shift in the origin of practices is relevant to my study as this movement exposes 'identity (formation) in terms of difference, where difference is asserted against what is closest' (Bourdieu 1984, p.479). In other words, teachers' religious *habitus* functions as a marker of a religious facet of teachers' identity.

The value of Skeggs' (2004b) appreciation of *habitus* calculating and incrementally progressing technology extends to the religious disposition of an individual or what is referred to as religious *habitus*. Lagring's account shows how teachers deliberate about what field to support, what values to sustain, and what institution (church or state) offers the greater influence in a particular time and situation. The deliberations of the REAP volunteers (Bela and Dana) include where and what community to choose as the REAP partner community. These deliberations are based on accumulated dispositions in the *habitus* enabling a strategic process of inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu 1991a, p.3). Therefore, the data suggests that every deliberation, decision-making process and disposition formation help classify teachers as a collective, not only through this 'strategic game-playing accrual' but also in the effects of this process. The fact that they draw the information needed for their strategies from multiple sources in religion-related activities foregrounds the notion that *habitus* is a 'combination of technology and property housed within a body that lives its traces' (Skeggs 2004b, p. 85). From another angle, the formation of teachers' identity within and through the religious field is influenced by the construction of their individual and collective *habitus.* In this field, teachers' identity is expressed not only as professional individual but also as as church people (*taong simbahan*, as Lagring would say). This preliminary analysis suggests that it is possible to rationalize the dynamics of reflexivity (i.e., teachers as lay strategizing social actors) in the context of teachers' discretionary civic engagements.

In analysing teachers' *habitus* as lay social actors in the religious field, I shall first interrogate how teachers' class is constituted in the religious domain (i.e., how it is generated) before appraising the extent, affordances and challenges of the notion of teachers' reflexivity. From there, I shall look into possible dispositions of teachers' collective and reflexive *habitus*, as generative and subversive, and as consecrating and legitimizing.

7.2.1 Consolidation of teachers' collective religious habitus

In this section, I shall explore how teachers' religious *habitus* is critically constituted through their voluntary participation in religious activities of the community. For Bourdieu, the term 'laity is a classification for those dispossessed of their capacity to produce and administer religious goods' (Bourdieu 1991a, p.6; see also Rey 2014, p.76). In predominantly Catholic countries like the Philippines, volunteer teachers engage with the community both as lay members and lay leaders. The majority of the FGD participants consider themselves lay leaders in their own respective parishes (as Catholics) and even in other religious affiliations (for those who belong to other Christian denominations). Within a Bourdieusian context, the significance and valorization of teachers' leadership is always contextual and arbitrary.

In Philippine communities, teachers' pervasive and continuous participation in the communities' religious activities supports the conception of teachers as a group or a class with a generative disposition (Bourdieu 1977). These institutional affiliations and participation help structure teachers' religious world views and practices as laity for reasons that 'certain religious institutions have traditionally served as pillars of identity for their adherents, socializing them and defining them across the widest possible range of concerns' (McAlexander et al. 2014, 859). To be more specific, parishes and schools are influential institutions that help shape teachers' religious worldviews and actions. This position supports Bourdieu's theory that *habitus* does not only demonstrate the ways in which the body is in the social world, but also the ways in which the social world is in the body (Bourdieu 1977). For this reason, teachers' multiple and continuous participation in religious activities and roles played in religious institutions are an embodiment of the religious world in teachers' identity.

Faith that begins in the family as a status marker. Even before teachers volunteer for school and parish activities, they are already familiar with the religious field through an

earlier investment in their *habitus*. Their religious orientation begins long before within their respective families. The view that 'family is at the basis of the structuring of school experiences' (Bourdieu 1972, cited in Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.134) can be extended to mean that it is also where the first religious investment transpires. In this context, institutions (e.g., family, schools and churches) function as the primary formers of teachers' 'collective and interrelated practices within a particular field' (Burke, Emmerich & Ingram 2013, p.166). Hence, for these teachers, participation in religious activities is just an extension of familiar and historically constituted practices in this field. The only difference is that this time, as lay leaders in the community, they participate in the reproduction as well as generation of practices. These collective and interrelated practices serve as the foundation of teachers' constitution into a class that is both generative and reproductive of multiple dispositions. Hence, teachers' collective religious *habitus* allows for an understanding of this as a status marker (Bourdieu 1984), albeit partial. A deepening of an understanding of teachers' religious *habitus* requires an interrogation of teachers' perception of their moral (ethical) ascendancy in the community.

The legitimating power of moral ascendancy. From the earlier accounts (e.g., of Crisanto and Racquel) it is expedient that teachers are held in high esteem, as someone worth emulating, thereby underscoring the relevance of 'morality and how it was articulated culturally' (Skeggs 2010, p. 342). In this research, this is evident in their capacity to organize people (e.g., for masses and processions), transmit knowledge (e.g., doctrinal and social teachings, teaching skills to out-of-school youths) and struggle with other agents (e.g., in challenging state's position on family planning and death penalty). Although this moral ascendancy is not exclusive to the religious field, it is particularly demanded in this field. The importance of the moral dimension of religious *habitus* rests on its functions as a class status indicator and as a basis for class-based social navigation (Ignatow 2009; Saatcioglu & Ozanne 2013). While this is evident in most of the FGD participants' responses, it was Santi, a teacher from Colegio de San Luis, and Crisanto who emphasized that a mistake or a scandal of one teacher is collectively suffered. For most of FGD participants, the most painful critique from any member of the community is *'teacher ka pa naman, nagawa mo yun'* (how could you do and to think that you are a teacher). The class condemnation is swift when the community castigates erring teachers by highlighting the incongruity of teacher's action to the

teaching profession. The backlash is not on the individual alone but to the whole class of teachers. Thus, while Skeggs (2010) might be correct in opining that, in the epistemology of class, the element of morality and how it is articulated is often missing, at the practical level, morality is implicated in the appreciation of Filipino teachers as a class. The FGD participants were well aware of the social consequences when teachers are discovered living a life unworthy of this high esteem (e.g., being inebriated in public, heard cursing, or caught committing an indiscretion). It becomes a stigma not just for the accused teacher but also for the class of teachers or *kaguruan*. The requisite of moral ascendancy, the value of religious moral capital, increases exponentially in the religious field. This is illustrated by Chen, private school teacher from Sta. Teresita School in the province of Cebu, *'one of the most painful to hear from parents and other people in community is the critique "teacher ka pa naman!" (and to think you are a teacher) and yet you don't act like one'.* From the above discussion, teachers' ethically based esteem is a valuable symbolic capital, suggesting that 'ethical stances [are] covert means of power struggles' (Pellandini-Simányi 2014, p.652) functioning as a legitimating power in the community. In other words, while on the one hand, the presence of religious capital consecrates and legitimizes teachers' position in the community, on the other hand, the lack of this symbolic capital results in ignominy or what can be called delegitimation or desecration.

Function of religious class identity. From here on, I shall illustrate the ways in which teachers' class identity in the religious domain is understood. Teachers' class identity in this domain is apprehended at two complementary levels. First, it can be seen in the conception of 'embodied class' (Bourdieu 1984, p.437), indicated and magnified by the leadership roles that most teachers occupy (e.g. as head catechists, as WESTY officers). Second, this embodied class is positioned to sustain the structuring influence of religious institutions (i.e., their potentiality to resist practices contrary to their religious beliefs) by acting as its apologist. When teachers assume leadership positions in the religious field, this pre-eminent role in the community foregrounds a particular religious and gendered *habitus* in this field. The significance of gender at this point arises from the observation that most FGD participants who occupied leadership roles in various lay organizations and programs of their religious affiliation were female. For instance, in San Vicente Ferrer Parish, all of the officers in the parish pastoral council were female

teachers in nearby private and public schools.[14] A differentiation of teachers' gendered *habitus*, field and capital could influence views on objective relations of power and teachers' identity in the community. Bourdieu (1977, p.80) stresses the 'objective homogenizing of group or class *habitus* which results from the homogeneity of the conditions of existence'. In this case, teachers are not only homogenized and legitimized as a group, but they in turn also become instruments of homogenization and legitimization. For instance, in the communities under San Vicente Ferrer Parish, as some teachers' perform religious (e.g., liturgical – masses, processions, etc.) and social practices (e.g., election-related activities such as membership to PPCRV and advocacy against the death penalty) leading their homogenization into groups which at the same time differentiating them from another (i.e., Catholics from *Iglesia ni Kristo* and other Christian denominations). Lagring's lament that from the time a non-Catholic principal was appointed they have not celebrated mass is evidence of this classification where 'nothing classifies somebody more than the way he or she classifies' (Bourdieu 1989, p.19). While Lagring indicates how teachers are involved in the tension due to difference of religious affiliations, some experiences show how even if someone belongs to another denomination, there is a possibility of collaboration. For instance, Heart, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-C, revealed that, even if she is not a Catholic, '*I still work with the programs of the big church – yes, we call the Catholic Church the big church*'.

Class consolidation through differentiation in the religious field. While Bourdieu (1987, p.5) suggests that 'those who occupy the same position have every chance of having the same *habitus*', the above examples indicate that government prohibitions of various actions (e.g., no religious activity in public schools) native to a specific religious *habitus* accelerate the consolidation into groups by increasing the distance of dissimilarity. In other words, the resistance offered by other teachers who do not belong to the Catholic faith differentiates and consolidates teachers' identity structured along religious affiliation. This inter-*habitus* and inter-field resistance that differentiates teachers according to their religious beliefs and affiliations further strengthens the bond among teachers of similar religious beliefs. This process of class consolidation through differentiation pervades other activities in the community. For some teachers,

[14] This phenomenon indicates that a separate and in-depth analysis of the gender component of teachers' engagement is warranted not only in the religious field but also in other fields of community engagements.

consolidation of identity does not stop with alignment of beliefs and views; it is also carried through practical action, such as taking the side of those opposing the Reproductive Health Bill, performing even a role of parish-based election observer (i.e., as volunteer to Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting organization), and by volunteering to help extend the educational and social outreach (formal and skills training) of their respective schools.

To summarize this section, religious institutions (e.g., Catholic parishes, other Christian denominations and private schools) help structure teachers' collective religious *habitus* whose historical formation started long ago within the family and which has been mediated by multiple cultural, social and religious principles (norms, values, etc.). Such formation supports a collective dimension of teachers' *habitus* whereby a 'single person shares many of their dispositions with other actors' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.60). This commonality is shared through family, teachers' social class, their religious congregation, or even a social movement (Schafer 2015). Hence, the community perceives teachers' particular and individual actions as reflective of the collective or class of teachers.

In the next part of the study, I will discuss the significance of teachers' class configuration in the critical understanding of teachers' paradoxical identity as faithful (loyal and obedient) to the tenets of their respective faith while retaining their reflexivity as believers.

7.2.3 Reflexive believers and faithful workers

From the outset, it seems a tautology to posit teachers' reflexivity in the context of their voluntary civic engagements. However, the question is how can any admission of reflexivity be sustained in a domain where obedience and complicity is highly valued? The manner through which teachers participate in different and regularly occurring religious activities in the community helps determine their identity therein. The accounts of Lagring and Heart (in their affiliation with their respective religions/denominations) as well as Bela and Dana's stories of their community extension programs indicate a creativity and innovativeness that underpins their reflexive actions. The notion of reflexivity is essential in the understanding of *habitus* particularly when perceived as a sociologically adequate account of the 'relationship between reflexive practices and the social construction of identity' (Farrugia 2013,

p.284). This understanding is significant particularly when *habitus* directs attention to how 'religious practical logic blends into the overall cognitive, emotional and bodily dispositions' (Schafer 2015, p.356).

For teachers involved in religious projects, there are situations where the requirements of their professional identity contradict their beliefs or moral position. This situation is one possible cause of their 'vacillation between a desire to change and a desire to maintain' (Stahl 2013, p.8). The fact that their participation in the activities of their respective religious institution is generally voluntary, that is, they may or may not participate and if they do they control the extent of their participation, indicates a stronger notion of reflexivity in their identity. From this foregoing, the manner by and through which teachers' *habitus* is embodied and actualized through their participation in the religious field also differentiates the nature of their identity.

In the previous chapter (on teachers' mandatory engagements), I established that temporal disjuncture or dissonance between *habitus* and field (Adkins 2003; Decoteau 2015; Stahl 2013) create fluctuating opportunities for teachers' reflexive actions. This is similarly manifested when teachers who are lay religious leaders struggle to practise their faith at their school (celebrate masses, etc.) because their principal who professes a different faith does not permit it. These teachers experience a similar disjuncture when instructed to remain neutral during an election and refrain from propagating the church's stand against state-sponsored bills (e.g., the Reproductive Health Bill) and vice versa. For most FGD participants, when the conflict is between faith/morals and state compliance, they strategize their way out of this dilemma to sustain their compliance with both fields. However, when the choice boils down to 'either–or', more senior teachers form their allegiance alongside the church's teachings. These struggles unravel both the strength and constraints of teachers' reflexive *habitus* against the socializing and determining roles of institutions (McAlexander et al. 2014). In other words, while these struggles support the notion of teachers as social actors (e.g., by speaking against state policies deemed contradictory to religious beliefs in the case of Catholic teachers who are lay leaders), it also unravels their deep entanglement with their respective religious affiliations. Hence, the dynamic nature of the religious field may be apprehended from this angle of competition for legitimacy among various agents and institutions therein. Furthermore, the decision by more senior teachers to favour the church's teaching over the state's position challenges the role of the state as the primary

agent of consecration in modernity (Engler 2003). Hence, these practices seem to suggest a reasoning along Thumala Olave's (2012, p. 65) contention that reflexivity can be directed towards the attainment of 'religious ideals as an end in itself'. What I have also shown is that the attainment of these religious ideals both requires and results in the subjugation (intended or otherwise) of other ideals and the marginalization of other entities.

To summarize this section, the notion that teachers are social actors in the religious field is evidenced by the manner through which they strategically navigate between the homogenizing influences of both institutions (church and state). It is within this context that the notion of reflexivity helps rescue agents (teachers who are lay leaders) 'away from a static picture of religious beliefs [and appreciates, from a sociological standpoint] how beliefs can be transformed in the process' (Lee 2010, p.159). Part of the dynamism of teachers' reflexivity in this domain includes how they manage to sustain the tenets of their beliefs (religious *habitus*) without compromising their identity as professional teachers and vice versa. However, when the interests of these two institutions diametrically collide, teachers are left with no option but to align with either one or the other. I shall further argue for teachers' reflexive capacity in some of their ritual practices.

7.2.4 'Buling-buling' and 'karakol': habitus' dance of consecration, legitimation and reproduction

In this section, I analyse how a particular cultural and religious dance helps teachers' legitimized and legitimizing reflexive *habitus*. Some FGD participants narrated that they – or their colleagues – participate in the religious street dance locally known as '*buling buling*' (primarily in honour of the patron saint Sto. Nino) and '*karakol*' (performed in honour of various patron saints or the Blessed Virgin Mary during the May festival). *Buling-buling* is a graceful street dance around the locality, performed primarily by the town's key people dressed in traditional attire (Mendoza 1976). *Karakol* is a 'devotional-circumambulatory-dancing procession in honor of a patron saint done either on land or at sea accompanied by a joyful music in the waltz rhythm played by a brass band' (Saenz-Mendoza 2002, p.61). It should be noted that teachers are just one of several groups of performers of this religious dance around the community. Crisanto (public school teacher, Centro Elementary-A and High School) reported that they also perform these dances outside of their purely religious confines.

Thus, in *buling-buling* and *karakol*, teachers perform a fundamentally devotional/religious street dance even in secular parades during various civil celebrations. While *buling-buling and karakul* are specific to FGD participants' communities, variations of these practices are almost expected in other localities due to similarities in the social, cultural and religious conditions under which these practices thrive. Although these practices are confined to Christianised communities, this study is unable to account for teachers' cultural practices in regions that escaped Spanish and American colonial project (e.g., southernmost part of Mindanao and part of the Mountain provinces).

The complex nature of this particular community engagement is further revealed in this analysis. When teachers perform this religious dance in civil (non-religious) celebrations, they become complicit with the blurring of boundaries between the sacred and the profane. Hidden in this process is an institutional intent (by both the church and the state) to maintain their dominant structuring function over the other. On the one hand, when the local government and local education officers (supervisors and principals) require teachers to perform *karakol* or *buling-buling* during civic activities, this can be seen as the state's strategy – through their local government units – to claim dominance by inserting a religious ritual in a fundamentally civil event. On the other hand, a parish invitation to teachers – who are government employees – to participate in the *karakol* and *buling-buling* may be seen as the church's strategy of sustaining dominance in what I term 'sacralisation of the profane'. While the former may be may be understood as a manifestation of the secularizing strategy of those in power, the latter indicates the church's sacralising strategy.

Again, these sacralising and secularizing 'push and pull' strategies are not new. During the American colonial period, teachers were invited to be part of the religious procession and occupy seats of honour in liturgical celebrations, such as masses and novenas (see Freer 1959). Thus, whether teachers are aware of the roles they play in this competition or not, this collective practice contextualizes the understanding of a 'religious activity [that] can be properly 'intentional' without having to be manifestly 'religious' to the practitioner' (Lee 2010, p. 160). In this sense, teachers are ironically complicit not only in blurring the lines between the 'sacred' and the 'profane' but in the projects of consecration that sacralise the social world and of legitimation that secularize fundamentally religious practices. For Bourdieu (1984, p. 6), 'cultural

consecration confers on the objects, persons, and situations it touches a sort of ontological promotion similar to transubstantiation'. Similarly, when teachers perform the street dance in any field or celebration, the performance consecrates the objects, persons and events – even the very field itself. When this consecration is translated in the social realm it becomes a legitimation of the celebration, agents and the network of power in that event. For this matter, a purely religious activity is identified as a civil celebration instituted in the official calendar activities of the community or the locality. Through teachers' participation in these dances, they become agents in this secularising and sacralising dynamics. Furthermore, the performance of these rituals illustrates how teachers' 'religious *habitus* interacts with and attempts to legitimize particular forms of cultural capital' (Green 2012, p.399). In these dances, while teachers display their identity to the community both as repositories and transmitters of cultural and religious practices, what is camouflaged is how they are implicated in the power play between the church and the state.

Teachers' performance of *buling-buling* and *karakol* also provides the social material to evaluate their capacity as social actors through the function of their legitimated and legitimizing religious *habitus*. By looking into how teachers are legitimated and in turn legitimize through their cultural and religious performances, the dynamics of symbolic violence are unravelled. The fact that none of the FGD participants questioned the meaning, relevance or appropriateness of their participation in these street dances indicates an assumption of naturalness, that is, they saw it as immanent from their identity as teachers. In other words, the apparent absence of criticality indicates the intensity of entanglement or complicity with structures of power (church and state). This sense of being natural poses difficulties in perceiving how participation in these rituals can be at the same time an occasion of symbolic violence, that is, a violence based on 'misrecognition [...] which is wielded precisely inasmuch as one does not perceive it as such' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.168). In other words, teachers seem to be oblivious to the possibility that they are pawns in the position-taking strategies between the state and the church.

From sociological and critical theory perspectives, teachers' participation in these religious dances or in processions, novenas, and so on reveals the consecratory function of religious institutions. For Bourdieu, 'religion exercises an effect of consecration by inculcating a system of consecrated practices and representations […] in a transfigured

and therefore misrecognizable form' (Bourdieu 1991a, p.14). In the religious domain, the process of consecration is akin to that of legitimation. Legitimation and consecration are similar processes differentiated mainly by the field wherein they are applied. While consecration is conferred on a more rarefied plane and includes a reality beyond the social realm, that is, a spiritual realm, legitimation process operates within the purview of the social world. In this study, the involvement of FGD participants from both private and public schools in their respective churches' activities – be it in social, liturgical or catechetical field – is an act of consecration of their identity in the community where these engagements are practiced. Due to the immutability of the principles, that is, in terms of doctrine of faith and morals, upon which these practices (e.g., liturgical celebrations that include among others processions, novenas and masses and advocacies that protects an uncompromising view on the sanctity of life and irrevocability of marriage) are based, teachers' involvement is limited only to the delivery of services, performance of roles assigned to them and transfer of the technology on how to practice their beliefs. This argument suggests that the limits of teachers' reflexivity become more visible proportional to the degree of their consecration in the religious field. For this reason, the notion that teachers succumb to forms of consecration suggest that their *habitus* lacks the 'anthropological assumptions of a rational actor perspective' (Swartz 1996, p.78) in relation to core principles of their religious beliefs but shows a modicum of reflexivity in relation to how this faith is personally practiced. In this sense, teachers' involvement in religious activities shows how the power of religion structures not only the religious dimension of their lives but even the social and professional aspects. From this standpoint, the teachers' lack of expertise to interpret doctrines in matters of faith and morals renders them more as consumers rather than reflexive lay leaders. Through this notion of teachers as consumers in the religious field that they become vulnerable to symbolic violence, that is, 'the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.167).

One of the questions that needs asking is whether in religious realm, individual's complicity to religious practices and acceptance of religious tenets may be considered occasions of symbolic violence in the same manner when experienced in the social realm? Notwithstanding the complex nature of teachers' reflexivity between the structuring tendencies of both state and religion, their participation in the religious field

still provides an opportunity to evaluate religion's importance in teachers' lives and how the relations of power in the performance of their religious engagements relate to the construction of their identity. Furthermore, it is difficult to uncover the meanderings of symbolic violence where teachers' participation has been regularized (through time and frequency of practices) or has taken a 'traditional' existence. This means that teachers from nearby schools are expected to participate in every fiesta and civil ceremony, where these dances have become part of their living tradition. In this sense, what was once a reflexive and 'consecrated avant-garde position' eventually 'pass into a rear-guard' (Grenfell & James 2004, p.510) indicating a gradual slide to reproductive position. In this particular sense, I argue that collective and reflexive *habitus* is temporal and historically constituted, that is, what was once reflexive in time eventually crystallized into a *doxic* state. Bourdieu (1990a, pp.56–57) refers to this as 'internalized as a second nature and so forgotten as history […] that makes *habitus* a spontaneity without consciousness or will and through which they eventually attain practical sense'. This transition from reflexive to *doxic* is evident in the unproblematic and taken-for-granted acceptance of the performativity of these religious dances in non-religious domains. However, the diminishing importance to problematize the consecrating and legitimizing process of their participation in religious activities exposes teachers to symbolic violence particularly in the capacity of these activities make them unknowingly complicit in sustaining the interests of the church and the state.

To summarize this section, my analysis of teachers' performance of the dances *karakol* and *buling-buling* leads to several conclusions. First, it shows how teachers become implicated in the continued competition for social and cultural relevance between the state and the church. Second, through this dance they are legitimated as a dominated class in the community in as much as they can both dance for the state or for the church, for either religious or civil events in the community. However, an argument can be made that their facility in navigating these competing fields may also indicate a literacy-informed reflexivity. Third, through their participation, while they may help blur the line between the sacred and the profane, teachers are often unaware of their vulnerability to symbolic violence. Fourth, by their participation, they become agents of the reproduction of traditional cultural and religious practices in the dual process of secularizing tendencies of the state and the sacralising aspirations of the church. While evidence of teachers' reflexivity is more pronounced elsewhere in this section (e.g., in

strategizing how to comply with the requirements of both the church of their affiliation and the state), their participation in this specific cultural event betrays the fragility of this reflexivity particularly when set against the overpowering influence of the state and the church.

In this section, teachers' religious engagements unravelled how meaning is constructed through the perceived – and even imperceptible – interests of multiple agents in the field. In other words, after years of participation in religious activities (e.g., in *buling-buling* and *karakol*, and as lay leaders, catechists and social workers) these engagements are accrued to teachers' collective *habitus*. When this happens '*habitus* being the social embodied, [it] is "at home" in the field it inhabits, it perceives it immediately as endowed with meaning and interest' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.128). In the process, as these practices assume customary and habitual status (i.e., *doxa* and orthodoxy), the field's structuring power (i.e., the struggle and competition) may be affected in two diverging manners: it is either emaciated of its homogenizing power or has attained an assailable rarefied power. The discussion of teachers' religious *habitus* only highlights that 'fields [be they religious or otherwise] are characterized and structured by the struggle or competition that takes place within them' (Rey 2004, p. 341).

7.2.5 Conclusion

To market the goods of salvation is a paradoxical statement; it conveys that the religious domain can be fully understood within Bourdieu's economic logic and that all capital in this field seeks economic conversion. However, while the dynamics of marketing might be applicable when referring to transactions within and between human institutions, it cannot explain the reflexive fullness of teachers as believers. Nonetheless, in this section, I established how religious institutions (schools or churches) help construct teachers' collective historically constituted and field-structured religious *habitus*. The socializing tendencies of these institutions sustain the collective dimension of teachers' *habitus* whereby they share many of their dispositions with other actors within and beyond the religious field. Due to the homogenized and homogenizing nature of the religious field, teachers' capacity as social actors in their community are substantially diminished proportionate to their entanglement with their own respective religious organizations. Nonetheless, teachers sustain the notion of reflexivity – at least from a

sociological standpoint – through multiple struggles (e.g. insistence on practising their faith in schools or defending their beliefs against what they consider immoral state laws). When teachers find themselves on a collision path between the church's teaching and state laws, their *habitus* enables them to strategize their way into compliance with both demands. However, should the situation call for an 'either–or' decision, teachers appear to align themselves with the church in matters of faith or when their religious salvation is at stake. Furthermore, teachers' participation in religious activities makes them vulnerable to symbolic violence, particularly when they are caught up in the competition between the church and the state. Since these two influential social institutions generally organize these practices, teachers tend to reproduce beliefs and practices rather than generate novel actions. Teachers' reproductive tendency is further intensified when these practices already repose in the list of traditions in the community.

In the discussion of the religious field in the next section I intend to deepen the understanding of teachers' engagements and dispositions in this particular field.

7.3 Understanding Filipino teachers' religious field

The fundamental notion of field as a competitive sphere and network of social relations wherein agents and institutions struggle over the production, acquisition and control of legitimate forms of capital valued in a particular field remains the same in the religious field. The relation of the religious field to teachers' identity relates to the argument that the 'examination of selfhood becomes intelligible in terms of its construction within a given field and its "space of possibles"' (McNay 2001, p.142). In my study, religious institutions and organizations are positioned alongside Bourdieu's assumption that these institutions are a specific field with its own organization, structures, agents, entities and dynamics (Bourdieu 1991a; Willey 2016). For this reason, the religious field also reflects the logic of economy of the field as 'historically constituted areas of activity with their specific institutions and their own laws of functioning' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.87). All fields are homologous and interrelated, meaning that they are likewise subject to the same economic logic of exchange which is evident even in religious field (Rey 2014). Consistent with the generic understanding of field as a structured space of social forces and struggles (Grenfell 2014), Bourdieu (1991a, p.2) also regards religion as a field or symbolic system that is simultaneously 'structured and structuring'. However,

for religious institutions, like the Catholic Church, the ontological structure of the religious field rests primarily on an immutable reality, that is, it is transcendent (Schafer 2015, p.456), and not on the primacy of relations. This *a priori* acceptance of an immutable reality – akin to a symbolic capital – in the religious field generates endless forms of classifications, social ordering and activities as an established order, or *doxa*, to which teachers (and other agents) are organized (Bourdieu 1990b, p.127). This section of the study looks into the nature and dynamics of the field of teachers who are affiliated with the work of their respective parishes (e.g., volunteer teachers in San Vicente Ferrer Parish) and private religious academic institutions (e.g., Los Angeles College teacher volunteers in the REAP program). In the next section, I first look into what is required of teachers to be admitted (i.e., legitimated) in the religious field and the position they tend to occupy therein.

7.3.1 Practical faith: prerequisites for admission and position in the religious field

The accounts of Carmen and Lagring (parish volunteers at San Vicente Ferrer Parish) and Bela and Dana (facilitators of REAP community extension program by Los Angeles College) strongly suggest that teachers who volunteer in religious organizations and programs possess 'the minimum requisite of practical faith as the condition of entry that every field tacitly requires and imposes' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.68). Specifically teachers' participation in the religious field requires them to profess a specific faith (Catholic, Protestant, *Iglesia ni Kristo*, etc.) and identify that they are a *bona fide* teacher/employee of a religious academic institution. In fact, the prerequisite faith is the initial distinguishing and classifying component in the religious field in the sense that it baptizes them into a group (e.g., as Catholic lay volunteers or as REAP volunteers) against any other groups in the community.

The prerequisites of admission into these institutions indicate that permanent relations of inequality operate inside this space where 'various actors [wherein some dominate and others are dominated] struggle for the transformation or preservation of this field' (Bourdieu, quoted in Willey 2016, p. 127). Hence, teachers' decision to participate in this field and become, in their own words, '*taong simbahan*' (a lay church person) engenders a two-fold effect. First, teachers automatically become collective inheritors, protectors and reproducers of the established *doxa* (Bourdieu 1990a, p.68). Second, they become subject to the 'relational configuration' of power therein (Bourdieu &

Wacquant 1992, p.17) through the socializing functions of religious institutions (Grenfell 2014; McAlexander et al. 2014). This is evident from both the church and states' imposition. For instance, on the one hand, while the state regularly reminds teachers to remain apolitical, it continues to utilize them in various community engagement activities (e.g., tree planting, community clean-ups, *Brigada Eskwela*, literacy programs for the elderly and out-of-school youths). On the other hand, the church continues to involve teachers – as lay leaders – in its various advocacies. Similarly, Catholic schools 'require' their teachers to participate in institutional community service programs and activities. Consequently, by performing the activities under the banner of these institutions they eventually become identified with them. For this reason, it becomes possible to understand their alternating ascendant position (in relation to the people in the community) and subordinated position (in relation to the primary authority in this field, i.e., the priests and the hierarchy or the administrators of academic institutions).

Teachers' participation in the religious field inevitably situates them to work with the church's primary implementer of its worldview, the priests. In the religious field, Bourdieu designates the 'priest' and the 'prophet' as the two primary forces, where the former 'represents orthodoxy' and the latter the leads the 'forces of heterodoxy' (Willey 2016, p. 128). In the predominantly Catholic Philippines, teachers' role in parishes and religious organizations as well as their participation in community extension services (of private and religious schools), illustrates how these roles are incarnated in teachers' identity. In this context, teachers' collaboration with parish priests and priest administrators of schools are reminiscent of a practice that started during the Spanish period (see Chapter 5). That contemporary Filipino teachers' identity remains associated with people of the cloth is evidence that some of the conditions of teachers' involvement in church matters during the Spanish period remain.

Moreover, the data suggests that, although teachers possess the capacity to actuate both orthodox and heterodox roles, they tend to exhibit more orthodoxy than heterodoxy in their activities (e.g., catechism and liturgical activities). This tendency illustrates both identification with and division in the religious field, namely, 'between specialists and the laity' (Rey 2014, p.78; see also Bourdieu 1991a). This division provides the context for how teachers' involvement in church activities facilitates the reproduction of the dominant religious worldview and practices by transmitting the *doxa* (i.e., church

teachings or private schools' mission) to other fields in the community. At another level, this reflects the division of the religious field between specialists and laity. Furthermore, teachers' activities in the religious field reveal that their position in this field is subject to its hierarchical structure. There are two arguments that support this subordinated position. First, 'religion contributes to the (hidden) imposition of the principles of structuration of the perception and thinking of the social world' (Bourdieu 1991a, p.5). The immediate effect and evidence of this imposition extends even to the reproduction of the total social structure (Lakomski 1984). Second, teachers' habitual participation in the religious activities of their parishes and schools illustrates how they themselves unconsciously perpetuate their subordinated position living precisely within the lines of a *habitus* that develops dispositions (Bourdieu 1991a). In other words, the data indicates teachers' increased vulnerability to symbolic violence in the religious field thereby decreasing their capacity as authentic social actors therein.

To summarize the points in this section, teachers' participation in the religious field presupposes faith and membership to religious institutions. These requirements are principles of differentiation for competing groups. Socializing institutions constitute the religious field whose interest is the perpetuation or reproduction of the *status quo* or traditions. In this sense, the religious field increases teachers' vulnerability to symbolic violence, thereby unravelling their dominated position. However, teachers also occupy a dominant position in this field through their function as lay leaders in the community. The tendency of the religious field to maintain a hierarchical structure and the *status quo* (of belief, rituals, world views, etc.) challenges the assumption that field is 'responsive and in a state of flux in relation to actual socio-historical forces' (Grenfell 2014, p.loc 1003). In other words, the religious field, when critically appreciated through teachers' voluntary engagements, becomes an arena for the reproduction of a hierarchical structure and perpetuation of institutional hegemony. This leads me to the analysis of the manner through which the logic of the religious field imposes itself on all agents therein.

7.3.2 A 'dance' of dominance and subversion in the religious field

Lagring's intervention in both the religious and educational fields, whereby she favours the position of the church – when the situation forces her to choose – suggests two things. First, her belief is indelibly structured along the dogmas and teachings of the

church she is affiliated with. Second, and more importantly, the religious field takes historical and essential pre-eminence over other fields. This particular instance reflects the primacy – dominance – of the religious field over the educational field in this particular context (i.e., in matters of faith and morality). The existence of an immutable element that is immanent in the religious field is the principle upon which symbolic domination is structured (Green 2012; Mellor & Shilling 2010; Thumala Olave 2012), suggesting further that this field adheres to a different logic. In the case of private school teachers and those involved in their respective parishes, when they champion the church's stand on any particular issue they become part of both the 'force of argument' and the 'argument of force', illustrating that domination can never be entirely absent from relations of communication (McNay 2001, p.141). However, when Lagring and other teachers engage with the community as the church's apologists in matters of faith and morals (e.g., contra the Reproductive Health Bill), they surreptitiously allow the understanding that both the social and religious fields are shaped by the same power struggle, where what is applicable to 'hard social relations' may also be relevant to 'symbolic […] relations' (Schafer 2015, p.316).

The performance of *buling-buling* and *karakol* during activities beyond the religious domain, as Crisanto and Emma described, indicates the benefits of the transposability of religious rituals in reproducing religious traditions. This phenomenon supports Dianteill's (2004, p.529) argument against an absolutist conception that 'religious' is limited only to the religious field in that it oscillates between a 'central and peripheral concern'. To the contrary these teachers' proactive engagements sanction the fluidity of a particular human capital (Norman 2011). Although the religious field tends to value orthodoxy over heterodoxy, it is not absolute or fixed, as seen in evidence supporting the notion of an ever-changing field and constant shifting of power (Grenfell & James 2004) that instigates a dynamic and generative interplay between reproduction and production (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Hence, the transposability of these religious practices (from the religious field to the secular field) as well as teachers' disposition to reproduce these practices in multiple fields illustrates the generative tension in the relationship between continuity and change in religious practices (Chen 2012). In a parallel manner, this shows how teachers' identity in this community engagement is constructed in moments of reproduction and generation.

Indeed if, on the level of operation, the religious field teems with intra-field struggles and position-taking intramurals (e.g., the complaint of Catholic teachers against their non-Catholic principal), the intensity of struggle increases exponentially in inter-field competition (e.g., the religious field against the political or educational fields). For instance, when the dominant Catholic Church and state occupy opposing stands on social and political issues (e.g., birth control, environmental concerns, death penalty and political dynasties), volunteer teachers experience disjuncture between allegiance to their profession (education field) and faithfulness to their belief (religious field). In the section on *habitus*, I have illustrated how teachers navigate this dilemma. Relating this aspect of the field to reflexivity, teachers who volunteer for religious institutions are likely to experience *habitus* disjuncture in both inter-field and within-field competition. For this matter, the various intra- and extra-field competition in the religious field tests the sociological logic of 'objective relations of power' against the 'logic' of field as a 'sacred space [wherein] an agent or a group can potentially alter their socio-historical trajectories' (Willey 2016, p. 138). How teachers navigate these competing hierarchies is best explained by their collective and individual dispositions in their *habitus*. Every instance of competition reveals ever-shifting positions of power not just by the very nature of these fields but due also to what is at stake (capitals) in these fields. This is further intensified by the capacity of the *habitus* to deploy and convert these stakes to other fields of struggle. Teachers' intense degree of complicity in the religious field is positively correlated to their vulnerability to symbolic violence as well as to the capacity of the religious field to generate such. In the next section, I argue that, intentionally or otherwise, the religious field provides a structure for committing symbolic violence through the process of misrecognition.

7.3.3 The religious field as a field of rarefied symbolic violence

Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992, p.167) argues that 'symbolic violence is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity'. For symbolic violence to take effect, it requires a misrecognition as a 'process by which people fail to see the social origins of social and cognitive categories' (Grenfell 2008, p.197). Connecting this notion to my study, this relates to the way teachers treat their engagements in the religious field as ordinary and customary or part of their daily routine. The same is true in the case of teachers who work in schools attached to nearby parishes (e.g., Colegio de San Luis and Los Angeles College, which are attached to a religious shrine). While every field of

teachers' community practices is a possible arena for processes of misrecognition and commission of symbolic violence, it is in the religious field that these are most dissimulated or rarefied.

When Carmen, a private school teacher from Quirino Memorial HS, concluded her all-encompassing description of teachers' voluntary engagements as religious volunteers with a reiteration that all of their activities require the imprimatur of the primary custodian of orthodoxy, the parish priest, she was articulating two key notions. First, the religious field is indubitably hierarchical and patriarchal. Second, the *doxa* of dominant institutions in this field organizes the objective relations of power that determines the parameters of teachers' legitimate practices. These notions are further supported by my observation that, for most FGD participants, the virtue of faith-oriented obedience takes precedence over critical positions in the religious field. The apparent dominance of the religious field in the social world reveals teachers' perceptions of the religious field. First, the preference suggests a higher valuation of spiritual capital over material capital at certain historical moments in teachers' lives (i.e., as they advance in age and they near retirement). Second, teachers' higher valuation of spiritual capital over other forms of capitals suggests that belief systems organize teachers' 'compliance to domination through the shaping of beliefs' (Lukes 2005, pp. 144). Third, Carmen's description strongly suggests that teachers' compliance in the religious field appears as misrecognised obedience, where 'symbolic power is accepted as legitimate rather than arbitrary' (Swartz 2013, p.83).

These arguments that sustain the primacy of the religious field contribute to the blurring of the critical optic required to unravel the structures of power, the position-taking struggles, the fluctuation in the dominant–subordinated positions, and the arbitrary valuation of capitals therein. This dissimulation is part of the process of misrecognition that occasions the occurrence of symbolic violence. Furthermore, the teachers' diagnosed inability to unmask the relations of power and to recognize their subordinated position in the social space indicates the collateral effect of pervasive, protracted and systemic symbolic violence. From the above arguments, in the religious field symbolic capital takes a rarefied form as 'a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims' (Bourdieu 2001, pp.1–2). In other words, the imperceptibility of symbolic violence corresponds to the degree by which this has metastasized among Filipino

teachers particularly when symbolic violence evolves into a *doxa* or takes the appearance of orthodoxy.

Aside from the above route towards exposure to symbolic violence, I argue with Harrits (2011, p.237) that the process of 'inclusion and exclusion' are avenues wherein agents – in this case teachers – becomes vulnerable to symbolic violence. In the religious field, one of the ways in which teachers are constituted into a group or a collective comes through the logic of inclusion and exclusion (Bourdieu 1991a, p.3). In this field, those who exist in a similar position commonly share similar habits and tastes – a similar (and therefore collective) *habitus* (Rey 2014). Conversely, those who fail to (or do not) accrue value in themselves in the religious field by dominant symbolic techniques are therefore always/already read as immoral (Skeggs 2004b) and in a sense excluded. This equation is very much evident when Catholic teachers air the constraints of their religious practices in their schools, for example the difficulty of celebrating Catholic sacraments in school when their principal belongs to another Christian denomination. Hence, the structure of inclusion and exclusion influences the nature and intensity of struggle and competition in reference to other groups or individuals who are not professing the same belief. Through the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, 'religion is more than a convenient analytical subject' evidenced at it reasserts itself as the locus of consecration challenging the insinuations that religion has been replaced by the state as the 'primary agent of consecration in modernity' (Engler 2003, p.450).

The dynamics of inclusion and exclusion which underscore that the 'struggle over classification in this field are at the same time struggles over the social recognition [of the *habitus*] of certain [individual or collective] actors' (Schafer 2015, p. 39). However, where there is social recognition, there is also social misrecognition in the same manner that where there are inclusions, there are also exclusions. In a Bourdeusian economy of power, a site of consecration is at the same time a site of desecration, by those who belong to the same field but, even more so, by those who belong to other fields (other religions or another institutional field). Ergo, the long road of inclusion and exclusion leads to symbolic violence where teachers become complicit in the homogenizing and proselytizing tendencies immanent in the religious field.

To summarize this section, contemporary Filipino teachers' religious field, when subjected through Bourdieu's logic of mercantile exchange and position-taking struggle,

functions as a structure of symbolic violence in a rarefied or imperceptible manner compared to how other fields manifest this proclivity. In particular, the kinetic social power of the religious field structures teachers' engagements therein until it assumes a *doxic* character, so that teachers regard their involvement as customary or even traditional. This assumption of a *doxic* structure that leads to the construction of what is orthodox and heretical (unorthodox) likewise functions as the principle of inclusion and exclusion. From teachers' description of their religious field, they have illustrated how they become vulnerable to symbolic violence by their complicity in its various activities. Finally, the capacity of the religious field to shape teachers' disposition correlates to a field predisposed to maintain the hierarchical social order by protecting its interests.

7.3.4 Conclusion

Filipino teachers characterize their religious field as one that presupposes their faith. This faith is one of the principles of teachers' classification by inclusion and exclusion. It is the same principle that aligns them to the church's worldview and practices as well as their struggle against those with contrary positions. Through the socializing tendencies of institutions – in particular religious ones (including schools and parishes) – teachers are more inclined to perpetuate customs and traditions than to generate critical actions. This illustrates the church and states' symbolic power and teachers' vulnerability to symbolic violence. Notwithstanding these constraints, teachers still occupy an alternating ascendant and dominated position in the religious field: ascendant in the community while largely dominated when structured against the state and church's hierarchical organization. When compared with other fields, teachers' engagements unravel the religious field as more socializing and homogenizing due to the presence of several factors, namely a belief in an immutable God, the hierarchical structure of the institutional church, the robustness or even rigidity of doctrine (dogma), the presence of a cadre of well-trained gatekeepers (priests) who often demand obedience as a primary value, and the unflinching belief in the primacy of religious capital (e.g., salvation) over other capitals.

7.4 Religious capital as currency in the social and religious fields

In this section, I present an analysis of how teachers utilize their religious capital as currency in navigating both the religious and non-religious fields as reflected in teachers' community engagements. To understand the concept of capital is to fathom its relationship with field and *habitus*. The accounts of Lagring (a public school teacher from Sto. Domingo Nat. HS) and Bela (a private school teacher from Los Angeles College) suggest the 'unequal distribution of capital is the source of effects (value) of capital' (Bourdieu 1986b, p.284). Inequality in capital distribution renders the field uneven so that teachers are situated in an ascendant or subordinated position. In any particular field, agents (individuals or groups) compete for stakes and resources within fields using various forms of capital. In my study, teachers in the religious field compete mainly, albeit unobtrusively, for symbolic (status recognition and reputation) and social capital (social relations). This indicates that teachers' *praxis* in this field is primarily, but not exclusively, 'organize(d) around a struggle for noneconomic legitimation' (Swartz 1997, p.139). To aid forms of struggle, *habitus* provides agents with knowledge and the tools to strategize their struggles for the stakes in the field – providing individuals with a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992, p.128; Bourdieu 1998b, p.25). While the field is the locus of struggle for capital, *habitus* provides teachers with cognitive and practical tools to compete for these stakes. Hence, teachers' practices are driven by an interaction between resources accrual (i.e., *habitus* and capital) and field structure dynamics.

Juxtaposed with the religious understanding of *habitus* and field, this section presents religious capital as a specialized form of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1991a; Iannaccone 1990, p.299; Willey 2016). The notion that there is a capital correlative to each specific *habitus* and field is significant in constructing an identity of contemporary Filipino teachers, particularly the notion that every species of capital is a resource that provides a different form of power (Bourdieu 1986b; Sallaz & Zavisca 2007). In the accounts of most FGD participants, their success in the religious field is due to their practice of the value of *pakikipag-kapwa* (akin to smooth interpersonal relationships). This only suggests that within the religious field the correlative religious capital relates to 'skills and experience specific to one's religion including religious knowledge, familiarity with the church rituals and doctrines, and friendship with fellow worshipers' (Iannaccone 1990, p.299). The degree of their *pakikipag-kapwa* as religious capital 'reflect[s] the

degree of mastery of and attachment to a particular religious culture' (Stark & Finke 2000, p.120). In this line of argument, *pakikipag-kapwa* is both a positive disposition (*habitus*) and a cultural capital that affects the degree of accrual of teachers' religious capital.

To critically understand FGD participants' religious capital, I have to interrogate it not only from the level of praxis but also at an ontological and epistemological level upon which the ensuing struggles depend. One position suggests that religious activities proceed from a position that 'doctrine and practice are not fixed, immutable ideals, but rather are dynamic components of religious institutions' (Stone 2001, p.1). With this premise, religious capital becomes a high-stakes value not only in the religious domain but also in the social world. Another position suggests that dispositions and actions rest on an immutable universal reality underlying religious and moral certainty (Thumala Olave 2012). From the FGD sessions, it appears that, at a purely religious level, teachers' belief in immutable reality (including doctrine, etc.) is uncompromising. However, when probed critically, teachers actually negotiate their positions between two opposing institutions (church and state) due to the mundane demands of everyday life.

While negotiation might be a marker of reflexivity, it also indicates teachers' susceptibility to 'the imperialism of the universal […] a form par excellence of symbolic violence perpetuated by seemingly enlightened elites upon the practical activities of social actors' (McNay 2001, p.141). For instance, imperialism is felt in the fight against some government policies (e.g., the Reproductive Health Bill, the imposition of the death penalty), where 'the valued norm itself are assumed by social actors to be universally applicable' (Sayer 2005, pp. 953). From the standpoint of the church, which is assumed by teachers involved in this particular social-religious activity, it is imperative to defend the given fundamental doctrines. Thumala Olave (2012) drives this point that religious capital does not absolutely adhere to Bourdieu's definition of 'accumulated labour' for, in the religious field, religious capital is ontologically organized and only secondarily accumulated (through labour).

In the next section, I will illustrate how teachers utilize religious capital both as a legitimating resource and as a currency for exchange.

7.4.1 Teachers' religious capital as a legitimating resource

In the religious field, teachers' social proximity to the source of legitimating power (e.g., the church hierarchy and school officials) analogously locates them in a position of power. As a concrete example, the parish pastoral council of San Vicente Ferrer Parish is composed entirely of teachers from nearby public and private schools. As they work closely with the parish priest in both religious (e.g., rituals like masses, processions and catechizing) and social activities (feeding program, providing seminars on natural family planning seminars), legitimation of their identity becomes inevitable. This observation is supported by the argument that one 'social function of ritual [is to] consecrate capital and legitimize difference' (Willey 2016, p. 126). Teachers do not only participate in these activities; some of them assume leadership roles (preparing the program, ensuring the attendance of the community and facilitating the celebration) in ritual celebrations in the community.

For teachers affiliated with private religious educational institutions, their participation in community extension programs is the ritual that consecrates them to the community and legitimizes their identity therein. For Bourdieu, this process is a form of 'cultural consecration […] akin to religious transubstantiation' (Bourdieu 1984, p. 6). This process allows for the transferability of capital from one field to another by reason of the 'structural and functional homologies that exist between all field' (Bourdieu, cited in Rey 2014, p. 45). In other words, teachers' religious capital is also valuable in the social and other fields (and vice versa). Thus, teachers' religious capital is not *per se* a religious one, nor is it exclusively autonomous, but it emerges as an amalgamation of various forms of convertible capitals. The same amalgamated and convertible capitals potentially serve as markers of teachers' identity in multiple fields.

While in other fields accrual of capital is tantamount to legitimation, this logic is inapplicable in the religious field or at least it appears to be. During the FGD sessions, I observed that legitimation by the community rests on the perception that teachers' voluntary participation is a disinterested act. Legitimation in this field observes the social equation: the greater the degree of disinterestedness to economic capital, the higher the degree of legitimation. This disinterestedness is expressed every time FGD participants insist that their involvement is voluntary and that the community typically holds them to a higher ethical standard and degree of accountability. When critically

evaluated, unbeknownst to these teachers (or perhaps intentionally), their effort to sustain an unblemished moral standing in the community indicates that this aspiration is 'conducive to obtaining symbolic power and legitimizing [their position in the] hierarchy' (Pellandini-Simányi 2014, p.651). Hence, the field where teachers' capital is used for their legitimation or consecration is the same field where this capital can be devalued and teachers delegitimized or desecrated. Therefore, since the value of teachers' capital is dependent on multiple elements of the field, their identity in the religious field is likewise never fixed.

The capacity of religious capital to facilitate the legitimation of teachers' identity in the community is not only mediated through its rarefied form. Legitimation also transpires via 'embodied cultural capital accumulated through a lifelong socialization that takes place in large part unconsciously' (Kraaykamp & Van Eijck 2010, p. 210). To illustrate this point, teachers' ability to perform rituals such as *buling-buling* and *karakol* legitimizes their identity in both the civil and religious fields. However, while it is possible that teachers' involvement in these activities is indeed voluntary, it is far from neutral since even they recognize that their participation in these community events are expected (culturally) and even required by their respective superiors. Hence, even religious capital is not independent from state's educational policies (Karamouzis 2015).

As a summary, teachers' legitimated religious capital also acts as a principle of legitimation of their identity in the community. However, since the religious field does not exclusively construct teachers' religious capital but acts in conjunction with every other field that utilizes teachers' multiple literacies (e.g., government, school, political), this amalgamated religious capital is a currency that is valued beyond the religious field. Hence, while the possession and utilization of religious capital may help construct a facet of teachers' identity, the different configuration of social and historical factors implies heterogeneity of the facets of teachers' identity.

7.4.2 Religious capital and the economic logic of exchange

The concept of capital rests on the notion that it is only a resource and stake in so far as it has value. On account of its value, religious capital can be interrogated on the basis of its 'exchange rate'. Teachers' voluntary engagements in the community through their religious affiliation extend beyond the religious domain. Their accounts of voluntary

civic engagements show that they are omnipresent in community activities, whether in grand celebrations or quotidian activities (see Table 3). These accounts indicate that the convertibility of religious capital is premised on its pre-eminence (in terms of value) over other forms of capitals. For teachers involved in religious activities of their faith affiliation, what is at stake in the religious field to which religious *habitus* is primarily aligned, is the salvation of their souls. In other words, the primordial significance of religious capital is its salvific value. Thumala Olave (2012, p. 63) utilized the above argument in her critical position that 'religious belief and activity cannot be reduced to the possession of assets or the struggle for the accumulation of scarce symbolic goods – religious values do not "run out" in the way material goods do'. However, this argument is sustainable only if teachers utilize religious capital strictly independently of other capitals. As a proof, when Carmen pointed out that '*the community recognizes us as both teachers in the school and as parish workers (taong simbahan)*', she was suggesting that religious capital is amalgamated with other forms of capitals. The same point was illustrated by REAP Program volunteer teacher Dana who was unequivocal in her position that their presence in the community is primarily as teachers and only secondarily recognizing their affiliation to a religious institution. In this amalgamated context, teachers' capacity to utilize other forms of capital (e.g., cultural and social capital) in the religious domain allows for a perspectival appreciation of religious capital within the structure of the economy of exchange. The wedge between religious capital and economic logic is further driven by the recognition that religious capital is closely related to moral and ethical capital (Saatcioglu & Ozanne 2013; Sayer 2005; Setten 2004). The value of these capitals defies economic metrics. Thus, religious social processes may demand that 'everyday ethics [is] a phenomenon that is related, yet not reducible to economic relations and interests' (Pellandini-Simányi 2014, p. 651). For this reason, I find it more reasonable to distinguish that teachers' religious capital orbits within the logic of economic exchange in relation to mundane and secular stakes (e.g., power, resources), but not in relation to ethical and moral capital and obviously not in relation to core religious capital. This argument explains how Lagring (and other teachers) can subvert the state in matters of faith and morals but still manifest allegiance to the state in matters concerning professional and social concerns.

However, since religious capital is not only a form of cultural capital but functions more efficiently as symbolic capital, religious capital (particularly that which highlights the

attainment of the ultimate stake – salvation) is a resource in convincing people to attend liturgical celebrations, participating in advocacy activities, negotiating for religious activity in the school and for other purposes as well. Hence, the success of teachers who are affiliated with religious institutions cannot be solely asserted based on their religious capital but on its amalgamation with other forms of capitals. Furthermore, the value of teachers' religious capital can only be appreciated vis-à-vis the literacies that they utilize en route to legitimizing their distinct identity in this field.

7.4.3 Conclusion

In this section, I have established how teachers value and utilize religious capital within and beyond the parameters of the religious field. The homogenizing tendency of the religious field and the reproductive inclination of religious *habitus* aligns with the value accrued through religious capital. For teachers involved in religious activities (be it through the parish or the school and for both private and public school teachers), the pre-eminence of religious capital is unmistakable. Hence, while economic, social and cultural capitals are relevant – even necessary – in configuring the objective relations of power in the field, in this context what carries more weight (as resource and stake) is teachers' religious capital. To underscore the value of religious capital, teachers utilize it both as a currency of exchange (e.g., in educating people and in securing communities' participation in religious activities) and as a principle of legitimation or, more in keeping with the religious field, consecration. Since teachers generally refer to religious capital in terms of its primordial value, that is, its salvific value, acquisition of this capital logically requires adherence to universalizing structures of religion (e.g., dogma) and reproductive tendencies of religious practices (e.g., regular liturgical celebrations and fiesta celebrations). Nonetheless, reflexivity can still be apprehended at the level of the social and in individual innovative practices, for example in various strategies teachers concoct and deploy to comply with the demands of often-conflicting institutions.

Chapter 8: Teachers' identity in the political domain

Aside from engaging with the community through their religion-related activities, teachers' involvement as actors in the political field is another sphere of encounter with the community. The conceptualization of identity in this chapter runs parallel to how it was proposed and argued in previous chapter as a configuration emerging from relations between *habitus*, capital and field. The proposition here is that teachers' multiple engagements in the political field – as described in FGD sessions and interviews, and also observed – provides the impetus for the analysis of teachers' *habitus*, field and capital relative to their identity in the community. This introductory section commences by articulating the purpose and context of this chapter before concluding with the discussion, organization and approaches undertaken.

Purpose of the chapter. My aim in this chapter is to analyse how contemporary Filipino teachers' voluntary – individual and collective – engagements in the political field contribute to a critical construction of a distinct set of political markers of identity. Consistent with the approach in the preceding chapter, I intend to illustrate – via working with the data instead of simply applying the 'tool kit' (Stahl 2013) – how teachers' legitimated and legitimating practices in the political domain help configure their *habitus*, field and capital as social actors. Although the arguments in this chapter run parallel to how a facet of teachers' identity was constructed in the religious field, the unique structure of the political field generates distinct forms of teachers' engagements therein. In other words, in this chapter I argue that multiple and habitual practices of teachers' political *habitus*, energized by modalities of political capital and executed in a correlative political field, provide an opportunity for the construction of teachers' identity as political social actors. This distinction is grounded in the position that collective identities are fundamentally historical (Steinmetz 2011) and 'political in that they are constructed identities that involve power relations' (Swartz 2013, p. 23).

Context. In recent years, the Philippine political field has been dominated by traditional politicians (collectively and pejoratively referred to as '*trapos*') composed mainly of the local elites from political dynasties (Eaton 2003), celebrity candidates (Maniago 2007) who capitalize on their silver screen persona and popularity, and lately emergent party-list groups (Eaton 2003; Holden 2009) representing the marginalized sector. The

continued stranglehold of the first group, the '*trapos*', on the Philippine political landscape resonates with Bourdieu's (2000, p.173) assessment that the world of politics is typically confined to a 'group of professional politicians coming from a class that enjoys considerable economic resources, well-reputed academic degrees, and the associated prestige'.

Contemporary Filipino teachers participate both collectively and individually in the current political intramurals. At the collective level, Filipino teachers' engagements in the political domain materialize through the machinations of the recently introduced party-list system in Philippine politics. Representation of the marginalized sectors of Philippine society is the main goal of party-list organizations (Holden 2009). Teachers' entry into mainstream politics through the party-list system immediately positions and identifies teachers' class as a marginalized sector in Philippine society. At this level, teachers' identity is constructed through their twofold function as an instrument of democratic consolidation or institutionalization (Ufen 2008) and as social agents who promote different forms of advocacy (ACT Teachers Party-List n.d.). At the individual level, teachers' involvement in traditional politics reflects their personal political aspirations, which typically transpire at the community level (i.e., local politics). This means that some teachers, particularly those who have retired, have tried running for government positions.

Teachers' collective and individual involvement in the political domain is either by election or by appointment. Although Philippine law prohibits teachers from seeking election to a political position while on active duty, this prohibition does not completely prevent them from engaging in the political arena. Hence, teachers who aspire to political office need to resign or take leave of absence from their teaching duties. Just the same, when teachers (resigned, retired or on leave) run for public office, they often retain their teacher identity and even utilize it as capital in their election campaign. However, there are non-elected political positions in the community where teachers are not encumbered by legal prohibitions. An example of this reported by FGD participants (e.g., by Art, a public school teacher from Centro Elementary-B and HS) is membership of the village council (e.g., *Lupon ng Tagapamayapa and Lupon ng Baranggay*) to which some teachers find themselves nominated by the village chief.

Teachers' involvement in the political domain provides a threefold lens for the construction of their identity in the community. First, since the political domain is organized by multiple and continuous struggles for legitimation (Hensmans 2003; Ieţcu-Fairclough 2008; Michelman 2003), teachers' engagements (legitimated and legitimating) therein help construct the political facet of teachers' identity. Second, their political involvement defines the nature of their political leadership in the community. Lauglo (1982, p.233) opined that while 'the "teacher politician" has become a legacy from the past in many countries, but even so, it has made the idea of the teacher as a trained community leader seem attractive'. This observation is evident in Philippine society where, based on the accounts of FGD participants, a number of their colleagues continue to engage in political field both individually and collectively. Third, the scope and scale of teachers' individual and collective participation, the modalities of their political activities, and the objectives of their political participation indicate a distinct class identity. In other words, teachers' identity in the political domain emerges from their assumption of a leadership role that is both legitimated and legitimating. The next paragraph illustrates how identity may be constructed through their leadership roles.

Teachers' express their leadership role in the political domain at two levels. First, at the community level, FGD participants noticed that the *Barangay Captain* (village head) of their community often appoints teachers to the village council, as members of *Lupon ng Barangay* or *Lupon the Tagapamayapa* (village council as mediators of peace). Teachers' key functions in this council are to arbitrate conflicts and mediate between people in their respective communities. Second, contemporary Filipino teachers' collective involvement in mainstream politics emerged with the passage of the *'Party-List System Act'* or *Republic Act 7941*. This Act, which 'promotes proportional representation in the election of legislators to the House of Representatives through a party-list system of registered national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof' (*Party-List System Act 1995*), serves as a vehicle for teachers' legitimate and formal participation in the mainstream political structure. While there are several teachers' party-list organizations, this research focuses on teachers' participation specifically in the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) since most FGD participants were familiar with it and most teachers from the National Capital Region (Manila and Quezon City) are active members of the ACT party list.

ACT as a group organizes teachers' collective struggle against deteriorating pay and working conditions, the decline in the status of their profession, and the general stagnation of an educational system influenced by neo-liberal policies (ACT Teachers Party-List n.d.). Furthermore, the ACT party list may be considered as a social movement with a 'collective attempt to promote or resist change in a society or group' (Beaford, Gongaware & Valadez 2000, p.2717) which they appraised to be inimical to the general interest of the Filipino learner and teacher.

Teachers' involvement in the *barangay council* or in party-list organizations generates practices through which members of the community may glimpse an identity of contemporary Filipino teachers. The uniqueness of the Philippine political field as well as the specificity of teachers' engagements therein provides an impetus for the critical understanding of their *habitus*, capital and field in relation to their identity formation.

8.1 Narratives of teachers as reluctant politicians

In this section, I articulate how FGD participants described their praxis in the political field, both at the collective level, for example as party-list members, and on an individual basis. The fragments articulated here represent their collective perceptions – including contradictory views and consensus – on teachers' involvement in the political domain. Through these multiple voices, I interrogate how a facet of teachers' identity can be drawn from their *habitus*, field and capital in the political domain.

8.1.1 Teachers' perceptions of their individual involvement in politics

A narrative summary of the exchange between Juan Miguel and Reggie, public school teachers from Pilar Elementary and HS B, showed that they view the political arena as a class function energized mainly by economic resources, family *habitus* (political dynasties) and social capital.

> *A teacher who ventures into the political arena loses control of the situation. This means that the teacher become vulnerable to usual political mudslinging and risks assuming all the unsavoury characteristics that we usually believed of a typical politician. Being a teacher is not enough to win an election and prosper in this field. For unless a teacher is rich and belongs to a powerful family, one cannot penetrate the political domain, much less prosper in it.*

In this narrative, Juan Miguel and Reggie suggested that teachers risk losing their very identity as teachers the moment they venture into the political field. 'Losing control of the situation' suggests that the political field is an unchartered territory and not

homologous to their natural practices as teachers. Furthermore, the narrative also exposed the current political structure wherein *trapos*' (traditional politicians) economic capital is an invaluable currency in every modality of economic exchange in this field. While Bourdieu (1986b, p.285) proposes that it is possible to 'establish conversion rates between cultural capital and economic capital by guaranteeing the monetary value of a given academic capital', in this context, the conditions that would make conversion possible are absent because contemporary Filipino teachers are typically economically and financially disadvantaged.

The extent to which teachers embody economic disadvantage is proportional to the degree to which the dominant and traditional political figures in Philippine society monopolize the pertinent resources (capital) in this field. Hence, from the perspective of most FGD participants, these traditional politicians not only dictate the currency rate of all other forms of capital, they also control the modes of its production, conversion and distribution to other politically valuable resources. Outside of economic deficit, the aspiration to keep the integrity of teachers' cultural *habitus* (dispositions and values) underscores their hesitancy about participating in the political domain. Lagring, a private school teacher from Sto. Domingo National HS, summarized this particular rationalization:

> *Perhaps another factor why teachers do not normally involve themselves in politics is that they are well aware that after long period of teaching values to their students they risk compromising the same values for the sake of politics. That is why teachers often occupy only an advisory position, i.e., village or municipal councillors. It is in these positions and at this level that teachers' educational capital is highly utilized. In this designation, teachers usually excel. However, you cannot expect teachers to be prolific in the executive function of politics (e.g., as mayor or vice-mayor).*

For Lagring, teachers' incursion into politics is not just about losing a sense of control (i.e., entering a field beyond their expertise). The stake is far greater since what teachers risk losing is their 'teacherly identity' together with all the values (honesty, truthfulness, selflessness, etc.) associated with the teaching profession which in turn help differentiate them from other professions, especially from traditional politicians. In other words, FGD participants view that teachers' participation in the political field inevitably requires them to speak and to act contrary to their traditional *habitus* and against the long-accepted *doxa* in the teaching profession. When this situation happens, it may result in what may be referred to as 'cleft *habitus*' or dissonance with their natural disposition (Bourdieu 2000; Costa & Murphy 2015). Ironically, the same notion

of cleft *habitus* may lead to a greater reflexivity emerging from a confrontation with a contradictory field (Ingram & Abrahams 2016) particularly evident from teachers' participation at the collective level (i.e., through Party list groups). Furthermore, it is also evident from Lagring's account that compromise – as the universal language of politics – threatens to corrode teachers' values. In this particular case, there is a strong possibility that teachers' *habitus* will succumb to the overwhelming power of the field. Lagring's fear is well founded when considered within Grenfell and James' (2004, p.510) prediction that an 'in the course of time [an] "avant-garde" [position] will will become acknowledged, established as a consecrated avant-garde passes into "rear-garde" position'. In other words, Juan Miguel, Reggie, Lagring and all those who had reservations about teachers' political involvement are afraid that a teacher whose disposition is generally characterized by fundamentally pro-social actions and inhabited by array of cultural values will capitulate against the overpowering and corrupting structure of politics.

Serafin, a private school teacher from the island school of San Luis Academy, alluded to the principle constituting the *doxa* of teachers' political engagements:

> *I observed that in my community the village head (Barangay Captain) often nominates teachers to the village council or Lupon ng Barangay where they help settle disputes at the community level. However, we also noticed that those who appoint members to the village council prefer senior and retired teachers. In our case, we are still relatively young teachers, so we are not yet considered for that position in the community.*

This statement illustrates how nomination becomes a form of legitimation at the community level through the power of the village head, who is vested with political power in the village. I observed that elderly teachers in the provinces are more likely to be nominated to this position than the young and those living in urban and city centres. What is more apparent from this narrative is that, in the absence of economic capital, teachers' success in the political field depends on their capacity to utilize their cultural (knowledge) and social capitals (kinship relations in the community).

In contrast to teachers' individual political engagements, collective engagement in the political domain offers a more prominent social identification in this sphere, evident not only in the community but in the entire Philippine society. In the next section, I present narratives on teachers' collective participation through party-list organizations.

8.1.2 A collective militant, progressive and nationalist political engagement

Teachers' collective participation in mainstream politics takes shape through their voluntary membership in party-list organizations. In the 16th Congress of the Philippines (June 22, 2013 – June 6, 2016), teachers were represented by three party lists in the House of Representatives (A-Teacher, ABAKADA and the Alliance of Concerned Teachers). This study focuses on teachers' collective political participation through their membership in the Alliance of Concerned Teachers for several reasons, that is, FGD participants are mostly familiar with ACT, it is the most visible teacher organization in terms of articulating their advocacies, and it is the most militant among the teachers' party list organizations. Aside from the FGD narratives, information about the dynamics of ACT as a social movement was derived from an interview with Juaquin, a public school teacher, manager of a teachers' cooperative and long-time ACT officer. Juaquin not only helped organize teachers in the National Capital Region but he was also at the forefront of organizing teachers in the provinces. Aside from convincing teachers of the necessity of forming a teachers' union and joining the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, he was also active in facilitating legal support for disadvantaged teachers as well as in explaining social issues to students and parents. Juaquin described the nature of ACT's advocacy:

> *While we use the halls of the House of Representatives as a space for struggle, we are also convinced that this avenue for critical negotiation with the government is ineffective without the pressures exerted through street actions. For instance, while ACT representatives propose bills for salary increases, the urgency of these bills are not simply argued in the halls of Congress but in the streets where we hold rallies and demonstrations. If we do not hold mass actions, the government is usually indifferent to our situations – they could not care less. The street then is an important space for our struggle. It is there that the media broadcast our demands and other marginalized sectors sympathize with our fight.*

Juaquin reveals the multiple battlegrounds for a variety of radical actions. Furthermore, he shows how a marginalized radical *habitus* gains social energy in part through alliances with other marginalized sectors of the community. These alliances, including the integration of media practitioners among their ranks, supports Bourdieu's notion of how groups begin by occupation of 'similar positions and who, being placed in similar conditions and subjected to similar conditionings, have every likelihood of having similar dispositions and interests' (1985, p.725).

While Juaquin described ACT's engagements – including its goals and general strategies – at the institutional level, Tita provided concrete examples of how teachers benefit from these radical engagements.

> *While ACT brings to national consciousness the plight of Filipino teachers and the state of education (lack of textbooks, classrooms, unjust teachers' salaries and benefits, etc.), ACT assists teachers against abusive parents and administrators (principals and supervisors). Not only that we have representation in the Congress, we also have someone who can immediately give us legal advice particularly during an election or when we feel oppressed by our principals. Because of this, we noticed that principals and supervisors are more careful in dealing with teachers who are members of ACT.*

In these statements, Juaquin and Tita both argue for the inevitability and legitimacy of radical action where every social and communal space is treated as a legitimate battleground, or a field for multiple competitions. The importance of alliances with other marginalized sectors in Philippine society to promote their advocacy suggests that only through a collective *habitus* endowed with sufficient radical social energy can their action have an impact on the longstanding elite-dominated political field. For Crisanto, such collaboration is not difficult to establish for the primary reason that '*teachers also belong to the uring mangagawa or working class that we do not run out of supporters from other marginalized sectors of the community*'. Hence, when teachers join in the protest chant '*Uring mangagawa, Hukbong mapagpalaya*' (Working class, liberating force!), as they march around major thoroughfares, the natural passion in their voice reveals their conviction for what they are fighting for.

Currently, ACT membership is concentrated in the National Capital Region but they are aggressively expanding membership to the provinces. However, not all FGD participants agreed with ACT's strategies. In particular, senior teachers from the provinces and the islands are highly critical of ACT's street activities (i.e., rallies and demonstrations). Consecutive accounts from two FGD sessions in the provinces reflect the reasons for their contrary views and criticisms. Reggie, a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-B, regarded ACT's political activism and teachers' political participation as against the law.

> *The law requires that we should be non-partisan. So how could we abide with this provision when ACT is highly politicized? This dilemma is unsettling and for this reason – at least in this province – teachers are not enthusiastic about becoming members of ACT. Aside from that, I cannot yet feel the benefits of their advocacy.*

Reggie's reasoning echoes the position of most senior public school teachers in the provinces where FGD sessions were conducted. In contrast early career teachers from various focus groups were more supportive, appreciating the benefits they are entitled to as ACT members. However, I also observed that during FGD sessions they tended to defer to the opinion of their senior colleagues on this matter. This indicates that the divergent positions on ACT activities are highly differentiated by age, seniority and by geographical location. In this manner, age inadvertently or even strategically functions as a capital for domination in certain areas of the political field. While Reggie based his reservation on a legal prohibition, Minda (a private school teacher from Colegio de San Luis) – and teachers from different focus groups – reminded her colleagues of the notion that the teaching position is a '"*vocation" rather than just a "profession"'*. The oft-repeated cliché that glorifies docility and sacrifice is an unmistakable form of symbolic violence perpetuated against teachers. Symbolic violence is the most insidious form of violence since it is 'misrecognized obedience in that symbolic power is accepted as legitimate rather than as an arbitrary imposition' (Swartz 2013, p. 82-83). As argued previously, for symbolic violence to take effect, it requires misrecognition of ordinariness. This could not be more evident in Minda's indictment of teachers' radical activities where she sees that participation in the political field is contradictory to teachers' natural *habitus.*

> *What can I say about teachers protesting and lobbying? I would like to send all of them home. It is alright to demand better pay but not to the point that it scandalizes the community and even affects our functions in the school. First, as teachers, we need to exhibit a sense of propriety to the community. Second, the community needs to be assured that we are doing our job as teachers not as radical activists.*

Reggie and Minda's position illustrates the division between a radical class and traditional class of teachers in Philippine society. For these teachers it is important that there is a 'sense of limit [reminding] people to maintain their rank and distance and […] to know their place and be happy with what they are' (1990a, p.123). By maintaining the differentiation between the traditional notion of what it is to be a teacher against emerging facets, Reggie and Minda illustrates how teachers are complicit to symbolic violence by operating under the spell of this 'gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims' (Bourdieu 2001, p.1).

In the succeeding three sections, I further the analysis of teachers' participation in the political field beginning with an exploration of how the above narratives can potentially

construct and legitimize contemporary Filipino teachers' *habitus*. Then the discussion turns to an investigation of the field as *habitus*' correlative principle. This chapter concludes with analyses of how capital – its possession and dispossession – helps configures both political *habitus* and field.

8.2 Teachers' *habitus* in the political field

Exploration of contemporary Filipino teachers' *habitus* in the political field provokes the interrogation of a politically characterized disposition in their *habitus* without insinuating a notion of social schizophrenia to their identity. In this context, contemporary Filipino teachers' political *habitus* functions as a 'conceptual tool that is defined as the disposition, thoughts, and actions that inhabit peoples' [in this case teachers'] worldview, and in turn, influences the political choices they make' (Tejada-Pena et al. 2010, p. ix). In other words, political *habitus* refers to teachers' distinct manner of participation in political processes. Specifically, in this section the interrogation of teachers' political *habitus* responds to the following questions. First, what contributes to the legitimation of teachers' political *habitus*? Second, to what extent does teachers' political *habitus* reproduce the *status quo* or generate distinct political actions? Third, in what manner is teachers' political *habitus* a source of power and to what end is this power constituted and positioned?

8.2.1 Legitimated and legitimating political habitus

In this section, I first illustrate how teachers' political *habitus* is legitimated in the political field before exploring how this legitimated political *habitus*, in turn, functions as a legitimating principle. From the culled data, it appears that teachers' legitimated and legitimating *habitus* contained in their various engagements in the political field correlates with how their identity is constructed. But what makes political engagements distinct is that it relates identity to the 'struggle for a legitimate vision of the social world' where agents 'wield a power which is proportional to their symbolic capital' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.238). In other words, teachers' engagement in the political field allows for the construction of a facet of teachers' identity as political identity. In my conversations with teachers, during and particularly outside of the FGD sessions, I observed that, in general, teachers are least comfortable with their practices in the political field, suggesting that for the majority of these participants their engagements

therein are largely borne out of necessity. As Tita, an ACT member from Centro Elementary School, reasoned:

> *we have no other recourse but to take our arguments to the streets – with this indifferent government there will be no salary increase and no improvement in our benefits. The increasing equity gap between teachers and other professional, the long neglected call for a living salary that will allow us to send our children to school plus the fact that we have been patient for a long period of time – these are the factors that force us to join the political arena as a group.*

This observation supports the argument that the 'practices which comprise social movements and protests are not produced simply by force of *habitus*, but equally as an effect of both social fields and capital' (Crossley 2003, p.56). Hence, teachers' individual and collective entry into the political game – through their candidacy – means that they are subjecting themselves to the cultural, social and political (legal) judgment (legitimation) of the people.

Teachers' identity in the political field: homogeneous or heterogeneous? Teachers' participation in the political field (individually or collectively, as elected or nominated officials) inevitably draws the notions of 'power, politics and self-interest' (Webb, Schirato & Danaher 2002, p. 2) in the conceptualization of their *habitus*, field and capital. It is through this argument that the capacity of these concepts is put to task to make sense of the political dimension of their existence. For instance, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers' (ACT) radical actions against K–12 implementation,[15] which they believe was implemented without critical consultation, are evidence of struggles against the perceived perpetuation of an imposed and dominant vision of the social world. I contend that this struggle, which is at the same time an assertion of legitimacy, is a manifestation of a radical identity that is at once distinct as it is contrary to the traditional notion of what it is to be a teacher. ACT's struggle for legitimacy in the political field is an assertion of their 'capacity to judge "without banisters", [where they] re-appropriate politics and not let themselves be transformed into customers or patients' (Mihai 2016, p.24). In short, legitimacy is an aspiration of a critical social actor, not

[15] The fundamental feature of Republic Act No. 10533 or The Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013 (but more popularly known as K-12 Law) is the objective of providing 'quality education that is globally competitive based on pedagogically sound curriculum that is at par with international standards' (Section 2a). Among the controversial features of this law are the addition of two years into the basic education formation of pupils to which parents are decrying the added education costs, the required re-training and professional development of thousands of teachers and the displacement of tertiary level teachers, the lack of classrooms and other facilities.

only to understand but more importantly to construct meaning in the political field. These teacher activists seek legitimation from the people through their street demonstrations whose intended result is a legitimation by the government after their demands are granted.

Teachers' contradictory positions on their participation in the political field make understanding of their political *habitus* problematic. This mirrors critical objections that highlight Bourdieu's notion of political *habitus* has not been sufficiently explored particularly in relation to intellectuals' role – in this case, teachers' function – in politics (Swartz 1997). Furthermore, another critique castigates Bourdieu for 'overreaching', that is, for illegitimately assuming the (universal) applicability of his tools to every social and political issue (Lane 2006). By extension, these critiques provide evidence that teachers' incursions into the political field are largely unexplored. Instead of being cowed and stifled by these critics, I choose to see research gap as an opportunity to explore Bourdieu's notions of political *habitus*, field and capital in terms of their capacity to construct a facet of a distinct identity in Philippine society.

Even after establishing that teachers' political *habitus* can be legitimated in the political field through their participation in the electoral process and assumption of political office, there remains a divide between teachers who believe in the necessity of their political involvement and those opposed to this view. This particular contrasting stand on teachers' involvement in the political field mirrors the ideological divide and competition in the political *habitus* (Ibrahim 2015) between teachers' traditional role and emerging radical actions. On the one hand, some public (mostly senior) and private (almost all) school teachers closely adhere to the traditional roles of teachers (nurturing, obedient, predisposed to comply, parochial, etc.) whereby their community engagements are aligned with longstanding cultural values. On the contrary, public school teachers, particularly those from the National Capital Region (NCR), argue that militant, progressive and nationalist actions form part of an emerging contemporary teachers' identity. In all the FGD sessions, the topic that divided the participants the most was their engagement in the political domain. The contrasting perspectives reflect how the opposition between orthodoxy (traditional actions) and heterodoxy (emerging radical practices) organizes the field of cultural production (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.106). The contrasting teachers' perspectives on the legitimacy of their participation in the political field provide a logical basis for the difficulty in refining the

concept of political *habitus*. Hence, for Bourdieu (2000; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) an immanent disposition of *habitus* is to struggle or to compete, particularly that an elaboration of *habitus*' indicates a power of freedom or 'power-to' (Haugaard 2008). Paradoxically, this stance for struggle includes a counter-resistance to acts that threatens the traditional teachers' identity. The agents of this resistance to emerging radical facet of teachers' identity are often educators from the provinces, those in rural setting, most of those that come from the private schools, and senior teachers.

Based on the above discussions on the possibility and complexity of legitimizing teachers' political *habitus*, I argue that establishing a more or less homogeneous teachers' identity in the political field is extremely difficult, if not impossible. I underscore a twofold basis for this assertion. First, what may be considered as legitimate or illegitimate political *habitus* (dispositions and practices) is largely arbitrary, that is, it is historically and demographically conditioned. In other words, teachers' age and experience, demographics and geographical location, private or public affiliation, and so on, influence teachers' perceptions of the legitimacy of engaging in the political field. Second, multiple layers of interests (e.g., economic benefits, more respect for teachers' rights.) and disinterestedness (e.g., aspiration to retain teachers' traditional value) are also differentiating categories that lend variability to appreciation of teachers' engagement in the political field. In other words, when political *habitus* 'functions as principles for simultaneous existence of inclusion/empowerment and exclusion/dominance within the practices of everyday political participation' (Harrits 2011, p.237), it is impossible to mark a homogeneous notion of teachers' identity in the political field.

Connecting this discussion to the larger aim of this study, the data supports contrasting facets of teachers' identity in the political field. Hence, the very notion of teachers' political identity is itself a contested concept. For this reason, there is an inevitable task to problematize how both traditional identity (representing the more senior teachers from the provinces/islands) and radical identity (early career teachers and/or those living in the city) are legitimized. Putting it differently, these contrasting positions suggest the heterogeneity of teachers' identity both as individual actors in local politics (Stokke 2002) and as collective agents organized within the structure of contemporary social and identity movements (Crossley 2002; Husu 2013; Ibrahim 2015).

Radical habitus and legitimation through social movements. In this section, the analysis continues with the investigation of how contemporary Filipino teachers' political *habitus* is legitimized at both the individual (typically as municipal and village councillors) and collective level (specifically through participation in the Alliance of Concerned Teachers party list). In these two fields, teachers struggle for their legitimation and consequently the validation of their critical identity. At the collective level, teachers' political *habitus* is legitimated through their collective engagements as a social movement operationalization of a radical *habitus* (Crossley 2002, 2003) aimed at instigating social change (Husu 2013). This means that teachers' collective political *habitus* is legitimized (specifically through ACT) as a power of freedom or 'power-to' (Haugaard 2008). In this context, teachers' proactive stance emphasizes radical dispositions and actions aimed at unmasking and altering the relations of power in the social world.

Teachers' political *habitus* is legitimated in many ways, through actions (rallies, demonstrations, strikes, debates, etc.) in every space and time (in the streets or the Halls of Congress, during *Brigada Eskwela* activities, etc.) and in alliance with other marginalized sectors of the society. For instance, in the May 9, 2015 teachers' demonstration against the forced implementation of the K–12 program, teachers (from the ACT and other party lists) formed alliances with other marginalized sectors with the battle cry '*Uring mangagawa, Hukbong mapagpalaya*' (working class, liberating force.) Through this identification – '*ka-uri*' – with other marginalized sectors, teachers increased their collective symbolic capital and magnified their capacity to instigate change. This social capital was further magnified through their strategy of utilizing different platforms to disseminate information with the objective of gaining people's sympathy.

The limited opportunities of teachers as politicians. While complexity characterizes the legitimation of teachers' political *habitus* through their collective engagements, the limited political opportunities and more confined engagements of individual teacher politicians reflects a more homogenized political *habitus*. For instance, Juan Miguel (a public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-B) and James (a public school teacher from the island school of Isla de Norte Elem. and HS) echoed the general sentiment of the futility – in terms of being typically confined to a councillor role – of teachers' political careers due to their lack of economic capital. This argument

illustrates how material conditions contribute to teachers' formation and distinction as individual politicians. Furthermore, this confinement to a particular political space reasserts the notion that 'individuals exist only alongside and within collective structures, and so cannot be understood in isolation from one another' (Bourdieu 1993b, p.15). In other words, as one FGD participant rationalized, '*wala kasing mayaman na teacher*' (teachers are typically economically disadvantaged). That is why their participation is typically confined to councillor roles and their success is limited to the community where they are recognized.

As a consequence of this typical collective classification, the legitimated and legitimating political *habitus* reflects a heterogeneous and contested identity. Notwithstanding their economic and social-political deficits, teachers' capacity for reflective judgment brings 'novelty into the political space' (Mihai 2016, p.23) particularly in times of creative crisis in the political and economic domains when old models are rendered inutile. This is precisely what Tita, Joaquin and the rest of the ACT members and supporters suggested, namely, that injustices against teachers can no longer be addressed through proper channels, so new strategies are required to unmask forms of domination and to effect educational reforms. Furthermore, the diversity of these facets indicates that both individual and collective *habitus* develops 'a practical sense attuned to the political conditions of the field' (Thomson 1991, p. 27). For ACT teachers, this practical sense includes the knowledge that media plays a central role in maximizing the reach of their ideology and that they acquire more political capital by collaborating with similar marginalized groups – in numbers there is strength. Through continued participation in the political field, this practical sense helps develop 'dispositions, thoughts, and actions that influence the political choices of an actor and *eventually* come to underlie the political ethos that a change-agent uses' (Tejada 2015, p. 339). Lastly, the opposing assessments of teachers' political *habitus* – from among the teachers themselves – indicates that 'political *habitus* […] in many ways [mirrors multiple] class *habituses* reflective of class cultures amidst differences in resources and "class culture"' (Harrits 2011, p.241).

What I have emphasized in this section is that teachers' political *habitus* requires legitimation (e.g., by running for elections, through nomination by the village chief and by collective action through party-list activities) and at the same time acts as a legitimating agent (e.g., arbitrating conflicts in the village, counselling fellow teachers

on their rights, obtaining a salary increase for teachers, proposing a bill in support of teachers' welfare). Furthermore, teachers' social and cultural demographics influence and differentiate the manner through which political *habitus* is legitimized. Finally, while constructing a specific facet of teachers' political *habitus* in the political field is untenable at the collective level and only partially possible at the individual level, this difficulty does not preclude the notion of teachers' legitimated and legitimating political *habitus*. As a caveat, the difficulty of constructing a relatively homogeneous teachers' identity in the political field only increases the importance of understanding identity as an extremely differentiated product of field, *habitus* and capital relations.

In the next section, I evaluate the capacity of teachers' legitimated and legitimating political *habitus* to reproduce and/or to generate practices in the political domain.

8.2.2 Teachers' political habitus: reproductive or generative?

Teachers' identity in the political domain resonates throughout their individual and collective engagements in their respective communities. In this section, I will explore the reproductive and/or generative possibilities of teachers' engagements in the political field. This discussion continues from the previous section where I argued that multiple forms of legitimating practices help generate a more heterogeneous identity in what may be conceived as 'participation in the volatile game of representation and validation' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.171). By first subjecting themselves to a legitimate and legitimizing electoral process, teachers also commence their own project of self-legitimation. This legitimating process provides the foundation for a critical understanding of their political *habitus* (individual and collective). In other words, in order for teachers to legitimize, they must first be legitimated through the processes devised by the state. Although articulated in another context, Ieţcu-Fairclough (2008, p.411) expressed the importance of the electoral process where agents 'stake their claim to represent the interests of the entire [in this case, teachers'] population or of large sections, [illustrating that] power depends on successful mobilization of majorities'. In this sense, teachers invest in the democratic electoral process as a numbers game. For involved teachers, the electoral process is more than a just a political exercise, it is a measure of their identity, not only among their peers, but also more critically at the altar of the voting community.

While individual teacher politicians have to contend only with other aspiring agents in the community, party-list aspirants require multiple levels of legitimation. First, different teachers' party lists compete against each other for the right to represent the teachers' population. Second, they need to accumulate a certain number of votes (set by the Election Commission) from the general electorate to secure representation. For example, in the May 2016 National Election, the number of votes ACT received obtained for them two seats in the House of Representatives in contrast to one seat each for the A-Teacher and Manila Teacher party lists (Santos 2016). This political structure indicates that teachers' aspirations to have a political impact are set against the backdrop of multiple (internal and external) political hurdles. By subjecting themselves to this political exercise, teachers throw themselves into multiple and overlapping forms of political reproduction. As evidence for this argument, aspiring teachers also conduct political campaigns, utilize media to publicize their platforms, get entangled with political intrigues – in other words, they need to play the political game. Up to this moment, teachers both as individual politicians and in the party-list movement have been complicit with the political structure, thereby reproducing much of what constitutes traditional political practices.

Individual and collective political aspirants undergo the process of electoral validation wherein they become part of the politically structured social reproduction. However, even after the election period, that is, after going through the process of state-sponsored legitimation, teachers' individual and collective political *habitus* remains subject to differentiation. For instance, while individual teacher politicians are prone to perpetuate the political *status quo* and the processes therein, collective (party list, particularly ACT) engagements are better disposed and positioned to generate actions contrary to the logic or *doxa* of traditional politics. In other words, as a collective, teachers are able to generate practices capable of inducing change as a component of their political class *habitus* (Harrits 2011; Tejada 2015).

After having been declared winners in the electoral process, which is a pre-eminent form of 'rational agreement in modern [and democratic] societies' (Crossley 2003, p.46), teachers now assume a degree of political legitimacy in the Philippine political fields. One of the immediate consequences of this legitimation is the ability to speak with authority to legally and symbolically represent teachers' groups. In other words, teachers use the very same structures of domination (i.e., the electoral process

dominated by traditional politicians) to gain entry into mainstream politics. Once they are validated, that is, proclaimed winners, they shed the veneer of compliance and maximize the capacity of their radical *habitus* to test the boundaries of what can be spoken and what can be obtained through their radical action. It is in this context that contemporary Filipino teachers are disposed towards generative actions. However, the variability of political success and impact between individual teacher politicians and teachers' party lists indicates that, even in the political domain (or particularly in this domain), political *habitus* only assumes relative autonomy (McNay 1999, 2001). In this sense, legitimation by election appears to be an *illusio* of power and autonomy that functions as the very requirement for the (political) system or structure to work. Nonetheless, teachers' participation in the very structure of domination is a strategy utilizing the same *doxa* – taken-for-granted rules of the game – in their favour.

In Language and Symbolic Power (1990b), Bourdieu propounded the notion that to speak the language of domination or to tacitly define or be part of the definition of the official language involves ignoring (or subverting) the laws of construction and masking its social genesis (p.44). This notion can be extended to describe Filipino teachers' participation in political fields in terms of how they are entangled in the process of legitimation that mirrors an illusion of agency rather than reflects an authentic one. However, this is important from a strategic standpoint since the legitimation of teachers' individual and collective political *habitus* through the electoral process also empowers them to legitimize their subsequent actions. Hence, from legitimated identity to a legitimating power. This strategy plays a critical role in attaining one of the central objectives of the ACT party list – according to Juaquin – 'that teachers acquire a progressive, militant and nationalist world view'. The innovativeness of a legitimized political *habitus* allows teachers to manifest their struggles in multiple social spaces – from the hallowed corridors of the Philippine Congress to the politicized streets of the community. Not only that, the subsequent actions from this legitimated habitus is not only a legitimate, that is, with social and legal gravity, but they are now empowered to legitimize (e.g., through legislation, through collective action, etc.).

To further the understanding of the reproductive or generative capacity of teachers' political *habitus*, it is necessary not only to identify their actions but also to assess the intensity of such actions, including whether they are episodic or continuous. In other words, are teachers' political engagements simply a fad or a long-term engagement? For

Tita and Juaquin, political involvement emerges from social inequalities and the continued marginalization of the teaching profession. While, for Reggie and Lagring, who insist on the traditional role of teachers, political engagements that contradict the typical teachers' role are only temporary. The latter position is aligned with the thinking that 'political contention is [more] episodic rather than continuous occurs in public [and] involves interaction' (McAdam, Tilly, and Tarrow, quoted in Emirbayer & Goldberg 2005, pp.469-470). I distinguish that, while it is tenable that at the level of action political contention might be episodic, at the level of dispositions, the aspired stance requires consistent radicality where power is understood as freedom from fundamental constraints (Haugaard 2008). For as long as the condition that generated the construction of an activist identity persists, teachers will continue to address social inequalities in their field through these actions. Strategizing when, where and how to manifest this activist identity is crucial to the success of their advocacy. For instance, strikes and rallies by ACT usually coincide with opening of classes, *Brigada Eskwela* activities or juxtaposed with official state activities. These activities are held when the media's attention is focused on schools. Therefore any activity therein – particularly strikes, demonstrations and so on – are magnified and broadcast to the rest of the country. Thus, despite the episodic nature of political contention, the continuous dimension of a strategic and reflexive *habitus* is just as important. This episodic action and continuous strategy is not only utilized exclusively by militant groups; school principals and supervisors also deploy it as a counter strategy. For instance, Emma, a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School, noted that '*whenever ACT would announce a sit-down strike, our principal or supervisor would also schedule faculty meetings or seminars leaving us with no option but to comply with institutional requirements*'. This tension between teachers and their superiors (principals and supervisors/ directors/directress) involves a tactical strategizing that indicates a measure of agency but still within the parameters of larger social structure.

The argument that political contention is strategically episodic (choosing when, where and how to fight) in order to maximize the intended effect further sustains the argument that teachers are reflexive actors in Philippine society. Furthermore, episodic political contention allows teachers to utilize their social capital to form alliances with other marginalized sectors. These alliances are evident particularly in the fact that ACT-initiated demonstrations and rallies are supported by other militant organizations and

vice versa. Thus, when teachers' political *habitus* is unencumbered and predisposed to act reflexively, it can be triggered not only by education-related problems, but also by other critical social issues in Philippine society. Furthermore, these alliances also illustrate how teachers utilize social and cultural capitals in the furtherance of their cause. As Juaquin, an ACT officer, clearly articulated when asked why ACT are present even in rallies that are not education-related, '*ginagawa naming yun bilang pakiki-isa at bilang pagkilala sa pagka-kawing-kawing ng mga problemang panlipunan*' ('*we ally with them as a form of solidarity and to show the interconnectedness of social problems*'). As a result, militant teachers' political *habitus* is more prone to confront multiple occasions of disjuncture, providing more instances for reflexive actions. In addition, the consistent disposition to engage in militant action indicates that the conditions for the existence of political *habitus* also persist. This condition for existence is referred to as 'the structures constitutive of a particular type of environment (e.g., the material conditions of existence characteristic of a class condition) that produce *habitus*' (Bourdieu 1977, p.72). Through the persistence of this politically configured material condition, the endurance of teachers' political *habitus* is 'guaranteed by the conformity of practices and their constancy across time' (Bourdieu 1990a, p.54) and further reinforced by the 'interconnectedness of the existing opportunities [for radical action in the] field (Husu 2013, p.275). In other words, for as long as the condition of inequality persists in any marginalized field, teachers' collective political *habitus* will always be triggered to exercise the whole range of what Juaquin refers to as 'militant, progressive and nationalist actions'.

In contrast, activism in teachers' *habitus*, illustrated through ACT's collective action, is almost non-existent in teachers' individual engagements in the political domain. Their confinement to the role of village councillor, noble as it may seem, indicates a subordinated position in the political structure. Due to their subordinated position in the larger political structure, teachers' political *habitus* tends to be complicit with traditional political practices dominated by powerful agents (traditional politicians and political dynasties typically supported by powerful political parties). In this specific political engagement, teachers are dispossessed of what is ironically referred to as a language that is authoritative and legitimate as these are mostly defined and conferred by the dominant class (Hanks 2005). Hence, teachers' individual political engagement illustrates how teachers become complicit in the reproduction of the political *status quo*

while teachers' collective (social movement) engagements show how it is possible for political *habitus* to unmask and critically reconfigure structures of domination. The preceding argument is particularly meaningful since, as individual political aspirants, teachers' 'need (political) parties that can offer […electors not only a doctrine but a programme of truth and action that can be translated into total support thereby increasing the chances of assuming power' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.174). Nevertheless, the degree to which the dynamism of teachers' political *habitus* is activated and activates is proportionate to the amount of 'material and cultural instrument necessary for them to participate actively in politics' (p.172). Finally, in contrast to the effect of alliances between ACT and other marginalized sectors, the impact of individual teacher politicians' alliances with traditional political parties is nuanced. On the one hand, it may increase the chance of success. But on the other hand, it also increases their vulnerability to 'ideological manipulation […][so that] they are complicit in the maintenance of the *status quo*' (Mihai 2016, p.30).

To summarize this section, contemporary Filipino teachers' political *habitus* tends to reproduce *status-quo* power at the individual level where they become vulnerable to intensified symbolic violence. On the other hand, while teachers' collective participation (i.e., through party lists) opens itself to potentially generative practices, the attainment and deployment of these requires an unprecedented form of activism previously atypical of teachers' *habitus*. Nonetheless, what is more significant in this analysis are the following findings. First, at both individual and collective levels of political engagements, teachers' political *habitus* is constructed and reconstructed, that is, legitimized, within a correlative political field. Second, upon legitimation of their political *habitus*, teachers embark on legitimizing their multiple radical actions and critical discourses in every space and opportunity presented to them.

In the next section, I intend to illustrate how teachers' political *habitus* – as much as it is legitimated – is likewise legitimating. Teachers' capacity to legitimize their actions, advocacies and their world view means that their political *habitus* is endowed with power in spite of their subordinated position in the political field. In the ensuing analysis, I investigate the paradox of a marginalized political *habitus* as a principle of teachers' political power. Also in the next section I attempt to determine the boundaries and context of this power.

8.2.3 Political habitus as a source of reflexive and symbolic power

In this section, I investigate the dynamics of teachers' political *habitus* as a legitimizing principle through symbolic power, that is, 'the power to define what is and what is not valued' (Grenfell 2014, p.146). From the data, teachers' legitimating dispositions and actions of their political *habitus* in the community help configure a facet of their distinct identity. For instance, when teachers mediate conflicts in their respective communities or when ACT members organize a sit-down strike; they are constructing a political *habitus* unquestionably endowed with symbolic power. Specifically, the struggles in these examples are not only competitions for the right to define what is valuable, but also an actual contest to obtain the available stakes. Hence, modalities of power, particularly symbolic power, are requirements *sine qua non* in teachers' legitimating actions. To maximize the potency of symbolic power, teachers access the critical role of language as a tool in navigating the unequal structure of power characterized by acts of domination and resistance (Bourdieu 1990b). In this research, I observed that the modalities of power that originate from multiple marginalized positions flow from different capitals and operate at different levels of the community.

From the outset, teachers' participation in the political field proceeds from a relatively disadvantaged position. This disadvantage is palpable in the community-limited position accessible to individual teacher politicians. Even at the collective level, the presence of multiple competitions – even from among their ranks – suggests that ACT teachers do not have the monopoly on representing teachers. Furthermore, the limitation and arbitrariness of teachers' political and symbolic power is unravelled by their need to ally themselves with other marginalized organizations to exponentially increase their collective militant voice. This strategy indicates that teachers' multiple disadvantages in the political field reveal an 'unequal distribution of the meaningful instrument of production (i.e., economic and social capital) which 'reduced [teachers] to the status of consumers in this field' (Bourdieu 1990b, p.172). In other words, teachers form alliances to compensate for these multiple disadvantages.

As a social movement, the proof that teachers' marginalized legitimated symbolic power is legitimating can be articulated in several modalities. First, ACT teachers' political *habitus*, through their cultural (education/intellectual) capital, helps unravel the structures of domination and the interests of other agents in the political field. Second,

teachers' political *habitus* attracts the sympathy and collaboration of other marginalized agents. This collaborative action highlights the importance of how 'the intervention of multiple agents devolve into a necessary condition for the legitimation of a public decision' (Dubois 2014, p.216). For instance, by encouraging teachers to become members of the ACT party list, Joaquin needs to produce 'ideas that are – not only – capable of producing groups' (Bourdieu 1990b, pp.181–182) but of bringing teachers together into one un-ignorable group. Third, central to teachers' legitimating power is their capacity to 'strategically manoeuvre to meet the contradictory demands of the political field, as involving a double political game, a game of democratic representation and a game of power' (Ieţcu-Fairclough 2008, p.399). As a consequence, it is in the amalgamation of these three manifestations of power that the ACT social movement invests in the possibility of change by tapping into the potentiality of a 'reflective judgement [action] and the inertia of political habitus' (Mihai 2016, p.22). While Stahl (2013) suggests that such potentiality may be traced to *habitus* disjuncture, McNay (2001, p.146) expounds the argument by proposing the possibility of social change via critical consciousness.

The reflexive and symbolic power of teachers' political *habitus* is even indubitably apprehended when set against the machinations of other competing agents in the field. For instance, teachers' political *habitus* is set against states' capacity to mobilize experts to their advantage. For example, the government's capacity to gather 'competent persons' to dialogue with striking and radical teachers demonstrates state agents' 'aptitude to govern and [to impose] their legitimacy to do so' (Dubois 2014, p.216). While some teachers welcome the ensuing negotiations – which is often utilized as a bargaining chips for teachers to end their demonstrations – between representatives of the state and officers of the ACT, the latter is always wary that this strategy is just another form of censorship (Hanks 2005). Another example of how the representatives of the state activates a counter-strategy to the activism of the progressive group is the scheduling of faculty meetings during planned rallies and strikes. As a form of censorship, the struggle is for the control of the narrative of discourse, that is, what, how and where to talk about issues. Thus, if teachers have an unencumbered ability to attend rallies, what they hear is a critical evaluation of their unjust situation. On the other hand, requiring teachers to attend faculty meeting and seminars silently emphasizes that teachers need to teach in the classroom and that participation in these rallies contradicts

their professional identity. That is why some teachers suspect that negotiations are just for show and dialogue is simply empty rhetoric to placate any brewing dissent.

To summarize this section, notwithstanding teachers' disadvantaged position due to their economic and social deficits, once they have been legally, politically and socially legitimated, they are endowed with symbolic power for acts of legitimation. At the individual level, teachers' legitimating action flows from their elected or nominated position – typically as councillors (*kagawad*). At this level, their legitimating actions are at the same time principles of reproduction of their political class *habitus* in their respective communities. At the collective level, teachers' legitimating actions as ACT members are less constrained and are organized around reflexive and strategic actions. These actions include unencumbered articulation of their views and demands, the capacity to draw state representatives to the negotiating table, and strategic episodic action to maximize impact.

The next section augments this discussion of the meaning and relevance of political *habitus* by apprehending the field wherein they are naturally constructed.

8.3 Playing the political game: teachers' political field

Teachers' aspiration for legitimacy through their political *habitus* corresponds to a specific political field. In this section, I analyse how teachers' legitimated and legitimating engagements reflect the political field that constructs and lends meaning to their political *habitus*. Among the many fields of teachers' involvements, it is in the political field that field is indubitably perceived as 'a structure of relative positions in which the actors and groups think, act and take positions' (Hilgers & Mangez 2014, p.9). It is also through teachers' political practices that field 'seek[s] more energetically to influence the distribution of various forms of capital' (Mihai 2016, p.29). For this reason, teachers' involvements in the political field reveal more pronouncedly the multiple configurations of *habitus*–field relations. The symbiotic relationship between *habitus* and field is a given in Bourdieu's sociology (Bourdieu 1977, 1993a; Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992) whereby the 'dynamics of the phenomenon are analysed as consubstantial with the relational space in which it takes place' (Hilgers & Mangez 2014, p.3). However, it appears that field seems to have pre-eminent influence over *habitus* rather than the other way around. This argument is sustained when the field is

typically reckoned in terms of 'defining' (Swartz 1997, p.117), determining and imposing its structure on the agents therein (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.79).

In this section, I intend to explore the political field through teachers' community practices. To attain this objective, I shall first problematize the political field as a constructed and constructing space. Next, I analyse teachers' capacity to act as social actors vis-à-vis the limits of the field. Finally, I investigate how the relation of power between *habitus* and the structures of power legitimizes teachers' identity in the political field.

8.3.1 Political field and the dynamics of a constructed–constituting space

In this study, the argument that field is pre-eminently constructive when compared to *habitus* is sustained mainly at the collective level of engagement while it is contradicted at the individual level. The data reveals that the encumbering power of the field wanes significantly when met with a determined political *habitus* that is both collective and radical. Hence, even if teachers are in a dominated position in the political field due to multiple disadvantages, their capacity to have an impact on the field remains due to a confluence of ancillary factors. First, from Juaquin and Tina's accounts, teachers are cognizant that an increase in the possibility of success in the political field rests on their ability to speak as one. In other words, solidarity (*pakiki-isa*) increases their reflexivity in the face of the overpowering elements in the political field. Second, the nature of the democratic political field allows the formation of alliances with other marginalized sectors in order to maximize their influence. In other words, among professionals in Philippine society, teachers are in a better position to establish alliances with other marginalized groups. In these alliances, the only consideration required is that they 'occupy similar positions, […] placed in similar conditions and subjected to similar conditionings, [so that they] have every likelihood of having similar dispositions and interests and therefore of producing similar practices and adopting similar stances' (Bourdieu 1985, p.725). The data further indicate that it is at the collective level where teachers' political *habitus* can resist the homogenizing influence of the political field. Hence, even the manner by which teachers react to and resist the structure of power in the field facilitates the construction of their political *habitus*. This in a sense sustains the argument that 'no single field monopolizes the production of reflexivity' (Webb, Schirato & Danaher 2002, p. 52). On the contrary, the overlapping fields dispose agents

towards 'the systematic exploration of the unthought categories of thought which delimit the thinkable and predeterminate thought' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p.40) that results in possible configurations of identity. In other words, teachers' identity in the political field is differently constructed as teachers engage in a variety of activist practices (e.g., rallies and demonstrations, authoring and lobbying for House bills that advances teachers' welfare, coalesce with other marginalize sectors).

The resulting practices of a critical and activist teacher, as Juaquin opined, characterize the political field as a 'space of production […] and legitimation that makes it possible to understand the *habitus* of the agent' (Dubois 2014, p.209). However, the plurality and intensity of teachers' engagements in the political field suggests that *habitus* also functions as a principle of its construction. This is an inevitable conclusion since teachers' multiple political engagements, as well as the ubiquity of political spaces (Halls of Congress, Barangay Halls, Historical landmarks, major thoroughfares), influence the construction not only of political *habitus* but also of the political field. That activist teachers can express their sentiments and bring their fights in multiple spaces characterizes the field's permeability and elasticity (responding to the tug of the *habitus*). Therefore, regardless of whether the political field promotes agency or reproduction, this indicates that the political field is a 'site par excellence in which words are actions and the symbolic character of power is at stake' (Bourdieu 1991b, p.26).

It appears that, while teachers' collective engagements manifest multiple, radical and strategic activities in navigating the objective relations of power in the political field, the same could not be said when teachers participate in this field as individual politicians. At the level of the collective, regardless of whether teachers approve or disapprove of radical engagement in the political field, their participation is still characterized by unparalleled dynamism. Specifically, teachers who are officers and members of ACT take advantage of the immanent relation of power in the political field whereby they can form arbitrary alliances with agents aligned to their specific area of advocacy. By doing so, they take advantage of the 'quantum of social force, or of capital guaranteed to the occupants therein – which they utilize in the struggles over the monopoly of power' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, pp.229–230). On the contrary, teachers' individual engagement, as *kagawad* (councillor) or member of the *Lupon ng Barangay*, reveals their subordinated position in the traditional political field where they

tend to comply with the political *status quo* rather than exercise radical engagements. Compliance in this case is the 'unwitting complicity of actors in pursuing their own vested interests' (Swartz 1997, p.70). However, these situations do not automatically mean teacher politicians' symbolic victimization (i.e., through symbolic violence). On the contrary, the art of compliance can actually take the form of a strategy of cocooned disinterestedness. By wielding the *illusio* of disinterestedness in the political field, individual teacher politicians may access 'the most profitable strategies arising from the perception of exuding the most authentic sincerity' (Bourdieu 1977, p.214), which is disinterestedness. In other words, at the collective level, ACT members need to broadcast and magnify their marginalization and disadvantage to succeed in their advocacy. On the other hand, at the individual level, the continued legitimation of teacher politicians in the political field requires a perception of disinterestedness.

Furthermore, this analysis indicates that teachers' collective engagement through ACT advocacies anticipates a *habitus* disjuncture in the political field, that is, they expect opposition and are geared up for battles in the field. This argument is supported by teachers' constant assertion of the legitimacy of radical actions in the political field wherein their aim is to break the *doxa* (traditional conception) of what it is to be a teacher. This assertion necessitates unravelling the structure of power that sustains their subordinated position. Hence, teachers' collective engagement in the political field help creates *habitus* disjuncture, which opens up opportunities for strategic reflexive action where teachers are predisposed to act as social actors. In the next section, I further problematize how the structure of the political field relates to the conception of teachers as social actors.

8.3.2 Limits of the political field: proof that teachers are social actors?

The contrasting ways in which teachers judge their involvement in the political field suggest a notion of field limitations. Specifically, the multiple boundaries of the power of the field are revealed by highlighting its historical characteristics (Lahire 2015). What limitation means in this context is that a field is only a field as far as it is a field of power (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Swartz 1997), that is, when agents are actually interested and therefore actively participate in the acquisition and appropriation of powers and resources. This notion of the limits of the field opens up the possibility that

field boundaries can be breached, proving further that teachers have reflexive capacity as social actors in this field.

Evidence of the limits of the field can be gleaned from the questions like 'how do we conceptualize those experiences that do not fit within an exchange-value model of self and culture' (Skeggs 2004b, p. 75). In this study, the notion of limits of the field appears in the episodic but constant and protracted radical actions of teachers' political engagements. Through these militant activities, teachers kept on testing the robustness of the field. For instance, Juaquin, a public school teacher and ACT officer, takes pride in ascribing a salary increase and improvement in teachers benefits as a product of teachers' sustained militant actions. For him, their successful episodic, collective and relentless militant actions in every space of possible competition and through many forms of struggle is sufficient proof of the limits of the field. In his words, '*kahit medyo matagal ang pakikibaka, pero sa dulo nakakamtan din namin*' ('*even if struggles are prolonged, in the end we also obtain what we are fighting for*').

Teachers' interest in the complex, challenging and diversely constituted political field requires a recognition of the stakes therein as well as their radical capacity to compete for those resources. For instance, Emma, a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School, described her colleagues in the National Capital Region (NCR) as '*palaban*' (subversive) and '*sanay sa pakikibaka*' (used to fighting for their rights). This description is also a recognition of the legitimacy of their actions and literacy to compete for the stakes. For Tita, Crisanto and Juaquin, teachers from the NCR, if teachers are to receive what they rightfully deserve in terms of salary and other benefits, they have to fight for it through *'militant, progressive and nationalist actions'* otherwise the government will remain insensitive to their marginalized situation. Such actions and dispositions reveal a continuously changing position in the political field. Thus, a recognition that actors (in this case teachers) are always 'positioned at the intersection of multiple, overlapping fields […] may help determine when and why people engage in decisive, intentional action that shifts either the course of history or at least their own trajectories' (Decoteau 2015, p.318). Within this overlapping political field, struggles are legitimate since it metamorphoses into a space that forces the 'undiscussed into discussion, the unformulated into formulation' (Bourdieu 1977, p.169). In other words, the importance of a reflexive teachers' political *habitus* rests on its capacity to force teachers' situation, which is usually ignored, into public discourse. As to the effects of

the political field on individual and collective political practices, the accounts of FGD participants indicate that individual teacher politicians are more vulnerable to the political field's all-encompassing power while the teachers who act collectively are more resistant. In other words, for these teacher politicians, the political field is robustly demarcated so that it limits their capacities as social actors.

Notwithstanding the notion of limits of the field, contemporary Filipino teachers' political field maintains itself as a field of discourse. The spectrum of possibilities in the political field, that is, what can be spoken, who can speak and how it is spoken, as well as how establishments can be challenged, provokes the conception of teachers as legitimated and legitimating political social actors (Stokke 2002). This capacity can be traced to teachers' cultural (educational-intellectual) capital that empowers them to anticipate 'the imminent forth-coming (as) present, immediately visible, as a present property of things' (Bourdieu 2000, p.207). In the political field, teachers do not only utilize the lessons of historical marginalization but they can also anticipate possible effects, both adverse and positive. This is very much evident in teachers' opposition to what they refer to as the '*carelessly planned but haphazardly implemented*' K–12 program. In the May 9, 2015 rally at the *Liwasang Bonifacio* their argument revolved around the anticipation of thousands of teachers losing their jobs, lack of classrooms, lack of teachers' preparation to handle incoming levels of students, the additional burden for parents, and so on.

Aside from their literacy to recognize the lessons of history as well as their capacity to anticipate the future, the argument that teachers are social actors or reflexive agents is facilitated by the elasticity of the field in democratic societies. In short, the very nature of the democratic political field makes it more tolerant of radical and militant actions. Hence, teachers' politically relevant literacies magnify their capacity as reflexive individuals. This is made clearer when set within the context that 'politics is the realm of the contingent, of the spontaneous […] where no precise rules […] are available [and where] reflective judgment is conceived to be the political faculty *par excellence*' (Mihai 2016, p.23). However, this conception does not necessarily imply that radical actions in the political field automatically mean that teachers are autonomous agents. To believe this would be to be entangled with the *illusio* that the political field is the only field of teachers' legitimation and relevance. Although Martin and Gregg (2014, p.51) are correct in suggesting – in another context – that some 'buy into the *illusio* without

reservation and pursue the stakes of the field with total commitment through internal approval', this argument is partially challenged in this study. In the case of Filipino teachers' engagement in the political field, the desired approval or legitimation is not only from among their peers (internal approval) but also from the different entities in Philippine society (external approval). Hence, aside from the fact that the political field provides a space where teachers express their capacity as social actors, agency is ironically magnified by the multiple limitations immanent in the field.

To summarize the key points of this section, while the political field is endowed with panoply of power, this field is the most open to modification and adjustment due to the historicity of field and *habitus*, the incessant tug of the field and fluctuating value of capital. Although the notion of the limits of the field is warranted, it is also differentiated. At the individual level, the political field is less likely to adjust to teachers' political *habitus*. This means that the political field is more potent as a determining factor in relation to individual teacher politicians. At the level of collective political participation, ACT's episodic, multi-space and multi-directional struggles remains a challenge to the limits of the field while at the same time sustaining the argument that teachers are collective social actors.

8.3.3 The political field: legitimating an identity through radical action

In this section, I will probe not only the capacity of the political field to legitimize teachers' identity but also the levels and dynamics of legitimation immanent within the structure of unequal distribution of power. Perceptions of multiple inequality and prolonged marginalization characterize the political field as a natural space of 'deliberative conflicts that can trigger legitimation crises and provoke significant transformation within the paradigm of political relevance' (Mihai 2016, p.28). Filipino teachers are cognizant of the fact that they are deeply but differently embroiled in this social context. This impels teachers to continue their participation in the political field beyond the economic motivation in their quest for legitimation and aspiration to gain relevance in the community.

In addition to economic disadvantage and lack of political resources, teachers' practices in the political field go through layers of legal, cultural and social scrutiny. For instance, teachers need to seek a permit from the state to stage their rallies. Then, as Emma – a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School – complained, they are often

threatened with suspension if there is even a suspicion that their radical action compromises their primary duty as teachers. Hence, it is important to understand that the extent to which teachers may engage in the political field remains within the structural control of the state. At the cultural level, some members of the community (colleagues, parents of their students and other members of society) perceive teachers' radical actions (demonstrations, rallies, etc.) as contrary to teachers' traditional values. In other words, the *doxa* of the political, cultural and social field continues to impose its structure upon all who enter therein. This is also the reason why at the individual level teachers are more likely to succumb to the structure of the political field while the collective (e.g., ACT) are more likely to resist the encumbering power of the field.

At the collective level, teachers' radical actions and modalities of struggle for legitimacy challenge what Vandenberghe (1999) observed to be Bourdieu's partiality towards 'perfect congruence' characterized by 'aspirations for perfect adjustment between positions and dispositions' (Hilgers & Mangez 2014, p.16). The reason is that it is in the very nature of radical action to subvert any encumbering and homogenizing structures. Therefore, teachers' radical practices reveal that the quest for perfect congruence between *habitus* and field is fraught with multiple internal and external struggles. For instance, the competition among party lists aspiring to represent teachers as a marginalized sector of Philippine society indicates teachers' internal struggle in this field.

The variability of struggles in the political field further indicates that the competition between orthodox (traditional) and heretical (radical) actions is more tolerated therein than in other fields of engagements. For example, while both private and public school teachers from the provinces generally consider radical actions (rallies, strikes and demonstrations) as antithetical to teachers' orthodox duties, teachers in the NCR express active support for ACT's multiple struggles. The more traditional group of teachers judge that those involved in radical activities 'deviate too far from their space of legitimacy, in other words, from the objective structure within which they are most legitimate' (Hilgers & Mangez 2014, p.17). For these teachers (e.g., Lagring, a senior private school teacher), the political field is so incongruent with teachers' identity that involvement therein compromises their very identity as teachers. However, ACT members take on the exact opposite perspective. What Juaquin identifies as contemporary teachers' identity or '*makabagong guro*' requires a radical disposition

that is unwilling to simply accept the taken-for-granted nature of the social world. The significance of multiple engagements in the construction of teachers' political *habitus* lies in its capacity to tolerate 'heretical' actions, allowing for a re-imagination of teachers' traditional identity. In a sense, ACT teachers in the political field do not struggle against the pressure of hysteresis, that is, 'negative secondary reinforcement' (Bourdieu 1977, p.78), but have come to embrace the struggle as part of introducing a radical *habitus* to the community.

ACT's radical actions in the political field caused such division among teachers 'shocking agents [in this case teachers mostly from the National Capital Region] out of their habitual acceptance of that field and into a more critical attitude' (Crossley 2003, p.47). On the other hand, teachers in the provinces oppose such actions and reiterate the docile attitude of traditional teachers. Nonetheless, regardless of the contrasting positions that teachers take on this matter, the political field provides 'the opportunity for critical reflection and debate upon previously unquestioned assumptions' (p.47). Filipino teachers' increasing participation in political processes that are endemic to the democratic political field such as elections, demonstrations (freedom of speech and assembly), and unionism (freedom of organization) indicates a shift of disposition from a controlled (obedient and docile)/traditional cultural field to a relatively autonomous political field. In order for this shift to become successful, teachers need to comply with a demand to increase the standards expected of anyone seeking right of entry into an autonomous political field (Bourdieu 1990b, p.177). In other words, only through assuming critical social views, expressed through radical actions, are teachers sufficiently legitimated in the political field.

As a summary, this section has illustrated how teachers' collective militant action legitimizes a politically literate facet of their identity. The irony in this process is that, while legitimation through militant action helps construct an emergent politically coloured dimension of teachers' identity, the same process is also breaking the traditional mould of orthodox teachers' identity. The continuity and inevitability of this process is field dependent, that is, for as long as the material conditions that warrant the existence of a radical political *habitus* remain, this mode of struggle and legitimation will also be sustained.

In the next section, I examine the value of modalities of capital in the economy of political *habitus* – exchange in the political field that shapes the construction of contemporary Filipino teachers' identity.

8.4 The capital that matters in the political field and *habitus*

The extreme dynamism of teachers' political *habitus* in the political field requires a commensurate appreciation of capital 'both as a weapon and as a stake of struggle' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 98). Never has capital in its various forms been more recognized, valued and deployed than in the political field and by teachers' political *habitus*. In fact, the irrefutable object of struggle in the political field, the reason for the 'push and pull' between teachers' *habitus* and the political field is due mainly to the competition for various forms of capital – specifically, economic capital. Economic capital is important not only because material resources affect mobilization but also because this capital creates distance from material necessities, which helps shift the interest to symbolic aspects and status (Bourdieu 1986b). In this sense, teachers' subordinated position in the political field due mainly to their economic and social (i.e., political influence) deficits opens the exploration of teachers' alternative capitals that provide weight to their political *habitus* and grant them relevancy in the political field. In this section, I will also examine strategies teachers use to mitigate their economic and social deficits in the political field.

8.4.1 Fluctuations in the value of capital in the political field

Teachers' *habitus* in the political field may be considered a repository of a variety of capitals. Their propensity to orient themselves actively either towards the conservation of the distribution of capital or towards the subversion of the distribution (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, pp.108–109) is differentiated by the level of their involvement (i.e., whether individual or collective). At the collective level, among early career teachers and those living in urban centres, teachers' radical disposition may be considered valuable capital that is connatural with teachers' political *habitus*. However, senior teachers from both public and private schools in the provinces refuse to acknowledge the legitimacy of radical action. Hence, they are also adamant in regarding their disposition as authentic capital aligned with teachers' traditional (orthodox) *habitus*. In this manner, capital functions as a naturalizing social mechanism which produces and

reproduces the gap between politically 'active' agents and politically 'passive' agents (Bourdieu 1990b, p.171). For teachers who are members of ACT, radicality (i.e., militancy, progressiveness and nationalism) is seen as a resource *sine qua non*, the lack of which imperils the attainment of their objectives as a social movement. These teachers acquire legitimation through critical educational literacy, providing them with strategies in the field of struggle including the acquisition of 'potentially legitimate knowledge claims' (Maton 2000, p.164). While the same cultural capital in terms of educational literacy is valuable in the political aspirations of individual teacher politicians, this literacy is bereft of criticality. As a proof, individual teachers' confinement to 'councillor' positions suggests that radicality and militancy can even be negatively perceived as baggage in the political field. What they rather value is wisdom in their conciliation work, literacy to deploy cultural values (*pakiki-isa*, *pakikipag-kapwa-tao*, etc.) and pertinent skills in drafting *barangay* and even municipal ordinances. All of these, while valuable skills, tend to reproduce the *status quo* rather than modify it. In other words, the value of capital in the political field is fluid and relative. Therefore, as a result of ever-changing configurations resulting from intersections between differently legitimated and legitimating teachers' political *habitus* and corresponding volatile political field, teachers' capitals also undergo proportionate increase or decrease not only in value but also more importantly as currency of power. In the next section, I discuss how teachers evaluate their economic and cultural capital in the political field.

8.4.2 Economic capital versus cultural capital: a struggle for social position

In various fields of struggle the 'accumulation and exchange of capitals serve to maintain and enhance [teachers'] position in the social or political order' (Swartz 2013, p. 55). As a resource that helps maintain (reproduce) their traditional position (as compliant teachers), Emma, a public school teacher from Bangusan Elementary School, hopes every year that her salary is given on time and for her mid-year bonus to arrive earlier so that she will have the financial resources to buy materials for *Brigada Eskwela* should the community continue to be indifferent to this activity. This example illustrates teachers' dependence on economic capital to implement a mandated program and at the same time maintain a certain status in the community by presenting a classroom that is prepared for the school opening. Like most of the FGD participants, Reggie, a public

school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS, looks forward to an increase in salary so that he need not resort to loans to pay for the tuition of his children. In general, contemporary Filipino teachers' economic capital is mirrored in their appreciation of the 'London' social phenomenon. If there is one cultural and community-based economic process familiar to all FGD participants, it is this 'London phenomenon'. Lagring, a public school teacher from Sto. Domingo National HS, offered the clearest description of this process:

> *London means 'loan here and loan there', in short, London. A teacher's bag is typically bulky because it always contains loan forms – whether through GSIS or another lending agency. This is how we augment our meagre resources. It is good that creditors generally trust us [teachers]. Sometimes teachers would even succumb to loan sharks ('five-six') or sometimes the creditors already hold on to our ATM card. Just the same, teachers are very familiar with the word 'London' and yes, we are thankful because it help us send our children to school and it is a dependable structure in times of financial emergency.*

Every FGD participants' aspiration to see to it that their children acquire tertiary education rests on the belief that that only through acquisition of a college (tertiary) degree could their present and future living circumstances improve. These examples help underscore the importance of having sufficient economic capital but also of the timing of when this capital is made available to teachers. In other words, the gravity of economic disadvantage is felt more strongly during life episodes like enrolment periods (for the tuition of their children) and during *Brigada Eskwela* (particularly in schools where communities are highly differentiated and therefore more likely to be indifferent). Furthermore, social mobility and trajectories depend in larger part on teachers' literacy to utilize their scarce economic capital augmented by their cultural capital. If there was one discussion point in all FGD sessions where teachers were in agreement, it was the importance of strategic utilization of their limited capitals to ensure that their children acquire educational capital.

In this particular context, the aspiration for capital acquisition generates at least two conclusions. First, instead of enhancing their position in the social space, the manner by which teachers struggle to obtain economic capital illustrates how the government perpetuates a structure of domination. ACT members for instance use a multitude of amalgamated capitals including cultural (critical literacy), social (capacity to solicit support from other marginalized organizations), and symbolic (representation in the House of Representatives) as resources in constructing strategies to acquire what the believed is due to them. Second, at a higher level, the noble intention (i.e., education-

related goals) behind teachers' aspiration to acquire more economic capital indicates that teachers' engagements in the political field underpin their entanglement in structures of symbolic violence. This argument is supported for instance by the observation that teachers need to form a party-list organization for them to obtain what is rightfully theirs. Through this party list, teachers collectively harness and deploy every form of capital in order to disentangle themselves from forms of domination, particularly the structure that perpetuates forms of violence.

While the FGD participants agreed that teachers lack the requisite economic capital to compete in the contemporary political field, they also recognized that even their cultural capital is insufficient to be a successful teacher politician. This consensus reflects Bourdieu's argument that cultural capital is a 'dominated capital' with respect to economic capital and the field of power, thus making cultural producers (in this case teachers) a 'dominated fraction of the dominant class' (see Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, pp. 104–105; Bourdieu 1993, pp. 37–39). The relevance of cultural capital in the political field relates to the idea that it facilitates the legitimacy of the position-taking strategies of social movements (Husu 2013). Nevertheless, the same dominated cultural capital, when strategically utilized in alliance with other marginalized sectors of Philippine society, gathers an indubitable symbolic capital in competing for the stakes in the field. Successful alliances with other marginalized sectors of Philippine society transforms their struggle from a singular voice to a cacophony of dissent, or what Bourdieu (1986b, p.280) refers to as 'accumulate[d] social energy in the form of a reified or living labour'. Along with the magnification of voices and increased visibility is the transformation of this struggle into something symbolic not only of teachers' predicament but of the circumstances of all the marginalized or forgotten members of society. Hence, these alliances 'stress the performative capacity of symbolic forms and their multi-level implication in social struggles over and across social divisions' (Bourdieu 2013, p.292). These strategic alliances organize agents in a structure of interpersonal relation allowing them to 'frame their action vis-a-vis one another' (Fligstein 2001, p.108) and, more importantly, must be based 'according on their orientations to each other [so as] to articulate the same shared goal' (Martin 2003, p.29).

In addition, alliances which require 'the intervention of multiple agents devolve into a necessary condition for the legitimation of a public decision' (Dubois 2014, p.216). Therefore, teachers' lack of economic capital is compensated for by a surplus of cultural

and symbolic capital through which they form strategic and critical alliances. Even for individual teacher politicians, their political survival and success in the political arena depends on the quality of their political alliances. However, since most of these individual teacher politicians have specific relevance within the limits of their community, their alliances lead to complicity rather than reflexive radical actions. In other words, the value of individual teacher politicians' social capital is limited by the parameters of their community. Thus, teachers-turned-politicians consume and utilize their capital as they attend to the mundane and quotidian demands of their communities.

8.4.3 Conclusion

This chapter reveals that it is in the political field that teachers' collective identity is atypically legitimized through what members of the ACT party list refer to as a 'militant, progressive and nationalist' movement. However, teachers are generally unsuccessful when they individually participate in politics due mainly to lack of economic capital and the perception that the stakes and dynamics of the field is contrary to teachers' fundamental values. Hence, reflexive practice is highly evident at the collective level while the contrary is true at the individual level. For the FGD participants who are members of ACT, it is only through collective movement in every arena – whether the streets or halls of Congress – and through activism (e.g., demonstrations, rallies, strikes, lobbying) that the state will listen to their grievances and improve teachers' professional and living conditions. Since the political field is the site of overlapping and persistent struggles, it is also a space where the effectiveness of teachers' literacies is measured against other agents and institutions in the field. In the same manner, the value of their resources is also weighed against the competing interests of other professionals, and public and private institutions. Therefore, it is in the political field that teachers test the limits of their collective literacies and values of the different forms of capital. Finally, from teachers' activism emerges a non-traditional notion of what it is to be a teacher in contemporary Philippine society, that is, *'militant, progressive and nationalists'*. This emergent identity remains contentious and resisted not only in mainstream society but also even from those among their ranks who maintain that activism is alien to who they are as Filipino teachers.

Part 4 - A presentation of a constructed and constructing identity

The core elements that compose Chapter 9 are discussions of the findings and conclusions from this research and future research directions. The discussion first presents the emergent markers and characteristics of Filipino teachers' identity, as well as the varied ways in which they are legitimated. Then it progresses by consolidating specific responses to the main research questions and sub-questions. After articulating the findings, the discussion moves to an overall assessment of the affordances and limitations of Bourdieu's theory and method in relation to this study. The chapter culminates with a discussion of the significant implications of this research for practice, theory and policy. The discussion section shapes how the conclusion is presented in this chapter. The conclusion section first presents the two categories – mandatory and voluntary – of teachers' community engagements before presenting how teachers occupy a fluctuating subordinated and ascendant position in the community. This section concludes by summarizing how Filipino teachers' identity may be alternately determined and agentic through their various mandatory and voluntary engagements in the community.

Chapter 9: Discussion, conclusion and future research directions

This study has explored how Filipino teachers' community engagements facilitate the construction of their identity as teachers in and with the community through the interrelation of their practices, resources and field. It responds to a dearth in local studies on teachers' identity in relation to their community engagements (see Biddle 1995) and their affordances (Schutz 2006), particularly in arguing for stronger and more creative and diverse school–community relations (Fiore 2011; Lauglo 1982). Despite the significant body of literature on Filipino teachers' professional identity (e.g., Abulon 2014; Bustos-Orosa 2008; De Leon-Carillo 2008), their identity in the community, particularly through their engagements therein, has remained largely unexplored. Moreover, Bourdieu's sociological tools have not been previously utilized as a critical framework to explore the dynamics of Filipino teachers' community practices, appraise the value of their multiple resource, and interrogate the structure of their socio-cultural contexts.

When probed more deeply, this study showed that the construction of this identity incrementally occurs every time teachers collectively and individually involve themselves in community activities. This study also revealed the different modes of how teachers' identity may be constructed via these engagements including possible implications for the community. First, this theoretical approach helps structure teachers' alternating ascendant and subordinated position in the community. Second, studying teachers' community engagements also unravels the extent of their agency and the impact of various social structures on their identity. Third, focusing on teachers' community engagements facilitated an understanding of how their identity is legitimated. While the construction of teachers' identity in the community emerges as a product of the interrelations of dispositions, fields and capitals, Filipino cultural elements not only contextualizes the modalities and implications of subsequent interrelations but also demonstrates that further investigation of the applicability of Bourdieu's theory as a distinct way of understanding Filipino social phenomena is warranted.

This chapter presents the overall research findings and culminates in the articulation of markers and characteristics of Filipino teachers' identity in the community. Section 9.2 discusses the answers to the research questions. Section 9.3 assesses the adequacy and limitations of Bourdieu's theory and method, as well as how its limitations may be addressed. The discussion then focuses on the implication of this research for theory development and methodological approaches, teachers' practices and policies. The conclusion of this study discusses how teachers' mandatory and voluntary community engagements define their identity in the community in terms of their position (subordinated and ascendant) and practices (determined and agentic, legitimated and legitimating). Future research directions opened by this research are discussed in the final section of this chapter.

9.1 Identity markers and characteristics in the community

I argue that this research shows Filipino teachers' identity as undergoing an alternating process of construction and re-construction through various community engagements. In particular, exposure to overlapping social and cultural factors helps develop a socially characterized identity. However, this community-constituted identity does not supplant their fundamental professional identity as teachers. On the contrary, it builds upon the literacy and function of their professional identity. This study demonstrated that teachers' civic participation helps constitute what I refer to as identity markers in the community. In Philippine communities, teachers are disposed to act as *community leaders* and *community knowledge resources.* They are expected to be *morally ascendant,* and *culturally and socially literate.* In the community, the teaching profession is unambiguously *gendered (i.e., it is a female profession).* Several sectors and institutions regard teachers as *religious lay leaders, community workers* and lately, as *activists*. These markers are collectively characterized as *heterogeneous (constituted by multiple dispositions), historically conditioned, indicative of relative agency, configured as a class through limited economic but abundant cultural and social resources, and continuously forged through multiple relations.* The multiple forms of legitimation that facets of teachers' identity acquire and are subjected to in the community further aid the heterogeneity of their identity. Specifically, Filipino teachers' identity is externally legitimated by government laws and institutional policies, as well as by community recognition and validation through different private

and public institutions (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, teachers' identity is also legitimated – internally, by their own colleagues (i.e., from among their ranks), and through the very act of dispensing multiple community engagements. The latter indicates that teachers' community involvement is a self-legitimating act. These alternating and overlapping sources of teachers' legitimation expedite and sustain the diversification of how their identity in the community is constructed. Furthermore, these sources are the same principles that circumscribe them to modes of domination. Ironically, one of the effects of this prolonged subordination is the emergence of what some teachers consider subversive practices (see Chapter 8).

The aforementioned construction generally emerged as a product of multiple relations between teachers' *habitus*, capitals and field (Reay 2004, 2010; Twiselton 2004). This process results in a contested conception of identity between the fundamental divide of traditional (i.e., compliant and patient) and emergent (e.g., activist, politically inclined). The distance between this divide is mediated by the different demographics or the conditions of their existence that influence their practices in the community. The research also captures how teachers alternately occupy an ascendant and subordinated position in the community. Filipino teachers' fluctuating positions determine their strategies or the modality and intensity of their struggles for stakes potentially obtainable in the performance of their civic involvements. Lastly, through their community engagements, teachers demonstrate how they are implicated both in acts of social and cultural reproduction, and in generating atypical and novel practices. These overall findings are further discussed in the answers to the key questions of this research.

9.2 Responding to the research questions

A working hypothesis at the beginning of this research was that a dynamic relationship between teachers' practices and dispositions (*habitus*), resources and literacies (capital), and the context (field) in which these are applied produces an identity construct. This hypothesis informed the main question of this research that is '*how do teachers' community engagements help construct contemporary Filipino teachers' identity?*' What is immediately obvious based on the research is that teachers' civic participation increases their visibility, and as a consequence their status, in the community. The dynamics of teachers' multiple civic involvements provides the framework through

which the community legitimizes teachers' identity. By utilizing Bourdieu's methods, this research captures how teachers are subjected to the structuring tendencies of the community. In other words, this study demonstrates how teachers are implicated in sustaining traditions in the community by facilitating the reproduction and propagation of the very structure of social and cultural reproduction. The paradox of this situation is that the same community engagements that expose them to structures of reproduction also arguably stimulate them to be more creative in responding to the challenges both of their living conditions and the demands of their communities. Hence, a cardinal dimension of their community-constructed identity is that their community practices are both reproductive and generative.

This finding is further clarified through critical understanding of teachers' field, capital and habitus and the ensuing constructs from their interactions.

9.2.1 An understanding of teachers' field

In answer to the sub-question '*through what social processes is the field of Filipino teachers historically constituted*', I theorize the field as constituted by processes attendant to expansionist colonial practices, and by various interests of dominant and interested agents in their respective communities. In contemporary times, the field is constituted through teachers' adherence to traditional socio-cultural practices and to various pieces of legislation that sustain the *status quo*. Hence from the colonial periods to the present dispensation, multiple relations of power structure every field where teachers operate. The research also reveals that the field is characterized by a variety of struggles resulting in teachers' continuous and cyclical movement from largely dominated to relatively ascendant. Shifts occur through dint of time and field mastery where teachers eventually acquire the literacy to navigate successfully the natural tensions of the field. Ergo, the manner in which teachers navigate various power structures encountered in their community engagements contributes to the very organization of this field. Based on the data, for the most part, the field of contemporary Filipino teachers is typically characterized by perennial tension (Bourdieu 1993b), but this is not always the case as teachers eventually acquire the skills to successfully navigate the social terrains of the community thereby diminishing the intensity of different contentions in the field. In other words, the degree to which teachers' acquire practical knowledge (i.e., 'sense of the game') in relation to various community

activities determines the extent by which tensions are aggravated or mitigated. The dissipation of power struggle in the field and the facility to acquire the cultural literacy to manage these tensions can be traced to two factors. First, Filipino teachers practice their profession in the very community they live in. Most of them, particularly those in the provinces, were even born in the same community and are living with people they are closely familiar with. Hence, their familiarity with the people, social structures and cultural dynamics affords them an insider literacy that is critical in navigating the social contours of the community. Second, the implementation of the *Localization Act* (R.A. No. 8190) prioritizing the assignment of teachers to schools where they are bona fide residents strengthens the first argument further.

The significance of a historically constituted field is evident in the answers to the three specifying questions. First, '*what consequential historical moments and structure contributed to the construction of Filipino teachers' field?*' The impact of Spanish and American colonial rule is indubitable in Philippine society and culture. The historical analysis in this study identifies that one of the most significant moments was when teachers' identity in general and Filipino teachers' identity in particular became entangled with the worldview and practices of colonial personalities who performed 'teacherly' acts. Therefore, Spanish religious men and women and American Thomasites, circa 1901, contributed to the structuring of native Filipino teachers' community engagements during the colonial periods. Specifically, the religious aims of Spanish colonization helped construct teachers primarily as catechists and paved the way for their involvement in religious and cultural activities of the community. To a larger extent, the vestiges of these colonial periods reverberate in the contemporary practices of private and public school teachers. On the one hand, private schools continue to emphasize teachers' role not only in the intellectual but also in the moral and spiritual development of their students (see Gutierrez 2007). While on the other hand, the protracted debate on the use of the English language as a medium of instruction continues to dominate curriculum and pedagogy discourse (see Bernardo 2008; Tupas & Lorente 2014), despite this being a questionable bequest of American colonial rule (see Bernardo 2004). The imperialists' aspirations of American colonial rule were even more closely linked to teachers' social functions. In fact, teachers constituted the backbone of pacification – camouflaged as the 'benevolent assimilation' – of the Filipinos. While colonial interests helped structure Filipino teachers' field, it

was not the only configuring factor. For instance, given sufficient time to expand this research, an analysis of the field that teachers experienced during the pre-colonial and post-colonial era (including the martial law regime and post-1986 People Power Revolution period) could help explain why in some instances the homogenizing power of the field is dissipated (e.g., in the political field), while in some engagements this power is intensified.

The second question is: '*how does the field function as a space through which Filipino teachers' identity is constituted?*' First and foremost, Filipino teachers directly or indirectly construct and reproduce the field. The impact of the validating power of the field is one of the most evident processes in this field that helps construct Filipino teachers' identity. Specifically, these processes transpire when teachers participate in multiple mandatory and voluntary community activities, whether they are state or church sanctioned. Through their engagements with the community, teachers' practices become an embodiment and a reflection of their social world (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). Therefore the very performance of the act of community engagement leads to the legitimation of teachers' identity as leaders, intellectual resources and so on in the community. However, it is not only their practice *per se* but what transpires during their community engagements that structures their legitimation. By performing their community engagements, teachers are in a position to challenge and even to subvert the *status quo* by contesting other interests in the field thereby increasing teachers' potentiality to impact their respective communities. Teachers' position to challenge the existing social order is magnified in the political field particularly when activated in a collective manner (see Chapter 8). Likewise, their authority becomes vulnerable to every interested agent in the field, making possible what may be called legitimation through delegitimizing acts.

What is immediately evident in the research is the significance of the community as a space of multiple encounters between teachers and other agents. In their respective communities, teachers are situated in an alternating position of dominated in terms of status (when set against other professionals such as politicians, businesspeople, priests, and when functioning in an individual capacity) and asserted ascendant position (when acting in a collective, when relating to the general population, during masses, particularly in rural settings). The importance of locating teachers' position in the social

domain relates to the manner in which they invest themselves in the ensuing struggles in the field.

The third question is: 'how do teachers' multiple community engagements in various fields legitimize their identity in the community and configure their legitimizing role therein?' First, teachers' identity is legitimized in the community due to the legal and normative character of these engagements, which makes their involvement obligatory. Secondly, their identity is legitimized through the very performance of the roles required of them. Since the nature of the roles, communities and events vary, the constructed identity is extremely differentiated. The more heterogeneous the field, such as in urban centres, the more that teachers become vulnerable to forms of domination and vice versa. For instance, lack of sufficient legal support from the Department of Education places them at a disadvantage when they are exposed to election-related violence (see Chapter 6). It is interesting to note that forms of resistance to domination also vary between early career teachers and senior teachers. While early career teachers recognize their subordinated position in terms of economic and symbolic capital, more senior teachers dissimulate the impact of this economic gap by asserting the nobility of the teaching profession and their ascendant status in the community. Lastly, on the one hand, heterogeneity of the field decreases Filipino teachers' capacity to play a more meaningful ascendant role due to the presence of other experts therein. On the other hand, even in heterogeneous fields, teachers sustain their leadership role among members of urban masses (see Chapter 8 on collaboration with other marginalized groups).

In my analysis of teachers' community engagements, it is evident that field is predisposed to organize the positions of agents, structure the hierarchy, and assign the value of capitals, thereby setting the parameters of what is possible. However, these functions are far from guaranteed or absolute due to the diversity of the field and tendency of fields to overlap. On the contrary, in some community engagements, instead of the field stifling teachers' agency, the opposite is true. In other words, what became evident is that, within the confines of their experiences, teachers' practices – *habitus* – are generative, adaptive and creative (see Skeggs 2004b, 2010; Stahl 2013). While Bourdieu (1973, 1993a) emphasized struggle as a fundamental component of the field, the acquisition of multiple dispositions and increasing understanding of the structure of the field empowers teachers with practical knowledge, first on how to play

the game therein and second on how the field may be restructured. Each field that teachers encounter is not immutable, although this study suggests that some structures are more resistant to change than others (e.g., the political field is more vulnerable to collectively instigated change than the religious field). Hence, agents and institutions are not the only ones influenced by the relations of power in the field. The very structure of the field itself – through dint of time – succumbs to eventual alteration by individuals' agentic resistance in their habitus to the homogenizing process of the field (see Section 6.2.1 and Section 7.2.4). While the porosity of the field might be positively appreciated in explaining both its homogenizing tendencies and in determining the spaces where teachers' agency may be exhibited, the same porosity also exposes a field that struggles to capture the totality of teachers' formative experiences and relations (Atkinson 2012, p. 170).

Lastly, this research discovered that the porosity of every field allows teachers to manage, to varying degrees of success, the demands of every field they enter into. For instance, this field property, coupled with multi-field literacies and dispositions, helps us understand how teachers are caught up in the tension of sustaining the fundamental constitutional tenet of separation of church and state.

9.2.2 The value of Filipino teachers' capitals

The sub-question that informs my understanding of teachers' capitals is 'how do Filipino teachers' capitals contribute to the formation of dispositions in the habitus essential to the realization of their community engagements?' In the context that capitals are both stake and resource, valuable as well as scarce, the aggregation of these helps locate the social position of Filipino teachers and determines their capacity to meet the multiple demands (e.g., financial) of their daily lives. The amount and quality of collective and individual capital also influence the participants' capacity to augment the value of their existing capitals. The research also revealed that the stake and resource related to Filipino teachers' identity includes the four main strands of capitals. These are cultural (e.g., educational attainment and cultural knowledge), social (social relations obtained through social and religious rituals, e.g., when they stand as ninongs/ninangs or sponsors during wedding and baptismal rituals), economic (in this context, it is not the amount but the regularity of salaries) and symbolic (e.g., perception of respectability and moral ascendancy). In order to deepen my understanding of the dynamics and

interplay of teachers' capitals in community engagements and in their identity, I asked three specific questions.

First, '*as a group, how do Filipino teachers acquire and deploy their capitals in the field?*' Their cultural capital is acquired mainly through their hard-earned education degree and by continued natural exposure to their own respective communities. Also, teachers obtain their social capital through social and religious processes like baptisms and weddings, and through membership in religious organizations and party-list groups. Lastly, teachers' symbolic capital is also acquired and lost through continuous deployment of their cultural, social and economic capital. In other words, teachers' multiple capitals incrementally grow and diminish through their community engagements. In this study, the reason for the alternating valorization and devaluation of their capitals points to the variability of teachers' literacy to deploy them and to the influence of the social demography of the community. For instance, symbolic capital increases in value in rural areas or in traditional communities and wanes in urban centres due mainly to the heterogeneity of the field. The main source of teachers' economic capital is their salaries, specifically the regularity of their salary. This assurance of salary – coupled with respectability and trustworthiness – allows them to augment their current economic resources through credit. The same capital when operationalized/activated in a community setting (e.g., by giving *abuloy* – a donation to the family of a neighbour who passed away – and other forms of solicitation particularly during fiestas) establishes/legitimizes them in a slightly ascendant position over most community members in rural communities. However, whatever economic resources teachers possess diminish in urban communities.

As a collective, teachers rely on their cultural capital as the primary source of their multiple literacies relevant to the needs of the community. Granting that teachers possess the requisite dispositions, or know-how, to operationalize their resources, the value of their cultural capital is maximized through amalgamation with other forms of capitals. In other words, one of the most important values of teachers' cultural capital is its high exchange value in the community. The resulting variability of Filipino teachers' capital configuration that defines their differentiated positions in their respective communities makes it difficult for this to become an exclusive indicator of identity. In other words, if a group of teachers are involved in protests and rallies (see Chapter 8), it does not follow that all teachers equally appreciate the notion of teachers possessing and

wielding political capital. Similarly, even in mandated engagements like *Brigada Eskwela* (see Chapter 6), teachers hold contrary positions on the manner through which the value of *bayanihan* (community solidarity) is deployed as a cultural resource. These differentiations trace back to how social demographics and teachers' geographical location influence how teachers' political capital is valued. This study suggests that teachers' political capital is a highly valued commodity in urban centres. However, political capital's significance diminishes in rural and provincial areas where the majority of teachers regard political involvement – individual or collective – to be alien to teachers' core traditional identity.

This research shows how teachers utilize, that is, convert and use as currency (Skeggs 2004b), their amalgamated capitals in three ways. First, in an ascendant position in relation to pertinent members of the community, they dispose their multiple functions such as Board of Election officers, census enumerators and *Brigada Eskwela* implementers (see Chapter 6). Second, in a subordinated position they collectively struggle to reduce equity gaps through membership of progressive organizations (party lists). Third, fluctuating in an alternating ascendant and subordinated position, teachers access and activate the variety of capitals available to them in order to navigate between fields' conflicts (e.g., between demands of the state and their religion of affiliation) and even conflicts among themselves (e.g., between traditionalists and progressives).

In order to deepen my understanding of the dynamics of teachers' capitals in community engagements, the second question I asked is: '*what are the social processes that facilitate the acquisition and successful utilization of Filipino teachers' capitals?*' The social processes that assisted in the acquisition of their forms of capitals are the following: schooling or acquisition of a degree that vests them with professional authority, imposition of laws (e.g., the *Localization Act* which paved the way for them to live in their respective communities, election law and the *Barangay Eskwela* memorandum which grants them an ascendant position required to fulfil mandatory duties), participation in religious organizations (e.g., parish pastoral councils, WESTY committees, and Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting), membership of party-list groups (such as the Alliance of Concerned Teachers), and participation in socio-cultural *(buling-buling/karakol* dance, parades and processions) and religious rituals (e.g., weddings and baptisms where teachers increase their social capital through expansion of social relations).

The plurality of avenues through which Filipino teachers' capitals are acquired and increased, as well as deployed and consumed, results in what may be referred to as the 'massification' of Filipino teachers' capital. In other words, capitals possessed and generated by teachers' practices in the community are often regarded as common and typical assets whose value can be easily accessed by the general public or the 'masses'. For this reason, if Bourdieu's economic logic (Thomson 2008) is adopted as an exclusive instrument of measurement where capital increases its value only when it is scarce, the array of Filipino teachers' capitals cannot be sufficient reason for the ensuing struggles. This study both supports and debunks the utilization of an economic standard in assessing the value of capital. For instance, while competition for dominance is more symbolic in cultural and religious practices (see Chapter 5 and Chapter 7), the struggles surrounding election exercises (see Chapter 6) and progressive, militant and nationalist actions (see Chapter 8) are more pronounced and palpable. Therefore, the economic logic of exchange is supported in teachers' struggle for political and economic capital on the one hand. However, on the other hand, the economic valorization of teachers' capital diminishes in the cultural and religious fields (see Thumala Olave 2012; Sayer 2005). Since Filipino teachers play a more circadian role in various community activities, the corresponding capitals they typically acquire are those that ensure successful participation in community activities, such as *pakikipag-kapwa* (or the art of relating with other people through a recognition of common humanity), and a perception of moral ascendancy (through this, teachers are invited to stand as *ninongs* and *ninangs* or godparents). From my observations and the words of FGD participants, the value of teachers' capital in various community engagements hinges on three factors. First, Filipino teachers' ready and constant disposition to be involved in community affairs reflects what the community truly values in teachers. I would also argue that the advantage of the ubiquity of Filipino teachers provides immediate and palpable reinforcers of the ideal teacher persona/identity. Any one can see in his/her travel/transmigration, that teachers are always involved in community matters. The impression of teachers from one's childhood-/hometown experience is reinforced upon seeing the same. Third, teachers are educated and possess literacies/skills relevant to the needs of the community.

The third question is: '*how are these capitals utilized in teachers' social positioning and position-taking strategies?*' Teachers primarily view these capitals as a resource. This

means that teachers operationalize their capitals in the economic sense of the word capital where through these they invest themselves in the life of the community. Secondly, it is also clear that these resources likewise function as an 'end', or the stake that energizes all competitions in the field. Thirdly, the exchange value of teachers' different capitals is evident when they are used as currency in acquiring and converting other forms of capital valued in their respective communities. For instance, aside from the legal basis of their election duties, what ensures the success of this particular function is teachers' ability to access their cultural (educated) and social (mutual familiarity with members of the community) capitals.

What this research reveals is that the notion of capital as accumulated labour (Bourdieu 1986b), structured along the logic of economic exchange and geared towards increase, is inadequate to characterize the entirety of the social processes in the community. The same community engagements are not only a means to acquire capital but also venues where the same can be devalued. Furthermore, this focus on accumulation along an economic logic limits the valuation and accrual exclusively to a process of struggle (Turner 2011). In a purely economic sense, capital is only valuable if it is scarce, but this research shows that the valorization of Filipino teachers' capitals in the community is not dependent on scarcity alone but on the ordinary skills relevant to the quotidian demands of the community.

9.2.3 Teachers' habitus: disposed for relation and action

The third component required for a relational mode of constructing Filipino teachers' identity addresses the sub-question 'how do teachers' dispositions or practices in the community, constituted through their community engagements, contribute to the construction of Filipino teachers as social actors and/or as reproducers of cultural practices?' Based on the research findings, I arrived at a three-fold conclusion.

First, these engagements increase teachers' visibility in the community, thereby positioning them at the very vortex of community life. The evidence indicates that teachers sustain their traditionally and historically constituted identities by dispensing activities that they deem to be traditionally appropriate to a professional teacher (e.g., by engaging in apolitical activities like parades and cultural presentations). Filipino teachers' participation in traditional activities in the community (e.g., processions, parades, fiestas) inclines them to reproduce cultural practices rather than to generate

significant change. As a consequence, I argue that whatever reflexivity teachers manifest as they participate in these community activities is relative to how successful they can be in enacting both mandatory and voluntary engagements.

Second, teachers also possess the literacy to engage in new practices (e.g., by participating in demonstrations and by their newfound readiness to question government policies whether in education or in other national issues). As an example, for teacher activists, the current socio-economic structures in place (e.g., concerning salaries and benefits, education's share of the national budget appropriations) fail to improve teachers' living conditions to a level that corresponds to their professional identity. For teacher activists, the historical inability of government and private institutions to alleviate teachers' social conditions can only be remedied through collective radical actions in the political field. Notwithstanding the continuing equity gap between Filipino teachers and other professionals, they remain one of the most hardworking groups of professionals (see De Quiros 2014). For this reason, the growing politicization of teachers' engagements in the community, centred mainly on economic aspects, highlights teachers' sentiments that some of their civic engagements are a response to this core social justice issue not only of unpaid labour but also of undervalued labour. This research indicates that justice cannot be obtained through reproduction of traditional practices but by investing in 'progressive, militant and nationalist' practices that constitute the identity of modern Filipino teachers.

Third, what this study also reveals is that teachers' dispositions do not strictly organize them in a clear-cut distinction between generative social actors and structured agents. This particular finding reasserts the persistence of the agency and structure debate (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992). As in most cases, teachers' multiple dispositions situate them in a position where they can either subvert or comply with the various and at times conflicting demands of agents and institutions in their communities. As a result, the manner by which they dispose of their community engagements, by acquiescence or by presenting alternative practices, points to them being alternating social actors and structured agents.

In this research, contemporary Filipino teachers' multiple, overlapping and continuous practices in the community underscore the notion of teachers as social workers (Bourdieu 1998c). In this context, teachers' leadership practices acquired and deployed

within the school setting (Eacott 2013a, 2013b) are the same allied and fundamental resources – literacies or skill sets – that can facilitate their leadership roles in their respective communities. This study clearly indicates that the primary identity of these educators as leaders, counsellors and as knowledge resource in the community is that of a teacher. In other words, due to the general applicability of teachers' literacies in multiple fields, it is easier for them to assume some of the functionalities of other specialists in the field. In Philippine society, teachers' social and economic opportunities are limited (De Quiros 2014; Tubeza 2009). However, instead of being chained to a subordinated class position, or perhaps impelled precisely by this reality, the participants I researched are animated to improvise configurations of dispositions in their *habitus* to escape the cycle of reproduction (see Chapter 8). This aspiration is evident when a significant number of FGD participants shared that they encourage their children to take up a profession other than teaching and that they do not mind supporting their matriculation through loans (see Chapter 8). In other words, the disjuncture between teachers' *habitus* and field compels them to resort to agentic practices perceived as reasonable solution to mitigate this disjuncture. Concretely speaking, there is a palpable disjuncture between the Herculean demands made of teachers by their profession and their respective communities against the meagre salary that remain insufficient to support the human needs of teachers' families. For this reason, more progressive teachers (see Chapter 8) strategize to break the cycle of reproduction by engaging in collective activist practices. On the other hand, more traditional teachers (see Chapter 7) manage this disjuncture by relying on their faith and by succumbing to practices like 'London' (loan here and loan there) (see Chapter 8).

During data-gathering sessions, teachers regularly referred to '*diskarte*' (street-smart strategies) in navigating challenging situations both in the school setting and in the community. '*Diskarte*' means the capacity to work with the cards one is dealt, and therefore suggests reflexivity – albeit limited – in relation to present life circumstances. However, when the focus is deviated away from the limited nature of this reflexivity towards the significance of how often they deploy this cultural value, it is not impossible to appreciate the value of this strategy in potentially improving their living conditions and their life chances. Therefore, while some teachers' community engagements are enacted upon the principles where teachers act as cultural reproducers, there is also civic participation where they appear to be more agentic. In other words,

teachers' agency is magnified particularly when they are able to extend their leadership skills and utilize the same literacy when assuming important roles in various community activities.

As a conclusion to this section, the same *habitus* that ensures the perpetuation of conditions and practices is the principle that holds the key for teachers to break the chain of reproduction and generate new dispositions, trajectories and identities.

9.3 Affordances and limitations of Bourdieu's theory and method

The evaluation of Bourdieu's theory and method in this section is guided by the principle that 'an invitation to think with Bourdieu is of necessity an invitation to think beyond Bourdieu, and against him whenever required' (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. xiv). The unique character of this study rests in the manner through which Bourdieu's theory and method were utilized to capture teachers' experiences in constructing a contemporary Filipino teacher's multifaceted and multidimensional identity in and with the community through their engagements. This research provided evidence that, indeed, the tension between agency and determinism that continues to challenge Bourdieu's sociology cannot be resolved through an either/or solution, nor can the solution be a simple 'and both'. Culture dictates that there are fields and dispositions where agency is generally unambiguous (e.g., the political field and collective involvement therein) while in others it is indubitably determined (e.g., the religious field in relation to core beliefs and morals but less so in the social realm). That Filipino teachers' identity cannot be reduced to economic relations and that their sense of purpose does not absolutely rest on relations indicate that culture is more resilient and robust and that it can resist the colonizing view of a foreign theory and method (see Enriquez 1994, 2013). The meticulous application of culturally sensitive methodologies ensures that the social phenomenon under study is not denigrated by Bourdieu's theory and method.

In this research, I also rigorously applied the three concepts of *habitus*, capital and field collectively in exploring how teachers' identities as evidenced in my discussion of teachers' community engagements (see Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8). What is revealed through this strategy is that the strength and limitations of Bourdieu's key concepts manifest in proportion to how they are collectively or individually deployed. For

instance, the durability of *habitus* is typically sustained or modified depending on the robustness or porosity of a given field. In the same manner, the capacity of the field to structure teachers' identity is also influenced by the quality of dispositions in the *habitus* and the value ascribed to capitals. It is within the mutually affecting dynamics of *habitus*, capital and field that some practices acquire an *illusio* of innateness (e.g., teaching as naturally a female profession and teachers' are expected to participate in community activities), evolve into an established *doxa* (e.g., teachers as morally ascendant, economically disadvantaged) that often lead to a misrecognition or forgetfulness of the historicity of teachers' practices in the community. For this reason, the ensuing indifference or *illusio*, to the historicity of teachers' community engagements become the principle through which teachers are subjected to varying modes and intensity of symbolic violence.

While Bourdieu's method is largely successful in allowing the researcher to understand teachers' identity, in some areas, the method appears inadequate to account for specific dimensions of an identity. For instance, the veneer of meritocracy and naturalism has deeply cloaked gender-based issues so that to most FGD participants there is no problem arising from the gender divide – '*it is what it is*'. However, this unproblematic gender-based notion is belied by revelations that on the one hand female teachers have an advantage over male teachers since they perceive that teaching is naturally a female profession (see Chapter 4.9). But on the other hand, almost all victims of electoral violence in the FGD groups were females. Hence, deeper provocation is necessary to pry open this 'taken-for-granted' gender dynamics of Filipino teachers' identity. This research provides yet another proof that understanding of the gender dimension of a social phenomenon remains lacking in Bourdieu's sociology (Skeggs 1997, 2004a, 2004b). While this seminal finding directs attention to the role of gender in identity construction in the school setting, the study was not able to expound on its significance when constructing teachers' identity in the community setting. Provocations during FGD sessions on gender related issues (e.g., equity in terms of promotions, opportunities and social positions) was largely unsuccessful due to the complexity and sensitivity of subject matter.

Another area where Bourdieu's ontology and epistemology encounter radical challenge is in the religious field. For Bourdieu, only the relational is the real (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Vandenberghe 1999). However, for teachers who are engaged in the

religious field, it is not the only basis of reality. Throughout this research, teachers reiterated the importance of aligning their lives to their religious beliefs and maintaining their moral integrity in the community, indicating the importance they ascribe to an 'immutable principle' (Thumala Olave 2012). This notion challenges an absolutist direction of the concept that social reality is a social construct (see Berger and Luckmann 1991, Bourdieu 1989) and questions the regression of every social relation to economic relations (Sayer 2005). Furthermore, Filipino teachers' disposition to believe in a reality beyond human, that is, social construct, sustains Karakayali's (2004, p. 359 original emphasis) observation that Bourdieu's sociological position are 'essentially *methodological* and *epistemological*' but not ontological. Thus, while Bourdieu's theory and method is successful in probing the secular relations of the Catholic Church's hierarchy (as a fully functioning complex social organism) and the economic components of its belief systems (Rey 2004; Turner 2011), the Bourdieusian schema struggles to account for the implications of a belief based on an immutable principle, namely God (see Section 7.2). For instance, teachers who are engaged in the religious work of their respective religious affiliations maintain an unequivocal position on the value of salvation. For these teachers, belief in God and salvation structures their moral positions. However, it is also in the religious field that permutation of capital to economic value is rarefied, that is, possibly camouflaged, not only by disinterestedness but even supplanted through a higher valuation of religious capitals. Therefore, theorizations of capital must not only focus on acquisition and exchange (Bourdieu 1986b) but also on diminution and shrinkage and what is valued beyond the here and now. Not only is there a necessity to expand the concept of what is valuable beyond economic value, the theory should also entertain the possibility of seeing other forms of value without converting them to an economic state. For instance, the unique character of 'religious values [is that they] do not "run out" in the way material goods do' (Thumala Olave 2012, p. 63).

The impact of Bourdieu's incursion into the sociology of religion is limited by its predisposition towards economic structure and logic of the social realm (Turner, 2011). However, the research found teachers' participation in the religious activities of their respective communities underscored the notion that 'belief can only survive if it is embedded in practice, and practice can only survive if it is embodied in the everyday world' (Turner, cited in Turner 2011, p.123). Therefore, the endurance of belief-centred

dispositions testifies to an embodiment that challenges the secularizing optics that prioritizes the economic value of religious practices over the significance of non-pecuniary factors. In this study, the persistence of Filipino teachers' involvement in religious practices that sustain multiple relations beyond economic transactions is a form of resistance against the secularizing tendency of sociology of religion. In other words, teachers' participation in religious and cultural activities, where economic stakes are minimal or at least are not foregrounded, requires alternative principles of actions, for example the ultimate goal of attaining salvation through good works for their neighbours. This practice can be traced to teachers' historical embodiment during the colonial period (see Chapter 5). From that time onwards, teachers' participation in religious and cultural activities has been gradually formed into durable dispositions. Filipino teachers are not only implicated in the secularizing activities of the state, they are also entangled in the sacralising practices of their respective religions (e.g., the performance of *buling buling* and *karakul* in both religious and civil celebrations).

To achieve a balanced use of Bourdieu's optics in the political and religious dimension of Filipino teachers' identity, I suggest restraint from conceptual modification, such as 'conceptual hybridization' (Adams 2006), 'reconstruction' (Vorderobermeier & Vorderobermeier 2014), 'reconceptualization' (Mellor & Schilling 2014) and remapping (Hanna 2014) for this risks altering the novelty of his sociology. Through this study, I aligned my strategy with those who insist on applying Bourdieu's *habitus*, capital and field *in toto* (Reay 2010, Atkinson 2012; Edgerton & Roberts 2014; Mills 2008a; Wacquant 2014). The critical openness that helped Bourdieu to recognize the notion of capital beyond its economic significance is the same critical openness required when his schema is deployed to social phenomena beyond the context of its original application. For this reason, rather than pursuing a conceptual and structural modification of Bourdieu's theory and method for purposes of cultural acclimatization, my position is to apply his schema *in toto* but rigorously mediated by indigenous research practices (See Section 4.4). Underscoring this strategy is an understanding that culture has a way of recognizing and resisting what is naturally extraneous to it (see Covar 1993; Enriquez 1994, 2013). Therefore, instead of conceptual alteration, what is more respectful to both Bourdieu's sociology and Filipino teachers' culture is a process of linkage with other sociological theories. For instance, a more dynamic notion of teachers' agency may be foregrounded by exploring how concept of governmentality

and power influences a notion of authentic identity that – ironically – continuously aspires to defy construction (Foucault 1991). Then, the affordances of teachers' community engagement-constructed identity may be further provoked when linked with pursuing the affordances of recognizing teachers as transformative intellectuals (Giroux 1984) in their respective communities. Finally, the potential of a critically constructed teachers' identity in the community for social relevancy can be examined by linking this with the practice of critical pedagogy (Friere 1997; Leonard & McLaren P 1993). The importance of linking Bourdieu's theory and method with other social and cultural theory compels the recognition of its limitations without adulterating its ontology and epistemology.

This study shows that the regularity of teachers' individual participation in religious activities is underscored by their belief that teachers' notion of reality is not only constituted by what is relational (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992; Vandenberghe 1999) but by something they regard as constant in the ever-fluctuating social world (see Dianteill 2002; Thumala Olave 2012). Although this finding suggests that there are inherent limitations to Bourdieu's theory, which cannot be addressed internally, this constraint does not totally obliterate his argument for a relational component of reality. Notwithstanding the conceptual limitations of Bourdieu's schema when applied to some social phenomenon (e.g., gender, non-economic aspects of religious practices), it is important to recognize his theory and method for their seminal possibilities (Turner 2011). As an example, in the same manner that capital may be constituted outside economic notions, reality also includes an essential and immutable dimension, which resides at the core of Filipino teachers' identity. The same argument holds true in gender discourse where Bourdieu's theory and method have been critiqued for their inability to unmask how gender is implicated in symbolic violence and for his failure to appreciate the criticality of agency in this field (see McNay 1999; Skeggs 2004b). Nonetheless, when the key concepts are collectively deployed, this strategy can help us understand how marginalized individuals produce creative strategies to challenge the devaluation that they (e.g., female and gay teachers in this study) constantly experience.

9.4 Implications

The implications of this research for theory and method are cocooned in the previous section. In this research, one of the findings is that relations in the social world are not

exclusively structured by economic logic neither by asymmetrical relations of power alone. This indicates that that the theory of cultural reproduction needs to be evaluated beyond a logic of economics and relations of power. This research also directs further study utilizing Pierre Bourdieu's sociology to acclimatize his theory and method by rigorously applying his concepts relationally and *in toto* and by utilizing culturally sensitive methodologies (see Section 4.4).

The implications of this study for the understanding of teachers' practice centre on the role that community engagements play not only in constructing teachers' identity but also in sustaining critical relations between school and community. This argument implies that if school–community relations are to be strengthened, that is, to go beyond intermittent, fragmented and partial experience (Butcher et al. 2003; Dikkers 2013; Frederico & Whiteside 2016), teachers needs to be more involved have to play a more critical role. Specifically, teachers' relatively ascendant position in the community makes them ideal agents for citizenship education and in espousing a more critical notion of democracy. While teachers' professional literacies (Abulon 2014; De Leon-Carillo 2008) are a substantial capital, they still have to be calibrated according to community contexts.

The implications of this research for existing laws and policies influencing teachers' community engagements rest on the durability of the community engagement-constructed identity. In other words, Filipino teachers' community engagements will continue as a practice in the present and future socio-economic, political and religious context of Philippine society. For this reason, teachers need to be involved in shaping the policies that structure their obligatory engagements. In other words, it is expedient to counter the 'loss of involvement of the teaching profession in the production of educational policy at a macro level' (Lingard 2009, p.81). Filipino teachers' participation in the formulation of laws and policies that will impact their community engagements is vital due to the endurance of their mandatory and voluntary practices in the community. As a consequence, community engagements will continue to function as a multi-dimensional space where teachers' identity is constructed. Since a meaningful understanding of this identity is important for both the community and their respective schools, support is necessary in order to harness the benefits of these engagements more critically. This implies that conversation around school and community relations needs to be sustained through research, instruction and extension. In particular, the curriculum

of teacher education programmes needs to be enhanced to include the adequate formation of pre-service teachers who can critically engage with their communities. This can also be offered as professional development for in-service teachers focused on the utilization of this identity for the benefit both the school and the community. In this manner, teachers' reflexive capacity will be magnified, and state and institutional policies will be critically appreciated. This study also reinforces the current policy requiring Philippine tertiary educational institutions to implement a community extension programme involving students, teachers and school stakeholders. As Eacott (2011a, p. 43) observed that 'the preparation of educational leaders [continues to progress as] a global phenomenon', the need to expand the field wherein they may exhibit this leadership meaningfully and critically also widens (i.e., it necessarily includes the community). In this sense, leadership is not just an exclusive function of principals, supervisors or school directors but is a requirement *sine qua non* for all teachers who are tasked to sustain school-community linkage through their leadership practices in the community. For this reason, the unique community leadership particularly in the Philippine context requires re significant support structures from various government and private agencies.

9.5 Conclusions

This study concludes with the conceptualization that Filipino teachers' community engagements facilitate the construction of their identity in and with the community through the interrelation of their practices, resources and field. In this research, the understanding of teachers as *'intellectual leaders in the community'* where they are required to express this leadership through *'counselling services [and] to actively be involved in matters affecting the welfare of the people'* (Professional Regulation Commission 1977, p.88) led to the establishment of the importance of community and community engagements in the construction of their identity. What was established is that relations between teachers' multiple practices, literacies and fields generate heterogeneous modes or facets of identities anchored on their professional identity. In other words, teachers are 'many things' to different people in the community. As one FGD participant succinctly put it, '*people expect us to be the "jack of all trades" in the community*'. The diversity of contemporary teachers' practices in the community gives weight to the argument that, while 'teaching is a caring profession [and] care is

necessary, [however, it is] not sufficient if schools are to have the socially just effects that we would want them to' (Lingard 2009, p.90) in the community. Since the social significance of teachers' identity rests on the manner by which they enact their mandatory and voluntary community engagements, this study established that it is necessary to explore their identity in terms of their social position (i.e., whether subordinated or ascendant) and struggles in the field as well as the constitution and impact of their practices (determined and agentic).

9.5.1 Mandatory and voluntary community engagements: principle of identity differentiation

In this research, I presented an analysis of Filipino teachers' identity differentiated by their mandated and voluntary civic engagements. These two-fold modalities served as a basis for multiple distinctions, for example between public and private school teachers, between teachers from the province and from urban centres, and between politically inclined and traditional teachers. The different legislations, institutional polices and memoranda that homogenize teachers' mandatory community engagements contribute to the construction of their identity in the community. Specifically, these laws legitimize them as leaders and authority figures through the performance of their election duties, census enumeration and *Brigada Eskwela* activities. While these laws provide the principle for group classification of teachers in these activities by determining what constitutes valid practices, teachers' dispositions and literacies provide them with differentiating practical strategies. Furthermore, although pertinent legislation constitutes and legitimizes teachers' class identity, it is culture that endows them with reflexivity as 'a power of adaptation' (Bourdieu 1993b, p.88) and as a literacy for social navigation. This explains how, through their legally constituted but culturally differentiated identity, teachers are able to adapt, negotiate and innovate by accessing arrays of cultural and social values that differentiate what has been legally legitimated.

Even in these mandated engagements, it is only when durable *habitus* correlates with valuable capitals and a porous field that the possibility of reflexive action is magnified and the homogenizing tendency of structure mitigated. In other words, while teachers execute mandated activities through the force of law, what ensures a successful implementation is their capacity and ability to access and to utilize cultural practices such as *pakiki-isa* (solidarity) and *pakikipag-kapwa* (value anchored on meaningful

social relations). Through this process, a legally constituted but culturally legitimated and differentiated teachers' identity emerges from their mandatory engagements.

Teachers' identity in the community is also structured by their voluntary engagements. This conclusion is supported by the dynamics of their engagements in the religious (including cultural) and political (including civic) fields. While FGD participants generally considered their involvements in the religious field to be voluntary in nature, their engagements therein are organized according to the homogenizing dogma and traditional practices of their religious affiliations. Furthermore, their class identity as lay religious leaders typically submits to the hierarchical structure of religious institutions. In this manner, involved teachers become instruments of social, cultural and religious reproduction. In this field, if teachers manifest reflexive action, it is often to defend the church's teachings and in deference to the existing hierarchy. What is not immediately palpable is that they use the same reflexivity to navigate the opposing demands of the church and the state. Also in this field, teachers are valued for their ascendant moral position (at least as expected of them by the community) and for their intellectual capacity (knowledge resource). Moreover, faith and moral elements of their identity allow them to translate the values of *pakiki-isa* and *pakikipag-kapwa* to other values like *pakiki-ramay* (sympathy, e.g., in times of neighbours' needs) through a cultural process recognized as *kawang-gawa* (charitable activities).

Teachers' collective identity in the political field requires that it be characterized by activism if it is to be effective. Its legitimation rests not on performance of typical activities nor is it based on traditional perceptions, but on *'progressive, militant and nationalist'* activities. This is also how Filipino teachers – engaged in activism – utilize legitimation as a political strategy or strategic manoeuvring oriented to meeting the contradictory demands of the political field (Ieţcu-Fairclough 2008). In my research, the concentration of the social gravity of this emergent identity is palpable in more heterogeneous urban communities and dissipates progressively in rural homogeneous communities.

The relational property of Bourdieu's concepts, particularly when applied in concert, allows an exploration of the 'ebb and flow' of the intensity of teachers' engagements and legitimacy of identity differentiated by multiple demographics. Collective political involvement in this field is where teachers manifest the greatest sense of agency.

However, it can be argued that, since this reflexivity is borne out of economic necessity as a result of protracted structural neglect, this does not reflect authentic agency. This means that, for teachers to structurally improve their life situations, they need to act collectively in all possible avenues of struggle where they can wield the different literacies available to them. In this field, teachers' identity as an activist allows them to manifest *pakiki-isa* and *pakikipag-kapwa* through a collective process of *pakiki-baka* (struggle). Among the dispositions of Filipino teachers' identity, it is their activist appearance that was most contested in various social demographics in the study. Nonetheless the growing intensification of this activist identity underscores the necessity of re-imagining the social beyond cultural reproduction (see Chapter 8).

9.5.2 Occupying a subordinated and ascendant position in the community

This study also reveals that teachers' identity and civic engagements mirror the modalities of their fluctuating subordinated and ascendant position in the community. When teachers occupy a subordinated position in their respective communities, they become more susceptible to effects of the notion of cultural arbitrary (e.g., community engagement is indubitably natural to Filipino teachers' practices). This misrecognition of the historical genesis and circumstances of their community engagements lead to what may be termed as social forgetfulness that their subordinated social position is a function of power and for this reason increases their vulnerability to forms of violence, both physical and symbolic. For example, when violence erupts in polling areas, teachers are the most likely casualties. When the economic situation worsens, they are among the first social groups to be adversely affected by rising prices for commodities. To mitigate this subordinated position, teachers either resort to traditional practices (e.g., practising their faith, obtaining credit at local shops and even succumbing to loan sharks) or commit themselves to collective activism. The latter strategy aligns with the position that only by assuming a 'militant, progressive and nationalist' collective identity can teachers be liberated from structures of domination.

9.5.3 An alternately determined and reflexive identity

I further discovered that teachers' heterogeneous identity straddles between teachers as social agents (reflexive) and as organized by different structures in Philippine society. This means that teachers' capacity to act as social agents is inversely proportional to how the field is constituted. For instance, while teachers' agency is more palpable in

most voluntary engagements and in the political field, their mandatory engagements and involvement in the religious field result in a more structured identity reflecting the more traditional values of the community. Hence, in this study, fields dictate what is to be valued and how it can be utilized. But the overwhelming influence of the field is dissipated through years of mandatory and voluntary community engagements where teachers have learned how to manage the often conflicting and imposing interests of multiple individuals and institutions in the field. Moreover, they have acquired a degree of criticality to unmask relations of power by identifying their *modus operandi*. With this knowledge, they develop strategies to navigate different fields of interests.

Although, to a certain degree, my cultural familiarity with teachers' community engagements (see Section 1.7) gave me a 'sense of the game' that there is a positive correlation between these involvements and teachers' identity, what was largely unexpected is the intensity of the tension between their practices and the structuring tendencies of the field. Specifically, I had not anticipated the extent to which various interests ultimately influence how structures of the field and teachers' agency have been constituted. Furthermore, what was unexpected in this research is the discovery of the magnitude of differentiation teachers' identity in the community so that, in some instances, this identity is not only debated but also negated. In this study, teachers' contested identity typically emerged from the tension between traditional notions of what is expected of teachers and emerging conceptions due mainly to teachers' aggravating socio-economic disadvantage. This tension reveals how teachers' traditional activities in the community set the condition for the reproduction of their identity in the community. However, teachers' deteriorating economic disadvantages generate increasing awareness that only through collective action in and outside of the school setting can teachers create a meaningful change in their social position. Hence, whether community engagements are mandatory or voluntary, individually or collectively practiced in all possible space of engagements, the performance of the act itself can be considered as self-legitimizing.

Finally, in this study the relationally and historically constructed contemporary Filipino teachers' identity through their multiple and overlapping practices in the community increases teachers' potentiality for socially meaningful engagements in the community. In other words, the process of identity construction in this study resulted in the expansion of teachers' 'space of possibles' (Bourdieu 1993a, p.64). For instance, while

teachers' identity during the Spanish and American occupations was entangled with the respective hegemonic worldviews of the colonizers (see Chapter 6), this research unravelled the strategic position and critical role of contemporary Filipino teachers to reinforce the notion that 'education is a vital weapon of a people striving for economic emancipation, political independence and cultural renaissance' (Constantino 1970, p.20). In other words, while teachers were instrumental in the colonization of the Filipinos through education, the same group of professionals, particularly when their identity is critically constructed, is capable of decolonizing teachers' practices in school and in the community through their distinct and culture-specific practices.

9.6 Directions for future research

In the title of this thesis, the word "exploring" is an operative term suggesting that every limitation encountered holds the potentiality for further exploration of this social phenomenon. For instance, while I provoked the gender component of identity construction in every FGD session, the cultural veneer of teachers' responses hiding under naturalism and meritocracy could not be breached using the current research methods. For this reason, the role of gender dynamics in constructing teachers' identity in the community requires separate and focused interrogation. In-depth research on this aspect could be further stimulated by an interesting discovery that the FGD participants recognized the emergence and positive contribution of what they labelled 'acceptable effeminate [male] teachers'. In fact, elderly teachers and those from rural areas (provinces) had a more positive appreciation of this group than the activist group of teachers.

At another level, the exploration of teachers' identity may benefit from an evaluation of how the community perceives them. This research explored teachers' self-appraisal of their community engagements. Therefore, the constructed identity is built from their own perceptions and justifications. However, if the source of data on teachers' community engagements and identity were other members of the community, this shift of focus could produce different identity characteristics and markers. In other words, the optics from these alternative cohorts could influence the interrogation of teachers' social positions and relations.

While the probative value of Bourdieu's sociological method allows for a more social understanding of the basis of teachers' identity construction, amalgamating this with theories that help look into the more psychological or individual processes of identity formation will provide a more integrated notion of teachers' identity. Since this study was able to locate teachers' multiple positions (ascendant and subordinated) in the community, the results of this study may be utilized in further interrogating teachers' capacity in relation to educational areas like culturally responsive pedagogy, governmentality, liberation, citizenship, as well as, a tool for unmasking and combatting forms of neo-liberal education. Thus, another possible research direction is to explore how this socially enriched identity can meaningfully benefit classroom practices and learning. Specifically, there is a need to explore teacher's identity and agency, as well as, their perceived roles in the often-conflicting challenges of social media. The urgency for research in this area becomes palpable particularly that the digital platform blurs further the boundaries between schools and communities, and also, accelerates socialization through digital interactions.

Finally, the benefits of journeying further along this academic provocation rest in the assertion that exploring how community engagements critically constitute teachers' identity disposes them towards a creative imagination of how they can socially and culturally contextualize learning.

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Appendix A Stories of Teachers' Community Engagements

When one student saw me serving (as election officer / volunteer) during the election … she asked me why I was there. That gave me the opportunity to tell her that our work extends to the community and that we're not just their facilitator in school.

– Bela, Private school teacher from Manila.

Introduction

This appendix entitled 'Stories of Teachers' Community Engagements' presents my re-construction of teachers' community engagement stories. From these stories, teachers' community engagements were consolidated into a matrix in *Table 3. Modalities of Filipino teachers' contemporary community engagements (pp.105-106)*. It is also from these stories that community engagements were chosen on the basis that they represent the general views of the FGD cohort. These specific community engagements were subjected to analysis in Chapters 6, 7 and 8. The stories here were drawn from the FGD participants' 'voices' (i.e., verbal – responses, discussions, arguments, etc., and non-verbal – gestures, pauses and silences), interviews with key informants, and casual conversations with colleagues in Education. With the general aim of the research in mind, I organized these stories according to how they can best reveal the Filipino teachers' practices, literacies and contexts. Interspersed with teachers' stories are my own observations and seminal analysis. Hence, even the manner through which these narratives were constructed already reflects my perspectives – biases included – about my social world, i.e., Filipino teachers, Philippine communities, teachers' civic practices, etc.

Prologue to the Narrative

During formal and informal data gathering episodes, I observed that at the core of teachers' community engagement experiences and observations is a perception that they are respected in the community and that the same community expects them to be role models therein. This perception and expectation seems to have been going on for a long time that their contemporary community engagements reflect a continuity of past

practices. For instance, the practice of augmenting salary through credit can be historically traced back to a similar occurrence during the American colonial period. This practice involves teachers assigned to remote areas where they can obtain jawbone (credit) at the Chino store [who] offer them a 'chit' for whatever supplies the Chinese trader had' (Perez 1959, p.34). This perception – expectation process helps cement old practices and/or occasion the generation of new forms of community involvements. Data also indicates that a number of FGD participants foregrounds the legislative *raison d'etre* of these engagements while some participants put premium on cultural elements as the generative principle of their practices. However, in its entirety, teachers' community engagements – as articulated in various FGD sessions – are a confluence of cultural and legal elements differentiated by their diverse affiliations and alternating positions in the society. For this reason, this section also includes an exploration into the enactment of these legal mandates and the deployment of pertinent cultural values.

The focus group sessions with teacher participants were often animated and spontaneous. Both consensus and dissent were evident as participants were observed to casually express agreement or disagreement to a co-teacher's point of view. In most of the FGD sessions, the manner through which teachers' register their dissent or agreement also provides nuances and differentiations to a seemingly dominant and homogeneous strand of teachers' practices in the community. While FGD sessions generally revealed that these perceptions were largely collective in nature, their engagements are very much individualized. Hence, teachers' individual experiences helped produce variety and intensity as well as lend peculiarity to typical community engagements. In addition, the *non-verbals* contributed to the complexity and 'richness' of the responses from the FGD, providing further layers of meaning to teachers' community practices.

Participants' narratives were drawn from the pre-identified groups and individuals during FGD sessions, and from colleagues in the field of education during informal conversations. All participants formally consented to have their voices referenced in this study. The FGD groups and individual sources are listed and abbreviated *in toto.*[16] In

[16] MPS (Manoag Public Schools), CSL (Colegio de San Luis – Private School), CIPS (Isla de Norte Public School), SVA (San Vicente Academy – Private School), MAPS (Manila Public Schools), LAC (Los Angeles College– Private School), VTSVFP (Volunteer Teachers of San Vicente Ferrer Parish), CPPST (Cebu Public and Private School Teachers – Sta. Teresita School / Consolation Nat. HS), LCPST (Ligao City Brigada Eskwela interview – province), BES (Bangusan Elem. School Brigada Eskwela interview – urban), IAO

these narratives, teachers' anonymity were guaranteed by using pseudonyms, however, the schools and locations were left 'as is' to help in the differentiation on geographical and social demographics. The origin of the 'voices' of respondents (author and the whole spectrum of context) is tracked through footnotes indicated at the bottom of every page for identification and referencing. Indicators of consensus during the focus group sessions cover the spectrum of categorical chorus of 'yes' to simple nods, and from offering a similar version of experience to abducting the narrative particularly when the experience pertains to a shared event. On the other hand, contestation includes direct rebuttal, albeit infrequent, to a colleagues' presentation or an offer of a modified account. In effect, stories of community engagements are divided into mandatory and voluntary engagements.

Mandatory and Voluntary Practices: Generating Perceptions & Building Expectations

FGD sessions revealed that there was a strong sense of inevitability among public school teachers relative to the performance on some community-related activities. This notion was evident during formal pre-service orientation given to incoming teachers.

Public school teachers recognize that some of their community involvements are indubitably mandatory,[17] while educators from private schools generally consider that most of their community engagements are voluntary in nature.[18] However, the FGD sessions with private school teachers revealed that private schools' institutional policies – to a certain degree – obligate them to engage the community as part of the agreement they entered into by mere employment with these institutions. The mandated community engagements of private school teachers referred mainly to those activities in and with the community that are prescribed and defined through the school's Community Extension Services.[19] These community-related programs and activities generally proceed from the institutional mission of the private institutions whereby the planning, funding and implementation are managed by teachers and other school

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(Interview with Alliance of Concerned Teachers Officer), ICEP (Interview with Cultural Education, i.e., KAGUMA/GDCE, proponent, ITIP (Interview with Teacher assigned in school with Indigenous People).

[17] MAPS, MPS, and CIPS

[18] CSL and LAC

[19] LAC

personnel as part of their institutional responsibilities.[20] Vina and Jinnie, both private school teachers from Colegio de San Luis, framed the mandatory character of their involvement in various community engagements:

> *We accompany our students in these activities not only because it is in the handbook (i.e., both student handbook and faculty manual) that we have to do so (sic) but also because I am a Catholic teacher and it is our moral obligation to participate*.

This narrative primarily indicates the multiple sources of their community involvements; institutional policies and cultural norms. It also implies that these activities proceed from the multi-faceted identity of a teacher; as a citizen in the community, as a teacher, and as a believer. Conversely, it also alludes to the possible co-existence and confluence of multiple sources and characteristics into overlapping community-related practices. In many instances, particularly where culture (e.g., cultural celebrations like fiestas) and religion (e.g., processions and rituals) are involved, these principles coalesce in multiple community practices. Over time most of the laws affecting teachers' mandatory duties have undergone changes, from minimal modification to abrogation, thereby limiting or expanding corresponding practices. Nonetheless, the initial mandatory character that these laws had long impinged on the minds of teachers and community members were already imbedded and embodied.

From all the FGD sessions, it was revealed that teachers' election-related experiences were as diverse as they were actively discussed and debated. The succeeding section presents the FGD participants' views of their election duties.

A Narrative of Teachers' Election Duties

FGD sessions revealed the unequivocal acknowledgement from among public school teachers[21] of their legal duty to serve during elections. Regardless of their geographical locations, most of the participants from public schools affirm their past and continuing participation as election poll officers in this democratic exercise.[22] This mandatory character of election duty is undoubtedly clear from the exchanges between Chia, an early career public school teacher from the Island, and James, her principal, with Chia saying: *'you cannot refuse to serve during elections because that is your service as a teacher… it is mandated… whether you like it or not.'* In another FGD session, Reggie,

[20] CSL and LAC
[21] MPS, MAPS and CIPS.
[22] MPS, CIPS, MAPS, and VTSVFP.

a senior public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-B, recalled that in past elections in his municipality:

> *Teachers who refused to serve were even fetched by the police from their homes and escorted to the voting precincts. So, if you are really unable to serve then you have to inform your supervisor beforehand.*

Hence, the attached penalty for failure to properly dispose of this function enforces the mandatory nature of this activity and sustains the recognition of their legal foundation.

Legal Grounding of Teachers' Election Duties

The preponderance manifested by all FGD participants that election duty is mandatory, reflects their cognizance of pertinent laws enforcing and defining their mandated elections duties. Filipino teachers' election duty is legally determined by the *Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines (Batas Pambansa No. 881)* and the *Electoral Reforms Act of 1987 (RA No. 6646)*. These laws designate teachers as members of the Board of Election Inspectors (BEI) and/or as members of the Board of Tellers (BOT). The Electoral Reforms Act of 1987 prescribes that the Board of Inspectors:

> *Shall be composed of a chairman and two (2) members, one of whom shall be designated as poll clerk, all of whom shall be public school teachers, giving preference to those with permanent appointments. In case there are not enough public school teachers, teachers in private schools, employees in the civil service, or other citizens of known probity and competence who are registered voters of the city or municipality may be appointed for election duty*.

The *Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines (BP 881)* further defines that; *'the board of election inspectors for each precinct* [is] *to be composed of a chairman and a poll clerk who must be public school teachers' (Sec. 164)* and whose main duty is to *'conduct the voting and counting of votes in their respective polling places' (Sec. 168)*. The following prescription of the applicable law removes any lingering doubt as to the mandatory nature of election duty for these teachers:

> *Public school teachers who are members of the board of election inspectors shall not be relieved nor disqualified from acting as such, except for legitimate cause and after due hearing' (Sec. 170)*.

The law only exempts those impeded from discharging this duty by reason of age, infirmity and physical disability. For teachers who have relatives vying for public office in the same community where they serve, the law prescribes that they be assigned to a different community or municipality. For instance, Milet, a public school teacher from the municipality of Sto. Domingo, whose relative is vying for public office in the same

area where she normally serves, was transferred to another community during that particular local election.

The Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines *(Batas Pambansa No. 881)* and the ***Electoral Reforms Act of 1987*** *(RA No. 6646)*, considered as the legal cornerstone for contemporary teachers' election duties, have since undergone multiple amendments. These laws were the existing jurisprudence at the time the FGD sessions were conducted (January 2015–June 2015) and were in effect during the May 2016 National Elections. A recent substantial amendment to this law is expounded in the latter part of this section.

Teachers' election duty is normally a three-day activity, discharged in their designated polling precinct and consisting of three phases: preparation (physical or educational), election proper (overseeing the casting of votes and canvassing of results), and safe transit of ballots to the location of the next level of canvassing. In reality, however, teachers perform other activities related to their election duty that may commence way before the election proper and can extend well beyond the three-day period. While the law specifies what and how teachers should dispose of their election duties (*Omnibus Election Code of the Philippines* 1985; *Republic Act No. 6646, The Electoral Reforms Law of 1987* 1987), the provision does not fully account for the totality of teachers' ancillary election-related practices.

In areas where the number of eligible public school teachers is insufficient to man all the polling precincts in a community, the next in line to be tapped, albeit on voluntary basis, are the private school teachers. The FGD sessions have revealed that a significant number of teachers from private schools have had poll duty experience.[23] Santi, a private school teacher from Colegio de San Luis, affirms:

> *Sometimes when there are not enough public school teachers, they ask the help of teachers in private schools. I noticed that salaries of election officers vary according to roles and nature of the election, that is, whether the election is local or national*.

It is significant to note that private school teachers' election duty service is only occasioned by the need to fill vacancies due to limited numbers of eligible public school teachers in an area. Thus, the fundamental difference is that poll duty is voluntary and

[23] SVA, LAC, and CSL

occasional for private school teachers, and mandatory and customary for public school teachers.

Collective Narratives of Teachers' Appraisal of their Election Duty

Narratives from FGD sessions further revealed that when teachers' election-related activities—whether official or informal—are identified and chronologically arranged, the structure identify possible specific points of encounter with the community and the conceivable modus of encounter. Based on this chronological structuring of activities, teachers' election duties include the following:

- Prior to election day, those mandated to serve as BEI/BOT members are required to undergo orientation seminars on how to conduct the forthcoming election, e.g., IT literacy training.
- Teachers then transform the classroom into a voting precinct and post voting instructions and voters' lists outside of the polling precinct.
- On election day, they take on the role of chairperson or secretary, act as technical tutor, conduct orientation to voters regarding the voting procedure, ensure the safety and integrity of the votes, pacify and mediate when conflict arise, act as counsellor, and liaise with involved parties (police, watchers or representatives of different political parties, and election observers), when necessary, facilitate the canvassing of votes and after the votes have been tabulated, handover the forms to the next level of canvassing.

During election proper, teachers do not only rely on their duties' legal mandates but they also bank on the bearing of teacher-voter familiarity. For instance, Raquel and Lagring, public school teachers from Sto. Domingo, described how they managed the election process and rationalized the bearing of their identity as teachers in this particular activity:

> *During election we ask voters to fall in line (just like our students), to be in order, to be disciplined. In the same way that students listen to us, the voters also listen and obey our instructions when inside the voting precincts. I feel that my being a teacher has a way of affecting the conduct of the election in our own assigned precincts. Plus, the fact that often, their (voters') children are or have been our students in school.*[24]

In another setting, Santi, public school teacher from Colegio de San Luis, recalled that because of this mutual familiarity with voters it is not uncommon for teachers serving during elections to receive dinner or snack invitations from the supporters of political candidates. Similar experiences were echoed by most of the FGD participants who have

[24] DAPST

acted as election officers, particularly public school teachers whose mandate to dispose this duty is more on a regular basis compared to private school teachers.

The mandatory character of teachers' election duty is one of the most contentious topics during the FGD sessions. What is discernible from across the debate on this topic is that teachers' personal experiences during election duty significantly influence their position on whether to repeal or to amend the existing laws governing their election duties. For instance, the desire to make election duties voluntary as expressed by Jean, a public school teacher from Isla de Norte, was prompted by a traumatic legal battle she had experienced against a losing candidate. Jean was accused by the defeated candidate of negligence of duty and for unduly favoring the winning candidate:

> *I was almost incarcerated …* [in exchange for] *just 2,500 pesos (of honorarium)… I was charged in court where I personally spent more than 100,000 pesos (to) defend my case. Just the acceptance fee of the lawyer was already a burden for us and then adds the expenses of the trip (from the island to the mainland). When the case was dismissed I did not file a counter charge anymore... it will just be another headache.*

It was a harrowing ordeal for the teacher where she had to endure 5-8 hour boat rides to the mainland just to attend the court hearings. She also bewailed the lack of legal and financial support by the Department of Education. Although she was eventually exonerated, the stress from sleepless nights, the sizable amount she personally had to raise for legal fees, and the dangers she had to contend with during the commutes to the court were overwhelming reasons for her to strongly advocate for the voluntary nature of election duties. Another traumatic election-related experience was reported by Tita, a public school teacher from one of most populated villages in Quezon City. The experience during the 1994 Barangay Election had practically changed her life:

> *Since it was election of village officers, the precinct was full of representatives of competing parties. Elections of village officers are usually more rowdy since candidates and their supporters were just nearby. The losing candidate cannot accept defeat that the followers demanded that ballot boxes be opened for a recount and they began accusing us of conspiracy…they took pictures of us and [had] the police arrest us. There were around 18 (teachers) of us, some were even handcuffed and we spent the night at the police precinct… I cannot imagine how they can do that to us teachers. When they made the report it was written there that we participated in cheating and that we were part of the conspiracy. And then, they made it known to the community that we were involved in cheating in favor of other party. How can we do that? Their watchers were there all the time; we just follow[ed] what was stipulated by the law… even to its letter. It was a harrowing experience for me because I am being hunted and there*

> *was a warrant for my arrest. It was the religious community who provided sanctuary for me. Since I could not get help from the education department then, I relied on these religious communities and I just prayed to God and to St. Therese because I knew I did not cheat nor did anything wrong… I just did what was asked of me as election officer. It was only after some time that I surfaced and returned to my school to teach… yes, I resume[d] teaching but I was always wary if there are policemen in the vicinity.*[25]

When I asked if her experience was just an isolated case, she responded by reminding the FGD group about the case of a pregnant school teacher who was shot while protecting the ballot box and another teacher who was burned to death when armed men set fire to the entire building that housed the ballot boxes. Crisanto, another public school teacher from Manila, narrated the story of his mother, also a public school teacher. Up until the time of the FGD session, his mother was still fighting a legal battle for a similar complaint. Sandro, on the other hand, told his personal story as a neophyte election officer during his first teaching assignment. The place where he fulfilled his mandated duty was tagged by the COMELEC as a 'hot spot'. Hot spots are electoral precincts where election-related violence is highly likely. True enough, his election experience turned out to be an ordeal when armed men *'sprayed bullets at the voting precinct'*. He considers himself lucky to have come out of it unscathed. It is worth noting that election-related violence is personally experienced by at least one participant in all FGD sessions among public school teachers.

Legality Aside, What is in it for Teachers and Why Teachers in the First Place?

'Teachers will always serve during elections', so says Carlo, a private school teacher from Cebu City.[26] However ironic it may seem that this forecast had come from a private school teacher, most public school teachers nonetheless share the same sentiment. The rationale for this often rebounds to economic beneficence. Although teachers decry that the measly amounts they receive do not fairly compensate for the strenuous and stressful work they have to do, election duty is still a source of income. As reported, 'the 650,000 teachers who will be serving in the May 9, 2016 General elections' (Sy 2016) as BEIs will only 'receive a total of P4,500 just like in past elections, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) said in a resolution. According to the poll body, all BEI chairpersons and members shall receive P1,000 a day or a total of P3,000 for their three-day service' (Jaymalin 2016).

[25] PPS
[26] CPPST

That election duty will continue to be entrusted to teachers which can be argued to be beyond economic affordability. This argument rests on the following; practicality, i.e., almost every village has a public school; teacher population, i.e., teachers constitute the largest capable workforce, and teachers' community knowledge, i.e., chances are these educators are residents in the very community where they will serve. As Edith, public school teacher from Cebu City succinctly puts it: *'mobilizing teachers [is] always advantageous to the government as it lessens the logistic burden in preparing and managing elections since teachers are the largest – well trained – manpower that government has at its disposal'.*[27] Furthermore, classrooms used as polling precincts are the most ubiquitous and accessible spaces in the community for this activity. Crisanto and Art, both public school teachers from Manila, also discussed the practicality of having teachers as election officers in terms of their cemented presence in the community:

> *If they get someone else (aside from a teacher in that school or community), that person might not be known or recognized by the community and that situation poses a problem. Unlike if it's a teacher – particularly if the teacher works in the same school, it is easy to call her/his attention and ask for assistance should problems arise*.

Thus, over time, people in the village (community) shape the perception that election duties form part of teachers' responsibilities. As a consequence, in Philippine society, it is common to speak, in the same breadth, of local and national elections vis-a-vis the Filipino teachers' functions outside the confines of formal teaching practices.
Perhaps one of the most significant dimensions in teachers' election-related engagement centres on the measure of legitimacy that teachers afford to this electoral process. This particular discourse on legitimacy was stimulated by teachers' evaluative comparison between national and local elections. National elections include the voting for national positions, e.g., president, senators and congressmen, while local elections mainly focus on the election of local leaders from governor to barangay (village) head. Generally, most FGD participants in public schools agree with Crisanto's and Art's observation that:

> *One of the most challenging duties of teachers in and with the community is related to their election work particularly during village or local election where the presence of contending local politicians and the passion of their rabid supporters intensify tense atmosphere thus aggravating the possibility of conflicts and altercations exposing teachers to possibility of violence.*

[27] CPPST

Unlike National elections when competing parties are only represented […] supporters are not so passionate about the process.

The proximity of all stakeholders (i.e., candidates, voters, watchers, and etc.) allows the immediate proclamation of the winners. One the hand, the same proximity also complicates the management of election process. The experience of Tita, a public school teacher from Quezon City, is a concrete example of this. She related that *'in the 1994 Barangay Election, the losing candidate (together with his supporters) stormed the voting precinct* [and] *accused us of connivance and forced us to open the ballot boxes'*.[28] Due to the proximity of all agents in the social space, even a slight suspicion of cheating can be a flash point where these agents can automatically intervene. However, the volatility of the election atmosphere in a particular locality can be provoked by a confluence of factors. This includes the culture of traditional politics and the history (political or otherwise) of the relations between contending parties due to prevalence and propensity to establish political dynasties even at the barangay (village) level where *'many barangays become mere appendages of the incumbent mayors and local political dynasties'* (Casiple 2007).

FGD participants are firm in their position that cheating is less likely to occur in the polling booths or in their respective precincts. Public school teachers from Manaoag have claimed that, based on their experiences, cheating rarely happens at the precinct level during the casting and canvassing of votes as these processes are within the sphere of what they can control.[29] Supporting this claim is the discussion below, from the same group of teachers, expressed and shared by most of the FGD participants from other groups, mirroring the assurance of credibility at the precinct level.

Facilitator: Are you able to gauge if there is cheating during the election?

All: Yes.

Eva: However, in the precinct you cannot really cheat.

Reggie: During the casting and canvassing of votes… there are very few opportunities (for cheating) or even none at all.

Reggie: But what we can't control is the vote buying or what happens before the election.

Juan Miguel: After we canvass the votes and transfer them to the municipal hall… we are no longer certain about what happens… if there are switching of votes, it happens after (outside of the polling precincts).

[28] QCPS
[29] MPS

Reggie: We cannot control the 'before' and 'the after' of voting and canvassing.

Juan Miguel: But we can say that during the election itself – it is clean.

Paraiso: We vouch for credibility in our level as it is our profession that is at stake.

Teachers' assurance that it is improbable for cheating to occur under their watch and in their own precinct demarcates the ambit of their power of influence during this democratic exercise. Thus, in their designated precincts for the duration of the election period, teachers are fully reliant on the authority afforded to them by pertinent laws. At least among the FGD participants, most of those with traumatic election-related experiences are relatively young teachers. Nonetheless, most participants regardless of age and institutional affiliation asserted that cheating is improbable in the precinct level.

Historicity and Evolving Forms of Election Duties

The May 10, 2010 Philippine elections saw the nationwide introduction of electronic voting and counting technology. Automation improved the election process in terms of 'ease of counting of votes and fraud prevention such as ballot box snatching or tampering during transit (Reyes & Tan 2015, pp.278-279). In this aspect automation has become the single most important modification to the conduct of elections that has altered teachers' modus of engagements. For one, 'the amended election automation law requires at least one of the three members of the BEI to be an IT-capable person' (Goldsmith & Ruthrauff 2013). This requirement necessitates training to acquire specific technical literacy. With the automation, except in Barangay elections (election of village leaders), teachers no longer have to oversee the tedious manual canvassing of votes. In manual canvassing, it was within the purview of teachers' duty as Chair of Board of Election Inspectors to validate or invalidate a particular vote. It is also during this stage where teachers usually engage other agents in the political arena, manifesting clearly that the electoral process is a contested field. Furthermore, it is in this phase of the electoral process where teachers' identity in and familiarity with the members of the community are utilized as *sine qua non* component for orderly and peaceful canvassing process in his/her respective election precincts.

These ongoing modifications in the electoral process are expected to impact teachers' dispositive interaction with their respective community in this field of encounter. As Juan Miguel, public school teacher from Pilar Elem and HS-B attests:

> *When voting and counting is automated, as in the recent election, the moment the voting period closes we are able to immediately determine who won in our precincts and print the results… we no longer have to do the tedious manual counting of votes*.

Teachers who experienced serving in the recent elections agree that automation considerably lessened the burden on the teachers as it simplified their work and shortened the process.[30] The introduction of technology in this traditionally manual process calibrates teachers' embodied election practices.

Teachers observe that the conduct of their election duties is relatively peaceful and generally orderly particularly when rapport with voters assigned in their respective precincts is established.[31] For this reason they can dispose of this traditional and inalienable duty with ease. It is warranted to conceive that, to these teachers, constant election involvement has been internalized and seems like second nature to them. This practical sense or disposition to function as election officer cannot be more evident than when all FGD groups named the forthcoming election 2016 as the most significant event where they will yet again be involved. On the other hand, the election experiences of Crisanto, Tita, Sandro and Jean still resonates teachers' vulnerability to election-related violence in politically volatile areas.

At the time the FGD was conducted (January 2015–June 2015), the prevailing law still stipulated the mandatory nature of teachers' election duties. Both the Senate and House of Representatives only ratified a bill filed in 2014 aimed at amending the obligatory nature of the law on January 26, 2016. That bill is presently known as the Election Service Reform Act of 2014 or ESRA (*Election Service Reform Act of 2014)*.[32] While the disposition of public school teachers during FGD sessions recognized the obligatory nature of election duty – which enforced teachers' ubiquitous presence in the community during a critical phase in the socio-political life of the country – the effect of the full implementation of ESRA remains as yet to be seen. In particular, the anticipated changes to the nature of teachers' participation open the door for more questions such as: *Will the number of teachers involved as poll officers decrease? Will the increased remuneration and benefits, provision for insurance and legal assistance, entice teachers*

[30] MPS, MAPS, CIPS
[31] MAPS, MPS, CIPS and VTSVFP
[32] An Act Making Election Service Non-Compulsory for Public School Teachers, Authorizing the Appointment of Other Qualified Citizens, Providing For Compensation and Other Benefits, Amending For the Purpose the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 6646, And Other Election Laws.

to perform this act on a voluntary basis? Only after determining the answers to these questions will the impact of this policy modification to teachers' community practices can be sufficiently evaluated. With FGD participants[33] strongly claiming that cheating is impossible within their precinct or polling booths, i.e., inside the classroom and during the canvassing of votes (during manual counting), they essentially provide a measure of legitimacy to the democratic process in the social space where they are in charge. Furthermore, Reggie, public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-B, offered a general claim for all teachers that *'hindi naman siguro ipagpapalit ng guro ang kanyang propesyon at dangal ng dahil lang sa suhol at halalan' (I do not believe that teachers will risk their profession and dignity during election).*[34]

After election duty, the practice of census enumeration also carries clear national mandate based on laws, while the similar activity of educational mapping derives its mandatory character from departmental (school to school basis) memoranda.

Census Enumeration and Educational Mapping

Census enumeration and educational mapping are teachers' community engagements that are similar in their manner of implementation but different in aims.

> *Batas Pambansa No. 72, An Act Providing for the taking of an Integrated Census every 10 years beginning in the year 1980, and for other purposes specifies that 'public school teachers shall be employed for enumeration work and for such service shall be paid an honorarium as may be determined by the National Census Coordinating Board but in no case less than two hundred-fifty pesos and shall receive service credits equivalent to the number of days rendered in census work.*

Census enumeration, according to FGD participants, can last for a month or more depending on the coverage, i.e., population size and expanse of the territory.[35] Teachers' involvement in this activity magnifies their presence in the community and deepens their familiarity with the different positions of agents and networks of relations in the community. Conversely, this practice provides opportunities for members to get to know the teachers in their community. When evaluating the process involved in this practice, it is evident that teachers are the most available, capable and convenient choice for this work.

[33] CIPS, MAPS, MPS
[34] MPS
[35] MAPS

The obligatory character of public school teachers' involvement in this activity is diluted in the sense that this is not demanded of all teachers but only of those designated by the Department of Education or assigned by their respective School Principals. In fact, it came out during the FGD sessions that only the elderly teachers from public schools can clearly recall that early in their teaching career, census enumeration was a mandated duty for most of them; currently this practice is only assigned to younger teachers and only in certain areas where Local Government Units (municipalities) have not trained other citizens for this duty.[36]

An Engagement from 'house to house'

When asked to describe what is census enumeration, teachers use the colloquial term *'nagha-house to house'* or that they go from house to house in every part of the community to gather household information. Heart, a public school teacher from Manaoag, describes her census enumeration experience as an event associated with,

> *Long walks where at one point we have to wade through rivers just to carry-out census duties…this home visit usually takes ten days to complete…in one occasion we were ran after by dogs and in another, we have to balance and cross rice paddies to reach a family living in that extreme part of the community. In exchange for this service we are also given service credits*.

Aside from service credits, census enumerators are remunerated financially for this physically exacting duty.

As census enumerators, teachers usually work in pairs in conducting interviews from one house to another.[37] Those assigned to a rural and agricultural area are required to traverse rice paddies to reach households to obtain basic information (social demographics) about the people in the community. Throughout the process they encounter challenges normally experienced when in the community, e.g., being ran after by dogs and walking under the scorching heat of the sun.[38] For those conducting census in urban areas they have to navigate numerous streets and narrow path walks in both affluent subdivisions and squatters' areas.[39] The uniqueness of Census enumeration is that it allows teachers to interact with the respondents, i.e., household, in their own homes. For this reason, more often than not, the enumerator and the source of

[36] VTSVFP, BES, CPPST
[37] VTSVFP
[38] MPS
[39] MAPS

information (often one among the senior members of the family) engage in informal conversation about practically anything of interest. Chances are, as is customary, census enumerators get invited to share a meal or are offered a *miryenda* (snack) during this activity. In the exchanges between them, teachers are positioned to provide the household other relevant information about available government programs and how to access them, e.g., poverty alleviation programs, literacy campaigns, etc. Through the census enumeration activity, teachers do not only become knowledgeable about the community and the people therein but are also given an opportunity to encounter them in both formal and informal contexts.

The practice of providing uniforms (t-shirts) and IDs for teachers to wear during census enumeration facilitates the identification of teachers as census enumerators. As such, this practice does not only intensify the communities' awareness of teachers' multiple roles outside of the school setting but it also invites attention to another dimension of their identity as government representatives. Sandro, public school teacher from Pilar Elementary and HS-A[40], frames how teachers' social identity is further cemented and amplified through this particular practice.

> *In our case, our school principal divided our area and assigned us to our own zone (where we live). So we are identified as teachers… you don't need to introduce yourself… they know you and you know them that most of the times you do not even have to ask who they are.*

Similarly, some public school teachers from Manila articulated that some of their colleagues or co-teachers have been asked to conduct the census. While some teachers in most provincial areas remain generally mandated to conduct census enumeration, there are municipalities and areas that no longer involve teachers in these duties since the government has contracted and trained other citizens for this particular work.[41]

Educational Mapping: Convergence of Education and Government Programs

Some FGD participants from public schools describe educational mapping as another engagement with the community closely akin to census enumeration.[42] As it is in census enumeration, the encounter between teachers and members of the community transpire at the home of the latter. It also occasions longer conversations (question and answer and even discussion) between involved teachers and household members. There is also

[40] MPS
[41] CPPST and BES
[42] MAPS, MPS, and CIPS

similarity in the data drawn from these encounters, i.e., teachers ask about the demographics of the household. Crisanto, public school teacher from Manila, provided the differentiation between these two activities:

> *The goal of this practice is to gather education-relevant baseline data on every household in communities around their school; the generated data are also utilized by other government agencies like the Local Government Units (LGU), Department of Health (DOH) and the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)*[43].

Cory, public school teacher from the province, illustrates how and what information are gathered during educational mapping:

> *Educational mapping includes the recruitment of students. Who among them are eligible for kinder (kindergarten), who are those with disabilities? I also take note of the out of school youths in the community. As a teacher tasked to this educational mapping, we ask information that will be beneficial not only for the census but also for education.*

Eventually, the educational goal of this activity is to increase the number of enrolment in every village elementary school.[44]

Communicator of Government Programs, Progressive Advocate of Public Welfare and Faithful Defender of Religious Teachings

Public school teachers reported that in the course of their engagements in the community, particularly during educational mapping or casual encounters with their students' parents, they take the opportunity to communicate educationally relevant government programs.[45] An example is the ***'Four-Ps – Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program'***, i.e., the 'human development measure of the national government that provides conditional cash grants to the poorest of the poor, to improve the health, nutrition, and education of children aged 0-18' (*Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program*). Private school teachers from Isla de Norte have reported that even if they are exempt from census duties and educational mapping activities, they nonetheless have been in situations where people in their community inquire about government programs and how these can be availed.[46]

While dispensing public information is not a mandated community engagement, teachers' social status and assignment in the community strategically positions them to

[43] MAPS and MPS
[44] MPS, VTSVFP and MAPS
[45] MPS
[46] SVA

do so. The scarcity, and at times absence of, agencies to perform this duty in remote areas further pushes teachers to dispense of this function. Thus, situations can force teachers to act as communicators of government programs and they are compelled to do so even in the face of potential harm. A manifestation of such is the narrated experience of Morgan, a public school teacher in a community of indigenous people where he had to disseminate and explain the law on anti-violence against women and children:

> *I invited parents and pupils to be present in the school (classroom) to discuss the Anti-Violence against Women and Their Children Act (Republic Act No. 9262). Unbeknownst to me, there are some parents who disagree with what I am doing. While I was discussing the law to parents and their children inside the classroom, there were four to five men who were singeing the carcass of a dog just outside the classroom. After a while they moved their activity closer to the classroom where I can see them – at the periphery of my sight at this point they are already skinning the dog. Later on, one of the men in that group, whom I learned to be an obviously intoxicated husband of one of the participants shouted at his wife to come out while sternly saying; 'are you listening to this law of Ramos' (former president) and why are the children included in this nonsense? I can hear that another equally drunk parent was also shouting viciously just outside the classroom. Speaking directly to me, one of the men threatened to attack me - but nothing happened. I was told by the people to leave school early during that day (and did not return until after an agreement ensuring my safety was agreed upon).*[47]

From the above narratives, it can be construed that, in some areas, teachers were perceived as government representatives in poll duties, census enumeration, and information dissemination facilitators. Through these engagements, people in the community are reminded that public school teachers are government employees, and as such, represents and promotes the interest of the state in the villages. However, it should be noted that this particular affiliation with the government fails to deter some factions within the teachers' ranks to be vocally critical of government policies that are perceived to be disadvantageous not only to teachers' general welfare but also to Philippine society as a whole. For instance, members of the Alliance of Concerned Teachers define their identity as *uring manggagawa* or 'working class'. On the basis of such classification aligns them and coalesce with different workers' organizations on various advocacy and protest activities.[48] However, activism is not a popular marker of teachers' identity even from among their ranks. One group of FGD participants from

[47] ITIP
[48] IAO and MAPS

Cavite province, for example, offers the following reason why they still refuse to join the ACT:

> *We are more obedient and we just continue to teach even if there is a call for a sit down strike. On the contrary, teachers from Manila are more 'palaban' (confrontational) that is why they demonstrate and rally in the streets – they do not simply agree and obey.*[49]

Regardless of this non-acceptance by more senior teachers – mostly from the provinces – those who belong to progressive organizations, register their collective critic through multiple forms of activism against the state.

Teachers' inevitable multiple engagements in layered fields of power is further enhanced by other institutions that utilize them for specific ends. For instance, all FGD participants who also served as officers of the Parish Pastoral Council shared that in such capacity they assist in disseminating Church teachings and positions on certain social issues such as the controversial Reproductive Health Bill and the Commandments of Good and Responsible Voting during election season.[50] For these teachers, educating the laity on the Church's stand on the reproductive health bill and helping create awareness of clean elections do not only constitute a primary (educational) function towards building their respective Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) but also form part of their moral duty to defend the tenets of their faith.[51]

While some FGD teachers[52] felt quite strongly about the necessity to be progressive educators (e.g., ACT) and some teacher-volunteers emphasize the need to actively support faith-related advocacies[53], the majority of FGD participants from public schools underscores community engagements that are not controversial since they are directly in line with their area of specializations. For instance, teachers who are involved in the scouting movement (Boy Scout of the Philippines and Girl Scout of the Philippines) implement environmental activities like tree planting and street cleaning together with their troops (pupils).[54] Alternative Learning System (ALS) teachers report that they are tasked to implement the Literacy Program of their school in nearby communities

[49] BES
[50] VTSVFP
[51] VTSVFP
[52] IAO, MAPS
[53] VTSVFP
[54] MAPS

particularly targeting out-of-school youths and the elderly (senior citizens) members.[55] In the same manner, Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) teachers devise and facilitate training for out-of-school youths focusing mainly on skills development that can be used as capital and possible source of alternative income. Crisanto, who also teaches TLE recalls:

> *In one of our seminars in the community, we taught them skills on cottage industries like how to make salted eggs, with the hope that these trainings will provide them with skills they can use to find employment or alternative source of income*.[56]

A number of public school teachers emphasized that enrolment campaign in their respective communities is central to their role as teachers.[57] During such enrolment campaign activity, teachers inform parents about the following: registration and enrolment schedule, requirements, education-related government programs and subsidies and how to avail of them. Crisanto and JB discussed their experience as part of their school's enrolment campaign team:

> *With enrolment date and requirements drawn in the placards that we carry, we scoured the streets close to our school, we engage the parents we encounter along the road and entertain their questions*.[58]

Through this patently education-centreed engagement, teachers magnify their identity and visibility in the community.

Most FGD participants from public schools agree that, in recent years, this enrolment campaign activity has evolved as a part of the nationwide *'Brigada Eskwela'* program of the Department of Education. This program is a contemporary school-related event whose very nature obliges teachers to engage the community and solicit their assistance and participation in preparing the school for the opening of classes. The next section presents a construct of teachers' perception and appreciation of this popular contemporary program.

'Brigada Eskwela': Preparing the School and Community through Solidarity

Since 2003, the Department of Education has been ushering the beginning of each school year through the nationwide *Brigada Eskwela* program. *'Brigada Eskwela'* (literally, 'school brigade' and also referred to as the *'National Schools' Maintenance*

[55] MAPS and MPS
[56] MAPS
[57] MAPS
[58] MAPS

Week') is a nationwide event sponsored by the Department of Education that aims to prepare the classrooms, school premises and the community for the coming school year (Luz 2011). While participation by various stakeholders (parents, village officials, private institutions and companies) in this activity is voluntary, public school teachers are mandated to engage the community for this weeklong school-based, community-driven activity.

'Brigada Eskwela': Teachers' Mandated *Bayanihan*

The provision mandating *Brigada Eskwela* is contained in *Department of Education Order 24, s. 2008*. This order defines *Brigada* as a 'nationwide maintenance program that engages all education stakeholders to contribute their time, efforts and resources in ensuring that public schools are all set in time for class opening. It is a week-long event where local communities, parents, alumni, civic groups, local businesses, NGOs, private individuals and even teachers and students volunteer their time, skills to do minor to medium repairs and maintenance work in the schools' (*DepED Order 24., s. 2008*). *Brigada Eskwela* or the *National Schools' Maintenance Week program traces its origin to the 'Adopt-A-School Act of 1998'* whereby private companies were invited to help improve the state of public education in the country through 'staff and faculty development training and further education; construction of facilities; upgrading of existing facilities, provision of books, publications and other instructional materials; and modernization of instructional technologies'. Participating companies are enticed with tax credit benefits and the exhibit of their company logos at walls or fence of their adopted schools. Wider community involvement was introduced in 2008 through the *Brigada Eskwela* program where other stakeholders were invited to participate in preparing the school. Utilizing the spirit of *bayanihan* (community-based solidarity), the *Brigada Eskwela* program has been bringing together teachers, parents and the community (private, business organizations, local government, other organizations, etc.) once every third week of May to work together in repairing and preparing public schools for school opening (*Brigada Eskwela Manual* 2010).

Brigada Experiences

While the law is clear on the program's objectives and strategies, teachers offer contrasting appraisal of this program. This section constructs a narrative of teachers' *Brigada Eskwela* experiences by looking both into attenuating and ancillary factors

underlying their personal and collective appraisal. *What is Brigada Eskwela for these teachers?* The following exchanges in one FGD session underscores a general understanding of the context around and the dynamics of *Brigada Eskwela* in Cebu City.

Edith: Brigada. First is Brigada…teachers would be involved in the parade as an opening activity.

Researcher: Brigada Eskwela, is that recent? I could not remember Brigada Eskwela when I was still in elementary school.

Claro: It started 5yrs ago.

Edith: I think it was even in 2003. May 23, 2003.

Researcher: What is the concept behind Brigada Eskwela?

Edith: The main concept is to bring parents to get involved in school to help the teachers clean because it is really challenging when teaching in public school – it is just you… no janitor… no repairman, none. It's only you in your classroom. And you are the manager.

Researcher: What do you expect from parents in Brigada?

Edith: For them to help in cleaning, painting, repairing chairs… everything.

Researcher: But the school provides the materials?

Edith: No.

Researcher: So where do you get the materials?

Edith: We solicit them from the parents. First, we set a meeting. And then we decide on what to do in the classroom, the parents can decide on what to do in the classroom. Parents can chip in to help, if they don't have any money, they can contribute their services in place of money.

Researcher: So you can decide what color to paint the classroom?

Edith: Yes unless the principal imposes something else, like our principal imposes this building should be colored tulip. We have color coding in our school. Our centre should be colored tulip like it's off white or ivory. Like that. But in your classroom it's …

Researcher: So they bring all the tools – hammers saw, etc.?

Edith: Yes.

Researcher: Are they the carpenters?

Edith: Yes but if we don't have somebody from among the parents who can do the repair we talk about it and then we decide if we can get help from the outside.

Researcher: In chipping in for the materials, are all of these voluntary?

Edith: Voluntary, if you can't afford then you will come and help. In any way – we do the cleaning, painting and repairing.

Researcher: How about their meals? Who provide for the meals during Brigada days?

Edith: They often prepare and bring food, it's a kind of 'potluck', they contribute… although most of the time… teachers' usually provide the food for the volunteers.

Researcher: For the parents…

Edith: Most of the time. Because in the public (school) we don't have much resource and teachers usually dip into their own pockets, so that's it. Good thing though that it is summer season … there are no classes so we don't have much expenses… so teachers can have extra money for this…

Researcher: Is that the same process carried out in all public schools?

Edith: Yes it's mandated already sir.

Researcher: Mandated.

Edith: That's mandatory.

Researcher: What's the advantage of having a Brigada Eskwela aside from physical preparation of the classroom?

Edith: Actually it can establish rapport between parents and teachers. Some parents will be very apprehensive to approach you if they think that you are strict and a disciplinarian. It's a very good start to build a relationship before the start of class. In my case, I really would love for the parents to come once in a while so that we could talk about the progress of the child and it's a very good start. The Brigada Eskwela is a very good start.

Although *Brigada Eskwela* is mainly centreed on the physical preparation of public schools, teachers also take this opportunity to hold parents-teachers' (PTA) meetings, where the latter orients the parents about the programs, activities and academic schedules for the coming school year. Celia, the teacher and officer in charge of *Brigada Eskwela* in Ligao City, also vouched for the beneficence of the program outside of its physical dimension:

It helps the teacher to get to know the parents at the beginning of the school year. The Brigada Eskwela is a good opportunity for parents and teachers to meet and start to collaborate, which they actually need to do for the whole year. But Brigada Eskwela is not only exclusive to parents… other stakeholders are - for example the members of the Bureau of Fire, Military, PNP and those from the colleges. It will be the teacher who plans the weeklong activity and schedule the participation of stakeholders.

The geographical location and social demographics of the school determine who and what entities from the community will be involved in this activity. For instance, private universities, telecommunication companies and hotels are typically involved in the *Brigada Eskwela* of some schools in Metro Manila, while the military and the police

participate in areas where their camps are located.[59] Jun, a *Brigada Eskwela* teacher-coordinator[60] recalled that in one remote area of Legaspi City, even the rebels (New Peoples' Army - NPA) who have children attending nearby school participated in the activity. An armed encounter with policemen ensued as Philippine National Police (PNP) groups were also volunteers during the *Brigada Eskwela* activity *('nakiki-brigada ang PNP, nakiki-brigada din ang NPA')*.

Based on the concepts upon which *Brigada Eskwela* is constructed, and the fact that the program is legally enforced; this constructed education-centreed event poses considerable social and cultural weight. That *Brigada Eskwela* is a nationwide and weeklong activity involving engagements of various social groups in a specific geographical and social space in the community further enhances its impact to the community. Specifically, through *Brigada Eskwela* activities, public school teachers collaborate with other agents and institutions around the program's objectives. The regularity of these practices, i.e., annually, in addition to their election and census enumeration duties, further amplifies the intensity of their multiple functions outside of their natural classroom setting.

Critical Affordance of *Brigada Eskwela*

While FGD participants are generally appreciative of the *Brigada Eskwela* program, a few criticisms do exist. Arcia, a college professor and one of the proponents of cultural education for teachers, cautioned about the uncritical deployment of cultural value behind *Brigada*, stating:

> *'I have an ambivalent feeling towards Brigada Eskwela. It is evident that the Department of Education access culture (i.e., the value of 'bayanihan' – i.e., communal solidarity) to mobilize people. But I can see that there are excesses and there is misapplication'.*

This observation unmasks the continuing inadequacy of past and present government administrations to adequately provide for public education system. Instead of providing long-term structural remedy to long-standing deficits, the government appears only able to offer a truncated use of cultural values like *bayanihan* as a panacea to festering educational issues. The esteemed value of *bayanihan* served as a veneer of long standing equity gap and evidence of how state utilize cultural elements to their advantage. This strategy conveniently abandons upon the shoulders of the people in the

[59] BES and LCPST
[60] LCPST

community the government's fundamental and constitutionally mandated responsibility of providing sustainable quality education.

Emma and Mercy provided another critique to the positive affordances of *Brigada Eskwela*. These two are public school teachers in a semi-provincial setting considered to be a relocation community for displaced temporary settlers from the National Capital Region. While these teachers generally applaud the intent of *Brigada Eskwela,* they are also quick to point out that the absence of government budget for this program hampers the attainment of its objectives. These teachers noted that 'due to the absence of funding, it has become:

> *A necessity for teachers to have a (sic) good public relations skills, which comes in handy when asking for donation from the governor, mayor (for paints and other materials). The community might provide the labor but it's the teacher who organizes these things. We do this every year, every beginning of classes we go around the community to solicit for materials. In fact, most often we dip into our pockets that is why we often look forward for the early release of our mid-year bonus*.'[61]

Mercy's assessment of *Brigada Eskwela* reveals the beneficence of this activity to those in political positions:

> *Brigada Eskwela is a good concept if only it comes with a budget. For this school year, the governor gave paint to the public schools in the province. It was documented (with photo op) as all the teachers who received the paint had their pictures taken while receiving the paint so that it can be publicized. But hopefully it should not only be paint because we need water tubes, faucets, electrical (fixtures) and at the same time not all parents are willing to be involved.*

If *Brigada Eskwela* brings the community to the school and in the classroom on a voluntary basis, recurring wrath of nature that the Philippines is accustomed to forces members of the community to use classrooms and school grounds as temporary shelters or evacuation centres, and as spaces of encounter.

Caring for Evacuees in Public Schools: Crises Management

Various forms of calamities that befall communities in the Philippines are also occasion encounters between teachers and members of the community in school and classroom spaces. Calamity situations are either of natural causes (typhoons, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and floods) or man-made (armed encounters between military forces and armed insurgents or terrorists). In Philippine social context, school grounds, buildings

[61] BES

and classrooms are the most ideal and practical sanctuary. In most cases, these are the only available space and infrastructure for victims and survivors of these calamities. For this reason, education authorities and local government leaders designate classrooms, gymnasiums and sometimes the entire school as evacuation centres.

A particular example of where schools are utilized as spaces of refuge during natural calamities is Ligao City in the Province of Albay. The province is regularly affected not only by torrential rains and catastrophic typhoons but also by eruptions of the nearby Mayon Volcano. Jun and Celia, two teacher-officers of the *National Risk Reduction Management Council (NDRRMC),* explained that in the city, the local Department of Education and the Local Government Unit (LGU) have pre-identified public schools that automatically serve as evacuation centres during calamities. Celia further elaborated that *'there is a responsibility by schools to accommodate evacuees… the education cluster is particularly mandated to accommodate evacuees… in terms of providing temporary shelters for those affected and displaced in the community'.*[62] Jun added a caveat that teachers are only indirectly involved in the management of evacuation centres since the primary responsibility in this sanctuary belongs to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) and the Local Government Unit (LGU). During volcanic eruptions where evacuation is mandatory for communities within the declared danger zone, the use of schools as evacuation centres could last for months. In recent years, to mitigate the disruptive effect to classes and education activities of the prolonged use of classrooms, the Department of Education constructed Temporary Learning Sites (TLS) within school grounds. In some cases, evacuees vacate the classrooms during the day to give way for classes. Evacuees then would return in the evening. The use of public school classrooms as evacuation centres for displaced members of the community is a common experience in calamity-prone areas in the Philippines whether urban or rural, in the NCR or provincial areas.[63] In the southern part of the country where armed conflicts remain prevalent, schools often function as refugee centres and temporary safe havens for the displaced. During this prolonged presence of evacuees or refugees in schools, some teachers are involved in the initial relief operation, i.e., packing and distribution of relief goods, and in facilitating activities for the displaced such as singing contests, movie viewing, and

[62] LCPST
[63] LCPST, BES, MPST

cultural presentations. The longer the evacuees remain in the school/evacuation centre, the more opportunities there are for teachers to engage the community under such circumstances. Celia further clarified teachers' role vis-à-vis the nature of calamity that befalls a community:

> *The roles of the teachers in evacuation centre depend on the nature of the calamity. If it is typhoon - there is an automatic categorization of typhoons, so for instance, if it is typhoon signal number one - these are the people to be accepted and these are the things to be done. There is also an organizational structure wherein the school head is the chairman and the vice chair is the school's DRR (disaster risk reduction)... then they will get volunteer teachers. Teachers will be assigned for first aid, then another will be in-charge of relief operation and another for communication... transporting and financing and so on. The last time that we used the school as evacuation centre, we took care of more than 3,000 evacuees.*

During situations when calamities displace people from their abodes and relegate school classrooms as temporary shelters, teachers interact with evacuees even as they also coordinate with other government service entities.

The next stories show how obligatory engagements were practiced in private school setting. While public school teachers are legally mandated to enact what is stipulated by law, private school teachers, though relatively free, reference institutional policies (mission and vision) as the principle of the obligatory sense of their community engagements.

Private School Teachers' 'Obligatory' Community Engagements

For FGD participants from private schools, community engagement means something different. For these educators, community engagement largely refers to involvement in the community service programs of their respective institutions. They emphasize that involvement with institutionally initiated community engagement is voluntary on their part. However, they are largely silent as to what are the consequences of non-participation.[64] For these private school teachers institutional policies and programs define their community involvement and, at the same time, lend a measure of obligatory sense to their practices. Furthermore, their engagements in the community reflect not only the religious identity of the institution but also their individual religious affiliation. Colegio de San Luis teachers, for one, have observed that their mandated engagements are closely aligned with their subject specialization and deeply bound to the religious

[64] LAC and MPS

mission of the institution. These include teaching catechism and facilitating student catechism activities, occasional visitation to the home for the aged, participation in social action program of the nearby parish, e.g., feeding program, and involvement during town and religious fiestas. These particular activities are often implemented in the community together with the students and thereby expose private school teachers to their community. It is also common practice for these private school teachers to be appointed to various committees that support the nearby parish and shrine's religious celebrations, e.g., parades, novenas, rituals and other activities. I also observed that active participation in these religious events is not restricted to private school teachers. In other words, most public school teachers who belong to the same parish also actively engage the community in these religious activities.

Some private and religious institutions provide more systematic, sustainable and socially significant community extension programs determines teachers' community engagement. For instance, while teachers of Los Angeles College – QC, a private school, engage the nearby community through its parish activities, their institutional community engagement is more articulated through the school's community extension program, *Re-entry Education Program for the Poor (REAP).* Essentially, this program aims at providing education to out of school members of the community, e.g., youths, elderly, working parents, etc. In coordination with village heads and other institutions in target communities, volunteer teachers provide assessment examination to participants. After assessing the level of learning they are in, teachers conduct tutorial studies. Then the same students undergo another assessment, and should they pass this, they are certified and can continue their formal schooling. The REAP program is designed to be replicated in other communities beyond the physical territory of the school. For this matter, REAP programs are implemented in multiple communities in different parts of the country. Since the REAP program is characterized by sustainability and collaboration with target communities, it also requires more intensive and protracted involvement by volunteer teachers. Bela, a private school teacher from ACQC, declares: *'even retired teachers or those that are no longer formally affiliated with the college can still volunteer as part of REAP*.'[65] As such, although teachers involved in the REAP program might not be personally known to a community they are involved in, they are

[65] LAC

nonetheless recognized as teachers. Teresa, another teacher from the same institution, describes teachers' participation:

> *It is a voluntary participation where they give their time for productive activity in the community where REAP sites provide opportunity for teachers to tutor out-of-school youths in their area of expertise. They choose a REAP site where they assist in administering evaluation tests and in tutoring the participants.*

REAP is just one example of the community extension programs of private educational institutions through which private school teachers engage the community.

Teachers' engagement in and with the community is not only limited by what is mandated by government laws, departmental memoranda or institutional policies. In fact, while legal and institutional bases provide a mandatory character to these community engagements, it is evident that the obligatory nature is far from absolute. Furthermore, the obligatory character of teachers' engagements seem to be intertwined with voluntary and culturally conditioned practices. Thus, the data suggests that while some aspects of community engagements carry legal or institutional weight, some components of the same practice tend to be more voluntary. It is therefore common to discover both mandated basis and voluntary elements integrated into specific community engagements. Compounding the fluidity of the mandatory-voluntary nature of these practices is the tendency for laws to evolve and even to be repealed. While these iterations further eschew mandated practices (with its levels of permutations) towards voluntary involvement, the residue of what was once mandatory invites a deeper understanding and unmasking of factors that help retain the obligatory sense of these practices.

The next section is a constructed narrative of teachers' engagements in the community perceived by them as clearly voluntary on their part. Voluntary community engagements are more diverse, nuanced and complex as these practices emanate from, and mediated by various socio-cultural factors foremost of which the different social and cultural values are held in high regard by the community.

Voluntary Elements of Election Duties

Although FGD participants recognize the mandated character of their election duty, they also observe that the election-related activities they perform are not exclusively determined by what the law requires. On the contrary, culture-based election-related

practices vary owing to multiple socio-cultural influences. For example, some teachers—from both public and private schools, in active service or retired—when prevented from, excused or unable to serve as members of the Board of Inspectors still manage to be involved in the election process by volunteering to be part of the National Citizens Movement for Free Election (NAMFREL) or the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV). NAMFREL is a 'Philippine non-partisan, volunteer organization whose primary objective is to help ensure free and fair elections' (Goldman & Pascual 1988, p.223). PPCRV is a parish-based organization that monitors the election proceedings and ensures the credibility of this democratic exercise.[66] Bela, a private school teacher, observed that *'while practically anybody can volunteer as PPCRV, teachers are often invited to participate to be members of this organization'*. PPCRV is an initiative of the Catholic Church, specifically the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

Since PPCRV is embedded in every parish, it has a far-reaching impact on how the electoral process is conducted in every community – *barangay*. The core advocacy of PPCRV is the 'formation of the mind, the heart, the New Filipino Voter' through 'Proactive involvement for Clean, Honest, Accurate, Meaningful and Peaceful Elections' (PPCRV 2016). Thus, educating the people on how to be responsible voters according to the social teachings of the Catholic Church is one of the key roles of volunteers, which they carry out prior to the election proper. For instance, FGD participants who are at the same time volunteer teachers at St. Joseph the Worker Parish specified that voters' education is not only central to their work in the communities, particularly in the formation of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) but is also work that is dear to their identity as educators. The consensus among these participants is contained in the statement that:

> *Part of our work in the community every time there is an election is to educate the people in our basic ecclesial communities on how to vote conscientiously by providing them guidelines of what we call as commandments of good voting.*[67]

Thus, while the origin of teachers' election duty may vary, their practices during Election Day is inalienably linked to their professional identity. This observation on identity maintenance is contained in Teresa's (private school teacher) recollection:

[66] MPS, CSL, VTSVFP and LAC
[67] VTSVFP

> *During Election Day, voters call us ma'am when they ask for help like - Ma'am where can I find my name? We guide these voters to look for their names on the list just like what we do inside the classroom to our students when we give reminders and guide learners during school activities. It would seem that we tend to bring those practices outside.*

What can possibly motivate private school teachers to voluntarily involve themselves in this oftentimes tedious and at times life-threatening community engagement? In the absence of financial incentive, these group of teachers point to the value of *pakiki-isa* or solidarity with the community as their reason for involvement as PPCRV volunteers.

Aside from multiple election-related teachers' functions, FGD participants also refer to their involvement in colorful community celebrations and festivities as voluntary. One of the vestiges of multiple colonial rules in the Philippines is the diversity and ubiquitous presence of celebrations in the whole archipelago. The annual celebration of these events, be it religious or civil, multiplies the opportunities for teachers' voluntary community engagements.

'Fiestas' and Festivals

Majority of FGD participants regardless of differing demographics and affiliations confirmed their involvement in fiestas and other festivals in their respective communities. Teachers' participation in local fiestas and various festivals are intertwined with their own personal religious beliefs. Every village, municipality and city celebrate 'fiestas' or the annual civic and/or religious activity to commemorate a town's foundation anniversary, cultural heritage, or the patron saint of the locale. For instance, during the scheduled FGD session in San Vicente Ferrer, the data gathering activity transpired on the very day of the town and parish fiesta. One of the highlights of the fiesta celebration involving the whole community was the cultural presentation that started with a parade around the town's *puroks and sitios*. The parade culminated at the town's municipal multi-purpose gym. In that space, people from the community packed the building to the rafters to watch the competition of marching bands from various schools in the municipality and the coronation of the fiesta queen pageant. For Lagring and Carmen, public school teachers and volunteers at San Vicente Ferrer Parish:

> '*99% percent of the activity this morning required the involvement of teachers. It is a town fiesta, without the participations of the teachers it will*

not push through (in the manner that happened this morning) and perhaps… there will be no parade and show to watch.'[68]

Similar consensus was declared in all FGD sessions where the nuances of their participation are differentiated by the nature and magnitude of the celebration. Thus, teachers' customary participation in this regularly occurring cultural celebrations does not only indicate their position in their community but also increases the possibility of cementing these practices in the very disposition and identity of these teachers. These embodied habitual engagements is evident in how some teachers distinguish the months of the school year according to the occurrence of regular activities with school-community engagements. In most celebrations or commemorations of similar nature, cultural parades and religious processions are indispensable components of the program. Edith, a public school teacher from Cebu City, describes in the following statement the activities with parades around the community:

First is Brigada in June, then Buwan ng Wika (Filipino Language Month) in August, then United Nations in October; we have Rizal Day celebration (December), teachers' host that too. The whole district hosts the celebration of the city. So the teachers would be involved in every parade that marks a particular celebration.

Contained within Edith's construction of these activities is the conception that parades are cultural markers of both chronological time and events/seasons.

Parades are also culturally differentiated such that their components – and teachers' participation – are shaped by their distinct cultural traditions. A concrete example of this is reflected in the involvement of some public school teachers in civil parades and religious processions around the community, e.g., *'buling-buling'* and *'karakol'*. *Buling-buling* is a street dance performed during the feast of Sto. Nino, while *Karakol* is a similar performance during fiestas in some municipalities in the Southern Tagalog region. Some public school teachers are involved in these religious activities since schools are not only part of the civil community but also belong to what is traditionally referred to as ecclesiastical territories. Ecclesiastical maps are religious demarcations of communities according to parishes and dioceses. While these territories do not have absolute legal determination, to predominantly Catholic Philippine society these maps are relevant to both public and private school teachers. Thus, a particular geographic space is not only politically demarcated; they are also culturally (ethno-linguistic) and

[68] VTSVFP

religiously delineated. In this structured social and geographical space, the performance of cultural and religious activities helps to unmask agents' relative positions and the corresponding weight (relevance of their capital) therein. The relative homogeneity of communities based on religious belief, i.e., at least 85% of current population are Catholics, ensures that cultural and religious rituals can be replicated in most communities. In the case of the street dance *buling-buling,* migrant teachers from the Southern part of the country find it easy to relate with this cultural practice since it is also performed in their own provinces.[69] For this reason, when the school[70] they work for participate in the community's celebration of the feast of its patron saint, the said teacher found it easy to relate with and to be involved in this activity. *Karakol* dance is popular among Southern Tagalog provinces; nonetheless, there is strong similarity with *buling-buling*. Both are street dances, have religious origin, utilized in both religious and civil celebrations, and involves going around the communities.

Part of contemporary Filipino teachers' involvement in this socio-cultural activity, reflected in most FGD sessions, includes the following:

> *Act as 'consultant', plan the cultural activities, function as program emcee, serve as judge in pageants and various contests, coordinate the decoration of venues, chair the sports activities, prepare the students in their participation (street dancing, parade, presentations), and officiate in various sports competitions*.

There is a clear consensus from every FGD group that among the various involvements in fiesta activities, their work as program emcees and judges during pageants and contests emerged to be their most common task. According to James, the principal of a public elementary school in the Island: *What I do is…I rotate teachers' assignments as emcee or coordinators in cultural activities of the school and the community so that everyone will have the opportunity to do this in the community*.[71] Hence, as program emcees, teachers are able to showcase their leadership and communicative literacy while their function as pageant judge could be indicative of peoples' appreciation of teachers' cultural capital and literacy. By rotating the assignments among the teachers, James is providing equal opportunity for teachers to be involved in these activities. In a sense, he also helps construct a collective identity of teachers to the people in the community.

[69] MAPS
[70] MAPS
[71] CIPST

Although Philippine society is a predominantly Catholic nation, non-Catholic teachers are equally active in their communities and churches of affiliation as consultants and advisers to different village organizations and as liaison with corporate entities.[72] For Catholic teachers, retired or active, their participation also includes being 'lectors, members of parish organizations, officers and even choir members'.[73] Teachers who were at the same time volunteers in their own parishes[74] were appointed as committee heads in the various organizations of the church. In the parish (e.g., St. Joseph the Worker Parish) where the FGD was conducted, all the officers of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) were senior teachers from both private and public schools in the community. These teachers head the W.E.S.T.Y. (worship, education, social action, temporalities and youth) committees of the parish and lead the formation of Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) in the villages. As leaders of BEC, teachers facilitate various religious and social activities in the barangays (villages) and educate the people on current social issues relevant to their faith, e.g., the controversial *Responsible Parenthood and Reproductive Health Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10354)*. The consensus on teachers' role as leaders in the community representing their parish is encapsulated in the words of Lagring and Carmen:

> *In the same way that the Department of Education authorizes us, the Church also relies on us and empowers us to train people in the community so that they can do things on their own like leading in prayer in the community, Bible services, and other religious activities in their area. That even without us, they can manage to do their work. We can gauge their empowerment when they start to inquire about Church policies and would even discuss with us who they think should be the right candidate to vote for during the election*.

The ubiquity and regularity of festivals in Philippine society provide a social space where teachers, through their engagements, can be constituted as a group and locate their position therein. As ordinary life in Philippine society is constituted by overlapping fields of religion, economy, entertainment, cultural events, politics and a plethora of socio-cultural practices; it is almost inevitable for teachers not to tread in the dominant socio-political arena.

Treading the Political Arena

[72] MAPS and MPS
[73] MAPS and CSL
[74] VTSVFP

Election duty indirectly draws teachers into the political arena through their role as facilitators of the election process. Their influence therein remains within the parameters of their voting precincts and lasts for as long as the election paraphernalia are in their possession. However, across time there are teachers who have opted for a more active involvement in the political space. This part of the narrative construction explores teachers' participation in the political life of their communities. While some of these engagements are based on personal decisions, these teachers deliberately rely on the affordances of their identity and literacies as currency in navigating this particular social space.

Teachers as Village Counsels

FGD participants have observed that there are indeed teachers who meddle into or at least attempt to enter politics in their respective communities capitalizing on their identity as teachers. Their foray into the formal political arena can either be through election or appointment. FGD participants have reported that in the village level, some teachers are appointed to the *Lupon ng Barangay* (village council) and in the *Lupon ng Taga-pamayapa* (village council of peace-mediators) to perform functions that include arbitration of conflicts and mediation between people in the community.[75] Dan, a private school teacher from Manila, describes the '*lupon' (council) as 'a village council and in our place (province) where most of the members that the 'barangay captain' (village head) appoints are teachers*. Public school teachers from Isla de Norte opined that teachers are perceived to possess both the knowledge and wisdom to credibly act as counsels in their villages.[76] Betong, a private school teacher from the same Island, shared that those chosen for these positions are often senior or retired teachers:

> *Only senior teachers are considered to be part of (the) village council that even if we are teachers, they (barangay captains) do not invite us to be part of the village council mainly because we are still young – they prefer to involve more senior teachers for this role*.[77]

This nuance reveals that while teachers share similar cultural capital, i.e., professional, licensed, etc., such can still be further differentiated (with corresponding adjustment in weight) by the cultural significance of other social cultural factors. In this particular case where wisdom is conveniently associated with age, seniority in the profession

[75] CSL, MPS, MAOS, LAC, SVA and CIPS
[76] CIPS
[77] SVA

enhances a teacher's chances of occupying such positions. Aside from membership in village councils, FGD participants also emphasized communities' propensity to appoint teachers as advisers to youth organizations and clubs[78] as well as advisers to the village-based *Sangguniang Kabataan* or Youth Council.[79]

When aspiring for an elective position, FGD participants have observed that teachers' chances at success in the political realm is often rather bleak due to several factors. These include lack of the all-important financial resources (unless the teacher is rich through other means), limited link with established political parties, and even former students' bad perception of them.[80] Limuel, a public school teacher in Isla de Norte, frames the possible impact of teachers' long service in their profession to their political chances:

> *While teachers' long practice in the community provided opportunity to be known by possible voters, here in the Island it still depends if you have been good to your students or known to be too strict. If the teacher runs for an elective position, this might be an opportunity for his/her former students to get back at him/her.*[81]

Party-List System: Expanding Teachers' Political Involvement

Contemporary Filipino teachers' political involvement as class representative emerged with the passage of the 'Party-List System Act' or Republic Act 7941. This Act, which 'promotes proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives through a party-list system of registered national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof' (*Party-List System Act* 1995), serves as a vehicle for teachers' legitimate and formal participation in the current political structure.

Through the 'party-list system', Filipino teachers have formed several sectoral parties that provide them an avenue for representation, as congressman/woman, in the House of Representatives of the Philippine Congress. In the 16th Congress of the Philippines, teachers are represented by three party-lists and four members of the House of Representatives, (i.e., A Teacher – 2 representatives, ABAKADA – 1, and Alliance of Concerned Teachers – 1). Among the three party-lists, the Alliance of Concerned

[78] MPS and CSL
[79] LAC
[80] CSL, MPS, MAOS, LAC, SVA and CIPS
[81] CIPS

Teachers is the more progressive and militant.[82] This research focused on ACT since most of the FGD participants have expressed familiarity with this group.

ACT, as a group, serves as teachers' *organized and collective struggle as a response to the worsening pay and working conditions, decline in the status of their profession, and the general deterioration of the educational system* (*ACT Teachers Partylist*). The 'party-list system' allows teachers, through their representatives, to promote a legislative agenda framed from their perspectives and advocacies. By gaining membership to this legislative body, teachers are given a voice and a social space to engage other elected representatives, challenge traditionally dominant politicians, critique laws deemed disadvantageous to the general welfare of teachers, and promote legislations beneficial to teachers. Their membership to the House of Representatives expands their sphere of influence wherein they find strength from coalescing with other marginalized groups with similar advocacies and by taking advantage of public exposure afforded by the media. Crisanto, ACT member from Centro Elementary-A and High School, shared: *'even if we are not present in the rallies, we are with them as part of our pakiki-isa* (solidarity). It is also common to see other groups (non-teachers) participating in demonstrations. For Crisanto, the obvious reason is that: *'teachers belong also to the uring manggagawa or working class that we do not run out of supporters from other similar sectors of the community.'*[83] Among the party-lists representing the teacher sector, the ACT party-list members are the most vocal in their advocacy for better compensation and benefits for teachers and are more critical of government programs (e.g., introduction of K-12, ASEAN integration in education and voluntary election duties).[84]

To this party-list group, teachers' advocacies are not restricted to educational matters. On the contrary, teachers' concerns engage a wide range of national issues. Over time the group has found a way of magnifying the chances of their success through the following strategies:

- Nationalizing the membership to their organization through the establishment of regional and provincial chapters,
- Coalescing with other sectoral representatives with similar advocacies,

[82] IAO
[83] MAPS
[84] IAO

- Expanding the arena for discourse (i.e., classrooms, the halls of the House of Representatives, the streets, etc.),
- Utilizing all forms of media in communicating their advocacies, and
- Maintaining a degree of visibility in the public sphere.

For instance, in the May 9, 2011 rally, organized by the Alliance of Concerned Teachers, I personally observed the active support of other teacher and non-teacher sectors. The main goal of the demonstration was to call for the suspension of the implementation of the K-12 education program. The demonstrators covered a lot of ground to reach as many people as they can and thereby increase people's level of awareness. Protesters started from multiple points in Manila and marched in major thoroughfares towards *Liwasang Bonifacio*[85]. The protest culminated in a program where leaders of militant teachers' and students' organizations, parents and other marginalized sectors argued against the implementation of the K-12 program. Members of the media covered the event, aiding the amplification of the voice of dissent.

One of the perennial advocacies of teachers' party list groups is the continuous fight for just compensation and benefits. Juaquin's assessment regarding teachers' financial predicament expresses a long-standing disadvantage:

> *Although, public school teachers' salaries have increased, so much so that in general we now generally receive higher compensation than most private school teachers in the country, what we take home is still far from what teachers should fairly receive to allow a family of five to cope up with various expenses and live decently.*[86]

Economic capital lends differentiation between public and private school teachers,[87] between teachers from urban (i.e., with municipalities and cities with higher internal revenue allotments) and rural areas[88], between teachers and other professionals[89] and even among teachers in private schools.

While all FGD participants are grateful for the benefits they have received through the mediation of ACT, they are conflicted as to the manner by which these are obtained. More senior teachers and the majority of those from the provinces are more nostalgic about their traditional role and regard their colleagues' frequent rallies as actions that

[85] *Liwasang Bonifacio* is a historical and popular space where rallies and demonstrations are held.
[86] IAO
[87] SVA, LAC
[88] MAPS, MPS
[89] CIPS

are not truly reflective of the teaching profession. [90] For some teachers, membership in ACT is a form of distinction between being *palaban* (militant) or obedient adding that while their counterparts spend their time in the streets (participating in rallies/demonstrations), they are inside the classroom dispensing their duty as teachers.[91]

Teachers' voluntary membership in party-list organizations, particularly in ACT, utilizes the value of *pakiki-isa* (solidarity) in the form of *paninindigan* and *pakikibaka*. It is also in this highly active, if not volatile, political arena where teachers engage the government in various forms of struggle from the hallowed halls of the House of Representatives to the traffic-infested streets where they hold their rallies. ACT's classification of Filipino teachers as 'marginalized and oppressed sector in the Philippines' (*ACT Teachers Partylist*) constructed them into a class whereby they often collaborate with other sectors of similar classifications and advocacies.

Voluntary community engagements of teachers are not just restricted to events of magnitude like fiestas, festivals, and election-related, nor are they just confined to positions of paramount political and cultural importance. Teachers' community engagement pervades through the quotidian concerns and habitual challenges of the routine life of and in the community.

Familiar Community Engagements

Election duty, census enumeration, *Brigada Eskwela*, participation in cultural and religious activities, etc., underscore teachers' collective engagements in the community. Culled from various FGD discussions is the observation that while these engagements structurally ensure teachers' collective visibility in the community, teachers' involvement on individual and personal basis multiplies their engagements in the same community. This situation is facilitated by the passage of the 'Localization Act' where local teachers are prioritized to teach in their very own communities. Teachers' individual involvement carries a degree of significance particularly in close knit Philippine communities.

Localization Act and The Cultural Weight of Teaching and Residing in Own Community

[90] DAPST
[91] BES

The Localization Act (Republic Act 8190) is a law 'granting priority to residents of the barangay, municipality or city where the school is located, in the appointment or assignment of public school teachers. While this law does not specifically stipulate teachers' community engagement, it is the law that allows teachers to reside in their own locality and provide the principle behind teacher and communities' mutual familiarity. Prior to the promulgation of RA 8190, it is customary to assign newly hired public school teachers to remote areas and Foley (1976, p.61) noted that such practice impacts the 'exchange and political mobilization in educational bureaucracy' relative to this practice. Thus, it is not uncommon for teachers to move from one assignment to the next where each new place of assignment is a return step to the original place of residence (i.e., hometown and often to the family). One of the affordances of the teaching profession, particularly in public schools, is the possibility for teachers to live and teach in their own communities. Senior FGD participants from public schools recall that their first teaching assignments were in remote areas of their provinces, [92] where although they were recognized as teachers, they were initially classified as outsiders. Sensibility to 'insider' *(taga-loob)* and 'outsider' *(taga-labas)* perception and classification discourse is critical to teachers' community engagements. Enriquez (1992, p.49) observed that in Philippine society, levels of social interaction can initially be categorized as either 'insider or outsider'. The levels of interaction within these categories determine teachers' acceptance or non-acceptance in the community, as well as shape the nature and mechanics of their community engagements. The Localization Act has therefore facilitated teachers' movement from an 'outsider' to an 'insider' where such movement carries repercussion on the manner, meaning, and quality of their engagements in the community. Teachers' return to his/her community of residence is a return to the community where that particular teacher is considered 'one among them' (as kin and/or neighbor).

There are instances however, that instead of eventually returning to the original place of residence, teachers settles in one of their areas of assignment by reason of marriage or other opportunities. Dan, a private school teacher from Manila, recalled that:

> *Due to the practice of assigning teachers to far-flung areas… some teachers already start family in their remote (place of their) assignments. For*

[92] MPST

instance, I remember a teacher who eventually married the owner of the tricycle that she hired every day.[93]

The practice of assigning newly hired teachers to remote areas has not been totally eradicated, but the Localization Act has created the opportunity for public school teachers to be immediately or gradually assigned to schools proximate to their residence or, if not immediately possible, at least be given the chance to apply for eventual transfer to a school in their place of residence.

The Localization Act is accompanied by an Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) prescribed by the Department of Education Order No.3, s. 2013 (*Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 8190*). This IRR reiterates the prioritization of residents to fill up vacancies and posting of teachers, and clarifies the procedures and requirements for the said process. By providing opportunities and guidelines on how public school teachers can expedite their posting in or transfer to their own community of residence. Teachers then can return to where they are not just known as teachers but as neighbors or relatives and fellow members of the same community. More often than not, and particularly in rural/provincial areas, teachers possess both the advantages and disadvantages of being familiar with the people and the dynamics of the community. From FGD sessions, the appreciation of the Localization Act depends on a variety of factors. For instance, although public school teachers from Isla de Nortes are familiar with this law, they are largely unaffected by it since the island is already remote, lacking in teachers, and teachers in the area already have the propensity to return and to settle in the Island.[94] FGD participants from urban areas, while appreciative of this law, accord little significance to it due to the availability of public transportation that generally mitigates the effect of long distances from their residence to their place of teaching assignment.[95]

The Localization Act brings the teacher home, to the bosom of the familiar community. The practical consequence of the teacher residing in his/her community includes saving on travel time and expenses. Teachers normally just walk from their residence to the school along with students, and the teacher is among his/her familial support system. And in Philippine society, family does not only refer to its nucleus but to the whole

[93] LAC
[94] CIPST
[95] MPS

spectrum of extended family (Medina 2015). FGD narratives are replete with stories of mutual familiarity: from 'tricycle drivers who would even give them free rides to fish vendors in the wet market who give them discounts; from the pastor who paid for one's bus fare and a lot more. Each FGD participant has their own personal stories of people recognizing them as teachers. However, mutual recognition is not at all times convertible to beneficence. In this study, we noted the asymmetrical relations in different fields where teachers are disadvantaged, e.g., during volatile election situation, in terms of salaries and benefits when compared with other professionals, among others.

Beyond the geographical consideration of the Localization Act, this law also helps construct the identity of the teacher in the community as a 'local', providing for a greater chance of mutual familiarity between the teacher and the community—not anymore as an 'outsider' but as an 'insider' or one among us. Teachers do not have to wait for elections or census periods, or fiestas, to engage the community. Life in and with the community offers ordinary but contiguous spaces of possible engagements and encounters not so much as a group but more on an individual persuasion. The next section explores teachers' individual and ordinary community engagements.

Community Engagements on an Individual Basis

FGD participants observed that living in the very same community where they teach provides them with numerous opportunities for regular engagements. In this context, teachers' professional identity (specifically educational capital) and their network of relationships engender the configuration of their symbolic capital that is valuable as a currency in navigating the social world of their community. For instance, through teachers' symbolic capital, acquired through membership in organizations like the Rotary club, and by deploying their cultural capital (expressed as public relation skills), a teacher is able to engage for assistance from these civic organizations (e.g., medical mission, health seminars, installation of water system in the village).[96] Personal talents also animate teachers' individual engagements, e.g. singing in the church choir,[97] refereeing in sports games,[98] and acting as program emcee and pageant judge, among others.

[96] MPS
[97] CSL and LAC
[98] CSL, MPS, CIPS

Cultural participation can also take an aesthetic dimension. This is illustrated by the experience of public elementary teachers from San Vicente Ferrer when they were all assigned to different *'purok'* communities to assist in development, particularly the beautification of the community.[99] While mandated community engagements are largely organized (e.g., election duty, *Brigada Eskwela* and participation in institutional community service programs), individual and talent-based engagements are far more spontaneous, diverse and frequent. Other voluntary involvement includes membership to organizations like *Gawad Kalinga* (a non-government organization whose objective is to build house for the poor) and to private entities like media groups who help during calamities through the packing and distribution of relief goods. They also collaborate with civic and religious groups in medical and dental mission programs.[100] Thus, aside from the customary functions of teachers as a group, teachers' competencies, literacies and other capitals allow them to engage the community in their own distinct way in diverse manners in responding to the needs of the community.

Most of these individual and talent-based engagements reflect teachers' familiarity with their cultural dynamics in relating with their neighbors. Thus, whatever competencies they acquire through the more collective engagements, as well as any amount of literacies they accumulate in the process becomes a resource that individual teachers access and deploy in their engagements. Conversely, while these engagements are deployed on an individual basis and often do not merit official institutional (private schools) or government (Department of Education) recognition, the sum total of these individual teachers' engagements reflects a degree of the collective identity. In the words of Millet, senior public school teacher, the sum of it all is that *'we are jacks of all trades'*[101] and for Tere, private school teacher, *'all that we do is part of teachers' collective stories, so we always have to consider the bigger picture where a mistake of one teacher is imputed to all teachers'*.[102]

Even in collective and institutional engagements such as *Brigada Eskwela*, election duty and census enumeration; teachers' communicative and public relation skill or 'PR' is deemed crucial. FGD participants from public schools stated that *Brigada Eskwela* depends so much on the *'diskarte'* (street smart strategy) of individual teachers, and on

[99] VTSVFP
[100] LAC, CSL and MAPS
[101] VTSVFP
[102] LAC

teachers' social and cultural capital.[103] In this engagement, teachers utilize their public relation skills and communicative competency to successfully solicit for material assistance and seek out volunteers.[104] Even during elections, teachers' public relation skill is again harnessed particularly when they need to coordinate with the police, volunteer groups, poll watchers, supporters and voters. All of teachers' community engagements benefit from the value of *pakikipag-palagayang loob* (capacity to establish rapport through culture) as constitutive element of their communicative competency in engaging people in the community. For instance, when there is *'palagayang-loob*' (rapport) between the interviewer and the interviewee during census enumeration, teachers' are able to draw information with facility. Since most of contemporary Filipino teachers' community engagements are done in collaboration with other agents, their individual 'PR' and *'diskarte'* skills function as currency in ensuring successful community engagements.

Pakiki-isa: Cultural Value as Lynchpin of Teachers' Daily Community Engagements

Teachers' community engagement cannot solely stand on legal mandates and institutional policies. On the contrary, FGD participants consistently reference cultural values and norms as elements of their multiple involvements in their community in terms of *'pakiki-isa'* (solidarity) with the community. The socio-cultural dimension of teachers' community engagements, while evident, is rendered opaque due to blurred boundaries between practices that are mandated by law and those that are obligatory by reason of culture. The confluence of mandatory and voluntary characters in contemporary Filipino teachers' community engagements helps organize teachers' perception of and expectation by the community.

Aside from multiple mandated and voluntary forms of engagements, FGD participants also discussed the perceptions and expectations of people in the community that are both reproductive of their traditional practices and possibly generative of new practices.

'From Every Juan's Perception to Communities' Expectations'

[103] BES
[104] MAPS, LCPST and BES

FGD participants described how their neighbors, students, parents of their pupils, the media, and other agents or *'every Juan'* in the community perceive them, not only as a teachers in the classrooms, but as the same professional in their community. This section is a construct of how teachers arrived at the conclusion that in the manner teachers' were perceived; through that manner they were expected to act. In the same FGD sessions, teachers shared the common observation that most of community's' perceptions and expectations reflect their moral standing therein. Hence, these constructed perceptions lay the foundation for the determination of norms dictating teachers' acceptable decorum and behaviour in the community. Conversely, community's' perceptions and expectations from teachers, particularly those residing among them, also define the parameter of what is considered deviant behaviours and unconscionable practices. This section presents three common emergent perceptions of teachers by the community from the FGD sessions, namely, as role models (where teachers are often invited to be godparents in weddings and baptisms), financial resource (more on generosity and disposition to share than actual affluence) and as local intellectuals.

Teacher ka pa naman![105] The Social Weight of Role Model Perception

> *I just heard from our neighbors that when you say teacher they would look at you as a figure of morality. They tend to scrutinize the things that you do whereby you gain respect from them by how you conduct yourself in school and in the community where you're very visible to the people around you. Chen (Private school teacher from Cebu City)*

The quote above is a perception shared by the majority, if not all, of the FGD participants. Teachers from both private and public schools formed their consensus around two points: on the general class perception of the community about teachers as role models and on the accompanying weight of the expectations arising from these perceptions. Teachers, among other professionals in the community, are 'expected to exhibit refinement' in speech and in actions[106] in school and particularly in the community. This perception and expectation transcend the usual differentiation due to geographical location and as may be caused by social demographics. Crisanto, a public school teacher from Manila, observed that:

[105] *'Teacher ka pa naman'* is a sarcastic rebuke which can be literally translated as *'and to think you are a teacher'*
[106] MPS, MAPS and CSL

> *If you live in the very same community where you teach, all the children from school see what you do most of the time, they can observe what you do even at home – it is unacceptable for teachers to be seen drinking in public place nor loitering around inebriated.*

Teachers' visibility and the transparency of their lives in the community, compounded by the regularity of their engagements therein, occasion the gradual but sustained construction of who they are in the community.

In general, teachers are expected not only to exhibit pro-social behaviours in the community but they are also expected to monitor the actuations of their present and even past students, whether in school or in the community. Teachers reported how parents include them in the dynamics of disciplining their children. According to Patricia, it is common to hear this from parents of their students in the island: *'is that what you learned from your teachers?'* In Manila, Crisanto expressed the same thoughts when rebuking a teachers' impropriety like drinking alcoholic beverages in public: *'How could you… (nakakahiya ka) shame on you… (teacher ka pa naman) and to think that you are a teacher?'* [107] Thus, these teachers strongly feel that people in the community also look up to them to uphold certain cultural values and inculcate the same to their children. FGD participants from Los Angeles College observed that the social weight of this 'role model' expectation from teachers creates a noticeable distinction as people in their community are more tolerant with policemen's unscrupulous behaviour or by other professionals while they are less forgiving when perpetuated by a teacher.' As Chayong, private school teacher from Colegio de San Luis, puts it: '*when you commit a mistake or do something improper of a teacher there is always a consequence and it is difficult to be erased from their memory.* Rhon, a private school teacher from NCR, added another dimension to the punitive weight of teachers' transgressions:

> *Actions of teachers (and even lifestyle) have strong impact in the community… for example if a teacher becomes a mistress or got involved in corrupt practices… I need to say that these actions affect the community.*

The role model perception that empowers teachers to mediate *('makialam')* in the disciplining of their students even in the community seems necessary for some teachers. According to Patricia:

[107] MAPS, CIPS, and SVA

> *'If we do not look after the students' behaviour in the community… we are also the victim of that same behaviour inside the classroom. Furthermore, there was even an instance when somebody commented that 'you saw what the student did and you did not even correct him'. Now, when we see students littering and disposing improperly their trash, even if this is outside of school premises, I ask them to pick (up) their trash and clean up immediately'.*

Throughout the whole FGD sessions, no mention was made on meting out corporal punishment as a way of disciplining their students. The social and class identity that this role model perception of teachers creates, together with the whole spectrum of attached expectations, configures the form and quality of their community engagements that in a way constitute distinct teachers' practices. For instance, for Claro, a private school teacher from Cebu City: *'when we go out into the community, somehow people tend to look up to us. Seemingly, there is a felt high regard for teachers that becomes handy when managing election processes'*. This high regard seems to transcend both geographical and temporal boundaries as teachers are also invited to form stronger bonds with some of their former students as godparents in religious ceremonies.

The perception of teachers as role models in the community is not restricted to disciplinary functions. Further discussions on the possible consequences of this role model perception reveals that such is intimately related to social expectations. For this matter teachers are invited to stand as sponsors during social and religious rituals like weddings and baptism. The likelihood for these educators to be invited as godparents can be directly proportional to the degree by which a teacher is perceived as a role model.

'Ninong at Ninang': Expanding the Network of Teachers' Social Relations

FGD participants realized that most of them particularly the more senior ones, from both public and private schools, regardless of geographical differentiations, have been approached by their former students and other people in the community to stand as sponsors/godparents (*Ninong* or *Ninang*) at their weddings or at the christening of their children. Teachers' participation as godparents in these social and religious rites functions as a gauge of their moral standing in the community through which they can further expand the network of social relations with the people. Jinnie, a private school teacher from Colegio de San Luis, elaborated that age is also a factor in considering teachers to be godparents in these social and religious rites: *'I noticed that as I grow in*

age, an increasing number of my former students have been asking me to stand as their Ninang (sponsor – godparent) in their wedding or as godparent to one of their children'. However, young teachers from both public and private schools expressed that they have rarely been invited to be sponsors, which for them indicates that they are not yet 'ancient' (old)[108].

When invited to be godparents, teachers become the couple's second parent bestowed during the wedding rite or as second parent to the infant during baptismal rite. These rituals provide the cultural and religious foundation for the '*in loco parentis'* principle where 'the sponsored is likened to a son/daughter, while the sponsor is likened to a parent' (Medina 2015, p.34). This principle requires teachers to be morally co-responsible in the rearing of the child and in guiding the new couple. It is also to this end, that former student and other members of the community approach teachers for this role in their lives. Thus, as godparents, teachers are expected to look after their *inaanak* or godchild to inculcate, mediate and transmit socio-cultural values.

There is a horizontal and vertical dimension to teachers' role as sponsors. The vertical dimension relates to them as second parents or in the place of the parents. In this role, teachers who became godparents are expected to look after the welfare of the child or the couple by giving assistance and advice. At the horizontal dimension, teachers expand the network of relationships not only to their 'godchild' but also to their co-sponsors. For as godparents, teachers do not only establish new social relationships with their godchild (in this case former students and other members of the community), but they also become *'kumare'* and *'kumpare'* (constituted social relationship as co-parents of the sponsored). Through these social, cultural and religious rituals, teachers occupy the same social space with other professionals and agents in the community. Religious ceremonies (wedding, baptism and confirmation), including civil unions, expand the number of ritually-forged kin of families and is characterized by mutual help and reciprocity which in turn reinforce and preserve kinship solidarity and cohesiveness (Medina 2015, p.34). The engendered social networks established through these rituals can possibly shape the contours of teachers' social positions and relations that have corresponding repercussions in their various community engagements. For instance, if a teacher is a *kumare or kumpare* of the Mayor of the town, both the Mayor and the

[108] SVA, CSL, CIPS

teacher can access this new relationship in various exigencies of socio-political life of the community.

'Loan-don': The Paradox of Teachers as Financial Resource in the Community

Contemporary Filipino teachers 'receive the lowest salaries among the ranks of professionals' (*ACT Teachers Partylist*). For this reason, it is not uncommon to characterize their economic standing not only in terms of their economic resources but on the capacity to make ends meet through as skill they call *'diskarte'*. Teachers have a name for this social phenomenon – 'London'. *'London or Loan-doon'*, a contraction of words ('loan here and loan there') is a euphemism for the common practice of Filipino teachers of augmenting their meager salary through credit from lending individuals or institutions. Taking advantage of a healthy credit line from lending individuals and institutions is one way for teachers to supplement their salary. Eva, Reggie and Sandro describe this credit process in relation to their identity as teachers:

> *The teaching profession has many social benefits… this profession provides you with better access to credits from individuals or institution in what is now identified with us … "london". It means, 'loan here and loan there" (loan duon and loan dito). People easily trust us; if you are really in need (financially) you have recourse through this. Thus, in a way it is easy for us to remedy an urgent financial need. If we do not have this capacity to acquire loans it will be extremely difficult for us (to) make ends meet. What amazes us - sometimes the lenders are the ones who would initiate to lend us money because they trust us – they trust that we will be paying regularly. Especially if you are a teacher and your husband does not have a stable job...it is really difficult and we are able to support the financial needs of the family through these loans.*[109]

'London' has become a common practice among FGD participants that they have even expressed gratefulness for this practice that is closely linked to the social resources made accessible to them as teachers. For Carmen: '*we are not ashamed to say that because of the 'london' practice, teachers are able to send their children to school. We survive … even if how many children we have, we can still send them to school.*'[110]. But this practice – while highlighting teachers' innovativeness – indicates equity gaps in Philippine society. This practice also reveals teachers vulnerability to unscrupulous loan sharks. Enterprising creditors recognized and saw financial opportunity in the scarce economic resource of teachers by taking the initiative in offering credit lines to teachers:

[109] MPS
[110] VTSVFP

> *Creditors are the ones who usually approach us… they know that we will pay…upon collection of our salaries. These creditors would even compete among themselves on who can offer the lowest interest rate and better payment scheme… In fact we do not even have to look for creditors - the creditors (institutions) would offer loan credits in school. Before it was only a practice in Manila but now there are also credit institutions here in Isabela.*

Notwithstanding the consensus of FGD participants on their deficit financial standing (regardless of their geographical and cultural affiliations), what amazes teachers is the paradox imbedded in the perception of the community that they are generous financial resources. Baffled teachers could not understand how people in the community still run to them for financial assistance even when they are well aware of how much they are earning. The community often solicits from teachers when the community is in need of financial resources. These financial exigencies include: help to cover the funeral and burial expenses for a deceased community member; contributions to augment the operational fund for fiesta or Christmas celebrations; assistance for the fund raising activity in the village, just to name a few. Furthermore, teachers also receive solicitation letters from various groups in the community, i.e., for relief goods during calamities, and prices (in cash or kind) for pageants and sports activities.[111] Notwithstanding this perception of generosity, teachers are critically aware of their real financial standing when they observed that their involvement in various socio-cultural activities are mostly reserved to membership status or committee chairmanship but rarely as organizer for such role entails shelling out sizable amounts of which they do not have.[112]

Amidst the restrictions posed by their limited financial resources, teachers express optimism that quality of life is improving albeit at a snail pace when they are able *to build their own house, send their children and siblings to school until they acquire a degree even if at the end of the day nothing is left (for them)*.[113] In the Island, it is almost expected that teachers prefer an Education degree for their children and their siblings (as it is customary for many families within this social strata to collectively support the education of the younger siblings). For these teachers, the significance they attribute to the weight of economic standing depends on one's aspirations and lifestyle: *what I*

[111] MAPS, MPS, CSL, and CIPS
[112] LAC
[113] CIPST

appreciate living as teacher in the Island is that my needs are not complicated… we can live simply here as a family.[114]

Although the desire to acquire that capacity to live simply is echoed across most of the FGD areas, teachers in more urban areas are found to be in a better position to improve their economic standing. For instance, Crisanto, public school teacher from Manila, praised the assistance that the local government in neighboring city gives to their teachers; '*Local government unit provides assistance for housing and other benefits, but sometimes they arbitrarily decrease the allowances that we use to receive from the city*. From FGD responses, external factors based on economic classification of the city or municipality supervising their schools directly impact teachers' social position and mobility.

Most FGD participants frame their foray into education and teaching profession relative to the concept of economic deficiency. Sandro, a public school teacher in the municipality of Manaoag, provided the closest description that can encapsulate the reflective reasoning of most participants when asked why they opt to become a teacher: *'sa hirap ng buhay'* (due to the hardships of one's life, mostly due to economic necessities) this is all that my parents can afford to support. Furthermore, for Bela and Jean, private school teachers of ACQC*: 'it is the easiest degree to finish and there is a significant (malaki) difference in tuition fee from other degree programs'.* Aside from the above circumstances, availability of scholarship programs abound for education courses, e.g., Sangguniang Kabataan (Youth Council) Scholarship, governor's scholarship program, and schools' scholarship program is more accessible to education takers.[115] It was also observed during FGD sessions that aside from poverty, the choice of education degree includes historical and family consideration. For instance, *'teaching runs in the family that my aunt, mother and other relatives are teachers'*[116]. Furthermore, teaching is a profession open to other professionals looking for alternative jobs, e.g., an engineer can be a teacher; and so can doctors, lawyers, police and others.

In all FGD sessions, participants agree that their economic positioning in the society is 'middle to lower-middle class'[117] and they also belie the insinuation that education

[114] CIPST
[115] CSL, LAC, MPS, MAPS
[116] CSL, MAPS
[117] LAC, MPS, CSL, MAPS

degree programs is of lower quality compared to other degree programs.[118] The impact of deficit economic circumstances to teachers and the teaching profession contributes to the low regard for education degree. For instance Chia, a young public school teacher from the Island thinks that: *compared with other professionals like lawyers and doctors, it appears that teachers occupy the lower portion of the social order particularly when it comes to financial matter*. This assessment seems to be shared by a minority and generally young teachers. More senior teachers offer a contrary view. For example, in the same FGD session, Grace, a more senior teacher, rebuts young teachers portrayal that teaching is subordinated: *I consciously do not put myself down. I take it that I am a professional teacher. Even that rich doctor became one because of me*. It appears that everyone shares the reflection that it takes a teacher to rear other professionals. When probed deeper, the distinction offered by Chia and some other teachers is restricted to economic consideration. For the more experienced teachers such as Grace: *the respect for teacher is incomparable. Sometimes even when you are in the company of a doctor… you will most probably be the one greeted by the child (student)*.

'May-alam at Maalam': Teachers as Local Intellectuals

FGD participants observed that some people in the community also regard them as sources of practical and theoretical knowledge by their neighbors. They are perceived and expected to be both *'may-alam'* (knowledgeable) and *'maalam'* (able to put that knowledge to practical use). In a sense, they can be called as local intellectuals where teachers are perceived – and expected – to possess a significant degree of theoretical and practical knowledge. The importance is this knowledge is felt not inside the classroom but in addressing the common needs of the community. How local intellectual is understood by these teachers can be culled from Jinnie's experience, private school teacher from Colegio de San Luis, when some of her neighbors would asked her assistance and views on several matters:

> *Could you kindly read this letter for me? At other times, my elderly neighbor ask to interpret their medical prescription – like how many times to take this or that medicine. Sometimes they just ask my opinion about anything'*.

Similar experiences by other FGD participants include seeking help to understand the contents of a letter received from a government office, to explain the stipulation

[118] LAC, MPS

contained in a court order, and to help draft official letters to various government agencies.[119] Jinnie further recalled that some people in the community have made it a habit to borrow dictionaries or a copy of the Bible from her.[120] For his part, Crisanto revealed that former students still regularly ask him for tutorials.[121] The apparent paradox between teachers as local intellectuals and teachers' economic deficit reveals both the different modalities of capitals possessed by these teachers.

In the matter of teachers being regarded as local intellectuals, teachers from more urban setting opined that they do not share the same experiences with those from the provinces since in their areas lawyers, doctors and other professionals abound. For instance, some public and private school teachers from Manaoag have shared that since people in the *poblacion* already know where to get specific information and have access to the Internet, they no longer reach out to teachers to acquire this kind of information.[122]

As a consequence of teachers' residence in the same community with their students, some parents of their (past and present) pupils still expect them to transmit socio-cultural values to their children even in the community.[123] In a sense, teachers' multiple literacies provide them with the fundamental knowhow to address common concerns in the community. As Milet frames it: *'we are expected to be jack-of-all-trades in the community'*.[124] What is observable here is that individual teachers' community engagements are differentiated and individualized. For instance, Art, a returning public school teacher from Manila, has this experience:

> *For me, it's my involvement in sports in the community…though sometimes I am also invited to give seminar on fire and safety, or first aid… you have to be the one especially if your community lacks the logistics and resources that the community comes to me as a resource to give seminars.*

Local intellectual designation takes on an aesthetic dimension in the experience of some teachers in San Vicente Ferrer. Essential to the analysis of teacher-community involvement, we need to consider the practicality of assigning multiple community roles to teachers. As Carmen pointed out in her sharing:

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[119] CSL and MPS
[120] CSL
[121] MPS
[122] CSL and MAPS
[123] MPS, CIPST, SVA and MPS
[124] VTSVFP

> *The village (barangay) officials requested the involvement of teachers in the beautification of the purok (community groupings in the village) and in other cultural activities… the reason is that they also recognize not just the availability of teachers but also their capability. We are assigned to the community where we belong. This is not only true here in San Vicente Ferrer so I think that it is a project of the province of Isabela. If it is by purok then they really need a good number of teachers for each purok in the community.*

Cultural and political circumstances further define the construction of teachers' identity as local intellectuals in the community. In a locality where the political figure dominates the entire social space disadvantaging other agents within it, teachers as local intellectuals are forced to critically, though often reluctantly, engage the dominant force. The manner, quality and even the success of the enactment of teachers' local intellectual designation is filtered by the volatility of the social field and the amount of power that the dominant wields in it. For instance, in the Island, teachers from both public and private schools act as critical agents who assess and expose the *modus operandi* of local politicians.

> *Since the Mayor controls everything including the communication tower, the power generator and the only sizable ferry in the island, we know what is happening when there is a power outage for more than a week and the communication line is down as well. That is the time when the boat is loaded with timber and other resources of the island then delivered (somewhere)*.[125]

Teachers' critical involvement in the island is limited to critical analysis of the situation since they still fear that the dominant political, who they symbolically refer to as *'malaking paa'* (big foot), can get back at them *(baka masipa kami ng malaking paa – the one with big foot has the power to kick us)*.[126]

In another context, when teachers' become members of Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) they become, in the words of Juaquin, a public school teacher and ACT officer, as *'mulat na kaguruan or makabagong guro'* (new generation of enlightened/critical teachers). As activists, these teachers are expected to be militant, progressive and nationalistic.[127] With this identity, not only do teachers possess the capacity to assess socio-political dynamics within the school and in the larger society, they are also empowered to actively participate in emancipatory and liberating social practices. Adds Juaquin, *'a modern teacher is an enlightened teacher who is expected to use critical*

[125] CIPST and SVA
[126] SVA
[127] IAO, MAPS

framework in analyzing social situations and in actively engaging the community'. According to this mold, teachers are not simply expected to obey; in fact, they are encouraged to question or to be critical about policies and programs affecting their profession.[128] For progressive and enlightened teachers, part of their critical role as local intellectuals is to advocate and to lobby for teachers' welfare in any social space where this can be attained. They also find it strategic to join forces with other sectors, to utilize multiple media platforms to obtain their goals and to piggyback on official government activities to promote their agenda. For instance, ACT member teachers and parent-participants used the DepEd's 2015 *Brigada Eskwela* week to launch the signature drive calling for the suspension of the K-12 programs'.

The formation of the critical disposition among contemporary Filipino teachers, as local intellectuals, is also attainable via a more formal education programs offered by the Department of Education. These initiatives include mainstream academic trainings and graduate education degree program such as the *Kaguruang Makabayan* (KAGUMA) and Graduate Diploma for Cultural Education (GDCE) programs.[129] In an informal conversation with Arcia, one of the proponents of this program:

> *Kaguma and GDCE are teacher-training programs whose goal is to re-educate teachers on notions of cultural education. This is attained by providing critical frames in apprehending and analyzing social and cultural realities on national level but with particular emphasis on the local communities. These programs emphasize on local culture as an abundant (especially to teachers) resource in constructing relevant historical, social and cultural knowledge*.

KAGUMA and GDCE are related, the former often serves as the introductory avenue where teachers gain interest in acquiring this competence. While KAGUMA is usually a three-day seminar, GDCE that leads to a Masters' degree is a summer program that can be completed in at least 2 to 3 years. The critical framework that these two programs aim to form in the teachers is reflected in their respective contents. The courses taught in KAGUMA include the 'Pedagogy of Cultural Education – Culture as Worldviews that tackles the genesis and orientation of our education, Language and Cultural Diversity, and Rare-view of Philippine History where mainstream reading of history is critiqued and deconstructed'.

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[128] IAO

[129] *KAGUMA and GDCE were programs developed by ARTIST Inc. non-government institution, which aims to popularize and develop people's art and literature from the Southern Tagalog region (in the Philippines).*

In one of GDCE's summer classes, which I was allowed to observe, I listened to how teachers practice in their own respective schools and communities what they learned from previous GDCE classes. Here is one example of the possibilities engendered by cultural education:

> *'Through courses in Graduate Diploma Education, I am able to explain what cultural education is in a manner that I became more appreciative of local history. For example, aside from Jose Rizal who is our National Hero, we also have our own local hero right here in our place. Through my research I found out that the present 'donut factory' in our town is where the old garrison stood during the Japanese occupation. I also learned about the life of the local hero who gave up his life against the Japanese when he led the liberation of the prisoners from that garrison. Now when I teach, I do not only focus on the life and deeds of great heroes but also I discuss the hero who lived right around the bend.'*[130]

Arcia, further narrated the account of the initiative and efforts of a KAGUMA scholar who worked with the community to revive a local practice in the fishing village and organize this practice into one that is familiar to the people and organic to the place.

> *'After being taught cultural mapping, one MAPE (Physical Education) teacher researched on the diversity of marine life in General Luna. He remembered his childhood in their area, which is a fishing village. One of the activities they enjoyed then were to gather seashells during low tide. Back then they can identify the seashells by their local names. He noticed that the present generation is no longer familiar with the names of these shells. It was from that past activities and the forgetfulness of the present generation that inspired him to conceptualize a project. He developed it into a research paper and he named the entire activity as 'Hibasanan' (hibas - low tide) festival. In a sense, 'hibasanan' became a festival that creates awareness to the young generation about the local heritage of their town. Thus, teachers, after KAGUMA, where they are provided with framework on appreciating and analyzing local cultural and historical heritage and materials, returns to their community with a new way of looking and framing the common elements of their community. It is important for teachers to return and to be in touch with their community because it is where they can find their rich (cultural) resources.*

While KAGUMA and GDCE are contemporary cultural programs for teachers, recognized and supported by the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education, Arcia admitted that these still require consistent effort to inch past its 'novelty' phase. For now, cultural education through KAGUMA and GDCE is gradually and effectively enhancing the local intellectual capability of teachers in their own respective schools and communities.

[130] GDCE Class conducted at Colegio de San de Juan de Letran – Calamba (April, 2015).

Similar to how teachers' radical and progressive activities are perceived to be improper vis-à-vis teachers' traditional practices, there are extreme situations where certain groups felt strongly against some of the practices as local intellectuals in their community. Take for instance how Morgan's[131] harrowing experience during the discussion of the Anti-violence against Women and Children Law to parents and pupils exposed him to mortal danger. What can be obtained from Morgan's account is that when teachers function as local intellectuals they can unwittingly strike a sensitive cultural issue, which antagonize people of contrary opinion and position. In a similar manner, teachers' social and critical analysis of deliberate brownouts in their place is muted for fear of 'big foot' *(malaking paa)*.[132] Perhaps recognizing the perilous position of teachers when they are perceived to be meddling, Lagring offered this caution: '*we are leaders… but since we have the village chief in our community, we defer to him and only after that can he designate us to function as one. That's the time we enter as leader'*.[133] Lagring is not only cautious, her statement betrays that teachers' position and capacity to negotiate realms of power exposes teachers' vulnerable position and the de-valuing of their capital in the face of power.

Contemporary Filipino teachers' community engagements are complex as they are generated from multiple sources, operationalized in different evolving and layered fields, and continuously engaging different agents therein. Thus, it is deemed useful to offer a summary of teachers' engagements that emerged from FGD sessions, interviews and conversations with key informants.

What is most important is that the FGD sessions revealed the factors affecting community engagements and provided clues on how multiple relations and layered meanings can possibly configure a social identity of Filipino teachers. Figuratively speaking, these constructed engagements are simply the proverbial sociological 'tip of the iceberg' of this project.

[131] ITIP
[132] SVA
[133] DAPST

Appendix B Letter of Consent by Participating Schools

'Exploring Filipino teachers' identity and community engagements'

Consent of School Participants

This project has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact Vicki Allen, the Human Ethics Compliance Officer of this Committee:

Tel: (08) 8302 3118; Email: Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au

Declaration:

In signing this form, I confirm that:

- As an authorized official of the school with the legal personality to approve or disapprove this request, I have read the School and Participant Information Sheets. The nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and school's involvement in it.
- I also allow that one suitable classroom be used as a venue for the narrative inquiry and focus group discussion.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, the school will not be identified and details will remain confidential, unless required by law.
- I understand that by signing this form I am consenting to allow the teachers of this school to participate in narrative inquiry and focus group discussions.
- I understand that the whole process of narrative inquiry and focus group discussions will be filmed and audios will be recorded with wireless microphone. These recorded data will be transcribed to text that will serve as the basis for analysis.
- I understand that recordings will be securely held on University of South Australia grounds for a period of five years with access granted only to those involve with the project in order to maintain confidentiality of all participants.

Name of School Official: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix C Letter of Invitation to Teacher Participants

January 5, 2015
Name of Teacher
Name of School
Address

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

Greetings!

You are invited to participate in the study to deepen our understanding of the Filipino teacher in the study entitled **'Exploring Filipino teachers' identity and community engagements'.** No one is in a better position to understand the life of a teacher than a teacher himself/herself. The study seeks your assistance together with some of your co-teachers (four each from the elementary and high school department) from your school to provide the following information;

1. Description of the communities where you live and teach,
2. Identification and description of various community roles and find out how these roles impact their identity in the community.
3. Exploration of the possible effects of community engagements to classroom practices.

The research is undertaken as a part of a doctoral degree and will involve having a PhD student on site during the pre-agreed data gathering date.

Some key information relative to this research:

- Your consent is very important and you will only be allowed to participate in the process upon submission of signed consent agreement. The consent agreement contains opt-out, confidentiality and anonymity clauses.
- The data gathering will utilize both Narrative Inquiry *(pagkukwento)* and Focus Discussion method *(kwentuhan at talakayan)*. We will choose a date that will not adversely affect school activities as well as it should not hamper important domestic concerns. It will be a whole day activity and will start at 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. The researcher shall facilitate the whole data gathering process.
- Simple meals will be provided during the data gathering sessions.
- All proceedings will be recorded through audio recorder and video camcorder.
- Gathered data will be secured properly on University of South Australia grounds for a period of five years with access to specific data set granted only to those involved with the project.
- A summary of findings will be provided to the school upon completion of the project.

The University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee has approved this project. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant school please contact Vicki Allen, the Human Ethics Compliance Officer of this Committee. Tel: (08) 8302 3118; Email: Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au. For further information regarding the research project or to withdraw consent for

participation, please contact Stephen Redillas. Tel: (+63) 0939 179 2297, Email: stephen.redillas@unisa.edu.au.

Attached herewith is a response form for this request. *Good day and Hoping for your favorable response to this request.*

Respectfully yours,
Stephen Redillas
Ph.D. Student
School of Education, University of South Australia

Appendix D Consent Letter of Teacher Participants

This project has been approved by the University of South Australia's Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any ethical concerns about the project or questions about your rights as a participant please contact Vicki Allen, the Human Ethics Compliance Officer of this Committee:

Tel: (08) 8302 3118; Email: Vicki.Allen@unisa.edu.au

Declaration:

In signing this form, I confirm that:

- I have read the Participant Information Sheet the nature and purpose of the research project has been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.
- I understand the purpose of the research project and my involvement in it.
- I understand that I may withdraw from the research project at any stage during the data collection and analysis phases and that this will not affect my status now or in the future.
- I understand that while information gained during the study may be published, I will not be identified and my personal details will remain confidential, unless required by law.
- I understand that by signing this form I am consenting to participate in narrative inquiry and focus group discussions.
- I understand that the whole process of narrative inquiry and focus group discussions will be filmed and audios will be recorded with wireless microphone. These recorded data will be transcribed to text that will be the basis for analysis
- I understand that the recordings will be securely held on University of South Australia grounds for a period of five years with access granted only to those involved with the project in order to maintain confidentiality of all participants.

Name of Participant: _____

Participant's Signature:_____

Appendix E Coded Research Participants & Locale *(Table 4)*

Manaoag, Pangasinan (Public School / Provincial / Mixed rural and urban)			
No.	Gender	Pseudonym	School Code
1	M	Sandro	Pilar Elementary and HS-A
2	F	Eva	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
3	F	Heart	Pilar Elementary and HS-C
4	F	Mayang	Pilar Elementary and HS-D
5	F	Paraiso	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
6	M	Reggie	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
7	F	Lucia	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
8	F	Celia	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
9	M	Juan Miguel	Pilar Elementary and HS-B
Manaoag, Pangasinan (Private School/ Provincial / Mixed rural and urban)			
1	M	Santi	Colegio de San Luis
2	F	Joanne	Colegio de San Luis
3	M	Belle	Colegio de San Luis
4	F	Rina	Colegio de San Luis
5	F	Jinnie	Colegio de San Luis
6	F	Chayong	Colegio de San Luis
7	F	Vina	Colegio de San Luis
8	F	Minda	Colegio de San Luis
Manila - National Capital Region (Private School / urban)			
1	M	Dan	Los Angeles College
2	M	Mile	Los Angeles College
3	M	Rhon	Los Angeles College
4	F	Bela	Los Angeles College
5	F	Tere	Los Angeles College
6	F	Dana	Los Angeles College
7	F	Jeanne	Los Angeles College
Manila - National Capital Region (Public School / urban)			
1	M	JB	Centro Elementary-A and High School
2	M	Crisanto	Centro Elementary-A and High School
3	M	Art	Centro Elementary-B and High School
4	F	Mina	Centro Elementary-C and High School
5	F	Tita	Centro Elementary-D and High School
Isla de Norte, Cagayan Province (Public School / Provincial / Island / Rural)			
1	M	Adrian	Isla de Norte-A Elementary and HS
2	M	Lyndon	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS
3	F	Gretchen	Isla de Norte-C Elementary and HS
4	F	Chia	Isla de Norte-D Elementary and HS
5	F	Patricia	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS

6	F	Jean	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS	
7	F	Grace	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS	
8	F	Melay	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS	
9	M	James	Isla de Norte-B Elementary and HS	
Isla de Norte, Cagayan Province (Private School / Provincial / Island / Rural)				
1	F	Linda	San Vicente Academy	
2	M	Keith	San Vicente Academy	
3	F	Janna	San Vicente Academy	
4	F	Ariana	San Vicente Academy	
5	F	Biel	San Vicente Academy	
6	M	Serafin	San Vicente Academy	
7	M	Betong	San Vicente Academy	
8	F	Rosiel	San Vicente Academy	
San Vicente Ferrer, Isabela Province (Private & Public School / Provincial / Rural)				
** Participants are teachers and at the same time parish volunteers and officers of faith-based organizations*				
1	F	Racquel	Sto. Domingo Nat. HS	
2	F	Ada	San Pedro Nat. HS	
3	F	Lagring	Sto. Domingo Nat. HS	
4	F	Milette	Sto. Domingo Nat. HS	
5	F	Carmen	Quirino Memorial HS	
6	F	Tina	Quirino Memorial HS	
Cebu City (Private and Public School / Provincial / Mixed urban and rural)				
1	F	Edith	Consolation Nat. HS	
2	F	Susielyn	Sta. Teresita School	
3	M	Claro	Sta. Teresita School	
4	F	Eden	Sta. Teresita School	
5	F	Chen	Sta. Teresita School	
Bangusan, Cavite Province (Public School / City / Urban)				
1	F	Emma	Bangusan Elem. School	
2	F	Allyn	Bangusan Elem. School	
3	F	Osang	Bangusan Elem. School	
4	F	Annemarie	Bangusan Elem. School	
5	F	Lenlen	Bangusan Elem. School	
On Brigada Eskwela and Evacuation Centre (Sagingan, Ligao City)				
1	JunJun	*Project Development Officer in-charge of Dep-Ed Risk Reduction Programs*	M	Sagingan Elem. School
2	*Awit*	*Senior Education Specialist for Social Mobilization*	F	Sagingan Elem. School
Alliance of Concerned Teacher Party-List (An Interview)				
1	*Juaquin*	*Teacher, officer and active propagator of ACT*	M	Quirino Science HS
Cultural Education Teacher				
1	Arcia	Arcia is a professor of culture and head of the culture-related department of tertiary institution in Southern Tagalog region	F	Colegio de Santo Tomas

Appendix F Ethics Approval

Received: January 27, 2015

Dear Applicant

Re: Ethics protocol "Exploring the Social Identity of the Filipino Teachers in Contemporary Philippine Society" (Application ID: 0000033884)

Thank you for submitting your ethics protocol for consideration. Your protocol has been considered by the E2 Committee Review Group.

I am pleased to advise that your protocol has been granted ethics approval and meets the requirements of the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research.

Please note that the E2 Committee Review Group's decision will be reported to the next meeting of the Human Research Ethics Committee for endorsement.

Please regard this email as formal notification of approval.

Ethics approval is always made on the basis of a number of conditions detailed at http://www.unisa.edu.au/res/forms/docs/humanresearchethics_conditions.doc; it is important that you are familiar with, and abide by, these conditions. It is also essential that you conduct all research according to UniSA guidelines, which can be found at http://www.unisa.edu.au/res/ethics/default.asp

Please note, if your project is a clinical trial you are required to register it in a publicly accessible trials registry prior to enrolment of the first participant (e.g. Australian New Zealand Clinical Trials Registry http://www.anzctr.org.au/) as a condition of ethics approval.

Best wishes for your research.

Executive Officer

UniSA's Human Research Ethics Committee

CRICOS provider number 00121B

Appendix G Focus Group Schedule & Module

1. Introduction

    a. Teachers' community engagement in photos showing their participation in election (as BEI), community-based adult literacy program, drug awareness campaign, relief operations, health and nutrition (feeding program), advocacies, environmental campaign (tree planting) and involvement in cultural, religious and civic activities.

    b. Presentation of the title and aims of the research

        - *'Sino at ano si Titser sa Lipunan* (Who is a teacher in the community)?' Exploring Filipino teachers identity and community engagements

        - Aims of the Research

            - To further the knowledge on and to deepen the existing insight on Filipino teachers' identity in their communities

            - To explore the rich potentialities of their distinct identity in relation to community and educational practices

    c. Explanation of FGD Schedule

8:30 am – Orientation

9:00 am – *Kuwentuhang Halalan* (Election-related stories – a narrative inquiry approach)

10:00 am – *Miryenda* (snacks while story-telling is ongoing)

11:00 am – In-depth Discussion: *Masusing Talakayan* (FGD)

12:00 pm – Lunch (to be served)

1:00 pm – Continuation

3:00 pm - *Miryenda* (snacks while FGD continues)

3:30 pm – Closing (Expression of gratitude)

2. Narrative Inquiry: *'Kuwentuhang Halalan'* (story telling about election stories)

    a. Narrate your most interesting experience as a poll officer or in whatever capacity you were involved in during election.

    b. What are the benefits teachers received and challenges encountered in this involvement?

    c. In general, how would you assess teachers' involvement in the electoral process?

3. Presentation of mandate beyond election duties to engage the community drawn from Code of Ethics for Filipino Professional Teachers (including Election duties, Census enumeration, Drug education campaign, etc.).

    a. Have you been involved in these community engagements?

    b. Are there other community engagements that you carried out because you are teachers? Explain your participation therein.

4. Assessing teachers' knowledge of their community

    a. Can you describe the community where your school is situated – in terms of economy, peoples' participation in activities, profession and work of most people, etc.

    b. How would you describe the politics in the local (community) and national scale?

    c. As a teacher are you involved in the planning and implementing of activities in your community?

    d. Have you ever been approached by any member of the community to do something (assist / help) because you are a teachers?

    e. Are there collaborative activities between community and school? If there are, what are the areas of collaboration?

5. Government support and legislations

    a. How would you assess government's support in terms of budget allocation, benefits, and policies?

    b. Are you aware of educationally related policy that specifically affects Filipino teachers?

6. Family and teaching profession
    a. Why did you choose to become a teacher?

    b. Whose idea is it that so become a teacher? What are the factors involved in this decisions?

    c. What makes Filipino teachers distinct from other professionals?

    d. How would you evaluate the salaries and benefits of teaching profession?

    e. In what manner can you say that you are leaders in your own communities?

    f. Are there other benefits that you enjoy out of being a teacher?

    g. Do you think that earning a Master's or Doctoral degree increase your value as a teacher in the community?

    h. *Antas sa Lipunan* (Social Standing): To what social class do teachers belong to (in terms of economic standing and socio-cultural classification).

7. Gender component

a. Statistic show that 85% of Filipino teachers are female. What do you think are the reasons for this ratio?

b. Are there gender-induced consequences on teaching assignment (number and kind of teaching load and areas of assignation)?

8. From community to classroom

a. Do these community engagements affect the performance of your professional roles as teachers in the classroom?

b. In what ways can these community engagements be related to teachers' professional function?

Appendix H Data Collection & Recording Process *(Table 5)*

General Tasks	Specific Activities
Introductory Tasks	welcome and thank participants for attending;
	introduce the researcher & (e.g., assistance in serving food);
	introduce the research topic and objectives (using Power point presentation);
	identify how the information will be used;
	outline process of the discussion and 'guidelines' for group conduct;
	present the schedule from narrative inquiry to focus group discussion;
	indicate the length of narrative presentation per person;
	indicate the procedures and length of discussion during the FGD;
Ethical Task	present ethical rules of the UniSA;
	assure confidentiality;
	outline confidential data use and storage;
	seek consent for recording the discussion;
	confirm consent for participation (obtaining their signed participants' consent).
Group Cohesion Task	develop rapport with the participants (use of language or dialects, casual conversations);
	create comfortable, permissive environment (through ice breakers – if necessary);
	use culturally appropriate gestures and language (e.g., use of dialect in saying thank you and welcome, etc.)
	use first question to introduce participants (or if they already know each other, revise);
	present topic and questions in the narrative inquiry;
	begin with easy FGD questions and encourage contributions;
	remind them that the moderator can decide when to continue or to move another question;
	remind them of the time limitation.
Facilitating Discussion Task	encourage contributions from all participants, reiterate that all must be given ample time to answer and to discuss their answer;
	manage group dynamics (manage dominant and encourage silent participants);
	encourage discussion and challenge between participants;
	seek a variety of views and experiences;
	use probing to seek depth and detail in responses;
	again be aware of cultural significant body language, meaningful pauses etc.;
	use body and facial languages to encourage discussion;
	listen to issues raised and prompt the discussion;
	keep the discussion focused on research topics;

	determine whether responses provide sufficient information on each topic;
	invite new issues and opinions;
	vary moderation techniques to focus or open the discussion;
	monitor the timing and pacing of the discussion
	encourage contributions from all participants, reiterate that all must be given ample time to answer and to discuss their answer;
Closing Task	(should time permit) present a brief summary of what happened including their responses;
	thank the participants as well as all those who helped in the formation of the group and in the conduct of research.