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## A GROUNDED THEORY OF FILIPINO SEAFARERS' SINGLEHOOD

### ABSTRACT

Seafaring is one of the traditionally male-dominated occupations for the longest time globally. It has also claimed that many of the seafarers are single and preferred to be single. The purpose of the current study was to develop a theory that explains singlehood among male and female Filipino seafarer's diverse environment and circumstance. Grounded theory methodology was used in this effort to analyze interview data from and five (5) female and eighteen (18) male Filipino seafarers working in diverse environment and circumstances. The study explored why the participants remain single and how they managed singlehood. The Filipino Male and Female Single Seafarers in responding to Diverse Context theory proposes that singlehood in diverse environment and circumstances is best understood by participant's choices and decisions, and the factors that influence their decisions, the clarity of the circumstances they are in connecting with their experiences as single. Results for this purpose theorize seafarers' singlehood as to Freedom of choice; setting priorities; and constraints.

Keywords: Grounded Theory, Singlehood, Filipino Seafarers

### INTRODUCTION

Marriage as they say is a gift as it has completed the life of being a man and a woman. Others claim it's sanctity as Christians believe that marriage is a gift from God, one that should not be taken for granted. A marriage is a public declaration of love and commitment. However another Christian teachings that was written in the book of Matthew 19:11-12, which said, —a person who marries is to leave his or her parents and remain married, but the person who remains single does not carry the responsibility of marriage || . Jesus is our model and a perfect example of how life should have lived. In addition, Jesus taught that singleness is a gift from God.

Over time, the average age at marriage in the country increased from 25 years in 1960 to 27 years in 2015 among Filipino men and from 22 years to 24 years among Filipino women. Filipinos who remain unmarried beyond these ages, particularly those in their 30s, are often asked when they are getting married (Abalos, 2021).

Authors argue that this is a population worthy of scientific study, especially given the dramatic rise in singlehood and the benefits

of satisfying relationships (Robles, Slatcher, Trombello & McGinn, 2014). In the Western countries, married people report higher life satisfaction than do those who have never married (Lucas & Dyrenforth, 2005), whereas long-term singles report more depression and anxiety than do partnered individuals (Schachner, Shaver, & Gillath, 2008). Note that the benefits of relationships apply to satisfying relationships; distressed couples consistently display maladaptive outcomes (Simpson & Campbell, 2013). Fortunately, much research has investigated methods to enhance couple functioning, yet research has largely ignored the question of why some people remain single for the long term.

The main objectives of the researcher is to develop theories to explain singlehood among male and female Filipino seafarers and to present realistic relevant and substantive theory of singlehood among Filipino seafarers based upon imaginative understanding over explanation and prediction outline a grounded theory of singlehood of Filipino seafarers. These theories are believed to be complementary, as the researcher potentially explains different aspects of the singlehood phenomenon.

### LITERATURES

Grounded theory, a research methodology primarily associated with qualitative research, was first proposed by Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss in 1967. According to its founders, grounded theory constitutes an innovative methodology, facilitating 'the discovery of theory from data' (Dune C., 2010). This implies that in grounded theory the researcher is not focused on testing hypotheses taken from existing theoretical frameworks, but rather develops a new 'theory' grounded in empirical data collected in the field. As such, these data are deliberately privileged above extant theoretical concepts.

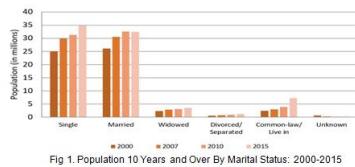
Grounded theory comprises several unique methodological elements such as constant comparative analysis and theoretical sampling which differentiate it from other research methodologies. Unlike most strategies of inquiry, grounded theory demands that data collection and analysis occur concurrently, rather than in a linear sequence. Indeed, Payne (2007) remarks that 'one of the unique features of grounded theory analysis is the dynamic interplay of data collection and analysis'. Given its unique approach, grounded theory can be

difficult to use. Indeed, one of the most problematic issues relates to how and when existing literature should be used during a grounded theory study.

Morse (2006), however, argues that the introduction of any research methodology into the public domain leaves it open to being adapted and employed differently to how the originator(s) envisaged. Dune (2010) themselves make this point, remarking that 'a child once launched is very much subject to a combination of its origins and the evolving contingencies of life. Indeed, Johnson et al. (2001) posit that merging distinct approaches, including grounded theory, does not necessarily compromise methodological 'purity', but can actually enhance rigor. As a result of this ongoing jousting and the increasing use of grounded theory across diverse disciplines, Dey (2004) posits 'there is no such thing as "grounded theory" if we mean by that a single, unified methodology, tightly defined and clearly specified.' Therefore, it is imperative that researchers who employ this methodology be well-versed on the topic in order to take their own informed and defensible position on how to apply it.

Glaser, it appears that the fundamental concern is based on the premise that a detailed literature review conducted at the outset may 'contaminate' the data collection, analysis and theory development by leading the researcher to impose existing frameworks, hypotheses or other theoretical ideas upon the data, which would in turn undermine the focus, authenticity and quality of the grounded theory research. This concern is not exclusive to grounded theory.

While the number of single persons increased over more than a decade, the proportion to the total population 10 years old and over remained at close to 44 percent from the year 2000 to 2015. Married persons comprised approximately 45 percent over the period 2000 to 2010 but shrunk to about 41 percent in 2015.



Among the 17 administrative regions in the Philippines, Region VIII (Eastern Visayas) had the highest sex ratio among single persons at 127.8 in 2015, followed closely by Region XIII (Caraga) and MIMAROPA Region with sex ratios of 127.7 and 127.1, respectively. The region with the lowest sex ratio among single persons was the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) at 103.

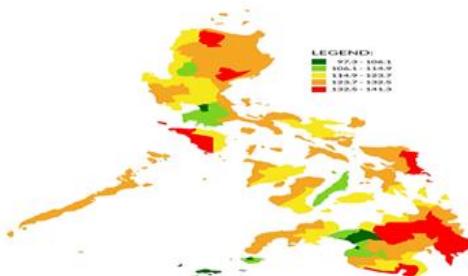


Fig 2. Sex Ratio Among Single Persons by Province: 2015

In 2019, about one in every three married between ages 25-29 years old, in which men and women comprise of 36.5 percent

and 36.2 percent, respectively, of the total number of recorded marriages. (Mapa, 2021) Men in their 30s can be an interesting bunch they're old enough to have a good idea of what they want from a relationship but are young enough that they may still be exploring their options and playing the field (Murray, 2021).

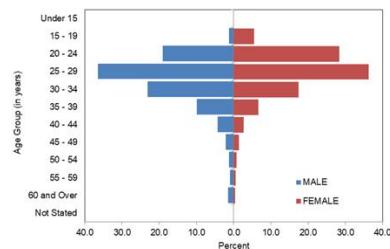


Fig 3. Percent Distribution of Registered Marriages by Age Group and Sex, Philippines (2019)

The trend has not had an equal impact across all sectors of society. The Pew study, which uses information from the 2019 American Community Survey, notes that men are now more likely to be single than women, which was not the case 30 years ago. Black people are much more likely to be single (59%) than any other race, and Black women (62%) are the most likely to be single of any sector. Asian people (29%) are the least likely to be single, followed by whites (33%) and Hispanics (38%).

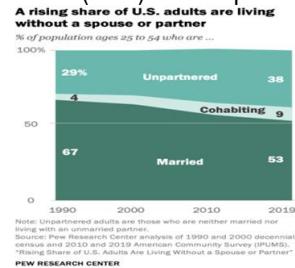


Fig 4. A rising share of U.S. adults are living without a spouse or partner.

The phenomenon commonly described as self-marriage is an exponentially growing trend in which individuals, mostly women, marry themselves. Drawing on a textual analysis of self-marriage accounts in online media, we argue that this concept denotes a new form of self-love and self-commitment at the heart of which lies a wellness program, rather than a legal contract (Lahad, et. al, 2019).

The related readings and studies, as well, provided clear perception and understanding that guided the researcher in outlining the grounded theory, presentation of findings and analysis. The related literature both foreign and local gave the researcher a clear view of the study. The studies and concepts will further guide the researcher on the grounded theory of singlehood of Filipino seafarers.

## METHODOLOGY

The qualitative method of research anchored on the Grounded Theory (GT) was utilized for this study. This method was used to treat a corpus of data in order to identify patterns from one data set perfectly. According to (Glaser 1978) Grounded theory is about following a set of steps to guarantee a good theory as an outcome. Grounded theory is a method of generating theory through systematic, iterative, and rigorous data collection and analysis process.

The researcher employed GT from the objectivist and constructivist theory. Objectivist grounded theory assumes the reality of an external world, takes for granted a neutral observer, views categories as derived from data, and sees representation of data and subjects as non-problematic. Constructivist grounded theory places priority on the studied phenomenon over the methods of studying it, uses grounded theory strategies as tools, not as prescriptions, and acknowledges the researcher's role in interpreting data and creating categories. Techniques involved in three major grounded theory strategies are described: coding, memo making, and theoretical sampling. One of the reasons that grounded theory has received increased attention is because this method emphasizes understanding the "voice" of the participant to build a theory about phenomena.

Before completing the interview, participants filled out a questionnaire that inquired about demographics

Table 1. Respondent's Profile

Participant Number	Gender	Age
1	F	31
2	F	32
3	F	35
4	F	44
5	F	32
6	M	32
7	M	32
8	M	38
9	M	35
10	M	39
11	M	33
12	M	35
13	M	30
14	M	37
15	M	36
16	M	36
17	M	31
18	M	36
19	M	32
20	M	34
21	M	36
22	M	36
23	M	40

The primary data collection method was participant interviews. Participants completed one interview, the length of which ranged from approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Interviews data and transcribed. A semi-structured format was used in the current research allowing participants and the researcher the flexibility to expand upon the specific questions proposed on the interview protocol.

#### Interview Questions

Tell me about professional career? How long have you been in seafaring industry?

Would you describe your professional life being single? How about your personal life?

What is singlehood for you?

Why do you decide to remain single? Do you have any experiences that push you to that decision? Or any circumstances that made you decide to stay single? Do you experience any challenges?

How do you prepare for the future being single? How do you manage your life

#### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

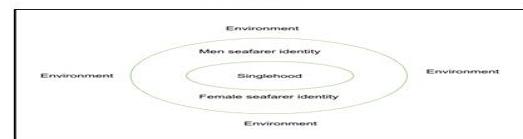
The purpose of the current study was to develop a theory that explains singlehood among male and female Filipino seafarer's diverse environment and circumstance. Grounded theory methodology was used in this effort to analyse interview data from and five (5) female and eighteen (18) male Filipino seafarers working in diverse environment and circumstances. The study explored why the participants remain single and how they managed singlehood.

Purpose -Driven/ Setting Priorities	Constraints	Purpose Driven/Freedom of Choice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and formation</li> <li>• Career priority</li> <li>• More opportunities</li> <li>• Business and insurances</li> <li>• Focus on goals dreams and aspirations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous bad relationships</li> <li>• Product of broken families</li> <li>• bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family attachments</li> <li>• Intendancy</li> <li>• No romantic relationships</li> <li>• Finding purpose</li> <li>• Independence</li> <li>• No commitment</li> <li>• Self – reliant</li> <li>• No romantic relationships</li> <li>• Flexibility of time</li> <li>• Self-awareness</li> </ul>

The Filipino Male and Female Single Seafarers in responding to Diverse Context theory proposes that singlehood in diverse environment and circumstances is best understood by participant's choices and decisions, and the factors that influence their decisions, the clarity of the circumstances they are in connecting with their experiences as single. Analysis resulted in one overarching category; purpose driven-entitled Setting Priorities,' which describes why participant, remain single and how they manage singlehood

This part also presents the paradigm to understand singlehood among male and female seafarers based on thorough process of theoretical sampling and analyzing the focal concepts, core categories and theirs relationships. This research followed the leads and process of concepts and categories in view of the theory that has been developed. The analysis of the interview transcription reveal three categories in understanding the meaning and reasons and managing of singlehood among male and female seafarers who were never married from the experiences and reflections of single Filipino seafarers. They are 1) Freedom of choice; 2) setting priorities; and 3) constraints.

Figure 1  
CONTEXT OF SINGLEHOOD AMONG FILIPINO MALE AND FEMALE SEAFARERS



The focal category about singlehood among male and female seafarers are essentially connected and interrelated to each other when it comes to male and female seafarers' understanding of singlehood. There are key categories that are related and unite the properties, dimensions and context of different reasons for remaining single and how to manage singlehood.

As expressed by one female participant:

I choose to be single for the rest of my life. I need to be financially stable so I can live independently with high level of freedom. I will work as if everything depends on me. Singlehood for me is a never married individual who can live independently, that is why I avoid romantic relationships. At the same time Am managing my finances well by investing on business. Relative to the challenge of being single, at times there is a feeling of pressure, yet the most important thing for me is how I feel... am happy being single.

Being single is something that impacts people in different ways; some people are very happy being single, while for others, not having a partner is a source of stress or sadness. Singlehood has a variety of psychological impacts that are influenced by other factors in a person's life. Singlehood in society varies

depending on the circumstances of a particular person's single state.

One male seafarer said:

I grew up from a broken family with my mom, and I don't want to leave her alone if I got married. Malimit ay hindi kasundo ng byenan ang manugang ay ayokong pipili ako sa kanila dahil sigurado ko n nom ko ang pipiliin ko, a ayokong maging unfair.

The psychological effect of being single too long also includes an increased level of confidence when dealing with people outside of your family. This is because the more time you spend around people, the less shifty and more put together you become.

A single male participant said:

I will also have chance to meet more friends, I can spend more time with others without any pressure from any romantic relationship

Singles are likely to face several constraints that keep them staying single. Some individuals have unsuccessful previous relationships because of their priorities. One of the reasons for singlehood will cluster in factors and domain that reflect constraints.

As conveyed by one single male:

Having a bad previous relationship made me realize many things: that entering in a relationship took a lot of wisdom and effort to succeed

Being single means freedom, it means ultimate freedom to do special thing. The best thing about being single is the freedom from the pressure of dressing for someone else, having the time to think for yourself alone, being able to hang out with your friends, ready to mingle and has the opportunity to opportunity to study and learn a lot. Freedom of choice is the opportunity to be oneself. "Freedom of choice," recognizes that singles have more freedom to pursue goals. Recognizes goal achievement as a strategy that can increase self-worth enhancing success in the future.

One single female participant said:

I enjoyed being single. I want to provide for my parents and siblings. I focus on my goals to establish business ang get more health insurance and life insurance for a secure future even I am single. For me singlehood is s the state of being without a romantic partner.

Majority of the participants discussed different situations why they choses to be single how to manage singlehood. Participants have different reasons why they chose to be single and with different circumstances. Reasons were focuses on self and family.

Table 2

HIGHLIGHTS ON THE CODING PROCESS-IDENTITY OF SEAFARERS

Codes	Concepts	Categories	Focal Category
I choose to be single for the rest of my life. I need to be financially stable so I can live independently with high level of freedom. I will work as if everything depends on me, singlehood for me is a never married individual who can live independently, that is why I avoid romantic relationships. Am managing my finances well by investing on business.	Freedom of Choice	Purpose Driven	IDENTITY OF MALE AND FEMALE FILIPINO SEAFARERS

MEMOS
Male and Female Filipino seafarers claim that singlehood is rooted on the three concepts such as freedom of choice, setting priorities, and constraints. For them, a choice to be single for the things they are happy about, like independence, having no commitment, being self-reliant, no romantic relationships and finding purpose, setting priorities for the single seafarers includes financial security, family attachments, focus on goals, more opportunities and constraints like peer pressure and unhappy previous relationships

In Grounded Theory, the most salient category that relates to all other categories, which emerged from the data, is the focal category. Data analysis revealed that purpose driven and constraint at the focal categories of singlehood among male and female Filipino Seafarers. The experiences of singlehood is rooted from freedom of choice, setting priorities and constraints.

Table 3

CONCEPTS AND FREQUENCIES OF RESPONSES THAT DRIVE THE PARTICIPANTS TO BE SINGLE

Concepts	Frequency Sample	Sample Responses
Family Attachment	15	I intend o be single by choice, I don't like lifelong commitments . Singlehood is the state of being unmarried. Never married woman tend to manage their life better. Although the normative expectation is to live with partners, children, and grandchildren, but for me I have an alternative choice not to marry but equally happy in life.
Financial Security	12	How to manage being single... well savings... preparation for future life after retirement. Investing in business, insurances and professional development so I can have fallback like for example teach in training centers or in Maritime school.. challenges...just focus on goals.
Education and Formation	10	mag focus n lang ako sa trabaho ko sa barko. Marami din akon nakitang maganda sa pagiging single.. hindi deviated ang attention ko, puro trabaho Ing ang iniisip ko kya mas nagiging competent ako dahil patuloy akong nag aarial para lumago ang aking kaalaman sa

		pagbabarko			
No lifelong commitment	10	I don't believe in commitment. For stability of my life, am getting health and life insurance and saving for my own house ifever I intend to retire from seafaring industry.		sadness. Singlehood has a variety of psychological impacts that are influenced by other factors in a person's life. I just have to focus on goals and purpose in life.	
Increased Independence	9	Gusto kon makaipon habang nasa barko, magpundar ng lupa at magnegosyo. Mas ok s akin n manatili akong mag isa, ang happiness ay di dapat inaasa sa ibang tao. Maaring me mga limitasyon ang pagiging single, pero ganon din nmn pag me partner... para sa akin mas ok n na walng partner... naranasan ko ng magka relasyon at sakit lng ng ulo... Pag single kokontrol ng mga activities n personally mong gusting gawin kung saan ikaw ay magiging masaya	Flexibility and free time	8	Being single means having not having to set aside time for a romantic relationship or partner
Constraints	9	Me mali akong naunag relasyon at nawala n ang tiwala ko sa mga babae. Nayon mas gusto ko n ang mag isa	High level of freedom	7	choose to be single for the rest of my life. I need to be financially stable so I can live independently with high level of freedom. I will work as if everything depends on me . singlehood for me is a never married individual who can live independently, that is why I avoid romantic
Self-reliant	8	Happiness is a choice and am happy being single. Singlehood can bring people a lot of happiness, provided they are able and willing to be more self-reliant than partnered people are	Self-awareness	7	Low level of stress and disappointments, although I know that whichever I choose to be single or marry has advantage and disadvantages, like no one to lean on, lack of companionship, however, I will understand better myself.
Avoid romantic relationships	8	1 Not investing in a romantic relationship have more opportunities on my own interest which can be a great source of happiness	Low level of stress	7	I know that whichever I choose to be single or marry has advantage and disadvantages, like no one to lean on, lack of companionship, however, I will understand better myself.
Focus on goals	8	Being single is something that impacts people in different ways; some people are very happy being single, while for others, having a partner is a source of stress or	Pursuit of interest	6	I will be living within my terms and I will do all the activities that will make me happy
			Less complicated life	6	Being single is living a less complicated life , I can decide on my own, and have complete independence and self-sufficient . Singlehood is a good blessings.
			Focus on achieving		Sa pananaw ko ag sinabing singlehood, ito yong mga taon piniling

dreams and aspirations / Imagination	5	wag makipag relasyon romantically. Bakit ko piniling maging single? My choice. I want to focus on my childhood dreams to go around the world... likutin ko ang mundo kaya mag iipon ako para ditto. Magtatayo ng business par me fall back ako kahit d n ako magbarko. I will secure the financial needs of my family For me singlehood is a deliberate choice to live alone. Masaya ako sa pag iisa
Be a better version/Self awareness	5	You don't need to adjust and change yourself. You can only think of being a better version of yourself because you want to. For me nothing is wrong in being single.
Joy of living alone	5	I embraced singlehood and discovered the joy of living independently , I also know of friends, single but happy.
Find purpose	4	I just need to find purpose and live my calling to get fulfilled. Being single means having not having to set aside time for a romantic relationship or partner
Flexibility and free time	4	Being single means having not having to set aside time for a romantic relationship or partner
More opportunities	3	Para sa akin ang mga single ay may mas maraming oportunidad na maipagpatuloy ang aking sariwang interest.
Avoiding responsibilities	3	Ayoko ng may responsibilidad.
Peer pressure	3	Am managing my finances well by investing on business. Relative to the challenge of being single, at times there is a feeling of pressure, yet the most important thing for me is how I feel... am happy

		being single
Protected from frustrations	3	Single individuals are also protected from frustrations in romantic relationships. There are times when single individual experience intimacy deficits, thus breeds loneliness
Joining organizations for singles	3	one can always deviate that feelings to a positive scenario by meeting other singles or joining organization and joining their activities whenever time permits.

It is clearly gleaned from the table that the highest frequency among the different concepts presented is the family attachment. Most of the participants prioritize family relationships over romantic relationship.

One participant said:

I intend to be single by choice, I don't like lifelong commitments. Singlehood is the state of being unmarried. Never married women tend to manage their life better. Although the normative expectation is to live with partners, children, and grandchildren, but for me I have an alternative choice not to marry but equally happy in life.

Education and formation is another concept on singlehood identified by the participants.

Mag focus n lang ako sa trabaho ko sa barko. Marami din akon nakitang maganda sa pagiging single.. hindi deviated ang attention ko, puro trabaho Ing ang iniiisip ko kya mas nagiging competent ako dahil patuloy akong nag aaral para lumago ang aking kaalaman sa pagbabarko

On the other hand, the participants also identified that they are not in favor of lifelong commitments

I don't believe in commitment. For stability of my life, am getting health and life insurance and saving for my own house if ever I intend to retire from seafaring industry.

The two are interconnected concepts, they wanted freedom.

Gusto kong makaipon habang nasa barko, magpundar ng lupa at magnegosyo. Mas ok s akin n manatili akong mag isa, ang happiness ay di dapat inaasa sa ibang tao. Maaring me mga limitasyon ang pagiging single, pero ganon din nmn pag me partner... para sa akin mas ok n na walng partner... naranasan ko ng magka relasyon at sakin Ing ng ulo... Pag single kokontrol ng mga activities n personally mong gusting gawin kung saan ikaw ay magiging masaya

Having equal frequency to increased independence is constraints. Constraints are the state of being restricted, or compelled to marry.

Me mali akong naunag relasyon at nawala n ang tiwala ko sa mga babae. Nayon mas gusto ko n ang mag isa

By doing these things they can focus on their goals and identified purpose.

Happiness is a choice and am happy being single. Singlehood can bring people a lot of happiness, provided they are able and willing to be more self-reliant than partnered people are

## DISCUSSION

In this study, singlehood for the participants are those never married male and female, no romantic relationship and voluntary choose to be single, age between 30 to 40. The definition of 'single men and women' in this study, agrees with Byrne's (2000) criteria of singleness which are (1) never-married, (2) over 30 of age, (3) not cohabiting, and (4) childless. The cut-off age of 30 is following Adams's (1976) suggestion that at this age most women are married and those women who remain single are on their way to achieving greater economic solidarity, looking from biological point of view, at the age of 30.

The following are the three categories identified in this research: Freedom of Choice

Freedom of choice is the first category identified by the single participant relative to singlehood among male and female Filipino seafarers where some of the concepts identified by the participants are Family attachments, Intendancy, no romantic relationships, finding purpose, independence, no commitment, self-reliant, no romantic relationships

The category on freedom of choice agrees with the report of The Journey of Mindfulness (2019) where four dimensions were identified the first of which is self-awareness.

"We are not our feelings. We are not our moods; We are not even our thoughts.

Self-awareness enables us to stand apart and examine even the way we "see" ourselves-our self-paradigm, the most fundamental paradigm of effectiveness.

It affects not only our attitudes and behaviors but also how we see other people. It becomes our map of the basic nature of mankind"

- Stephen R. Covey

As reflected in the response of one participant in the interview process:

For me, being single means I do not have to compromise with a partner or alter their plans to fit someone else. And I choose to remain single so I can decide what to have for dinner, nong kulay ang pinta ng dingding ng kwarto ko., wala na akong kakausapin kahit n sino at masaya ako sap ag iisa. I have Increased independence and I have high confidence levels.

How to manage being single... well savings... preparation for future life after retirement. Investing in business, insurances and professional development so I can have fallback like for example teach in training centers or in Maritime school.. Challenges...just focus on goals.

## Setting Priorities

Setting priorities can serve significant purpose in everybody's life. We tend to prioritize things we hold dear to our hearts such as family, educations, dreams and goals etc. A study by psychology professor Dr. Gail Matthews at Dominican University found that people who are focus on their goals succeeded at achieving them 50% more often than those who didn't, by included identifying actionable steps toward achieving their goals. Setting

priorities and goals, requires a mind-set shift and understanding of the environment and situations they are in, the reason and context of their priorities.

Included in the second category in setting priorities participants stressed out that singlehood is often a preference, especially for people who are goal-focused. As expressed by some participants:

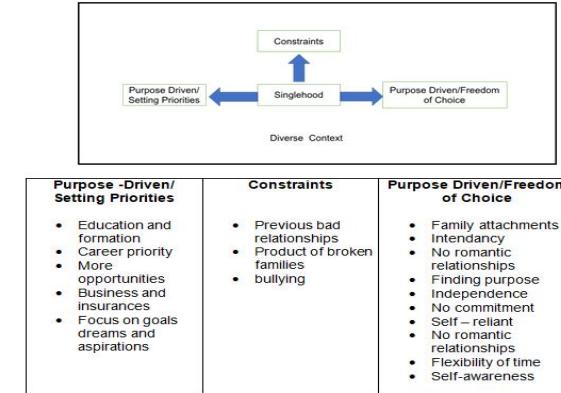
I focus on my goals to establish business and get more health insurance and life insurance for a secure future even I am single. My priority is my parents and siblings Malaki ang pamilya ko at ako ang pangangat at alam kong kailangan

Para sa akin, mas maraming oportunidad na maipagpatuloy ang aking sariling interest and can be a great source of joy and self-fulfillment

As depicted by the boxes below the diagram, figure 2 presented in this model, occur in diverse setting and environment showing different reasons for singlehood with different context. Clearly, the focal category is the purpose driven as supported by setting priorities and freedom of choice and context.

**Figure 2.** Theory of Filipino Male and Female Single Seafarers in responding to Diverse Context

Figure 2. Theory of Filipino Male and Female Single Seafarers in responding to Diverse Context



## Conclusions

The research represents the attempt to develop a theory relative to singlehood among Filipino male and female seafarers in diverse environment and context. The theory proposes that understanding singlehood is purpose driven and revolving around constraints.

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