

A Narrative Inquiry of Survival among Tribike Drivers in Mogpog, Marinduque

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Abstract— The purpose of this narrative inquiry was to explore and understand the narratives and experiences of the Tribike drivers on the notion of survival. Specifically, describe how Tribike drivers account for survival in their everyday lives and discover the meanings of survival that emerge from the participants' narratives.

Data were collected through narrative interviews, which lasted for 30 minutes. It was then transcribed and analyzed.

Based on the participants' narratives, emerging survival concepts were revealed during our conversation when they shared their experiences and how they started their work as tribike drivers. These themes deal with survival means gaining customers' trust and loyalty, building good relationships, and perseverance & determination.

Keywords— experiences, narrative inquiry, survival, tribike drivers

I. INTRODUCTION

As Mumby (1997) said that *"communication studies has to speak to social and political inequities and the situation of the disenfranchised while at the same time developing sophisticated and nuanced communication conceptions of the relations among meaning, identity, and power."*

It could reflect that in development communication, allowing the marginalized or unprivileged to speak for themselves is important. Development communication has been persistently in exploring different types and forms of communication that will fit the needs of their target recipients (Abalos, 2014). Hence, development communication is here to construct solutions to address communication-related problems to guarantee the acceptance and adaptability of development.

This study looks at communication from a pragmatism perspective. From this perspective, communication theory is a practical way of participating in societal discourse about communication norms (Craig, 2007). Moreover, he further explains under the pragmatism

tradition, communication is theorized as pluralistic through discourse and reflexive inquiry.

Living in uncertainty and vagueness requires various survival strategies, often portrayed through dramatic stories, altering people's understanding of poverty and survival methods. As Chaudhuri (2018) said that it is being observed that a major chunk of workers earns their livelihood through physical labor, although income levels differ across and within occupational categories. People who do not earn high incomes think of different strategies to survive. Some are creative, and others norm breaking (Ramos, 2013).

With this, poverty is considered a widespread social problem that undermines the economic development of entire nations, making poverty socially relevant. According to Asian Development Bank (ADB), one of the recurrent challenges in the Philippines is poverty and inequality. Furthermore, in the article of Reid (1990) about *"Village Life in the Philippines: A Struggle to Survive: Poverty: Unemployment is high, in part because young men often quit jobs. 'When you work, you still earn nothing,' one said"*, it was mentioned that the Philippines had been shaken by political chaos, economic dislocation, and social unrest. In addition, by any measure, at least 45% of all households in the Philippines are considered poor (Carner, 1982). Correspondingly, poor means unable to eat, clothe, purchase medicine, or live in a safe environment (Ongkiko & Flor, 1998).

In this situation, Chaudhuri (2018) mentioned that research explores coping mechanisms of families facing economic risks and demographic uncertainties in social history.

However, less privileged people are creative and motivated about how they will survive daily. As mentioned by Beck (1988) that there are some survival strategies. Nevertheless, it varies in relative importance at different times. Many people say that life is not smooth sailing. It could be a combination of good and bad times, but if things work out, people will survive.

Survival has so many interpretations depending on the people who experience it. There is no single definition applicable to all. According to Merriam, survival is the act of living or continuing longer than another person or thing. Thus, the common struggle many faces usually pertains to increased food prices and essential needs such as health and education are collapsing. Many people cannot afford basic needs and have lost their jobs. Daily existence is a struggle for survival.

To understand how less privileged people experience and survive limitations in their quality of life. In this study, I came closer to the realities and observed the life experience of pedicab drivers, to be specific who depend on their everyday living in their chosen job. I took into account their behavior as well as listening to their stories.

Nowadays, pedicab driving is a source of income, especially for those poor people who depend on their everyday living in this kind of job. Most drivers have families and must eat, be sheltered, and be clothed.

Pedicab driving is a famous manual transportation in the Philippines and other countries. Moreover, a pedicab, also known as "*sikad*," "*padyak*," "*trike*," or *tribike* that, is a three-wheeled vehicle that can carry two passengers in a covered rear seat. Moreover, it is called "*padyak*" because it is powered by the foot in the pedal.

Many people in the Philippines consider operating a pedicab as one of their primary sources of income. As an illustration, it is already a component of their company in Manila, especially in Divisoria. Some passengers also go to Divisoria to buy their goods and products for their business. Some of them chose a pedicab, commonly known as "*padyak*" because it is much cheaper for transportation and delivery of their goods than tricycles or "*kuliglig*" and taxis. Also, during the rainy season in Manila, pedicabs earn more

compared to regular days because motorized vehicles cannot go to flood. In addition, some of the drivers charge a little bit higher.

In the study of Irene et al. (2015), she stated that in Catbalogan City, pedicab driving is also a source of employment, especially for people experiencing poverty since there are fewer job opportunities in the said place, especially if you did not finish schooling. However, it is considered the fastest means of income for them, which is why many people living there grab the opportunity to earn money by driving a pedicab.

According to the study of Sari et al. (2017), in Southeast Asia, every country has its specific style. This kind of transportation "*pedicab industry*," is now growing and operational in developing and industrialized countries (Irene, 2015). Pedicabs are also operated in countries like New York, Macau and other tourist-packed places. Pedicab is widely used in South, East, and Southeast Asia.

It has been said that pedicabs have many values related to feasibility (Sari et al., 2017). In terms of environmental value, it is free gasoline transportation. Regarding social value, people support the pedicab drivers to survive and sustain their existence. Lastly, the economic value wherein there is a considerable number of pedicab drivers who cannot afford their monthly expenses. That's why Sari et al. (2017) pointed out that "*pedicab is perceived as the detrimental and poverty symbol in many cities*."

Similarly, the province of Marinduque comprises six (6) towns on the small island. One of these is Mogpog. Among the six towns, you could only find a pedicab or popularly known as "*tribike*," in Mogpog as a means of transportation. Furthermore, three clusters of pedicab drivers exist in the said town. They have their assigned route in Poblacion, and they have color-coding. The Municipality of Mogpog has issued Municipal Ordinance regarding the operation of pedicabs in the municipality because this serves as the most accessible form of transportation in the Poblacion area. Moreover, pedicabs filled the gap in the public transportation system by providing inexpensive mobility. In addition, they can easily roam in a town.

What caught my interest in exploring the life of the pedicab drivers in our place is how they survive in their everyday living since the pedicab fare is just only P7 or P10 pesos, but if you have “Suki,” they will give you a higher food or tip. Having pre-understood and seen the lives of pedicab drivers from when I was a kid, I am curious how they survive or manage their daily expenses. Some tribike drivers have regular and loyal customers like those, so they do not need to look for other passengers. When I was in grade school, our means of transportation every day was to ride a pedicab. I saw their perseverance and commitment to their job though the income is relatively low despite the struggle to roam in the town.

The Narrative Paradigm of Walter Fisher guided this study. Walter Fisher developed The Narrative Paradigm, an assessment framework for various communication fields. Fisher argues that human communication is influenced by history, culture, and character and that our experiences shape our behavior. This theory suggests that communication occurs through stories between a narrator and listener, highlighting the importance of storytelling in understanding human communication.

Fisher's theory suggests that people are natural storytellers, making cohesive arguments with a beginning, middle, and end. He believes that the rational world paradigm fails in sensemaking and that people experience life as a series of ongoing narratives (Griffin, 2012).

Guided by the theory, this research explored the different concepts towards the notion of survival of the tribike drivers. Furthermore, this study understands the experience of the participants and how they tell stories of their experience as tribike drivers.

As Lindlof & Taylor (2011) said, interpretivists believe that we need to understand social action from the actors' point of view. Added to this, it has been said that the experience of others is enigmatic that requires careful discernment.

This study also embraced social constructionism, highlighting how humans actively use symbolic resources to objectify, disseminate, and interpret the significance of their surroundings and existence (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

Moreover, it relies on the human agent using the cultural stocks of knowledge to engage and serve their situated, evolving purposes. This fits my interest in how my tribike drivers' participants construct meaning from their experiences about survival.

Lindlof & Taylor (2011) mentioned that social constructionism focused on how symbols, language, discourse, and media operate in the process have mentioned it. With this, the guiding claim is that “communication is the fundamental activity by which human constitute their social world as a real phenomenon.”

Social constructionism is then a feasible approach to understanding the experience of tribike drivers on their notion of survival. Likewise, this guides us to explore the idea that everyone is assigned to a tentative construct and taught how to enact it (Grimes, 2002).

Furthermore, Gergen (2005) believes that social construction as a worldview offers “*The invitation ... to generate alternative understandings of greater promise*” by inquiring about those questions and exploring those understandings since, in our society, it has been constructed between us. Constructs are usually pinched from the people involved in the social inquiry process to understand better and give meaning to the world around them.

Putting tribike drivers in the position of the storytellers identifies their capabilities as human agents in understanding their experiences in their job to survive.

II. METHODOLOGY

I could describe the development of the methodology of this study as emergent. I am looking at my study to be a qualitative inquiry. However, developing the methodology has not been as clear or easy.

As a novice in this kind of inquiry, I had so many rough roads experience while doing this. I thought I had a clear vision of what I wanted to do, but I had an out-of-focus notion of how to do it. Reading, listening to my professor's lectures, having conversations with my classmates, friends who are my support system, and participants, and observing them, the methodology of this paper slowly emerged, constructed, and reconstructed. With that, I will tell the story

of the methodology of this study. This is my attempt at a thick description and serves as the study's audit trail.

The result of this qualitative inquiry does not pertain to the wholeness or generality of the Tribike drivers but an understanding of their perspective on the notion of their own survival strategies in their daily existence.

This part of my study is the documentation of my qualitative research journey. It describes the process of gaining entry to my research site, participants, data collection, and making sense of my data.

Qualitative research is similar to social construction epistemology, focusing on human experiences, meaning, beliefs, and social norms (Gergen, 2005; Moen, 2006). Relative to this, Lindlof & Taylor (2011) emphasize humans using symbolic resources to interpret and objectify their environments' meaning, relying on cultural knowledge for equivocal, reactive worlds and evolving purposes.

I decided to use narrative design because "it seeks ways to understand and represent experiences through the stories that individuals live and tell" (Lapan et al., 2012). Equally, Thomas (2012) pointed out that "it recognizes what people's story is valid, does not have to be verified against traditional criteria to count as knowledge, and can enhance our understanding of the human condition." This account is imperative in my study since I heavily depend on the stories of survival of tribike drivers. Through having conversation research, getting the information about my participants' personal experiences as well as their interpretations, were collated and analyzed by both us (Dauite, 2014). Moreover, what makes interest in narrative inquiry accentuates "how stories can explain experiences as well as serve as a catalyst for personal and social change in the lives of the participants telling the stories and in the lives of their audience" (Lapan et al., 2012).

It could be noted that narrative inquiry follows a recursive, reflexive process of moving from field (with starting points in telling or living stories) to field texts (data) to interim and final research texts. (Clandinin & Huber, undated).

The research location was in the province of Marinduque. It is an island province in the Philippines located

in Southwestern Tagalog Region or MIMAROPA. This province comprises six (6) towns: Mogpog, Boac, Gasan, Torrijos, Buenavista, and Sta.Cruz. Among the six municipalities, Mogpog does have manual transportation, the pedicab or locally known in the town as "tribike."

Additionally, I lived in the said town, and it would not be that difficult for me regarding data gathering. However, because of the unexpected Covid pandemic and the implementation of community quarantine last March until mid of May, there are certain limitations on the movement of the people. Mass public transportation was suspended during the community quarantine; at the same time, no one was allowed to go out. Tribike operators were prohibited during that time to operate. Therein lies the difficulty for me.

Gaining entry into the research site was quite difficult because of the pandemic. The means of transportation were affected, and people were not allowed to go out. Moreover, only one representative from the family is allowed to go out to buy basic needs and acquire a quarantine pass from the barangay. The barangay only issued one quarantine pass per family for a limited time, only one and a half hours. With that situation, I could not talk with the tribike operators personally. They were not allowed during the pandemic. Luckily, I saw my prospected participant and asked him if they are permitted already to operate since our province is still in Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ). He said he was hired as a service vehicle for our barangay, Dulongbayan, in Mogpog. I did not waste my time asking him if I could schedule my interview and explain my mini-study to him. Before the lockdown, I had an informal conversation or small talk with my two participants whenever I was their passenger. One of the participants quickly granted my request because he knew I would need a tribike driver for my mini-study. He gave his mobile number to me and told me to reach him anytime so I could interview him.

According to Creswell (2007), in a narrative study, "one needs to find one or more individuals to study, individuals who are accessible, willing to provide information, and distinctive for their accomplishments and ordinariness or who shed light on a specific phenomenon or issue being explored." Moreover, individuals could be met by

a chance encounter, emerge from a wider study, or are volunteers (Plummer 1983 as cited by Creswell, 2007).

In terms of my research participants, I was guided by purposeful sampling. As cited by Lindlof & Lindlof (2011), they were chosen because there may be a good reason to believe that “what goes there” is critical to understanding some process or concept or to testing or elaborating some established theory.” The main point is who could share information about their life experiences, especially on survival on the nature of their job as tribike operators. Often, a researcher chooses individuals with experiences “central to the research problem in some way” (Lindlof, 1995). The popular tribike driver, called by many as “Kuya Udong,” and Kuya Alwin, the president of MTODAs, were interviewed. I chose them since the life experience of some tribike drivers. I could say they are the best person to tell the story about their experience as tribike drivers or operators since they have worked as tribike drivers for more than years.

I got to know Kuya Raymond and Alwin for so long because our family is their loyal customer or they served as our family service. Both of them were tribike drivers for so many years. In addition, both of them owned a pedicab or tribike.

It has been said that interviews apply to understanding the social actor’s experience, knowledge, and worldviews (Lindlof & Lindlof, 2011). I utilized narrative interviewing. When we communicate our experiences to others, we do so by telling our stories. Lapan et al. (2012) quoted from Michael Connelly and Jean Clandinin (1990) that “narrative inquiry, the study of experience as a story, is first and foremost a way for thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular view of experience as a phenomenon under study”.

According to Gubrium and Holstein (2003), experience comes through narratives. With this, my participants were open to experiences and on their terms. This connotes my participant’s voices and the authenticity of their stories. Qualitative researcher uses interviews to “elicit the

language forms used by social actors” (Lindlof & Lindlof, 2011).

In this study, I used an interview guide. It has been said that an interview guide is not a firmly structured set of questions to be asked verbatim. It should be associated with rewording (Lofland & Lofland, 1995). Let the participants speak freely in their own words. I did a one-one with my participants revolving around the following questions. I communicate with them in Filipino to make them comfortable in expressing themselves.

Though my conversation with my participants went like a family during the interview and guided by my questions, some stories were added. However, my interview was not long because they were quite shy, even though we had known each other for so long. Despite that, though their answers are short, they give a meaningful glimpse and how they view the world in terms of how they survive daily through their job as tribike drivers.

The interviews were recorded using a mobile phone with permission from the participants. Aside from that, I have my notebook and pen to jot down notes during the interview. With one of my participants during my interview with him, though I stopped recording our conversation and was already thanking the participants, he was saying something that I think is important, so I jot down before I forgot.

Strauss (1987) once said, “Any researcher who wishes to become proficient at doing qualitative analysis must learn to code well and easily. The excellence of the research rests in large part on the excellence of coding”.

After the interview, I listened first to it before transcribing it. Since I have only two (2) participants, I did the transcribing the recorded interviews for two (2) days. I attended to it many times to double-check the accuracy of the transcription.

In this study, the recorded interviews were in Filipino language. Hence, the transcriptions of the recorded interviews were in Filipino as well. Upon coding and analysis, it is being translated into English. However, I kept the original passages in the discussion flowing through my translation. This ensures the original lines are accessible and can be referred to.

To prepare for the coding of the interview transcripts, I printed copies of my transcripts and proceeded to do the first coding cycle on the first transcribed interview. According to Saldana (2009), during the first cycle coding process, it could range from a single word to a full sentence to an entire page. However, in second cycle coding, the coded portions can be the same units of a text and capture a book, film, or poem's primary content and essence, as does a code represent and capture a datum's primary content and essence.

After writing some initial analysis based on the data, I then coded the rest of the transcripts.

Clandinin & Connelly (2002), as cited by Creswell (2007), mentioned that narrative researchers seek ways to understand and represent experiences through the stories that research participants live and tell.

Using the narratives of the tribike drivers, the researcher found out the notion of survival they created.

In analyzing the participant's stories, the researcher took an active role and "restory" the stories and thematic analysis. According to Creswell (2007), restorying is reorganizing the stories into a general framework. This framework may consist of gathering stories, analyzing them for key elements of the story (e.g., time, place, plot, and scene), and then rewriting the stories to place them within a chronological sequence. Sometimes, when participants tell their stories, they are not presented chronologically. One aspect of the chronology is that the stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end (Creswell, 2007). Thus, the qualitative data analysis may describe both the story and themes that emerge from it.

I analyzed the data using the thematic analysis approach, where merging themes arise from the data. After that, I encoded all the codes and essential passages from the interview to develop a theme.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The research interest of this mini-study is the notion of Tribike drivers about communication, survival, and their survival strategies in their daily existence. This narrative inquiry sought to explore and understand the life experiences

of the two participants as they shared their own experiences as Tribike drivers.

Turning the stories into narratives through re-storying

I utilized the re-storying procedure. This made me write the narrative accounts of my two (2) participants. While doing the process, it became more apparent how my conversation with them is their personal experience stories. Despite the Covid-19 pandemic, I deeply constructed a timeframe and the occurrence of their life about their source of income as tribike drivers.

The two (2) participants for this study were selected because of the substantial hurdles they had experienced in their job to survive in their daily existence.

To start, I provided a participant description vignette of each participant providing their background and outline experiences as tribike driver.

Raymond's Narrative

Kuya Udong, also known by many in our barangay, is a 51-year-old who has worked as a Tribike driver for almost ten years. He is a member of the SPODA, an organization of Tribike drivers in our barangay. He is married and with two (2) children. Both worked in Manila but could not finish their studies and preferred to work because of financial problems. They came from Mindoro. According to him, in 2010, his family only went to Marinduque for a vacation. However, during the interview, he told me that he did not want to talk about their lives in Mindoro because of unfortunate occurrences, so they went here to Marinduque and later decided to stay for good. I did not attempt to ask any more about it because, during my visit or the day I was going to interview him in their house, his wife sat beside him and stared at him with a sarcastic smile. He shared that when they spent their vacation here in Marinduque, they lived with his sister, whose husband is a Tribike driver. During that time, he rented his brother-in-law's Tribike in the afternoon to have a little income while staying in the province. He gave P40.00 as a "boundary" to his brother-in-law. Kuya Udong is cheerful and has a good personality that makes his passenger love him as a good person. Many people in our place choose

Kuya Udong over others. Some tribike drivers patiently wait for passengers in their designated areas.

After a few months, when he saw that this job could easily earn money to survive their everyday expenses, he willingly bought a tribike worth P15, 000.00 through installments. With that, he decided to stay in Marinduque for good. In 10 months, he completed his installment payment for his tribike. According to him, he gave 50 pesos per day for the tribike. For him, tribike driving is one of the fastest means of income since he did not finish his studies. Also, when he had enough money, he decided to rent a small house for his own family to avoid conflict with his sister's family. During the interview, he laughed, and his wife teased him. Nevertheless, he told me that what happened to him and his sister was settled already.

Before the community quarantine in March, I already asked Kuya Udong if he could be part of my study. He quickly agreed with me, and explained it to him. Kuya Udong, I know him personally because we live in the same barangay, and at the same time, our family is his loyal customer.

Our agreed initial plan is to interview him in our house on the 2nd week of May since pregnant women are not allowed to go out. However, he was busy because our barangay officials hired him as a service vehicle. We moved our first scheduled interview on May 20, 2020. Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) was lifted already to General Community Quarantine (GCQ); I went to their house in the afternoon around 5 pm. Our conversation started with awkwardness because I think his wife was unaware that I would be coming to their house to interview Kuya Udong.

Alwin's Narrative

I did not know Alwin personally, but my mother always hired him as a service during the afternoon when she got home. I did not realize that Alwin was my sister's high school classmate. My sister helped me reach out to Alwin for this study. He has been working as a tribike driver for seven (7) years and counting. Moreover, he is the president of the tribike association in their barangay, which is IMPODA. He is the eldest among his siblings.

Most of the time after work, I usually go home around 6 p.m., and at that time, there are still tribike near the market or in the tribike lane. You will always see Alwin's tribike until 6 p.m. looking for a passenger before he goes home. Usually at 5 pm, most of the tribike drivers went home already. As well he had a duty in their barangay as Barangay Tanod.

According to Alwin, someone influenced him to work as tribike driver since he finished high school only because his parents could not afford to send him to college. One of his friends, who is also a tribike driver, influenced him to work as tribike driver. At first, he rented a tribike from their neighbor and gave 40 pesos as a "boundary" every afternoon after work. Like Kuya Udong, he can easily earn income from his job that will suffice their family's daily needs, like food every day. After a month, he decided to get also a tribike for installment.

Same case with Kuya Udong, before the community quarantine, I already talked to Alwin about my mini-study. My sister communicated with him that I was in need of tribike driver. I chose Alwin because of his sacrifices to his family. Moreover, his brother is a tribike driver who is PWD (deaf-mute).

We scheduled our interview on May 21, 2020, in our house early morning. Since he is some kind of a witty person, he told me that he went to our house early to have a "Bwenamano" payment for him, as I will interview him.

Before the interview, I asked permission to record our conversation. I asked him questions that could trigger him to tell his experience as tribike driver. The way he told his story was vulnerable because he felt nervous and awkward in answering the questions I raised. However, he at least provided me with information about his life as a tribike driver.

Participant's Expression of Survival

Pedicab or tribike drivers push their pedal-powered tricycles through Mogpog roads daily to serve their passengers. Like Kuya Udong and Alwin, as early as 5 a.m., they are prepared for their day's job and look for a passenger in the town proper. Every sweat flowing down their face and

body means a lot to them to be able to survive daily. They sacrifice but are still motivated to maneuver because they intend to earn money and survive.

During the course of the interview, I did not ask Kuya Udong and Alwin directly what is their understanding of survival in line with his job as tribike driver. I interviewed them separately. At first, I let them tell their experiences as tribike drivers and their value to their daily existence. However, at the end of the interview, I asked them if their job really helped them to survive everyday. Looking into it closely, the narrative accounts of Kuya Udong showed his idea of survival and his survival strategies for their daily expenses. In addition, both of them had straightforward answers to my questions.

Both of them begin telling their experience on how they started in tribike driving during my interview. They provided me some indications that focus on their survival strategies as tribike driver for how many years. Emerging concepts of survival were revealed during our conversation when they shared their experiences and how they started their work as tribike drivers. As Chaudhuri (2018) mentioned that people who are living a life of uncertainty are compelled to adopt different survival strategies. At this point, I think survival for both of them dealt with themes: *customer trust and loyalty, building good relationships, and perseverance & determination*.

Theme 1: Survival means gaining customer's trust and loyalty

As noted in my interview with Kuya Udong, it is not only about money that will help you survive in your daily existence but the trust of your customers. During the course of an interview, when he was asked about his understanding as a tribike driver, many times throughout the interview, he talks about his customers who always called or texted him to fetch them to go to the market, fetch their kids in school or buy foods in the market. He is not the ordinary tribike driver who stayed in their designated areas and patiently waits for the passengers for an hour. He has loyal customers who called him whenever they need Kuya Udong. Although, most of the tribike drivers in our place do have loyal customers. I pointed

out part of the account that talks about the emerging theme of survival meaning customer's trust and loyalty.

*A: Kailan ka nagsimula magtribike?
(When did you start working as tribike driver?)*

*KU: Ano... 2011... tapos hanggang ngayon. (...
2011... up to now....)*

*A: Ano ang masasabi mo kuya sa pagtribike?
(What can you say about your job?)*

*KU: Okay naman ang pagtribike... gawa ng
syempre yung mga customer mo... yung happy ka
eh... gawa ng kapag –oncall ka, syempre parang
ano ka eh... yung natutuwa ka... dahil syempre
tinatawagan ka lagi..*

*(I am okay with my job as tribike driver because of
my customer. I am happy because [I am] on-call...
Overwhelming because they are looking for you
[me]!)*

*A: Ano ibig sabihin ng on-call?
(What do you mean by on-call?)*

*KU: Tatawagan ka lamang.. tapos may apabili
sa 'yo ganon..
(They will call you and they will ask to buy
something! Like that!)*

*A: So meaning kuya, hindi lang ikaw napila sa
palengke para sa pasahero?
(So meaning, you are not only staying in the market
to wait for a commuter?)*

*KU: Ah hindi... madalas tinatawagan pero napila
din pero kapag nagtext sila tulad nina Mam Leila
at Mam Labao, naalis ako sa pila.*

*(No... most of the time they called me Mam Leila
and Mam Labao but I stayed also in our tribike
lane but if they texted me I leave our lane.)*

*A: Sa isang araw, magkano ang kinikita mo kuya?
(Per day, how much do you earn?)*

*KU: Siguro pinakamababa na ang 200, mas
marami akong customer kaysa sa iba.
(I think 200, that is the minimum... but I have more
customers compared to others.)*

A: Ahh.. okay. (Okay!)

*KU: Oo.. kunwari si Mam Agnes.. Malaki
magbigay 'yun. Singkwenta ang pinakamababa
ang nabigay nun... 70 ganyan... (Like for example,
Mam Agnes, she is generous. She give me 50 pesos
as lowest payment... Usually she gave 70 pesos)*

*A: So ibig sabihin kuya, hindi ka lang nakafocus
doon sa napila ka?*

(Meaning to say, you are not only staying in the designated area for tribike?)

KU: Ahh oo.. yun ang nagapalaki sa akin... saka alam mo yun tiwala... may tiwala sila (Yes! That makes my income higher [on-call]... and you know what, their trust... they have trust)

On the other hand, based on my conversation with Alwin. Likewise, there are some points that revealed about gaining trust from your customers which is why they keep looking at you.

*A: Kailan ka nagsimula magtribike?
(When did you start working as a tribike driver?)*

KA: 2013... kasi seven years na akong nagatribike. (2013... Because I have been a tribike driver for 7 years.)

*A: Paano ka napunta sa pagtribike?
(How did you start working as a tribike driver?)*

KA: May nagyaya sa akin. Sina Nonoy.. Yung taga Nangka na nagatribike din. Tapos yun nasiyahan ako sa pagtribike... ay kaya kwan... yun na ang kinabuhayan ko ay.. sabi ko ay maganda pala ire... ay di ganon laang.. Malaki din ang kita ay.. (Nonoy from Nangka influenced me to work as tribike driver. After that, I feel happy about it. Then it turn out to be my source of income... I told myself that this is okay... I earned enough money.)

A: Ikaw din бага ay may mg suki na may natawag sa'yo? Yung bagang on-call ganon? (Do you have loyal customers also like on-call?)

KA: Oo naman. Malaki ang kita doon. Pero hindi sila natawag sa akin... Di naman nila alam number ko (Laughing)... nahanap nila ako sa pila o kaya ay napasabi sa akin na apuntahan ko sila. Ganon... Saka minsan laang yung ganon... (Yes. I earn a higher income than [ordinary service]. However, they did not call me... They do not know my number (laughing)... They go to our designated area for tribike and look for me or they talk to someone and they told me that they are looking for me and I go to them. Besides, it is occasionally only.)

A: MAGkano naman ang nabigay sa'yo? (How much they gave you?)

KA: Kapag ganon na asitahin ka abigyan ka ng bilang.. maraming utos.. dala ka ng ulam ganon... 150 ang nabigay.... (Like for example, they will hire you... they have many request... like bring this food... they will give you 150 pesos...)

*A: Malaki din pala...
(It's already a big amount.)*

KA: Oo malaki kasi asitahin ka... masaya ang araw ko kapag ganon kasi nakakatuwa at may nagatiwala sa 'yo na ganon. Yung ibang nagatribike talagang pila laang... ako may mga nagahanap sa akin. At nakakataba ng puso yun kasi alam mo yun may tiwala sa'yo.. Parang subok na! (laughing) (Yes, they give higher charge or fare because they hired you...I am happy [for the high payment] because someone trust you.. the other tribike driver, they just wait for the passenger in our lane... like in my case, my customer looked for me.. it is overwhelming because they trust you!)

A: Kapag ordinary days? Magkano бага ang pamasaha? (How about ordinary days? How much is the fare?)

KA: Sampu laang mandin.. (10 pesos only!)

On the other hand, based on my conversation with Alwin. Likewise, there are some points that revealed about gaining trust from your customers which is why they keep looking at you. Based on my conversation with my two (2) participants separately, being a tribike driver, their motivation is their costumer's trust which is why both of them earned higher income to survive compared to some of their co-tribike drivers. Gaining trust from the customer means having loyal customers which is why they keep on communicating with you instead of others.

Theme 2: Survival means building good relationships and happiness

The second theme that surfaced was survival means building good relationships and a source of happiness. You will survive if you have a good relationship with your customers. During my interview with Kuya Odong, he narrated his life as a tribike driver; you could see in his eyes or even projected in his eyes the sense of happiness as a tribike driver. While listening to him, there is a realization that despite their sacrifices or sufferings, they are still motivated to serve their customers. It seems that it is not only about the money that makes them happy because of the income that they earn during the day which could sustain the financial needs of their family but instead making their customers satisfied and happy makes them also cheerful. It is really important that you build a good relationship with other people in the case of tribike drivers like Kuya Udong and

Alwin, they are happy because their customers trust them and that makes their income higher, and survive everyday for their needs. This is how he narrates or describes his happiness about his job and ability to survive everyday.

KU: Masaya dahil kapag kasama mo sina Mam Leila sa school parang bonding na din ba... sina Mam Labao... ganon...syempre mga kaibigan. Kapag magapasama sa school ba.. nadoon yung biruan din... (Happy because when I am with Mam Leila in school as their service, we have bonding moments... Mam Labao, like that... they are my friends... if they hire me as a service in school...)

A: So hindi ka lang nakita ano kuya? May nakikilala kang bagong kaibigan. (It's not about your income Kuya? You meet new friends.)

KU: Oo parang kaano ano na.. kapamilya na rin. (Yes, it's like family.)

A: Parang... Hindi ka lang nagatribike para lang kumita... (So...it's like you are not working just to earn money...)

KU: Oo. Kasama na doon ang galak... masaya ka sa pagtribike mo... Isa pa doon ay kunwari yung pakikisalamuha mo doon sa ibang nagatribike.. Yun din ay masaya...pag may party party kami kapag December... Yes... One of that is happiness...you are happy in your job... Another thing is your relationship with other tribike drivers... that is also my source of happiness... if you have party during December...)

Alwin told similar stories about having a good relationship with your customers. It is important that they have trust in you.

KA: Oo malaki kasi asitahin ka... masaya ang araw ko kapag ganon kasi nakakatuwa at may nagatiwala sa 'yo na ganon. Yung ibang nagatribike talagang pila laang... ako may mga nagahanap sa akin. At nakakataba ng puso yun kasi alam mo yun may tiwala sa'yo.. Parang subok na! (laughing) (Yes, they give higher charges or fares because they hired you...I am happy [for the high payment] because it someone trust you.. the other tribike driver, they just wait for the passenger in our lane... like in my case, my customer looked for me.. it is overwhelming because you that they trust you!)

A: Kapag ordinary days? Magkano бага ang pamasahе? (How about ordinary days? How much is the fare?)

KA: Sampu laang mandin.. (10 pesos only!)

Theme 3: Survival means having perseverance and determination

Tribike drivers push their pedal-powered tricycle along the roads to serve commuters to hire them. Most of them suffered but were still motivated and determined to maneuver their tribike or pedicabs to earn money and survive. They patiently wait for customers rain or shine to earn money to be able to buy food for their family at the end of the day. Like what has been said by Kuya Udong and Alwin, they are happy with their job because they were able to sustain their financial needs and at the same time have a good relationship with their customers and they treat them like a family. Some of the pedicab drivers do not have personal tribike. They just rent in order to provide for the needs of their families. However, if they owned a tribike, they are required to register and apply for a transport franchise to be allowed to operate.

All throughout our conversation, Kuya Udong's manner of narrating his story depicts perseverance and determination in the notion of survival. He had good survival strategies to be able to survive and he is very lucky that his loyal customers are very kind to him and treat him as a family. Based on our conversation, this is perseverance and determination reflected.

A: Pwede mo ba maikwento kuya paano ka nagstart sa pagtribike hanggang ngayon? (Could you narrate how did you start working as tribike driver? Until now?)

KU: Nandoon muna kami sa kapatid ko. Talagang nagtribike muna ako. Nahiram ko yung tribike ng kapatid ko. Tapos syempre parang dumating yung gusto naming makapagsarili na... kumuha kami ng hulugan. Tapos araw araw nahulugan ko singkwenta hanggang sa matapos.. Yun hanggang ngayon dire-diretso.. tapos natawag –tawagan ako nung mga suki ko...(We are living with my sister before. And that time, I used to work as tribike driver. I rented my brother-inlaw's tribike... and then, there comes a time that I want to live on our own. We get a tribike through installment. Everyday I give P50 pesos until I finished it. Like that, now, still working as tribike and then my loyal customers called me if they need a service.)

A: *So madalas kuya, natawagan ka? Parang nagiging service yung tribike mo? (You were called often? It seems like they hired you as service?)*

KU: *Oo... minsan di na ako napila... mas marami kasi akong customer eh.. malaki ang natutulong sa amin.*

(Yes. Sometimes I will not go to the tribike lane. I have more customers than the others. It really helps us.)

A: *Ah okay. Mas malaki ba kuya kapag on-call ka? (Okay! If on-call, higher earnings?)*

KU: *Mas malaki ang kita kapag on-call. Doon ko nakuha lahat. Bayad sa tubig, CATV, SSS, Card.. dyan ko nakuha lahat sa pagtribike. Dahil alam mo yun natawagan nila ako. Saka minsan, may extra ako, yung buhangin... nakuha nila ako magbuhat ng buhangin gamit yung tribike ko. Kaya survive kami. Napakalaking tulong sa amin. (If on-call, higher pay. Payment for water bill, CATV, SSS, Card, all of those I get from our earnings in tribike because they called me. And I have sideline, the gravel and sand.. They hired me using my tribike. That's why we survive. It is really a big help to my family.)*

A: *Sa isang araw kuya, 200 pinakamataas o pinakamababa? (Per day, 200 is higher or lower?)*

KU: *Pinakamababa na yun. Pinakamataas ko naabot ng isang libo ganon.. lalo na kapag may buhangin.*

(That is the lowest. I earned 1000.. like that. Especially if I have extra which is the sand and gravel)

A: *Ahh.. Talagang malaki din pala. (... You earned high income...)*

KU: *Oo.. lalo na nga kapag may buhangin kaso di lang yun araw-araw. (Yes. Especially if there is sand and gravel but it is not everyday.)*

A: *Pero kuya kung walang buhangin, magkano ang kita mo? (How about if you do not have a sideline like the sand and gravel, how much is your income?)*

KU: *Naabot ng P400. Malaki din naman. Hindi naman pare-parehas. (Approximately P400. It is enough. It is not always the same everyday)*

However, Alwin's survival strategies were quite different from Kuya Udong. Since Alwin is still single and he just concern only about their daily needs as the eldest in their family but his perseverance and determination of him to help

his family are recognizable. Aside from being a tribike driver, after his daily work, he is a Barangay Tanod at night in their barangay. Based on our conversation, perseverance and determination were reflected.

A : *Pwede mo ba maikwento kuya paano ka nagstart sa pagtribike hanggang ngayon? (Could you narrate how did you start working as tribike driver? Until now?)*

KA: *May nagyaya sa akin. Sina Nonoy.. Yung taga Nangka na nagatribike din. Tapos yun nasiyahan ako sa pagtribike... ay kaya kwan... yun na ang kinabuhayan ko ay.. sabi ko ay maganda pala ire... ay di ganon laang.. Malaki din ang kita ay.. (Nonoy from Nangka influenced me to work as tribike driver. After that, I feel happy about it. Then it turn out to be my source of income... I told myself that this is okay... I earned enough money.)*

A: *Doon sa 7 years na pagtribike mo, malaki talaga ang naitulong sa 'yo? Sa pamilya mo? (As tribike driver for 7 years, does it help you a lot? In your family?)*

KA: *Oo naman. Nakita rin kahit papaano.. saka 'yung nganing mga customer ko kapag inutusan ako malaki ang nabigay nila. Sulit mandin. Buhay [survive] ka na kapag ganon ay. Kung бага yung pangaraw araw na pangangailangan sa bahay ay solve mandin (laughing).*

(Yes. I earn money even if it is not that high. Another thing, if my customers asked me to buy something, they give me higher pay. It is enough. We really survive. I mean, our daily expenses were survived (laughing)

A: *Katulad ng ano? Bigas? Kuryente? (Like what, rice, electric bill?)*

KA: *Oo pambili ng ulam, bigas, mga kaunitng kailang sa bahay pero yung kuryente hati kami sa bahay nina Mama.. Kaya kailangan talaga mahataw sa pagpasad ng tribike. (Yes, expenses like food, rice, and other needs in our house but when it comes to electric bills, we shared in our house. That is why; you have to be determined to work)*

III. CONCLUSION

What is the story telling us?

The purpose of my mini-study is to explore the constructs of tribike drivers about survival through a narrative inquiry. I intended, through my participants' stories and my re-storying of their stories, to increase our understanding o

the phenomenon of survival in the context of the personal experience of the two tribike drivers.

Some studies said that tribike drivers represent the flock of manual workers who are trying to find their place in society. Pedicab driving served as a source of employment especially to the poor since there are fewer job opportunities for them. However, it is considered as fastest means of income for them, which is why many people living there grab the opportunity to earn money by driving a pedicab. In that situation, they have the motivation and perseverance because of their family and their customers. They were inspiring in doing their job just to surpass whatever challenges they encounter in their daily existence. As Dangmang & Cordero (2017) mentioned that, the motivation they have originates from what is considered as a natural drive, which they must satisfy in order to avoid hunger and insecurity.

Both Kuya Udong and Alwin's stories describe an experience of survival in their daily lives as tribike drivers by their choice to survive and sustain their daily needs. Likewise, it could be noted in our conversation that they are satisfied with their earnings through their job as tribike drivers. It demonstrated that tribike driving is their survival strategy to sustain the financial needs of their family. Both of them were satisfied with their job since they build good relationships with their regular and loyal customers who were always there to call them anytime. Furthermore, having a good relation and gaining customers trust and loyalty makes them happy aside from the income they earn that will sustain their daily needs. They really sacrifice but are still motivated to maneuver because of their intention to earn money and survive. Emerging concepts of survival were revealed during our conversation when they shared their experiences and how they started their work as tribike driver. These themes deal with survival means customers trust and loyalty, building good relationships and perseverance & determination.

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