# Masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines: An ethnographic study

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# Abstract

Individuals' eating practices have been linked with gender, in that masculinity and femininity can be reflected through what they eat. This has been related to how food is coded stereotypically, meat being perceived as masculine and fruit as feminine. The aim of my research was to explore the relationship between masculinity and eating practices in the Philippines, to find out if gender did impact on these. This was also important as diet related illnesses, are increasing in the Philippines. There was literature and studies on the composition of Filipino diets, however, there was limited understanding on the eating context in the Philippines.

To research this I used ethnography, taking a participant-as-observer role, and autophotography, giving participants cameras to photograph their meals. Data collection was over an 89 day period, spent predominantly in Manila. For there to be consistency in analysis, I used thematic analysis for the field notes, photographs and interviews. My findings suggested that food was not heavily gendered, in that different foods were not defined as masculine or feminine. I argue that gendered practices were observed through the quantities of food consumed, especially rice. Rice was more than just a staple food, it was thought of as being a heavy food, one which gave men the desired feeling of fullness. Participants frequently spoke of the equal division of labour in the domestic space, with foodwork not being a particularly feminised task. Significantly, I identified a strong emphasis on communal eating amongst participants. This was the common environment for people to eat in. In this context participants said that they were happier, the food tasted better, and subsequently they consumed more. The findings contribute an understanding of eating practices in the Philippines, particularly the important role of commensality and how gender was practiced in this environment.

I conclude that communal eating provided a setting where men could display their masculinity not through consuming masculinised foods, but instead through eating larger portions. This shifts the focus away from individual food choices onto communal eating practices when researching the Filipino eating context.

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**List of abbreviations**

ADB: Asian Development Bank
DoH: Department of Health in the Philippines
FANTA: Food and Nutrition Technical Assistance
FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FNRI-DOST: Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology
IDF: International Diabetes Federation
PSA: Philippines Statistics Authority
WFP: World Food Programme
WHO: World Health Organisation

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1   Introduction

Food is not merely consumed for its nutritional value, it holds gendered, emotional and cultural significance to individuals. Studying these explanations behind eating practices helps researchers to answer the question "why do people eat what they do?" (Warde, 2016). Food practices have been linked with the gender performance, in that masculinity and femininity can be seen through what an individual eats (Roos et al., 2001; Ristovski-Slijepcevic et al., 2010; Yusof and Duasa, 2010). Stereotypically, red meats are coded as being masculine and vegetables feminine (Roos et al., 2001; Stibbe, 2004; Ruby and Heine, 2011). Although the interactions between gender and food are more complex than this, it begins to show the links between food practices, masculinity and femininity.

With regards to the Philippines there is limited understanding on the Filipino eating context, especially the eating practices of men. There was information on what the Filipino population ate, but Warde's question above was yet to be explored in this context. Yet, diet is becoming an increasingly significant area to research in the Philippines, as they are suffering from rising rates of adults who are overweight. The latest figures suggest that 31.1% of the adult population have a BMI≥25 (FNRI-DOST, 2015). This can be linked with the increasing rates of diet related illnesses, such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes (WHO, 2015), which is causing morbidity and mortality. Additionally, Filipino men's life expectancy is 65 years old, lower than surrounding Southeast Asian countries. Masculinity has been linked, in other countries, to men eating less nutritionally balanced diets than women, primarily because the latter are more likely to practice health seeking behaviour (Courtenay, 2000). Therefore, I developed this research to examine the relationship between masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines. I aimed

to assess the concept of masculinity in a community in Manila, how this impacted on food practices, and how this information could provide some understanding behind men's eating practices.

To research this area, I used ethnography and autophotography, for a period of 89 days in the Philippines. The ethnography was participatory, in that I not only observed events but also was an active participant. I spent time with men and their families and collected data through in-depth field notes and in situ interviews. Autophotography involved giving cameras to ten men for them to photograph anything related to their meals and diets.  The findings suggested that food was not gender coded; instead masculinity could be seen through the quantities of food consumed. The importance of eating together provided a novel understanding of eating practices for participants. The research was initially designed in a more isolated sense; I was going to focus solely on men. However, soon into the fieldwork I observed that this would be an inaccurate representation of eating in the Philippines, because of the importance placed on eating together. This was an unexpected and significant finding in this study.

In order to provide some understanding and context to this study, I will next give a background to the Philippines. I will also present literature and studies on health and healthcare in this country. It demonstrates some of the broader healthcare problems which are currently faced by the Filipino population and health sector. Finally, I discuss how the project was developed.

## 1.2   Background to the Philippines

The Philippines is an archipelago in Southeast Asia, with a population of 101 million (PSA, 2016). It consists of 7107 islands, each with a unique culture, economy and history. This can be attributed to the heterogeneous development that occurred across the country. It was colonised by Spain during the 16th century and the United States in 1898. The Philippines also has close historical connections with the

Chinese due to trade. Each of these countries exposed and imposed their cultural practice, religion, infrastructure and medicine to the Filipinos in different regions (Villamin and Villamin, 2009; Balilla et al., 2014). The varied development of the islands, due to external pressures, is visible in the estimated 100-150 languages spoken (Headland, 2003). The roots of these often correlate with the historical trade or colonisation of the region. In terms of religion, 92% of the population is Christian, of which 81% belong to the Roman Catholic denomination which was introduced by the Spanish (PSA, 2014). The Catholic Church has been and continues to be highly influential politically, in educational institutions and in the daily lives of Filipinos (Keeny, 1973; de Castro, 1990; Mason and Smith, 2000; Mello et al., 2006).

Politically, despite efforts in recent years to reduce corruption, it is still prevalent in all governing bodies, from state government to barangay level administration. President Rodrigo Duterte, who was elected in 2016, made ending corruption one of the key messages in his campaign. However, his hard line policies on drugs, corruption and journalism have led to criticism from international agencies, such as Amnesty International. Outrage was particularly raised over his 'shoot to kill' policy on drug dealers and users. The exact implications of his presidency on political stability are yet to be seen.

Economically, the Philippines has experienced a decrease in poverty over the past few years, from 26.6% in 2006 to 21.6% in 2015 (PSA, 2016). This is despite the economy continuing to grow, suggesting that there are unequal gains to different income groups; with the poor not seeing the benefits of higher growth (ADB, 2016). Income and economic status directly affects healthcare utilisation, as around 50% of medical services are paid for by the individual (Sobel et al., 2010).

## 1.3   Background to healthcare in the Philippines

The Philippines suffers from public health problems across almost all medical sectors. Infectious diseases are prevalent, for instance it has one of the highest tuberculosis burdens in the world (Vianzon et al., 2013). The healthcare system is poorly equipped to deal with the rapidly increasing population and large number of ailments that people suffer from (Abe and Ohtani, 2013; Matsumoto-Takahashi et al., 2013). These are linked to poor living conditions, malnourishment, and low education levels all of which relate to the level of poverty in the Philippines. There is also declining government expenditure into healthcare (Herrera et al., 2010).  Technical equipment is scarce, such as MRI scanners with 0.05 per 100,000 people (Herrera et al., 2010). Trained medical professionals are inadequately available. This is especially true with specialists, for example there is 1 neurologist per 330,000 individuals despite the number of strokes that occur (Navarro et al., 2014). 67% of the neurologists are in urban areas (Navarro et al., 2014), which reflects the healthcare inequality between urban and rural regions. These problems are exacerbated because the Philippines has a long history of exporting nurses abroad, despite their own overly stretched resources (Phillips, 1986; Masselink and Lee, 2010).

The Philippines biomedical healthcare system presents an unequal distribution of workforce and income, with 70% of healthcare professionals working in private structures where only 30% of the population are treated (Herrera et al., 2010). This represents a significant problem for equality in access. These provide a better quality of healthcare, but are inaccessible to the majority of Filipinos. The 30% of doctors working in public hospitals have to cope with limited resources despite the number of patients they have. Hospitalisation into public hospitals is free, but patients pay for any prescribed medicine. Therefore, treatment is delayed until patients' families can raise the funds. For instance, the time period of distribution of antibiotics to children with cancer correlated with the income of the family, with the less affluent having prolonged waiting times (Kirby et al., 2014). Medication in

the Philippines can have a 100 times mark-up price compared to India and Pakistan (Hamilton, 2009). The excessive cost of medicine has caused people to self-medicate, especially with antibiotics. This is becoming an increasingly important issue for public health. The overuse of antibiotics is causing people to become resilient to drugs, and creating drug resistant strains of diseases (Kim, Capeding and Kilgore, 2014).

Maternal mortality and infant mortality remains high in the Philippines, despite them adopting the Millennium Development Goals (Acuin et al., 2011). There has been a steady decrease in the number of deaths. This has been explained by the continued preference for women to give birth at home, supported by an untrained medical assistant. There has been some slow progress in the number of deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants from 52.8% in 1993 to 62.3% in 2006 (Sobel et al., 2010). However, inequalities in access to maternal healthcare prevails (Molina et al., 2013). Also lower education levels, especially among the less affluent and rural dwellers, mean that women do not recognise the signs of needing medical assistance. Finally, the cost of healthcare acts as a barrier to women utilising it.

Initiatives such as PhilHealth have been implemented in an attempt to make healthcare accessible for every socioeconomic group. This has been labelled as being successful (Obermann, 2006; Herrera et al., 2010) with 20 million Filipinos enrolled in 2010. It is especially aimed at indigents, however there are unclear definitions over who constitutes as this. It aims to provide either reduced or free healthcare depending on the individual's income. However, there are a number of problems with PhilHealth. It is aimed at impoverished people, yet it expects potential participants to understand and fill out the forms. Low education rates, especially amongst the poor, make this a difficult task.

Of the 1781 hospitals 60% are privately and 40% are government owned (WHO, 2011). Again this limits accessibility to healthcare, as private hospitals are more expensive to attend but provide the best healthcare. Hospital administration has been decentralised from the state government to local government units. Although

the Department of Health does still run a handful of hospitals, the responsibility of the majority rest with local government units (Sy, 2003). The structure and administration in healthcare service are extremely complex, and regionally differ. Mayors, city officials, senior doctors and the Department of Health all influence the healthcare facilities in each area. Power structures within the medical system seem to be an uninterpretable web of people from every aspect of healthcare provision. It would also seem that financial influences are particularly poignant in decision making abilities. For these reasons, ethnomedical healthcare is still commonly used.

The continued use of alternative healing has been explained by financial hardship, proximity to a medical centre, low education rates and cultural beliefs. Of these the former three have received the most political attention and finance as they are easier to quantify and rectify with the right resources. However, cultural beliefs and understanding of healthcare still do gain some attention. In 1978 the Philippine Government created Health for All which aimed to integrate traditional and biomedical healthcare practices (Kadetz, 2011).

This section has provided a background and context about the Philippines and the healthcare system. It shows how they are suffering from unequal distribution of resources, poor health due to infectious and noncommunicable diseases, and a complex relationship between ethno- and biomedical healthcare practitioners. It is within this setting that I wanted to research a certain aspect of health, which is the link between masculinity and eating practices in the Philippines. The project was developed from personal experiences in the Philippines which are explained below.

## 1.4 Background and development of the project

I developed my interest in the Philippines through previous experiences of visiting the country. I had volunteered there twice because I had no previous knowledge of the Philippines compared with other developing countries. I particularly spent time with charities that focused on the health of the local community. We would

run educational days for parents, whilst providing children with basic medical check-ups. My time with these charities increased my interest in healthcare in the Philippines, especially as they taught the adults ideas which were different from the UK. I returned a third time to conduct my undergraduate dissertation research, which focused on the interactions between doctors and patients. Whilst planning my undergraduate research I noticed that there was limited literature on the Philippines and Filipino healthcare system. For this reason, I designed my PhD research to continue adding further understanding on healthcare practices in the country. At the start of the project I developed an interest into why there was limited literature on men's health compared to women's specifically the main healthcare problems that men were facing, which appeared to be diet related illnesses. My human geography and sociology background meant that I wanted to research the everyday eating practices of the participants, looking at why they ate the food that they do not just what they eat.

I provide this background to the project for a number of reasons. First, I believed when I designed the research that I had some understanding of the Filipino culture and practices. However, I realised soon into the fieldwork that in my previous visits I had been treated like a guest rather than a member of the community. Therefore, the past experiences were very different from the ones that I had during this research where I gained more of an insider's understanding. Second, this research is a culmination of personal interests, past experiences and in-depth research into the Philippines. Additionally, the research methods chosen, especially ethnography, are ones where I, as the researcher, collected data through interacting with participants and participating in daily life. For these reasons, throughout this thesis I write in the first person. Writing in any other person and pronoun would reduce the importance of reflecting on the research building up from the past and the personal nature of data collection.

## 1.5 Thesis structure

In this section I will present an outline to the thesis, with a brief introduction to the contents of each chapter. Chapter 2 begins with a literature review, where I used a systematic approach to search for literature on masculinity, diets and the Philippines. Before the data collection, I did a literature search to find which areas of health were yet to be researched. This was how I developed my research topic. After my time in the Philippines I conducted the updated literature search, this meant it could be specific to my research area. I found that at the point of writing there have been no papers written about this subject in the Philippines. I go on to discuss the specific public health problem of diet related illnesses and increasing levels of obesity in the Filipino population. This is followed by exploring the literature written about the link between masculinity and nutrition in mainly developed countries. I conclude this section with a discussion on theories on masculinity, especially hegemonic masculinity. This is a dominant theory in masculinity studies, and therefore an important one to consider when looking at masculinity and health. I then outline my aim and objects for the project.

Chapter 3 begins with an explanation of the methods chosen. First, I set out the research paradigm used, which was interpretivism. Then there is a description of ethnography and autophotography, how they were used, the benefits and complications of both are also explored. In order to understand the background of the participants, I go on describe their characteristics. I could not speak Tagalog, therefore I needed a translator, who also acted as a chaperone and advisor. The impacts of this on the research are evaluated. I used thematic coding for the interviews, ethnographic notes and photographs, which is discussed in section 3.6. Finally, with qualitative research it is vital to be reflective throughout the research process. Therefore, I follow on from the methods with a reflective piece entitled 'the ethnographer's dilemma'. This is an account of the difficulties which can be faced when using a participatory approach in research.

Chapter 4 contains my findings. The introduction to this chapter is the data collected about the importance of rice in the Filipino diet. Here I seek to demonstrate how one food can encapsulate ideas of gender, social and cultural values. It acts as an introduction to the next three major findings. First is a discussion on masculinity in the Philippines. In order to understand how gender may be shown through food practices, it is important to understand what masculinity or femininity means in the community being studied. I argue that this is especially important in this research, where little is known about this subject in the Philippines. Second, I present the results on gender and diet; with data on the reasons behind men's food practices. It builds on 4.3 in order to show that there is a link between masculinity and food decisions in the Philippines, but it is not about the food substance they eat, instead it is the quantity they consume. Third, findings on commensality, the act of eating together, are discussed. This was an unexpected finding, but one which proved to be highly influential on the eating practices of men and women in the Philippines.

Chapter 5 is the discussion chapter, where I link together the findings in Chapter 4 and the literature in Chapter 3. It starts with a discussion about commensality, and how this is an important area to study to have the most comprehensive understanding of eating practices in the Philippines. Following from this is a discussion on the link between masculinity and food consumption patterns in the Philippines. I especially explore how the findings vary from the concept of gender being shown through food substance choice. Finally, I discuss masculinity and gender enactment in the Philippines, comparing and contrasting my findings with the concepts put forward in the theory of hegemonic masculinity.

Chapter 6 is the conclusion to the thesis. In this chapter I draw out the key findings and contributions that this study has provided. I summarise the key findings, and how these met the three objectives I had for the study. Following from this, I discuss the implications of this study and the areas that it has opened up for further research. Finally, I put forward the limitations of the study and a brief concluding remark.

# Chapter 2: Literature review

## 2.1   Introduction

In this section I will discuss the literature review, where I used a systematic approach to search for the studies. This was conducted to assess any new literature which may have been published since the PhD commenced in 2014. The search strategy and outcome are presented, followed by a discussion of the six papers found which had some relevance to the subject area. In section 2.5 I then look at the growing problem of diet related illnesses in the Philippines and describe current eating patterns. 2.6 contains literature on the link between masculinities and nutrition. In 2.7 I discuss hegemonic masculinity, a dominant theory in gender studies

## 2.2   Rationale for the review

Before my data collection I did a literature search to establish which areas of health in the Philippines were yet to be researched. This also provided some background to the country, which is presented in sections 1.2 and 1.3. Once I returned from the Philippines and analysed my data, I conducted an updated literature review. This order of searching for literature after data collection reflected the qualitative research methods that I used in this study. Using ethnography and autophotography meant that I had a topic which I was going to study but it was broad until I began the data collection. I went to the Philippines with the main objective of researching masculinity and eating practices. The following systematic literature search was conducted in May 2017 once I had analysed my data. This meant that the review was led by the data collected and the main themes that I wanted to research. These were: men, health, dietary habits and the Philippines. The updated review was conducted with the primary aims of assessing any new

papers which may have been published and to have a search which reflected the final topic that I researched.

## 2.3   Search strategy

A broad search was used, which included the general Filipino population rather than constricting it to only look for papers on men. I considered that narrowing it down in this way could lead to certain papers being missed; for instance, papers using terms such as "gender" rather than "men and masculinity" may not have been found. Therefore, the main search terms were: Philippines, Filipino, health, diet and habits. Search terms were found through using the expand and thesaurus function on the databases, reviewing abstracts of papers which could be relevant, and consultation with a systematic review adviser. No limitations were made over the language or location of the papers as this may had excluded papers where such information was not specified. Several search strategies were experimented with, and the results were reviewed to find one which produced the most appropriate and largest body of literature to assess. I also hand searched through journals and bibliographies to find any more relevant papers.

Seven databases were searched, which were: Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA); Sociological Abstracts; International Bibliography of the Social Sciences (IBSS); PsycINFO; Bibliography of Asian Studies; PubMED; and MEDLINE.

The following search strategy was used:
1. (Philippine* OR Filipino OR "South East Asia*") *search by abstract*
2. (Philippine* OR Filipino OR "South East Asia*) *search by title*
3. 1 OR 2
4. ("Eat* behav*" OR "eat* habit*" OR "eat* practic*" OR "food practic*" OR "food habit*" OR "food behav*" OR "food consumption" OR "food choice*" OR "food decision*" OR "diet*" OR "eat*" OR "meal*" OR "health* behav*" OR "health* practic*") *search by abstract*

5. ("Eat* behav*" OR "eat* habit*" OR "eat* practic*" OR "food practic*" OR "food habit*" OR "food behav*" OR "food consumption" OR "food choice*" OR "food decision*" OR "diet*" OR "eat*" OR "meal*" OR "health* behav*" OR "health* practic*") *search by title*

6. 4 OR 5

7. 3 AND 6

## *2.3.1  Search outcome*

Table 1 shows the search yield for each database used. In total 1432 papers were found, (1407 from electronic databases and 25 from a non-electronic search), which was reduced to 1082 once duplicates were removed. A summary of the literature search can be found in figure 1.

| Database | Number of papers found |
|---|---|
| ASSIA | 32 |
| Sociological abstracts | 42 |
| IBSS | 45 |
| PsycINFO | 89 |
| Bibliography of Asian studies | 161 |
| PubMed | 232 |
| MEDLINE | 806 |
| Total | 1407 |

 *Table 1. Number of papers found in each electronic database*

I found large quantities of irrelevant papers, despite carefully considering the search terms. The initial screening was conducted by reading the title of each

paper, if it was not clear from the title what the focus of the paper was then the abstract would be read. I was specifically focusing on finding papers about men living in the Philippines. The exclusion criteria at this stage can be found in table 2.

| Exclusion | Justification |
|-----------|---------------|
| Filipinos living abroad | This research was about Filipinos living in the Philippines. It was felt that looking at Filipinos who had migrated to another country would expose them to different cultural practices, foods, and had the potential to alter behaviours. Hence, I focused on papers written in the same country as I was studying. |
| Non-humans | A large body of literature was on animals or plant species in the Philippines and were excluded. |
| Child development | Papers on the impact of diet on childhood development were excluded as they did not contribute understanding on men's food choices. |
| Maternal health | There were a number of papers on maternal health and the diets eaten by pregnant or breast feeding mothers, e.g. pregnancy and vitamin intake. Again, these were not on the specific topic of men. |

*Table 2. Exclusion criteria for the first stage of screening and justification*

Screening through title and abstract led to 39 papers, which were read in full. Of these, six potential studies were found which focused on men and their dietary habits or practices from a more sociological perspective. Exclusion criteria for this second stage can be found in table 3. Figure 1 below, shows the complete flow diagram for the systematic literature search.

| Exclusion | Justification |
|-----------|---------------|
| No mention of men (n=7) | These were papers which again focused on women and children with no mention of men. |
| Recommended daily allowance (RDAs), physiological, outdated | A number of papers looked at calculating the RDA of food for the population in the Philippines. Many of these were also outdated, for instance: Florentino, R. |

| findings (n=10) | and Pedro, R. (1992) "Nutrition and socio-economic development in Southeast Asia" used data from 1970s-1980s. |
|---|---|
| Healthy policy (n=1) | This was about how to improve the health of the general population through the use of policies. |
| Not about diet (n=1) | There was no mention of gender or diet, therefore it was not deemed as being useful for this research. |
| General population, not gendered (n=8) | These were excluded because they focused on age groups, occupations or socioeconomic status without splitting these into gender. |
| Sustainability in the Philippines (n=6) | Excluded because they were not about food, or were about the sustainable production of food. |

*Table 3. Exclusion criteria for the second stage of screening and justification*
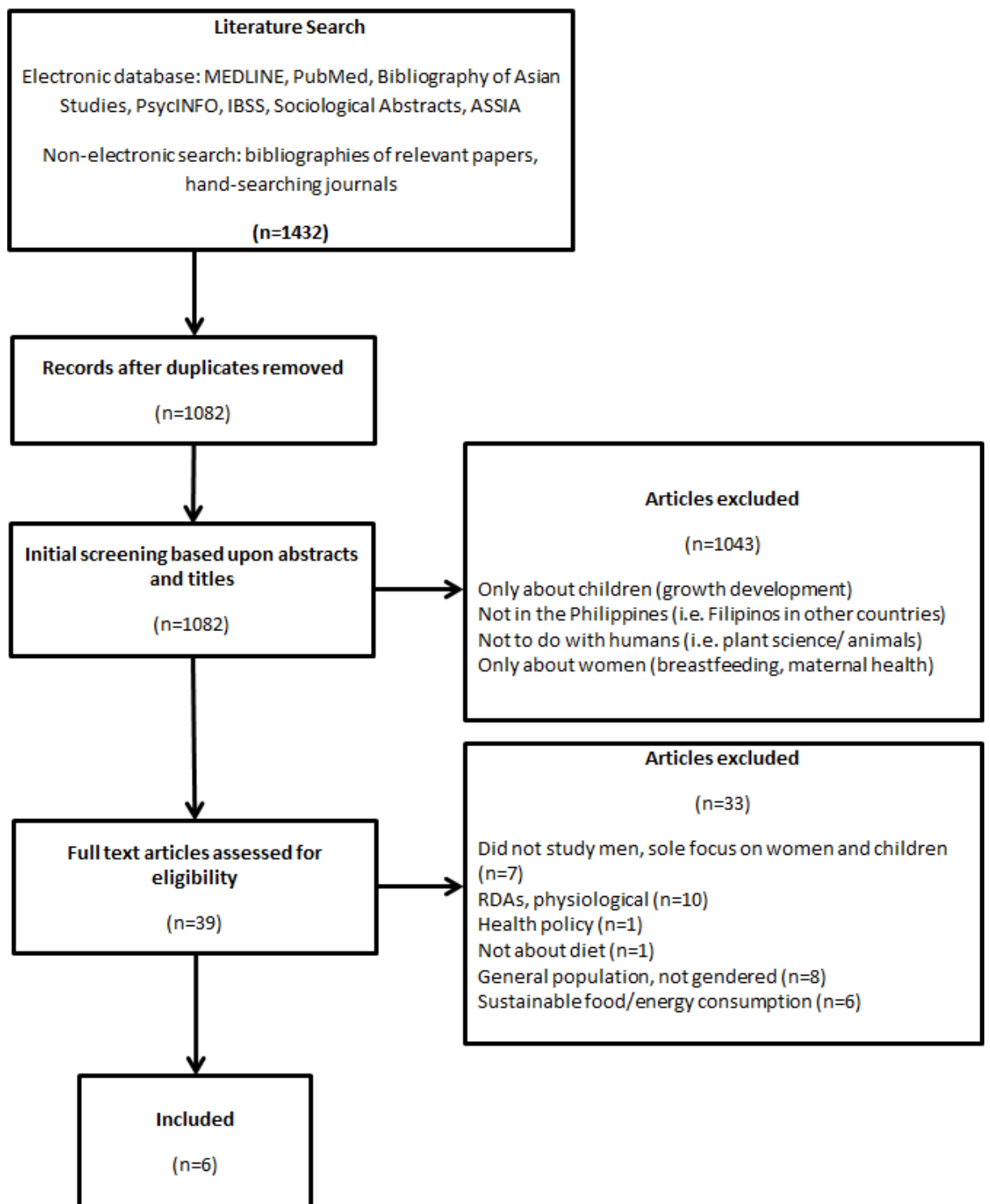
*Figure 1. Diagram showing the search strategy and outcome*

### 2.3.2  Relevant papers

Of the 1432 papers originally found, I found six that contained information relevant to this research topic. However, even these were only broadly related to the topic. The first was by Gregorio et al. (2016), "Knowledge, attitudes, and related practices of Filipino seafarers regarding cardiovascular diseases". With regards to masculinity in the Philippines, it is seafarers who are a prominent group that are studied. There were 136 participants and data were collected using a structured self-administered questionnaire containing pre-coded questions. Knowledge and attitudes of food and diets made up a section of the data collected. They found that >84% of participants identified that fatty food could contribute to cardiovascular disease. Other factors identified were high cholesterol and obesity. The following results (table 4) provide some information on the type of diet men thought that they had.

| Type of diet | Number (%) n=136 |
|---|---|
| High in vegetables | 67 (49.3%) |
| High in fat | 59 (43.4%) |
| High in salt | 37 (27.2%) |
| High in fruits | 36 (26.5%) |

*Table 4. Showing figures on types of diets, adapted from page 218*

One of the problems with this study is that respondents were talking about their diets in general. However, being a seafarer meant that they would be constrained by what was available on the ship. Their answers about their usual food may not be the same as someone who lived and worked on land in the Philippines. The use of a survey in this study meant that participants had a limited number of ways to answer the questions. This means that although it provided information on the knowledge that seafarers had on cardiovascular disease, the data did not provide an in-depth understanding or further explanation behind their answers. Therefore, there continues to be a gap in the literature for research using qualitative methods to gain more cultural and social understandings of men's relationships with food.

The second paper with some relevance was Schlegel and Guthrie's (1973) study on the Tiruray, a hill and mountain dwelling tribe in the Philippines. This study looked at if the tribe's diets were altering because of changing farming practices. The researchers used quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data on the diets of two men. These two men's diets were recorded for 1 year from 1966 to 1967. The average size of meals was recorded by weighing the food, and had a written up description by one of the researchers. They found that the changes in farming did alter what the men were eating. Observations were also kept about how the men separated food into four categories: starch staples, viands (side dishes), spices, and snacks.

This study gave a detailed account of the relationship between farming practices and the impact that it had on diets. However, it was small, only consisting of two participants and about a fairly remote tribe. The paper uses data collected 60 years ago, which means that the findings are dated. Although it does specifically study two men in-depth the researchers did not explore the concept of masculinity and how this may have impacted on their food consumption patterns.

The third and final set of literature, which had some relevance to this project, was about food consumption patterns, particularly in Manila. These were mainly about sustainability. There were some findings that the number of meals eaten outside of the house is increasing (Burger Chakraborty, 2014; Saloma, 2015; Burger Chakraborty et al. 2016). This was related to changing housing situations, for instance the increasing number of people living in small condominiums in Manila. Saloma (2015) found that people living in condominiums were more likely to eat out, because of the limited space to cook and store food. Indeed, some of these complexes did not allow for cooking facilities. This meant that people would eat out more, leading to an environmental impact from increased waste packaging. There was also some evidence about changes in the type of food consumed; with wealthier middle class beginning to eat organic food for perceived health benefits (Sahakian et al., 2017). Methodologically these studies used surveys and interviews

to collect data. Ethnography and photography were not utilised in any of these pieces of research.

The main problems with, say, Burger Chakraborty et al. (2016) and Saloma (2015) studies are the range of income levels of their participants. These could be between $5352 to $48,837. This large wage range would impact on the food decisions that people could make and their living situations. The authors argued that they were studying the middle class, yet this is a very variable group when it comes to occupations and levels of disposable income. This was a consideration that I made when defining what being from a low-middle socioeconomic class meant. The definition of middle class is wide; therefore I needed to narrow it down. I defined lower-middle class as being families who could afford a house and had enough money to make choices over what food they ate. This was in comparison to families with enough money to eat a highly varied diet or those with lower incomes who could only afford the basics.

These papers have some relevance to my own research area, yet it is limited. They provide some information about eating patterns in the Philippines, the diets that people eat and how these may be changing. However, they do not look specifically at gender and masculinities and the impact that this has on eating habits, instead they focus on what their participants ate. There is some use of qualitative research methods, but the gap remains to collect data using ethnography for more in-depth understanding of the eating habits of men. The papers on consumption patterns show that there are changes in the way that people eat. Yet they provide limited to no understanding on how gender may impact on the eating practices in the Philippines.

## 2.4  Summary

The review has shown that the gap which I originally went to research, that is exploring men's health and eating practices in the Philippines in a sociological

manner, remained at the time of conducting the search. There is also the space to contribute data collected through qualitative methods, such as ethnography, in order to provide some understanding behind men's eating habits. The following sections focus on these two main research themes, that is, a background on diets in the Philippines and the link between masculinity and food consumption.

## 2.5   Background to diet and nutrition in the Philippines

### 2.5.1  Introduction

There was evidently limited literature on my research topic, which is looking at why people eat the food that they do, rather than what they eat. The following section gives information on what food is eaten and the increasing number of the Filipino population suffering from diet related illnesses. This presents the growing public health problem in the Philippines, and shows why diet is such an important area to research.

### 2.5.2  General health profile of the Philippines

The overall health status of the Philippines has seen improvements over the past three decades, however these have now slowed (WHO, 2011). In terms of health outcomes the country is currently lagging behind most of South East Asia (WHO, 2015). This is reflected in the lower life expectancy of Filipinos compared to people living in surrounding countries (Table 5).

|  | Average Life Expectancy (years) in 2015 | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Country | Male | Female |
| The Philippines | 65 | 72 |
| Indonesia | 67 | 71 |
| Thailand | 72 | 78 |
| Malaysia | 73 | 77 |
| Singapore | 80 | 86 |

Table 5. Figures from WHO database country profiles, 2015

The leading causes of death in the Philippines since 1997 have been diseases of the heart and vascular system. Other noncommunicable causes of death include: diabetes mellitus; chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases; and malignant neoplasms (DoH, 2013). The Filipino population is also suffering a number of risk factors which affect health status, including smoking, hypertension, alcohol intake, obesity and physical inactivity (WHO, 2011). Many of the health related problems currently facing the Philippines can be related to nutrition and diet. The following figure 2, produced by WHO (2015), shows that several of the diet related illnesses causing mortality are increasing, such as diabetes and heart disease.

| | No of deaths (000s) 2012 | Crude death rate 2000-2012 | Change in rank 2000-2012 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ischaemic heart disease (15.4%) | 87.9 | | ◆ |
| Stroke (11.1%) | 63.3 | | ▲ |
| Lower respiratory infections (9.1%) | 51.9 | | ▼ |
| Diabetes mellitus (5.9%) | 33.7 | | ▲ |
| Tuberculosis (4.6%) | 26.2 | | ▼ |
| Hypertensive heart disease (3.7%) | 21.0 | | ▲ |
| Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (2.9%) | 16.4 | | ▲ |
| Kidney diseases (2.8%) | 15.9 | | ▲ |
| Interpersonal violence (2.8%) | 15.8 | | ▼ |
| Asthma (2.2%) | 12.3 | | ▲ |

Rank ■ decreased ■ increased ■ no change

*Figure 2. Top 10 causes of mortality in the Philippines from 2000-2012 (WHO, 2015: 3)*

The burden of disease should also be considered, to see what diseases are leading to disability and premature mortality. The following diagram presents disability adjusted life years (DALYs), which is calculated by adding the number of years of

life lost due to premature mortality (YLL) and the years of health life lost because of disability (YLD) (WHO, 2015).
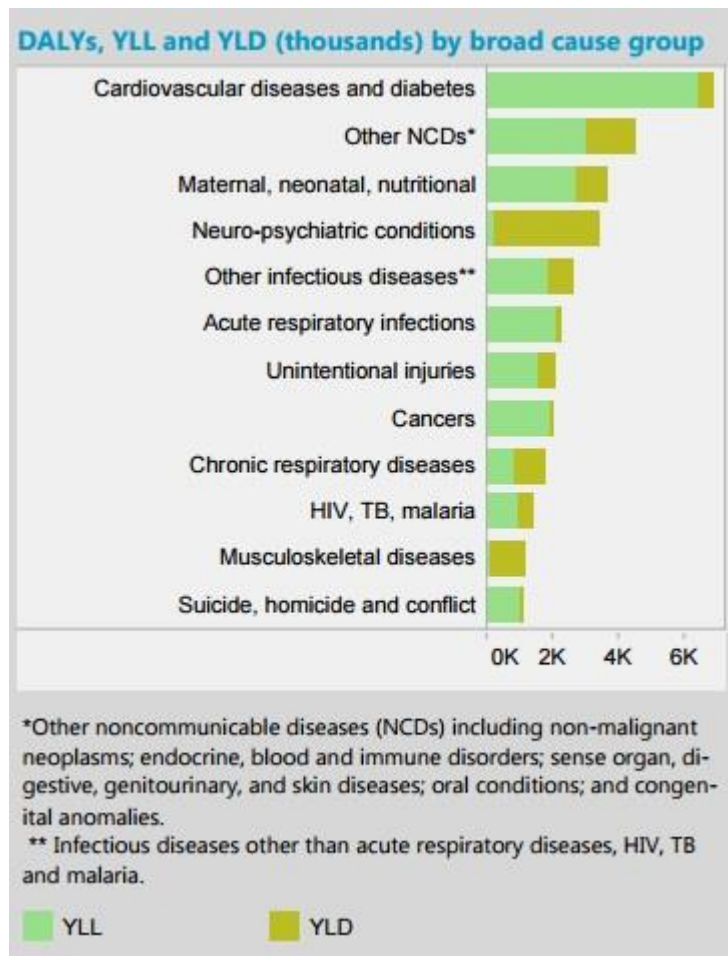


*Figure 3. Showing disability-adjusted life years for different diseases in the Philippines in 2012 (WHO, 2015: 3)*

The predominant causes of DALYs are diabetes and heart disease. It is clear from the evidence above that nutrition and diet in the Philippines are important to study as improving these could improve the health of the population. Also, with the rates of such diseases increasing, it is particularly important to research the reasons behind eating patterns in order to find ways to improve them. From 1994-2009 diabetes was in the top ten leading causes of mortality in the Philippines, with the rate increasing from 8.9 to 24.2 per 100,000 in this period (DoH, 2013). Researchers have found the prevalence of diabetes to range from between 5.8% to 6.1% of the total population in 2015 (including type 1 and 2) (IDF, 2015; WHO,

2016). Although the exact figure is debated, research from different sources predicts that the rate of diabetes in the population will continue to increase.

The figures indicate that diabetes will put increasing strain on the population and medical resources in the future. Diet is known to help prevent and control diabetes, therefore education on and compliance to eating well balanced diets are important. However, social settings, personal beliefs and practices may all impinge on trying to change food consumption. For men, their dietary decisions have been linked to masculinity (Courtenay, 2000). Although there are few studies on masculinity, diet and diabetes in the Western Pacific, some figures would suggest that this area suffers from similar trends to the rest of the world. Substantially more men than women died of the condition across the region which equated to 1,080,000 men, and 789,000 women in 2013 (IDF, 2013). This would suggest that different lifestyles between women and men impact mortality rates. It also emphasises the importance of studying men's diets.

### 2.5.3  Overview of nutrition

The Philippines has one of the highest indices on the global hunger scale in Asia (FAO, 2013). The causes of this include unemployment, price volatility of food, and poverty (FAO, 2013). This, plus poor nutrition and insufficient access to food has resulted in high rates of underweight, wasting and stunting among children. Although there has been a reduction in these two areas since 2000 little progress has been made to decrease the figure further (FAO, 2013; FANTA, 2014). It implies that children have inadequate access to the variety of foods which is needed to provide good nutrition. Undernourishment currently affects 13% of the total population, compared with 26.3% in 1990-1992 (FAO, 2015). Although this is a 48.8% decrease in the proportion of undernourished in the total population, the Philippines lags behind most other countries in Southeast Asia with regards to reducing this problem. For instance, Thailand reduced their proportion of undernourished people from 34.6% in 1990-1992 to a predicted 7.4% between 2014 and 2016 (FAO, 2015).

Babies and young children suffer from a high proportion being underweight. In 2013 (the most recent population data available) 19.9% of under-fives were underweight; this figure has been decreasing over time with it being at 20.7% in 2003 (FNRI-DOST, 2015). In contrast the obesity and overweight rates of children, below five years, has been increasing from 2.4% in 2003 to 5% in 2013. In the five to ten years age category the percentage of overweight children increases to 8.6%. This trend continues into adulthood figures. Over the past few decades there has been a continuing increase in the percentage of men and women (over the age of 20) who are overweight. This can be seen in figure 4. Currently 31.1% of the adult population have a BMI ≥25.



**Changes in percentage of adults (over 20) with a BMI ≥25 between 1993-2013**
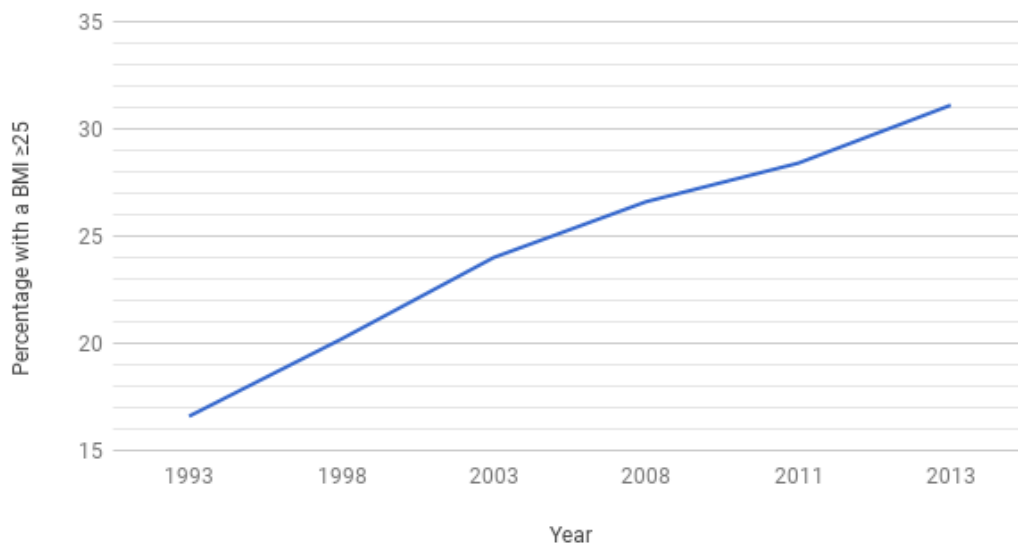
*Figure 4. Graph showing the increasing percentage of adults with a BMI ≥25 in the Philippines, figures from FNRI-DOST (2015)*

The Philippines suffers from a dual problem in relation to nutrition, currently struggling with increasing rates of individuals who are overweight concurrent with undernutrition and wasting in childhood. Obesity leads to increased risk of getting diseases of the heart and vascular system, which, as mentioned above, are already two major problems facing the Philippines. Therefore, these problems will be exacerbated if obesity continues to rise.

The Philippine government is committed to improving nutrition. They have set up initiatives such as 'The Philippine Plan of Action for Nutrition 2011-2016' which aims to reduce stunting to 20.9%, wasting to less than 5%, and low birth weight to 19.6%, plus they want to prevent increases in the number of obese adults and children (UNICEF, 2013). They aim to provide micronutrient supplementation and fortified foods, and address obesity through promoting healthy lifestyle. The latter, as set forward by the Nutritionist-Dietitians' Association of the Philippines, involves eating a variety of food, not smoking or drinking alcohol, and exercising (NDAP, 2015). The project so far has been unsuccessful at achieving these figures, however it does imply that the government has acknowledged that there is a problem.

### 2.5.4  The Filipino diet

Daily food consumption in the Philippines is mainly rice, fish and vegetables (FAO, 2001; WFP, 2012; FAO, 2013). The figures around the makeup of diets change depending on what region, income group, or background the people being studied are from, which explains variations amongst studies. However, the Food and Nutrition Research Institute has conducted national food surveys attempting to show the general food consumption patterns of the population. It shows that between 1993 and 2008 (the most recent data available) diets remained similar, with the diets consisting of cereals, fish and vegetables throughout this period (see figure 5). Fruit consumption decreased in this period, whereas meat consumption increased, all other food areas remained of similar percentages. These changes in figures may imply growing prosperity or changing diets due to the association of meat being for the more affluent.
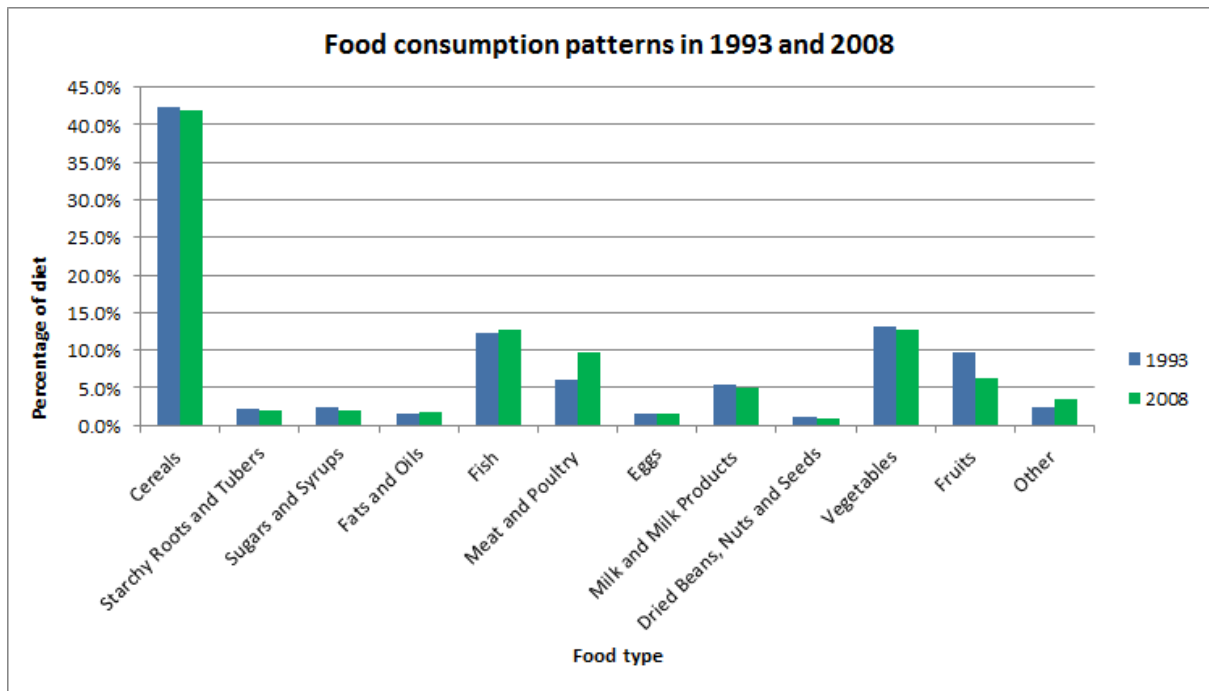
*Figure 5. Graph showing food consumption patterns, figures taken from FNRI, 2008, and from FNRI, 1993 cited in FAO, 2013*

Cereals are clearly an important part of Filipino diets, but it is rice which is the most substantial food in their daily consumption. Rice made up 35.1% in 1993 and 36.8% in 2008 of the average Filipino diet. It has a long history in Filipino diet and culture (Aguilar, 2005). Originally it was a prestige food given to chiefs and overlords. This changed over time with rice becoming cheaper and in increasing supply through the introduction of new farming techniques by the Spanish in colonial times, which made rice more accessible to the general population (Aguilar, 2005). However, increasing demand and shifts to cash crop agriculture has meant that since the 1870s the Philippines has been a net importer of rice, making them vulnerable to global rice market price volatility. Despite this, rice remains an essential food to Filipinos.

## 2.5.5  Summary

The overall current state of nutrition in the Philippines appears to be problematic, especially with the Filipinos suffering from both obesity and undernutrition in their population. The problems change as a person ages. Currently children are more likely to suffer from undernutrition, and adults from being overweight. Diet related illnesses are increasing in the adult population, as are deaths related to these. Yet, there is limited literature and understanding behind Filipino eating practices, especially those of men. This section not only provides a background understanding on the Filipino diet, but also indicates further the research gap of trying to explore why individuals' eat what they do and not just what they eat. In 2.5.4 the importance that certain foods have within a society was raised, in this case rice. The cultural significance and symbolism that people attach to different foods and how this impacts on their eating practices is also something of interest in this research.

## 2.6   Masculinity and nutrition

### 2.6.1   Introduction

In this section, I will discuss the link between masculinity and food practices. Studies have found a link between masculinities and femininities with regards to health practices, such as the food that people eat. First I look at the symbolism connected with food, followed by a discussion on food practices in different spaces.

### 2.6.2   Gender, food and symbolism

Gender is socially constructed, performed and produced through daily activities such as preparing meals (Connell, 1995; Lyons, 2009; Swenson, 2009; Mroz et al., 2010). Through studying this aspect of life scholars have concluded that food practices reflect and are embedded in wider constructions of masculinity and femininity (Roos et al., 2001; Ristovski-Slijepcevic et al., 2010; Yusof and Duasa, 2010; Parsons, 2015). Foodwork, anything related to the preparation of meals and snacks, has been traditionally associated with femininity in many cultures (Bove and Sobal, 2006). Other ideas around food and nutrition have also been gender coded, such as healthy eating (Parsons, 2015). Related to this is health promoting behaviour, especially in relation to diet, which has been coded as feminine throughout studies in this area (Courtenay, 2000; Lee and Owens, 2002; Sellaeg and Chapman, 2008; Mroz et al., 2010). This pattern in behaviour has been related to the enactment of masculinity, whereby men are distancing themselves from the feminised notion of healthy eating and hence eat unhealthier diets (Courtenay, 2000). However, these gendered patterns are neither homogenous nor static (Roos et al. 2001; Beagan et al., 2008; Sellaeg and Chapman, 2008; Oliffe et al., 2010). Studying gender in relation to food practices needs to be considered in a locally specific sense, without attempting to fit observations around notions of masculinity developed in other regions (Connell, 2005). It is also important to acknowledge the multiple masculinities that can exist at one time and how each of

these may impact on dietary decisions (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005; Gough and Conner, 2007).

Gender extends to the ascribed meanings and symbolic significance of different foods. Food can be culturally coded through various different mediums including the media, articles on dieting and advertising (Levi et al., 2006). Meat, especially red meat, has been coded as masculine because of its association with power and prestige (Roos et al., 2001; Stibbe, 2004; Ruby and Heine, 2011). Alternatively, vegetables, fruit and sweet foods have been coded as feminine due to the perception that they are lower status foods (Rothgerber, 2013). However, this coding of food is prone to change over time. Historically, when coffee was first introduced into England it was a masculine drink, only available for men in coffee houses. Over time the coding changed, with it being more freely available to everyone, coffee became more of a gender-neutral beverage (Reitz, 2007). Studies in the West have reported a move away from men assigning significance to meat; instead it is becoming more common for men to speak about consuming vegetables (Roos et al., 2001). This is not a homogenous change within all social groups. One study found that men with a higher education spoke about eating healthier foods compared to manual workers who spoke more of eating large quantities of meat (Roos et al., 2001). Again, this example highlights the importance of ensuring that studies are locally specific.

### 2.6.3   Private sphere and food practices

Research on masculinity has emphasised the importance of studying the context that men enact their masculinities in, especially in different spheres; the two most discussed are the public and private sphere. The latter revolves around the home and, in relation to diet, domestic foodwork. Private space foodwork in studies across the globe has been coded as feminine; research has found that women continue to do the majority of purchasing and preparing of food (Lu et al., 2000; Marshall and Anderson, 2000; Roos et al., 2001; Gough and Conner, 2006; Gough,

2007; Beagan et al., 2008; Sellaeg and Chapman, 2008; Cairns et al., 2010; Oliffe et al., 2010; Szabo, 2014b). This pattern in domestic work has been explained by power relations and working hours within the relationship. Typically, men work more hours outside of the home, implying that they are more likely to earn higher salaries (Lu et al., 2000; Beagan et al., 2008). In these scenarios, women have been found to take on the responsibility of preparing food since they are at home more. Studies have found that despite women becoming more visible in the labour market they still take charge of the private sphere (Selleag and Chapman, 2008). Following from this, it is argued that there are gender inequalities within domestic work causing conflict in the home due to the reinforcement of patriarchal hierarchies (Sellaeg and Chapman, 2008; Yusof and Duasa, 2010). The kitchen has also been explained as an area where social and gender inequalities are reproduced (Preston-Werner, 2008). These ideas follow common social assumptions, which are apparent in many studies globally, that the public sphere is masculine and the private sphere is feminine. However, these commonly held assumptions and media portrayal of gender roles are being questioned.

The binaries between gender roles are not so clearly defined (Douthitt, 1989) and ideas around these need to be questioned (Szabo, 2014a). Definitions over what is a feminine or masculine activity change through time, and domestic work, especially cooking, is beginning to be redefined. Studies have found that men are taking on more responsibility and increasing their roles in the private sphere (Douthitt, 1989; Bove and Sobal, 2006; Richter and Morrell, 2006; Preston-Werner, 2008; Mortimer, 2013). They are spending more hours looking after children, cooking and shopping for groceries. These studies have been, again, based in countries around the world such as Canada, Costa Rica, and South Africa. Despite this it is important not to draw major conclusions from the findings. The population being looked at is significant. For instance, more educated men in one study participated to a higher degree in domestic tasks than men who worked more manual jobs (Beagan et al., 2008). Therefore, although these studies have found changes within domestic patterns of labour, it is important to consider the

background of the men being studied, their education, class and relationship status as these may impact on the way that men enact their masculinity within the home.

## 2.6.4  Public sphere

Studies have found that men have different motivations behind food consumption and alternative dietary patterns in the public and private spheres. Men's food practices outside the home were found to be about convenience (Bock et al., 1998; Kroshus, 2008; Griffith et al., 2013). In these studies, men chose food that was quick and they enjoyed what was, in general, fastfood. At home their spouses had greater control over their diets and produced meals that were well balanced (Kroshus, 2008). The significance of eating in the home was about family, however outside the house it was about fuelling the body quickly and efficiently (Roos et al., 2001). Additionally, one study found that there was different emotional significance associated with each meal. It was found that men spoke more of their domestic meals, which the authors deduced was because men placed greater importance on this form of food consumption (Griffith et al., 2013). This demonstrates the significance of considering both sides of what constitutes a man's diet, since focusing on just one of the spheres would give an incomplete picture of men's eating habits.

Eating out or communal production of meals has been shown to be an important part of men's lives. Research has been conducted in a number of different sites and situations, including prison communal cooking areas (Earle and Phillips, 2012); firehouses (Deutsch, 2005); Boy Scout groups (Mechling, 2005) and in bars (Bird and Sokolofski, 2005).  In the first three studies listed above, men took on the 'traditionally' feminised role of preparing and cooking meals for the men around them. In each of these public spaces men renegotiated their masculinity to incorporate a feminised activity. Masculinity was enacted particularly in the prison communal kitchen, where space to cook was gained through showing authority (Earle and Phillips, 2012). This questions the often put forward idea of men cooking for themselves whilst women cook for others (Szabo, 2014a). Within these public

spaces men cooked for the group that they were with. Initially, this could have occurred because women were simply not there to take on this work. What is interesting, however, are the ways that they adapted the jobs to make them masculine. For instance, Deutsch (2005) found that firefighters used language to masculinise the job of cooking, by using profanities an increasing amount whilst in the kitchen compared with other areas of the firehouse. This section again shows the importance of considering the social groups men are in, where they are and what they are doing, when looking at eating practices. Also, the need to continually question assumptions put forward in literature of the static roles of men and women. Gender roles and the way that people enact them change within and between different sites. Therefore, it is important to study different sites to greater understand masculinities and eating practices.

## 2.6.5  Summary

I established in section 2.5 why researching what people eat is important in the Philippines, especially looking at men's food practices. This section has provided a background understanding of the link between gender and eating practices. The findings from the studies above show how it is important to look at the environment in which food work and consumption is happening. This means looking at the public and private space. It suggests that food can have a symbolic meaning, which impacts on food practices. However, in order to fully address and analyse masculinity and the impact this has on daily decision making, it is important to have a theoretical and conceptual framework on masculinity.

## 2.7 Theoretical framework: Sociological approaches to studying masculinity

### 2.7.1 Introduction

In this section I will discuss the idea of hegemonic masculinity, how it has been applied in different settings, and some critiques of the theory. To explore men's health, it is important to have an understanding of the theories surrounding masculinity. Hegemonic masculinity has been applied to a myriad of studies from healthcare, to sporting activities, to understanding the masculine body. It is argued that hegemonic masculinity helps to explain men's everyday lifestyle decisions and relationships.

### 2.7.2 The theory

The concept of hegemony originated from Gramsci's studies on class relations which "refers to the cultural dynamic by which a group claims and sustains a leading position in social life" (Connell, 1995: 77). Hegemonic masculinity is the idealised form of masculinity in a given era and place, which legitimises men's dominant position in society and their subordination of women (Connell, 1995; Courtenay, 2000; Fleming et al., 2014). Power and hierarchies are central to hegemonic masculinity theory. People experience hegemonic masculinity through marginalisation, subordination and cooperation. Marginalisation occurs when one form of masculinity is oppressed or empowered by another (Connell, 1995). Hegemonic masculinity often oppresses more subordinate men, but it can also elevate the traditionally less powerful into a hegemonic man through their adherence to the currently defined characteristics of what the ideal man is. Therefore, they will benefit from increased status in society. For instance, some African American men, a subordinated group in the USA, have become a symbol of hegemony through athletics. Subordination occurs against less powerful groups in society, often those men who do not fit the ideals surrounding the hegemonic man.

This can manifest through violence, limiting political or economic power and ostracizing them in society. It has been particularly equated to the subordination of homosexual men through time (Connell, 1995). However, it also applies to the subordination of women: to be the dominant gender masculinity needs to subordinate femininity (Connell, 1995; Demetriou, 2001); or as Nardi (1991: 353) explained: "For to be masculine is not to be feminine and not to be gay - nor, for that matter to be any other powerless ethnic or racial minority". Therefore, it is argued that by rejecting femininity and alternative forms of masculinity men can legitimate their dominance through displaying power over other groups. Men are thought, within this paradigm, to accommodate to the idea of hegemonic masculinity as many benefit from the ideology surrounding it which results in them wanting to sustain the concept, this is despite few actually meeting the definition (Donaldson, 1993; Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005).

In the West this idealised man in the contemporary era has been defined as heterosexual, with a female partner, but having had multiple sexual partners and performs risky behaviour (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). The most influential have been described as prominent figureheads in society, these include: activists, musicians, actors, politicians and sportsmen to name but a few (Donaldson, 1993). Their common trend is high visibility through multiple media such as television, newspapers and films. Central to hegemonic masculinity theory is this idea of multiple masculinities and the hierarchy that exists amongst them (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). Therefore, it is difficult to discern what the hegemonic man is, as there are contested meanings depending on the culture, class, and economic status of an individual. It is about gender practices which embody the current meaning of this glorified form of a man. These practices can change in different social settings, meaning that men may enact their masculinity in different ways depending on where they are. One study has found that in African American groups of men in the USA displays of violence and toughness bring with them power and status (Rich and Stone, 1996). Whereas working class boys in the USA may show their masculinity by driving through African American communities without a seatbelt on shouting epithets (Courtenay, 2000). Both groups of men are

trying to outwardly display characteristics which they believe constitute as being masculine.

### 2.7.3  Enacting gender

Portraying gender is about embodying and enacting certain characteristics which people may associate with a certain gender. Although this is achieved through gendered performances, the physical body of an individual cannot be ignored (Connell, 1995). It is the first visible sign that people use to determine an individual's gender, and can be an instrument for projecting the gender that someone wishes to show. Sporting activities are a prime example of men using their bodies to show their masculinity. Through sports men can show physical strength, skill, control, determination, and power, all of which are associated with the hegemonic ideas of the male body (Connell, 1995; Thomson, 2008). The sportsman is rewarded with approval from the crowds and a more dominant position in society (Goffman, 1977). Sports and the male body in this sense legitimise men's right to power. It is described as a performance where they can demonstrate their superiority over women and less powerful men.

The body is also a canvas which can be used to demonstrate masculinity. Scars can be worn as a badge of honour (Courtenay, 2000). They are a sign of endurance and an ability to survive dangerous encounters. There is a lot of symbolism associated with masculinities, which are different depending on the group of men being studied. Men may construct alternative forms of masculinity to compensate for their subordination (Courtney, 2000). Working class men have been found to use physical labour as a sign of masculinity, within this group in society performing this activity and being physically strong becomes the alternative to hegemonic form (Pyke, 1996). Homosexual men sometimes enact, what some have called, hypermasculinity which is a way of showing that they are a "real" man despite their sexual preferences (Courtenay, 2000). For instance, attending the gym regularly to have a muscular physique.

Every activity has the potential to be assessed as being either feminine or masculine. It is the combination of the activity and how the individual performs it which is important. This is informed by socially and culturally prescribed notions of what doing gender means (West and Zimmerman, 1987). To 'do gender' "means creating differences between girls and boys and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential, or biological" (West and Zimmerman, 1987: 137). There are physical, more obvious acts which help to distinguish people. Separating toilets into women's and men's is a cultural matter but helps to divide individuals into the two categories (Goffman, 1977). All of these acts and division of spaces are ways and create opportunities for individuals to demonstrate their gender.

### 2.7.4 Masculinities not masculinity

Masculinities can be enacted in numerous ways, and these change depending on people's class, race, sexual orientation, age, social setting, and culture. Therefore, it is important to consider the multiplicity of masculinity. It has been argued that men enact these multiple masculinities throughout their lives which are renegotiated depending on what space they are in (Courtenay, 2000; Hunter, 2007). For instance, they may be more willing to show emotional pain to their partners than to their friends. Therefore, scale is important to consider when studying masculinity. Micro level analysis would look at men's everyday lives, the different spaces they move between and social relationships which they have. This would highlight the influences of any direct encounters they have on a daily basis which would alter the enactment of masculinity. However, this needs to be placed in the wider political, economic and cultural surroundings in which they live. Not just between, but within countries, hegemonic masculinity changes depending on which area is being studied. For instance, there are differences in political beliefs in the North and South of the USA. Despite being the same country the South was found to have more restrictive beliefs about women in politics (Rice and Coates, 1995).

Masculinities are not static and have continually developed throughout history (Connell, 1995; Rice and Coates, 1995). Changes in the construction of what masculinity means are often more dramatic through the introduction of another culture. The majority of people across the globe have colonial, neocolonial or postcolonial histories. Colonisation altered societal gender structures within every society that it touched (Connell, 2014). The male coloniser immediately gave themselves superiority over the colonised (Segal, 2007); changing the masculine hierarchies in the country. The Philippines has a clear history of colonisation from various countries therefore social structures and gendered norms may have been influenced by their colonisers. Each of these could have influenced the development of gendered practices. It highlights the importance of appreciating the idea of cultures not being static and that they are continually influenced by outside forces.

## 2.7.5  Relationships between masculinities

Following from the concept of there being multiple masculinities, is idea that these different masculinities have certain dynamics between them.  Connell (1995) describes these relationships as being "relations of alliance, dominance and subordination. These relationships are constructed through practices that exclude and include, that intimidate, exploit, and so on'' (page 37). Hence, masculinities are constructed in relation to each other, not just as opposed to femininity. These masculinities do not all carry the same prestige and power. Yet there is no one clear hierarchy, since depending on the background of the group being studied there will be different ideas of what the hegemonic man is. The heterogeneity of masculinities makes it difficult to fully map out hierarchies; however there are some visible signs which indicate which groups of men in society are subordinated. Men with poorer health tend to come from marginalised backgrounds, as demonstrated by African American men having a shorter life expectancy than European American men (Laveist, 1993; Courtenay and Keeling, 2000; Creighton and Oliffe, 2010). African Americans in the USA are more likely to live in more

deprived regions, have lower economic status and fewer healthcare facilities available to them. This results in poor health and indicates that being a man from a European American background gives the potential for a healthier life. However, even increasing the health resources available in more deprived regions may not increase the overall wellbeing of the area.

The desire to enact masculinity can lead to unhealthy behaviour. In order to compensate for having less overall power in wider economic and political aspects of their lives, men find other ways to portray power. For people from a lower socioeconomic status this may lead to performances related to hypermasculinity, which has been found to cause violence and crime, and subsequently higher chances of early mortality (Pyke, 1996). Feelings of emancipation from outside masculinities can therefore lead men to partake in risky behaviour.

## 2.7.6 Relationships between masculinities and femininities

Masculinity is a relational concept which only exists as opposed to femininity (Kimmel, 1986; Connell, 1995). This means that one should not be researched without consideration of the other when looking at gender (Annandale and Clark, 1996). Masculinity is associated with the rejection of femininity. Consequently, this would imply that men try to avoid any activities which are thought of as 'girly', such as sewing or baking (Courtney, 2000). Therefore there are gendered divisions of spaces where such activities occur. Traditionally, the private space where child raising and domestic work has been feminised (Lee and Owens, 2002), whereas the public space where people go to work is masculine. Societies construct and continually reinforce the gendered division of daily occurrences.

However, it is not just the difference between the genders that need to be explored but also the relationship between them. Gerson and Peiss (1985: 327) explained this by writing that: "Male behavior and consciousness emerge from a complex interaction with women as they at times initiate and control, while at

other times, cooperate or resist the action of women". In any relationship between a man and a woman they both influence the other's behaviour (Lee and Owens, 2002). In some cultures women have been found to take over control of men's health, whether it is their son, partner or male friend (Courtenay and Keeling, 2000). This led to the finding that marriage was better for men's health than women, as women took on the responsibility of themselves and their partner's health (Oakley, 1994). This raises an important part of gender studies which is contextualisation, attempting to create a comprehensive picture of the lives of people in the studied area. The impact of this on my research was that I looked at men's relationships with women throughout the ethnography.

### 2.7.7  Gender and health

Health and healthcare practices are innately gendered, as "the doing of health is a form of doing gender" (Saltonstall, 1993: 12). Individuals can demonstrate femininities and masculinities through their daily healthcare decisions (Courtenay, 2000). Scholars have observed a number of gendered patterns relating to health, such as men make fewer healthcare visits than women (Verbrugge, 1985; Kandrack et al., 1991; Courtenay, 2000). Women have been found to have healthier lifestyles than men as they engage in more health seeking behaviour and take preventative measures (Nathanson, 1977; Kandrack et al., 1991; Courtenay, 2000). Health is a complicated interaction between biology, social experiences and the way that people enact their gender (Bird and Rieker, 1999). In this research I studied health from a sociological perspective, looking at the relationship between gender and eating practices. It has been argued that for men health risks differ depending on what form of masculinity they are enacting, whether this is marginalised, hegemonic or subordinated (Courtenay, 2000). Health related beliefs and practices can be used to demonstrate power, control, and toughness. All the qualities associated with hegemonic masculinity (Courtenay, 2000; Davies et al., 2000). Men have been found to enact this through their reluctance to utilise medical facilities or admit to any ailment. This is a rejection of the feminised act of taking care of

health. By opposing this men are reinforcing the superiority of the male body as being naturally stronger and healthier (Courtenay, 2000). The masculinities that people enact with regards to their health again need to be fitted within the wider context of how people define what being a man means (Courtenay, 2000). These constructions are related to a man's ethnicity, social class, sexuality and community. Men are thought to use different medical treatments depending on socially accepted gendered behaviours developed in their communities. The risk taking behaviour associated with disregarding medical problems, as with all ways of enacting masculinity, is done because of expected social, economic or political returns (Courtenay, 2000).

There has been increasing public attention being paid to men's poorer health status, mainly in relation to men's lower life expectancy (Annandale and Clark, 1996; Segal, 2007). Ill health is not a homogenous phenomenon which affects all men in the same way. Men who are unemployed, unmarried and hold less power within their communities are at higher risk of having poor health and early mortality (Segal, 2007). Poverty is high in the Philippines, however the relationship between masculinities in relation to socioeconomic status is yet to be researched. Ill health has also been related to the consequences of enacting hegemonic masculinity. It is a theoretical concept which does not reflect the true nature of men, and this makes it restrictive (Carrigan et al., 2002). Men strive to achieve this unachievable portrayal of masculinity which is thought to impact on their mental health, as does their sense of self-worth, insecurity over their position in society and anxiety of fitting this role. The pursuit can lead to risky behaviour, as demonstrated in studies on crime (Messerschmidt, 1997). Here men partake in criminal activities as an outward display of their ability to ignore pain, fight others, and show disregard for authority (Courtenay, 2000).

### 2.7.8 Critiques of hegemonic masculinity

Connell, through the theory of hegemonic masculinity, created a way of looking at masculinities and gender theory. It has provided a strong critique to sex role theory, by introducing the idea of power relations between and within genders, with particular focus on masculinity. However, it has not been without criticism. The first is that hegemony implies a singular form of masculinity (Demetriou, 2001; Osella and Osella, 2006; Moller, 2007; Beasley, 2008). This has led critics to argue that the theory loses the nuances in masculinity, especially when looking at the topic from a psychological perspective (Wetherell and Edley 1999). Instead men and their characteristics are placed in the categories of representing hegemonic masculinity or non-hegemonic masculinities (Demetriou, 2001); with the former being more dominant than the latter. This links with the second critique, the lack of definition over what hegemonic masculinity means, which is why it can be a complex idea to research. It has been interpreted as a political tool, a set of characteristics which embody masculinity or a specific group of men (Ford and Lyons, 2012). Wetherell and Edley (1999) described this idea in the following way: "Men might 'conform' to hegemonic masculinity, but we are left to wonder what this conformity might look like in practice" (page 336). This idea is furthered in some studies whereby people have found two or more conflicting masculinities which could be defined as hegemonic (Osella and Osella, 2006; Ford and Lyons, 2012). This was because both showed traits of dominance in their group but showed it in different ways.

The third critique follows on from this, in that it is often assumed that the hegemonic masculinity in the globalized world is linked with economic success (Beasley, 2008). Beasley argues that: "The concept is currently used to stand in for a singular monolithic masculinity, a global hegemonic form on a world scale and is understood to refer to transnational business masculinity to an elite group of socially dominant men" (page 86). The idea of singularity is further questioned when studying men who have significant social power. Examples usually include country's political leaders who may not embody hegemonic masculinity, but have

power in society. Hegemonic masculinity appears to apply to just one group of men in society, those in an elite class where there may be homogenous values (Beasley, 2008). This is a macro understanding of gender. The theory lacks the idea of researching masculinity in a locally specific sense, where the nuances of gender enactment and interaction can be studied. Therefore, it is important to research masculinity in different countries and societies, to assess the applicability of hegemonic masculinity in alternative settings.

### 2.7.9   Summary of theory

It is clear that there is a gap within current literature on masculinity to develop theories and understanding of men in the Philippines. This section has explored the current major sociological theory of hegemonic masculinity. In this study it provided considerations on: the importance of looking at relationships between men and between genders; power relations should be considered; masculinity (in our Western understanding) is enacted through daily activities which should be assessed; and when studying men consideration should be paid to the multiple ways in which men show their masculinity. The theory of hegemonic masculinity was used throughout the research through considering the core ideas, reflecting on their applicability to my participants, and framing my findings into wider understanding of gender in other countries.

## 2.8 Aims and objectives

The literature review in section 2.2 showed that there is still a lack of research on masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines. From a gender and health perspective, it was indicated in the literature that there could be a relationship between gender and eating practices. Additionally, it is important to research this area of men's health because of the growing levels of diet related illnesses in the Philippines. From the literature discussed above, and to address the gap in current studies I developed the following aims and objectives.

### 2.8.1 Aim

The aim of this research is to explore the relationship between masculinities and the accounts of eating practices in the Philippines, amongst a lower-middle socioeconomic community

### 2.8.2 Research questions

1. What is the relationship between masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines?
2. How are masculinities practiced in a lower-middle socioeconomic community in the Philippines?
   a. How applicable are theories on masculinity, which have been developed in the West, in a different setting?

### 2.8.3 Research objectives

1. To explore and question the connection between masculinities and whether these impact on eating practices in the Philippines
2. Use in-depth qualitative methods to gain understanding of the eating practices of Filipino men
3. Explore the concept of 'masculinity' in the context of a low-middle income community of men in the Philippines

Theoretically, in this project I will question the applicability of theories of masculinity, especially hegemonic masculinity, in a Filipino context. Pragmatically, I will explore the context in which men eat and what appears to shape their eating practices. Methodologically, I will contribute qualitative research on the Philippines, both ethnography and autophotography, which is currently lacking. In the following section I will describe the methods that were used to address the aim, research questions and objectives.

# Chapter 3 Methodology

## 3.1  Introduction

This is followed by a detailed account of the methods that I used to research the proposed area. I will examine the use of interpretivism as a research paradigm. This leads to an assessment of ethnography and autophotography, and what was involved in the utilisation of these methods. I go onto discuss thematic analysis and how this was used for the interview, field notes and photographs. I finish the chapter with a reflective piece on being a participant-as-observer in the ethnography.

### 3.1.1  Introduction to data collection

The data collected were through ethnography, interviews (both in-situ and organised) and autophotography between 16th February to 15th May 2016 in the Philippines, primarily in Makati, Manila. I kept ethnographic notes every day and I wrote these up during any relevant events or in the evening. These were mainly about meal times and observing the interactions that men and women had with food particularly during communal eating. They also included observations outside of the home, such as purchasing food, street food vendors, and eating in canteens or restaurants. I noted down quotes during conversations with men and women in different settings when it was not possible to record the interaction, such as church services, over meals, and whilst walking to a market.

Interviews were of varying lengths from 8 minutes to 95 minutes depending on whether they were recorded conversations or prearranged (for details about the participants, see table 6 in section 3.5.6). In total there were 38-recorded interviews. However, there were relevant conversations which were not recorded and instead written down in note form. Unstructured interviews were used for the autophotography which involved discussing the photos that participants had taken

and/or having in-depth discussions about their eating practices. The way in which people were interviewed depended on what they felt most comfortable with: for instance, if they wanted someone else there, and the location of the interview either being public or private. The more conversational interviews occurred in places of work where participants had invited me along to so that I could appreciate as many aspects of their lives as possible. Ages of the participants interviewed ranged from 19 to 70 years old.

There were ten participants in the autophotography, who took from 4 to 83 photographs (further details on participant recruitment can be found in 3.5.1). The range depended on if they had self-edited the photographs and chosen ones which they thought represented their meal times most appropriately. I did not specify how many photographs should be taken, just to do it over a minimum of four days. The interviews with participants who had taken fewer photographs tended to be longer so that we could explore their eating practices more in-depth and fill in any meals which they had decided not to record. The following sections explore the methods used to collect data in more depth, including discussion on the research paradigm used.

### 3.1.2  Research paradigm

Adopting a research paradigm is crucial in research as it informs each stage of the study from the design, to the data collection, analysis and write up (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010). In its simplest form a research paradigm is a "basic set of beliefs that guides action" (Guba, 1990: 17). It guides how the research method is implemented, for instance is data collected to test a hypothesis or generate understandings of people's experiences? (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). For this reason it is important to choose a research paradigm for the objectives of the research. I approached this research from a sociological perspective, in order to research the relationship between masculinity and eating practices. In the subsequent section I

will indicate why this was an appropriate paradigm to follow, considering the aim of the research.

Interpretivism developed as an opposition to positivism. Positivists understand and research the social world in a more scientific manner, with the perspective that there is one reality which can be objectively studied and findings can be replicated by other researchers (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010; Rubin and Rubin, 2012). Data collection, therefore, is about collecting value free facts that fit within a set of generalisable laws about the social and natural world (Gray, 2004; Chilisa and Kawulich, 2012). It is about testing a hypothesis and using deductive reasoning. Positivism has been critiqued as being an unrealistic opinion on the subjectivity of a researcher, or as Crotty (1998) stated "research outcomes are neither totally objective, nor unquestionably certain" (page 40). This philosophical view is not appropriate for the research that I designed, as I wanted to study the experiences of the participants, and explore the potential relationship between masculinity and eating practices. I also strongly understood the need to reflect on the role that a researcher has on the data collected. Thus it is opposed to positivistic study design where they are testing a theory rather than developing ideas from the data itself. Therefore, it is more appropriate to follow philosophical views from interpretivism.

Interpretivists are concerned with the context within which people construct their reality (Holstein and Gubrium, 2011). In other words: "Interpretive inquirers attempt to discover and understand how people feel, perceive and experience the social world, aiming to gain in-depth meanings and particular motivation for their behaviors." (Chen et al., 2011: 129). Chen's definition of interpretivism fitted with the aim developed for this research. In that, I wanted to research eating practices, which involved collecting data on people's feelings, perspectives of food, and experiences of eating. The methods chosen were ones which meant I could gain in-depth understanding of the participants' eating practices. For this reason too, interpretivism was an appropriate paradigm.

The ontological perspective, or what constitutes reality, of this paradigm is that there are multiple realities that are socially and individually constructed (Creswell, 2007; Chilisa and Kawulich, 2012). This means that the same event can be interpreted in multiple ways by different people from their own perspective, and each of these interpretations hold equal truth (Mack, 2010). This is opposed to the positivistic ontology which is that there is one objective and tangible reality. The epistemological assumptions, or nature of knowledge, associated with interpretivism are that knowledge is subjective, gained inductively and through personal experience (Mack, 2010; Chilisa and Kawulich, 2012).

Although interpretivism fits the aims and methods of this research project and there are numerous advantages to following such a philosophy, the limitations of it should be considered. The main critique of interpretivism is that it can be viewed as being highly subjective, and so creates data which cannot be fully replicated (Mack, 2010). With ethnography in particular, this is because the data collected can be about the researcher's interactions with participants. Every researcher would have different encounters with the community being studied. This critique leads to the need for the researcher to reflect throughout the research process in order to understand their own subjectivity (Seale et al., 2004; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Scott Jones and Watt, 2010). Other procedures, such as member checking, triangulation and peer debriefing are used in qualitative research to increase the credibility of the studies (further discussion of this can be found in section 3.5.8).

## 3.2  Ethnography

### 3.2.1  Ethnography and interpretivism

Interpretivism guides an ethnographer to gather information on the daily activities and interactions between people through which individuals construct and understand their world (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008; LeCompte and Schensul,

2010). In order to accomplish this, interpretivists place emphasis on the importance of not just observing but also listening to what is happening around them, as language is thought to be particularly important in the construction of realities (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008). This shows the importance of having a multiple method approach when doing ethnography, which includes listening and asking questions to people in a conversational setting. One of the issues with doing cross-cultural research where I did not speak the language meant that sometimes conversations were difficult to follow; there were some interactions which I missed. However, people were mostly accommodating with trying to speak English in front of me and my interpreter would try to translate Tagalog as much as possible if the participant did not know the English equivalent. This meant that although I could not always pick up every word that people said, I could usually follow the main themes that they were speaking about. In the centre of interpretivist thinking is an interest in the everyday decisions that individuals make (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008); this idea is also at the heart of ethnography, which aims to study the everyday experiences of participants. Ethnographers apply interpretivist thought to research aimed at understanding human behaviour and social reality in their natural setting, whilst constantly appreciating how variable and locally specific studies usually are (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008; LeCompte and Schensul, 2010). Therefore, the theory and the methodology complement each other well.

### 3.2.2 Defining ethnography

There is no one definition of what ethnography means, as it has been defined as both a theory (Nader, 2011) and a research method (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In this research I interpreted ethnography as a set of methods with the aim to collect and collaborate data to produce the most complete and accurate picture of the area of life being studied and the participants involved, which is always situated within the society of interest. Ethnography is sometimes misconstrued as just being about participant observation. Although the core element of ethnography is studying people and their cultures, it is argued that this cannot be

solely conducted through participant observation (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010). For this reason, I drew on a number of research methods in order to produce research with as much contextualisation as possible; as it is believed by other ethnographers that people's behaviour can only be understood in context (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

I participated overtly in participants' lives; observed what happened; listened to conversations; asked questions about what I saw or heard; took pictures; I collected any and all data available. These followed the practices suggest by Hammersley and Atkinson (2007). Ethnography is about learning what people do; the meanings they attribute to artefacts; and observing their everyday behaviour, rituals and routines (LeCompte and Schensul, 2010; Watt and Scott Jones, 2010). It is about uncovering the emotions of participants within daily life too, "what makes them laugh, cry and rage; who they love, hate and fear" (Delamont, 2004: 206). The overarching aim is to understand a different way of life from the participant's point of view (Spradley, 1980). In order to do this an ethnographer takes the stance that they are a student in the field and those whom they interact with are the teachers (Spradley, 1980). It is all about learning from people about their lives. I chose to use ethnography as it provided an effective and adaptable way to research men's eating habits.

### 3.2.3 Participant-as-observer

In a classic paper, Gold (1958) discussed four different roles which a researcher using field observation may adopt: these are *complete participation* where the researcher does not disclose their purpose to those who they are observing and fully immerses themselves in the environment that they are studying; *participant-as-observer* where the researcher tells participants they are part of the research but still tries to participate in daily lives; *observer-as-participant* which is where the ethnographer has less frequent visits with the observed rather than prolonged periods in the field; and *complete observer* where participants do not know that

they are being observed and the researcher does not interact with people being studied. I chose participant-as-observer as it seemed the most appropriate for the ethnographic research that was designed. I was there for a prolonged period of time, interacting with participants on a daily basis and participating in everyday activities. The implications of this are written in the reflective section later on in section 3.7.

## 3.3   Data collection methods in ethnography

### 3.3.1   Participant observation

Participant observation forms the basis of many ethnographic studies (Atkinson et al., 2001; Watt and Scott Jones, 2010). This is about exploring a particular cultural or social setting and taking field notes, which are written up during or as soon after the event as possible (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In my research the notes were more than just observations about the participants and what was happening, but also personal accounts of the experiences that I had with participants. Taking a participant-as-observer role meant that I included these interactions as data too. Therefore, although it is often called 'participant observation', I also include personal interactions. For instance, when I was walking down a street and someone invited me to eat with them, this is more than just participant observation. It was also observations about myself, and how people reacted to my presence. The notes taken, no matter what form of observation is was, needed to be of thick description with as much contextualisation as possible, not simply a description of what happened (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010; Light, 2010). Therefore, the meaning behind what has been observed and said should be included whilst ensuring that the reader gets an in-depth understanding of the research (Light, 2010). Spradley (1980: 78) created a list of nine factors in which I included in my ethnographic field notes: space (where it happened); actor (who was involved); activity (actions and behaviours of the people present); object (items present in the setting); act (single action people did); event (what is happening); time (sequencing

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and time frame); goal (what are people trying to accomplish); and feeling (the emotions felt and expressed).

I used these points throughout my writing up of the daily events. They provided structure to the notes in my research diary. I would write my observations as soon as possible after an event, sometimes during the occurrence I would write down some description which could then be elaborated on when back in my condominium. I believe that this meant I could participate in a more immersive way. Also, I found that writing notes in front of participants made them feel uncomfortable, as if they were being examined. A more effective and less invasive way to document what was happening was to take photographs. I always had a camera or phone camera with me in order to record the setting in which notes were taken, if it was safe to do so. People felt more comfortable with photographs rather than writing notes.

In order to do participant observation, the researcher must be accepted into the community (Watt and Scott Jones, 2010). This is why I spent time getting to know people in the community before I started to recruit participants. I felt I needed to be known and, as much as possible, trusted by individuals before I could start more intimate data collection, such as in their homes. Although I had previous contact with my gatekeeper, a well-respected community leader, I was aware that I would still be an outsider. I was living in an area where there were few foreigners and so was immediately visible as an outsider. In order to gather in-depth ethnographic notes on people's lives I needed to be accepted, but not 'go native'. There is always a difficult balance between being accepted but not 'going native'. I took an overt, participatory stance during the research which meant that I had to negotiate around being both an active participant and a researcher (Watt and Scott Jones, 2010).

Finding the right balance between these two could be difficult, which is why I constantly reflected on the impact that I had on the activities I attended and the impact that they had on me. For instance, I was invited to attend a group meal, on

one of my visits to a province. It was one of the first times I had eaten with them. I sat at one end of the table, as people arrived at the meal they sat at the other end from me. Rather than sit in the chair next to me, they sat on another table. I asked my translator if I had upset anyone. They explained that it was because they were too shy to speak to me, or found my accent difficult so would rather avoid sitting nearby. It was obvious that my presence impacted on how comfortable people felt in that environment, also where they sat. As we ate our meal, I was closely watched, and was not quite sure how I should be acting in this situation. Personally, this was difficult as it added to the feeling of isolation, which is commonly experienced by researchers conducting such data collection. My presence at the meal was clearly changing the way that people were acting, and I knew it was only once people got used to me being there that these interactions may change. Further reflections on the data collection and some of the difficult situations that I encountered can be found in section 3.7.

### 3.3.2   Ethnographic in situ interviews

Interviews are used, especially by an interpretivist ethnographer, in order to collect discursive data which can aid understanding into how people describe and construct their understanding of reality through the words used and the way that they represent themselves through conversation (Holstein and Gubrium, 2008; Smith and Bekerman, 2011). It also allows them to describe the reasons behind their decisions rather than the researcher presuming to know the correct interpretation (Delamont, 2004; Light, 2010). Although the term interview is used it is not usually of a formal and structured nature (Atkinson et al., 2001). The interviews I conducted were conversational, flexible and open ended, and occurred during any interactions I had with participants rather than being a separate event.

This form of ethnography was interactive, and I constantly tried to ensure that the participant's voice and understandings of the world were heard. I would seek clarification or explanation whenever possible. If I heard something or saw

something that I did not understand I would try to bring it up in conversation at a suitable point. For instance, once I had observed the frequency that people ate rice, I started to ask them to explain the reasons behind rice being a prominent part of their diets. I asked questions, for example, when I was eating at a restaurant where there was all you can eat rice. A waiter with a bucket of rice would come around when someone raised their hand, and gave them an additional cup of rice. In this instance I asked if this was common in many restaurants and asked why it was a popular place to eat. This opened up the conversation for them to explain the enjoyment of rice in the Philippines. Another such occurrence happened when I had arranged with my translator and their family to go out for dinner together. Since they had been so curious about my diet in the UK, I took them out for pizza. However, half way through the meal I noticed that they had not eaten much, perhaps one or two slices each. I asked if I had ordered something wrong or that they could not eat. To which they explained that pizza and bread did not fill them up and neither were they particularly keen, but did not want to upset me. They said that they would rather go and buy some rice dishes. This conversation highlights how important these moments were, in this instance that the people who I was eating with linked rice with feeling full. This was an important idea which is elaborated on in the results and discussion sections. In these instances, observation was followed by seeking explanation.

If it was possible I would record the conversations. Yet, this could be difficult for impromptu conversations, such as those which happened during meals or in passing on the street. I always carried a recording device with me, in case there were opportunities to record an interview. I would also ensure I got informed consent for these interviews. If I could not use the recorder, then I would write down notes either during or immediately after the interaction. I would particularly try to write down key phrases that were said, with as precise wording as possible since this would be important in the final analysis. I do not speak Tagalog fluently, and although I picked up important phrases and particular words which were commonly used during my interviews I needed a translator. The majority of participants spoke English to differing degrees. In fact, it was not the English that

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was as much of a barrier as my accent, since they were more accustomed to the American way of speaking. Therefore, my translator would have to translate my English into more understandable English to the participants. For instance, I would ask "Is there a difference between what women and men eat?". The "men eat" sounded too much like "many", therefore my translator would change it to: "What man eat and what woman eat, is there a difference?". These questions would be asked in the context of the conversation being held between the participant and myself. It would be asked if they brought up the idea of men and women, and any indication of there being differences in their eating practices. I always had someone with me who spoke both English and Tagalog to help clarify points of confusion throughout conversations with participants. Using both observations and interviews meant that I could constantly compare and contrast what I saw from my perspective and the participants' understandings of events. This relates back to interpretivism and the importance of acknowledging that everyone constructs phenomenon differently, therefore it is important to not assume that my own observations reflected the same constructions of the event as my participants.

### 3.3.3  Ethnography structure

There is no set way of conducting ethnography (Williamson, 2006), it is a highly flexible methodology which is always interpreted and used differently depending on the researcher. However, there are a number of steps which other ethnographers have described which helped to guide the data collection.

The initial step was to create broad research themes and aims, which I then narrowed down in the field (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Using ethnography is highly inductive, meaning that ideas are developed from the data, rather than testing a theory or concept. Therefore, I chose one area of participants' lives which was their eating. Choosing a community in the Philippines followed other ethnographers' advice of selecting a small scale study population in order to get very in-depth and detailed research, whilst not claiming that findings will be

representative of a wider population (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Next I chose a research setting, to narrow down the areas where the ethnography would be conducted. This helped with one of the main problems of ethnography, which is knowing where the boundaries of the investigation are. At the same time, the settings and boundaries were flexible to ensure I could collect data in any relevant locations to the participants. The majority of the research focused on men who lived in Manila, in particular Makati. This is an interesting area where wealth and poverty reside side-by-side. There are large malls full of international, relatively expensive chains surrounded by markets where the urban poor shop. It was in this setting that I lived in for three months and recruited many of the participants from.

As an ethnographer it is important understand the social world and context that participants live in, and one of the best ways to research this is to live there (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010). Indeed, I could look out of my window onto the busy street below and watch people sitting outside the small cafe opposite my building, food carts being pushed along, and hear the calls of vendors. It was too unsafe for me to leave my room without company; therefore this was the closest I could get when I was alone to observing the daily lives of people living in this part of the city. My main companion was my translator, a well-known and respected woman in the area, with a degree in dentistry and a high level of spoken English. Her connections in the community also helped with recruiting participants and becoming acquainted with people living in the area around me. The initial stage of the ethnography was getting to know people, building relationships and telling people about my research. To become acquainted with local residents I ate in food stores run by families in the community and bought snacks from street food vendors. It was a good way to not only collect data on men's diets but also gain knowledge of the local area and people who lived there. For instance, I found out about family structures, businesses, their working hours, and relationships. It was a sociable environment to be in; people would come and join our meals, pulling up a chair or extra table so that we could converse. All of these interactions were valuable to understand the context in which people lived.

The second stage was to recruit specific men to spend time with and understand their everyday lives. I quickly realised the importance of communal eating and families on explaining men's eating habits. Therefore, I adapted my research to study men in communal settings, such as with their families. Finding participants for this was aided again by my translator, who could advise about the houses and families that would be safe to spend time with. She also stayed with me whenever I was in these settings. Word spread about the research, as did my familiarity with people in the local area. This meant that I started to be invited to meals with families, friends, people's places of work, their homes, their restaurants, and to visit their relatives out of town. I wrote notes about snacks; everyday 'normal' communal meals; buying food in markets, from street food vendors and supermarkets; and at special events. Having such a variety of places to observe meant that I could collect in-depth data about a participant's everyday life, and wider information to provide the context needed to situate their experiences.

The study would be explained to men, anyone else who was present and anyone who could be written into the ethnographic notes that were taken. I would explain the aims, what I was studying and how the information would be used. This would usually be followed by my translator further explaining the project. Notes were anonymised to ensure privacy of information. I had no objections from people throughout the process, indeed people were willing to participate because they wanted their lives to be known about. I believe this reflects the 'proud to be Filipino' feelings that people voiced. It was more difficult to recruit people for the autophotography, which will be discussed below. However, people were willing to be interviewed, speak about their lives and allow me to join their everyday activities.

One of the main traits that an ethnographer needs to show is "willingness to participate in the social worlds of their research subjects on different levels: physical, social, mental and emotional. This commitment means that ethnography is highly subjective and physically and emotionally draining" (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010: 7). For this reason, I attempted to participate in as many activities as possible

in order to build relationships with participants and the community. This included attending women's craft circles, helping to teach English, joining in birthdays and celebrations. This was participating on a social level. The mental and emotional aspects of building connections were more difficult, especially when balancing being a participant and a researcher. I was aware throughout the process how important it was to have good relationships with people; therefore I was conscious to not offend anyone. This meant that I would try to avoid answering any questions on controversial topics. One topic that I was frequently asked my opinion on was same sex marriage. People had heard on the news how it was now legal in the UK, and so asked me what I thought. I knew from previous encounters with individuals and the general feelings amongst the community members that I spent time with was that they were against homosexuality. I heard several times stories of men who had contracted HIV and the beliefs that people had around this. In their mind the man had it as "a punishment from God because they were going against God's will". This opinion was completely different to the one I held on the matter.

However, when they asked: "What do you think?" I would reply with "It's a different culture in the UK and people believe different things depending on where they are from". This was such a strongly held belief by many of the people who I encountered that I felt it would definitely cause some hostility towards me should I share alternative thoughts on this. In general, my attempts to avoid answering these questions were accepted. When people would question me further I would not divulge my own opinion and instead tell them about the opinions of others in the UK. This gave an acceptably detailed answer as well as not explicitly giving my own opinion. It also meant that I did not offend or cause any arguments with participants. Without building connections with the people around me I would argue that the research would be lacking an honesty which was given thanks to the trust built between the participants and myself. Participating in everyday life and being part of people's lives during the research period meant that I gained an in-depth insight into the daily eating habits of men in this community, as well as wider understandings of social context in which events were occurring.

## 3.4  Autophotography

Ethnography relies on the researcher being present at events to observe and write a detailed description of what happened. Yet, I also wanted to collect data in moments when I was not there, and gather information about men's eating habits from morning until night, something which I could not realistically do in person. Therefore, I used autophotography.

Autophotography has been used to explore a variety of subjects, such as homelessness (Wang et al., 2000), occupations (Harper, 1986), school life (Marquez-Zenkov and Harmon, 2007), bodybuilders (Phoenix, 2010b), chemotherapy (Frith and Harcourt, 2007), adolescent masculinity (Blackbeard and Lindegger, 2007), and self-esteem (Noland, 2006). It involved me giving participants a camera and asking them to take photographs of what they believe best represents them, their beliefs, opinions and character on a given subject (Noland, 2006). I brought cameras with me to give to the participants, thinking that this would also act as a thank you gift for their participation. However, half of them chose to use their own phones or cameras using a memory card provided by me. I asked them to take a photograph every time they ate for four days.

Autophotography has been described as the closest way to see what participants see (Noland, 2006; Phoenix, 2010a), and enables the research to closely represent the participant's experiences. This is opposed to visual methods in qualitative research whereby the researcher photographs what they think is significant to the participants. This reduces cultural and researcher bias as they have limited input into the pictures being taken (Noland, 2006). It also reflects the principles of interpretivism, in that it provides a way to look at a situation from someone else's perspective. People chose to photograph a meal in different ways, and focus on the parts that they found important. Auto-photography also addresses the power imbalances which often occur within research, as the participant has more control over the data collected (Frith and Harcourt, 2007; Phoenix, 2010b). In particular,

with marginalised groups the photographs allow their voices to be heard and for them to represent themselves how they want to be represented (Noland, 2006; D'Alonzo and Sharma, 2010; Phoenix, 2010b). In my study, it meant that men had the freedom to epitomise their mealtimes how they wanted to show them. Although they were not a particularly marginalised group, they were one whose voices were not often heard. This was something which they voiced to me, saying that they were glad to participate in order for their stories to be heard.

The aim of the study was discussed with potential participants and what being involved in the study would mean. I also explained how the photographs would be used. If they agreed to participate then I would give them the cameras or memory cards. A number of men did not wish to be a participant, because they did not eat with their family very often and this was a source of embarrassment. This feeling is further explained in the findings section (4.6.4) and why this caused them to not wish to participate. In autophotography participants are given themes and asked to photograph anything related to this. In my study, I asked men to take pictures on anything to do with their meals. I tried to keep it as vague as possible so that I did not lead them to, for instance, only photograph their food. Photo-elicitation was then used to discuss the photos with the individual participants (Blackbeard and Lindegger, 2007; Frith and Harcourt, 2007). The photograph is the focus of the interview (Harper, 1986). In the ideal scenario I would ask for the photographs back first and arrange a date for the interview at a later time so that I could look through them beforehand. However, I needed some degree of flexibility with this, in that some participants gave me the pictures and wanted to be interviewed straight away. In these situations, I would look through them with the participants to discuss what they had focused on, and for them to describe who were in the pictures. These interviews were recorded, and I kept notes so that I could connect the photographs that they were speaking about with what they were saying. Autophotography provided a way to collect data on the subjective experiences of participants. The photographs were meant to be a way for the participants to represent their food intake in whatever way they thought appropriate. As seen in

the results section, the focus of the photographs gave an interesting insight on where participants' values lie with regards to food.

## 3.5    Participants

### *3.5.1  Recruitment*

Recruitment for participants was through my gatekeeper and translator. My initial recruitment plan was to attend a local community hall, which doubled as a church on a Sunday. However, an internal conflict over the leadership of the church meant that tensions existed within that community. This meant that it was no long viable to use it as a base, as I did not wish to create any hostilities between people in the local area. Therefore, I changed my recruitment to be through the gatekeeper and translator. They were both well respected and connected figures in the community. The first stage was to become known and trusted in the local area. I went to local eating establishments such as canteens. These were informal spaces, with cheap food and frequently eaten at by local residents. I would go to these places with my gatekeeper or translator and local residents who I had become acquainted with. As we sat there others would pull up a chair or another table and join us. We would start talking and the first question was often "why are you in the Philippines?" I would explain that I was a researcher and interested in food and meals in the Philippines. This was a useful way to start conversations and build interest in the research itself. People often invited me to their houses, places of work or their own eating establishments. It is important to understand the hospitable nature of the Philippines. It was natural to invite new company for meals or to their houses for a drink and snack. For this reason spending time with families and recruiting people for the project was to some degree simpler than originally planned because people were so welcoming. I would check that locations were appropriate with my gatekeeper or translator and then they would accompany me there. There was a snowball effect with recruiting participants, attending between two and seven

eating events a day meant I had many opportunities to speak with different people about the project. I was invited into different aspects of people's lives such as their places of work or family businesses. This also exposed me to the eating practices of people outside of the house, who they were eating with and where. Therefore, the project gained more interest in these environments too with people speaking to me about their diets.

Throughout this my gatekeeper and translator were also speaking to people they knew about the project. If anyone was interested in speaking to me about their eating practices, then the gatekeeper or translator would introduce us. These introductions could be through seeing them in the local area, being invited out for dinner to meet them or the gatekeeper inviting the participant to their house for us to talk. This was a useful form of recruitment as it ensured that the people recruited were safe to spend time with and they were approached by my gatekeeper not me. This was important to ensure that participants did not feel pressured or experience discomfort by me directly asking them to participate in the research.

Sometimes it was thought that people lived in an unsafe area for me to visit, therefore I could not spend time with their families at home, despite them being willing be part of the project. Once my gatekeeper or advisors said that the family and area were appropriate to spend time with I would ensure that the potential participant understood the nature of the research. I obtained oral constant from participants to be interviewed or be part of the ethnography. I was usually accompanied by my translator, for both safety and for her to be there if there were communication difficulties. Only if I had met with the family several times and had permission from my gatekeeper, would I go alone but still had to be escorted from my condominium with someone. The dynamic nature of families, with neighbours and family members visiting each other frequently also meant that I met people whilst eating in a house. Again, they would ask why I was there giving me an opportunity to explain the project, and subsequently collect the contact details of potential participants.

I would ask if I could write about the situations for the research and obtain their consent for being a part of this. Autophotography participants were also recruited by my gatekeeper. I told them the characteristics I was looking for, such as their income level, and then they would approach people who they thought would be suitable for the project. This was sometimes more challenging to recruit for, because people did not want to be shown eating by themselves. Therefore, it took several weeks to find people to participate. However, a snowball effect occurred too, with people speaking to their friends and family about the project. Once they had agreed to take part to the gatekeeper, I would then meet with them to explain the project and give them the equipment needed.

### 3.5.2  Age

There was 51 years between the oldest and youngest men spoken with. The age of participants varied because of the nature of conducting ethnography, which means that I spoke with people who were present at the meals or events that I attended. Speaking to the younger generations occurred often through getting to know the families or communities. This gave me some insight into whether there is a generational divide in masculinities and perception of gender. Also if there are any differences in their eating practices. Although men in their twenties were not the main focus of this project they did provide useful context for understanding of any generational similarities or differences in masculinity.

### 3.5.3  Occupation

The participants specifically chosen for the autophotography were in occupations or income groups where they had a house and enough money to make choices over the food that they ate, but also had to consider their budget whilst shopping. This was classed as the average lower middle income group. This definition was verified by Filipinos spoken to during the data collection. I did not ask the men

about their income because this could have been offensive to participants and they would have been reluctant to divulge such information. This is why I use occupation as an indication of disposable income available. Before assuming anything, I would always ask advisors who were aiding me with the research about classifications of participant's jobs and their potential level of disposable income (a table of respondent characteristics can be found in 3.5.6). The participants in this study classed themselves as belonging to a low-middle socioeconomic group.

### 3.5.4   Location of residence

The majority of men spoken to or observed lived in Manila or Makati (a city which makes up Metro Manila). This meant the main focus was on men residing in an urban space. It was common on the weekends for people living in Manila to travel out to their provinces to see their family. Some weekends I would travel with them out of the city to more rural provinces. Although this was not the initial aim of this project it did provide some understanding of what participants spoke of from their childhood or when they discussed their families. It provided first-hand experience of rural life and diets, whether this was different from what occurred in the city and also if the value put on food and family was different in the provinces.

### 3.5.5   Living situations

The most common living conditions of participants in this study was that they lived either with their family or close to family members. First, there were families who all lived in one house; this could be parents, children, aunts, uncles and grandparents. A typical house in Manila, of someone with a low-middle income, was over two stories. The first floor would be a small open plan living area with a few seats, a table, and a kitchen area with a few cupboards and two gas rings to cook on. The upstairs room would be divided into smaller sections by curtains or thin walls. Partners and children would have their own sections. These styles of houses that I visited were made primarily of concrete but had their own unique

features. They may have a small porch made of recycled corrugated iron and wood, a complex makeshift guttering system, or a hole in the wall patched up with materials that they could get hold of cheaply. Some participants lived in larger complexes, where each family had their own condominium with two or three rooms. Or families lived in a much larger block of flats, owned by other landlords. Although they did not own the building, they would still try to live in the same areas. The houses were lively, with people coming and going all the time. At times it could be difficult to find out where each of the family members lived, as they would frequently go around each other's flats. Although the type of house was different, the principle of living with or near family remained the same.

### 3.5.6 *Participants and pseudonyms*

The following shows the characteristics of participants who were interviewed or participated in autophotography. This does not include everyone who I spent time with, but the main informants.

| Pseudonym name | Age | Occupation | Place of residence | Background information |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aaron | 36 | NGO Worker | San Pablo | Aaron lived with his pregnant wife, daughter, and auntie. Both he and his wife worked full time jobs. We met at an after church meal when I was having a group discussion with the table. He also attended various public meals which I attended. He was shy to speak too much because he was worried about his English, therefore our interactions always included a translator or any friend who spoke English. |
| Adrian | 38 | Instructor | Manila | Adrian had a wife and two children who lived in the province, he visited them at weekends. During the week when he worked in Manila he would live with his parents. |
| Alberto | 52 | Technical Officer | Manila | Alberto was Andres' brother and Richard's brother-in-law. Alberto lived in the same large block of condominiums with this wife and 3 children as Andres. His sister also lived in the block. Both of Alberto's daughters went to university.  He had quite a large condominium with a corner sofa and large table and chairs. I rarely saw sofas in people's houses, instead they would often have more ornate wooden benches to sit on. He had a typical kitchen with 2 gas rings to cook on and a fridge. The bedrooms were upstairs. |
| Andres | 59 | Teacher | Manila | Andres was the brother of Alberto, he lived in the same block of condominiums with his partner (he was separated from his first wife) and son. The first time we met was at his sister's condominium a few floors down. His sister had made some food for me and a friend, during this meal Andres and Alberto visited and joined us for lunch. He lived in a typical condominium over two floors. With the open plan living downstairs and bedroom upstairs. |

| Andrew | 19 | Student | Manila | Andrew lived in Manila with his grandmother, mother and cousin. We met over a meal with Andres. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Anthony | 23 | Programmer | Manila | Unknown who he lived with because it was a brief in-situ conversation we had which was recorded during a meal. He lived in Manila and valued his meals eaten with others as it provided a break from his work. |
| Antonio | 24 | Trainee | Manila | Antonio lived with his family in about one hour away from Manila, this included his mother, father, and brother, however there was mention of others living in the house. |
| Caleb | 35 | Teacher | San Pablo | Carlos lived with his son, wife, and nephew in a provincial home. Him and his wife were teachers. We met on several occasions in group meal settings, days away and frequently spoke during these times because of his high spoken level of English. He was one of the strongest voices for not only the importance of eating together but also in gender equality in the house. |
| Carlos | 40 | Instructor | Manila | He lived with his wife and son, they had moved away from their provincial home where his parents lived. He valued eating with his wife, however, his work hours meant he often had to eat outside of the home. |
| Edward | 51 | Design Coordinator | Manila | Edward was brother-in-law to Jose. They lived in the same complex of condominiums owned by their family. Each had their own condominium which they lived in with their family. He lived with his wife and 2 daughters. |
| Elisha | 24 | Fireman | San Pablo | Elisha was the son of Gonzalo, both firemen. He lived in the family home with his mother, father, and siblings. Their family made extra income through producing peanut butter. |
| Eric | 27 | Developer | Manila | Eric had to leave the house at 5am to get to work because of the heavy traffic. He mentioned living with his mother, wife and child. He replaced eating breakfast with his family, with eating a snack with his friends because he had to leave so early. However, he would eat with his whole family on an evening. |
| Ethan | 21 | Engineer | Manila | Ethan lived in a boarding house with his sister because their family lived in a province. Eating together to him meant eating with colleagues, friends and his sister in the evening. |

| Name | Age | Occupation | Location | Description |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gabriel | 70 | Canteen owner | Makati | Gabriel ran a canteen in Manila near a large shopping mall. I frequently ate there when we were in that part of the city. It was a simple establishment but popular because the food was cheap and filling. He lived with his wife and two other younger family members who went to school in Manila. They had a house on the outskirts of the city in a quieter area which they would visit on weekends, during the week they lived above the restaurant. |
| Gonzalo | 58 | Fireman | San Pablo | Gonzalo was Elisha's father. We met after a church service and he would occasionally eat with us at the after church meal. He has been diagnosed with diabetes a few years previous to the interview and spoke of the difficulty of reducing his rice intake. His wife was often present with him when we spoke because he was concerned about his level of English when talking to me. |
| Ian | 23 | Website Designer | Manila | Ian lived a two-hour commute away from the office, with his mother, father and other siblings (number unknown). He usually ate dinner and lunch with his work mates because of the commute to and from work. He was a typical example of how family meals were replaced with workmate meals. |
| Isaac | 23 | Technical Worker | Manila | Isaac was from central Manila living with his mother and other unknown relatives. He would eat lunch with his workmates and then dinner with his family when he returned home. |
| Ivan | 21 | Technical Worker | Manila | Ivan grew up in the province, but when his grandmother moved to Manila so did he. It was unclear why she chose to move to the city. In the province he lived with his mother, father and sisters. |
| Jacob | 47 | Teacher | Manila | Jacob lived with several family members, including his brother, sister-in-law, daughter and wife. He mentioned his mother several times but it was unclear whether she lived with them. He was one of nine siblings from an impoverished background where they did not have much to eat and lived in very small accommodation. However, he was proud now that he had a steady income to support his daughter. |
| James | 52 | Professor | Manila | Unclear about his living situations, as this was a brief encounter whilst I was eating with Richard's wife. His parents had lived with him until they passed away. |

| John | 28 | Engineer | Manila | John unusually lived alone, renting his own flat in Manila because his parents lived 'far away'. Therefore, he ate with his workmates and friends for company during meal times. |
|------|-----|----------|--------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Johnny | 38 | Small shop owner | Manila | Johnny lived with his wife, child and two other relatives in Manila. Johnny and his wife ran a small corner shop where they sold snacks, drinks, and cigarettes. |
| Jose | 59 | Logistics | Manila | Jose was brother-in-law to Edward, and lived in the same complex of condominiums. He lived with his wife and two adult children who work night shifts. This meant they did not see each other as frequently as he would like. Their condominium had an open plan downstairs with a sitting area, table and chairs, and kitchen. Upstairs was split into 2 rooms, one for the parents and one for the children. |
| Joseph | 21 | Customer Support | Manila | Joseph lived two hours away from work so he ate breakfast when he arrived in Makati. Lunches were with his workmates, this was a very typical story for people who worked in the city. He lived with his mother, father and siblings and they waited for everyone to join in an evening before they started eating. |
| Joshua | 29 | Instructor | Manila | Joshua lived with his wife in the city. They had one son (11 months old at the time of data collection) who lived with his in laws in a province. They travelled home at the weekends back to see their son and family. |
| Landon | 23 | Student | Manila | Landon mentioned living with his mother and sister just outside of Manila. He would eat with his family when he got home. However, this was often late because of commuting to work. His family would wait for him to return home for them to eat together. |
| Marcus | 40 | Works at home | Makati | Marcus lived with his wife, parents and 2 sisters, he lived in central Manila. We met whilst I was eating lunch with Andres at his place of work. |
| Mark | 27 | Engineer | Manila | Mark had recently moved back to Manila after working in Saudi Arabia. His parents lived in the province, whilst him and his sister lived in Manila because of work and studying. Whilst in Manila he cooked, whereas when he went home his mother and father took it in turns. |
| Michael | 24 | Customer | Manila | Michael grew up in the province but moved to Manila because of work. It was unclear who he lived with in |

| | | Support | | Manila. But he spoke of mainly eating with his workmates. |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Nico | 50 | Café owner | Makati | Nico ran a small canteen on the ground floor of his building. There was a little display cabinet on the street for people who wanted to take away the food. Inside were plastic chairs and tables and a large display cabinet at the back which had the same food in but in larger quantities. They mainly sold rice with side dishes such as chicken cooked with vegetables in a sauce. He lived above the canteen with his family members. They had 3 rooms above the canteen and a garage which they used as a church on Sundays, all of these were for £200 per month. I interviewed Nico, with the aid of my translator, in one of the bedrooms which had 2 bunk beds for their children. They had their own bedroom and there was a living area. |
| Oliver | 21 | Student | Manila | Oliver lived in Manila with his grandmother, aunt, and other unknown family members. He said his grandmother's neighbour often cooked for them. |
| Paul | 70 | Retired-doctor | Makati | Paul lived in a block on condominiums which he owned with his wife. Both of them were doctors. They rented out the others for short term loans to visitors in Makati. His family members also lived in some of the condominiums including his children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. They helped to run the rental business. |
| Quentin | 26 | Customer Support | Manila | Quentin lived with relatives in Manila, however his mother and close family lived in a province. He would return there over the weekends. Weekend trips to see provincial family was common for people working in Manila. |
| Ramon | 24 | Programmer | Manila | Ramon lived with his family, including his mother, father and five siblings. He lived outside of Manila, which meant he had a long commute because of the heavy traffic in Manila. He ate lunch with his workmates, and if he could go home early then he would eat with his family. |

| Richard | 40 | Tuck shop worker | Manila | Richard lived with his wife and three children. He was the brother-in-law to Andres and Alberto. He had moved out of a larger complex which he shared with several families. He grew up in a province a long way from Manila, but moved there when he was young for greater work prospects. During my time in the Philippines, he lived in a house in Makati, with a small kitchen, table and chairs, and wet room downstairs. Upstairs the room was split in two, one half for the parents and another for the children. His father-in-law lived with them for a long time before he passed away a few years ago. They acted as carers for him until he died. |
|---------|-----|------------------|--------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Rodrigo | 20 | Developer | Manila | Rodrigo lived in Manila with his mother, father and sisters. He followed a similar pattern to other office workers of eating lunch with his workmates and dinner with his family. Although his mother often commented on how much she missed eating more meals with him. |
| Samuel | 19 | Student | Manila | Samuel lived with his mother, father and brother. He described his living situation as being a 'lower state of living'. He lived in a small accommodation with his family, but was reluctant to speak too much about it. |
| Tony | 40 | Pedicab driver | San Pablo | Tony was described as an honest pedicab drivers; an occupation which participants often spoke of having dishonest workers. He picked us up from the coach station when we travelled out to the province. He was married with one son. They lived together in a house in San Pablo. |

*Table 6. Pseudonyms, age, occupation and residence of participants*

### 3.5.7 Use of translator

I needed a translator throughout the research. Not only did this help with the language barrier, but it also meant that I always had someone to accompany me to places. It is important to acknowledge the substantial role and influence that the translator had on the data collected, and how her presence may have impacted on the research (Squires, 2009). The translator was a very well respected woman in the community, who was also well connected. She had worked with international NGOs before, which meant she had a great deal of experience translating from Tagalog to English. She had no formal training in being a translator. Her exceptional English and position in the community made her a valuable resource to have throughout the data collection.

However, all translators come with their own beliefs, knowledge and understandings of the world, all of which will influence the way that they may translate or interact with the research participants (Temple, 2002). Despite the translator's credentials there were moments where being from different backgrounds made communication difficult. I discussed in detail the project with the translator, explaining her role and the ethics involved. Filipino culture is very open; therefore, I was aware of the need to reiterate to the translator that anything said in interviews should not be spoken about with other people. We also discussed the questions I wanted to ask to ensure that they were appropriate in content. I asked for her to guide me in my practices, and let me know if I was acting or speaking in a way that may offend my company.

The trustworthiness of cross-cultural qualitative studies in the past has been questioned because they viewed the translator as being an invisible part of their research (Squires, 2009). Trustworthiness in qualitative research is linked to the competence of the researcher conducting the data collection. The translator became a part of the data collection; therefore, trustworthiness was also linked with their competency. This is why it is important to select an individual with the

right credentials (Edwards, 1998; Squires, 2009); whilst constantly reflecting on their role within the research. There were some difficult times which needed to be negotiated around. For instance, sometimes she did not want to translate what someone was saying as she thought I may find it offensive. One such instance occurred when we were walking from her house to my accommodation after having lunch together. We passed a group of pedicab (a bike with a side car) drivers who started calling out to me. I asked her what they were saying. To which she replied that they were being rude and saying naughty things about me. I explained that I would rather know, so that I could listen out for such phrases in the future, but she said it was too rude. Not knowing the language meant that in such instances I did not know if someone was being friendly or rude. I could only try to judge from their facial expressions and body language.

Another difficultly was when she would not tell me what I was eating because she was concerned that I would not consume it. I was not eating with wealthy people; therefore, I knew that I would have to eat whatever was given to me because it would be very rude not to at least try it. People would often give me part of the animal that they thought were best because I was a guest, such as ears, different parts of offal and occasionally blood. Not only this, but there was the added pressure of people watching me when I took the first bite to see my reaction, which I tried to make positive, but at times this was difficult. These were not foods that I was used to eating, and I was concerned about any of them making me unwell. This could make the lack of translating what the ingredients were frustrating. However, I was conscious of causing offence not only to my translator but also the people with whom I was eating. This meant that I tried to ask "for research purposes, could they tell me what was in there so that I could note it down". I would only say this if I was concerned over what I may be eating.

The final problem I faced using a translator was that in some interviews participants, despite speaking English, would speak to her rather than me. Some would not speak at all unless she was there to give them assistance if they needed words translating. There were times when difficulty occurred because the

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translator would start speaking with a participant about their experiences. Whenever such instances occurred I would speak with the translator in private to try and resolve any issues.

The interpretivist nature of the research means that importance is placed on the way in which words are used to construct people's meanings and understandings of the world. Using a translator can impinge on this, as it becomes their interpretation of someone else's words. However, interpretivism allows for the use of translators so long as the research accounts for the translator's identity (Temple, 2002). Again, this meant that I constantly reflected on their role and personality. Another problem, which cannot be avoided, is that some words do not translate or lose meaning when translated into another language (Frederickson et al., 2005; Yick and Berthold, 2005; Ojeda et al., 2011). In these cases, we would spend some time discussing the words after the interview. I would note them down so that I knew what they meant in future conversation. Language is embedded within cultural contexts, which means that translating then transcribing conversations or interviews can lose some of the cultural significance (Yick and Berthold, 2005). In these cases, my in-depth field notes were useful to provide context, again following the principles written by Spradley (1980). Using a translator did have an impact throughout the data collection, however by following the above mentioned methods I could recognise and acknowledge the consequences of using them.

### 3.5.8  Assessing the quality in qualitative research

Quantitative researchers use the terms validity and reliability in reference to the quality of their data. However, the use of these terms for qualitative research has been critiqued, as being misleading and inappropriate for the methods, analysis and data collected in more naturalistic inquiry (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Golafshani, 2003). A multitude of terms have been proposed as being more appropriate, such as credibility, trustworthiness, rigor, dependability and confirmability, to name but a few. It has been argued that of these credibility is most important factor used to

assess the quality of qualitative research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). A number of steps or procedures have been suggested by academics in order to increase the credibility of research, which will now be discussed.

First, there is triangulation, this involves using different sources of information and research methods in order to collect data (Creswell and Miller, 2000; Shenton, 2004). Using a variety of methods produces different data which can then be compared and contrasted (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). In my research, triangulation was achieved through using observation, participation, photography and interviews. Each of these provided data that I could then develop patterns and themes from. Triangulation has been critiqued as it assumes that the weakness in one method can be compensated by the strength of another (Mays and Pope, 2000). However, using multiple data collection techniques provided different perspectives and understandings of the same event, which was the consumption of food.

For instance, ethnographic notes were written up and collected by myself. This was unlike the autophotography that were collected by the participants. Therefore, my own observations could be compared with the data produced by the participants. I could see whether there was agreement or differences in the representation of meals between the two data sources. In the field, the initial analysis of pictures helped to guide my ethnographic observation. At the same time, analysis of my notes helped to inform the interviews that I had with participants and about the pictures that they took. Triangulation was about constantly comparing the data collected from the different sources.

Second, it has been suggested that to increase credibility of data a researcher can use member checking or respondent validation (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Mays and Pope, 2000). This involves presenting and asking for feedback on the data collected and initial analysis. This can be done throughout the fieldwork and at the end. It provides explanations of the results from multiple perspectives. Throughout my time in the Philippines I would ask for further understanding of situations. I

discussed my results and observations with participants and advisors to hear their perspectives. This was regularly done in the evenings, to discuss what I had observed over the past few days. We would sit in the local food outlet, someone's house or my condominium, eat food and talk about what I had seen or heard. People would openly tell me if they thought my observations were wrong. For instance, I initially said that I thought there were high levels of gender equality in the Philippines. However, the company I was with disagreed with me, saying that there was when it came to education and employment, but not within the house. Their disagreement helped me to observe more closely the interactions between men and women when it came to how decisions were actually made. Without using member checking, I may have not fully appreciated important aspects of gendered relations.

Member checking links with the third point, which is peer debriefing. This involves talking through the results and analysis with someone who was not involved in the data collection. In this project, my supervisors we consulted throughout the research process. One example of using peer debriefing was when I looked through a collection of the photographs with my supervisor. The participants often included themselves in their pictures. Whilst in the Philippines, I sent my supervisors pieces of work with initial ideas and observations on eating practices. They provided feedback from their perspective, which helped me to sometimes take a step back and consider my observations from a different perspective. Feedback from people not in the field was valuable because the participants were people with whom I had spent time in the Philippines, I got to know their family, visited their houses. This meant that I interpreted the pictures, interviews and ethnographic notes differently to someone without prior knowledge of the participants. Member checking by looking through the data with someone else, trying to analyse the pictures and exchanging ideas of interpretations, was useful in order to receive constant feedback and reflect on my own ideas. Ethnography is a particularly emotional and lonely way of collecting data, therefore using peer debriefing helps with "clearing the mind of emotions and feelings that may be clouding good judgement" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985: 308). Using both member checking and peer

debriefing addresses a critique of qualitative research which is the reliance on the individual researcher to collect and analyse the data. These steps helped me to both focus the research, sometimes distance myself emotionally from it, and also aided me in constantly critiquing and considering the conclusions which could be drawn. This final step of reflexivity was particularly important in my data collection, because of the participatory approach chosen for the ethnography, which is discussed in detail in the following section.

### 3.5.9 Reflexivity

Ethnography, as with the majority of qualitative research, rejects the notion that the researcher is an objective, detached observer, and instead accepts the subjectivity of the researcher (Valentine, 1997; Hodge and Lester, 2006; Moser, 2008; Ezzy, 2010; Light, 2010; Nader, 2011). This means that the researcher must always be reflexive of how their background, beliefs, and knowledge may influence the study. Reflexivity requires us to acknowledge that both the researcher and the participant are part of the social world being studied (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007), and that they come with their own cultural lenses through which they see the world. Recognition is also needed over the issues that gender, race, age, nationality and so on may have on the researcher's relationships with their subjects, and the impact these may have on their personal stance during the research (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010; Goldring, 2010; Laverick, 2010; Light, 2010).

Gender is particularly important to consider when conducting research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Distinguishing between whether a person is male or female is one of the first decisions that people make when they see someone. Once the person has been categorised individuals can adopt what they deem to be the culturally acceptable way of interacting with that gender. Being a female researcher will have impacted on the interactions that I had with participants. This situation has been beneficial in some studies, with women gaining access to more sensitive information, and not being viewed as a

threatening figure so men were more likely to talk (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983). However, other studies have found that men distance themselves from traditional masculine identities when they are being interviewed by a woman (Herod, 1993; Sellaeg and Chapman, 2008). Since I was looking at masculinities in the Philippines, I needed to be acutely aware of the impact of being a female may have on the answers that men gave. This was particularly highlighted when they made comments about how Filipino men helped at home, in the kitchen, cooking, buying food, unlike men from the UK. Followed by them explaining this was why I should marry a Filipino rather than a British man. Such comments usually reduced once I had spoken to the men a few times. However, it did show how men may answer questions differently because of speaking to a woman.

This difference may have been exacerbated further since this is cross-cultural research. Any observations around the impact that this had were noted down in my research diary. An ethnographer needs to acknowledge and subsequently suspend their own cultural assumptions and accept that biases exist within research despite their best attempts to subdue these (Rubin and Rubin, 2012). Again, cultural differences, assumptions or even conflicts were reflected on if they occurred. An in-depth examination of such instances with examples of when they happened can be found in section 3.7.

Ethnography is often criticised for being subjective and reliant on the researcher's discretion to determine what is or is not important to note or record. It is almost always a small scale and locally specific study, leading to people questioning how representational it is of the wider society (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). I knew I would influence every situation just by being there and change the conversations or people's actions in undeterminable ways, therefore people criticise ethnography as not reflecting the reality of social relations in a 'natural' way (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). In order to combat these criticisms reflexivity played a large role before, during and after the research was conducted. I cannot change that my presence influenced situations, nor the fact that this research relies on my discretion, however I can constantly reflect and acknowledge these. I attempted to

find ways whilst in the Philippines to ensure that I could represent participants as completely and accurately as possible, including data collection stemming from multiple research methods. The use of autophotography, for instance, allowed participants to represent their eating habits from their perspective. This meant that they were collecting the data rather than me. This process of reflection is important in qualitative data collection, analysis and write up because it increases the validity and reliability of the research and acknowledges criticisms over researcher subjectivity (Delamont, 2004). For this reason I wrote section 3.7, which is an in-depth write up reflecting on the research process. It addresses the ways in I adopted the concept of reflexivity throughout the research process.

### 3.5.10 Ethics

Ethical approval for the research was granted by the University of Sheffield (letter of approval can be found in appendix 1). Informed consent is required when "behaviour of research participants occurs in a private context where an individual can reasonably expect that no observation or reporting is taking place" (American Sociological Association, 1999). This was particularly used when conducting ethnographic observations, to know when I should obtain consent and this was an evolving process which I did not take for granted. For instance, when I was in someone's house, or with an individual and wished to write about what had happened I would ask for their permission. In my time in the Philippines, I did not have problems with gaining consent for this. I would always be introduced as a student from the UK conducting research. This meant that people knew from the beginning why I was there. I used my discretion about what I recorded, for example I would not write about children when I was in someone's house. I ensured that everyone who I was with knew about the research. This became easier once people became acquainted with me. However, I ensured that I would remind them that I was there as a researcher, not just a visitor. I told participants that the notes would be anonymised, as would any interviews.

The autophotography was more complicated as it did not follow the usual ethical principle of anonymity. I did not perceive originally how important this would be, because I did not anticipate that participants would photograph people more than food. I spoke to them about the purpose of the study before giving them the camera. I asked for them to seek permission from anyone in the picture. I explained that the photographs may not be anonymous and asked for their permission to use them without blurring out the faces. If I was unsure if someone had asked for another person's permission to be in the picture I did not include it in the findings chapter. I asked for them to let me know if there were any pictures which they did not wish for me to use. However, most of them had self-edited the pictures, such as deleting ones which they did not want to present to me.

There is always the ethical dilemma of 'giving back' to the participants. Research is a two-way transaction between the participants and the researcher, and both should benefit from it in some way (Head, 2009). There are large debates about what form these gestures of thanks should take. I decided against money as it can be coercive especially for more vulnerable groups (Ensign, 2003), people's motivations for taking part in the study may no longer be about them having something useful to contribute instead it is because they are in need of financial aid (Hutz and Koller, 1999; Head, 2009). Cash incentives have also been found to alter what people say, so that they voice what they think the researcher wants to hear (McKeganey, 2001). Money is a sign of power, and giving it to another person can impact on their perception of the giver. There were comments throughout the research about me being from a wealthier background, therefore offering money as a thank you would have reinforced the ideas that they had about my financial situation. For these reasons I chose alternative gestures of thanks. For those participating in the autophotography, they had the option to keep the camera that I provided. If they did not want to keep it, then I donated the cameras to a local charity at the end of the research, one which my translator helped with. In order to 'give back' to the community, I helped teach English to disadvantaged or unwell children. This also helped with gaining some acceptance from the community. Finally, I would offer to take people out for meals or buy snacks for individuals who

were aiding me in the research, whether they were participants or translators. Food was deemed as a culturally and ethically appropriate way to thank people for being part of the research.

## 3.6 Analysis

### 3.6.1 Thematic analysis

The ethnographic notes, interviews and photographs were analysed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis "is a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun and Clarke, 2006: 79). This method is used to describe as well as interpret data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). It was an appropriate method as it can be applied to different forms of data, such as interview transcripts (Braun and Clarke, 2006), photos (Dodman, 2003; Noland, 2006), and field notes; all of which were used in this research. Using only thematic analysis meant that there was consistency in the ways that codes were developed, which were then applied and compared across each of the different data forms. An advantage of thematic analysis was that it is not attached to one theoretical framework; it is compatible with both interpretivist and realist paradigms (Braun and Clarke, 2006). What changes is the way that it is applied to the data collected and what the researcher is focused on. The main critique is the difficulty of being transparent about the processes used to analyse the data. This again highlights the importance of being reflexive throughout the research process.

A six stage process of thematic analysis proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used (see table 7).

| Phase | Description of process |
|---|---|
| 1. Familiarizing yourself with your data | Transcribe the data using Microsoft word (verbatim transcription was used), then read and re-read the transcripts <br> Study the photos taken by the participants and the corresponding interview transcripts <br> Read through all field notes <br> Throughout this note down initial ideas (open coding) |

| 2. Generating initial codes | Having already generated initial ideas use these, plus continued reading of the data to generate codes |
|---|---|
| | Code as many ideas as possible, noting that each section can have multiple codes |
| | Begin collating the data together |
| | Ensure that the data is always given context from surrounding text |
| 3. Searching for themes | Collate codes into initial themes- create both candidate and subthemes, also discard any codes which become redundant (such as codes which are similar to others) |
| | Gather all the data relevant to each theme |
| 4. Reviewing themes | Review the themes by checking that they work to both the coded extracts / photos and the entire data |
| | Look at the overall story that the themes produce |
| | Generate a thematic map of the analysis |
| 5. Defining and naming themes | Identify what each theme is about, and ensure that it both stands alone as a subject and also contributes to the research as a whole |
| | Define what the theme is and is not |
| | Rename / name themes to ensure clarity |
| 6. Producing the report | Select vivid extracts/photos and examples which exemplify the themes and ideas being put forward |
| | Final analysis of the selected extracts, then relate these back to literature and theories developed by other authors |
| | Produce the written report |

*Table 7. Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006)*

Thematic analysis requires numerous decisions to be made about the approaches taken to the data, such as an inductive or theoretical approach, studying in a

semantic or latent way (Braun and Clarke, 2006). An inductive approach was taken, whereby codes and themes were linked with and developed from the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Theoretical approaches use theories developed by other scholars to form the basis of coding (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). Since most literature on masculinity is written for and in Western societies it was not appropriate to try and apply the data collected to their ideas. In the analysis a latent approach was used, which aims to identify underlying ideas, ideologies and beliefs that exist in the data. This fits with the interpretivist paradigm, that is, trying to understand the way that people construct their understanding of the world. This is compared to semantic analysis which is about what the participant has said and the surface meaning of this (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

### 3.6.2 Applying thematic analysis

Data analysis occurred throughout the research process, from data collection to the writing up of results. Whenever possible the ethnographic notes were written up, followed by comparing these with previous observations or conversations that I had with participants. These notes were observations, quotes and reflections on the experiences of each day. This helped to guide the data collection through focusing the ethnography and areas of interest down to more specific occurrences. It also helped to guide the research methods to make them culturally sensitive and effective. Themes began to develop in the early stages of the research, such as the importance of eating with people and the significance of rice. These became key themes not only influencing the conversations had around diets in the Philippines but also when looking through the data collected when back in the UK.

Four overarching themes became apparent:

- The significance of rice;
- Communal eating;
- The enactment of gender, particularly masculinities;
- Gender and eating practices.

The development of these then guided the later analysis, using the data to either verify what was observed in the initial familiarisation with the data or see whether these could be questioned once all of the different data sources were collated. One such example was the initial misconceptions around gender equality in the Philippines. Although it was initially I thought it had high levels of gender equality, when the interview transcripts and notes were re-evaluated this idea was questioned due to more in-depth coding. I will now discuss how thematic analysis was conducted with each of the different data sets.

### 3.6.3 Interviews

Interviews were self-transcribed to familiarise myself with the data and because participants would switch between Tagalog and English making it difficult to follow without personal experience. It also meant that I could note any emotions or inflections within the speech. Once the transcript was complete the initial stage of open coding was applied, this involved reading through each transcript and developing provisional themes. I printed off each transcript and went through writing broad notes alongside the interviews, such as 'gender relations'. This helped to start clarify some of the larger ideas that people spoke about. The next stage was more in-depth analysis. This meant going through the transcripts for a second time and coding sentences, phrases or specific words. The quotes were extracted and put in a large excel table, with tabs relating to overarching themes. The quotes were broken down further to try and extract as many meanings as possible from the data. After this the individual codes were collated and analysed in turn, combining those which were similar, and ordering them into significance. If people were speaking about the same idea, such as the meaning of a certain word, but had different opinions these would be coded under one larger theme. They were then recoded to find any patterns or disagreements within the data. The use of excel meant that I could constantly move and adjust the themes or quotes to find the most comprehensive understanding of the data. I could also highlight, in

the tables, the most 'vivid' examples of the themes which I produced. Examples of the tables created can be found in appendix 2.

## *3.6.4  Ethnography*

The main characteristic of analysing ethnographic data is that analysis is not just conducted at the end of the research, it occurs at every stage of the process (Williamson, 2006; Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007; Light, 2010; Scott Jones and Watt, 2010). The constant analysis is what guided the research design whilst in the field, and it helped to narrow down the research questions. The analysis involved interpreting "the meanings, functions, and consequences of human actions and institutional practices, and how these are implicated in local, and perhaps also wider, context" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007: 3), but always ensuring that these are as representative of the population being studied as possible (Rizzo et al., 1992). This meant that phase one of thematic analysis (generating the initial ideas around the data) began whilst in the Philippines. I received and asked for feedback throughout the research about my ethnographic notes in particular, this was also part of the analysis. This was to ensure that they were as representative of the community as possible, whilst also allowing for my own reflections on the different situations.

The ethnographic notes were treated as a transcript and coded in a similar way to the interviews. Most of the notes were written by hand in a notebook whilst in the Philippines. Therefore, the first stage was to finish typing these up. This was a process that I started during the data collection. This also allowed me to familiarise myself again with the notes. To some degree, it was more difficult to analysis the ethnographic data compared with the interviews, which is why I chose to do it after the interviews. As will be seen in section 3.7, there were times which were difficult and emotional. Reading through the notes therefore could sometimes reflect the difficulty of the research collection. I felt that spending some time away from the experiences that I had written about, would help with the analysis when it

came to trying to find patterns within this data. Once I felt it was appropriate to do so, the next step in analysis was to code the events and notes. First, I read through them and assigned larger codes to each event, such as 'example of eating together'. Once these were noted down, I then went through and coded them a second time, looking for more of the nuances in the ethnographic data. I then compared and contrasted the codes found with the interviews and the ethnography to begin to triangulate the data.

### 3.6.5 Autophotography

Thematic analysis was continued with the photographs too, rather than using, say, content analysis. This provided consistency across the analysis of the three different types of data collected. I explored the photographs in a similar way to using diaries, in that they were recordings of the experiences that participants wanted show with regards to their relationships with foods. The first step was to discard those which were unclear, blurred or accidental (such as taking a picture of the ground).  Then I printed off the pictures, laid them out on the floor together and observed them collectively. This was the initial way to assess if there were any patterns within the pictures. I noticed the presence of people in many of the photos; therefore I separated these from the ones that were focused on, say, the table or food. The food images were grouped to see if the patterns of eating described in the interviews reflected the foods which were captured in the autophotography. I then analysed those where there were people in individually. This involved noting down, for example: the activities happening in the picture; the food being eaten; those present in the photograph; who the photographer was (the participant or someone else); how many place settings there were at the table; the location of the meal; and the emotions shown. These notes were then coded.

For instance, the following example shows a written up version of the process which I used to study the photographs.



*Meal:* Breakfast, rice, re-fried fish, soya sauce, 3 in 1 coffee, left over vegetables from the night before **(Code: Rice, left overs, breakfast food)**

*Photographer:* taken by someone other than the participant **(Code: Eating with others, not self-portrait photograph, focus on activity not food)**

*Activity shown:* participant is in the process of eating of his breakfast **(Code: Focus away from food eaten, act of consumption)**

*Location:* at home **(Code: Domestic space eating)**

*Company:* an extra place setting is shown in this picture indicating he is eating with someone else **(Code: Eating with others)**

The codes were then collated and compared with those from the ethnography and interviews. Again, new ones were added and others were combined with themes that seemed similar. This led to the grouping of photographs, interview quotes and ethnographic notes into main and sub- themes.

### 3.6.6 Overall analysis process

The first set of analysis was sequential, in that I analysed the interviews, followed by the ethnographic notes and then the photographs. This was deliberate for a number of reasons. As mentioned above, I felt the interviews would be a good starting point as they, to some degree, were the least personal or emotional to analyse after the data collection. The initial codes developed helped with analysing the ethnography notes, to see if ideas found in the transcripts reflected or contrasted with the observations. The most difficult data set to analyse was the photographs. Early on in the analysis I observed that the pictures contained people

and that men chose to include themselves in the photographs. However, it was difficult to interpret what this meant. It was only through studying the transcripts and ethnography notes that I could begin to understand the significance of this finding. Therefore, the analysis was done sequentially, but throughout this I constantly looked at each data set and the codes to find patterns or disagreements across all three.

Once all the codes were generated I could then create large tables where I could group them, move them around, and find the most comprehensive representation of the data. The final result was the four main themes developed in the initial stages of analysis being supported by each form of data collected. Therefore, the key themes which will be focused on in the results section are: the cultural and daily significance of rice; the importance of communal eating in the Philippines; perceptions and enactment of gender by Filipinos; and how the former three themes link together with other data to generate results on the relationship between gender and eating practices.

## 3.7   The ethnographer's dilemma

Throughout the methods section I have reflected on some of the experiences that I had whilst in the Philippines. The following section provides more in depth examples about the data collection. Using ethnography as a research method in this project gave me a unique insight into the everyday lives of the participants in this study. I ate with them, spent time with families, heard about their good and bad news, they took care of me when I was ill, and to some degree by the end of the research I felt like I was part of the community. I was privy to the opinions that participants had about their neighbours, family members, community and friends. Not only could I observe what people ate, I could join in the experience of eating in the Philippines, the foods, conversations, and emotions that happened around the table. There were many positives of choosing this research method, and the finer details of the participants' lives that I was able to collect were often due to personal encounters or conversations not within a formal interview. However, using ethnography also meant negotiating around a number of, often personal difficulties and issues. The following data presented below are from my ethnographic notes which highlight some of these issues which I faced during the data collection.  It also provides a clearer understanding of the environment in which the research occurred.

Often during qualitative research the idea of power between the researcher and participant is discussed (Mullings, 1999; Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009). I experienced a particular form of power relationship between the community members and myself which extended beyond the data collection. I often felt powerless not over the research itself, but over my own personal freedom on an everyday level. For my own safety it was frequently suggested by my gatekeeper that I should not leave my room by myself.  I was living in a block of condominiums where I had a room, with a small fridge, bed, table, chair and cupboard and a small wet room. There were no cooking facilities provided or permitted in the room. This meant I was reliant on community members collecting me to go anywhere; we had a

specific knock that they would use so I knew it was safe to open my door. Due to the lack of cooking facilities I also relied on them to escort me to places where I could purchase food. This was completely different to the lifestyle I was used to in the UK, and having my freedom of movement, even ability to provide myself with the basic amenity of food was challenging. There were a number of instances where I wrote about the problems of this in my research diary and two instances in particular, highlight this difficulty.

The first was written when I was unwell. It was at moments like that when all I wanted were the comfort foods I was used to at home, this time it was ice-cream. Someone had come to my room to check how I was feeling, knowing that I was unwell. I said to her would it be alright if she could take me to the local shop so I could buy some ice-cream and sweets. The shop was across the road from my block of condominiums. She said that I should not eat either of these because the sugar in them would make my throat worse, as it would give the illness food to eat. So instead of buying these I had a Filipino food similar to rice pudding, and was instructed to drink water afterwards to wash away the sugar. Interestingly, at the time I noted how sweet this dish was and asked about the ingredients. They were rice, condensed milk, sugar and sweet corn. I said, "oh but that contains sugar too", trying not to sound too accusative but also trying to persuade them that it was acceptable for me to eat ice-cream. The reply was that it was OK to eat the warm rice pudding, but ice-cream was cold and sugary so would make me worse. I felt at this point that I had not only lost control of my freedom, but also of my ability to take care of myself in the way that I felt appropriate. However, I did not want to appear ungrateful for the help being given, nor did I want to disagree too heavily against their health advice in order to reduce the potential of creating any barriers between myself and the community members I was researching. Therefore, I accepted the rice pudding and water.

Later that day, another visitor knocked on my door, again with food. This time it was beef in gravy, noodles with cut up offal and steamed rice cakes. She had kindly bought this for my dinner. She handed over to food, and said she would be back

later to check how I felt. I said it was ok, I was just going to watch some TV and go to sleep, but she insisted that she check up on me. It should be noted that although I was 24 at the time of doing research, and so in my mind an adult who had lived away from my family for 5 years, for them I was still classed as being almost a teenager by UK standards. This was because they were used to their family members living within the familial home and were surprised that I moved away for university when "you were only a child". Therefore, people often felt like they had to take care of me more since my parents were not there. I attempted to eat some of food which she had bought, but it was difficult to do so. I knew that visitors would commonly look in my fridge to see what I had, share the food in it, or check that I had eaten the food they had provided. Therefore, I flushed the food down the toilet so that I did not offend her. When she came back in the evening she checked my fridge, as I thought may happen, and was pleased to see the food was not there. Although in some ways this felt deceptive and I felt guilty about throwing away the food, it seemed like the most appropriate way to not offend the people who were trying to help me, whilst also making sure that I felt comfortable with the food that I was eating.

The second happened when I was waiting for someone to collect me for us to have a lunch. The plan was to meet at 11am, then catch a taxi to the place where we were having lunch and meet up with a few other people. It reached 11am and I was ready and waiting. I already had knowledge of the concept of 'Filipino time' which meant that it was common for people to be arrive later than the agreed time, and this was a challenging cultural difference. It was 14:30 by the time I was picked up for lunch, at which point I was hungry and frustrated at agreeing a time and then being worried I was going to be late meeting up with people who were potential participants. The people who we were meeting with did not appear to be phased by us showing up late, just putting it down to Filipino time. Yet, for me it reinforced the idea of me no longer having control over when I could eat lunch, when I could leave the building and even having control over my own time keeping.

These two highlight the difficulties which can be faced conducting cross-cultural research. During the data collection, in order to reduce potential conflicts between myself and community members, I had to also negotiate acting in a locally sensitive manner, whilst trying to remain honest to the participants about who I was, both as a researcher and on a more personal level. The following are examples from my research notes about times when this was particularly challenging.

One of biggest cultural differences that I experienced was how we defined privacy. I was used to a more individualistic and in some ways isolated or separate way of living in the UK, in every aspect of life. First, I was used to food being my own, a plate of food at a restaurant would be served only to me and I could control the portion sizes that I ate. This was contrary to my experience in the Philippines, where they would often serve up food onto my plate from the pot in the middle of table. If I did serve myself then comments would be made about the amount I was eating. For instance, people would say: "Come on eat more!" or "You'll be too skinny if you just eat that". I thought I was offending people if I did not serve myself more food, however it felt like I was losing control over the quantity of food which I wanted to eat to feel comfortable. Linked to this was the second loss of privacy that I experienced, and this was over personal space and discomfort around certain forms of physical contact. Weight and body shapes were often discussed by individuals; they would poke each other and say "You need to stop eating so much" or "You look like you will have another baby soon". This was a common occurrence and not just because I was researching diets. They included me in this often poking my side or stomach, as they did with each other, whilst saying: "You're too skinny", "I can feel your rib", "You wouldn't be fun to eat with" or "I think you're getting fatter, you won't fit in your wedding dress you need to eat less rice". These were not said in cruel way, merely a matter of fact in their opinion. The opinions were useful to hear from a researcher's' point of view as they highlighted the ways in which people spoke about weight and advice that they gave to people with different body shapes. However, on a personal level it made me feel uncomfortable. Since this was something that they clearly did to everyone,

I did not want to object too heavily, again to reduce the self and other barrier in cross-cultural research.

The third difficulty was privacy over information about my personal life being shared. People would share with others if I was unwell, what I had told them about my life in the UK, information about my family or relationship status. This would result in me speaking to someone, who I had never met, and being greeted with them telling me what someone else had told them about me. For instance, I had a stomach bug so I decided it was better for me to eat 'safer' foods and drink sugary drinks. We went for a meal with some of Richard's friends. They asked why I did not want to eat much, to which Richard's wife told the table that I was ill with a stomach bug.

On another occasion I met an elderly woman in the street, a neighbour of one of my participants. The woman said, "Oh I hear you're not married, I have a son who isn't either, you should meet!" This was despite having told others that I was in fact engaged, they thought I was single until I got married. Again this was someone who I had never met. I realised that I would have to be careful about the ways in which I answered questions about my personal life, having established that any information that I told someone would be shared with the community. For instance, I was frequently asked who I lived with in the UK. The truth was that I was living with my partner. However, many of the participants were Christians with a strong belief that couples should not live together until they were married. If I was honest about my situation they would have questioned my morals which would have impacted on their encounters with me. Therefore, I felt like it was better to say that I lived by myself than tell the truth; to which I got the reply on several occasions "Good because we know that in the UK and US a lot of people live together before marriage which is bad". These encounters meant that I became cautious about how much I either avoided questions or had to not tell individuals the whole truth about my life in the UK. I asked someone to explain the reason behind why community members shared information so freely, she said that "Filipinos are open people, we tell each other everything".

This language of "Filipinos are…" was sometimes followed by "unlike people from the West, Europe or the US". For instance, Caleb (age 35) said, *"We take good care of our elders even they don't have money to give"* then went on to *say "In other countries, for example the United States, if the elder have plenty of money they pay the shelter, so in our, in the Philippines we only take our elders in the shelter if they don't have children to take good care of them if they don't have for example the capacity of taking care of them"*. The second phrase was said in a negative manner; since he went on to say how it would break his heart if his son ever sent him to a nursing home.  Although people were not criticising me per se, there was often a negative comparison of Western culture compared with their own; and as I was the only non-Filipino most of the time, these comments would often be aimed in my direction. Another example happened when I attended a church service, themed "what is man?" The speaker turned to me, I was sitting on the front row, and said "People in the West, they teach their children that people came from monkeys, so they think that God looks like a monkey! Isn't that right?" This then caused various people to tap me on the shoulder and ask if I thought that this was true. I knew that there were strong beliefs around creationism and evolution so replied "we have a different education system in the UK". Giving a personal belief about this would have been unwise and potentially cause some ill feelings towards me from the community that I was spending time with. Being directly asked my opinion about matters, which I knew to be controversial, meant that I would often have to try and avoid answering them directly so as to not cause offense.

In this type of data collection the researcher has to build relationships with those being studied; this is important because credibility of the research can be linked with the openness of informants in discussing their lives, and trustworthiness depends on positive relationships being built between the researcher and participant (Lawlor and Mattingly, 2001). They must also retain the role of being a field worker and refrain from 'going native' (Gold, 1958). It was ensuring a balance between these two which created internal conflicts during the fieldwork and writing up of this project. It was emphasised in the literature that building trust between informants and myself would be important in the ability to gain

acceptance and in-depth data (Fetterman, 2010). In order to build trust I had to make daily decisions over what to say and how to act in front of community members. For instance, I would reassure them about how the data would be handled and ensure I was always open about the research itself; this was where the role of being a fieldworker would emerge. On a personal level though I had to ensure that they would accept me and trust me as a person to enter into their homes and spend time with their families.

Although I was not researching children, I was acutely aware that they were present during the meals attended. Therefore, I had to be especially careful in these circumstances about the answers that I gave to questions about my life in the UK, so that parents did not feel uncomfortable with my presence in their families. As seen in the examples above, this could mean that I had to avoid telling the truth about my living circumstances or lifestyle choices. In such instances I would reflect on how this may have influenced the data collection. By not disclosing certain information participants did positively react to the answers I was giving, especially on areas in which they had strong moralistic opinions, such as living with a partner before marriage. Hence, from a researcher's perspective this felt like the right choice in order to be accepted and gain access to the communities.

On a personal level, however, this felt somewhat deceitful; it is here that the internal conflicts which occurred in the field can be seen. In the final stages of analysis and writing up of the project I continued to reflect on the influence that this may have had on the participants. For instance, should this work be disseminated and in the unlikely situation that a participant read it, there was the concern that they would feel deceived by my actions whilst I was in the field. If they did, then this could conflict with the primary aim of ethnography, as put forward by the American Anthropological Association (AAA), which is to do no harm to the participants or the communities being studied (AAA, 2012), which also includes emotional distress. I questioned how the participants would feel should they know that I had, for example, disposed of the food which they had bought me.

This is the ethnographer's dilemma when being a participant-as-observer, attempting to collect in-depth and worthwhile data, whilst also having to negotiate around cultural differences which could cause exclusion from those whom I was trying to study. Through reflecting and evaluating the choices I made whilst in the field, I believe that they were the correct way to respond to the situations which I faced. In the end, the focus of such research is on the participants and building shared experiences with them (Lawlor and Mattingly, 2001). Through choosing not to disclose certain information I built positive working relationships with the people in the communities that I was studying.

Keith (1992) reflected on this in his own ethnographic research about racism in policing, where he felt uncomfortable at times that in order to gain access to police officers he had to conceal certain characteristics about himself. As a researcher this makes sense, as it means that the study can go ahead and makes recruiting participants simpler. However, it is important to reflect on the implications that this may have on the final outcome of the study. In his article Keith goes on to describe another issue which I questioned during my own research, about how silence could mean tacit approval of ideas which I believed to be harmful or strongly disagreed with. For him this was overhearing police officers having conversations with racist content; for me it was, for example, staying silent when people were describing their beliefs around God punishing men who have sex with men by giving them HIV. By not objecting my silence could, as Keith argued, be legitimating these ideas. However, if I had said "it's a sexually transmitted disease and not given because of 'poor morals'" community members may be reluctant to accept being a part of this study. Also it was not my place to disagree, since I was there primarily as a researcher. This was a troubling concept to me personally, but not replying meant that the relationships between my participants and me continued to grow.

Given these complexities, the question then becomes: If someone else was conducting this research who was Filipino, or from a different background, how would that affect the data that was collected? I had already positioned myself in

this research as an outsider since I am British. I knew I would be viewed as such throughout the research by the communities that I was studying. Being an outsider had advantages such as observing daily routines or activities which may have gone unnoticed by someone from inside the community (Katz, 1994). For instance, the questioning around the quantity of rice being eaten occurred because this was different from the diet which I ate in the UK. It has also been argued that this position may make the researcher appear to be more neutral or objective to the participants (Mullings, 1999), and gives the freedom to ask questions which may seem obvious to insiders (Katz, 1994).

I felt that it provided a different form of conversation between myself and the participants because of the curiosity that people felt towards me and giving them the chance to ask their questions about my life in the UK. We shared stories and experiences which led to an openness when participants were discussing their own lives. In this regard, being an outsider conducting this form of research was beneficial. However, there were also difficulties, especially at the beginning with people being sceptical about the research, what I was doing there and feeling uncomfortable, for instance, eating whilst I was present. Although I had some knowledge about Filipino culture from previous research which I had conducted, I did not have in depth knowledge of the inner workings of the communities which an insider would (Hill-Collins, 1990). My different background, beliefs and education meant that conversation topics which would be acceptable for two people from the same community were sometimes challenging for me to participate in, such as conversations about weight and marriage. However, being of the same background does not mean immediate acceptance into the desired group being studied. Sultana (2007) reflected on this after his research in Bangladesh, where he was born and grew up. He found that his short haircut, watch and shoes caused him to be positioned as an outsider by the rural populations that he was researching despite them being from the same nationality.

Throughout the research I reflected on how I may have influenced the data collection and collected. Ethnographic research presented a unique set of

challenges during the data collection because of the often personal nature of the interactions I had with community members. I had read beforehand about ethnography being emotionally and physically tiring (Scott Jones and Watt, 2010), however I did not fully appreciate this until I was in the Philippines collecting data. The days were often long, especially as the research gained traction and I was invited to, for example, increasing numbers of meals, workplaces, homes, and shopping trips. This could mean travelling around Manila, a notoriously congested and polluted city where even short journeys take a long time. It was tiring having to think constantly about what I was saying or how I was acting so I did not offend people whilst also collecting data on what was happening. You do create emotional connections with participants in this form of data collection, which means I celebrated with and felt happy for participants when they shared good news. I also saddened when someone's family member died, or they opened up about difficult times in their lives. Participants' honesty and openness about their lives strengthened the research because I could gain in-depth understandings of their lives, at the same time it was emotionally difficult. The tiredness, emotional strain and cultural differences meant that there were situations where I said or acted in a way which caused some difficulties.

These instances often occurred when I responded to a question without first considering how it would be perceived. For instance, the presidential election was happening whilst I was in the Philippines. I was following it closely as it was a common topic of conversation. One meal time I was directly asked by a man who I would vote for and why. I answered that I would not vote for the popular choice because he seemed to promote too much violence, so I would vote for his opposition. This was the wrong answer, and I was quickly told that I did not understand the situation in the Philippines, how difficult it was and how killing certain groups in society were the only way to deal with the drug problems. Additionally, I was told that I could never understand as I came from a rich country which did not have such problems. This was an immediate barrier between the people around the table and me. I was primarily ignored for the rest of that meal.

When I left I apologised for not fully appreciating the situation, in an attempt to resolve the conflict. After this moment, I tried not to talk about politics.

I learnt a great deal during my time collecting data, not just about men's eating habits but also about conducting such personal research. Reflecting on the situation now and with the knowledge that I gained during the fieldwork, there are some changes that I would make if I was doing the research again. I would focus more on women too, and research gender rather than looking more closely at masculinity. I have a greater understanding of the gendered structures in society and also the communal nature of living; therefore I would collect more data on women's experiences. Women did speak to me about what it was like to be a wife or daughter in their families; however this was aside in the research. The fact I did not speak Tagalog was not a major issue because of the level of English spoken by many of the participants. Yet, I now know how to phrase questions in a clearer way, so that there is not embarrassment. Participants were happy to speak English, but would feel 'ashamed' (as they described in their own words) because they did not know what I was saying. I learnt that when they held their nose during conversations it meant that I was speaking in an unclear way, because they would say they were having a 'nose bleed'. This is a common phrase meaning that they were thinking so hard that the pressure in their head would cause a metaphorical nose bleed.

My naivety could be beneficial. If I did not wear make-up, then perhaps I would not have had the conversations about the way that husbands controlled the appearance of their wives. Being foreign meant that I could ask people to explain what they were saying or doing and they would accept it was because I was from a different country. The mistakes in behaviour that I made, although embarrassing, meant that people explained how I should act and why. These lessons were valuable in gaining knowledge about Filipino life and practices. However, I now understand the topics of conversation which should be avoided, especially those which caused participants to think that I could not understand the situation in the Philippines because of being from a privileged country. Topics such as crime and

punishment should have been avoided because of differing opinions on, for example, the death penalty.

Finally, I knew my presence in situations would cause people to act differently, which I accepted, but I never wanted people to feel uncomfortable with me being at certain events. Women at the dinner tables felt this in the initial stages of research. I now understand that I should have described 'life in the UK' very early on in the research so that they also had knowledge about my background. I was trying to reflect the behaviour of participants to the best of my ability, without appreciating that by simply explaining more about my life there would have been fewer misunderstandings. The constant reflection during my time in the Philippines helped to continually adapt my interactions with participants to ensure that the relationships we built were positive from both a personal and researcher's perspective.

## 3.8   Summary

In this section I have discussed the methods I chose to research masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines. I discussed the use of ethnography, autophotography and interviews, and how these were utilised to address my research aim. Using these three combined meant that I could triangulate the data, which is important to increase the credibility of qualitative research. Thematic analysis was conducted sequentially, where I analysed each data set separately, whilst also comparing the codes throughout the analysis. This resulted in four main themes being discovered which were: the importance of rice; masculinities; gender and food; and communal eating. The final section, a reflection on the use of ethnography, provided an intimate account of the personal dilemmas which were faced whilst conducting the data collection. I include further reflections throughout the thesis. This leads onto the following chapter, where I will present the data collected and findings.

# Chapter 4: Findings

## 4.1 Introduction

The findings chapter is split into four main themes. 4.2 acts as an introduction to food in the Philippines, and how important rice is in the Filipino diet symbolically and nutritionally. In 4.3 I present findings on masculinity in the Philippines, how it is enacted and what it meant to the participants. This gives a background understanding to appreciate the data collected on the reasons behind men's eating practices, which is section 4.4. In the final section, 4.5, I present findings on the importance of communal eating to the participants. This was an unexpected but highly influential area to collect data on.

## 4.2 Life sustained by rice

In this section the importance of rice in the Filipino diet will be discussed. It is about more than rice being eaten for sustenance, there is also the emotional, social and cultural significance it has in Filipino life. This section introduces a number of key themes which will be explored in more detail in following sections.

### 4.2.1 Diet amongst participants

In order to discuss food in the Philippines it is important to establish what on average a 'normal' daily diet was as described by a number of Filipinos. The meals chosen below (table 8) are typical of those explained by participants and ones which I ate on a regular basis whilst spending time with families. They reflect both the photos taken through autophotography and the descriptions given by men and women spoken to about their daily food consumption.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Breakfast:** rice, an egg (often fried) and sometimes some meat such as a hot dog, bread and coffee<br>*Picture:* fried egg, rice, fried fish | On an average day I would eat... *breakfast*, egg and rice (Jose, 59)<br><br>Usually we eat just simple fried rice, egg, bread, coffee and hot dog for breakfast (Marcus, 40) |  |
| **Snack:** examples include porridge, boiled egg, bananas (fried in sugar, wrapped in pastry or raw)<br>*Picture:* sweet rice wrapped in banana leaf | That's our *merienda*, our snack, with rice also. (Caleb, 35)<br><br>I usually have a *snack* between 9 or 10:30, sometimes I eat soup like, what do you call that, porridge (made of rice). Sometimes with egg also. (Adrian, 38) |  |
| **Lunch:** Meat, cooked vegetables, rice and a soup<br>*Picture:* Rice fried fish, sweet potato and cabbage in a soup | *Lunch* of course we eat heavy meals, we eat rice, meat, fish, vegetable (James, 52)<br><br>*Lunch* I usually eat rice again and other other usual dishes like vegetables and meat like chicken (Adrian, 38) |  |
| **Dinner:** Often the same as lunch, consisting of meat, cooked vegetables and rice<br>*Picture:* Pork and vegetables in a soup with rice | *Dinner* so rice again and meat same. Sometimes pork, fried vegetable also. (Nico, 50)<br><br>*Dinner*, if still I prefer a lighter dinner, fried fish again and then a small amount of rice (Gonzalo, 58) |  |

*Table 8. A typical day's food consumption pattern*

The participants spoken to in this study consumed either five or six meals per day. The daily meal times can be seen in table 9.

| Time | Meal |
| --- | --- |
| 05:30 - 06:30 | Breakfast |
| 10:00 | Snack |
| 12:30 | Lunch |
| 16:00 | Snack |
| 18:00 | Dinner |
| 20:00 | Snack |

*Table 9. A typical time table of meal times*

There was some variation in what was eaten; this was particularly evident for breakfast and meriendas or snacks. For instance, sweet bread (called pan de sal) was sometimes substituted instead of rice for breakfast; which made the meal then bread, a fried egg, fried meat and coffee. Merienda (a snack) was where the greatest variation happened as this could be anything from shop bought goods such as biscuits to street food. The latter was a cheap way to buy a snack, and was in vast supply because of the sheer number of vendors. Examples of this food include: deep fried bananas in pastry or covered in sugar; dirty ice-cream (ice-cream made by an individual not in a factory); noodles; fish balls; and porridge (made from rice). The vendors could be found throughout Manila and provinces walking around the streets to find customers, or waiting on street corners at all hours of the day. They were particularly popular between the main meals.

*Picture 1 (left): Fish balls in sweet and spicy sauce from a street food vendor in Manila*
*Picture 2 (middle): Taho- tofu, tapioca ball and soya milk which is sold out of pales carried on the shoulders of the vendor as they walk around the streets shouting taho. People leave their houses with their own cups to get filled with the food.*
*Picture 3 (right): Halo-halo (translated as mix-mix) this is crushed ice, evaporated milk and then a variety of different fruits or crushed biscuits. This was bought from a street food vendor in Manila as an afternoon snack having been invited to someone's house for dinner*

### 4.2.2  The 'typical' eating practices

It is important to also understand how meals were eaten together, not just the food which individuals consumed. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were often eaten with others. Indeed it was rare for me to eat alone whilst in the Philippines, further results on the importance of commensality can be found in section 4.5. I frequently wrote about the emphasis on eating together in my ethnographic notes, this included the rituals, unspoken etiquette and ways in which food was served. The following is a compilation of my findings, describing how 'usual' meals were eaten inside and outside the house.

'Dinner' (or the equivalent meal) was shouted, followed by waiting for everyone to join. This could involve going out on the street to call the children in from playing basketball, or running upstairs to collect them together. I was usually the first to sit down, as I felt less in the way by sitting at the table. Once everyone was sat the

meal could commence. The families with whom I ate, often sat around the table on stools rather than chairs because then more of people could fit. These could be stacked away in the corner, saving room in the small living space. Food was placed in the centre of the table, a pot of rice with a plastic ladle and the viands (the word used by participants to describe a side dish) in bowls with a spoon. Plates, forks and spoons were placed in a pile for everyone to help themselves to, though these were often passed out by whoever was closest to them. Food was self-served, I usually waited for someone to serve themselves first, so I could try and gage how much I should put on my plate. There was no hierarchy over who went first. It was whoever reached out for the serving utensil first. This could be the mother, father, or children. Initially I had a guest status, meaning I was offered to serve myself first, however as I spent longer with the families this changed to anyone reaching for the ladle. When sat around the table everyone was equal. I presumed, wrongly, that with the patriarchal structures in other aspects of Filipino family life that men were maybe served first. Yet this was not the case.

Everyone knew the amount that they should take, without the need for explicit explanation. If it was rice and a small fish then you knew to only take a little and wait to see what was left. The rice too, one or two scoops to start off with to ensure that everyone had enough. The serving dishes were never empty first time round, instead there was some left in case someone was particularly hungry. If there was enough, you ate until feeling full, if not the available food was shared so everyone got something to eat. Rice was placed on the plate first, followed by the side dish of meat and vegetables. A little of the broth was then spooned onto the rice. This was important to remember, as it was 'the Filipino way' of eating. Therefore people were pleased when I performed this small act. I received exclamations of "wow you're eating like a Filipino now!". With our elbows touching around the intimate tables we could then consume the food. We ate with a fork and spoon, something which took me a while to get used to. Even in restaurants where knives were available, everyone ate this way and so I copied rather than use the knife. The side of a spoon was used to cut food, an action which again took

time to understand. I did not want to create distance in my eating practices and theirs by using different utensils.

Around the table we would talk about family life. "How were people's days?" "How did school go?" We exchanged stories, who we had met, the latest neighbourhood information, how hot it was outside, and what I had observed that day. It was a typical family affair, with one noticeable difference from what I may observe in the UK. Everyone ate what was in front of them, there were no dishes cooked specifically for one child because they did not like the main. Neither did I hear complaints about the dishes being served. The meal was a time for bonding, building relationships and talking; an idea which I build on throughout the results section.

I frequently ate out with families and people in the local community, eating practices in these situations mirrored those of eating in people's homes. The most common places I ate at were canteens. These were often on the bottom floor of buildings, with the families who owned them living in the flats above. Food here was cheap, around £1.20 for a cup of rice and a side dish. The typical canteen had plastic furniture, the kind you would often see on patios. The floors were bare concrete and the walls were either exposed or painted breezeblocks. The windows had bars over to prevent break-ins when the canteen was closed. Without the people and atmosphere they created, the bare canteen felt like a cold area to be eating in.

The day's viands were behind glass fronted, heated cabinets in large metal trays. Notably the dishes were rarely labelled so I would have to ask about each one. Once, as a group, we had decided on a few to share, the dishes would be put into little clear food bags. The type of bags you would commonly see for sandwiches in the UK. There was always a very large metal container full of rice with a cup for measuring out portions, where we would request the number we wanted for the table. The food was brought over to where we were sitting. A larger plate with the cups of rice piled up was placed in the centre, as were the viands in the plastic bags

placed inside bowls. We would turn the plastic bags of food into the bowls. Finally, we had our own spoons, forks and plates and could serve ourselves as we would in people's houses.

It was common in local eating places for friends of whoever I was eating with to join our table. Either we would offer our own food or they would bring extra sides and rice to share with the table. The canteens felt like communal spaces where people met with their friends after work, bumped into their neighbours, and exchanged stories about what was going on their in lives. The cold décor turned into a warm and sociable environment to spend time.

### 4.2.3  The importance of rice

It was evident that rice featured substantially in the Filipino diet, particularly during the main 3 meals of the day. The versatility of rice could be seen through experiencing it hot and cold, sweet and savoury.

The importance of this food could also be seen through the number of Tagalog words that exist to describe different types of rice and at different stages of production. To name a few:

- Kanin- cooked rice;
- Palay- Un-milled rice;
- Bigas- Milled rice;
- Bahaw- rice which has been left over;
- Sinangag- fried rice, a popular way to use and reheat rice from the day before.

It was eaten for main meals, dessert and snacks. Fast food chains had adapted their menus to include rice rather than French fries alongside a main dish. It was rare to find a restaurant where rice was not on the menu. Family run canteens of all sizes always had a vast pot of rice and a cup to measure it out, with consumers continually requesting more so their plates could be filled.  No matter the setting;

rice was almost always readily available. Most men ate it as part of each of their meals. There were a few variations in the opinions that men gave about what they ate, with some saying they tried to eat it only twice a day, switching out one meal for bread. Reasons behind this were often linked with being told by doctors or friends that they should reduce their rice intake to reduce the chances of getting diabetes or obesity. However, the overarching pattern was rice everyday three times a day, especially when looking at what men consumed compared with women. Therefore, the question became: why is rice so important in the Filipino diet?

Rice was readily available and in abundance in the Philippines with many provinces, where participants were from or spoke of, relying on rice production to sustain their population economically and nutritionally. The country was described as "*a rice granary*" (Gabriel, 70; Aaron, 36) and it was explained, "*we have so many farmers in the Philippines so rice is abundant so it's part of our meals, three times day, more than three times a day*" (Caleb, 35). I conversed with people who commuted to Manila from their province every day, others who had moved to the city permanently, those who still lived and worked in a province and those who were born and raised in Manila but whose ancestors were from a rural region. People spoke of agriculture and rice with pride despite their varying backgrounds and personal experiences of the physical production of the food. Rice was a product of the Philippines that people proudly ate and enjoyed.

The latter word of 'enjoyment' begins to show the more emotive side of eating rice. The food was not merely eaten because it was physically available, although this was an obvious contributing factor. There is a deeper cultural and often personal connection to rice. Eating rice was described as a part of being Filipino: "*Since I'm a Filipino, Filipinos loves to eat rice I eat rice in the morning and during lunch and dinner*" (Joshua, 29). This was in answer to "why do you think Filipinos eat a lot of rice?" The *love* for rice was spoken of often, both in prompted and impromptu moments. A family member noticing that I had seen them go for another cup of rice would be followed with "we love to eat rice!" This exclamation also occurred

when we ate out, upon seeing a large bucket of rice three men said how it would not take them long to finish it off because of their love for this food. This emotional connection with rice meant that it held more significance than just being a side dish, without it not only was the table of food incomplete but the men eating felt unsatisfied emotionally and physically. This was explained by a young graduate when he was asked what eating rice meant to him: "*Based on my experience ma'am, if I don't eat rice I think I'm weak and I'm not satisfied and that's all ma'am. I think if we eat rice we are satisfied and we're strong*" (Ethan, 21: it should be noted that ma'am is used as a sign of respect usually to people who are older, but also those who are viewed as being in a position of power).

This notion was used to describe physical strength and cognitive ability. It was not that the rice per se was coded as being a strong food; rather it was a substance which was believed to fuel the body. The mind-set of the majority of the people spoken to was that without rice they would not be able to function fully. They were often surprised when they asked me about my diet in the UK, where I explained about eating bread in different forms for breakfast and lunch. This was a frequent conversation due to people's curiosity of British life and it always led to the same reaction. They exclaimed that it was too little and they would not be able to function on just bread alone. This was such a surprise that people would tell each other about the lack of rice in my diet which was followed by further questioning over how I managed to have any energy. The men especially said that they would struggle to live in the UK if that was all we ate. The reason was linked with bread not being filling enough to sustain them. Rice, on the other hand, gave them the feeling of being full which they needed to feel so that they felt 'strong' and 'satisfied'. Rice in this sense was fuel and energy to get through the day.

It was often felt that without rice, especially for breakfast and lunch, they would be unable to conduct a normal day of work. Not having this food in a day was described as having an emotional impact on many of the men who were spoken to. Without rice men said they felt *unhappy*, *impatient*, *sad* and *lacking.* One conversation over a meal shared after a church service exemplified this point. It

was between a man who worked at an NGO, a female friend of his who was also helping to translate any Tagalog words into English and myself. Having noticed the presence of rice in every meal I had eaten with this church I asked about why it was important in particular to this man:

*Participant: Without rice I'm angry.*

*Female friend: That's true, they're angry! (My husband) say "You did not cook rice?!" Men like that so you have to cook rice. (Both laugh)*

(Aaron, 36)

Not only did there *have* to be rice, but also if the resources were available there had to be enough rice to feel full and so strong, satisfied and happy. In Manila I ate with a family at one of their typical dinners, we had rice, and soup (a clear broth like liquid) with vegetables and chicken. Once everyone had filled their plates the pot of rice was empty. Having finished his first plate of food, the father sent a family member to the canteen nearby to purchase a bag of freshly cooked rice. He explained that without the extra rice he would have felt sad and unsatisfied because he would not have been full. There was the sense that being full brought happiness, rice made them full so rice brought happiness too.

This connection between eating rice and positive emotions appeared to have its roots in childhood experiences, where everyone had eaten rice throughout their lives. Dietary preferences did change from childhood; the typical example was not enjoying vegetables as a child but that they now ate them. However, the enjoyment of rice was never ceasing. Carlos (age 40) explained this having been asked why he included rice in his diet during a sit down short interview: "*Because that's what we're used to ma'am because it's the staple. [Translator: he's eaten rice since he was a child, it's part of the culture being Filipino]*". Again, rice was associated with not just their diets but also linked to the overall Filipino culture. Although this was true for the majority of the men spoken to, a few pointed out that in some provinces where rice is less easily available they substitute it with cassava (a root crop), but this was a minority. For the majority rice was a constant throughout theirs and their ancestor's lives. Several of the men in this research had

migrated from provinces to Manila in order to find employment with a higher income than they could get farming.

Two in particular spoke of their childhoods in the provinces, Richard (age 40) and Gabriel (aged 70). The three of us met with their wives in Gabriel's canteen to have a final meal together the last week I was in the Philippines. Both of these men had been previously interviewed and the meal was meant as a goodbye, however, it turned into a conversation about their childhoods and growing up. The conversation was not recorded as it was a noisy environment; instead I kept notes of what they were saying. Both of these men had moved when they were young and initially lived on the streets or in poor accommodation until they managed to find work. During these times the majority of their meals consisted of rice due to its affordability. They agreed that the rice that was eaten in the city did not taste like the fresh produce that they grew in the provinces. They spoke nostalgically about the smell of the rice fields and the taste of the fresh food. They had both grown up in impoverished families which meant that food could be scarce and often consisted of a pot of rice with a small fish if they had the funds to buy this. I asked why then, if they now had the funds to buy other food, do they still choose rice? The answer was the same as given above, because it was a part of their culture and a food which they had grown up eating.

The same was said by those who grew up in the city. Several of the men in this study had grown up in Manila in poorer communities. Their diets reflected that of Gabriel and Richard, just with less fresh rice. For men such as James who lived in a small flat with his family, the recollection of meals with rice brought joy because of remembering sharing out one large pot of rice placed in the centre of the table. These conversations about rice and food, including the one with James, usually happened whilst eating together and discussing the food that we were consuming; since rice was almost always there it was discussed at length. The positive emotions felt and often fond memories associated with rice meant that it was also a comfort food, something eaten during stressful or emotional times. The following quote was from a young man working in his first office job, where he would often

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have 14-hour days. He also felt a lot of pressure to meet the targets given to him by his employer because of job uncertainty in the Philippines. After he had explained the stresses of his job I asked if there was any food that he particularly ate after a stressful day. "S*ometimes people get stressed and sometimes people when they get stressed, like me, I usually eat so much rice*" (Antonio, 24). This was the equivalent of comfort eating, and numerous people said that they ate more rice when they felt unhappy; and this was something that they had done since childhood.

Rice was evidentially a food consumed from childhood to adulthood, yet despite eating this food two or three times a day throughout their lives there was no sense of boredom around consuming it. In fact, I spoke with one family who had travelled around Europe and had taken a travel sized rice cooker with them so that they could still eat it whilst abroad. They recalled this during a meal with several other people, who all agreed that if there was a chance of not being able to cook rice in the country or region that they were travelling to they would have to take a rice cooker. This emphasised how integral rice was to diets, to the point where people were reluctant to substitute it with another food even whilst abroad.

Rice was not just an everyday food, but was also eaten at celebrations. During my research in the Philippines I was invited to attend meals to celebrate occasions such as wedding anniversaries, birthdays and Filipino holidays. One such invite was for a meal on the 22nd April. It was a significant event to attend, therefore ethnographic notes were written during the car journey home. It was to celebrate an anniversary for a large charity in the Philippines. I was invited along with a participant and his wife. The event involved speeches and a sit down meal in a hotel in Manila. The following is an extract from my research diary: *"I was expecting a three course meal when I was invited to this event, since it was built up to be so formal. I dressed and prepared myself as if I was attending such an event in the UK. After the speeches had finished dishes full of food were placed on a swivel centre plate which everyone would then share. We had deep fried fish in sweet and sour sauce, panceet (a noodle dish), egg fried rice with vegetables, sweet rice balls,*

*spring rolls and deep fried chicken. Still eaten with a spoon and fork though. We were offered either fizzy orange drink or cola, not alcohol. But toasting didn't seem to be a thing".*  This meal stood out for a number of reasons.

First it was a very formal event held in a prestigious location and was advertised as a sit down meal. From previous experience of such events in the UK this meant to me that we would be presented with individual courses. However, in the Philippines the sharing of dishes was still done in formal settings. It also made me reflect on not having assumptions about the structure of meals in different settings. Second, it was noted that there was rice at both formal and informal meals, showing its presence in every mealtime situation. This was highlighted in another conversation over a large group meal with an elder and well-respected man in the community explaining how he had attended a wedding where the couple wanted to be "*more Western*" so served salad and meats. But he and others around complained to each other about the lack of rice saying that the meal did not feel complete.

Being from the UK meant that people were critical of the food choices I made for similar reasons. I often felt that my eating habits were being as observed by them as much I was observing theirs. This was particularly evident whilst eating out at shopping malls, where there were large selections of food inspired from either the US or more traditional Filipino food. I was naturally more inclined to choose the pizza or pasta, whereas those with whom I ate would gravitate more towards the dishes that came with a side of rice. It was, again, at these moments where discussion would be around the differences in the two different diets, and how they would struggle with mine. Often they would try to understand why I ate the food I did. It was put down to them thinking of me being body conscious, explaining that people would substitute rice for bread if they wanted to go on a diet.  This was then linked with what they had seen on the television and adverts which had influenced their perceptions of Western diets believing that we calorie count. This explained why at the wedding there was disappointment over the lack of rice and why it had been linked with being more Western, because to them it

was associated with perceptions of people from the West restricting their diets through eating bread and salad. These foods were not thought of as being filling.

Rice was also eaten on special days out, including at the picnics I attended with families. We would go to a resort and eat Filipino picnic food. One such incident happened when I was invited to go with a group from a local community to a resort for a social gathering, the food preparation started the night before. We were staying in a church overnight. *"Last night was busy with Caleb cooking dishes for today's meal, I helped prepare them but there wasn't much I could do because I was worried about cooking it wrong! Got up to fried egg and rice again, it is difficult to eat at times since it's so heavy but I don't want to upset the people who have cooked it. I was not sure exactly what all the pots were that were being handed to me to put into the vans and side cars. Some were hot and others cold. We arrived to a resort which included pools surrounded by small shacks that could be rented out. We unloaded all the pans which turned out to be rice, cooked meats with vegetables and fried fish, which I had helped to prepare the night before. There were shared burners nearby where the men and women went to heat up the food. I was not expecting this to be classed as picnic food, but looking around it seemed each shack was eating the same foods. There were no signs of small sandwiches, it was rice again. All the food was placed in the centre table in the shack and then we all piled our plates full of food. Seconds, thirds, it felt like the food supply was endless and pans full of food kept heading over to the burners to be heated"* (Extract from notes, 2nd May 2016). Rice was always present, from the everyday meal to special events, and the absence was noted.

The reliance of rice in each mealtime made it a large part of many of the Filipino's diets and lives of those to whom I spoke. However, as some aged they began to question the health implications of eating such a large quantity of this food. Everyone knew someone who had been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes and had been told to reduce his or her rice intake, often to between half and one cup per meal. White rice was the most commonly eaten; brown and red were available to buy but were more expensive. Therefore, doctors were advising patients to reduce

their white rice intake.  Men contemplated over how difficult this would be, considering what an essential role this food had played in their diets over the years. The thought of reducing or replacing it with another food was met with the idea of the impossibility of the notion: "*it's very impossible for us to eat without rice, we cannot eat without rice… We can eat moderate meat and fish but it's hard for us to lessen the rice*" (Caleb, 35). This response came after the participant had spoken about the importance of rice to men. He explained that he thought that eating large quantities of rice was not good for his health. This idea was common amongst the people who were spoken with during the research. My ethnography notes were full of passing comments that individuals had made about the link between health and rice. Many of them had been told by doctors about the health implications of eating a large amount of white rice, which they said caused diabetes and weight gain. Men such as Gabriel, Richard and Gonzalo mentioned on separate occasions other men who they knew who had eaten a lot of this food which had, in their opinion, caused them to have diabetes and other diet related health complications.

Everyone I spoke to knew someone who had been diagnosed with high blood sugar. Richard, over one of the frequent meals I had at his house with his family, spoke of a local pastor who had died in hospital after having his leg amputated due to diabetes. Nico told similar stories, listing off people in his life or local community who had been affected by diabetes such as wives how had lost their husbands because he said *"the men, they eat too much rice even when the doctor told them to stop"*. Even having been diagnosed with an illness, men spoke of the difficulty they had faced when altering their diets. The wife of Gonzalo was sat next to him during the interview; her English was good so he felt more comfortable with her there to help him. She had explained earlier in the interview that her husband had Type 2 diabetes and that when they found this out they tried to work together to change his diet. The doctor had advised him to reduce his rice intake to one cup per meal.

*Interviewer: When you found out you had diabetes was it hard to change?*

*Gonzalo: Yes, difficult.*

*Interviewer: Is it hard?*

*Gonzalo: Yes very, very hard.*

This was despite having been diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes several years previously; he still found it difficult not to eat as much rice as he wished to during meals. I asked people throughout the research about where they got their knowledge from about the foods that they should or should not eat in order to be healthy. The first knowledge sources came from either first hand encounters with doctors telling them to change their diets or hearing what other patients had been told. The second source involved people bringing up their Facebook news feed and showing me the pages that they followed on there. The majority of these posts included a picture followed by text about the health benefits or implications of eating certain foods.

A conversation about this happened one night after a day of trying to recruit participants, four community members, two men, their wives and I went to a local mall for dinner. This was noted down in my research diary, the following are the written up observations during this meal. "*We went to a food court which was full of American, Filipino, and other Asian food stalls and kitchens, this provided us all with the ability to choose whichever food we wanted. As usual I went to buy pizza whilst my company bought rice dishes with fish, pork or chicken as the side. They commented on how the pizza was unhealthy, I then joked it was better than microwave ones. Their replies surprised me. Richard's wife said that I should not be using a microwave as the food heated up in there would cause me to have cancer because of the radiation. I asked them where they had heard this. They all replied that each of them had seen a post on Facebook about how using microwaves was causing a lot of cancer in the West. This then started the topic of information they received from the media, and started me asking others the same question of "where do you find out information about diets?"*" If they said about trying to reduce their rice intake then this raised the question "Where did you hear that you should do that?" Social media was a large source of information for many of the men in this study, who frequently recalled the posts that they had seen and talked

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about the information as fact. The negative effects of rice which had been read about were: *"Rice causes diabetes"* (Caleb, 35), *"White rice is bad but cheap, brown is a better but expensive"* (Gabriel, 70). Despite having this idea about rice, trying to reduce the quantity that was eaten was difficult.

The difficulty of reducing rice intake was related back to the need for rice in diets to feel satisfied and full. Rice was described as a heavy food, one which sinks to the bottom of the stomach and so can completely fill it. Bread on the other hand was seen as being a snack light food. If the food sank then people said they felt full, if it floated like bread then they were unsatisfied. This idea was mentioned several times when I had to go on strong antibiotics whilst in the Philippines, an experience that provided a valuable insight into the idea of heavy and light foods. On Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March having felt unwell for two days I decided to go to the doctor for a check-up, the following are written up notes from my research diary on this day*: I went to the doctor's to see what was causing the pain in my ears, it is a different system than in the UK, you just drop in, write your name on a list and wait. I got called in to see the doctor, not a very private room since children kept running in and out and the doctor was being handed presents during the consultation as it was her birthday. She decided that to clear up the problem I needed to go on the strongest antibiotics she could prescribe me, despite me asking if this was completely necessary. She said that the Philippines was polluted so when people are ill then need strong medication. I left having paid for the appointment and picked up the medication then went home. I had some bread and butter in my fridge and powdered soup which I was going to eat for lunch before taking the tablet. When I told my company this, (she came to check that I was ok), she said I should not eat that because it is not heavy. Bread would not sink and line my stomach. I should eat rice instead. I did not want to hear this being ill, and only wanting to eat comfort food from the UK. But she insisted that her and her husband would take me to eat at a local canteen to eat food which would make me better. I really did not want to go but did not want to be insulting. They picked me up and we went to the canteen where they then ordered food. It was beef and marrow cooked in a clear liquid with vegetables and rice. At this point my stomach sank,*

*especially when I saw them mashing up the rice with the stock. I tried to politely say that I would rather go and buy something else. However, they insisted that this was the food that would make me better. Rice gave energy to fight off the illness unlike bread, and would line the stomach so that the antibiotics would not upset it. At this point a medical professional came and joined us at the table, someone who I became familiar with over the research. The husband and wife explained what had happened and the medical professional said "yes, you must eat rice to line the stomach, it sinks daba (doesn't it)?" They explained that this was the advice given to their patients by the medical personnel in their surgery. My company all said that I was in a hot country where you have to eat more food than in colder countries because the heat meant that you needed more food for energy because in this climate you burnt off the food faster. Hence since I was ill in a hot country I would need to eat more than if I was at home. At this point I realised that I would just have to try and eat some then go home and eat what I wanted.* This example suggests that the advice about eating rice when ill was held by both of the medical professionals.

Rice being heavy was brought up in conversations about why men ate the foods that they do for meal times. Rice was often compared to bread when it came to the heaviness of the two foods; bread was classed as being light and so participants thought that it would not provide the energy needed to last them until lunch. The following are responses to being asked why they ate rice as a part of their diets.

*"Rice is very heavy. So when you're working for hours you feel like you're still full."* (Joshua, 29)

*"Bread, but if I have to go somewhere I eat heavy meals, rice, rice for breakfast."* (Oliver, 21)

*"At breakfast I eat rice, of course I need a heavy meal for for my, of course we have study here so I have to eat heavy meal so then at lunch same"* (Mark, 27)

 *"Lunch of course we eat heavy meals, we eat rice, meat, fish, vegetable."* (James, 52)

*"Well actually rice because as I Filipino really work more physically and they feel that rice can disgust to more than the bread. It will stay more before we change from breakfast to lunchtime so we will still energised so we will still more be strong to face your challenges in the day."* (Jose, 59)

The first four responses here include the word heavy and this is a positive idea for these men. It meant that they could work and concentrate better, be more physically active, and full. The final one compares rice and bread again, in this quote he is talking about how he thinks that rice provides more energy than bread when it is digested. Again he is describing the connection between rice and energy. Joel did not like rice for the same reason, it being heavy: *"I think it's already our, we have it in our culture from our past generation for me eating rice is too heavy"*. He went on to say that as he grew older he was trying to become more health conscious which meant eating lighter meals throughout the day. Both the personal experience of being unwell and the quotes given above suggest that for the participants and people who were spoken with in this study rice was thought of as being heavy. This could provide a potential explanation as to why attempting to alter diet through substituting rice for another food item was difficult.

Soon into doing the research it became clear that many of the people who I spent time with relied on rice heavily during their meals and it was during conversations about this subject area and observations about eating patterns that gender differences in eating practices began to emerge. The following incident occurred on the first night of being in the Philippines, having been picked up from the airport my gatekeeper offered to take me out for dinner*: We went to a restaurant in Makati. In this restaurant they have 'kanin all you can' which translates as 'all you can eat rice'; the observations that I made about the tables around me suggested that there were gendered differences in the quantity of rice that they ate. There were two different coloured plates, one which indicated one serving of rice and another meant a continuous supply. Each time someone raised their hand a man with a large bucket would come and add an extra cup of rice to their plates. The viand (side dish with the rice) did not increase; this was carefully divided up so*

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*that there would be some left until the last serving of rice. Each person would also be given soya sauce, a small chili and a calamansi (a small citrus fruit similar in taste to a lime) with a small dish to make a personal sauce to have with the rice and dish.*

It was whilst eating out in such places where there was an obvious gender divide, every man in the restaurant as I looked around had the all you can eat plate, whereas women were more inclined towards the other. There were some women who chose the former, however, they only asked for one or two additional servings. The men on my table averaged four to five cups in total. This pattern continued even when we were not in the all you can restaurant and instead in ones where extra portions had to be ordered. In this case men's trays would have their main dish, often pork and chicken with rice, and then one or two separate smaller plates with extra cups of rice. When asked about this gender difference in rice consumption men felt that it would be harder for them to reduce their rice intake than women would: "*I think women can eat without rice. But men it's impossible to eat without rice. Always with rice in the side*" (Marcus, 40), this was in response to being asked if he thought there were any differences between men's and women's diet. This again highlights something of the psyche of men in relation to rice consumption. It suggests that the men in study believed that it was impossible to eat without rice. This again highlighted the difficulty that would be encountered in trying to change their rice consumption.

Gendered eating in relation to rice was less related to the food being eaten, rice was not coded as being masculine or feminine, and instead the quantity of rice eaten could be linked back with the way that people showed their gender through their eating practices. This was shown in the *'kanin all you can'* mentioned above. Some of the men in this study linked being able to consume large quantities of rice with being masculine, and many men who were spoken to proudly told me or laughed at the number of cups which they could eat in one sitting. This became such a common area to discuss that I brought it up in interviews and conversations through asking how many cups of rice they ate and then seeing any associated

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responses that they gave, such as being proud, or boastful. Being proud to eat fives cups of rice per meal was a response given when asked about rice intake. I asked Edward (age 51) about how much rice he ate with each meal during an interview *"depends on the size of the cup [he laughs]. I can eat five cups, imagine five cups per meal. Breakfast, lunch and dinner, five! It makes me strong"* this was followed by a slight flexing of the arm muscle and the comment "*I need to eat a lot to be strong*". The following quote came from a conversation about what James usually ate. He explained previously that it was usually rice two to three cups of rice for every meal, sometimes bread but that was rare *"But we usually practice eating rice and we feel very strong if we eat rice".* Both of these men linked the consumption of rice with strength.

One reason given to explain why men who gave similar answers felt this way was about perceptions of the body, something which is explored further in a later results section. The people who were spoken to said that women were more body conscious so reduced their rice intake depending on their perceptions of their body shape. This was also the reason why both men and women spoke of how, when women wanted to lose weight, they would switch rice out for bread: "*It depends if the woman take a diet, isn't it, so she'll prefer for eat for breakfast until lunch bread only. While the man is always rice. Pork and rice always"* (Marcus, 40). In a standard meal within the house women would eat half to one and a half cups of rice compared with men's' two to three. The idea of women being body conscious was often mentioned when participants were asked if there was a difference between what men and women ate. This view was also expressed by John (age 28): *"Because the intake of food of the man is larger than the intake of woman because maybe because of the physical activities they need to eat large amounts of rice or large amounts of carbohydrates for their daily activities then for women maybe small because some time they are under the social influence that diet or sexy... or whatever".* This suggests further differences between the diets of men and women due to the men's perceptions of the social influences that women felt. Also that John, who worked in an office, assumed that he would need to consume more food because of being more physically active.

Rice consumption for men was linked with strength, energy, stamina; each of these can be related to language associated with typically masculine qualities. This linked with the second explanation of why men ate more rice than women due to the fact that rice acted as a fuel which men needed more of because they needed more energy: "*For me, we are eating more rice because we need more energy*" (Michael, 24). This was said by a man who worked in an office, not manual labour, similar to John's comment above. Yet his perception remained that despite doing the same office work as a woman, men would need more rice for energy. Joshua added to the idea of men needing fuel in the following way after being asked if he had any phrases about food in his life: "*Food is like, when you **compare man to machine, machine use fuels,** fossil fuels just to function like cars. Also my moto in life if you want to have a **strong solider** you have to feed them. Even if they are good if their stomach is aching they cannot perform well*". The language here can be classed as being masculinised, with the linking of the male body to a machine which needs to be fuelled and again the relationship between food and strength. The fuel he was talking about in this quote included rice, which he had previously explained to be an important energy source for him.

The theme of gender continued to the cooking of rice too. In the house the cooking of rice as a chore separated from the cooking of meals: "*I have a wife then I will do the chores for her, so I will be the one to prepare the food, the rice…*" (Ramon, 24) and "*here in the Philippines men and women do same thing. Even my kids have been training to cook rice, wash dishes and even ironing clothes*" (Alberto, 52). These represent two important points. First, the separation of rice from the cooking to other foods shows the normality, the everyday nature of this food. It is a task which is carried out every day, like the washing of dishes. Second, is the emergence of men and women doing the same domestic tasks including cooking meals, preparing and the purchasing of food. This is a significant area which will be discussed in a later section. Within the house in many of the families I spent time with domestic tasks, which may be feminised in other cultures, were not viewed as such and men performing these chores did not report feeling emasculated. This

was a part of family life, helping to cook the rice and meals which was significant to many men who were spoken with in this study.

### *4.2.4  Summary*

The results I have presented in this section show the importance of rice in the Filipino diet. It was not just a food which was consumed; there was an emotional connection with it. People enjoyed eating rice which is why it was eaten at almost every meal. There were other interesting ideas, such as it being a heavy food, which was more filling than lighter ones. It embodied Filipino values, a food which could be continually split so everyone present could have some food. Finally, the consumption patterns of individuals could reflect their gender through the quantities that they ate. This section provided some background of the participant's diets and reasons for their eating patterns. In order to further understand the relationship between masculinity and eating practices, first it is important to understand how participants described and enacted what masculinity meant to them.

## 4.3  Gender and masculinities

### 4.3.1  Introduction

The overarching aim I developed for this project was to explore the relationship between masculinities and eating practices amongst Filipino men living in the Philippines, then evaluating if this could explain the diet related public health issues that are currently on the rise. In order to explore this idea a background of the ideas around masculinity need to be understood, since dietary practices in previous studies have been related to wider ideas surrounding the construction of gender. In the following section I present data on masculinity construction, enactment, gendered relations and language used around each of these. This provides the understanding needed to explore masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines.

### 4.3.2  Gender in the Philippines

In the area of the Philippines that was studied and amongst the men and women spoken to, there was a general consensus that overall the Philippines had high levels of gender equality. This was particularly related to increased access to employment, and the subsequent rise in the number of women in the workplace. I asked participants and their wives about what they thought about women's role in the economy. This first quote was a conversation between two women during an informal interview with a participant. The four of us were sat down after lunch and we were discussing the chores that men and women did within the households that they had observed and if this had changed over time. The consensus between the two women and man (who although he was not speaking at this time was nodding during the conversation) was that there had been a positive change in women having access to employment and subsequently men participating more within the household.

*Jocelyn: Now we accept, before like that, but that's why his father's work is like that. The hard work about cooking. And that's his father's work but nowadays it is accepted that if the woman gets work and man doesn't have work the man will do the household chores. There's agreement. By this time it's accepted.*
*Rosa: So if the mother is not available to cook the father will cook.*
*Interviewer: So now, has it changed? Has it changed over time?*
*Jocelyn: Yeah there's a change because all of before the father is the one working.*
*Rosa: The farm.*
*Jocelyn: Whatever work and the mother's the one who's left with the children to do the household but now because education is, we give high regards to education right? And now many women were educated so women also work like the women graduated college so she will not just stay at home and do the household chores because she has a skill she has the ability to work so now a days men and women both accepted that if your wife is a college graduate and able to work in a company or whatever she's allowed to work.*

In this conversation Jocelyn linked employment with increasing education for women. Another explanation expressed by some men about why there were increasing employment rates for women was that over time the Philippines economy had weakened. This meant that families needed as many people to have an income in order to have enough financial resources to pay for basic amenities. This idea was explained by Paul (age 70), an elderly and well respected gentleman in the local community in which I was living in Makati. It was an unexpected encounter which I wrote up in my research notes. We started talking about how he had travelled to the UK when he was younger because the economy was strong enough for him to afford it. However, it had weakened over time which meant that he would no longer be able to. I asked what impact this had had on the wider Filipino population. He explained that now everyone had to work including women. Before he thought that the traditional Filipino life was that men work on the farm and women look after the children, an idea also discussed above by Jocelyn and Rose. This had also changed though now that the economy was moving away from farming.

Changes over time about women's role in the workplace and house were also explained by Gabriel. However, he described it as a weakening economy meaning that women were now having to help their husbands, implying that it was still primarily the man's responsibility to have employment. *"There's a big change,*

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*because before wife does not work in the office. Now they allow the wives to work to help the husband. So that's the big change. Because of economic situation the husband cannot support the family so they allow their wife to work to sustain their needs".* This suggests that there was still language being used and ideas held which indicates that there was still some gender inequality in the Philippines. Gabriel went on to explain that corruption was also to blame for the need to women to work. It had particularly affected low socioeconomic groups in society as funds which should have been providing help for this group were instead benefiting those in higher socioeconomic positions. He explained that this was why it was more important in lower income earning families for everyone to work.

At the same time as trying to increase employment, higher education for women was encouraged. This was why when driving around Manila I observed on the side of universities and schools large posters showing the latest graduates and many of the highest-ranking students were women. There was no surprise over this by my participants since in almost every family the wives and daughters had been educated to the highest degree that the family could afford. Although primary and secondary schooling was free the added expenses of school uniform and transport was the main limiting factor in access to education, and not gender. The combination of access to education and employment led to increased acceptance over women being more visible in the public space. This meant that it was common to see women in the workplace in positions of power. Whenever this subject was discussed men did not indicate any negative feelings towards a female member of staff being their superior as explained by Caleb a primary school teacher: "*For example my co teacher is only 23 years old but she is the position is higher than me, so I must follow and respect her so based on the chain of command I must follow her, even though I am 10 years older than her, I must follow*." The acceptance of women in higher positions was observed in the workplaces that I was invited to visit by participants in the study. This involved places such as a university and IT consultancy firm. In both of these there were female superiors that men spoke of. I did not directly question men about their opinion of having a female superior.

However when we discussed their work and colleagues the men never made negative comments about this.

There were occupations that people continued to categorise as 'men's work'. This was usually physically exerting labour such as construction workers or pedicab drivers; or more dangerous occupations such as jeepney or taxi drivers and police officers. These jobs meant that men were more visible in public spaces such as streets, which at first was misleading as it had been assumed that the 'women stay at home, men work' idea was true in the Philippines too. However, it was that these jobs required men to stand on street corners waiting for work or patrolling the streets as in the case of policemen. They were also described as being dangerous by women such as Rose and Jocelyn that was why they thought that men were more likely to do them. That being said, all shopping malls and many of the shops which I visited had both male and female security guards. It was so visible that I noted it down as a point of interest. Compared with, say, the UK there was a much more even split of men and women in this occupation, one which could typically be viewed as being a masculine job. Women were more visible running smaller businesses, those inside of buildings such as canteens, corner shops and launderettes. On average I ate at canteens or small restaurants 5 times a week. This meant that I could not only observe what the people who were with me ate but also the environment in which we ate. These canteens were often run by families with both men and women cooking, clearing tables and running the stall. Although women were not as visible in the public space of streets they were inside businesses.

From the results above, I initially believed there to be high levels of gender equality, however on further scrutiny of the results I found that there were subtler ways through the language used about gender that meant the idea of complete gender equality was questioned. The quotes said by Jocelyn and Gabriel used above to indicate changes in employment in a positive manner also show a concept of 'allowance'. They both say that in order for women to participate in the public space they still required men to allow them to do so. Jocelyn was a highly educated

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dentist who grew in Manila. In the following extract she indicated that although there were changes to gender relations and equality, women still needed to be allowed to work.

"*So now a days men and women both accepted that if your wife is a college graduate and able to work in a company or whatever she's* **allowed** *to work.*" (Jocelyn, 50) (Emphasis added by researcher)

Again further examination of Gabriel's quote showed that he used the same language of how women were now allowed to work by their husbands: *"Now they* **allow** *the wives to work to help the husband. So that's the big change"* (emphasis added by researcher).He was a café owner in Manila, who had grown up in the province. He often compared the current gender relations with those he experienced when he was young.

Both of these used the concept of allowance which implied that women still needed permission from men to work, indicating that although initially the Philippines looked like it had equal employment and educational access for men and women, there were subtler ways in which men still have dominance in society. Interestingly both men and women used language around permission to work. Additionally, these two participants had opposing backgrounds, one came from a province the other from Manila, and there was twenty years between them. Yet they still used the same language of allowance. This was a common turn of phrase with regards to men giving women permission to participate in activities, one which was heard on a regular basis throughout the research. Phrases such as "I wouldn't allow my wife to go out after 10pm" or "My husband don't allow me to wear tight clothing" were said in passing but held significance when looking at power relations between genders. The Philippines was described by participants as being historically a patriarchal society but in recent years there has been social movement away from this.

### 4.3.3 Masculinities

Throughout the research there was the constant question over what masculinities look like in the Philippines and how are they enacted in everyday activities. Researching this alongside the main aim of the project provided a basis to then build understanding of men's relationships with food. It is central to theories of masculinity and gender, in that genders are shown through the everyday actions of an individual (Swenson, 2009; Mroz et al., 2010). They are informed through social and cultural occurrences around them. Therefore, in this section masculinities are explored through discussing how they are enacted and what influences how they are constructed. This is a huge area to study because of the magnitude of factors that influence gender construction. The topics written about below represent some of the significant influences and observations on masculinity that were found during this research. It has been acknowledged that this does not cover every aspect of Filipinos men's lives; however it does provide information which can be specifically related to diets in subsequent sections.

### 4.3.4 Religion

For the participants in this study religion, mainly Christianity, played an important role in everyday life, and also informed people about gender relations. The importance of Christianity was visible throughout the research in the Philippines, not only in what people said but also what was observed whilst travelling around different areas both walking and on public and private transportation. The following descriptions of the visibility of Christianity in everyday life are written up from notes in my research diary on different occasions and have been then collated together. During my time in the Philippines I caught taxis, jeepneys, sidecars and buses. Many of these had rosaries hanging from their rear view mirror. Jeepneys especially often had woven signs across the inside of the window with sayings such as: "in God we trust". Canteens that I ate in at had bible verses printed off and displayed on the walls. I also observed on a regular basis icons or

statues of saints being paraded down the streets or sang to at the side of roads when it was their saint's day. These days were sometimes public holidays. Whilst walking around the streets of Manila and provinces that were visited I noted down the high presence of religious buildings. These were of all denominations, and ranged from converted garages to large and grand buildings. The congregations too ranged from ten worshipers to a thousand depending on the church. The presence of religion spread into private spaces too. In every house that I visited to have a meal with a family or to interview a participant there was a religious icon, crucifix, bible, or sign with a bible verse somewhere in the house. Before the meal times in the public and private spaces it was common to give grace before eating. The importance of religion in everyday life was highly visible in the areas of the Philippines that I visited. It was also observed and written down in the ethnographical notes and spoken about during interviews.

The Bible was often quoted when discussing family life, social relations and the role of men within this. It guided their understanding of gender relations and power within this. Some of the participants in this study interpreted the Bible as God saying that men should be in charge of household and that ultimate decision-making power should rest with them. This opinion was expressed particularly succinctly by Caleb during a conversation about family life and the roles of the husband and wife: *"Based on biblically speaking so man should stand as the head of the family and the woman should just support not just follow but respect her husband"* (Caleb, 35). He later went on to say that it was important for there to be mutual respect within the couple, but still believed that the man should be head of the household.

It was during conversations around my own relationship status that views on marriage were particularly expressed. One of the first questions that was often asked was if I was planning on getting married one day, having answered yes they would describe to me married life and what it meant in the Philippines. This again involved religion. I was regularly quoted the following bible verse by men and women *"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord"*

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which is taken from Ephesians 5: 22. This was the justification for a wife submitting to her husband when married. It is a language of submission and dominance, which is guided by religious teachings. I experienced these teachings first hand whilst attending church services every Sunday during the research. This was important in order to be more accepted within the communities that were being studied, and also provided some interesting insight into the teachings within the church and how these impacted on everyday interactions.

One service in particular related to how religious teachings could impact on the formation of masculinity, therefore after the service I wrote up the experience. On Sunday 20th March I attended a provincial church service. It was a simple church made from concrete with about 50 people who attended. The speaker was in his late thirties and had chosen to give a talk entitled "what is man?". His speech was in Tagalog, however he had translated the slides into English and I had someone who sat next to me interpreting his talk. He started off by explaining the origins of men and women. He preached about how creationism was correct because the Bible said that man was made in the image of God and that God did not look like an ape so evolutionism was wrong. At this point I had a number of people lean forward and ask for my beliefs on this matter, since they thought people from Western backgrounds believed in evolution, something that they frowned upon in this church. I attempted to avoid the question so as to not cause a stir during the service. Once he had established that creationism was correct he went on to talk about the origins of man, through the story of Adam and Eve. He focused on the fact that man (Adam) was made in the image of God and how woman (Eve) had been created from Adam's rib. Upon reflection of this moment, I noted the difficulties of having differing beliefs from those who were being studied, especially when after the service they were becoming quite passionate about how Western style education was wrong teaching children about evolution and not creation. The overall impression gained was that men were like God, whereas women were secondary to this as they were made from a part of a man. The church service attended was in the middle of the research and it reinforced the research themes that had started to develop about the large impact that religious teachings had on

continuing a hierarchy of men and then women in relation to overall dominance in society.

Religion, to some degree, has been used to explain why there is still a patriarchal power structure in the Philippines, which means that overall men could justify having more dominance in relationships than women. This view was given by the majority of men when discussions around relationships arose. Religion, however, was thought of as becoming less influential than perhaps it was for the older generations, with elders in the community saying that the youth were less likely to go to church. Instead in these instances the way that their family structure was in their childhood could aid understanding on how men now constructed their masculinities in relation to women.

### 4.3.5  Relationships and power

Equality in relationships was expressed as being very important; indeed, it was participants themselves who brought up concepts and words such as equal relationships and equality between the genders. Many of the participants in this study who were married felt that in their own relationships there was equal partnership. This was attributed to the equal division of household labour, which is explained in a later section; also the fact that they encouraged their wives to work and daughters to be educated. These are visible acts, which initially gave the general appearance of gender equality in the Philippines. This made researching masculinities challenging, because the obvious actions which may be attributed to dominant masculinities in societies, such as limited opportunities for women in the workplace, were not observably present in this country. It was not until more time was spent within families and personal experiences of the way men spoke to me, did the underlying gendered structures become more apparent. One such moment is shown in the conversation between Marcus, the translator and I. Before this we had been talking about relationships and marriage. They had asked me about how it was in the UK and how husbands and wives treat each other in my country. I

avoided answering these questions until they had spoken about their own experiences, so as not influence what they said too much. Therefore, I asked what he thought about marriage in the Philippines and decision-making. Previous to this we were discussing the differences between older and younger generations where he had mentioned that he thought men and women were equal.

*I: What about gender equality?*

*Marcus: I think the point of view in husband and wife I think they should [be] equal. So they can understand each other sharing their thoughts about the issues and responsibilities of the whole family and their relationship also.*

*I: So if you have to make a decision who gets the final say?*

*Marcus: **Of course the man.***

*I: Is that common?*

*Marcus: Yeah what the man said the wife will **submit**.*

*Translator: They will have discussion.*

*Marcus: But in the end of the day **the man is still the final word**. Man should give the last word in the family.*

(Emphasis added by the researcher)

The language used here again shows the presence of words such as submission when talking about the decision making process that occurs between men and women, in addition the 'of course the man' represents how in this participant's mind this was the social norm in the Philippines. The aforementioned quote represents the overall impression gained throughout the research with relation to the role of men in relationships and family, especially the idea of the man having the final word. It was not only described in such conversations but observed on a daily basis. The following three examples involving the purchase of a car, catching a bus and choosing a restaurant were extracted from my research diary, which highlight typical decision-making patterns that I observed whilst conducting the research. One morning, over breakfast a husband and wife were discussing purchasing a new car. They had the funds to do so but needed to choose the exact model. There was a long discussion over the advantages and disadvantages of

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different cars that they had found on the internet. It ended with the husband saying he wanted to buy the Toyota, and so that was the car that was purchased. On another instance a husband, wife, their family and I were sat drinking coffee together in a community hall in a province. We had travelled out there to see their friends and family. During this time they were discussing which bus to catch home, a simple daily decision. However, the wife suggested one time, the husband another, and again it was the husband's choice of bus that we caught. In relation to food I ate with families or members of the community every day, and the decision making over where to eat often followed similar patterns to the ones mentioned above. It was common, when I was joining a participant's family for a meal outside of the house for us to walk around, passing different canteens and restaurants, or market stalls then discuss what food we wanted to eat that night. Everyone could contribute the food choice that they wanted, yet if the husband or elder man in the group said that he wanted to eat in a certain place or a certain food then that was what was done.

The overall impression gained and observed followed the patterns listed above for the socioeconomic group of men who were being studied in these communities. It does not mean that all Filipino relationships were like this, or that every decision made was made by the men, women made their own decisions and openly shared their opinions with the men. As Marcus above said, equality was linked with this, about women being able to express their views to their husbands and discuss matters that would affect the family. However, the observations did reflect the 'man had the final say' which was described in conversations and interviews that were had.

Husbands and male members of the family also showed dominance in controlling how women presented themselves outside of the house. This was something that I personally experienced on a regular basis whilst out in the Philippines. Being foreign I tried to dress appropriately for the culture I was studying, this meant dressing modestly in an attempt to draw less attention to myself. Yet, I still chose to wear basic make-up, as I did not consider this would be a problem in the

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communities that I was studying. In the beginning this was not commented on, leading me to assume in the first few weeks that this was acceptable. However, as relationships grew between myself and those in the communities studied, men and women began to voice their opinions. On multiple occasions participants' wives would say to me, "my husband doesn't like me wearing that much makeup outside of the house". The husbands then, on separate occasions, echoed this opinion, "if you were my wife I would say don't wear makeup unless for special occasions". This did not cause me to feel chastised, as it was merely voicing their points of view. Once enough trust was built between myself and the participants I began asking them why they felt this way, it seemed too much of an accusative response to say in the initial stages of the research.

Two particular conversations stood out in response to this question, which I wrote up in my research notes as they were not in appropriate settings to record. The first was with a wife of Richard whilst travelling home from grocery shopping on Wednesday 9th March. She mentioned my make-up and how her husband would not like her to wear it. I asked "why?" She explained that she thought most men in the Philippines were helpful in the house, would cook and clean, which was an advantage of marrying one. But, that I would not be able to cope with it because of not having the independence I was used to with my appearance. To her, it seemed like a compromise, having a helpful husband or personal freedom to express your personality through outward appearances. She went on to ask "What do your father and boyfriend think of you wearing it?" To which I replied that they did not have much say on the matter. I often reflected on how difficult it could be in an informal setting to refrain from voicing my opinion so as to not upset the community members I was researching. My response clearly surprised her as she went on to ask "what if they said you can't wear it?" I explained that I had not encountered that before so was unsure what I would do. I did not wish to influence any further the opinions that they may have been forming about me being overly independent.

The second was a conversation with Caleb after a Sunday church service he saw me apply Vaseline to my lips. At which point he again commented that when he married his wife, he told her that he only wanted her to wear clear lipstick and no eyeshadow unless it was a special occasion. Again I asked why. He said "I do not like her going out the house with it because men might look at her and she is my wife. Like you, if you get married your husband might say don't do it, right?" I stated that I would still wear makeup. He looked slightly shocked and replied "what about your husband, he will let you?" This was again a man who proudly said that he helped in the house, cooked as many meals as possible and helped with childcare. However, this conversation again showed the relationship between genders in the Philippines, and how many of the Filipino men and women with whom I spoke during this research described the different ways that men controlled certain situations.

The idea of control over certain situations was highlighted on Friday 25th March after attending a community gathering which was written up straight after the encounter. We had ice-cream and sweet bread as a snack, something that was commonly done after a gathering. A group of five, three men, one woman and myself were sat talking whilst others slowly said their goodbyes and left. These were four people who I had spoken to several times. As it quietened down they began to ask me questions about my life in the UK, ones which they seemed to be too embarrassed to ask when it was more crowded. The topic of relationships came up again, this time about me going out with friends and whether my partner was happy with me to do so. One of the men asked, "I know people in the UK go out drinking, do you?" I replied honestly saying that yes my friends and I would go out for a drink after work. He said "and your boyfriend, he comes with you?" I said "no I go by myself with my friends" not thinking much of this. A second man then joined in and asked what about if there were boys there too. At this point I began to realise that the conversation was following a similar pattern to the previous two about having to get permission around certain areas of life. So again, I explained that he would not mind if I went out and had drinks even if there were boys in the group too. This was obviously different to the expectations of the woman and

three men who were there, but I felt like these exchanges were useful throughout the research to hear what different people would do in such circumstances. The woman said, "my husband wouldn't like me to go out if there was men there unless he came too", one man said "I don't let my wife go out with a group with men too". The restriction of certain actions suggested that men could still dominate situations.

It was not just the husbands and elder men who tried to influence the way that women portrayed themselves, younger men had strong ideas about this too. I went swimming with a group of 20 in a resort, the women wore shorts and a loose top for modesty. Yet, when I left the pool a younger male member of the family whom I was with handed me my shawl to cover up further, as did husbands for their wives. On another occasion when I sat down, rather than crossing my legs, I rested my right ankle on my knee. I was wearing jeans so did not think that this would be an indecent way to sit. However, this was thought of as being a masculine way to sit, so a twenty-year-old came and told me that women should not sit like that. These micro level gender relations were particularly poignant to observe when looking at power plays between the genders. It was through observing and having conversations about this area of life that the initial impression of gender equality began to be questioned. The men in this study controlled the private space through the continuation of the practice and norm that men make the final decisions for the family. This included both the larger financial decisions down to the appearance of their family. Gender equality, as participants described it was linked with access to public space areas for women.

### 4.3.6 Masculinities between and amongst social groups

The background of the men studied needs to be considered, because there is more than one way to display masculine qualities depending on the social group being studied, a concept which was observed during this research. The background of the men inevitably varied to some degree; however, there were some factors which I

tried to keep consistent amongst the participants who were specifically a part of the study. I did also speak with people who were in a different position to those being researched as these provided a more comprehensive understanding of masculinities in the Philippines. The characteristics of the participants chosen were that they had some level of education, whether that was formal or informal. If they grew up in provinces they were more likely to have had a lower level of education than those who grew up in the city. More important than this was that they had enough income to have choices over what they ate and have a place of residence, but also needed to budget their spending. The participants all lived with family. This was viewed as the typical lower-middle socioeconomic family in the Philippines. The definition for this group was also verified by confirming these characteristics with my gatekeeper.

In this socioeconomic group masculine qualities were related to providing for the family through financial contributions. The majority of men in this study, both the fathers and sons, still felt that they had a responsibility to the family to have an income to support the wife and other children. They would proudly speak of, in their opinion, the ingenuity of the Filipinos in finding ways to make money. This was brought up during a conversation where I asked Marcus why there were so many street food sellers, small shops (like a corner shop on the ground floor room of a house) and canteens. He said "*Filipinos loves to eat, a good way to make money is selling food in every way. We are very creative. We find ways to make money. Filipinos are, what's the word, resourceful*" (Marcus, age 40: taken from notes written during in conversation). However, he later went on to describe that he also felt it was important for men to have a job and not just rely on the wife. The same opinion was voiced by Edward (age 51). His wife ran a small shop from their house, which sold soft drinks and small packets of food such as biscuits and sweets. He particularly expressed the view that a husband who did not work was lazy and a not a good man. This was linked to his masculinity and could be seen through the body language he used when discussing this. He would sit up tall when saying what a man should be or act like, and would then follow this by saying that

he fitted within this group. He did say that he thought it was important to him and his wife that she should run the business.

Although this was the experience for the men and women spoken within this study, they did say that it was becoming more acceptable for women to be the sole income earner and for the husband to stay at home. I noted down one conversation between Richard and his wife whilst they were talking about this topic they agreed on the opinion "who cares if the man work or the woman work, it's what's good for the couple". Although this view was expressed, the men in this study felt that it was important for men to provide financial support for their families. This was often not directly stated, however, some men spoke indirectly about the link between earning money and being a man. The following three quotes represent this idea. The first one was in answer to the question, "why is food important?" this was during an informal interview in the man's place of work. *"So I believe that food is very essential because without food a **man** cannot earn for his **honour** for his family. That man cannot support"* (John, 28). For John being able to work and provide for the family brought with it honour. He also specifically relates earning back to men, rather than saying, for instance, "without food a person cannot earn".

The second quote was Joel explaining the problems with trying to buy food for the family: *"Here what is important is you understand. You try to understand the means the husband is earning of course if you're husband is just earning a small amount for the food of course you have to understand that"*. Again he is relating men with earning the money in the family compared with both the husband and wife. The third quote from Ian was about the roles of men and women in the Philippines: *"...in our culture the husband or the man is the one who works and the wife stays at home, takes care of the children... But the father is the provider, he works for them, and it's... it's... it's their way of showing their love for their husband"*. This more indicative of the gender stereotypes which were discussed during my time in the Philippines. It was often viewed that men from the provinces

or in the older generations were likely to hold this view, however, it was still present in some of the younger men.

The 'who cares' would be expressed on one day followed by them showing how, for them, this way of providing was linked to their masculinity, although this was not often directly stated. For instance, Richard (age 40) had previously voiced his opinion that it was fine now for men to just work at home. Yet, one day we were walking to have dinner at their house. On the way we saw three men, sat on fold out seats at the side of the street playing chess together. At this point Richard turned round and said, *"Those men are very lazy and bad, they should be working not playing. Their wife must be very tired working"*. These were men who were unknown to the participant. In this case the contradiction was evident, that the men who were not working were emasculated by the participant who linked being a good husband and father with having employment.

The people who I spent time with, ate with or interviewed were almost always from a lower-middle socioeconomic group. Once the data was coded, I noticed patterns within the opinions that men from this group gave on masculinity and the role of men in the family or society. Socioeconomic background was important when studying how masculinity was portrayed, as this varied between different groups. For instance, one group which was particularly mentioned as differing from my participants' ideas of masculinity was men in poorly paid occupations such as pedicab drivers and construction workers. This was particularly highlighted in one conversation that I had with Richard's wife, which I wrote up after the event. We were talking about the different ways which men showed 'being a man' in the Philippines, since she was speaking proudly of how her husband helped in the house and had a job. She compared this with the sidecar and pedicab drivers which would congregate on the street corner near her family's house. She believed that their masculinity was shown through their physical strength and in a more aggressive way. For instance she said that they were more likely to drink, smoke, spend their money on gambling and start fights. This was a view which other people in the local area felt too. These opinions would often be stated when we

were travelling around the city and would pass a group of men who participants in this study did not deem as being 'good'. This happened on Tuesday 10th May whilst driving back from eating a meal out. It was later in the evening when I was being driven back to my flat with two men and woman who I had become familiar with. A road diversion meant that we had to go through a poorer area of the city. The streets were lined with people sitting on the pavement, these were mainly men. This was different to what I had observed in the area that I was living so I asked my company why. Johnny said that these were bad men who drank a lot and got into fights. I did not have the opportunity to converse with men in this area to hear about their lives. However, this example did provide some understanding behind the opinions of the men who I was studying about other men in society.

This was an opinion given by some of the men who I spoke with during this research, yet I met people in these poorer paid occupations who did not follow these masculine qualities. For instance, I spoke to a pedicab driver, Tony (age 40), who regularly drove me to and from different events. He did not display any of the qualities, which participants in this study described the lower socioeconomic groups to have. He was against drinking, violence and frowned upon the unfair ways in which some, predominantly male drivers, would exploit different people by charging different rates for journeys. When I asked Caleb about Tony he said that Tony was an exception. The often negative ways of describing men in different socioeconomic groups would be expressed whilst we were walking round the streets of Manila. Such an occasion happened when we were walking around the market, the following is an extract from my research diary. "*This afternoon I went to the market with Richard and his wife. We walked along the main street and passed the usual pedicab stop, the one we stop at in order to travel up to the supermarket. Some called out to me, I am getting used to people shouting out now since I do stand out... This time Richard wouldn't translate what the man said, because he said it was too rude and that the man was "very naughty". I left it because he looked embarrassed. I started asking about the life of pedicab drivers. He said that the wives look after the children or have small stalls, but the husband goes out to work. It felt like a much more typical family structure which I was less*

*surprised at because of what others had said. Richard keeps telling me how much*
*he helps in the house when he talks about other men."*

In relation to food though there were some observed similarities in the act of consumption by men in the two different socioeconomic groups. The above section described the importance of eating with people which was a view expressed by every individual who was conversed with during the research. It was also observed whilst driving around in the evening in areas where pedicab drivers slept. Their sidecars were both a source of income and in the evening were converted into a place to sleep by using a blanket to create almost a tent. We drove regularly past one area where they gathered every night. Here, the families would gather together and build a small fire at the side of the road to cook their evening meal. I was told by fellow passengers that this was likely to be rice and if they had the funds then a small side, such as a fish. A fold out table would be placed at the side of the road where the families would then eat together. In this socioeconomic group, just as in the one which was specifically researched, the importance of eating together could be seen. Although it was not possible to speak directly to these men, watching the same evening ritual around eating revealed how the importance of consuming food with company filtered through every social group observed during this research.

The data presented above reflects the idea of there being multiple ways to show masculinity in the same society. There were differences felt by the participants and some judgement over how those in a different occupation showed their masculinity. This could be about elevation of the participants' form of masculinity above other men in society, which is why they and their wives spoke in a derogatory way about others. At the same time, with regard to food, similar interactions and acts of consumption could be seen in each of the socioeconomic groups who were observed through eating together. However, it was believed by participants that the men in the lower wage occupations were more likely to follow the strongly gendered roles in the relationship. This is a trait that the men in this

research believed really distinguished them from other men in society and this was highlighted through the word tigas.

### 4.3.7 Tigas…- 'Feminine tasks' in a masculine way

The themes written about above: relationships and power; gendered jobs; changing perceptions of gender over time; equality; and multiple masculinities, can be optimised and collated by the use of one particular Filipino word, which is tigas. This was first said in an interview near the beginning of the research, when a man said *"I am tigas, tigasaing, you know?"* which was then followed by laughter by him and my translator. Having not heard this before it was initially not recognised as being important to study in relation to masculinity. However, after this it was said during several conversations about the role of men in the domestic space for instance they said they were tigalaba, tigaludo, tigalinis. This made me to begin to ask men who I encountered during the research how they defined it, what it meant to them, and was it a positive term. The word describes doing domestic chores in a masculine way. However, it was more than this; it was described as a joke, compliment, and insult. The way that individual men defined tigas reflected their overall ideas about masculinities and gender.

It derives from the word tigasin meaning tough and strong, and taga which means 'you are the one to do [then activity]'. These have then been combined into a grammatically incorrect and colloquial phrase which creates tiga[activity], meaning you are the one to do [activity] in a masculine or strong way. The following examples were given:

- Tigalaba- you are the one to wash clothes
- Tigaluto- you are the one to cook food
- Tigalinis- you are the one to clean the house
- Tigasaing- you are the one to cook the rice
- Tigasampay- you are the one to hang the clothes on the line
- Tigahugas- you are the one to wash the plates

- Tigagawa- you are the one to work

- Tigaplantsa- you are the one to iron the clothes

- Tigaano- you are the one to do whatever

### 4.3.7.1 Interpretations

There were multiple interpretations given about these phrases, and what it meant to men. In all of the interviews that were conducted men spoke in as much English as possible; with the help of the translator should they need it. However, trying to translate the exact meaning of these words or phrases was more challenging for participants. One of the ways it was explained was trying to translate it directly into English, and not talking about it as a social concept. James translated it as: *"It's actually the strength of the man and the job of a woman put in one meaning",* this was in response to being directly asked what the term meant. He was one of the first people I asked to explain it due his ability, which I observed throughout the research, to explain Filipino words and concepts in English. Gendered language can be seen in this translation. Strength was associated with masculinity, and helping in the domestic space as being a feminine task. In this sense equality for Filipino men is related to participating in household work. This is different from seeing an overall transformation in the way that jobs are gender coded or indeed having no distinction between masculinised and feminised tasks. Instead there was the prevailing language which influenced how gender was constructed through everyday activities. Tigas, therefore, could be related to the continuation of gendered practices.

Another interpretation fed into the one above, again about distinguishing women from men in a more derogatory sense. This was said by Edward who had already indicated the importance of men still being the dominant power in the household and always making the final decision. When asked what tigas meant his answered reflected that: "*So colloquial terms we always say they are under de saya, under the skirt, saya means skirt, which means the head of the family is not man, is*

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*woman"*. This is the equivalent of the phrase 'being under the thumb'. In this sense tigas was used as a mild insult towards the masculinity of men who were not more dominant in the house. Here, the more subtle language used to continue patriarchal structures in the Philippines can be seen. It was a view held by more of the older generation of men who were researched, where there were stronger beliefs around gendered roles, and more emphasis put on men being head of the household. Those who were spoken with in their twenties and thirties did state that the translation was a man being under the skirt but this was followed with acceptance that it was not emasculating. One example of this was given by Ivan (age 21) who said that "*it's in Filipino culture it's what you call 'under de saya of the wife'. But there's nothing wrong with it. I don't think that it can be a... it is a funny thing with men doing this household thing*". This time rather than being insulting it was classed as a light hearted term. These two men, though of different ages, were from the same socioeconomic group in the Philippines. However, there was a split in the ways in which they thought masculinity should be enacted either through dominance or acceptance. This idea of different opinions between generations was summed up in John's quote when I asked about the meaning of tigas to him: "*In the modern world it's normal that we need to share the household chores with our mother with our partner in life. Because in some term, in previous era there is a bad connotation with women and inequality of the world, inequality of the woman and the man.*" In this sense changing levels of equality could be related to seeing men participating more in the domestic space.

The next definition given by a number of men in this research reinforced the idea that domestic tasks were still feminine and so men who participated in them were not the norm in the Philippines. This was explained by Andrew (age 19), who thought tigas was used to highlight men who were performing an act outside of the usual gendered patterns of behaviour of Filipinos: "*Men do those colloquial words because it is different from the habit of the Philippines of a family **of course**". Of course* was used to emphasise that, in their opinion, the average family in the Philippines still conformed to gender stereotypes of men go out to work, women stay at home and do housework. This opinion was different from the findings in

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this study when I spent time within families where I found that almost all of the men spoken to stated that they freely helped in the house. This was not only spoken about but also observed when I spent times in participants' houses.

I was invited for dinner at Richard's house, who had previously spoken of his participant in the domestic space. Walking into the kitchen it was noticed that he was cooking the meal for that night, rice with fish and vegetables. He said, upon seeing me, *"I went out today to buy food for the meal, I went to the market"*. In order to check whether this was a display for my benefit or a reflection of daily life, I asked his wife if it was common for him to cook. She answered, "*Yes he cook a lot of the dinners. He is better cook than me*". I visited families on multiple occasions and there was always a division of men and women preparing food for the families. I would also ask both the husband and wife if this instance represented their 'normal' meal times. For some participants being called tigas was something to be proud of as it distinguished them from other husbands, fathers or sons. It elevated their own masculinity above that of others. For the majority of men I spent time with, being called tigas was not insulting, instead it was something that gained them some prestige amongst men and women. These two photos represent this idea, through the way that these men wanted to be represented in the house.



These two photographs show men participating in domestic chores, first a man showing the produce he bought in the market, and the second of a participant cooking a meal. The cameras were given to the men to take photos of their

relationships with food. Initially it was thought that this would be an individual activity with them photographing their food. However, in these images men had their photograph taken by someone else. They show them participating in everyday activities, such as the purchasing and cooking of food. The second in particular is an action shot. For both of these men, the word tigas was not insulting; instead they interpreted it as being a part of the family and community, which was always emphasised. Other participant's photographs did not include pictures of them specifically helping in the domestic space; however, they explained later that that was because they had not photographed themselves whilst doing these activities, instead they included pictures of when their family members cooked. The emphasis and need to describe their role within the family and participating in food preparation did show however that this was important to them.

Again, the background of the men being studied needs to be acknowledged whilst discussing masculinities. The impression was that if I had spoken to people in lower socioeconomic groups this word would have more of a derogatory meaning for them. It would emasculate them rather than elevate their position in society. It should be noted that the higher income groups were not spoken about much in this sense because the wealthier in society were more likely to hire domestic help which would change the dynamics within the household. Therefore, responsibility for tasks such as purchasing and cooking food was passed onto the domestic help rather than the husband either choosing to participate or not.

The final understanding of the word goes back to the importance of family for many Filipino men. Everyone felt a responsibility to provide for the family however they could, and one of those ways was by helping in family life: "*I define, being* **responsible** *husband or* **responsible** *in your family so many husband always do that* [help within the house] *because they love their wife and their family"* (Marcus, 40). Being called tigas was a sign of respect because it showed that they were helping the most valued thing to them, and to Filipino culture, which is family. The constant mention of family to explain everyday actions makes studying this part of life particularly important. Throughout the research men mentioned the role that

they played in their families, whether this was financial or through participating in domestic chores. This was why the original research design was altered to include a higher focus on men within the community and their homes, since when food was spoken about it was common for men to link it back to their families or to communal eating. Therefore the role that men played within the family, and the impact that this had on the diets of themselves and their family helped to explain the overall dietary practices made by the men in this study. Tigas provided a way to explore the opinions that participants had over the gendered roles within the domestic space.

### 4.3.8  Summary

In this section I have presented data about gender and masculinities in the Philippines. The main findings suggest that although the Philippines initially appears to have high levels of gender equality, it still remains a patriarchal country. Men remain the head of many households with power to make the final decisions over family matters. However, there was not one homogenous view on what masculinity and manhood meant. This was represented in the different ways that men defined tigas. In the following section I build on these ideas of masculinity and explore the ways that participants described and showed their eating practices.

## 4.4 Gender, the body and food

### 4.4.1 Introduction

Autophotography provided a lens for participants to represent their food and mealtimes in whatever way they felt appropriate. It showed an insight into not only the food that they ate but also helped to define what the act of consuming food meant to them. The main finding was the presence of people in the photographs; this was both the participants by themselves and individuals who they were eating with. From this initial observation the photographs were then split into 'action' shots taken of the participant either by a self-portrait or having the picture taken by someone else, and 'communal eating' shots, those which included either the people who the participant was eating with or evidence of another person present at the table.

The following six action shots show a number of participants consuming meals, varying from breakfast to evening dinner, both inside and outside the house and taken as a self-portrait or by another photographer.

Observing these pictures as a whole and individually revealed a number of factors which contribute towards understanding why men in this study ate in the way that they described, were observed and captured through photography. The first observation is that men are posing in the pictures with their food in the act of eating, whilst looking into the camera. They are turning the camera on themselves or asking someone else to do this for them, as opposed to photographing the food that they are eating. This showed an important element of representing the way in which they eat, in that they were comfortable being photographed consuming their food. The focus then moves away from the food and onto the action of consuming it. Also visible is the joy on several of the men's faces. This can be related back to participants often saying about the joy of eating, even if the food was "*not so delicious, even if it is just rice and salt*" as Richard's wife said when I asked her to try and explain why I never heard complaints about the food being

eaten. Joy was felt through the mere act of consuming food; this was also shown in the interviews where emotive language was often used when discussing their daily diets.

The emotional connection with food would, as discussed above, usually start with the feelings that they had around rice. For instance, Alberto (age 52) when asked about his daily food consumption spoke about rice, so I asked why he ate so much of it, he replied: "*If you offer us food without rice we are using the emoticon (shows sad face) only. We are no satisfied that's why we are not happy.*" The photographs above predominantly show men eating rice as a part of their dish. This suggests that not only do people speak of their emotions in relation to eating food but it can also be seen on their face in the photographs. This feeling was present during the dinners that I attended. In the previous section I briefly described how important eating together and consuming food was for the participants in this study; yet there was also the emotional connection that they had with this activity.

These were themes that frequently appeared throughout my ethnography notes; alongside observations about how people appeared to feel whilst eating. Almost all of the meals that I was present at were not sad affairs; there were rarely arguments and people were observably happy whilst consuming food. Being there for 89 days provided a myriad of opportunities to eat with people, and each one was noted down in my research diary. The following are written up notes about the more emotive side of eating with people and I was reflecting on how different I felt at these moments. "*I had lunch today after a church service. It was a similar meal to what we usually eat, rice and meat and vegetables cooked in a clear broth. It has been tough at times to eat rice and boiled food. There is just a lack of variation, something I am finding difficult. Yet people around me don't complain, not like I hear people back home doing so when eating the same food again. They always seem happy here, whereas I am thinking "oh no not again", they seem to be enjoying themselves eating it. There has never been complaining by the children or adults. So again I asked people why, and they said that they were 'happy eating and eating with people' and that they enjoyed eating food*". When reading this next

to the interviews and photographs it again highlighted how joy was linked with the consumption of food with others rather than being connected to the food being eaten. This characteristic was observed in both men and women.

Differences in gender began to appear when the men, who were spoken with in this study, described the importance of the physical feeling that consuming food had on them, which was particularly the enjoyment of feeling full. Again they spoke of how food made them feel against what food they were eating. Men, when describing being full, began to discuss differences between men's and women's relationships with food. For instance, when I asked Rodrigo about the difference between men's and women's food consumption he said that: "*For men it doesn't matter what we eat. We eat just to have the sense of fullness. We... it don't matter what time we can eat anything.*" Feeling full for Rodrigo was the aim of eating and it did not matter what food was being consumed. Studying the dishes that they are eating in the six photographs presented above can also support this point. The food and beverage being eaten or drunk in these pictures was representative of the everyday food that I observed and people described eating during the research; there was no sense of shame in showing the reality of what they ate. These plates were also not aesthetically displayed. Both of these once more remove the focus for the observer of the photographs away from the food to the people who are eating it. For the participants, it also removes the focus away from the food and onto the emotions and overall experience of the food being consumed. It is this final point that they portrayed through taking these photographs.

This comfort around displaying themselves in the act of consuming food showed an insight into the way that they perceived themselves, their relationship with food and their perceptions of their body, which was reflected in the interviews too. The participants did not feel embarrassment over consuming food in the pictures, which shows a certain mind-set around diets, and the idea of being less concerned about the perceptions or judgement that people observing the photograph and myself may have. This was reflected in the following quote about trying to reduce rice intake: "*I think for the men it's really hard but for the women it's easy because*

***they're always take care of their bodies****. As a man we **don't care** if we eat a lot"* (Quentin, 26). This idea was reinforced by Eric (age 27) who said *"I **don't really care** I eat what's available"* and Anthony (age 23) *"at this stage of my life **I don't care** about more healthy and nutritious foods, I just love to eat. Because we have a saying that 'you only live once' so enjoy it!"* Again, the idea of not giving as much thought over their (men's) diets was highlighted in these quotes. The third quote also describes how the enjoyment of eating outweighed for this man his consideration over the food that he chose. These provide another explanation as to why men were willing to be show themselves eating any food item on camera. Men never showed signs of feeling self-conscious of consuming any quantity of food in front of me, indeed masculinity could be linked with the quantity of food that they ate. This was repeatedly shown by men of all ages in the study during different mealtimes spent with them, where men would eat whatever quantity of food they wanted until they felt full or the food had run out. This was true of large communal meals, I observed men serving themselves seconds, thirds, fourths until the pots were empty. When eating outside of the home the men whom I ate with would order additional portions of rice with their meal. During these experiences, there was no visible sign of my presence influencing the quantity that they ate. Indeed, they would speak proudly of how much they could eat.

This was contrary to my experiences in the initial stages of eating with women. In order to understand eating practices, especially from an ethnographical perspective, it was important to attend as many meals with people as possible to observe eating habits. However, this came with complications. The diet that I ate in the Philippines was extremely different from my own in the UK; this meant that I could on average eat half a cup of rice per mealtime. For the wives of participants and women in the communities being studied this was thought of as being an unusually small amount to be eaten. They jested saying, *"you eat like a child"* or *"you eat like a bird only pecking at food".* In the third week of research Richard's wife explained that some of the women felt too embarrassed to eat in the same room as me or would eat a small amount, wait until I left, then consume what they usually would. In order to try and reduce the impact that my presence had I

explained to the families and people who I encountered about how different my diet in the UK was, and explain why I did not eat the same quantity of rice. Unlike the men, the women felt "ashamed" (as Richard's wife described) by eating more than I did. This data shows the difference between men and women's relationship with food and perspectives of the body.

### 4.4.2 Women diet, men don't care

Food, as discussed above, for men could be related to being like a fuel to power their bodies so they were strong. Therefore, eating more food meant more fuel. This was highlighted through the negative reaction that many men who were interviewed, particularly those who were below 50 years old, had when I initially asked them to tell me about their "diet". For me this meant for them to describe what they ate every day. However, the men interpreted it as being about them having to reduce or restrict the quantity of food that they consumed. The following are two responses given when I asked men "could you please tell me about your diet?"

*"I don't go on diet! I eat what I want." (Johnny, 38)*

*"Women diet, not men" (Carlos, 40)*

The latter quote was indicative of the opinions that many men who were spoken with had about the difference between what men and women ate. I asked men if they could describe any differences or similarities between men and women's diets. Two main and contrasting themes appeared: those who believed there were no gendered differences and those who thought that there were due to women's perceptions of their bodies.

The first theme that was developed from men's responses was the opinion that there was no difference between what men and women ate. This was expressed by Carlos and Ethan when asked separately about their thoughts on the matter: *"Difference Filipinos? I think there's no difference between Filipino men and women what Filipino men eat that's what the Filipino women eat also"* and Ethan (age 21):

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*"Here in the Philippines I think there's no difference here because sometimes I grow up in the province and what man eat is just they eat also by woman. So I think there's no difference mam".* Both of these men's interpretations were about the food which was consumed. Elisha (age 24) stated that there was also no difference, however for him this meant no difference in the quantity of food eaten: *"Not much mam because some there are some women that are eating eating as much as men do but at the same time there are men that eats a little then"*. The following quote, where the same view is voiced, came from the wife of a participant. They wanted to be interviewed together. The couple owned a canteen in Manila so were in a unique position to discuss their observations about the orders that men and women placed.

*I: Do you think there's a difference between what men and women eat?*

*Gabriel's wife: In our place in the restaurant. The same!*

Some men who were interviewed went on to explain why, in their experience, there were no visible signs of gendered food choices or consumption. These men often described the economic situations of their families and how people from a lower socioeconomic background were more likely to eat the same food as each other. Personal choice, and therefore the chance for there to be gendered differences, was diminished because of eating whatever the family could afford.

*"In our, like, me I'm in some state like lower state of living, we usually eat whatever we had we eat for dinner. In the rich state some middle class family they some on diet like that. But in many kinds, in my state there some who lives in slums or other squatter areas anything they share it".* (Andrew, 19)

*"I don't really think so... maybe for the high up people... they are strict with their diets, but for regular people I guess not. What's available, they eat, especially in the family. What they cook, what you prepare is for the whole family. It's not 'this is for you because you are a boy' or 'this is for you because you are a girl'... it's basically what is available."* (Eric, 27)

They both interestingly compared their own diets with what they perceived the wealthier in society would eat. This was the explanation that some women gave over why they thought I ate less food than them, in this instance it was not about being a woman but instead being from a perceived wealthier background. This was explained to me whilst I was helping to cook lunch one day. The following is a written up extract from my research diary. "*Today at lunch I helped to prepare a small fire outside to cook some fish we had bought at the local market this morning. The fish was still alive when we bought it, so the first stage was to watch the women kill and then prepare it. We wrapped them in banana leaves and then put them on a metal grill over the fire to cook.* (Picture below shows the BBQ we used, cooking a different fish which has not been wrapped in a leaf).



*I chatted to the women and men who were wondering in and out watching me try to help with this. We started to talk about again the amount of food that I ate. I was with the wife of an NGO worker, Richard's wife and a female nurse, they said that I was like what the expected westerns to be like, counting calories, concerned about my weight. I have never told them or implied if I do or don't do this. Richard's wife said that this was what rich people did in the Philippines to be more like westerns*". This explanation reflected what Andrew and Eric said in their interviews shown above; that there was an association between wealth and limiting food intake.

Family was also mentioned by both Andrew and Eric in relation to finances and food. They did not discuss how their own personal finances may alter their food decisions; instead it was about what the family ate as a collective. Family was also brought up by Jacob (age 47) and the difference between personal and collective eating. For him there were no gendered differences because they all ate the same food.

*Jacob: No. In our in our family so whatever our parents put on in front of us we eat, same. So what we have experience our family (Tagalog)*

*Translator: What is for one everyone eat.*

These descriptions of no gendered differences over the food which was being consumed reflected my own observations throughout the study. I repeatedly noted down how people who were part of the ethnographic study consumed the same dishes without regard of gender. Especially in the families, there was the one pot of rice and either one or two viands, but that these were shared by everyone present. I did observe, however, differences in the quantities of food not only being put down to wealth but also gender. This reflected the second group of opinions which men expressed when answering "what man eat and what woman eat, is there a difference?" In this group men said that women wanted to take care of their bodies therefore tried to reduce their food intake, unlike men. This was about how people of different genders perceive their bodies and the way in which this may influence their eating practices.

The men who gave the following answers described how they thought that women were body conscious, which meant that they would go on a diet and in the first set of answers dieting meant reducing their food intake.

*"Here in our country? I think there is no difference except those who are **conscious** of their weight. They are the one there is a difference, especially for women who want to have a trim body."* (James, 52)

*"Yes mainly because men eat more than women I guess. Women are more **conscious** of what they are eating. They maintain their physical... fitness."* (Elisha, 24)

*"Yes mam because from my opinion mam, women are so so size **conscious** so they eat [figure] figure, size **conscious**, so they eat, they very strict under what they eat. But men eat what they want because we can burn it in a single day ma'am. So that's the difference mam I think."* (Oliver, 21)

In the latter quote Oliver not only talks about women being conscious of their body image but compares that with men. Again he reinforced this later on in the interview by saying *"I only eat what I want to eat, I only eat what I want. I burn it".*

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These thoughts are similar to those voiced by other participants about men being able to consume large quantities of the foods whilst not being conscious about their body shapes. This extended to the different food preferences that some participants perceived men and women to make because of individual's perceptions of their body. Some men mentioned how they had observed that women who were conscious of their diet or body switched rice out for, what were deemed as, 'lighter' foods such as bread or French fries. This can be seen in the following three quotes:

*"Yes. Women like to go on a diet! Especially my girlfriend. When she feels she is getting fat, she doesn't eat after six. There is some sort of rule that they don't eat after six. Or they just eat bread. Anything just to fill up..."* (Rodrigo, 20)

*"In my experience, I encountered some of the women... they are just eating chips... they are not eating rice much because they are... figure conscious"* (Michael, 24)

*"Ok, I think so, I think so because I have my sister she prefer, she really body conscious. Yes yes she eat just err light meal like that, she really want to look her figure. Yeah here in the Philippine … figure conscious so she ate light meal so like bread like that. Instead of rice she keep on eating bread like that. If she want to eat rice just a few, I mean half cup. Yes half cup. So for men they usually work they are the one who work hard so obviously they eat [Translator: alot] (laughs) yes a lot. So that's why I think that's the difference between the women's diet then men's"* (Carlos, 40).


The answers given in these interviews added an extra layer of understanding onto the idea of there being light and heavy foods. In the explanations given throughout the research heavy foods, such as rice, provided energy for the whole day, created the feeling of fullness, and would be eaten when ill to speed up the process of recovery. Additionally, heavy foods would be avoided when individuals wanted to lose weight. Whereas French fries and bread, which were viewed as being light and so did not sink to the bottom of the stomach, were thought of as the food choice for women on a diet. The idea of the calories in each type of food was not mentioned.

In other participants' interviews they had the similar opinion of women being more likely to diet, but from their observations this meant reducing the quantity consumed of certain food type, not just substituting rice for another product; for instance, reducing fat intake through choosing fish or vegetables and reducing carbohydrates. Carlos explained what he had observed with his wife's diet: *"I think when it comes to... sometimes my wife is having a diet because she wants to lose weight because she's very conscious about her body, figure, so when her waist is getting bigger she usually lessen her carbohydrate intake and some fats".* Nico and Samuel gave similar opinions of women choosing what was thought of as more dietary foods.

*"Yeah, usually in my observation in our canteen most of the woman did not like fatty foods because they become health conscious so they look for fish for vegetable so they don't like fatty food. They don't like meats like pork. So they look for fish and vegetable. Many of the women **but we are not conscious in our health. Majority eat what you want.**"* (Nico, 50)

*"**Of course when a man eat they are not too conscious about what is going to his body or what's going to be, it's just like I love to eat. eat what it there, eat eat eat.** but when a woman wants to eat they think too many, too many. They're so conscious about herself her figure, like that. And then they're thinking so different, like 'there's too much carbs! I don't like that, I should go diet'. Like that."* (Samuel, 19)

Nico and Samuel voiced, like several other participants, their opinion about men eating more than women and not being body conscious. The sentences which have been highlighted in these quotes emphasise this point. Both said that men pay less regard over what they are consuming and for Samuel it was because he loved to eat, something which echoed the opinion of many men and women in this study. What was not present in the research was the idea of different foods being strongly coded as masculine or feminine. Men did not speak about women choosing bread or French fries because they are feminine instead it is because they

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are light foods which are eaten when people want to go on diets. Dieting or limiting food intake, however, was feminised when done for the reason of being body conscious. Studying the photographs that participants took could show the difference between men and women's comfort of being shown to be in the act of consuming food. The following three photographs are men with their partners posing for photographs. These were not defined as action shots, as they are not in the process of eating or preparing the food.



These show two themes that were found throughout the data. First, the importance men placed on showing that they were eating with others. In order to take each of these pictures the participants have given the cameras to another individual to photograph this moment. Second, a comparison of these three pictures with the photographs where the men are alone shows the difference that the presence of their partner has on the 'posing' or 'posturing' on both of them. Rather than being caught in the act of consuming food they are both sat staring at the camera waiting to start eating. This is different to the findings above of men posing in an action shot. This finding could reflect the idea of women being less comfortable showing themselves eating to a foreign observer. In this instance it is about the observer of the photograph, but during the research I was the observer.

Here, gendered differences with regards to eating practices were about the comfort levels felt by men and women of showing themselves consuming food.

### 4.4.3 'Good' food and masculinity

When asked about gendered differences in diets the majority of men who were spoken with first gave a response that emphasised the idea of not caring about what they ate. This often felt like it reflected a certain characteristic of masculinity of being nonchalant about what they were consuming, so long as they were full and eating they were happy. Therefore, in the initial data collection period it appeared that taking care of an individual's health through diet was a more feminine than masculine practice. It also became apparent in the early stages of data collection quite how often men and women mentioned people who had been diagnosed with diet related illnesses, such as high blood pressure, heart disease and diabetes. For these reasons, I began to ask participants about: what healthy eating meant to them; whether their knowing someone with, say, diabetes had affected their diets; and where their knowledge around diet came from. This line of questioning and observational data collected around this subject also meant that wider notions of masculinity and health behaviour could be explored.

The first theme derived from the data was mainly the opinion held by younger men, that is, those in their 20s and 30s. They would often start off by saying that they could eat anything and they did not appear to consider the health implications of the food that they were consuming. This could be seen in many of the responses provided above about the perceived differences between men's and women's food consumption patterns. During these conversations they would usually discuss their present time eating habits and beliefs. This changed, however, when we started to discuss the idea of eating a 'healthy' diet or discussing diabetes. In these instances, men started to look to the future and describe how as they grow older they will have to change what they eat to stay health.

John gave the following answer when asked if he had any final thoughts at the end of our informal interview: *"... food is very essential. We need to eat food just to give all the strength, but for now we are so distract with the fast food. So less food and many artificial ... instant food instant noodles. So we are suffered our health".* For him food was an important part of life and he knew that eating fast food was not good and that people needed to eat more fresh food. His diet at the time involved eating fast food, such as rice and fried chicken, for his lunch and dinner because of his work schedule and the food outlets that were close to his office. It was interesting also that he acknowledged that there were health implications attached to eating a poor diet, but was yet to alter his own dietary practices. This was despite having family members with diabetes, which he mentioned early in the conversation. Having a family or friend with a diet related illness did not have a great impact on the food that men ate in their 20s and 30s, despite them having some information about potential health implications linked with a less nutritious diet. Instead these men would speak of the future, and how when they grew old they knew they would have to adjust their diets.

For instance, I noted down in the research diary that one day I was eating at a local canteen with a participant, his family and a few people who lived in the local area. There were nine of us in total, four men, three women and two teenagers. It was a typical meal, rice with a small vegetable, fish and meat dish to share between us. We got onto the subject of eating vegetables and a 'healthy' diet, because they noticed that I was favouring that dish over the others. One man who was in his late 20s explained that his dad and uncles all had diabetes, he put it down to them eating too much rice and sugary drinks and not eating enough good food (such as vegetables and fish). I asked him if this had affected what he ate. He said not now, but when he gets old he knew he would have to eat less rice. He had been told that he might get diabetes because his relatives had been diagnosed with it. At this point an older man in our company said, he agreed and kept telling his son he would have to eat less rice because he was getting fat and that would make him sick. But his son kept saying he was young and needed it to grow strong.

Again rice was linked with causing diet related illnesses more than any other aspect of their diets. There was always this acceptance that younger men would have to alter their diets as they grew older because of what they had seen in their elder family members or friends. Some men in their 50s who were interviewed, who initially also spoke of being a man so needing more energy than women, admitted that now they wanted to take care of their health by altering their diets.

*"I want to be healthy when I grown old. I don't want to eat too much and then you'll find out that you may be having the high blood the heart problem." (Andres, 59)*

*"If you don't eat you die. If you don't eat you die. So food is important of course, but eat healthy food is important also. We are getting older so we must reduce in what we eat because we are so conscious about our health." (Nico, 50)*

*"Before, so much oil in our food. But now because of... of course... information in the internet and in the social media.... there are ways that are shown how to prepare healthy food. And number 2, because of the age I avoid oily food already. I don't want... if god gives me long life I don't want to spend it in sickness. I want it to be in health and enjoy the rest of my life until the lord brings me back." (Jose, 59)*

For the first two men, they wanted to reduce their food intake in order to be healthy, the third man specified reducing the amount of oil that he ate. Health seeking behaviour through choosing to alter diets was not an idea seen to be emasculating. It was a lifestyle change that was encouraged by communities and individuals' so that they could have a long life. This is where the difference in reaction came between reducing food intake because of being body conscious and reducing it for a health related reason. The former was feminised, whereas the latter did not appear to be gendered. Therefore the overarching pattern found in this section was that: men (both young and old) initially spoke of eating large quantities of rice as a fuel for the body and showing nonchalance about taking care of their bodies. However upon further questioning, the younger men said that they needed to change as they got older, and the older men were now trying to reduce their food intake. Food goods were not gendered, instead the quantities eaten and

act of controlling food intake was feminised.  Men felt more comfortable than women showing themselves consuming food which is why they turned the cameras on themselves during this activity. However, men also wanted to show the environment that they were eating in by showing their company. This reinforced the importance of communal eating had for many of the men who were spoken with.

### 4.4.4  Summary

The results imply that there were gendered differences in the eating practices of men and women. Several participants described how women were more body conscious than men and that because of this perception women were more likely to diet. Food was categorised into either being light or heavy, light foods were eaten when people wanted to diet. Finally, throughout this section I have mentioned the importance of family and eating together. This was a strong theme that emerged from the data. It was within these communal settings that gender could be enacted through eating practices. Therefore, in the final results section I will present data on the importance of family and food.

## 4.5   Family, friendship then food

### 4.5.1   Introduction

Family, friendship then food represents the order in which people described their priorities around eating. Relationships came before the food that they eat. In this section this concept is explored. To understand food within the family, I will explain family life to provide some background context. Family was consistently mentioned throughout the research as having a significant impact on men's lives including influencing the food that they ate, making it an important area to discuss in any area of Filipino life being studied. I will examine the significance of eating together, and how this was central to the way that men represented their mealtimes through their photographs. The Filipino ideal for meals, which was described by men during this research, was one eaten with company. It was viewed as a central part of social relationship building. However, it was becoming more difficult to adhere to because of changing industry in the Philippines; hence the implications of this on Filipino life are explained. All of these were described as having an impact on eating practices. Of course people have to eat to survive, however, this is about how their social values have repercussions on the dietary decisions and daily eating experiences that they have. These were the main themes found in the data, which I discuss below.

### 4.5.2   Family life

For many of the participants in this study when they spoke of living with family, this was not just the nuclear family, it extended to aunts, uncles, parents, grandparents. Any relative, no matter how distant, could be found living in the same house. I was often invited to attend meals at families' houses which provided a useful insight into the family structures in both Manila and provincial areas. It often took some explaining from the family members to understand the relationship between the people present at the meal. I spoke with Caleb during the

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research period, who lived with his extended family including his aunts, mother, nephew, wife and son. There were others in the house too, but the exact relationship was unclear. I asked him the reasons behind families in the Philippines living together in one house. He replied: *"Because in the Philippines we have the extended family. Very extended the aunts and aunties so we live together… It's really happy living with your relatives together. But there are times that you have support maybe the same will be, it's really hard but then as Filipinos we are we used to live in poverty. Not really poverty we always make solutions and we always solve problems all together even we don't have money. Money is secondary."* The first reason Caleb gave for living together was poverty; this was the answer that I was expecting considering the experiences participants gave about having low wages but high rental prices. However, this was a secondary reason for him about why he wanted to continue living with his family.

Living together brought happiness. This was similar to what Edward spoke of when he described his living conditions. Edward (age 51) lived with his wife and daughter in a block of eight condominiums in Makati. The other seven were occupied by his wife's sisters and family members. Although they each had their own space, it was important for them to live in close proximity to each other. Edward explained their living situation in an interview, after I asked him about why his family were neighbours: *"They came from different places but they converge in this place. So that when they grow old they will be together. That's how Filipino, they want our household together"*. Many of the parents who I spoke with did not expect that their children would leave home. The expectation was for them to find a job, live at home, and then contribute to the household fund; participants mentioned giving money towards the food bill, utilities and the school tuition for their siblings. It was common for a child to live with their parents until adulthood, and I observed it on a regular basis. It was also discussed during the interviews, when I asked the reasons why people lived with their families*: "Because when I look at the families in the Philippines they have already children and stays with the parents always very very I think it's very hard for the parents to to tell to the children that you have to leave because of that extended families"* (Andres, 59).

Living together was important to show respect for elders within the family. Care homes were rare; not just because people could not afford them although this is one factor. It was part of the culture in the Philippines that elders in the family should be cared for by the younger generations. This was something that I observed too in the families, that is, families taking care of the elders. Richard's wife explained this to me whilst we were having breakfast at their house one morning. She stated that her mother and father had lived with them until they passed away. She said that they should because it taught her children too to take care of her and her husband when they were old. Being a foreigner meant that I was continually asked about every aspect of my life in the UK. This included how we treated the elderly in our society. Several of the participants had heard that it was common in the UK for the elderly to live in care homes, and so they asked if this was true. It was particularly brought up in a recorded interview with Caleb who was against the idea that the elders in the family should live anywhere other than their home, and he frowned at what he deemed the uncaring nature of the West. He said that: "*it will really break my heart if my son will bring me to a shelter and leave me there*". It was clear that family was extremely important, they lived together, took care of each other, provided financial support and many ran small businesses together. Within these close relationships, food played an important part in family life.

Family extended beyond blood and this could be seen through the uses of kinship terms to greet both those who were familiar and unfamiliar to the individual. I was often beckoned by hearing "*ate*" being shouted at me. This happened in every location I went. Pedicab drivers would shout "*ate*, pedicab ride?" Street food vendors would say the same "*ate*, fresh coconut, banana cue". Ate meant older sister, to greet a man it was *kuya* meaning older brother. I heard people greet anyone from jeepney drivers (a cheap form of transportation) to policemen to city officials. It was a sign of respect, and reflected the family central nature of the Filipinos in the communities that were being studied.

This was one of the reasons why looking at exact relations in families was difficult for someone coming into the community because within and outside the family these terms were used. I was conversing with a university student in his early twenties about who cooked for him whilst he was in Manila. He said that: "*My aunt cooks dinner for me and my grandmother*", which to me meant that he lived with his grandmother and auntie. However, he went on to explain that his aunt was his grandma's neighbour and that she cooked for them. Family extending beyond biology was also explained by Edward when I asked him to explain family structures in the Philippines, which came about during a conversation we had after an interview. I had packed everything away since the interview had come to a natural end after 95 minutes. Yet the conversation started up again after we heard someone shout 'hello' through the window to my participant. I asked who they were, and Edward replied that they were his brother, but not really. As the recording equipment had been packed away I quickly got my notebook out and asked him to explain what he meant whilst I wrote notes. The man was in fact someone who his family knew from the province that he had grown up in. They lived in the same community. He said he was called a brother because they were from the same place, family did not need to be from the same parents. This importance of family, both biological and non-biological members, was also discussed in relation to men's eating habits.

### 4.5.3   Family meal times

One of the overarching findings when it came to eating practices was that the men who were spoken with in this study tried to eat as many meals as possible together either with the family or with friends both within and when they were away from home. Some couples spoke of how every night they would wait for their spouse to come home so that they could eat together as a family. Only if the children needed to go to bed early did they not have a family meal, and in such instances the couple would then eat together later into the evening. This point was epitomised whilst discussing family eating patterns during an interview with a teacher who lived with

his wife, son and other relatives: *"during dinner I can't eat without my wife. For example I'm, I will come late at work, we eat at exactly 6:30 at the evening so if I will come 7 o'clock so my child will be fed first by my wife and then she will wait for me and not eat until the time I come"* (Caleb, 35). This idea was reflected in Gabriel's answer too which occurred during a conversation in a café in a mall about eating together and marriage. Gabriel and his wife wanted to take me out for halo-halo (mix-mix) a popular dessert in the Philippines; it was as a treat for me being a guest in their country and a common way to show hospitality. The couple owned a popular canteen in Manila which I had previously been to because another participant knew of this place and the owners well. They, like many others in the research, asked about my relationship status, to which I explained that I was engaged. Therefore, they started giving marriage advice too. For them eating together as a couple was central to having a happy marriage.

*Gabriel: Every day we eat together*

*Gabriel's wife: Eating together is very important. Eating together is **very** important.*

Waiting to have the whole family there was linked with happiness too. For some men, such as Mark, this was the reason why they waited for the table to be complete before they started eating: *"Of course when you are complete it is much happy than eating alone, right? So we don't, actually we don't start when of course if you are not complete with the family if someone is still out of home then they are not going to start, yes."* Gabriel's, Caleb's and Mark's answers on the importance of eating together reflected many of the observations and stories told by the individuals' which were written down in my research diary. Edward and Jose were brothers-in-law who lived in the same block of family owned condominiums. I interviewed them separately during the research period. Both told me a similar story about living in the same building and the impact that this had on their communal eating. They both expressed how important family was to them, as was eating together. If they knew one of the family members was alone at a mealtime, they would go, knock on the door and invite them to eat. If they had extra food they would do the same, walk down the corridor and invite people to eat with them. Edward and Jose added that if they were alone on an evening they would

knock on other family member's doors, without notice, to join in their mealtimes. They thought that eating by yourself was a very lonely experience. I was present for such a moment described above whilst eating with Richard's family. Halfway through the meal, rice with a fried fish, a friend of the family entered the house unexpectedly. After exchanging pleasantries Richard's wife immediately asked if the friend would join us for dinner. The friend declined which was then followed by the whole family saying "come eat" and beckoning her over. The importance that people placed on inclusion within mealtimes was not just spoken about; it was something that was experienced on a daily basis.

The invitation of 'come eat' would lead to another small chair or stool being brought to the table. Elbows would often be touching at such meals and they would ensure that as many people as possible could squeeze around a small table. Once that had reached capacity and if extra people were joining there would be family members sat on the staircase, on the floor, and on the curb of the street. The meal expanded throughout the house and spilled into public spaces. A typical house or condominium that I visited in Manila consisted of two floors. The first had a small sitting area, dining table, kitchen and wet room. The second was a room split up into smaller sections, one for the parents the other for the children. Ovens are not a common sight within houses; instead people cooked everything using two gas rings. The picture represents a typical kitchen in Manila.

Despite the unpredictable numbers of people eating, food was well thought out for the week, with people carefully choosing food from the market with their budget. The importance of money, when food shopping, was brought up by a number of men throughout the research. The following two quotes are about the impact that having low financial resources had on the decisions made about what to purchase. They were responses to being asked during an interview to describe their weekly food shopping.

*"We have to buy only what is needed for that amount of money." (Joel, 59)*

*"And we have a certain amount of money to spend and if it exceed it's the time you forget the extra." (Caleb, 35)*

As a researcher from the West participants would often compare their situation to what they perceived the situation to be like in more affluent countries. In this case Joshua compared the budgets in the Philippines with the West. In the following quote he implies that Filipinos have to budget their money when it comes to food choices, unlike his perceptions of western countries which he believed to have high levels of resources. This was again in answer to being asked about food shopping:

*"So in the Philippines we have a budget. Budget is very strict in budgeting because we have limited resources not like in the Western countries."* For the budgeting reasons, participants were inclined to shop in markets as these were cheaper than supermarkets.

It was common for families to have particular vendors that they would buy their groceries from, either on a weekly basis at a market stall or daily from a vendor pushing a cart along the streets and knocking on customer's doors with that day's produce. Richard and I discussed this over breakfast when I heard a vendor shouting what he was selling outside of the house. His wife shouted *"one minute kuya",* then ran outside and returned with a fish and a few vegetables. She said *"I never know what he will have, but he give us a good price because he know us now"* (extract from ethnographic notes). Another advantage of using market stalls or vendors was that prices could be haggled and items inspected before it was purchased so that the family got the most for their money. Any member of the

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family would then cook for the household and this often changed each night depending on work schedules. It was not solely the duty of women, but men also participated in domestic tasks such as cooking.

The whole family gathered round the table, waiting for everyone to be present before eating. This was not only described, as seen above with partners waiting for their wives, but also experienced on numerous occasions. It was also not just families who waited before eating, it occurred during larger communal meals. For instance*: Sunday 6ᵗʰ March I was invited to a meal after a church service, this became an almost weekly activity. Women and sometimes men from the church would cook a large meal for between fifteen to twenty people. Several large pans full of rice were placed in the centre of long tables with benches either side. Then the viand was placed on the table. This particular Sunday was busy with people coming and going in the different rooms of the church. I was told lunch was being served, so went outside into the wooden dining shack and waited. The food began to get cold and I spent some time fanning away flies from it. It was 30 minutes from lunch being called until we started to eat. Everyone then helped themselves to the food in the centre, ensuring that there was enough for everyone to have some. Piles of rice were consumed using a spoon and fork or hands, until everyone was satisfied or the food had run out.* This highlighted how important eating together was for this community, as seen through the lack of concern over the food going cold. We always had to wait for the company to be complete.

### 4.5.4  Eating together

Initially it appeared that the act of eating was central to Filipino life and culture. To some degree this is true, and people often said that they loved to eat. However, more important than this to the men in this study were the social interactions that occurred around the food being eaten. Communal eating reflects the communal or relationship central nature of many Filipinos. One of the main priorities for people was having healthy relationships between their friends, family and community.

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This was highlighted when discussions were held over why I never heard complaints over the sharing of one dish each meal even when they ate outside of the house; most noticeably the children who were present did not complain to their parents. The lack of individual choice was initially surprising, given the nature of ordering food in the UK where you would usually order a dish by yourself. This observation meant that I started to ask people about the significance of sharing food. In answer to questions about this topic people explained that it was because they did not mind the food that they ate because it was more important to eat with people: *"Food is just secondary to the relationship"* (Joel, 59), this was with regard to having personal choices over food instead of eating communal meals. The same was said of money, that it was secondary to relationships, which is why value was placed on sharing out the income that they had earnt. Obviously having food and an income were extremely important for them to have a better quality of life, however they prioritised family and relationships first. This was also explained by Andrew from a different perspective, for him the food being eaten was not important; instead he valued ensuring that everyone had some food to eat, no matter how simple it was. The following quote was a response to being asked about why he thought eating with his family was important:

*"Because when you, in Filipino we always eat together we share food, even there is not enough food for everybody we still share even I tried to eat one plate for four of us, just rice and soya sauce and some kind of oil like that then we share it…What's the good if you're full but the others are starving or their stomach are empty? Family, Filipino family are always sharing even if it's their last day, they will even give it to their family because Filipinos they love sharing each other's food".* (Andrew, 19)

Andrew's answer aided the understanding on an emotional level about why they wanted to eat together and the lack of complaints. For him it was about being fair and making sure that no one went hungry. Andrew was from a poor background and lived in an informal settlement in Manila. He explained that many Filipinos were in the same position as him, and that sharing was the norm when their

financial and nutritional resources were low.  Another emotion was linked with the sharing of food and that was happiness: *"I guess, because when we eat together we... share foods and we eat plenty of foods because we are happy eating together"* (Ramon, 24). Ramon's case was different to Andrew's in that he had more income to purchase more food. Yet, the food that he bought was still shared with his company.

Food was not the only thing that was shared during communal meals, participants spoke of sharing their daily experiences. Once I had noticed the pattern of people eating with company I began to ask participants why they did it, and why it was important to them. There was one word in particular which kept appearing within conversations and interviews, which was 'bonding'. Throughout the research people explained that to them there was a relationship between eating together and bonding. In the interviews I never used this word, which made it more revealing that many people spoken with during the study specifically said that sharing food meant they bonded with others. The following quote was said by James, who poignantly not only relates communal eating with relationship bonding, but also says that it is something which is normal in Filipino culture: *"When my parents are still live we used to eat as a family together. **The way Filipinos do.** We are, we have bonding…it has been a tradition to have **bonding** even though we are already in the right age"*. In the right age means that they were the right age to move out of the familial house but still chose to reside there.

The theme of bonding appeared in conversations with Adrian, Rodrigo, Marcus, Landon, Eric and Antonio which are listed below. Each of the following was a response to the question: "why is eating with people important to you?" Which I would ask if they had discussed communal eating during our conversation or interview.

*"I think that food is one factor that can unite people also, especially every family which are eating together I think it's one of the factors that makes the family **bond** together."* (Adrian, 38)

*"Yes, especially my mother. It's very important for her, for us to eat together. It's basically the time for us to be able to communicate with each other and to **bond** with each other."* (Rodrigo, 20)

*"Because one thing is **bonding** part of the family, fellowship to sister, brother, mother. That's the culture, always together with your family." (*Marcus, 40)

*"I think it's important because it's the time where we while eating we're [sharing] sharing our what we did today, what experiences we have, our different stories, like that mam. It's a **bonding** time for us when we eat together."* (Landon, 23)

*"It's like a **bonding** for the family, it's time for you to talk. You share what you have been through in the day."* (Eric, 27)

*"When eating together, they are building a family. For example when there is a celebration like birthday or Christmas, when the family are eating together there are certain **bonds** being created."* (Antonio, 24)

These quotes highlighted how eating together was both an everyday event that happened with the family and, as Antonio states, something which occurs on special occasions. It was a daily event that for men such as Marcus was not only a part of family life but also Filipino culture. The data collected through autophotography highlighted how photographs can reflect individuals' relationship with food and eating. This was particularly shown when comparing my own autophotography with my participants. In order to reflect on the use of the method, I did it myself over a period of time in the Philippines. The two pictures below were examples of my photographs.



The focus of all of my autophotography pictures was food. My individualistic style of eating in the UK I feel heavily influenced the pictures I took. My relationship with

food during meals was how the food itself made me feel, what it meant to me and what it looked like. Therefore, this was the way I represented meals in the pictures. However, this was in stark contrast to my participant's pictures. These photographs show people eating with family or friends, or of the table laid out with places for family members. In the photographs below, a family including husband, wife and three children's table setting with an extra for a guest; a man and his partner; and a man and his mother. Comparing my own interpretation of autophotography and food with that of my participant's helped me to reflect on what their pictures represented about their cultural values compared to my own.



In these pictures, men decided to take a self-portrait photograph to include themselves and the people they were eating with. One man chose to photograph the table, not individual plates of food, showing that he was eating with others. Participants were asked to photograph anything to do with their meals and eating. Therefore, they had the freedom to represent their mealtimes in whatever way they felt appropriate. These photographs reveal that not only were meals eaten together, but that men wished to show how they ate with other people. Not everyone interpreted the instructions given about the autophotography in this way; instead they included photographs which were taken of the food that they ate. In these instances, they believed I was interested in the food that they consumed. Yet,

when they discussed the pictures or talked about food in their lives they spoke of the importance of eating with people. The significance placed on eating together could be seen whilst trying to recruit participants. Some Filipinos who initially were interested in the project said that they did not want to participate because they were embarrassed that they did not eat many meals with their families, and thought that their photographs would not be useful for the study. This really emphasised the priorities that people had around family, friendship and food.

This idea was also shown whilst analysing the photographs that participants took as a sequence of pictures not just looking at the individual ones. The first photograph would be of the food that they were eating, followed by one showing who they were eating with. The second is a participant eating by himself, followed by asking his wife to join in the picture.



The succession here once more shows how it was not enough to simply photograph the food that they ate, but that if they were eating with someone it was important to have them included within the documentation of the meal.

Eating together was integral to family life, because many believed that the *"family who eats together stays together"* (John, 28). This phrase was mentioned a number of times when discussions were held over why individuals thought that eating in a communal atmosphere was important. Even when this particular saying was not used people still expressed the same sentiment. The reason given behind this feeling was related to the environment that was created around the dinner table. It provided a time to communicate, people spoke freely over the table about problems they were having and experiences of the day. When I had noticed the importance of family I began eating with different families as much as possible. This meant not only did I get to see the food that they ate but also the social environment that was created around the table. The conversations that were held were particularly noted down in my ethnographic notes. For instance, one night I ate with Richard's family. That night, their son had come home and explained to his parents that his grades were lower than they were expecting. The dinner table provided the time and space where the parents discussed the results with their son and other children. There was openness about the situation and they were not shy about having an outsider there. I often felt that being included in a meal time meant that I became included in conversations and the lives of the participants I was eating with, and not just included in the food that we were sharing.

It happened too when eating with James and his family. On this occasion his sister had cooked rice and chicken in sauce, which we all sat around the table eating together. The subject of money came up, and how they would try to increase the money that they made by starting a small business because otherwise they would struggle to pay the rent. At this moment I began to feel uncomfortable, as speaking about monetary issues was uncommon from my background. However, I was again included in the meal and so the conversation, being asked what I thought about some of their ideas. These two stories reflect the openness of conversation and discussions during mealtimes. Caleb, when asked about eating with people summarised his feelings in the following way: *"It's a family tradition and it's a Filipino culture that family eat together and talk on matters regarding the studies of your child the status of your relationship with your wife, so we eat always*

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*together".* Nico's answer to the question was similar to this: *"Eating together is important because we talk to each other we discuss any problem arise we discuss maybe we give some advice for our children and open heart".* Again, the trend emerges of value being put not on the food being eaten but the environment around this activity. I often felt that eating with people was about inclusion into the community, which Caleb's answer reflected when he gave his opinions on communal eating *"It's very important or us Filipinos because eating with other people makes you belong".* Belonging when eating together was also mentioned by another participant *"you feel... belong to the... you are not alone in this world..."* (Matthew, 26). Every person spoken with in research about this area of their life related the consumption of food with a sense of community, belonging, fellowship and sharing. This was further highlighted in the following quote, which was a response given by Oliver to being asked about the importance of people eating together: *"it's the only time that you are in circle, in a circle ma'am they ask question you answer them, you ask question, you tell jokes, that's the **essence** ma'am of food in the Philippines ma'am".* Once more, the essence of food in the Philippines was not the item being consumed but the overall environment which was created due to food being consumed within the 'circle' of other people.

This was not just about family but also extended to friends and the community. Filipinos were proud of their hospitable and welcoming nature, which could be seen in the following exchange.

*Female friend: If someone comes in and you're eating 'come on let's eat' that's Filipino.*

*Marcus: We usually do that it's hospitality.*

*Female friend: It's a good trait of Filipino always welcoming visitor. A neighbour.*

Other traits which were mentioned with regards to food was that *"we Filipinos are friendly"* (Caleb, 35), this was also mentioned by James, Richard, Edward, and Alberto in conversations with them when they explained why they would always offer food to other people. Valuing friendship and relationships was mentioned as a Filipino trait, this links with the ideas written above about food being a tool to

keep families together. What appears here is the link between being Filipino and food. The core principles which Filipinos describe as being fundamental to Philippine life were family, sharing, hospitality and being welcoming to everyone, which are reflected in people's relationship with food. That is, what they use food for. Whilst walking along the street a pedicab driver was cooking some food on the pavement, he looked up and invited us to eat with him, his friends and family by saying 'come, eat'. We had never met before, however, it was explained that if someone saw you eating you invited them to eat too, because that is 'what Filipinos do'.

It was the same whilst eating with families, other community members would visit to chat with family and if we were eating another place would be set at the table and the friend would join in the meal. Food, in this sense, was used as a tool of inclusion, something which was valued by the Filipinos in this research. It could be explained by the nature of eating in the Philippines too. If they were eating and saw someone who was not, it was social etiquette to invite the others to eat with them. In these situations, it was not enough to simply sit around the family table and join in discussions without consuming the food which was prepared; people insisted that everyone should join in eating, because it was their way of showing inclusion into that social group.

Food was used as a social tool in many different situations, and was used to continue not only the Filipino way of eating but Filipino principles. This idea was written about in the following ethnography notes: *I had been helping to teach English to children during my stay in the Philippines. This acted as a way to give back to the community, especially my gatekeeper, for their help in this project. Near the end of the research as a thank you for helping out they said that they wanted to buy me some food. We went shopping and they bought some Filipino treat foods, which was a large sweet rice cake and sweet bread buns with filling. We then went back to their house, the food was placed on the table and shared between the family and friends who visited. The food was never handed to me specifically.* This seemed poignant in the way that it reflected the individual against the collective

when it came to food consumption. For them, the food was bought, even for personal thanks, to be shared rather than giving the individual the option to eat it alone. This is contrary to what would be expected should the gift be given in the UK. In this sense, food was used as a social tool for thanks, inclusion, hospitality and community, all of which were traits that people proudly pronounced as being Filipino. Finally, this example emphasised how food was considered something which should not be eaten alone, an idea which was explained in several of the interviews. Whether people were eating a snack or a main meal they said that it was better to eat with others due to the emotional impact that eating alone had on them, such as the joy that they felt. I asked Caleb to further explain why he ate with other people and he related it back to the emotional impact it had on him and others: *"it's part of our culture that we eat together in the gathering and it's makes us happy when we eat with other people".* The emotions that people felt eating in solitude developed into a line of questioning in the research.

There was an emotional relationship with the actual food being eaten, as explored in the previous section with relation to rice. However, there were significant emotional connections with the act of consuming food with other people. Communal eating brought happiness, and this had physical consequences of the person eating. First, the food tasted 'more delicious': "*it makes the food taste better if you have someone to talk to"* (Isaac, 23). This view was also expressed by a participant's wife when discussing the food that was eaten at the table and the relationship that this had with eating together. She was trying to explain why the food being eaten was not as important as the people who they were eating with: *"Whatever is there ever* [even] *if not so delicious not... It's so simple but they will eat together. The essence is that they will eat together no matter what's in the table. Yes"*. These are two varying opinions about food and company, the first saying it physically tastes better, the second explaining that actually the taste does not matter it is the company.

Some participants discussed how their appetites increased when they ate with other people, which were also linked to their feelings whilst consuming food. This

view was expressed by Elisha, a 24 year old fireman who valued the times that he ate with his family on an evening. His occupation meant that he would often have to eat by himself if people were away from the station. *"Sometimes it's more appetising to eat when you have someone to eat with or I guess it's more happier to eat so you get to eat more"* he then went on to emphasise this by saying *"Sometimes when you have friends over your family you eat more because you have the appetite"*.

The opposite was also said, in that men spoke of losing their appetite when eating alone. The experience was described as being lonely by both men and women, therefore they ate quickly and ate less food. Ivan explained this during an informal interview when asked about why he ate with other people: *"If you feel... if you eat alone it feels... no appetite... it looks like... If I'm eating with my workmates and family I need two cups of rice but if I'm eating alone, one cup of rice... I'm not consuming it all"*. These physical symptoms of individual eating extended to a feeling of tiredness, as Mark explained when asked why he always tried to eat with people: *"it's really tiring when you are eating alone. And then you lose your appetite when you are eating alone so much better for me to eat with your family together, yes"* (Mark, 27). This view was expressed by a number of participants, the feeling of tiredness.

People throughout the research spoke of their positive and negative feelings, which were both physical and emotional, around the experience of consuming food. Second to these were the opinions on the food being eaten. Since there were such positive emotions connected with eating together it acted as stress relief. Ian was asked about the role of eating together in Filipino culture to which he replied that *"it's a way of relaxing. Because after you worked with your team you tend to chat with them, share your experience and throw some jokes... it makes us... it makes our time enjoyable. For a while we forget our stress and our workloads, which is why it's very important to us"*. Eating together was discussed in-depth particularly when talking to people who were employed in a job with long hours. The men who worked in offices, such as Ian, said that after a stressful day they

wanted to go home and eat with their families. There was a clear pattern of significance being put on this way of consuming food, and these feelings went through the different generations spoken to. This was the ideal scenario, however, shifts in the economy and changing work schedules mean that there are changes in the environment in which people consume food.

### 4.5.5 Changing eating patterns

Traditionally the findings described above were the ideal, and what many families strived for when possible. However, participants explained that when they migrated to Manila and left provincial life behind their relationships with food changed. In the city men spoke of eating more fast food compared with their childhood: *"From my childhood when I was a kid I just eat what my mother cook, like Filipino food. Today, sometimes fast food because here in Manila here in Makati, limited choices of food. Sometimes a lot of fast food here. Me and my office mates just eating, Jolibee, MacDo, KFC every day. It's a routine for us"* (Joseph, 21).

Long hours in the office and irregular patterns of work for family members were described as the main cause of making eating together in the house a difficult task. My condominium was located on a busy street in Makati. When I was waiting for a lift or had some spare time I would sit by my window and look out onto the street below. This provided a daily snapshot of the routines of passers-by. I wrote up my observations to see if there were any patterns which emerged whilst conducting these observations. The following are descriptions of the daily routines which I heard or saw written up from my observational notes: *"At all hours of the day and night I could hear the calls of street food vendors. They walk around the streets shouting whatever produce they were selling, whilst pushing a cart or carrying buckets. Day and night I could also hear and see people purchasing the food as a snack or main meal whilst they were on their breaks. It was obvious when the breaks were because the streets suddenly became full of people. The vendors provided food for people 24 hours of the day".*

Once a pattern began to emerge I asked Marcus why they were so popular and worked all hours. He said that the food was cheap and tasted good, also that Makati now had a growing number of telemarketing and sales companies which had day and night shifts. Therefore, the vendors had adapted their selling to being 24 hours. However, by providing the food for people in shift work it meant that the vendors themselves would struggle to have family meals together because these small stalls would often be run by family members taking it in turns to sell the produce. Small cafes were open day and night to provide food for anyone who needed a meal. Fast food chains were open all hours too. Alongside the food call, traffic could be heard throughout the day and night ferrying people to and from work.   In Manila, the impact of changing industry and providing food for workers meant that the traditional way of everyone eating together was beginning to change.

The participants in this research had eaten with people from childhood. These moments were looked back on fondly often as being some of their happiest memories. This feeling was described by Jacob (age 47) as *"the happiest moment, the memory I ever experience in our family when we eat together so whatever in front of us"*. He again emphasised not the food but the family. This was the constant pattern through the autophotography, ethnography and interviews. There was sadness about how this was changing and they had to eat without their family more and more. First, people had left their family for better job prospects in the capital. Some men who worked in the city commuted everyday to their job from nearby provinces; this meant that they arrived home too late on an evening to be able to eat with their families. Others spent the working days living in small condominiums or sharing houses with residents in similar financial situations. For these men, eating together was even more important on the weekends: *"me and my wife we work in the city, our little girl lives in the province with my mother. We go home Friday night and come back to Manila Sunday night. Eating together is very special to us because we don't get to see family a lot. So we eat every meal with them when we are home"* (Andres, 59).

This couple had moved to Manila for their jobs but did not want to permanently migrate there as they did not wish to leave their families. This lifestyle was commonly spoken of and meant that every weekend the bus depot was crowded with people commuting home to visit family. It was also experienced by Joshua: *"We are weekend parents, me and my wife. Monday to Friday we are working here in the school. And she is also in her work. After Saturday and Sunday we go there and after that we go back to our home in province. Then Monday again work again".* Shifts in the economy and labour market were viewed as changing the 'essence' of food in the Philippines of communal eating. Jose added to this idea by describing the sense of loss that he felt because of not being able to eat with his children, which was different from his own upbringing: *"My children work at night and sleep in the daytimes so me and my wife sleep at night and work at the daytime. That's one of the reasons why Filipino families these days are seldom together at the table"*. Although the words initially do not appear too disheartening, it was the tone that he had whilst saying these which was noted down. There was a sadness that he could not provide the joy that he felt eating with his extended family as a child for his own children.

Men increasingly spoke of how their short lunch or dinner breaks meant that they had to eat more convenience food, especially those who worked in Manila and in office jobs such as call or IT centres. This was observed a number of times when I went to fast food restaurants during lunch breaks with participants or having interviewed them in the morning. I noted down on several occasions my experiences of visiting these places during lunch breaks. They were full of school students, workers in their uniforms, and men in suits ordering individual meals for themselves, which differed from the eating habits within the home of one meal shared between the family members. I would ask participants about their opinions on consuming fast food compared with the more traditional Filipino cuisine. One such conversation occurred with James, who would often go to eat fast food during his lunch breaks, and said that it was cheap, quick and convenient during his busy working day. In his opinion over the past few decades there had been an increasing

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number of fast food chains opening in the Philippines and they were very popular. I asked Richard on a separate occasion when we were ordering food at the counter about his opinions on whether this form of food consumption had changed the eating habits of Filipinos. In his response he explained that it was different because people eat quickly and more often just their own food. To him and his wife, who was also present, this was the way they thought people in the West ate, because they viewed the British and Americans as being busy and buying plates of food just for themselves. There was importance placed on communal rather than individual eating, which was reflected in the autophotography too.

However, I also observed that in these fast food outlets people would still try to eat with others. Additionally, although they were ordering their own food they still shared it. For instance, one day we went to McDonalds for lunch. I ordered my own food, a burger and fries. I carried my tray over to table where my company was sitting. When I sat down they reached over to my tray, picked up my fries and poured them into a tray in the centre of the table. They proceeded to do the same with their own portions. Although we had ordered separately the food was still shared. This implied, to me, that the food that people were consuming may be changing but the importance of sharing was not. Indeed, they had simply adapted the way that they ate with others. Rather than being able to eat with their family, they instead ate with workmates and friends. Street food vendors had also designed their carts to accommodate the communal ideas of eating. I took the following picture of a street food vendor's cart.

It shows strangers standing around the cart eating food with others. This is opposed to simply taking away the food to eat at their places of work. Again, eating environments have been created which reflect Filipino values around food consumption whilst adapting to changing eating patterns.

### 4.5.6  Diet and health

The communal eating was commonly found in participant's houses, as discussed above, but it also extended beyond the domestic space to public space eating areas too. On both Saturday 23rd and Monday 25th April I went to two restaurants with eight and then ten people. The first was a US-Italian style restaurant, the second specialised in roast chicken. They were two very different places but stood out as examples because the way of ordering food was extremely similar. I noted these practices down after each meal. We sat down at long tables, with a place setting in front of each chair. I noticed how there were no menus on the table but expected that these would be handed out when we sat down. The waitress came and gave out two menus to the eldest members at the table. There was some discussion around what they were going to order, checking whether people did or did not like certain food. Then the two with the menus ordered food for the whole table. There was no ordering an individual plate of my preference; instead we shared dishes in the centre much like being at someone's house.  This was interesting for studying how food practices in restaurants reflected the way that customers were accustomed to eating. However, it did make studying individual food preferences more difficult, as men and women were often eating the same foods. One consequence of this form of ordering food was that in the end I ate what the others ordered, as did the rest of the table. This meant that the only control I had over the food I consumed was often the quantity that I ate. This could make it challenging to try and eat, from my experience, a well-balanced diet if the food being served had poor nutritional value. Therefore, either everyone could share a healthy or unhealthy meal.

Participants often blamed the increase in diet related illnesses to the increasing consumption of fast food, which could then be related back to changing work patterns. This was altering the food being eaten, from more traditional Filipino dishes to more burgers and fried chicken at a low price. Fast food outlets had adapted their menus to fit in with the population being served, such as including rice rather than bread. The changes meant that people ordered their own food rather than the traditional viand (side dish) and rice combination which were shared by the table. The increasing consumption of fast food and, particularly mentioned, fizzy drinks was how many Filipinos explained the growing levels of diet related illnesses, especially diabetes. There was a common trend when talking about illnesses, participants would name someone they knew and they describe why they thought they had, say, diabetes.

I asked Caleb to talk about why he thought diabetes was increasing, he replied: *"Diabetes, it's discipline, just like (friend's son) he has high sugar, sugar level is high. But then he can't resist temptation when he was offered buy chocolate or soft drinks"* (Caleb, 35). The consumption of fizzy drinks and sweets was described as causing other illnesses too. I was given advice throughout my research about my own diet, especially when I was unwell. I went to purchase a sugary soft drink in order to have some quick energy having been ill the night before. I explained this to a participant, his wife and a nurse on separate occasions when they asked why I wanted to buy the drink. Each said that I should not drink sugary drinks or sweets because they cause throat and ear infections since they feed the virus in the throat. As this was a new concept to me I asked others about their opinions; it turned out to be a well-known idea in the communities that I spent time with. Despite knowing about the link between fast food, fizzy drinks and diabetes, and in their opinion sugary food and infections, fast food remained a popular meal due to convenience and low prices.

The closest social activity which could be related to the eating habits found in this study was the equivalent of the alcohol drinking culture in the UK. Indeed,

participants who had heard about the culture of drinking in the UK through the news or social media would compare the two. The main principles of it are the same. First, instead of after work drinks, it was after work meals. When I was invited out it was always to eat, and never to have a drink. Second, there were canteens and restaurants lining streets in cities and could be found in remote villages; just as pubs can be found in English cities and villages. These were the hub of social interactions. Finally, overeating in the Philippines, as with over-drinking in the UK, was becoming a problem with regards to the health of the population. The love to eat with others and the impact that this then had on diets needs to be considered. People said that they were more likely to eat large quantities of food in the company of others, which could lead to overeating compared to if they ate alone. The culture around eating in the Philippines could be one of the causes of the increasing problem of obesity. Even though communal eating was always quoted as being important, the austerity of previous generations, increasing affordability of food and increasing consumption of fast food meant that overeating was a possibility for a larger proportion of the population.

### 4.5.7  Masculinities and communal eating

It was within communal eating environments that I observed and men described how they could portray their masculinity through food choices. Being able to eat large quantities of rice was particularly emphasised as being masculine as Richard (aged 40) said whilst we were conversing during a lunch with 25 other people in a community hall. It had been cooked by some of the older members of the community who were both men and women. As Richard went for a fifth serving of rice he said to me *"Men need to eat a lot of rice, so we are strong"* which was then followed by him pointing to his arm muscles. There was then a general consensus around the table with other men agreeing this to be the case. Caleb also discussed this after a meal. We were having a conversation about my time in the Philippines when Aaron, who I had previously interviewed, asked Caleb if I had asked him how much rice he ate. After the initial laughter he said that men in the Philippines eat a

lot of rice, the more rice they ate the more manly they were. This was written down after the event in my research journal. It was evident during the whole research that men on average ate more rice than women, and there was a sense that masculinity could be linked to the quantity of food which they ate. Conversely, the control of food intake was feminised; as discussed in section 4.4.

Different eating habits also emerged in these settings, as did the role that men played in the purchasing of ingredients and preparation of meals. After acknowledging this, my focus shifted from individual gendered food practices to the role of men in the domestic space and how this may have impacted on diets. It became more evident when spending time with families and social gatherings that traditionally feminised jobs such as cooking were completed by both men and women. This was visible whilst walking around markets that both men and women were equally present in the purchasing and selling of produce. Then within the home there was a general consensus around equal distribution of domestic labour. Originally in this research the public and private space eating habits of men were going to be observed separately. There were some differences in the food that was available to men; however, the basic social principles of eating with people and sharing dishes were still discussed by men for each of these spaces. Masculinity in these cases could be seen in the preparation of food, and participation and social interactions had during meal times.

### 4.5.8  Summary

In this section I have explored the importance of eating together for the participants. This way of eating reflected wider social and cultural values about family and community. It was within these settings that men would show their masculinity through the quantity of food that they consumed. Additionally, eating with people impacted on men physically, it changed how the food tasted and their appetites increased. In this section I also presented the data on how men perceive times are changing due to work schedules, in that they believe that people are

eating fewer meals with their family members.  Having presented the findings on each of the four main research themes, I will now move onto the discussion chapter to compare my findings with wider literature.

# Chapter 5: Discussion

## 5.1   Introduction

I will now discuss each of the main findings in detail, whilst comparing them with wider literature. I start this section with a discussion of the importance of eating together. This is at the core of eating in the Philippines, and one which influenced the participants' eating practices and gender performance. This idea is explored in section 5.3. Finally, in 5.4 I discuss what masculinity meant to the men in my study and how this compares to literature about masculine theories in other cultures.

## 5.2   Commensality and gendered food practices

I begin this chapter with what I would argue to be the most significant observation in this study which is the importance of commensality, the act of eating together. When I was designing this research I was going to look in a more isolated sense at men's eating habits. I had not fully appreciated the eating culture in the Philippines. In the communal eating environment men can display their masculinity through their food practices. Therefore, I will discuss commensality first and then how masculinity and eating practices fit within this. The importance of eating together was apparent from the moment that I first arrived in the Philippines and was immediately taken out for a family meal, from this point onwards the social and personal significance of eating in such an environment continued to appear in my observations and interviews. This section addresses the question which has driven many scholars and research studying food from a social science perspective, and that is "why do people eat what they do?" (Warde, 2016).

It was clear throughout the data collection and subsequent analysis that family influenced many aspects of participants' lives, including their patterns of food

consumption. They would aim to eat as many meals as possible with other people. Family, as described in the results section, were not just people who were biologically related to the individual it extended to friends, Godparents and neighbours. This was why it was difficult to trace who was in each family because the definition was so broad. Meal times for the participants were an occasion when they could spend time with their family members or friends, which was a valued moment in their day. The importance of commensality could be seen on the multiple instances that we waited for everyone to be present at the table before we ate food. For the participants this time was not just about consuming their own food with other people, it was about the social environment that it created. A meal has been defined as a time when food is consumed in the presence of others (Douglas, 1972), whilst also being a cultural site where people unite, bond, resolve arguments, build relationships, or negatively feel the exclusion from a social group (Appadurai, 1981; Mars, 1997; Fischler, 2011; Danesi, 2012a; Danesi, 2014). Mealtime rituals and practices change depending on the community that is being studied, as do the social rules and customs that should be followed whilst eating with others (Fischler, 2011; Danesi, 2012b). It is evidently important to understand this site of consumption in any culture, but especially in this study where commensality was a significant event in men's daily eating habits.

A number of reasons were given for why people ate together. People spoke about how communal eating was part of their culture and fitted in with wider Filipino values. This was seen in the following quote from Caleb (age 35): *"It's a family tradition and it's a Filipino culture that family eat together and talk…"* as well as from Marcus's female friend regarding inviting people to eat together *"It's a good trait of Filipino always welcoming visitor. A neighbour".* The mealtime, therefore, reflects wider social values held by the population being studied, in this case it is about family, relationships and being welcoming. These were traits that the men and women in this study would proudly speak of. Commensality has been researched in many different countries, where researchers have tried to understand why it is more important in some cultures than others. For instance, it was found that in France people felt more self-conscious and experienced higher

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levels of stress if they ate alone than those studied in Germany (Danesi, 2012a). Higher levels of commensality have been found and greater importance placed on this form of food consumption in Southern European countries compared with Northern Europe and the US (Danesi, 2012b). A few explanations have been presented to explain this divide. One proposal is that people from different countries associate food with having different purposes. It was found that people from the United States were more likely to associate food with being functional and related it to health, whereas for the French food was about pleasure and socialising (Rozin et al., 1999).

The differences seen in Europe have been related to historical religious differences and the social values that they instilled, especially the catholic-protestant divide (Danesi, 2014). In this case, historically Catholic countries displayed eating behaviours similar to the French listed above, with meals lasting longer and food holding a more social rather than functional status in people's lives. Therefore, the relationship that people have with food, not just what they eat but how they consume it, reflects wider social values and daily lifestyle practices in different societies. This is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, it shows the importance of studying food consumption patterns at a local level, as they clearly vary depending on which community is being studied. Secondly, it highlights how food, no matter where it is being studied, is more than just something which is consumed. It can be a symbol of a society, that is, a tool to present the values held by the people consuming it. For the men who I was studying food was used as a tool to bring the family together, and reflected the hospitable nature of Filipinos that they proudly spoke of. This was the current situation that men described and I observed in this study. However, eating practices are prone to change, through development or income levels in a country. This means it is important to appreciate the temporal nature of research on what food represents and how it is eaten.

There can be a large personal and emotional impact related to having knowledge about the rules and rituals around the dinner table. Performing in the correct way

can lead to inclusion into a social group and lead to an overall positive emotional experience (Danesi, 2012a). Conversely, not assuming the correct mannerisms relating to food consumption in the population that is being eaten with can lead to social exclusion and emotional distress. This was something that as a cross cultural researcher I experienced, especially with regards to how much rice I was expected to eat. Initially I felt a lack of acceptance because I could not eat the amount that would have been acceptable. I was not following the expected quantity that women should eat in the Philippines. For instance, when some women told me I ate like a bird, eating too little and 'pecking' at the food (see page 143 for further examples). I also ate slowly because I was not used to eating with a spoon and fork rather than a knife and fork. This impacted on both mine and the women's eating habits. Added to this, they did not understand at times why I felt comfortable eating breakfast by myself in the morning. I was again not prescribing to the ideals that they held around the way that food should be consumed.

Some participants in this study expressed how, for them, the act of eating together was valued more than the food being eaten. People did exclaim that they love to eat, but even more they love to eat with other people. Joel summed up this point by saying that "*Food is just secondary to the relationship*". Food had a number of different purposes. It was a tool of inclusion, which would be shared even when given as a gift. This could be seen in the data reported (on page 170) about the food gift given to me as a thank you being shared with everyone present. Food was shared; even a glimpse at someone else eating could lead to the offer to join them, such as the pedicab drivers cooking at the side of the road. In the data that I collected, food was rarely just an item to be consumed individually and when people did eat by themselves it produced negative feelings. This was because the act of individual eating in the Philippines seemed somewhat lonelier than perhaps studies found in the West. In Western countries there are higher rates of lone eating, behind the desk, or walking along in the street, it has become almost normalised (Yates and Warde, 2016). In the UK mealtimes have shortened, as has food preparation time and they are increasingly eaten alone. This trend is evident in other Western countries such as Norway, France, the Netherlands and the US

(Warde et al., 2007; Yates and Warde, 2016; Warde and Yates. 2017). Warde writes about the changes that have happened in the West, yet the ideal remains the same as that in the Philippines: "dominant norms in many societies prescribe that meals ought to be shared, eaten simultaneously, and ideally face-to-face with family members or other close and significant associates" (Yates and Warde, 2016: 97). Despite these ideals, changes in lifestyles in these countries have led towards increasing levels of lone eating.

Some families in my study spoke of the difficulties that they faced now with having family meals. The shift pattern of working meant that men described the challenge of having family meals, because children may work during the night and the parents during the day. Therefore, the participants felt at times that they were not performing their duty in the family of ensuring that they ate together because: *"family who eats together stays together"* (John, 28). Hence, if they did not eat together the worry was that the family ties would not be as strong. This was viewed as a time to build relationships as well as eat. Trying to have a family meal has been the goal for not only these participants but those in studies conducted in Western countries. Family meals in Britain (Brannen et al., 2013) and the US (Sobal et al., 2002) were still thought of as being an integral part of family life. People also perceived that these opportunities were declining (Yiengprugsawan et al., 2015), although there are debates about whether or not this is reflected empirically (Brannen et al., 2013). Whether or not these values are changing, the results of both my own and other studies suggest that there is concern about the family meal no longer being a part of their eating patterns. I did not look at the perceived shifts of eating patterns for participants in-depth but it would be an interesting area to study in the future, looking at the perceived compared to the actual changes in the number of meals eaten together. Family meals in the Philippines could mean meals eaten with friends as well, as the definition of family was very broad. However, the definition of family may not be the same in different societies being studied. This therefore changes how eating company is defined in each study.

The community I studied believed that the ideals of commensality from the family's perspective were eroding, following similar patterns found in the West. Some men spoke nostalgically of their childhood and eating with their families, whilst expressing sadness that they felt they could not provide the same environment for their children (for further examples, see page 175). The younger generation spoke of eating more fast food and quick meals compared with traditional Filipino food with their family. However, they would still aim to eat with workmates and friends, and not alone if this was possible. There were changes with family meals, yet people still aimed for commensality with a different social group. Food was still shared in fast food restaurants, such as French fries being poured in the centre of a tray for everyone to share. Although times were viewed as changing, the social aim of eating together remained. The meals that were consumed were also similar, with rice continuing to be dominant in the Filipino diet.

A typical family meal continued to be rice with some fish or meat and sometimes vegetables in a broth. As seen in the photograph below it would all be placed in the centre of the table with large serving spoons so that people could serve themselves.



This way of serving food was representative of the social values held by the community in this study. Food did have a personal *physical* function for the participants, giving them energy for the day's activities. However more important than this were the *emotional* functions of commensality, which can be particularly demonstrated by studying rice. One pot of rice in the centre of the table which everyone could help themselves to was symbolic not just practical. It symbolised

the sharing of a resource with the family as Andrew said "*in Filipino we always eat together we share food, even there is not enough food for everybody we still share even I tried to eat one plate for four of us, just rice and soya sauce and some kind of oil like that then we share it...What's the good if you're full but the others are starving or their stomach are empty? Family, Filipino family are always sharing even if it's their last day, they will even give it to their family*". He mentioned three important aspects of Filipino eating habits here: rice, sharing and family. These three words stood out throughout the research as being highly influential on the eating habits of men. Rice was cheap, enjoyed by everyone without exception, and could be split between multiple people. If another person was invited to join the meal, which frequently happened, the rice would be split further. The practical, but more importantly symbolic nature of rice in the Philippines was eloquently summarised by Aguilar (2013) in the following two quotes: "rice stands for the 'we' even in the poorest families" (page 321) and "[rice] is the basis of commensality" (page 324). Both my own findings and those of Aguilar show how rice was not just a taste of necessity for people from lower socioeconomic groups, it was representative of their social values around family and sharing, as well as the importance of commensality to many of the participants in my study. Eating was more than just consuming food, there was an emotional significance of the event which varied depending on if they ate with or without company and this in turn impacted their eating habits.

The participants in this study only spoke of positive emotional consequences when they ate with people. Happiness was commonly linked with commensality: *"Of course when you are complete it is much happy than eating alone, right?"* (Mark, 27). The Filipinos who I spoke with also mentioned that they felt displeasure when eating alone. In other studies, participants have spoken of feeling depressed, stressed and unhappy (Redd and De Castro, 1992; Yiengprugsawan et al., 2015). In my own research, it was not just about the participants having positive or negative emotions, they had physical consequences. The first of these was that eating with someone made the food taste different "*It makes the food taste better if you have someone to talk to*" (Isaac, 23). Others mentioned that the food was more

appetising because they were happier and so ate more. Conversely, eating alone was linked with tiredness and a reduction in the quantity eaten. I could not observe this as I did not research men eating alone, which makes their personal reflections a valuable insight into their eating practices when I was not present. The participants had a high level of self-awareness about how they felt in different eating environments and the changes that it caused.

This resonates with other studies where they have found that people eating alone ate less than those eating with company (Klesges et al., 1984; de Castro and Brewer, 1992; Bell and Pliner, 2003). These pieces of research have often been based on observations of participants in restaurants or in controlled conditions in a specific research space, and not natural or everyday environments. The conditions in which people are consuming food may alter the findings. For instance, when people eat alone in their homes and when they are not being observed eating, they may eat more food because of it being a comfortable space. Additionally, Lupton (2013) writes about the effect that feeling shame has on the quantities that people consume. This is about surveillance of the body, with people wanting to consume what they believe others will find acceptable. These studies are different to mine because data in this project were collected through the participants' personal accounts; they described their eating patterns rather than being observed.

There are debates about the exact impact that other people being present whilst eating has on the consumption patterns of an individual, whether it causes an increase or decrease in the quantities eaten. Although there are conflicting arguments on this there is one overarching concept which has been agreed on in this field of research, that the quantity eaten during a meal is influenced by the social environment that the food is being consumed in. Indeed, some have argued that the most important factor in the quantity eaten by humans was social and not physiological in nature (de Castro and Brewer, 1992). It is for this reason that I believe researching the social side of eating, the emotions attached to this, and the environment in which food is eaten is just as important as researching the dietary intake of participants. This is again trying to understand the 'why' over the 'what'

question with regards to food habits. It is data and information about the former of these two areas of research that is currently lacking in literature in the Philippines. However, studies have been conducted on this area in different countries where researchers have tried to understand the influence of social or lone eating.

Behaviours during commensality have been split into three main categories: social facilitation; modelling and impression management. Social facilitation refers to the increased food consumption whilst eating in the presence of others compared with eating alone (de Castro et al., 1990; de Castro and Brewer, 1992; Bell and Pliner, 2003; Sobal and Nelson, 2003; Hetherington et al., 2006; Pliner et al., 2006; Herman, 2015; Vartanian et al., 2015). The results in my research concur with these findings, in that men mentioned increased food consumption saying that the number of cups of rice eaten could double during commensal eating. A number of reasons have been proposed in other studies which may be relevant to the answers given by participants in the research that I conducted. The first is the time effect, in that the more people there are, the longer the meal lasts and so people have the chance to consume more food because they graze on the left over food on their plates (Redd and de Castro, 1992; Bell and Pliner, 2003).

Second, is that social facilitation is more likely to occur when people eat with friends and family, than if they eat with strangers because eaters feel more comfortable consuming the quantity of food that will satisfy them (Clendenen et al., 1994; de Castro, 1994). Both of these could be influencing the quantity that people in the families that I studied were eating, in that if they ate with other people that they know at each meal, this could have led to an increased meal duration and comfort around consuming large quantities of food. This is particularly important to research in the community that I studied because of the frequency of commensality. Other studies have focused on restaurants and the differences in calorie consumption depending on the number of people present (Klesges et al., 1984; Bell and Pliner, 2003). However, such an eating environment for many people is an infrequent occurrence, so this does not represent 'normal' eating conditions. Social facilitation may have occurred for the participants of my study.

However, it was not just having people there that increased how much they ate because of increased duration of the meal, it was the emotional significance that eating with family had for the participants. It led to happiness which also led to increased food consumption.

This point is further enforced when looking at the second behaviour which is modelling, when people increase or decrease the amount that they consume reflecting the quantity being consumed by their co-eater (Hetherington et al., 2006; Pliner et al., 2006; Vartanian et al., 2013; Vartanian et al., 2015). This could explain why women decreased the amount that they ate when I was present at the table. However, this was not the case of the men with whom I ate; they did not appear to change their eating habits despite me being there. I assume this because from the beginning to the end of the research their eating patterns did not change, in comparison when women felt more comfortable with my presence they ate their normal quantities of food. This implies that simply eating with other people does not increase the amount eaten, it is also the company that matters and the relationship that people have with them. As an unknown outsider my presence initially altered the amount that women ate.

The joy of commensality was changed too, with them feeling more self-conscious. This links to the final eating behaviour of impression management, where people reduce the amount that they eat because of the company that they are with (Pliner et al., 2006; Salvy et al., 2007). Therefore, women who I ate with could have been reducing their food intake not just to mirror mine but also because of trying to create the right first impression. Reflecting on my own eating habits when I first started made me appreciate how, as a guest, I was doing something similar. I did not want to appear greedy by eating too much, nor was I entirely sure what the right amount was to serve myself. Although self-serving food was helpful because I could control the quantity that I put on my plate, it was also an act which was watched, assessed and came with social rules which I did not fully understand until later on in the research.

Social facilitation, modelling and impression management were all visible in the data collected in the Philippines and each of these can occur depending on the familiarity that the eater has with the co-eaters. Social facilitation has been described as less likely to occur in front of strangers (de Castro, 1994; Herman et al., 2003; Hetherington et al., 2006). This resembles particularly the eating habits of the women in the initial stages of my study. Alternatively, men and women have been found to consume more food in the presence of people who they know (Salvy et al., 2007). I cannot be sure if women increased the quantity that they ate when they were with people that they knew; I only know that they reduced their usual amount in front of me until they felt familiar with me.

One suggestion is that when an eater is with familiar co-eaters they feel more comfortable consuming larger quantities of food (Clendenen et al., 1994). The men in my study appeared to be comfortable eating in front of friends and strangers, as seen by their confidence of showing themselves eating in photographs and in front of me. Unlike women, therefore, their comfort levels of eating did not change depending on their company. The main impact of the amount that they ate was whether they were alone or with people. I did not explore this topic area with the women who I spoke with during the research, as they were not the primary focus. Also, I could not observe these changes because they were ones described by men comparing their eating habits with and without company. This idea of comfort can explain why women showed signs of modelling and impression management in the initial stages of research until they felt more confident eating the quantity that they wanted.

Therefore, familiarity with co-eaters seems to have had a bigger impact on women's than men's eating behaviour in the Filipino communities that I studied. Although there were gender differences on the impact that co-eaters had on the quantity of food eaten, it was evident that for both men and women commensality was influential on their eating habits. Indeed, I would argue that out of all the potential factors which may explain the food habits of men in this study, commensality was the most influential. It was important socially and culturally,

representing the importance of family and sharing for the Filipinos. Then, within this setting, gender could be portrayed through the food quantities that were eaten instead of the food item that they chose suggesting the wider social values that the participants had; communality was put before individuality. In the next section I will build on the idea of communal eating and how masculinity was shown in this eating environment. I will also discuss the impact that gendered perceptions of the body had on eating practices.

## 5.3 Gender and eating practices

In the initial stages of the research I was studying the dietary substances that participants were eating and quickly established that this focus did not reflect the eating practices congruent with consumption patterns in these communities. The mealtime practice of everyone eating the same dish meant that trying to find 'masculine' or 'feminine' foods as referred to in the literature did not seem possible. Reflection on this during the event suggested that in the initial stages I was inadvertently trying to apply or test theories about gendered eating patterns in the West to the people who I was studying. This was instead of just collecting the data that I observed or that men spoke about. Having established this, I began to try and build a picture of what food consumption in the Filipino communities really looked like, not just from a gendered perspective but also a societal one. It was from this point that I could fully appreciate the communal and shared manner in which meals were eaten.

Participant's answers reflected this finding, with some giving the opinion that men and women ate the same food: *"Difference Filipinos? I think there's no difference between Filipino men and women what Filipino men eat that's what the Filipino women eat also"* (Carlos, 40). This finding goes some way to dispute other studies in different countries about gendered food. Stereotypically, red meat has been associated with masculinity whereas vegetables and white meat are feminised (Bourdieu, 1984; Adams, 1994; Roos et al., 2001; Stibbe, 2004; Rozin et al., 2012; Cavazza, 2017). These gendered practices have been related back to the idea of hegemonic masculinity, whereby men try to distance themselves from feminine behaviours including the food which they eat (Connell, 1995). This idea has been critiqued as being overly simplified and not considering, for instance, socioeconomic status and food choices (Deutsch, 2005; Rothgerber, 2013). These studies have also often been conducted in Western more individualistic societies where people are served individual dishes in restaurants which are where gendered eating practices are most apparent. However, these same principles of

gender coded foods were not visible for the Filipino men and women in the communities that I was studying.

One explanation for this could be that in societies that are more prosperous or in higher socioeconomic groups gender can be performed and accomplished through individual food choices as people have the finances to buy their own dishes or have multiple dishes cooked at each mealtime. This is compared with the men in this study who were not wealthy and therefore it made sense for them cook one dish for the whole table. I would dispute this to some degree as the culture of not having individual choice over meals extended to the restaurants too and having dishes in the centre of the table for everyone to eat. Even in moments where I paid for the meal as a thank you for helping with the research or because we took it in turns to pay, we would still order dishes for the centre. Extending from this, even if the restaurant did serve individual plates of food, extra dishes would be bought for the centre of the table for everyone to share. Looking through my ethnographic notes it is difficult to find examples where food was not shared at a mealtime.

Despite being in different settings, in the domestic and public space, the same eating culture existed, and it became evident that food was not strongly gendered. There was an alternative way for men to show their masculinity during mealtimes. The quantity of food being consumed seemed to be an important way to enact gender whilst eating; this was especially true with regards to rice portion size. Masculinity could be linked with the amount of rice that the men could eat, which is what, for example, Edward explained in one interview: *"depends on the size of the cup [he laughs]. I can eat five cups, imagine five cups per meal. Breakfast, lunch and dinner, five! It makes me strong"*. For men with this opinion eating more rice made them stronger and more masculine. It has been argued that there are cultural expectations about how much and what kind of food are classed as being masculine or feminine, and that choosing the right quantity of food to eat is another way of portraying gender (Cavazza et al., 2017). It is the "how much" that is more relevant to the findings in this study. The general findings in other studies are that men are more likely to choose larger portions than women, because

eating lightly has been feminised (Pliner and Chaiken, 1990; Bock and Kanarek, 1995; Sobal, 2005; Cavazza et al., 2017). Eating large amounts of rice was described as giving men energy, acted as a fuel and made them strong. This is typical masculine language with the body being a machine needing, in this instance, rice to fuel it. "*Food is like, when you* **compare man to machine, machine use fuels,** *fossil fuels just to function like cars"* (Joshua). This is particularly true for men who have a lower socioeconomic status, so are more likely to view their body as a muscled machine (Courtenay, 2000). Studies have also concluded that women are more likely to be concerned about weight control, which leads to increased conversations about and participation in diets (Rozin et al., 1999; Johnson and Wardle, 2005). This provides potential explanations behind why women were more likely to change their eating habits in front of me and why men were more comfortable showing themselves consuming food in front of the camera. Instead of being concerned about the way in which over eating could change their body shape, men focused on how the food would physically make them feel. These are two very different reasons behind consuming the quantity of food that they did.

The performance of gender through portion size becomes even more significant during communal meals. The amount eaten in these meals can be influenced by the people who they are eating with, and if the person being studied is male or female; this could be seen in both the ethnography and autophotography data. The men in this study did not shy away from the camera; they felt comfortable showing themselves eating, which is exemplified in the following picture.



This shows a participant staring at the camera, clearly enjoying eating his meal. There is no sense of embarrassment, indeed he would have had to ask someone to take this photograph for him, showing another level of comfort. From an ethnographic perspective, my presence at meals did not appear to change the amount that the men ate, and they appeared to feel comfortable consuming the quantity that they desired to feel full. This comfort around continuing to eat the amount that they desired despite different

company reflects findings about portion sizes and masculinity; in that men were less likely than women to be concerned about the perception that others had on their food intake (Vartanian et al., 2007). Choosing the right quantity of food to eat, not just what food to eat is a way of performing gender (Cavazza et al., 2017). Indeed, studies have found that women who eat a smaller portion convey feminine and attractive qualities to their fellow diners (Pliner and Chaiken, 1990). This perception then continues the want for women to minimise their food intake in public and in front of strangers.

These ideas occur because of the social norms which are created around not only what is eaten but how much is eaten. These norms can be developed nationally or at a community level (Higgs, 2015), which is why there may be differences depending on the group of men being studied. One of the reasons why people may follow social norms is because of their association with social judgement (Higgs, 2015). Therefore, individuals learn what quantity is appropriate for the company that is being eaten with. The theory is that when an individual eats with someone who consumes small portions then they are likely to eat less too (Vartanian et al., 2015). This provides another explanation behind the initial encounters that I had with women when eating with them. They reduced the amount that they ate in my presence because of being concerned about me judging the quantity that they ate. This experience correlates with the studies which have explored the influences of co-eaters portion sizes. Several of Herman's studies have shown a relationship between co-eaters, in that a co-eater who eats a large quantity makes it acceptable for their company to also eat more (Herman et al., 2003; Vartanian et al., 2013). Once I had explained my own dietary practices in the UK and tried to increase my rice intake, women then felt more comfortable to eat the quantity that they wished. It was as if, as Herman discusses, I gave permission for them to not have to reduce their food intake. Mimicking in this way is used to create a good impression too, something which seemed to have more impact on the women's consumption compared to the men's (Robinson et al., 2011).

The above example of women altering their diets highlights another point, in that researching men's eating practices in isolation from women's only gives a confined picture of the eating practices of men. Masculinity and femininity are intrinsically linked (Connell, 1995), so in order to fully understand one it is important to consider the other. The initial main focus of this study was to just explore masculinities and eating practices, however the experiences of women's eating practices, that I had written about in the ethnographic notes, was invaluable. The differences in comfort or representation of gender through food practices provided the context needed to further understand men's eating practices. It also meant that I could ask more comprehensive questions and write ethnographic notes which represented the full picture of mealtimes of the participants in this study. However, I had not fully appreciated the importance of this during research design. It is, thus, a potential area for future research, which is further exploring gendered food practices looking at both masculinities and femininities.

Eating larger quantities of food was a way to show their masculinity too, it was not just about their comfort of eating with people. The association that men made between eating rice and strength was always related to the quantity of food consumed. Again, it was not the fact that rice was coded as being masculine or feminine, instead importance was placed on the quantity that could be eaten. Men who ate larger meals in one study were thought to be more masculine than those who ate less (Bock and Kanarek, 1995). This may be linked to some of the men's comments around not caring about their bodies, unlike women who they perceived to be more concerned about their bodies. For instance Quentin summed up this idea in the following quote: *"I think for the men it's really hard but for the women it's easy because **they're always take care of their bodies**. As a man we **don't care** if we eat a lot"*. Dismissing health needs is a way of constructing gender, in this instance it was about not considering the health implications of what they ate (Courtenay, 2000). This is opposed to women who are thought of as having more health seeking behaviour; a view aired by my participants and found in other studies (Nathanson, 1977; Kandrack et al., 1991). It is thought that women take preventative measures such as considering what and how much they eat. The male

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participants were often distancing themselves away from the feminised idea of dieting or controlling food intake; as seen in their objection to my initial line of questioning what their diets were, such as *"Women diet, not men"* (Carlos, 40). This has been found in Western studies too, where this behaviour has been related back to hegemonic masculinity and the need for men to distance themselves away from feminised behaviours (Courtenay, 2000).

There was knowledge and appreciation of the importance of changing their diets in order to live a longer life without health related illnesses. However, for the younger men this was something which they would be concerned about as they grew older, which meant that it did not impact on their current food practices. This was why they said that they did not care about what they ate; it was something they would consider in the future. There were some men who had been diagnosed with diabetes or hypertension and had to alter their diets. Altering diets because of a diagnosis was not feminised. Instead this was linked with being a responsible husband and father since having a healthy body meant that they would be able to provide for their family. Again, the actions taken can be related back to masculinity being shown through taking care of the family. If changing their diets meant that they could continue to work inside and outside the household then it was not emasculating.  Therefore, changing the food and quantity eaten at meal times was feminised if it was for the sole reason of trying to lose weight because of beauty. Diets were altered only when they had been recommended by doctors. This was despite everyone who was spoken with knowing someone with diabetes or hypertension; yet this association did not impact some of participants eating habits until they themselves were diagnosed. They were willing to make post-diagnosis lifestyle changes, but did not appear to follow preventative health seeking behaviour. Many of the men seemed to think that they would continue 'not caring' about their body and what they ate until they were diagnosed with an illness or until they were older.

Men perceived women choosing to diet because of them wanting to remain slim; whereas the male participants were eating food with the ultimate goal of feeling

full. Being full made them happy and made men believe that they would have enough energy for the day: *"For men it doesn't matter what we eat. We eat just to have the sense of fullness. We... it don't matter what time we can eat anything"* (Rodrigo). This relates to Berlant's (2011) discussion on what does having adequate food means. She proposes a number of different answers to this question. It could be biological, having the energy needed to conduct daily activities. Adequate food could be measured through people's ability to seek and be in employment. In my own research, the answer to this question is that adequate food meant having enough food to feel full. This is an important question to answer because it impacts on the food quantities that individuals' consume. For some of the men in my study, they would keep on eating, if there was enough food, until they could not eat anymore.

The "not caring" about their body shape or food portions can be linked with this desire. Many of the men who were spoken with had come from poorer backgrounds where food was scarce and often split into small portions so that the whole family could eat. This could be why, now that they were older and had more money to buy food, they felt such joy at being full rather than the pain of being undernourished. Being full was linked with their ability to work too: *"So I believe that food is very essential because without food a **man** cannot earn for his **honour** for his family. That man cannot support"* (John, 28). Masculinity was linked with the ability to provide for the family. This meant it was important for them to eat enough to be productive at work and so earn an income to provide for their family. To achieve this, men discussed eating heavy food instead of light ones, these were foods which sink to the bottom of the stomach compared with those which float.

The consumption of heavy and light foods was gendered by the men in this study. Diet food was light; the common examples being bread and French fries. Although the food did not seem to be feminised, the consumption of it was in relation to dieting. This was because men described how women would eat these foods when they wanted to lose weight. Again what is gendered is the reason behind consuming food and *not* the food itself. However, rice was viewed as a very heavy

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food and filling: *"At breakfast I eat rice, of course I need a heavy meal for for my, of course we have study here so I have to eat heavy meal so then at lunch same"* (Mark). Roos et al. (2001) found that manual workers spoke about needing heavy food for energy; however this was usually talking about meat compared to having salad. Although they are two different foods, the relationship between heavy food, energy and manliness can be seen. Another difference was that I spoke with men in different forms of employment, such as office jobs, teachers, and café owners, despite participants being from different backgrounds they mentioned needing to eat heavy meals, especially at breakfast and lunch in order to have energy through the day. This is contrary to Roos et al. (2001) where such language was used by men from manual labour jobs, and not a spectrum of jobs.

Another important point from this is that both men and women in the Philippines did not think about high and low calorie food. In their opinion calorie counting was a Western concept, as seen in their comments to me about being a 'typical Westerner' counting calories to stay slim. Instead they used the two categories of heavy and light food. The binary splitting of food has been found in other cultures; such as hot and cold, yin-yang, heavy and light. The categorisation of food reflects the health beliefs that people have around different types of food. For instance, studies in Latin America and Thailand found that people tried to balance the quantity of hot and cold food eaten so that they had good health (Wilson, 1982). Cold food was avoided when people were ill because diseases were thought of as being cold too. Similarly, in China there were yin-yang foods which were eaten depending on what illness individual's thought they had (Wilson, 1982). The definition of foods being heavy or light was found in studies about African-American food preferences in the US. It was found that food was categorised by the way they 'sat in the stomach' (Jerome, 1975; Kilbride et al., 1990). In these studies, heavy foods were thought to stay with a person compared with light ones. Similarly, my participants defined heavy foods as being ones which sank to the bottom of the stomach and provided energy for the day. Food was categorised by the feeling that they produced instead of its calorific content. This shows the

cultural alternative ways of viewing and defining food, which is important when studying diets in different social groups.

Food quantity was evidently an important explanation behind the eating practices of the participants in this study. It related to the enactment of gender through eating practices, perceptions of the body and fitted within the wider social practice of consuming meals together. Male participants not caring about the implications the food would have on their health or on how it would make them look meant that they did not need the co-eaters permission to consume larger quantities of food. Men's goal was to feel full and satisfied, something which could be achieved through the consumption of rice. This was affordable to all of the participants in this study, as there were different grades of rice depending on how much a consumer had to spend. There was always a large pot of rice in the centre of the dinner table at every meal that I ate, whether this was breakfast, lunch or dinner. Everyone around the table could put as much or as little rice as they wished on their plates. It was in this setting of eating together that the enactment of gender through food practices could be researched. In these family settings I could also explore concepts of masculinity and what it meant to my participants. In the final discussion section I will explore the idea of masculinity and manhood for my participants.

## 5.4  Masculinities in the Philippines

In section 5.2 I discussed the importance of commensality, which led onto 5.3 where I demonstrated the link between eating together and gendered food practices. I will now move onto how in the communal and family settings men presented or enacted their masculinity. Family, in the participant's accounts, was often the explanation behind everyday actions. However, the role that men took in the family varied, which showed the multiple ways in which men could perform their masculinity. I will discuss how my findings follow critiques made by other scholars about the singularity associated with hegemonic masculinity.

The data suggests that there were varying ways that men described and were observed practicing their masculinity. By this I mean, men demonstrating a set of behaviours which could be related to the socially defined characteristics of being male. Indeed, like many researchers who have written in the past one of the difficulties I found was trying to create a picture of what masculinity meant to the men being studied (Courtenay, 2000; Osella and Osella, 2006). In my research there were multiple ways in which participants described what traits were masculine, and so I attempted to look for patterns of behaviours which men spoke of. There were participants whose characteristics could be thought of as a more stereotypical portrayal of manhood, the want to be the main earner in the family and be the head of the household. The men in this group expected to have the final say on household matters and wanted their wives and children to ask his permission to participate in different activities, as shown in the following exchange:

*I: So if you have to make a decision who gets the final say?*

*Marcus: Of course the man.*

*I: Is that common?*

*Marcus: Yeah what the man said the wife will **submit**.*

This could also be seen in the language around men allowing their wives to work or daughters to get education: *"Now they allow the wives to work to help the husband"*

(Gabriel, 70). For the older generation, this pattern of behaviour could be related back to the religious teachings throughout their lives. I experienced these lessons first hand when I attended church services, especially one entitled 'what is man?'. In this service Biblical teachings were used to explain why women were secondary to men, because Eve was made from Adam's rib (further details can be found on page 121). This highlighted how the sermons in churches could affect participants' opinions on gender.

There appeared to be another set of opinions and actions from men where gendered boundaries and roles were blurred. These were men who helped with domestic chores, were accepting of their wives potentially being the main earner and played an active role in childcare. This was illustrated, for instance, when Richard said "*who cares if the man work or the woman work, it's what's good for the couple*". The differences in the way that participants defined what it meant to be a man could be particularly illustrated in their different interpretations of tigas (as seen in section 4.3.7). This is a colloquial term, translating directly as a man doing a feminine job in a masculine way. However, the ways in which participants defined it showed the multitude of opinions about what being a man meant. Participants described it as: a joke; compliment; it reinforced gendered roles or redefined them; or it was a way of contributing towards the family. All of these are representative of their wider definitions around manhood. The first is in line with the 'traditional' male role in the family. In this case tigas was almost insulting because it meant that the husband was not the dominant decision maker in the family: "*So colloquial terms we always say they are under de saya, under the skirt, saya means skirt, which means the head of the family is not man, is woman*" (Edward).

The next two definitions show the changes in gendered jobs, "*I define, being **responsible** husband or **responsible** in your family so many husband always do that* [help within the house] *because they love their wife and their family*" and "*In the modern world it's normal that we need to share the household chores with our mother with our partner in life. Because in some term, in previous era there is a bad*

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*connotation with women and inequality of the world, inequality of the woman and the man"*. What begins to emerge is that different men have different gendered definitions of actions and ways to portray their masculinity. This finding, the idea of there being a multitude of definitions about what being a man meant to participants, adds to a body of literature which critiques the theory of hegemonic masculinity, and an inability to find just one configuration of practices which constitute a hegemonic form.

Some have argued in their own research that there may be two dominant forms of masculinity in a given society, such as Osella and Osellas' (2006) during their study in Southern India, where they found two forms of masculinity that contradicted each other. In their opinion, "the term 'hegemony' suggests agreement, singularity, homogeneity, and not plurality" (page 51). A similar finding was discussed with research on young men in Indonesia, where they found three groups of men who presented traits which could be perceived as following hegemonic principles but all showed hypermasculinity in their own way (Nilan, 2009). This reflects the queries that were raised whilst analysing the data in my study. That is, questioning if it is possible to define what hegemonic masculinity would look like in context of the Philippines. Men spoke of many different traits that they thought of as being masculine, which ranged from being strong, a family man, head of the household, helping with domestic tasks, being the main earner, or supporting their wives desire to earn. It is difficult to create a picture or define what could constitute as being a configuration of practices which continued to legitimise men's dominance over women. This was also because the role of women in society and within the domestic space varied depending on the family that I spent time with. For instance, some men described how they controlled what their wives wore, who they spent time with and what activities they could participate in (for specific examples refer to page 125 where men compared my appearance with their wives). At the same time, women were very visible in the public space, holding positions of power within companies, and observably achieving in school with posters showing their successes of graduating with top honours. Jocelyn described the growing acceptance of women working outside of the home and men participating in the

domestic space "*nowadays it is accepted that if the woman gets work and man doesn't have work the man will do the household chores. There's agreement. By this time it's accepted".* Therefore, there were social changes which people observed about the changes in gendered roles within the family and workplace, whereby women were not experiencing the same level of subordination as in previous generations.

I have now reflected on the influence of having read hegemonic masculinity whilst I was conducting research in the Philippines. Although I went in trying to question the relevance, I noticed in the initial stages that I was trying to uncover what the hegemonic masculine form looked like in the community that I was studying. This was even narrowed down to trying to discover it for participants who were in the same socioeconomic group, lived with their families, and had similar houses. However, constantly analysing and questioning the data meant that I came to the conclusion that it was not possible in this research to find one hegemonic form which dominated over others. The conflicting definitions of masculinity in such micro level research caused Osella and Osella (2006) to reach the same conclusion. Pringle (2005) argued a similar point about hegemonic masculinity, writing that it was useful on a macro level to understand the wider picture, however it did not aid the understanding on a small scale, such as studying the everyday practices of individuals. The research that I conducted was designed to be an in-depth study into the decision making of men on an everyday basis using a small sample. This form of data collection provided a detailed and intimate account of the different ways in which, even in a small group, men defined what being a man meant. The characteristics described were highly individualistic and difficult to generalise into saying that a certain set of traits were those which could describe a singular hegemonic set of characteristics. Within the same group men valued different masculine traits, as did the women who I spent time with.

One of main difficulties when studying hegemonic masculinity is the ambiguity of the definition of the theory. There appears to be conflicting ideas as to whether it refers to actual groups of men or the most dominant form of what it means to be a

man (Beasley, 2008). It has been described as either being enacted by a minority of men or does not correspond to the lives of actual men (Connell and Messerschmidt, 2005). These opposing definitions cause difficulty when assessing whether or not such models of masculinity may exist within research, especially that conducted in non-Western countries where the construction of masculinity may be presented in a different way (Ouzgane and Morrell, 2005). Religious beliefs, family and socioeconomic status can all impact gendered performances and on what people may value. For instance, for business orientated men their dominance could be seen through their wages, working class men it could be through their physical prowess, for the group of men who I was studying it was being a 'good' man which was the distinguishing feature between themselves and their opinions of other men. Good men were ones whose everyday actions and choices were for the family. For some participants, this could legitimise their control and position in the family. Working toward the family could mean ensuring the 'right' decisions were being made about how money should be spent, or ensuring that wives were not wearing clothing or make-up which may receive unwanted reactions in the community. On the other hand, making sure the family was harmonious could mean buying food, helping to cook and doing domestic chores. What appears here are the complexities that exist when studying masculinity, which is trying to discover what masculinity may mean in each setting.

My study appears to indicate that there is not one form of masculinity in a culture. Some of the men and their wives who I studied described, for instance, pedicab drivers as drinking too much alcohol, being violent and not taking care of their families in the ways that were thought necessary by the participants. This opinion was given when I was walking down the street with Richard's wife and she was describing how she negatively viewed their behaviour. Personally, I encountered times when pedicab drivers called out to me; these were phrases which my company would often not translate as they were considered too rude. The behaviours described could be indicative of pedicab drivers showing their masculinity through violence and risk taking behaviour, however this is relying on the accounts of my participants. This chastising of another enactment of

masculinity meant my participants believed that their definition of manhood was elevated above others. One group of men marginalising another in the Philippines has been found in other studies, by researchers who have studied seafarers and fishermen where multiple conflicting masculinities have been observed (Fabinyi, 2007; McKay and Lucero-Prisno, 2012). Depending on the environment the men are in, being a seafarer is both a prestigious job and a marginalised one.

On the ship there is a clear, naval hierarchy. Europeans often captain these whilst Filipino men occupy lower positions (McKay and Lucero-Prisno, 2012); therefore on the ship they are marginalised, holding a lower position on the hierarchy of power. They are also described as being dutiful and subordinate; language which means that they are less likely to hold positions of power. However, when in the port they show hypermasculine traits, such as drinking and hiring sex workers. When they are at home in their communities they have an elevated masculinity, with people holding respect for them because for them this is a relatively highly paid job. Here, three forms of masculinity can be seen to overlap, all for the same seafarer (Fajardo, 2011; McKay and Lucero-Prisno, 2012). This idea of different perceptions of masculinity in relation to jobs is also seen in illegal fishing, where fishermen are regarded highly in the community but the occupation holds a low status in the wider society (Fabinyi, 2007). Masculinity, therefore, is a set of gender practices which hold different prestige depending on the social situation. Masculinity depended on the expectations that different groups had about the characteristics that a man should possess or demonstrate to show manliness. In my research men would marginalise other men if they felt that they did not demonstrate behaviour which was in line with their own principles about family and community.

It was evident that family was constantly mentioned throughout the research with regards to every aspect of life, whether we were discussing what it meant to be a man, food, or how they made daily decisions, it would often come back to family. This meant that I thought it was important to research the role that men played within the family and how this may impact or highlight some aspect of their masculinity. In the families who I spent time with I was initially surprised by what

appeared to be a blurring of traditional gendered roles within the house. Men were observed helping to cook, clean and look after the children. A number of reasons have been proposed by participants and in other studies for the increased participation of men in the domestic space and adoption of feminised roles. The first can be linked with the rising employment of women, especially abroad. Female migration has been related to men having to take on domestic chores (Pingol, 2001). This could, therefore, influence the constructions of masculine and feminine work, an idea which was further discussed by Angeles (2001) with regards to the way in which women becoming the 'breadwinner' may be changing gendered roles in the Philippines. Migration of men, such as seafarers, has also been linked with increased participation in household chores, as it was found that when they returned from working abroad they became heavily involved in, for example, child rearing, cooking and cleaning (Parreñas, 2008).

The families who were studied did not have husbands or wives working abroad, however there appeared to be a growing acceptance in certain classes about the different roles which men and women can have. Socioeconomic status has been highlighted as being important when looking at this area of the portrayal of masculinity. For instance, nearly 30 years ago research on fatherhood in the Philippines concluded that Filipino men did not take an active father role in the raising of children; instead their primary task was to provide financially for the family. This was especially found amongst men with a lower socioeconomic status (Tan et al., 1988). Although I did not study men from this background specifically, the opinion of the men who were studied was that those in poorly paid occupations were less likely to be a dutiful father or husband. However, I found no evidence amongst my participants that men do not participate strongly in the upbringing of their children, especially when in the house. Gendered roles are fluid, therefore the forms of masculinity 30 years ago when this paper was written may have evolved and adapted to different times. Many of the men in this study spoke proudly of their role within the family and ensuring that there was harmony within the house, including between themselves, their wives, children and any other family members who lived with them. Indeed, having bonding time with family was

viewed as being extremely important to them and accomplishing this could be linked with their masculinity. Bonding, as a word, commonly appeared in the interviews, for instance: *"Because one thing is **bonding** part of the family, fellowship to sister, brother, mother. That's the culture, always together with your family"* (Marcus, 40). Again, the importance of family is more than just about masculinity; it is part of their culture. However, it can be linked back to men, as explained above, by their actions being for the purpose of the family.

Tan et al. (1988) conclude in their paper that higher socioeconomic classes in society and those living in urban areas showed some signs of being a more 'hands on' father, especially with regards to helping with childcare. Yet, he thought that men demonstrating the active father role were a minority in the population. I would argue that this latter idea of the role of men in the family is in fact increasing through time, as men spoke about some of the changes that they had observed over their lives towards more gender equality within and outside the home. This was shown, for instance, when they spoke of women having employment and men doing the cooking and cleaning now. Of course there were still some participants with a differing opinion who believed that men should be the ones who went out to work and were head of the household. This was visible with the definition of tigas, when some participants would disapprove of households where men were 'under the skirt (thumb)' of women. However, there was still enough evidence of changing opinions about the role of men and women over time for this to be a significant finding.

It is not just the role of a father that I observed and men spoke of but also the role a man takes on as a husband. Studying this provided an intimate knowledge of the relationship and power structures between men and women especially in the domestic space. One of the key definitions of hegemonic masculinity is that it is "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell, 1995: page 77). My initial findings appeared to challenge this concept, as I

observed high levels of gender equality, from education, to employment opportunities, to help in the domestic space. When I first heard Jocelyn say *"And now many women were educated so women also work like the women graduated college so she will not just stay at home and do the household chores because she has a skill she has the ability to work so now a days men and women both accepted that if your wife is a college graduate and able to work in a company or whatever she's allowed to work"* I thought that it was a clear statement that there were high levels of gender equality in the Philippines. This was the same as the first impressions that a group of Vietnamese professors felt when they first visited the Philippines; they were also surprised by seeing organisations run by women and also female politicians (Angeles, 2001). Therefore, the outsider's perspective is that of gender equality and hence a move away from patriarchal systems of control.

This initial thought was reinforced when I saw men help within the house and observed the joint ways in which decisions were made between a husband and wife. For instance, when a couple were deciding which car to buy I saw the man and woman each giving their opinions. This was another finding which resonated with Angeles (2001) account of men in the Philippines, with there being joint decision making in couples. However, having spent time with families and observing gendered relationships in depth, this idea of perfect gender equality began to be questioned. The examples of women needing to be 'allowed' by men to make certain life choices, such as when Jocelyn said *"she's allowed to work"*, suggested that there was still male dominance in certain areas of women's life. This was reinforced by the interactions I personally experienced with men about my appearance and how they would not let their wives look or act the way that I did. I would call this the insider's perspective of gendered relationships, one which could only be fully explored through ethnographic methods of observation and participation.

There is limited literature written about gendered roles in society and patriarchy with regards to the Philippines to which these findings can be compared. However, there has been some relating to how, within the family, there is an expectation for

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men to provide financially for the family (Aguilar, 2006). Aguilar goes on to describe how 'real' men were thought to be those who meet the responsibilities of the family, for them to be able to buy food, be educated and have clothes. She found that "men equated masculinity with responsibility towards the family" (Aguilar, 2006: 50). Others have made this link between masculinity and the need to provide for the family through being successful in the workplace (Pingol, 2001; Aguilar, 2006). Whereas wives were expected to play the nurturing role of looking after children and doing the domestic work (Liwag et al., 1998). Angeles (2001) found in her study that, for men who have built their masculinity in this sense, tigas was more of a derogatory term, one which meant a henpecked husband. This finding is in line with my own, whereby there was a subset of men who thought that tigas meant that men were under the woman's skirt or thumb whereas men should be strong and head of the household. This was explained by Edward: "*So colloquial terms we always say they are under de saya, under the skirt, saya means skirt, which means the head of the family is not man, is woman*". The language used was often more revealing than the actions of men and women. Patriarchy was less visible in the 'traditional' ways that are observed in family life or even public life through women's lack of access to different activities, such as employment and education. However, the longer I spent time with people the more open they became about their opinions on gender and the language used became more revealing about the continued patriarchal structures that were present.

One of the original reasons behind the development of hegemonic masculinity was to explore gendered relationships and patriarchal power structures (Donaldson, 1993). It was about trying to explain the oppression of women and how this then benefitted men. For instance, men going out to work whilst encouraging women to be housewives (Donaldson, 1993) meant that husbands could control the family finances whilst women had less financial freedom. Hegemonic masculinity is about how certain men hold positions of power and they continue their dominance over women and subordinated groups through reproducing "the social relationships that generate their dominance" (Carrigan, Connell, and Lee, 1985: 595). In Carrigan, Connell, and Lee's (1985) article the authors speak about men having power and

wealth, which is then related to their dominance. The men in my study appeared to place precedence on following a certain set of principles, compared with, say, having financial power and dominance. Despite having different values in life, they still had ways to control gendered relations to their benefit through the subordination of women. There were participants who were helpful in the domestic space but still thought of themselves as being head of the household. They described, during the interviews, that they believed that joint decisions were good, but still thought men should make the final decision. They were happy for their wives to work, but still the women needed permission to do so. When it came to appearances, men could be influential in the way that women looked with regards to their makeup and clothing. For instance, if they did not approve of their wife's outfit, the husband would ask her to get changed. The accounts that men and women gave during my research would imply that this request would be obeyed. The idea of increasing equality with regards to domestic labour is different from the findings of other socioeconomic groups and regions in the Philippines. Men in urban poor areas were found to be on the streets gambling whilst their wives were doing domestic work (Angeles, 2001). In provincial regions more traditional gendered roles can be seen, which is why the location of the study is important.

Fords and Lyons (2012) eloquently summarise the ideas I presented in this section in the following quote: "What is clear, then, is that the multiple, relational and sometimes conflicting character of masculinities requires a deep investigation into both the contextual conditions and the wide array of performative strategies any group of men may use to secure and construct their identities as men" (page 35). This research has contributed some locally specific findings about masculinities in the Philippines. I positioned this as an exploratory study, one which has started the 'deep investigation' into what masculinities look like in the Philippines. The findings demonstrate how, even in small sample of men, there are a variety of ways in which men define masculinity.

## 5.5  Summary

Family and community have been mentioned throughout this discussion chapter. For many of the participants eating together was the ideal environment to consume food. There was an emotional connection with commensality, in that people felt joy during these times. This in turn affected the quantities of food that they consumed and how the food tasted. In this environment men could show masculine traits through the quantities that they ate. Therefore, in this discussion I have demonstrated the intertwined nature of family, commensality and masculinity in Philippines, and how understanding these contribute knowledge towards the eating practices of Filipino men. In the following section I will collate my findings and conclude the thesis.

# Chapter 6: Conclusion

## 6.1 Introduction

In this thesis I have explored masculinities and eating practices in the Philippines. It was evident that food, in the literature, was more than a substance consumed for its nutritional value. There were social, cultural and gendered significance attached to eating practices. Looking through the causes of mortality and morbidity that diet related illnesses were increasing, as was the percentage of population who were overweight or obese. Additionally, Filipino men had a lower life expectancy than many of the surrounding Southeast Asian countries, yet there was limited literature on men's healthcare practices. Therefore, I developed the project to increase knowledge about masculinity in the Philippines and eating practices. To address the gap in the literature I used ethnography and autophotography to gather data on eating events and practices of men from low-middle socioeconomic background. On return to the UK, an updated literature review showed that this gap remained. My overall aim for this research was to contribute understanding behind the eating practices of Filipino men, answering the 'why' men ate the food that they do, not just what they ate. I did this through developing and addressing the following three objectives:

1. To explore and question the connection between masculinities and whether these impact on eating practices in the Philippines

2. Use in-depth qualitative methods to gain understanding of the eating practices of Filipino men

3. Explore the concept of 'masculinity' in the context of a low-middle income community of men in the Philippines

In this chapter I will explore how these objectives were met through discussing my main research findings and the methodological and academic implications of the

research. There were three key research themes which developed from the data analysis, these were: gender and masculinities; gender and diet; and commensality.

## 6.2 Key findings to meet objectives

### 6.2.1 Objective 1:

*To explore and question the connection between masculinities and whether these impact on eating practices in the Philippines*

In sections 5.3 I discussed the relationship between masculinity and dietary decisions. I found that men and women perceived their bodies differently which altered their food intake. However, in the discussion found in section 5.2, I suggested that the importance of communal eating in the Philippines is more significant when exploring the eating practices of my participants.

#### 6.2.1.1 How much food instead of what type

The accounts provided by my participants suggested that masculinity was shown through the quantity of food that men consumed rather than the food that they ate. This finding differed from studies in other countries which found food to be gendered, the usual and stereotypical example that is given is meat being masculine and fruit being feminine (Stibbe, 2004; Rozin et al., 2012; Cavazza, 2017). Yet, these scholars' findings are relevant in societies where the consumption of food is more individualistic. The eating practices found in the Philippines, however, were communal where everyone ate the same dishes. This pattern was observed both inside and outside the house, in that dishes were placed in the centre of the table for everyone to serve themselves. In this setting, gendered food practices were seen through the portions of food being consumed. Masculinity was especially related to eating large quantities of rice. Additionally, the language used around food and the effect that it had on their bodies was masculinised. For instance, eating large quantities of rice made them strong. Whereas controlling

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portion sizes or limiting food intake was feminised. This could be linked to perceptions of the body.

### 6.2.1.2  Perceptions of the body and the effects on eating

There were gendered perceptions of the body, which then influenced the quantities of food being eaten. Some of the participants thought of their bodies as being a machine, therefore, food was the fuel needed to function throughout the day. Conversely, caring about body shape and dieting were feminised. Indeed, the idea of reducing food intake was met with negative comments from participants, since in the male participants' minds eating large quantities was linked with joy. Men also felt joy when they could consume enough food to feel full. This meant that food was eaten for the physical feeling it created rather than for its nutritional value. Linked to this were men eating 'heavy' foods such as rice, and not 'light' food, for instance bread and French fries. Heavy foods would lead to the desired effect of being full. Therefore, there was a link between eating large quantities to show manliness, eating enough to feel full and not being worried about taking care of their bodies until they were diagnosed with a medical condition. From a policy or intervention design perspective, this means that the findings on portion size and the quantities consumed should be considered carefully, and perhaps above looking at what people eat. I would propose this because participants spoke of the desire to eat until they felt full. There was also disregard over what food was eaten, even if it was plain. The association between only feeling full when eating heavy foods, such as rice, also needs to be addressed especially for men. Male participants perceived and women described how women were more likely to control their food intake than men. For this reason, it is important to continue to research why men eat food until this point and how this information can then be used to alter consumption patterns.

*6.2.1.3   Commensality and eating together*

The importance of family and community were mentioned and observed throughout the data collection. It heavily influenced men's and women's eating practices. Eating together reflected the core social principles which people held, of family, sharing and unity. This was reflected in way that food was used for different reasons. For instance, food was used as a tool of inclusion, a tool which could be used to continue the social and cultural values held in the community. However, it was felt by participants that these core values around eating together were changing over time. The accounts that participants provided suggested that people in Manila were experiencing a tipping point, where changes in job schedules and work patterns make eating with the family more difficult. Although family commensal meals were perceived to be decreasing, participants still ate with others. At the same time, family was substituted with friends and work mates. Hence, commensality still occurred just with another group.

With regards to food consumption, commensality had a profound physical effect on the quantities of food that men ate. Men described how they ate less when they were alone, associating this with sadness and loneliness which reduced their appetite. Conversely, eating in a communal setting made the food taste better and the consequential happiness led to increased appetites. In the community that I studied, lone eating was not the problem when it came to the potential of overeating; instead this was more likely to happen in communal settings. These findings correlate with the ideas of social facilitation when eating with others, in that people are likely to eat increased quantities. This has been related to the meals lasting longer (Redd and de Castro, 1992; Bell and Pliner, 2003) or the comfort levels felt when eating with familiar people where the eater feels free to consume the desired quantity (Clendenen et al., 1994; de Castro, 1994). For the participants in this study, the happiness of eating with others was the main factor which increased the quantity that they ate. Social facilitation appeared to be stronger in men than women in my research (see section 5.2).

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Vartanian et al. (2013) questioned whether manipulating social norms around the quantity of food consumed could help with the problem of overeating. Of course, there are differences in opinions about the exact impact that eating with people may have. However, the findings in this study in the Philippines would imply that in this context commensality should be focused on. It has also been documented that when one person in a regular commensal circle changes their diet it can impact both positively and negatively on their company (Sobal and Nelson, 2003). Commensal units can act as social support so encourage healthy eating practices or lead others to choose unhealthier foods (Sobal and Nelson, 2003). Therefore, there is the possibility that in the Philippines manipulation of communal eating could lead to changes in food consumption patterns rather than focusing solely on the individual.

## 6.2.2  Objective 2:

*Use in-depth qualitative methods to gain understanding of the eating practices of Filipino men*

### 6.2.2.1   Ethnography

Ethnography provided a way to gather in-depth understandings into the everyday food consumption patterns of families and men in a Manila and some provincial households. I attended events from having snacks with people on the street, to meals in their house, dinners in canteens and parties. Therefore I could obtain data on a variety of different eating events. Opposed to using interviews or food diaries, ethnography provided a way to not only collect data but experience it. I could gain an understanding of the background and environments that people would describe in interviews. It provided the contextualisation needed to fully appreciate the eating practices of the individuals in this study. Ethnography, especially in countries where there is limited research on diets, could be further utilised in food studies. This means that data can be collected on not only what people eat, but also the environments they eat in, who they eat with, and the dynamics around the table.

All of these impact on the dietary habits of individuals, and data should be collected in order to find the most appropriate ways to design interventions.

### 6.2.2.2 Autophotography

Autophotography meant that I could research people's eating patterns when I was not present. Men could capture their meals and represent them however they thought appropriate. This provided an intimate account of their eating practices. In this study, participants chose to focus on the people rather than the food being consumed. This reinforced what I had observed through ethnography. Autophotography also helped me to focus on what topics were important to the participants whilst in the Philippines. The pictures made it clear that I needed to look at the environment that people ate in and who they ate with rather than focusing specifically on the food that the participant was eating. The idea of commensality was particularly captured in these images. Not only this, but I could also see what they were eating, even if this was not the main focus of the pictures. Autophotography provided a way for people to record their own lives and experiences. With food research it serves a dual purpose, of providing data on what people eat and also why they consume the food that they do. This allows the researcher to focus on what is important to the participant, and not just what the researcher has observed.

## 6.2.3 Objective 3:
*Explore the concept of 'masculinity' in the context of a low-middle income community of men in the Philippines*

In section 5.4 I presented findings and a discussion about the ways in which men portrayed their masculinity in the communities that I researched. This was then used to evaluate the theory of hegemonic masculinity in the context of the Philippines.

## 6.2.3.1 Masculinities

There was heterogeneity in the way that men described what being a man meant. This could be seen through their definitions of the colloquial word "tigas", meaning "to do feminine tasks in a masculine way". For some this was a compliment; it meant that they were helping their family and did not feel effeminate for participating in domestic tasks. There were others who thought that this was more insulting and emasculating because it meant that the man was not 'head of the household'. Some men thought that being tigas was normal in the modern world; others thought they were an exception from the norm. This highlights that even within the same community, where people knew each other, and lived in similar environments, they defined masculinity in a myriad of ways. Although there were these disparities, the common value for the men in this group was that they should take care of their families and provide for them. This was a driving force for many of the participants, and impacted on how and why they made daily decisions. This highlighted the importance of appreciating the multiplicity of masculinities within any given setting.

## 6.2.3.2 Gender equality

In the initial stages of research, there appeared to high levels of gender equality. However, constant analysis of the data during and after fieldwork showed that this was not the case. There were more subtle ways that men continued to show dominance over women. Although women were employed, in order to be so they were expected to ask for their father's or husband's permission. Power in decision making also resided with men. People did speak of how times were changing, with women having the chances to seek employment and education, and with men speaking of helping within the domestic space. However, the micro ways to control women within these changing economic and domestic practices implies that the communities which I spent time in remained patriarchal. Oppression of women manifests in the control over personal freedoms, such as what to wear, where to

go and who with. Therefore, freedom of choice is limited with everyday decisions being made by the male members of family.

### 6.2.3.3   Hegemonic masculinity

Throughout the research I have considered the applicability of this theory to the participants in this study. I agree with the critiques that the singularity of hegemony is restrictive when looking at masculinities (Demetriou, 2001; Osella and Osella, 2006; Moller, 2007; Beasley, 2008). I could not find "the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy" (Connell, 1995: page 77). Indeed, I would argue that attempting to construct a profile of the traits which could be congruent with hegemonic masculinity would negate away from researching the nuances in masculinities.

However, there were some merits of hegemonic masculinity as a theory, which can be applied to all gendered research. For instance, Connell brought forward the idea that there are multiple masculinities and femininities, a move away from sex role theory. This could be seen in my results with the definition of tigas and different opinions on masculine traits. Additionally, she spoke about the relationships between these masculinities, how one group may marginalise another. An example which demonstrates this was when my participants defined the pedicab drivers as being bad men thus elevating their own masculinity and marginalising another. There is also the concept of relationships between masculinities and femininities, which is often about men's subordination of women. In gendered studies, and my own research, this leads the researcher to consider what the power dynamics are between genders. There were still signs of patriarchy and male dominance such as language of permission and allowance, despite appearing to be a very gender equal country with women being in education and employment. The merit of the theory is the way in which it directs the researcher to study the relationships between and within genders. However, the concept of hegemonic masculinity, and trying to unearth what this could be in reality, could be restrictive when looking at

masculinities. This is particularly true when conducting research in different societies. Hegemonic masculinity is often equated to economic success (Beasley, 2008). Yet, in my research men subordinated other men not through having more money but through their opinions of other's lifestyle choices. Therefore, the concepts of hegemony in one culture or community may not be the same in another. This, again, adds to the complexity of deciphering what hegemonic characteristics are; if they are global or local. I would also question that if every group values different characteristics, is it possible to find a singular dominant form of masculinity?

## 6.3  Implications and further research

The research that I conducted has a number of academic implications, both theoretically and practically. Firstly, theoretically the results and discussion in this research have questioned the applicability of masculine theories in a non-Western setting. I have highlighted the importance of acknowledging the diversity of masculinity not only between cultures but within the same community. Even with the small sample of participants, the results demonstrated the complexities of researching masculine traits when different groups value different characteristics. This research has complimented findings from other literature, which have questioned the singularity associated with hegemonic masculinity. Further research is needed in different cultures to explore the concept of masculinity, how it may be enacted, and the impact that this has on gendered relations. By understanding these on a local level, research can be conducted and policies made which fit in the concepts of masculinity in a given community. This presents the argument that interventions need to be locally specific and fit within masculine and gendered culture of the targeted group.

Another potential research area would be the perceived and the actual changes to the number of meals eaten with family. In my research people still ate with others, however, family was being replaced with workmates and friends for the younger

generation. There are interesting changes happening within work-life interactions in Manila which could be altering family life. The economic shifts and increasing number of 24/7 jobs, such as call centres, are impacting on the hours that people work and so their food consumption environments and patterns. The impact of this on eating practices is yet to be explored.

The importance of commensality has been discussed throughout the results and discussion chapters and how influential it was on men's eating habits in the community that I studied. It means that rather than look at the individual when considering eating patterns in the Philippines it is important to look at the communal. Studying commensality could therefore help us to understand the ways in which diets can be altered. The idea of manipulating commensal eating has gained increasing recognition in scholarly articles. It has become of particular interest with regards to the obesity epidemic, something which is on the rise in the Philippines. The argument put forward is that in the past public policies have been created on the assumption that consuming food is a private act; however this fails to recognise that in many societies eating is a communal and social activity (Fischler, 2011). Therefore, when it comes to studying and changing diets the family and commensal units in individual's lives should also be considered just as much as looking at the person's food consumption patterns (Rockett, 2007). There is clear evidence that consuming food with people impacts on the quantities eaten, both increasing and decreasing the intake. One problem with commensality for the future is that if societal norms are that it is acceptable for men, especially in company, to consume the quantity of food he wishes to feel full rather than the quantity he requires from a biological perspective then problems with increasing weight will continue (Vartanian et al., 2013). This is then exacerbated if there is increased availability of certain types of food, and if people receive a higher wage or food prices decrease (Vartanian et al., 2013).

This is an idea which Vartanian et al. (2013) admits needs further research, and I believe there is great scope to research this further in different societies, especially those where commensality remains prominent. It is an interesting point when

reflecting on my own data. Participants did not condemn each other for eating large quantities; indeed I felt more stigmatisation through serving myself smaller than the expected portions. Added to this, manliness could be linked with eating several cups of rice at each meal, hence gendered and social norms about the quantities that were acceptable to eat were looser when it came to larger quantities than smaller ones. Studying commensality and the environments that men ate in could increase understanding about how dietary consumption patterns could be altered. In that, if everyone eats the same food, and eats more of this when with others, then we need to look at the relationship between communal eating and individual's consumption patterns. This is opposed to creating policies which focus on food decisions being made by the individual. Therefore, I return to the point made by Vartanian et al. (2013), that increasing levels of obesity in the population will occur if social norms produce an acceptable environment for men to consume the quantity he needs to be full rather than the quantity he requires biologically. There is the opportunity to build on my findings and explore the idea of how they could be used to alter eating practices in the communal setting. Also, if there has been an impact on diets following the decrease in food prices and increased availability of certain foods, especially the increasing number of fast food outlets.

From an intervention and policy perspective, I have demonstrated in this research the importance of looking at the communal not just the individual. It has been documented before that when one person in a commensal circle changes their eating habits it has implications on the people who they eat with (Sobal and Nelson, 2003). This can have both a negative and positive effect depending on what changes that the individual makes. However, it provides a way to consider how important it is to intervene at a commensal level. There is the potential for research to be conducted on further understanding the impacts of communal eating on the food quantities being consumed and how this can be used to improve diets.

## 6.4  Limitations

I designed this research to collect in-depth data on a small number of participants. This resulted in having ten autophotography participants, and while the exact number of people in the ethnography cannot be quantified there were also limited numbers. Therefore, the findings cannot be generalised to represent wider communities in the Philippines. There are debates about the right sample size in qualitative research. The exact size depends on the desired effect. I wanted to collect detailed accounts on a small population. This has the benefit of being in-depth but the limitation of the findings being specific for one group with a certain set of characteristics (Sandelowski, 1995). Participants were from a certain socioeconomic group, which further limits the applicability of the findings to other Filipinos. Expanding the research to include people from other backgrounds would have caused the data collected to be less in-depth. Having a sample from the same background that I could spend significant time with led to detailed accounts of their lives. However, there is space to research other socioeconomic groups to collect wider accounts of masculinity and eating practices.

I have written throughout this thesis about being reflective to always account for how I may have impacted on the data collected. This is one of the main critiques of ethnography, that it is dependent on the researcher's observations and interactions with participants. Constantly reflecting on my own positionality and on the situations which I encountered, meant that I could assess and try to address any problems I may have faced in the field. Yet, this does not change that the research was reliant on the way that I collected and analysed the data.

There was a lack of prior literature about masculinity and eating practices in the Philippines. This had the positive implication of contributing new research on this country. However, it means that this is an exploratory project. I could compare my findings to those in other countries, but had limited literature to provide a background and initial understanding of my topic area. This paves the way for a

great deal more research to be conducted on this subject area, in order to provide literature about the Philippines and men's health.

## 6.5   Conclusion: the link between commensality and masculinity

Commensality was found to be more significant to eating practices than masculinity. Communal settings created an environment where men could display their masculinity through consuming larger quantities of food. Added to this was the desired effect of eating food until they felt full. These three combined reveal how a communal meal creates a social setting where men can demonstrate their masculinity through eating increased quantities of food until they feel full. It shows the complexity of studying diet, how the individual and communal are linked. To address dietary consumption patterns in the Philippines, it is important to understand the communal not just the individual and the implications of commensality on eating practices.

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# Appendix

Appendix 1. Letter of ethical approval from University of Sheffield and letter of approved amendments

Rachel Winter
Registration number: 140221554
School of Health and Related Research
Programme: HARR41 Health and related research

Dear Rachel

**PROJECT TITLE:** Masculinities and diet in the Philippines: An ethnographic study
**APPLICATION:** Reference Number 007312

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 08/02/2016 the above-named project was **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form 007312 (dated 03/02/2016).
- Participant information sheet 1014631 version 3 (03/02/2016).
- Participant consent form 1014632 version 2 (03/02/2016).

If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

Ellen Nicolson
Ethics Administrator
School of Health and Related Research

**ScHARR**

Ellen Nicolson
Ethics Committee Administrator
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10 March 2016

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**Project title:** PhD Public Health
**Reference Number:** 007312

Dear Rachel,

Thank you for submitting the above amended research project for approval by the ScHARR Research Ethics Committee.  On behalf of the University, I am pleased to inform you that the project with changes was approved.

If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the documents you submitted for review, please inform me since written approval will be required.

Yours sincerely

*E. Nicol*

**Ellen Nicolson**
**On behalf of the ScHARR Research Ethics Committee**

Appendix 2.

Tables showing the way that data was coded and ordered for the interviews

| Gender equality | Relationships | Masculinity (being a man) | Background |
|---|---|---|---|
| Accepted way now | About partnership | Circumcision | Childhood |
| Allow wife to work | Agreement | Difference between physical strength and helping in the house | Economics changing home situation |
| Changes in economy | Communcation | Emotions | Lives with family |
| Education | Marriage | Emphasising being a man | Money changes what is eaten |
| Equality (7) | Mutual relationships (2) | Expectations | More choice in Maila |
| Gender equality | Partnership (4) | Little difference | Moved to Manila |
| Gender relations | | Man has final say (3) | Province life (5) |
| Gendered jobs | | Manhood | Rich and poor (2) |
| Men and women do the same thing (3) | | Masculinity (3) | Working |
| More accepting of men helping | | Men crying | |
| Technically there similar to the west | | Men go out to earn money | |
| Things women can't do | | Men head of household | |
| Women more educated so go out to work rather than staying how with children | | Men's jobs (3) | |
| Changes over time (4) | | Patriarchal | |
| | | Power (2) | |
| | | Religion | |
| | | Still men's power though | |
| | | Surprise over lack of cryin | |
| | | What men should do | |
| | | Women being submissive | |

| Number | Age | Occ | Quote | Code 1 | Code 2 | Code 3 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DM550106 | 35 | teacher | P: Yes I cook, I cook, I cook. Especially on weekends | Cooking | Men's jobs | Weekend |
| | | | Ok err my wife eat less especially rice, she eat less rice. But she make she make, she makes it a habit to eat rice even a little | Women eat less rice | Gender diet differences | |
| | | | **based on biblically speaking so man should stand as the head of the family and the woman should just support not just follow but respect her husband. But then the mutual relationship must always be a relationship.** | Religion | Men head of household | Mutual relationships |
| | | | : In Filipino culture man is the head of the family and the children the wife give the respect to the head of the family and the authority of the father always. | Equality | Men head of household | Mutual relationships |
| | | | **Yes we shop together. My wife can't shop without me and same with me.** I can't shop without her because when we shop we always decide what kind of soap, what kind of rice, what kind of bread, what kind of cooking oil, what kind of vinegar we're going to use. How much. And we have a certain amount of money to spend and if it exceed it's the time you forget the extra. But it's fun. | Doing domestic chores together | Shopping together | Partnership |
| | | | **Here in the Philippines if you're not circumcised you will be bullied for the entire of your life.** IF you're not circumcised it's hard. Before you enter puberty you must be circumcised or you will be bullied your entire life. | Circumcision | Masculinity | Manhood |
| | | | For example my co teacher is only 23 years old but she is the position is higher than me, so I must follow and respect her so based on the chain of command I must follow her, even though I am 10 years older than her, I must follow. | Equality | \ | \ |
| DM550137 | 51 | design coordinator | If I'm in the house for example day off, my wife never go to work so she usually just stay at home. But if I'm at home I see to it that I cook. Why? Because it will favour my taste. | Both cook | \ | \ |
| | | | Of course me, why I'm here. Wet market, I go to wet market. But cash and carry, mall, super market my wife. She does not want to go to the wet market. | Division of labour | Partnership | \ |
| | | | Some, some food I learned from my father because I could see how he prepared foods for us. But as of now I learn a lot of food through TV, through where we eat | Father teaching | Men cooking | Learning to cook |

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