



## The Bliss and Burdens of Grandparents in Child Caregiving: The Case in Bukidnon

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### ABSTRACT

Grandparenting is a phenomenon in the Philippines. Grandparents attending to their grandchildren in schools and at home is a common scenario. They serve as caregivers or child-minders, extending financial, physical, moral, and spiritual support. Hence, the study was conducted to analyze the issues concerning grandparenting and care-giving. The study was conducted in Bukidnon. A survey was conducted to 120 respondents, and a Key Informant Interview was facilitated to the Senior Citizen Organization officers. Most grandparents are in an abject situation. They are poor whose health is fragile and delicate but are still compelled to work to support themselves and their grandchildren. The factors behind grand-parenting include financial instability of parents, broken relationships, financial dreams, personal choice, and compulsion. The role of caregivers over grandchildren is overwhelming, but most elderly perceive grand-parenting positively. For them, it is a part of life, a stage to welcome. Grandparents are happy because they are blessed with grandchildren, but they are financially hard-up, struggling to survive with their grandchildren. Though burdened, their perceptions on grand-parenting and the meanings they attach to it, give them the spirit to perform their tasks. Their situations and experiences put into context the principles of Activity Theory.

*Keywords:* grandparents, child-minders, poverty, issues

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### INTRODUCTION

Grandparenting is a phenomenon in the Philippines. Grandparents attending to their grandchildren in schools and at home is a common scenario. According to Cruz (1999), many of our senior citizens have remained resources. They continue to support their grown-up children and, according to Sorita (2004), even their grandchildren. They extend financial and physical support as caregivers. Likewise, Robertson (1995) found that in the Philippines, couples have less need to look for assistance outside the family because they can rely on grandparents to bear some of the responsibilities in providing care and support to the grandchildren.

In Taiwan, the elderly are usually profiled as care recipients. A significant portion of them is playing substantial childcare responsibilities. One of the factors behind this is the increasing participation of women, of which many of whom are mothers, in the labor force. They can no longer personally attend to their growing children. Second, there is a lack of facility or institution in Taiwan that would take care of the children while the parents are out for work. Hence, grandparents are taking the role as caregivers or as safety nets to growing children (Peng, 2013).

Grandparenting is not only widespread in the developing countries in Asia like the Philippines, many seniors in the US and European nations are also serving as caregivers to their grandchildren. In these countries, grandparenting is seen as beneficial by some. It helps the elderly maintain cognitive functioning. Likewise,

grandparenting serves as an avenue for social activity, it gives the elderly a sense of responsibility, and it keeps them abreast with time and intergenerational exchanges. However, when grandparenting has become a burden because of excessive time and tasks, the activity becomes stressful and tiring than being beneficial (Arpino & Bordone, 2012).

Indeed, grandparents across cultures have emerged as potentially significant figures as caregivers, attending to their grandchildren. More and more, grandparents serve as a valuable source of help in most families. Especially in times of family crises like teenage childbearing, single parenting, separation, spouse working abroad, financial difficulty, company downsizing, and illness, grandparents serve as a sanctuary and source of support (Thomas, 1990). They are the very persons who are just a few meters away, willing to give their support.

Practically, as individuals grow old, they become weak, are prone to diseases, physical impairments and are likely to suffer disengagement from work (Dadang, 2016). The elderly are vulnerable and, in some cases, helpless. Hence, serving as providers and child-minders to grandchildren, maybe adding a burden on them. Thus, this study was conducted to analyze the situation behind grand-

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parenting, problematizing care-giving, or child-minders as the role of grandparents. Particularly, the study unveils the factors behind grand-parenting, the support extended to grandchildren, the perceptions of grandparents on care-giving, and the issues on grand-parenting.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Bukidnon, particularly in Manolo, Malaybalay, Valencia, and Quezon. The four areas represent the four districts of the Province of Bukidnon. Quezon, Valencia, Malaybalay, and Manolo represent districts 1, 2, 3, and 4, respectively. Likewise, to make the study well-represented, Malaybalay and Valencia were picked to represent the urban communities, and Quezon and Manolo represented the rural. The study is descriptive. It assesses the experiences and roles of grandparents as care-givers and analyzes the issues in grand-parenting. The data were gathered from April to July 2018. A Survey and Key Informant Interview (KII) were conducted among the senior citizens of the places mentioned above who were grandparents. The respondents were asked about the situation they are in to as grand-parents, unearthing their experiences, perspectives, and challenges as care-givers. The survey had 120 respondents, 30 from each area of study. Purposive sampling was used in determining the respondents of the survey. Some were interviewed at their homes; others were at the schools because they were attending their grandchildren. Some of the questions were extracted from the study on "Dependency, Disengagement, and Life Satisfaction: The Challenges Confronting the Elderly of Maramag, Bukidnon, Philippines," a study of Dadang and Mendoza that was transformed into an article in 2016 and was substantiated with some relevant questions. The questionnaire was peer-reviewed. It had five parts: Biographical information, Situation causing grand-parenting, The Support Extended to grandchildren, Grandparents' perceptions on care-giving, and the issues on grand-parenting. To elucidate the issues gathered in the interviews, a KII was conducted to the officers of the Senior Citizen Federation. There were six key informants; three from Quezon and three from Valencia City. The discussion revolved around the issues confronting grand-parenting and the situations of the grandparents.

The study came out with quantitative and qualitative data. The former was analyzed through frequency count and percentages, while the latter was analyzed through thematic analysis. In analyzing qualitative data, the information was categorized in matrix form to identify discernible patterns, and later on, were revised based on emerging themes. The following themes came out: Factors behind grand-parenting, Joy in grand-parenting, grand-parenting as an additional burden. SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) method was used to come up with an analysis.

The study was conducted observing research ethics. It underwent the institutional review. Likewise, the researcher sought permission from the municipal mayors. During data gathering, she and the interviewers explained to the respondents the nature and purpose of the study conducted and assured them that their identities would be kept anonymous. They were asked to participate, but

it was made clear to them that they had the right not to answer questions that they believe were not sound.

## Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on the Activity Theory of aging. The theory explains that the elderly are happiest when they stay active and maintain social interaction. The participation and involvement of the elderly in different activities allow them to interact with other people. The activities may be provided by the different sectors like the formal support networks such as the church, the local government unit, and the civil society units, and the informal support networks such as their family, relatives, friends, and neighbors. The activity theory postulates that a high level of activity enhances personal satisfaction. It also says that the elderly would not desire social withdrawal, as disengagement is bound to reduce the meaning of the elderly's life. To maintain a positive sense of self-concept, the person must substitute new roles for those that are lost because of age. Giving them with familial roles may help maintain or develop a positive self-concept (Maciones, 2004). Likewise, as a branch of symbolic interactionism, activity theory believes in the meanings one attaches to activities and interactions. According to Blumer (as cited by Maciones, 2004), symbolic interactionism rests on three primary premises: First, that human beings act towards things based on the meanings those things have for them; second, that such meanings arise out of the interaction of the individual with others; and third, that an interpretive process is used by the person in each instance in which he must deal with things in his environment.



Figure 1. The Map of Bukidnon

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bukidnon is home to 1,415,226 inhabitants. The land-locked province situated in North Mindanao measures 8,294 square kilometers. Cebuano-Bisayan is the province lingua franca today with 65.9% using the language, 13.3 % are speaking the Binukid while the remaining population speaks other Filipino languages like Ilocano, Ilonggo, etc. The Bukidnons have always been farmers, with 95 percent still living in rural areas. They produce rice, corn, camote, gabi, cassava, nangka, beans, banana, coconut, coffee, and abaca. Swidden agriculture, plow agriculture, and slash and burn are the most common farming method. Few farmers, however, are using mechanized means. Likewise, many young Bukidnons have gained employment with mining and logging companies in the province as guards.

Bukidnon is rich in natural resources. However, behind its rich and grand appearance, Bukidnon represents an impoverished and marginal economic group. Aside from a few affluent businessmen and big farmland operators, only its civil servants enjoy a better quality of life.

Bukidnon is divided into four legislative districts. It has 22 municipalities with two-component cities, Malaybalay and Valencia. Valencia has a land area of 587.29 square kilometers and has a population of 192,993. **Malaybalay**, the provincial capital, has a land area of 969.19 square kilometers, and has a population of 174,625. **Quezon** has a land area of 626.86 square kilometers, with a population of 104,116. **Manolo Fortich** has a land area of 413.60 square kilometers with a population of 100,210. Of the four areas of study, Valencia has the highest population density at 329 per square kilometer, followed by Manolo at 242, Malaybalay at 180, and Quezon at 166.

The province has an elderly population of 139,263, of which 71,847 (52%) are females, and 67,416 (48%) are males. There are more female elderly than males.

### Biographical Information

Most of the respondents are ages 60 -64 years old; 55.8% in the rural and 50.7% in the urban belong to this age group. There are more female than male respondents. Likewise, it is observable that as the age group increases, the number of respondents decreases. There are very few respondents belonging to the 75+ age group. This age bracket is already very old and may no longer be capable of taking care of their grandchildren. Most (35.7 in rural and 29.15 in urban) have stepped elementary only. Only very few (4.1% in rural and 14.55% in urban) have finished college. Most respondents in both rural and urban communities are married (64.9% and 74.3 % respectively)

with 4-7 children, and 4-7 grandchildren. However, there are (13.5% in rural and 5.55% in urban) having 16 and more grandchildren. A great percentage (85.45%) are Christians, while 14.55 % are Muslims (see Table 1).

### The Situations behind Grandparenting

Most grandparents in urban areas (57%) are attending to 1-2 children, while 50% of the grandparents in rural areas are attending to 3-4 children. Based on the study, it was found out that the elderly in the urban areas become grandparents at a younger age. Most (48%) were at ages 35-44, while most respondents in the rural areas (47%) become grandparents only at ages 55-64. The children of the respondents in the urban areas got married at younger ages, while some were impregnated when only teenagers.

One of the objectives of the study is to unveil the factors behind grand-parenting. They are enumerated and described below.

### Financial Instability of Parents

One of the factors behind grand-parenting is the financial instability of the grandchildren's parents (the children of the respondents). The children, who are either married, living in, or are single parents, cannot afford yet to build their own houses and live independently. Hence they are compelled to live with their parents. On the other hand, though most grandparents are impoverished, they have at least a humble abode where they, together with their children and grandchildren, may reside. Data show most of the grandparents (78% in the rural and 77% in the urban) are living in their own houses. This means that it is their children who are clinging to them, not the other way around.

Table 1

#### Biographical Data

Biographical Data	Rural				Urban					
	Male		Female		R %	Male		Female		U %
Age Bracket	F	%	F	%		F	%	F	%	
60-64	8	47.10	24	55.80	51.45	11	45.80	20	55.60	50.70
65-69	6	35.30	13	30.20	32.75	5	20.80	14	38.90	29.85
70-74	2	11.80	1	2.30	7.05	5	20.80	1	2.80	11.80
75-79	1	5.90	3	7.00	6.45	3	12.50	1	2.80	7.65
80-84	0	0.00	2	4.70	2.35	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Educational Attainment</b>										
Elementary Level	7	41.20	13	30.20	35.70	6	25.00	12	33.30	29.15
Elem. Graduate	0	0.00	8	18.60	9.30	5	20.80	6	16.70	18.75
High School Level	3	17.60	17	39.50	28.55	5	20.80	9	25.00	22.90
HS Graduate	6	35.30	4	9.30	22.30	2	8.30	3	8.30	8.30
College Level	0	0.00	0	0.00	0.00	1	4.20	3	8.30	6.25
College Graduate	1	5.90	1	2.30	4.10	5	20.80	3	8.30	14.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<b>Civil Status</b>										
Married	11	64.70	28	65.10	64.90	19	79.20	25	69.40	74.30
Widow/Windower	4	23.50	13	30.20	26.85	5	20.80	9	25.00	22.90
Separated	2	11.80	2	4.70	8.25	0	0.00	2	5.60	2.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Number of Children</b>										
0-3	3	17.60	14	32.60	25.10	6	25.00	12	33.30	29.15
4-7	11	64.70	24	55.80	60.25	13	54.20	23	63.90	59.05
8-11	3	17.60	5	11.60	14.60	5	20.80	1	2.80	11.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Number of Grandchildren</b>										
0-3	2	11.80	11	25.60	18.70	5	20.80	5	13.90	17.35
4-7	7	41.20	13	30.20	35.70	8	33.30	16	44.40	38.85
8-11	3	17.60	10	23.30	20.45	5	20.80	8	22.20	21.50
12-15	2	11.80	5	11.60	11.70	4	16.70	6	16.70	16.70
16+	3	17.60	4	9.30	13.45	2	8.30	1	2.80	5.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>Religion</b>										
Christianity	17	100.00	41	95.30	97.65	19	79.20	33	91.70	85.45
Islam	0	0.00	2	4.70	2.35	5	20.80	3	8.30	14.55
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### *Broken Relationships vis-a-vis. Financial Dreams*

Likewise, parents who are breaking up with their spouses were leaving their children to the care of the grandparents. Data show that among the respondents (26.95% in the rural and 11.4% in the urban areas) are taking care of their grandchildren because their parents abandoned them or because the parents are aiming for a better income, hence are going abroad. One grandparent said, *"Ako may gabantay kay gihatud man na sa amahan diri kay ang inahan nanarbaho. Tua sa Cotabato ang amahan, ang inahan nanarbaho sa gawas. Ambot, pero murag gabulag man siguro sila"* (I am the one attending. The father brought her here because the mother is finding a job. The father is in Cotabato and the mother is working abroad. I do not know, but I guess they are breaking up). This not an isolated case in Bukidnon. This usually happens to couples who are marrying at a young age. They are not yet mature to handle responsibilities, and they do not have enough income to support the family. Stricken with poverty, many of them are giving up their marriage.

### *Personal Choice vs. Compulsion*

Likewise, there are some elderly who serve as caregivers because they love to. They are happy taking care of their grandchildren. But they could have the option to live independently. However, they see living alone to be lonely, hence they prefer to live with their children and take care of their grandchildren. The other situation is "compulsion." There are some elderly who are left with no options because they are in a disadvantaged position. They are financially handicapped, and they just rely on their children for their food and shelter. Hence, they serve as care-givers.

### **Support Extended to Grandchildren**

The primary role of the respondents as child-minders is to assist their grandchildren physically. This refers to cooking for their food, dressing them up, and in many cases, bring them to school. Data shows that 60% of the respondents (both rural and urban) extend physical support to their grandchildren. To most grandparents, however, performing this task is not a burden. They are happy performing their tasks. One grandmother says, *"Okey ra man hinuon, kay isip usa ka apohan trabaho man naku ang pag-atiman sa akong mga apo. Malipay ko nga nakita sila nga maayo ang panglawas ug kahimtang"* (It is just but fine. Taking care of them is my responsibility. I am happy to see them healthy and in good condition). One respondent also said, *"Naay uban nga mga apohan dili mobantay, pero lahi ko, dili ko pareha sa uban nga dili mobantay. Okey kayo ako mga apo. Sa ako mga anak wala ko ka hatud-hatud sa eskwelahan, pero sa ako mga apo, lahi ra jud"* (Other grandparents do not take care of their grandchildren. But I am different, I do take care of them. I didn't bring my children personally to school, but for my grandchildren, I do). Most grandparents are happy taking care of their grandchildren. *"Mas palitan pa ug gatas ang mga apo, kay sa mga anak sa una."* (I buy milk more often for my grandchildren than I did for my children before," said one respondent. Aside from physical support, grandparents are also extending moral and spiritual support for their grandchildren. They are teaching them good values so that they will succeed in life and become good citizens.

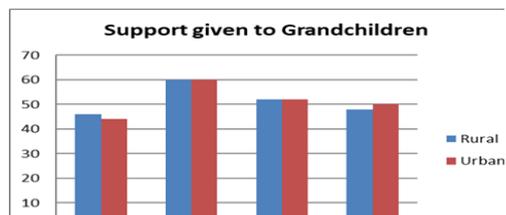


Figure 2. Support Extended to Grandchildren

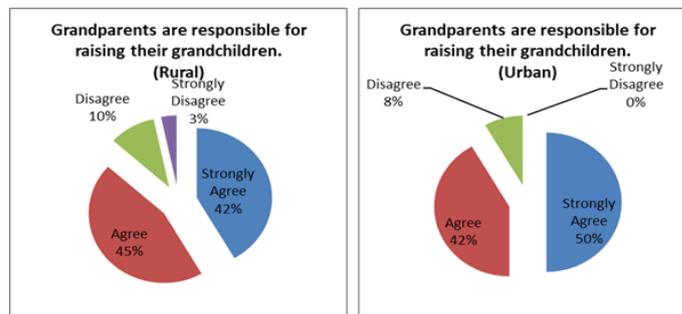


Figure 3. Grandparents' Perception of Grand-parenting

### Responsibility to Raise Grandchildren: The Grandparents' Perspectives

In both rural and urban communities, most grandparents consider raising their grandchildren their responsibility. Data show that 42% of the respondents in the rural areas and 50% in the urban areas strongly agree, while 45% in the rural and 42% of the urban respondents agree to the premise that it is the responsibility of the grandparents to raise their grandchildren. Only very few (10% in the rural and 8% in the urban) do not consider raising grandchildren their responsibility. From the narratives of the respondents, it shows that, in general, the elderly see a happy old age as one spent with grandchildren. One respondent said, *"Malipayon ko nga nakaabot ko ani nga edad ug nagkaapo."* (I am happy to have reached this age and have grandchildren). Another respondent said. *"Makahatag sila ug kalipay"* (They give joy). Another respondent said, *"Akong mga apo, akong kinabuhi. Akong gilaan akong kinabuhi sa ila. Alimahan naku sila hangtud ako mamatay."* (My grandchildren are my life. I intend my life for them. I will take care of them until I die). This is how the elderly perceive old age, one spent with grandchildren. Life would be lonely without grandchildren around the house.

On the other hand, grandparents are expecting that their grandchildren will also take care of them in return when they are already very old, weak, and incapable. *"Maayo ng naay mga apo para naay kalingawan ug bantay. Mingaw pud kaayo kung ikaw ra isa. Maayo na lang ug magluya ko, simbako lang, naay bisag usa nga moalima sa akoo"* (It is good to have grandchildren to take care. It is lonely to be living alone. If I get sick, God forbids, I believe there will be one among my grandchildren who will take care of me). This expectation is common among the respondents.

Most grandparents perceive caregiving positively. They see grandparenting as a part of life, a stage to welcome and to appreciate. Likewise, they view living alone and independently to be a lonely state. Grandparenting gives the elderly the energy and vigor to perform their daily tasks, and other chores related to caregiving. In addition, it gives them the avenue to socialize. They have the time to talk to other people when they bring their grandchildren to school.

### The Issues on Grandparenting

As presented in the previous discussion, the study revealed that most grandparents are happy in taking care of their grandchildren. This premise, however, does not mean that grandparents do not experience issues and challenges as they perform their roles as caregivers or as second parents to their grandchildren.

#### Health and Financial Concerns

Being already old, most of the respondents (67.75% in rural and 76.4% of the urban) suffer from health problems. These include arthritis, diabetes, hypertension, cough and cold, asthma, eye problem, body pain, goiter, and prostate cancer. These are age-related diseases. Nevertheless, it could not be undermined, that grandparenting may have also contributed to the persistence of health problems among grandparents. Grandparenting may have given joy to most grandparents, but such is also a stressful task. The study of Leder et al., (2007) showed an inverse correlation between parenting stress and the physical, social, and mental health of grandparents. Those who have higher parenting stress were reported to have lower levels of physical, social, and mental health. On the other hand, the study of Di Gessa et al., (2016) showed a positive association between grandchild care provision and better physical health among grandmothers. Those who were looking after grandchildren intensively and non-intensively had significantly higher physical health scores than grandmothers who did not provide any childcare.

Likewise, financial and provision of basic needs are issues behind grandparenting. The grandparents are already old. They have retired from casual employment or are old enough to do farming or peddling, but they are compelled to work to support themselves and their grandchildren. They have to continue earning a living. Some engage in farming, peddling, and others run a sari-sari store.

On the other hand, some elderly (grandparents) are supported by their children. Their children are working either as part-time or full-time workers in plantations or industries. A few are working abroad. The respondents said their needs are relatively addressed like simple food, composed of rice or corn paired with dried fish, salted fish, or vegetables. They do not have the caprices over

ornaments and lucrative dresses. They live a simple life.

Nevertheless, the respondents admit that caregiving largely affects their budget (73 % in the rural and 50% in the urban (Figure 4). Most of them provide for their grandchildren’s food, clothing, education, and medicine when the grandchildren get sick. It is apparent that the budget of the grandparents in rural areas is more affected. This is because they have lower income.

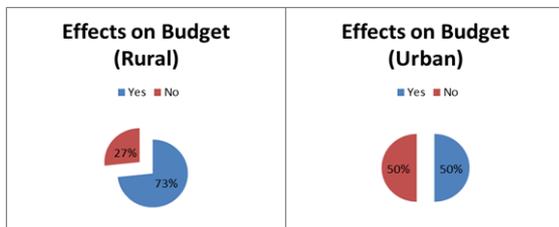


Figure 4. Effect on Budget

### Generation Gap

The generation gap is a challenge felt by grandparents. Grandparents and grandchildren belong to different generations. Most grandparents belong to the “Baby Boom” era, while the grandchildren belong to generation Z. A generation gap exists. The values and behavior of the grandparents are no longer be the things observed by the grandchildren. According to Manheim ( as cited by Pilcher, 1993), generations connote certain definite modes of behavior, feelings, and thought. People within the delineated population who experience the same significant event will have the same set of values, modifying what had been observed by the previous generation. Culture is seen to be dynamic. Observing the set of rules prescribed by the older generations (i.e. parents and grandparents) makes sense for it implies stability of the social order, but change, as influenced by many events, is seen to be inevitable. Hence, the generation gap is a fact. Manheim considers a society with no generations as “imaginary” and a “utopia.”

Most grandparents (57% in both rural and urban areas) experience a generation gap between them and their grandchildren. They notice some behavioral problems on their grandchildren like spending much time on gadgets, television shows, and friends. They said that their grandchildren observe a different lifestyle as compared to them in olden times. Descriptions like “*badlungon*” or “*gahi ug ulo*” (hard-headedness), “*lisod*” (hard), “*labad*” (causing headaches) were common comments from the grandparents. “*Usahay mabikil lang ko sa pamatasan nila, pero akoa man ng mga apo, wala koy mabuhay*” (Sometimes I am offended of their behavior, but they are my grandchildren, I can do nothing). These statements imply a generation gap. The same statements show that grandparents are trying to understand their grandchildren. They love their grandchildren despite the stress and headaches they bring.

### Effect on Over-all Activities

While the health of the grandparents is not significantly compromised with their tasks and responsibilities of being caregivers to their grandchildren, their budget, and over-all activities are greatly affected.

Figure 5 shows that 75% and 70% of the respondents in the rural and urban areas respectively say that grandparenting affects their over-all activities. They have less time for themselves because they have grandchildren to attend. They cook, dress up their grandchildren, bring them to school, and attend to their grandchildren when they are sick. However, despite this predicament, grandparents remain thankful. “*Nalipay ko nga naa koy apo bisan apike kos financial*” (I am happy that I have grandchildren though I am financially hard-up). Generally, the respondents are happy because they consider their grandchildren as “*gasa sa Dios*” (a gift from God).

In general, the grandparents in Bukidnon are in an abject situation. They are poor. They are compelled to work to support themselves and their grandchildren. Serving as caregivers and minders to their grandchildren make their situation worse. Their budget and their over-all activities are affected. Most grandparents are seen to be more than caregivers; they serve as second parents. They play the role of parents, for they are the ones providing their grandchildren’s basic needs. They give economic, physical, spiritual, and moral support.

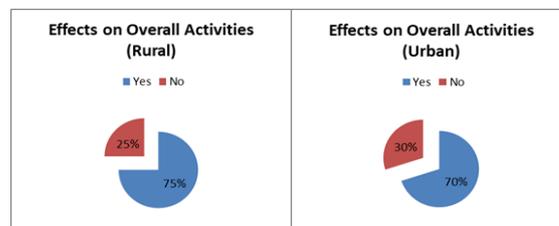


Figure 5. Effect on Over-all Activities

## CONCLUSIONS

Grandparenting in the places as mentioned above in Bukidnon, is an issue. Most grandparents are in an abject situation. They are poor, whose health is fragile and delicate. Old and weak, they are compelled to work to support themselves and their grandchildren, extending physical, financial, moral, and spiritual support. The presence of their grandchildren is adding financial burden. Care-giving makes the financial situation of grandparents worse. Their budget and over-all activities are affected. The financial instability of parents, broken relationships, financial dreams, personal choice, and compulsion are the factors behind grand-parenting.

The role of grandparents as second parents and as caregivers to grandchildren is overwhelming, but the elderly in Bukidnon view caregiving positively. They consider grand-parenting as a part of life, a stage to welcome and to appreciate. Likewise, they view living alone and independently to be a lonely state. Though burdened, their perceptions on grand-parenting and the meanings they attach to it, give them a lively spirit to perform their tasks. Their situation and experiences put into context the principles of Activity Theory.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Grand-parenting has two faces: the grandparents are happy because they are blessed with grandchildren, but they are also financially hard-up, struggling to

survive with their grandchildren. Hence, the study has the following recommendations to the following persons and institutions:

#### Parents of the Children

Rearing the children is not the responsibility of the grandparents. If the situation is inevitable, when the parents cannot be around for their children, they should at least give regular financial support.

#### Grandparents

Taking care of grandchildren is a norm and a gesture expected from grandparents in the context of Philippine culture. But the welcoming gesture of grandparents may develop a sense of dependency on the part of the children. The parents of the children may be asked to give regular financial support to their off-springs. It is their responsibility.

#### Young People

Teenage pregnancy and broken relationship are a factor behind grand-parenting. Teenagers who are still young and financially unstable often resort to bringing their children to grand-parents' care. This may be a warning to young people not to engage in pre-marital sex, which often leads to teenage pregnancy.

#### LGUs

The grandparents are seen to be in the abject situation. They need help from institutions. Any gesture of kindness from the LGUs may be of big help to them. They could be prioritized in livelihood projects, health care programs, and medical missions.

#### Senior Citizens Federation

This organization is the best agency that could help the plight of the elderly and the grandparents. Some grandparents are not beneficiaries of senior citizen pensions. The 500Php (9.8 USD) pension a month may somehow help augment the situation of the elderly. It is asked that the grandparents be prioritized in senior citizen's pension.

#### DSWD

The department may prioritize the elderly and the grandparents in its programs. The department can help the elderly avail for livelihood programs that may help augment their income so that they can have money to buy for their food and other necessities.

#### Municipal Health Office

Most grandparents are suffering from age-related health problems and chronic diseases. The MHO may prioritize them in their health programs like giving them free check-ups and provide them with medicines and vitamins.

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