

"The Community and Culture of Deaf Filipinos"

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What is a Community?

- A group of people in a geographical area who share common values and goals, and cooperate in order to achieve these (Hillery 1974)
- a social system where common goals and responsibilities to one other can be seen in interactions

What is Culture?

Everything inborn is natural, everything learned is culture.

- Interactions - communication
- Group behaviors, values
- Constantly changing

What is Deaf Culture?

- Sign language, visual culture
- Deaf identity - Deaf values and behaviors
- Deaf organizations and gatherings
- Technology: visual alarms, mobile phones, etc.
- Where does Deaf culture come from?

Who is part of Deaf culture?

- deaf vs. Deaf
- deaf community vs. Deaf community

Hearing majority

Hearing workers with the deaf
Hearing workers of the Deaf community
interpreters

Individuals with hearing loss

deaf

oral deaf, senior citizens, hard-of-hearing, late-deafened adults, deaf-blind, deaf with disability, deaf gay, unschooled deaf

Deaf

pre-lingual, late-deafened adults, hard-of-hearing, Deaf-blind, Deaf with disability, Deaf gay, unschooled Deaf

Interpreters

The Deaf as a cultural and linguistic minority

In 1999, for every 100 boys, in school, there were 86 girls, and only 2 deaf children.

Cultural conflicts

- Examples
- Conflicts between Deaf and hearing people

What is Audism?

- How does the Deaf community feel about Audism?

World Federation of the Deaf

What is the Philippine Federation of the Deaf?

- Member organizations
- Advocacy for the community and culture

“Abuse in the Deaf community”
Jeniffer C. Mendoza
Filipino Deaf Women’s Health and Crisis Center

PROBLEMS

Why are Deaf at risk in general?

- Vulnerable to incest, and other sexual abuse
- “Live-in” or pre-marital sex practice
- Common sexual harassment
- Many victims are re-traumatized if their are minors and unschooled
- Sexual abuse of Deaf students by male authority figures in provinces
- Can’t scream, difficult to communicate, unable to defend self
- Lack knowledge of how to report incidents
- Lack knowledge about laws and how to protect themselves from the offender
- Lack information, Basic Knowledge: Reproductive Health, Personal Safety, Sex Education, VAWC, and Family Planning

Statistics for Filipino Deaf Women

- 2 out of 4 deaf women are raped due to dismissal/ delay of cases in Supreme Court in the Metro Manila and lack of interpreters
- 1 out of 3 deaf women/girls are raped and harassed in the Bicol
- 2 out of 3 deaf women/girls are raped in Cebu due to dismissal/ delay in courts; no available female interpreter.
- 2 out of 6 deaf women are battered/abused

Case studies for Filipino Deaf Women

- 4 deaf women in prostitution due to unemployment
- 1 deaf girl was kidnapped from Zamboanga
- 2 deaf women raped and killed in Fort Bonifacio and Samar
- 1 deaf girl with schizophrenia victimized
- 1 deaf girl drugged
- 3 deaf women/girls abused and abandoned

Related problems

- Few number of social workers, guidance counselors for Deaf in Metro Manila (8 hearing, 6 Deaf)
- Outside deaf communities (from the schools): no services, intervention programs even in Metro Manila
- Elementary/ High School counseling not effective / do not address problem
- Deaf in provinces have less resources than urban areas

Related problems

- problem of lack of government services appropriate for Deaf
- little research on Deaf abuse
- lack communication skills
- lack of knowledge about Deaf culture
- lack of assistance needed e.g. deaf counseling, interpreting with legal, medical, barangay
- training, teaching or educating, and deaf socializing activities

Related problems

- Deaf clients living in different sites / shelters; inaccessibility
- Few Volunteers (teaching, counseling, interpreter, other professional)
- High expenses (far from shelter)
- Lack of hospitals

SOLUTIONS

What is FDWHCC and what is it doing now?

- The Filipino Deaf Women's Health and Crisis Center is a Deaf people's organization comprised of women.
- A non-stock, non-profit corporation, registered with the SEC and BIR.
- FDWHCC volunteers : community support to be able to provide services & interventions as needed

Our current concerns focus on assistance for abused Deaf women. The objectives relate to:

- Advocacy
- Livelihood
- Equality in employment
- Counseling and Educating
- Legal, financial and other assistance

How is the The Asia Foundation (TAF) project (Legal Access) part of the solution?

- For long months, we (PDRC, PFD, and FDWHCC) discussed with lawyers clarifying questions about **revising Supreme Court Memo 59-2004**
- Seminar and Primer - **disseminate information**: advocate Deaf culture, deaf-friendly courtroom system/ environments, provide interpreters and also lawyers
- **Info and education** campaign in sign language for terms used to communicate with the Deaf in courts.
- **Standards for testing & evaluation** for identifying competent hearing interpreters and also Deaf relay interpreters.
- After seminar, the recommendation is to expand and strengthen training of both hearing interpreters and Deaf relay interpreters for courtroom environment.

“Rights of the Disadvantaged”
Atty. Ricardo A. Sunga III
University of the Philippines, Institute of Human Rights

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Article 7 guarantees equality before the law and equal protection by the law for all people, including against discrimination

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Article 26 states that all people are equal before the law and have the right to equal protection of the law

Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons

Social and economic rights as well as civil and political rights

Others

- The Declaration on the Rights of Deaf-Blind Persons
- The formulation of the World Programme of Action Concerning disabled Persons (WPA)
- The Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities
- The Beijing Declaration on the Rights of People with Disabilities
- The Biwako Millennium Framework (BMF)

1987 Constitution of the Philippines

Equal protection of the laws (Article III, Section 2)

Statute

REPUBLIC ACT NO. 7277, AN ACT PROVIDING FOR THE REHABILITATION, SELF-DEVELOPMENT AND SELF-RELIANCE OF DISABLED PERSONS AND THEIR INTEGRATION INTO THE MAINSTREAM OF SOCIETY AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES, as amended by REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9442:

“Disabled persons have the same rights as other people to take their proper place in society.” (Section 2[b])

Presidential Proclamation No. 240

declared the period 2003-2012 as the Philippine Decade of Persons with Disabilities

Every person regardless of hearing has among other rights:

1. The right to equality before the law
2. The right to non discrimination
3. The right to equal opportunity

Policy on deafness

"equalization of opportunities" necessitating the use of resources in such a way as to give every individual, including a deaf person, an equal opportunity to participate in society