

**INDIVIDUALISM AND SALVATION:
AN EMPIRICAL-THEOLOGICAL EXPLORATION
OF ATTITUDES AMONG THE FILIPINO YOUTH AND ITS
CHALLENGES TO FILIPINO FAMILIES¹**

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Abstract

Previous studies contend that Philippines is still a ‘collectivist’ society (Cf. Hofstede Center; Cukur et al. 2004:613-634). In this collectivist or community-oriented society, individualism is not something that is highly valued. Being ‘individualistic’ is often associated to being narcissistic, loner, asocial, selfish, etc. However, one may ask whether the youth in the Philippines are not spared from this insidious culture of individualism, notwithstanding the seemingly dominant collective and communitarian character of the society. Although the overwhelming poverty is still the main problem in the Philippines, where according to Wostyn (2010:26) “only the wonderland of movies gives some respite to their consciousness of suffering and oppression”, the Filipino youth of today are also exposed to the consumeristic values of the ‘city’ and are not spared from the contradictions and insecurities posed by the pluralistic society. They are citizens of an increasing social and cultural pluralism characteristic of many liberal societies. Is it possible that individualism may also exist *within* this culture, especially among the younger generation? Is *individualism* slowly creeping in as caused by their exposure and easy access to modern technology, to higher education, mobility, interactions with other cultures, etc. Would this individualistic tendency have any influence on their religious beliefs, especially their belief on salvation? What would be the implications and challenges of these findings to the families in the Philippines? These are the questions we wish to answer in this study.

This paper is structured in four parts: first, we will discuss the theoretical framework of individualism and salvation; second, we will examine the empirical attitudes on individualism and salvation; third, we will explore the relationship between individualism and salvation; and finally, we will draw some pastoral implication especially in relation to the document “*Lineamenta* - The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the church and Contemporary Word” (henceforth, *Lineamenta*).

Key Words

Empirical, Individualism, Salvation/soteriology, Values, Transcendence, Families, Immanence, exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism

¹ This study is part of a bigger research conducted by the authors on the topic “Secularization and Religion among the Filipino Youth”.

I. INTRODUCTION

The naissance of ‘individualism’ can be identified with the emergence of modern society which was ushered by the Enlightenment in the late 17th-18th century. In the modern society, the individual is hoisted over and against collective and institutional restraints, including religion, so that each man and woman may take full responsibility for his or her own life and destiny (Bosch, D. 1995). Luhmann goes as far as saying that modern society highlights the individualisation of religion, and more specifically the individualization of decision (or *privatisation*). A positive valuation of the individual has been highly esteemed in several societies, especially in many western European countries. But today we hear a twist in the estimation of the sacrosanct position of individualism. What Émile Durkheim (2009:29) calls the ‘cult of the individual’ has become a curse in contemporary world.

On several occasions, Pope Francis repeatedly pointed out that the scourge of modern society is individualism. In his visit to the *favela* or squatter area of Varginha in Rio de Janeiro, he strongly condemned the culture of ‘individualism’ and claimed that “this culture is not what builds up and leads to a more habitable world; it is the culture of solidarity that does so, seeing others not as rivals or statistics but brothers and sisters.” In his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*,² Pope Francis writes: **“The individualism of our postmodern and globalized era favours a lifestyle which weakens the development and stability of personal relationships and distorts family bonds” (EG 67).**

Some contemporary thinkers however seem to have a different outlook. They take a more positive estimation of individualism particularly as they are manifested in the west. In the book, *The Many Faces of Individualism*, Musschenga (2001:3) echoes the cry of Anton Kersten saying that we should stop pointing our finger at individualism as the cause of all kinds of social evils in our society.³ While not denying the existence of such malaise, Kersten believes that these social evils are not necessarily brought about by individualism. According to him, these negative criticisms are based on nostalgic sentiments on some archaic “times of social control and repressive ‘norms and values’” (ibid.). Furthermore, Ruut Veenhoeven (1996) contends, that in individualistic countries where relatively high level of freedom is experienced, people tend to live longer and happier. What seemingly might be perceived as ‘egoistic individualists’, or insensitive individuals are results of powerful social and psychic mechanisms which enables one to live in a complex modern world. This indifference-creating mechanism is what Michael Walzer (1984) calls as ‘the art of separation’. This comes from the walls that are built in order to create a free living space but also to protect one against those who spurn and morally disapprove one’s way of life. These walls protect one against unwanted intrusion, including innocent but unwelcomed contacts (Musschenga 2001:20). Moreover, some claim that independent and autonomous persons may not necessarily be asocial. They just want to choose for themselves the people and the social networks they associate with. ‘Civil inattention’, according to Erving Goffman (1971) is not necessarily insensitivity but selectivity. One selects people with whom one wants to

² In the document, *Evangelii Gaudium*, the term ‘individualism’ is used five times (nos. 67, 78, 89, 99, and 235), and in all of these instances, it is used pejoratively. The word ‘individualistic’ is also mentioned four times (twice in no. 63, once in both nos. 208 & 262). In the document *Relatio Synodi* of the 3rd Extraordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops’ Pastoral Challenges to the Family in the Context of Evangelization, the term ‘individualism’ is also mentioned four times: ‘troubling individualism which deforms family bond’ to distinguish from the more positive valuation of greater freedom of expression and a better recognition of the rights of women and children (no. 5); “individualism and living only for one’s self are real danger” (no. 9); marriage as antidote to the temptation of “selfish individualism” (no. 9); and, “times of individualism and hedonism” (no. 11).

³ He mentions the following examples of social ills: “lack of social cohesion, decrease of compliance with all kinds of social rules, contempt for the life and goods of fellow citizens, loneliness, feelings of insecurity, indifference to the weal and woe of others” (Musschenga 2009:3).

associate with and one chooses the needy whom he or she wants to care for. One selects his or her social and moral space, one's own circle of people for whom he/she wants to feel morally responsible [see Zygmunt Bauman's (1993) concept of 'spacing' in his *Postmodern Ethics*]. This civil inattention, which is a social and psychological mechanism, is used to protect one's privacy from overwhelming influx of stimuli that may arouse one's feelings of existential anxiety and insecurity that could threaten and confuse the person. Authors like Naomi Ellemers cautions us not to directly associate (atomistic) individualism with selfish behavior. She states that observance of group norms does not necessarily result in more group-orientated or pro-social behaviour. That depends on the content of the group's norms. When the norms prescribe individualistic, self-regarding behaviour, the same type of behavior will likewise be demonstrated by the person. Study of Ellemers reveal that "those who feel most strongly committed to the group may be the ones who behave in the most individualistic way" (Ellemers, in Musschenga 2001). Furthermore, Musschenga argues that in market economies, the attitude of competitiveness is enhanced not only externally but also internally. It prods people to utilize all their capacities or abilities to pursue their goals. In this setting, people tend to perform well in order to succeed thus gaining social recognition and positive self-esteem, although having a sense of personal identity may not necessarily imply seeking the recognition of others. Moreover, some claim that those who are individualists in some aspects may not be individualists in others. Some authors like Inglehart (1990; 1997) contend that there is now a shift in the value system in several post-materialist societies. He speaks of 'post-traditional values and lifestyles' as a consequence of prosperity and opportunities brought by modern society. He argues that the new generations are moving beyond the materialist values that emphasizes sheer economic and physical security to a post-materialist priorities which underscores the values of self-expression, autonomy and the quality of life (Inglehart1997:4). Many of these values consider changing attitudes toward gender roles, attitudes toward homosexuals, abortion, divorce, religious saliency, etc.

However, as Giddens et al. (1994) point out, this reflexive project of constituting the self or personal identity in the context of modernity (or late/advance modernity) delivers to the youth a heavy task and responsibility that could have some social consequences. The advancement of individual 'choice' and 'freedom' entails constant choosing which requires a stable identity from which the choices can be made. This stable identity can be facilitated by social control, parental care and attention and other stable forms of socialization. In certain context where this is lacking, some setbacks may evolve. While there may be opportunities for greater self-interpretation, there could also be a destabilization of social relations and contexts (Heitmeyer, in Musschenga 2001:16). In the context of neo-liberal capitalist society, young people are forced to compete with each other in order to achieve. Failure to meet this expectation may even lead them to get involved into crime or to violent behavior (ibid.). Luhmann even talks about the 'claiming individual' who demands respect and recognition may often end up frustrated, thus saying that 'individuality is dissatisfaction'. Even the much valued ideas of modern individuals like freedom and independence are very much shaped by social and cultural influences and expectations. They have the same needs for belonging and social recognition, albeit the content of these influences and expectations and the conditions under which these needs can be satisfied have changed.

Earlier studies demonstrate that Philippines is still a 'collectivist' society (Cf. Hofstede Center; Cukur et al. 2004:613-634).⁴ Research shows that the Filipinos manifest qualities that

⁴ Some studies also reveal that individualism exists not only among the so-called individualist culture like in the United States or Western Europe, but also in countries like Korea where a notable collectivist culture exists (Triandis & Gelfand 1998).

express strong communitarian character like a “close long-term commitment to the member group (i.e. family, extended family, or extended relationships), loyalty as highly dominant feature prevailing over most other societal rules and regulations; fostering strong relationships where everyone takes responsibility for fellow members of their groups (Hofstede Center). In this collectivist or community-oriented society, individualism is not something that is highly valued. Being ‘individualistic’ is often associated to being narcissistic, loner, asocial, selfish, self-centered, self-referential, eccentric, egoistic, overconfident, or weird. It is an attitude that is often disparaged or disliked in the society. However, one may ask whether the youth in the Philippines are not spared from this insidious culture of individualism, notwithstanding the seemingly dominant collective and communitarian character of the society. Although the overwhelming poverty is still the main problem in the Philippines, where according to Wostyn (2010:26) “only the wonderland of movies gives some respite to their consciousness of suffering and oppression”, the Filipino youth of today are also exposed to the consumeristic values of the ‘city’ and are not spared from the contradictions and insecurities posed by the pluralistic society. They are citizens of an increasing social and cultural pluralism characteristic of many liberal societies. Is it possible that individualism may also exist *within* this culture, especially among the younger generation? Is *individualism* slowly creeping in as caused by their exposure and easy access to modern technology, to higher education, mobility, interactions with other cultures, etc. Are the Filipino ‘selfie’ generation of today becoming more and more individualistic or not? Would this individualistic tendency have any influence on their religious beliefs, especially their belief on salvation? Are their ideas of salvation becoming ‘individualistic’ as well? What would be the implications and challenges of these findings to the families in the Philippines? These are the questions we wish to answer in this study.

We shall develop this paper into four parts: first, we will discuss the theoretical framework of individualism and salvation; second, we will examine the empirical attitudes on individualism and salvation; third, we will explore the relationship between individualism and salvation; and finally, we will draw some pastoral implication especially in relation to the document “*Lineamenta - The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the church and Contemporary Word*” (henceforth, *Lineamenta*).

II. INDIVIDUALISM and SALVATION – A THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. Individualism: a Theoretical Perspective⁵

‘Individualism’ is said to be coined by the English conservative Robert Palmer and the French Louis de Bonald and Joseph de Maistre to refer pejoratively to the “disintegration of society which they believed had resulted from the French Revolution and its doctrine of individual human rights” (Musschenga 2001:4). In the 19th century though, there were some who use the term positively to indicate the ideal of individual personality. Since then, a large amount of research had been conducted to investigate this phenomenon in several contexts, within and between countries. In the Philippines, several studies have been carried out to investigate the concept of the ‘individual’ using words like *loob*, *diwa*, *pamantayan*, and *pakikipagkapwa-tao*, etc. (See among others Enriquez, V. 1990; Jocano, F. L. 1992; Gorospe, V. 1988; Miranda, D. 1989; De Mesa, J. 1987; Brazal 2004).

⁵ This section draws heavily on Harskamp & Musschenga (2001).

Musschenga (2001:5) proposes however to distinguish conceptually between “*individualisation* as an objective process of social change, *individuation* as development of personal identity, *values of individuality* which express views on personal identity that emerge in the process of individualisation and are used to legitimate that process, and *individual doctrines* in which (some of) these values are linked up to certain conceptions of man and of society.” For the purpose of this study, we will focus and limit our discussion only on the process of ‘individualisation’ and the ‘values of individuality’, without necessarily ignoring nor downplaying the relevance of the other concepts in the discussion.

Individualisation in general can be described as “the historical process in which the influence of tradition, the traditional social institutions and their vast social control on values, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours gradually diminishes” (Ester et al. 1994). Values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours are then progressively more assumed into personal choices and individual preferences (Halman 2001:25). This individual decision in all social spheres has been permeated by the pursuit of individual independence personal freedom and autonomy. “In other words, the ‘drive for personal fulfillment through self-expression, [...] the need to acquire self-respect, [...] or some other mark of individual identity all play a role in shaping modes of consumption and lifestyles” (Harvey 1993:123).

A Weberian and Durkheimian description is likewise provided by Van der Loo and Van der Reijen (1993). They claim that individualisation is “the process in which the individual breaks away from the bonds of close and proximate groups and becomes dependent on more distant and anonymous social factors” (cited in Musschenga 2001: 5). Influenced by the ideas of Luckmann, Beck and Giddens, Musschenga (2001:7) describes individualisation using key concepts like role distance, de-localisation, and de-traditionalisation. ***Role distance*** means that “the role is no longer seen as a destiny but as something that one can to a certain extent voluntarily take on and also shed; it occurs when the exclusive claim of an actual role action to represent reality is limited by a ‘self’ which is independent from *this* role.” ***De-localisation*** transpires “when roles and activities are no longer completely embedded in a local community; neither are these integrated by overarching, shared communal traditions; it is described as detachment to a local community whereby individuals spend a large part of their life outside that community, at work or in all kinds of supra-local social networks” (ibid.). And, ***de-traditionalisation*** occurs “when important aspects of personal identity are established not in primary socialization within family, but in the secondary socialization in which the individual learns the expert knowledge, the values, norms, and behavior patterns of various roles within the diverse institutional spheres into which modern society is differentiated; it considers the bureaucratic officials with rational-legal authority, the experts with specialized skills whose knowledge claims are derived from non-local, de-centered scientific sources, and are permanently open to corrections, as the ‘reference point for knowledge’ and authority, replacing tradition as the sole source of authority” (ibid.).

Many studies in the past have investigated the reality of individualism in terms of the ‘individualistic-collectivistic’ construct *within* or *between* cultures. In the *individualistic-collectivistic* construct, Hofstede et al. describes an *individualist* society as ‘when people look after themselves and their direct family only, while a *collectivist* society is when people belong to ‘in-groups’ that take care of them in exchange for loyalty’. In most studies conducted by various social or cultural psychologists and sociologists, the *individualism-collectivism* construct has

produced several interesting findings pointing to both theoretical and empirical ramifications, including its operationalization and its measurements.⁶

Triandis and Gelfand (1998) made a comprehensive review of literatures on both the theoretical and empirical studies made on individualism, at least in the field of social sciences (for other reviews, see Cukur et al. 2004; Kagitcibasi 1997; Oyserman et al. 2002; Schwartz 1994; Triandis 1994). Many of these studies point to several dimensions on the individual-collective constructs in terms of values, social systems, morality, politics, cognitive differentiation, ideology, economic development, modernity, the structure of constitutions, cultural patterns, the self, and even religion. While they conclude that the predictions of behavioral patterns based on these constructs have been successful, they argue that the individual-collective construct should not be construed as a monothetic constructs or pure dichotomies but rather as *polythetic* constructs. Harskamp & Musschenga (2001) affirms this point saying that there are indeed *Many faces of individualism*, as their book denotes.

Individualism in the modern society differs from that of the pre-modern in that in the latter, individuality is expressed by the way one performs his/her duties. One strives to excel on his/her role in relation to their status or station in life. Moreover, in pre-modern society, personal identity is largely constituted by shared local traditions. In the modern society however, the individual realizes that the principle of individuation resides in himself. The aim is to be special, unique and incomparable. It is 'self-referring'. The self becomes a 'reflexive project' (Beck 1992; Giddens 1991). The individual is responsible for the shaping of the 'self', and not the whole. One takes distance from the whole. One's social position and membership does not form as basis for his/her self-description and self-observations. Significant facets of personal identity are determined through secondary socialization via the 'expert knowledge' varied, the values norms and behaviour patterns of various roles within the diverse institutional spheres within a differentiated society. The core of personal identity is a 'narrative-structured' autobiography. As Beck (1992:135ff) says: *[...] in a modern society the individual must learn, on pain of permanent disadvantage, to conceive of himself or herself as the center of action, as the planning office with respect to his/her own biography, abilities, orientations, relationships and so on. Under those conditions of a reflexive biography, 'society' must be individually manipulated as a 'variable'. [...] What is demanded is a vigorous model of action in everyday life, which puts the ego at its center, allots and opens up opportunities for action to it, and permits it in this manner to work through the emerging possibilities of decision and arrangement with respect to one's own biography.* This personal identity is to be constantly recreated in the context of a fragmentizing institutions of modern society and permanently changing experiences. But as Giddens (1991) warns, this reflective project of identity is fragile and places a heavy burden upon the individual.

Notwithstanding the multifaceted nature of individualism, there are however some common values that are related to it. Musschenga (2009:9-10) names six of them, namely: (1) **intrinsic value** (worth, dignity of the individual; individual has a value in himself); (2) **self-determination** (positive self-determination means an individual determines himself rationally by distancing himself critically from traditions and conventions, and from the urges, needs, and desires of his inner nature; negative self-determination means freedom from external constraints and impediments); (3) **individual responsibility** (for the consequences of one's action and, more generally, for one's own life); (4) **self-development** (the development of one's capacities and potentialities); (5) **uniqueness** (being special); (6) **privacy** (the value of having a free zone which

⁶ Cukur et al. (2004:614) points out that "there has been little consensus regarding the definition of individualism-collectivism, leading to a lack of convergence in both its operationalization and its measurement." See also A. Carter's critique (1990).

is protected against unwanted physical, psychological and visual intrusion by others. Some core values can likewise be identified: authenticity, loyalty to oneself, and integrity.

Schwartz (1992; cited in Cukur et al. 2004:615) likewise made a value inventory showing a structure of 10 distinct individual level value types, namely: **power** (e.g. social status, or dominance over people and resources), **achievement** (e.g. personal success through one's efforts), **hedonism** (e.g. pleasure or sensuous gratification), **stimulation** (e.g. excitement and novelty), **self-direction** (e.g. independence of thought and action), **universalism** (e.g. understanding, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and nature), **benevolence** (e.g. preserving and enhancing the welfare of people), **tradition** (e.g. respect and commitment to cultural or religious customs and ideas), **conformity** (e.g. restraint of actions and impulses that may harm others and violate social expectations), and **security** (e.g. safety and stability of society, relationships and self).

Triandis (1995; 1996) reappropriates this value system inventory of Schwartz into two dimensions, namely: [1.] **the dimension of individualism-collectivism**, which includes (a) openness to change (to include the values of self-direction, stimulation, hedonism), and (b) **conservation** (security, conformity and tradition; [2] **the dimension of vertical and horizontal I-C**, which comprises (a) self-enhancement (power and achievement), and (b) self-transcendence (universalism and benevolence). **Vertical and horizontal collectivists** stress conservative values like preservation of tradition, following the majority, and safety seeking. **Individualists** underscore openness-to-change, espouse self-chosen directions and goals, and seek gratification of desires. Horizontal collectivists prioritize benevolence, and vertical collectivists give priority to power. Horizontal individualists give priority to universalism, while vertical individualists give priority to achievement.⁷

Robert Bellah et al. (1985:32-48; see also Dobbelaere 2001:48) distinguishes between *utilitarian individualism* and *expressive individualism*. *Utilitarian or instrumental individualism* emphasizes commitment to hard work, pursuit of own interests, striving for wealth and success. It believes that the key to success is "diligence and caution, and implies that each should pursue his own interest, expressed in the search for wealth. It portrays a rational, self-interested individual that soon emerges as an 'economic man', expressing himself in the economic and professional spheres" (Dobbelaere 2009:48). *Expressive individualism* on the other hand underscores "commitment to values like self-expression, self-realization and richness, and intensity of feelings...It stresses the freedom to express oneself. The measure of success in life is a life 'rich in experience' and 'of strong feelings'; it promotes individual well-being, the fulfillment of the individual" (ibid.). Taylor (2007:472) relates the 'age of authenticity' with 'expressive individualism' as they were manifested in the cultural revolution of the 60's in North Atlantic.⁸ This "revolution is one of loss and gain: communities, families, neighborhoods, and polity are eroding; people are less participatory, more distrustful; and, on the other hand, people are better off, the pursuit of happiness is in the full swing, and it is happiness *now, right now*; authenticity, doing our thing, realizing ourselves" (Curran 2013:981). The word 'expressive' implies two things: (a) expressing our thoughts, feelings, desires, and so on, in our speech; and, giving bent to or realizing in external reality our thoughts, feelings, desires, and so on" (Curran 2013:980; Taylor 1975). It underscores self-awareness; life as 'my own'. Dobbelaere believes

⁷ Although studies among American samples by Oishi, Schimmack, Diener, and Suh (1998; cited in Cukur 2004:616) found out that vertical individualism is strongly correlated with power than with achievement, and not significantly correlated with vertical collectivism as earlier claimed by Triandis.

⁸ Doorman, M. (2004; see also Curran 2013:982) spells out 7 values that characterizes the 60's: (1) it was about the young; (2) free love; (3) return to nature; (4) spirituality and mysticism; (5) open use of drugs; (6) music as ultimate expression of imagination; and, (7) political aspirations of a better world.

that this simple distinction between utilitarian individualism and expressive individualism needs some fine tuning. One has to distinguish between pure ‘utilitarian individualism’ from ‘*egoistic utilitarian individualists*’ or simply *egocentrism*. Dominique Verhoeven distinguishes between individualistic option versus traditionalistic option and tried to operationalize it using 13 statements. Theoretically, individualistic option presupposes de-traditionalization, as earlier mentioned. Some of the individualistic options were utilitarian, while others expressive. However, he proposes to construct three scales on the basis of 11 of these 13 items using a factor analysis. These three scales makes a distinction between *egocentrism*, *autonomy*, and *self-realization*. **Egocentrism** is a facet of utilitarian individualism, **self-realization** is based on items expressing both utilitarian expressive, and **autonomy** is a condition for both dimensions of individualism and traditionalism, conversely is the reverse.

In order to investigate deeper into the individualistic attitudes of peoples, Verhoeven comes up with a scale to examine the choice of the characteristics of future partners. They were asked to select on a scale of 1-5 which of the 18 proposed characteristics they want their future partner to have. These 18 characteristics were categorized into four scales, namely: *traditionalism*, and the three dimensions of individualism: *exploration*, *negotiation*, and *distinction*. These three dimensions of individualism are aspects of expressiveness.

The table below (Table 1) gives a summary of the attitudes towards individualism from the theoretical perspective:

Table 1 : Individualism: Theoretical Framework
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Utilitarian individualism II. Egocentric individualism III. Expressive individualism A. Autonomy B. Self-realization

Here on Table 2, we have the theoretical framework for the ‘choices of future partners.

Table 2 : Characteristics of Future Partners
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Traditionalism II. Individualism: On Three Dimensions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Dimension of Exploration B. Dimension of Negotiation C. Dimension of Distinction

On Table 3, we spell out the theoretical models of the value system. We gather four models, namely: traditional achievement values, traditional family values, social criticism, and hedonistic values.

Table 3 : Value System
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I. Traditional achievement values II. Traditional family values III. Social Criticism IV. Hedonistic values

Individualism and Religion

Christianity does not completely reject individualism. In fact some of its teachings are in accord with some individualistic ideals like self-knowledge, interiorization, personal love of God, personal experience of divine mystery, personal encounter with Jesus (EG n. 1), autonomy, independence, freedom, responsibility, etc. Cukur et al. (2004:616) suggest that religions uphold specific sets of values and attitudes that can explain the correlation between individualist-collectivist construct and religion. Sampson (2000 in Cukur et al. 2004:617) points to some examples of this relation. He said, “Christianity is premised on (a) individual salvation and (b) the concept of human nature as having its essence within each person, thus being in line with individualism.” Some authors believe that Christianity is based on personal salvation and a prompt individualism (Sampson 2000).

Drawing insights from Weber, several studies point out that the link between individualism and the Protestant Work Ethic (PWE) is manifested through the Protestant’s idea of salvation conceived as the realization of worldly success (Furnham 1990; Schroeder 1992; Goizueta 1991). Others like Kagitcibasi (1997) argues that monotheistic religion (i.e. Judaism, Christianity and Islam) tend to be collectivists, while the European Reformation of Christianity (i.e. Protestants) tends to be individualistic. Other studies show that Catholicism tends toward collectivism, while Protestantism is more inclined towards individualism (e.g. Kagitcibasi 1997). Sinha and Tripathi (1994; Cukur et al. 2004:617) contend that religious beliefs and salvation are personal or private in individualist cultures, although personal salvation and religious belief have a more communal nature.

There are copious studies linking religion and individualistic value orientation. Some studies show that religion is the polar opposite of individualistic values that promote selfish fulfillment through worldly possession and egocentric indulgence. Self-sacrifice, humility, sharing, and spiritual aspirations are far more valued in most religion than material aggrandizement and pursuit of self gains (Cukur et al. 2004:617; Huisman 1994). Moreover, some studies also point to some values like transcendence, preservation of social order, protection of individuals against uncertainty (e.g. tradition conformity, security, benevolence) to be positively associated with religiosity; while self-indulgence and other values that favor intellectual or emotional openness-to-change (e.g. hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction) are negatively correlated with religion.

Other studies like Rokeach (1973) reveal that “religious groups exhibited higher preferences for moral and relational values (e.g. forgiving, honest, helpful) but lower preference for personal competency and egoistic values (e.g. pleasure, freedom, being independent)” (Cukur 2004:617). Others show that rationalism (skepticism and no religion) is positively associated with horizontal individualism, but negatively associated with vertical collectivism, and not significantly associated with horizontal collectivism (Cukur 2004:617-618).

Some scholars of religion argue that there could possibly be three diverse reactions to the process of individualization among church members, namely: ‘amodernization’, ‘modern adaptation’, and ‘critical-modern exchange’. The *amodern* reaction is demonstrated by an attitude of opposition to the process of individualization, and a tendency towards reprimination (i.e. restoration of earlier norms) and rehabilitation. People who hold this view argue that individualism is as a process that may eventually lead to exclusive humanism and finally to crass materialism. When all authorities seem to fail one after the other, the ultimate authority remained with the self. Every person becomes a law within himself/herself. Intellectual and ethical

principles are right to the extent that they suit one (Menampampil 2012:147). The second reaction is called *modern adaptation*. This reaction is a kind of an uncritical and ‘resigned’ attitude towards the process of individualization as society has become modernized. The role of the church then is limited to support, consolation, and encouragement. The primary task of the church is to give religious guidance to individuals, to concentrate its efforts on the rites of passage, and to give consolation and comfort in times of suffering bereavement and funerals (Glock et al. 1967; Bellah 1985). Finally, in the ‘*critical-modern*’ exchange approach, there are two approaches that are demonstrated. First, church people criticize the factors in society that lead to gradual isolation and alienation through the process of individualization. They view individualization as a limit and a chance, a risk and a challenge. Second, there are some church people who make alliances with other groups (religious or other non-religious movements) in order to liberate people. Some of these groups of church members try to expand and help develop the possibilities for community formation which the present society offers. They emphasize the formation processes of various groups (Capucao 2010:150-151; Van der Ven 1993: 241-247).

Some theorists claim that the exposure to pluralism may bring some ‘damage’ to the plausibility of rigid dogma adhered to by a believer. Their certitude on some ultimate truth might crumble, or at least relativized, in view of other credible claims from other religious or secular persuasions. Peter Berger sees that the inevitable consequence of this would be the privatization of religion in civil society. Pluralism, some argues, may not necessarily lead to secularization but rather to increasing individualization of religious preferences. Luckmann (1979:127-138) refers to this as religion ‘*à la carte*’ or a *bricolage*, or what Phil Gorski (2005) calls as a ‘return to *polysemism*’. This also implies the diminishing influence of orthodox religious beliefs and practices but also the role of religious authorities.

B. Salvation: A Theoretical Perspective

In order to investigate the correlation between individualism and religion, we want to examine the attitudes of our respondents to one key theological category, namely *soteriology* or salvation. We are not satisfied with the attempt of previous social researches which limits the investigation of theological concepts to one general idea about religion or one notion of salvation. As theologians, we are aware of the multi-faceted nature of the Christian notion of salvation. This section will try to find out these various soteriological notions as they have evolved in the history of Christian Theology that might have influenced the beliefs and attitudes of our Filipino youth today.

The Christian tradition offers its core religious beliefs like the notion of salvation as a way of giving meaning to the life of the individual and the community. Like other religions, Christianity teaches universal love, brotherhood/sisterhood, equality, and solidarity of peoples, but also individual happiness and fulfillment. On the one hand, the Christian notion of universal salvation is conceived as an ideal for binding peoples collectively, on the other hand, it is also viewed as an individual experience, an individual event that proffers personal meaning, peace, joy and happiness. Surely, there are varieties of concepts of salvation in the Christian tradition. Our religious images, like salvation, are mediated by a plurality of experiences, interpretations and configurations within a plurality of settings and contexts (Van der Ven & Beauregard, *JET* 10, 1997, 1, 5-20). People from various religions and cultures have diverse visions of good life. For this reason, it is important to capture these images as they appear to our Filipino youth. In order to capture these whole range of notions of salvation, we will investigate these soteriological

ideas according to the various dimensions, in terms of its *height* (dimension of ‘transcendence-immanence’), *length* (the temporal dimension), and the *width/breadth* (the scope of salvation).

1. Dimension of immanence-transcendence

This ‘*height*’ dimension of salvation explores the straight vertical poles of the up-down continuum of the images of salvation. We consider three concepts surrounding this dimension, namely: absolute transcendence, immanent-transcendence, and the absolute immanence.

- a. **Absolute Transcendence.** This concept of salvation views transcendence as the supernatural cause of reality, and the “revelation of transcendence” as a totality of added, new and super-rational truths. Salvation comes totally as a ‘gift from on high’. It is perceived as a totally gratuitous offer that is free from any human or natural mediation. This concept of salvation may be considered as a religious interpretation of the experience of reality, of which the interpretative moment has been forgotten, as in a metaphor of which the natural and social ‘origin’ has worn out. Salvation is totally considered as a gift, a grace from above. This implies that human efforts do not merit at all, except through his/her passive FIAT. Human action contributes nothing but merely constitutes the material for God’s action, a view encountered in orthodox and neo-orthodox circles. Absolute transcendence emphasises the redemptive God who, prior to and independent of human action, brought salvation which people, through their innocent and culpable fallibility, cannot accomplish for themselves, even though they are themselves responsible for the plight in which they find themselves and the harm that they have done (Van der Ven *JET* 16.2, 2003).
- b. **Immanent-transcendence or transcendent-immanence.** This view of salvation looks at this binary code, immanence-transcendence, not as mutually contradictory poles but as dialectical in nature. Transcendence is not the negation of immanence nor its opposite. It arises in immanence and goes beyond it. Transcendence reveals itself in immanence, but at the same time also exceeds it. From a hermeneutical-theological perspective, *immanent-transcendence* refers to the interpretation of religious experience of transcendence as “the manifestation of a transcendent meaning in the dimension of our historical horizon of experience.” The transcendence permeates the core of all that exists more deeply than the core itself permeates all that exists. Experience is considered as the source of revelation. Schillebeeckx for instance contends, “There can be no revelation without experience” (Schillebeeckx, 1977). For a Christian believer, history is always related to a God who is known as the ground and the dynamic of creation and salvation. It is important to see the soteriological significance of everything that happens in history.. This dimension puts accent on the immanent nature of the transcendent aspect of salvation. Immanent transcendence stresses that “**God is in everything**”; God’s presence by and for the world. Transcendent immanence, on the other hand, refers to the transcendent nature of God’s immanence. **Everything is in God**; God’s presence in the world. Here salvation is something embedded in the action of the person. Salvation history is a task, a project that one has to build according to God’s plan or in view of the reign kingdom of God.

- c. **Absolute immanence** – Salvation is attributed to purely material structure of the world and rejects any reference to transcendence. The content of this concept consists of non-religious, purely worldly immanentism. This concept is a result of what can be called as the Second wave of the Enlightenment during the so-called ‘cultural revolution’ of the sixties and the seventies of the past century, when religious verticalism was reduced to horizontalism. In terms of God talk, it refers to a God who does not exist above the world, but only in the world, above all in human relations of mutual care and love. Salvation serves nothing more than as function of human existence. Ninian Smart indicates that secular ideologies may likewise have some notions or analogues to the religious doctrine of salvation, e.g. the idea of a millenium when humans live in harmony and glory on earth, a communist society which had overcome class distinction or alienation, or Hitler's 1000 year Reich which is millenarian but tribal in orientation, or the notion of progress (though without a clear idea of ultimate state of satisfaction) of democratic capitalism; existentialism speaks of salvation when an individual can live authentically in the face of, and conscious of, his own death and thus in a sense overcome death from within a finite existence. These concepts are generally based on a community-oriented, this-worldly, or the idea of a renewed blessed state. Immanence is “the belief that God is a symbolic metaphor referring to the novel, unexpected, startling way in which people construe their dire situation and, through this reconstruction, transform it. Divine action contributes nothing and the word “God” can be replaced by any fictional, literary, poetic and hence social or individual therapeutic strategy, a view encountered among proponents of a liberal kind of cultural Christianity” (Van der Ven, *JET* 16.2, 2003, 58-59).

2. Temporal Dimension

In the temporal dimension, we want to conceptually distinguish between past-oriented type of salvation, a present-oriented salvation, and future-oriented salvation.

- a. **Past-oriented** - This temporal orientation highlights a static event of the past, expressed for instance as an absolute gift from God, who has created a state of wholeness, in which humanity may share. This basic state or salvific event, for instance an absolute transcendent model of creation, may have both a critical and corrective objective. It rectifies the present in relation to the pleasant or salvific past. The task is to retreat back into what was originally good. Salvation is interpreted as a definitive action of God in creation being a gift that already transpired in the past. The emphasis is exclusively on God's salvific acts in the past, especially the primordial past which is not just the first phase of history but its beginning, thus constituting all history as we know it (cf Barth 1960; 1964; McGrath 1994). Salvation in this model thinks of a ‘golden age in the past’ as the defining moment in history (e.g. creation, or exodus experience, etc.). It is the source of interpretation of the present and it can be the reference point to view the future. The danger of "primordialism", fleeing into the past, in which the romantic notion of salvation established long ago may prove illusory because its ever new significance for the present and the future is not deciphered.
- b. **Present-oriented** - Salvific actions transpire in the present. However, such actions performed in the present are derived from the past and are directed to some goals to the

future. Actions are interpreted by referring to the experience of God's saving action in the past, and in the promise of God's eschatological saving actions in the future. Schillebeeckx points to how the interpretation of a past event would always coincide with the affirmation of a new expectation. The new future is unraveled through the memory of the past. The action of God in the past and the future is connected across the present with an arch stretched between memory and hope. God's gift of salvation in the past and in the future implies a *task* for the believer in the present. In the Old Testament, salvation in the present has been epitomized by various representations like deliverance from death, disaster, demons, sickness, forgiveness of sins, liberation from the law, and divine acceptance. An exaggerated valuing of the present is called *actualism*. It poses the danger that concern with the foundational stories of the primordial past will lessen and we will be blinded by the tasks facing us in the present, without pausing in gratitude to consider the treasure entrusted to us long ago as a tradition to be handed down from one generation to the next.

- c. **Future-oriented** - This perspective highlights the continuity between the inner-worldly history and the eschatological completion of the world. The continuity between the present old and the eschatological New World implies a relationship between human actions aimed at the future and the eschatological actions of God. However, expectation of the future may also pertain to the concept of salvation or eschatology in a discontinuous form. Salvation is realized neither in this world, nor by human actions; it will come about after this world and independent of human actions. It stresses the 'surpassing and transcending character of the completion of the world, thereby rendering contemporary history and secular achievements as trivial or unimportant. In the prophetic and apocalyptic literatures, God's salvation was increasingly projected into the future. It speaks about the hope for an age of salvation to break in and a new temple and all nations bringing tribute to Israel (Isa. 49; Zech 2). Yet Haggai and Malachi indicate that the restoration of the people of Israel and the rebuilding of the temple led to disappointment and disillusionment. Therefore, the final saving acts of God were placed in the future with even more radical metaphors of salvation: a new heaven and a new earth (Isa. 65). While previous prophets had seen God's salvation as a future event within history (Hos. 2), the biblical writings after the Restoration move toward apocalyptic imagery until finally salvation will be fully expressed in the arena of eternity after the resurrection of the dead (Dan. 12; Isa. 26:19). St. Paul in Rom. 13:11 speaks of salvation as the future event, in which God will judge the world, destroy the wicked and establish his final kingdom on earth. It expresses the context that the parousia of Christ and the last judgement were expected to take place before he and his readers had died. Similar texts also prove this understanding like in Rom. 9.9ff, 1 Thes. 5.8; Phil. 3:20f; Mark 10:23-26.

3. Scope of Salvation⁹

⁹ Some scales have already been constructed to measure the scope of salvation. However, these measuring instruments were operationalized in view of its pedagogical aim. For the specific purpose of this research, the three-fold distinction commonly used in the dogmatic debate on issues concerning interreligious dialogue, namely: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, will be employed. This is not to deny the nuances in between these concepts whose detailed treatment goes beyond the scope of this paper (Capucio 2010:115). Nevertheless, this three distinction can lead us into the heart of the debate as J. Dupuis pointedly remarked: *It should be noted that the three categories above have but an indicative value and may not be taken rigidly. They leave room for many shades of opinion among theologians. Taken rigidly, they*

- a. **Exclusivism** - believes that all salvation requires an explicit faith in Jesus Christ. Therefore, followers of other religious persuasions other than the way preached by Christ cannot be saved. The explicit knowledge of Jesus Christ and membership of the Church are required for salvation. It maintains the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* in its rigid interpretation. Jesus Christ and the Church are the necessary way to salvation.

- b. **Inclusivism** - seeks to combine the twofold New Testament affirmations of the concrete and universal salvific will of God, on the one hand, and of the finality of Jesus Christ as universal Saviour, on the other. It affirms that the mystery of Jesus Christ and of his Spirit is present and operative outside the boundaries of the Church, both in the life of individual persons and in the religious traditions to which they belong and which they sincerely practice. Jesus Christ is the way of all. Together with the exclusivist, they hold that all salvation is found through faith in Jesus Christ. Traditional Christian images are used to symbolize salvation, viz. the resurrection of the body, the beatific vision, justification before the Lord, the restoration of lost innocence, being a heir to the kingdom of God.

- c. **Pluralism** - holds that God has manifested and revealed himself in various ways to different peoples in their respective situations. No finality of Jesus Christ in the order of salvation is to be upheld, for God saves people through their own tradition even as he saves Christians through Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the way for Christians while the respective traditions constitute the way for the others. It differs from exclusivism for it claims that non-Christians can be saved. Pluralists are distinguished from the inclusivists for its assertion that not all salvation is in Christ. Salvation is imaged as the fundamental transformation of our human existence. This transformation is available through all the great religious traditions (e.g. eternal life in heaven for the Christians, annihilation of the illusion of separateness for Theravada Buddhism, etc.).

In summary, we can illustrate the theoretical framework of salvation thus:

Table 4 : Salvation : Theoretical Perspective	
I.	Dimension of Transcendence-Immanence
A.	Absolute Transcendence
B.	Immanent-Transcendence
C.	Absolute Immanence
II.	Temporal Dimension
A.	Past-oriented
B.	Present-oriented
C.	Future-oriented
III.	Scope
A.	Exclusivism
B.	Inclusivism
C.	Pluralism

would become misleading as they would freeze theological opinions into the straightjacket of preconceived labels. They nevertheless have the merit of showing clearly that the universality of the mediatorship of Jesus Christ in the order of salvation is at the centre of the debate."

III: INDIVIDUALISM and SALVATION – AN EMPIRICAL PERSPECTIVE

A. Method

1. Research population:

Our research population is comprised of 4,007 students who are selected from various schools throughout the country, employing both purposive and cluster sampling techniques (Sevilla et al. 1992). After setting our sampling criteria like (a) representations from both public and private, (b) from at least Third Year High school students up to college, (c) from urban and rural, and (d) from provinces representing Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, we identified specific schools to conduct this research. Letters were sent to the principals and department heads to give information about the study and also to ask permission for the conduct of the research. After a number of classes were identified by these principals/department heads, our volunteer researchers distributed the survey questionnaires to all the members of the class. The questionnaires were all collected and checked by our volunteer researchers after they have been answered.

Here is a summary of the population characteristics of our samples. In terms of **gender**, there are 1,400 (34.9%) males and 2,604 (65%) females. In terms of **age**, there are 1,760 (44%) belonging to the age group of 12-16 years old, 1,427 (36%) to age group of 17-18 years old, and 808 (20%) to 19 years old and above. For the **type of school** (public-private), there are 2,116 (53%) students from public schools and 1,891 (47%) from private schools. For the **educational level**, there are 313 (7.8%) high school students and 3,675 (92.2%) college students. In terms of **social status of the respondent's family**¹⁰, there are 599 (15.1%) low level, 1,905 (47.9%) middle, and 1,469 (37%) high level. **Religious affiliation**: Roman Catholic 3,035 (77%), others 928 (23%)¹¹, **church membership**¹²: core members 1754 (43.8%), modal 1894 (47.3%), marginal 331 (8.3%).¹³ For **religious saliency**, here are the frequency scores of their answers to a five-point Likert scale: there were 26 respondents (0.7%) who totally disagree, 39 respondents (1.0%) who agree, 158 respondents (4.0%) who are unsure, 1,312 respondents (33%) who agree, and 2,439 respondents (61.4%) who totally agree.

2. Measuring instruments:

a. Individualism scale

In order to examine the attitudes on individualism, we operationalize the three theoretical framework of individualism, namely: egocentrism, autonomy, and self-realization, using the

¹⁰ Computed from the average values of the following: (a) educational level of father, (b) educational level of mother, (c) clustered monthly gross income of household.

¹¹ **Islam 13 (0.3%), Buddhist 1 (0%), no religion 32 (0.8%),** Baptist 111 (2.8%), Mormons 18 (0.4%), Iglesia ni Kristo 69 (1.7%), Born Again 221 (5.5%), Evangelical Christian 47 (1.2%), Free Association 1 (0%), Alliance/Protestant 20 (0.5%), Methodist 13 (0.3%), 7th Day Adventist 25 (.6%), Latter Day Saints 11 (0.3%), Jehovah's Witnesses 30 (0.7%), Aglipay 5 (0.1%), Assemblies of God 17 (0.4%), Unificationist 1 (0%), Church of God International 6 (0.1%), Four Square Gospel 7 (0.2%), Pentecostal Trinitarian 47 (1.2%), Other Christian denomination 43 (1.1%).

¹² Clustered according to answers on questions related to (a) frequency of reading and reciting the bible, (b) attendance in worship services, (c) how often do you pray, and (d) participation in rituals and ceremonies like baptism, marriage, Christmas, Easter, funeral, and fasting). **Core Members** answer to – (a & b) more than once a week, once a day, and several times a day; (c) once a day, several times a day; (d) participates for religious reason. **Modal members** answer to- (a & b) at least once a month, or once a week; (c) pray more than once a week; (d) participate but for non-religious reasons. **Marginal Members** answer to – (a & b) *never, or only on feast days or special holy days*; (c) *never, only on feast days or special holy days, at least once a month, or once a week*; (d) *do not participate and neither do my family, or do not participate but family does*.

¹³ Missing answers are not counted in the computation of the frequency percentage for all these characteristics.

scales created by Dobbelaere (2001:59). These scales were constructed as a result of the factor analysis of 'individual choices' that expanded Bellah's two conceptual models of individualism, that is, utilitarian and expressive. Using a 5-point Likert scale, the respondents were asked to choose their answers on a number of items. Some of the items (see Table II, A, B, & C in Appendix for complete list of items) included on **egocentrism** are: *choosing to secure first your own future than giving priority to solidarity and charity; most important in life is to develop one's own creativity versus being good to others; to do what you like versus preserve the well being of others*. For **autonomy**, some items are: *choose your academic field on the basis of your own interest versus career prospects; I decide what cloths to wear versus it depends on the people I am going to meet*. The scale for **self-realization** includes items like *I prefer a demanding and creative job over a secure one with fixed hours; I prefer to differentiate myself from others versus seeking not to attract attention*.

In order to examine the value system of our respondents, we operationalize the four concepts, i.e. traditional achievement values, traditional family values, social criticism, and hedonistic values, using a Five-point Likert scale ranging from *unimportant, not sure about that, important, very important, and very much important*. These items were taken from the *Sociaal culturele ontwikkelingen in Nederland* (SOCON 2000). As lead statement to the items, we ask them: *At the moment, I consider important for life...* And so, for the traditional achievement values, some items are: (1) *practicing one's occupation*, (2) *being in a good financial situation*; for traditional family values: (1) *being married*, (2) *having children and raising them*, etc. Some items comprising social criticism are (1) *promoting greater equality in society*, (2) *contributing to the reduction of existing income differences*, etc. And for hedonistic values, the items include: (1) *enjoying life*, (2) *having fun*.

b. Salvation scale

In the theoretical framework, we consider three dimensions of salvation, namely, the dimension of transcendence-immanence, the temporal dimension, and the scope of salvation. The instruments employed to measure these three dimensions were taken from Capucão (2010). The dimension of transcendence-immanence and the temporal dimension however were modifications of the scales constructed by Jeurissen (1993). Using a five-point Likert scale, the respondents were asked to answer to what extent they agree or disagree on each of the following items on the scale. You can see all the items of these three dimensions in the Appendix below (see Table II D, E, & F).

B. Analysis

The data collected from the questionnaires were processed through SPSS program. Several analyses were conducted like frequency analysis, factor analysis, reliability of scales (Cronbach's Alpha), variance analysis, and Spearman's Rho correlation. We interpreted the mean scores of a Likert scale thus: 1:00-1.79 = *I totally disagree*; 1.80-2.59= *I disagree*; 2.60-3.39= *I feel ambivalent* (2.60-2.99= negatively ambivalent; 3.00-3.39=positively ambivalent), 3.40-4.19= *I agree*; 4.20-5.00= *I totally agree*. For the factor analysis, we applied the following criteria: communality of items >.20; factor loading >.40; explained variance >.40; difference between factor loading of items >.15. The items that do not meet these criteria are eliminated and are indicated by the asterisk placed before the items in the appendix. We use mainly free factor analysis, and we only use forced factor analysis when in case of measurements frequently used in

previous studies, the theoretical interpretability of the empirical factors from these forced analysis, is sufficiently near to the theoretical domain. In order to measure the internal consistency of items in a scale we subjected our items/variables to the Reliability of Scales analysis. We consider values equal to or above 0.7. In the correlation analysis, the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient was employed. The strength of correlation can be described using the following interpretation of scores: 0.00-0.19 "very weak"; 0.20-0.39 "weak"; 0.49-0.59 "moderate"; 0.60-0.79 "strong", and 0.80-1.0 "very strong". The statistical significance of the Spearman's rho correlation coefficient in the case of this study can be identified as: ** = correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); * = correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

C. Results

1. Frequency and Factor Analysis

a. Individualism

After exploring the theoretical perspective on *individualism* and *salvation*, let us now examine how the youth perceive these concepts from an empirical viewpoint. For individualism, we gather three main concepts of individualism, namely: Utilitarian, egocentric and expressive individualism. The latter is further sub-categorized into autonomy and self-realization. We performed several factor analyses to the data. The result of the factor analysis shows that there are only two factors that are perceived by our Filipino students, namely: (1) *utilitarian-egocentric individualism*, and (2) *self-expressive individualism*. The items of utilitarian and egoistic individualism formed one factor, while the items on autonomy and self-realization also created only one factor (See Table II, A, B, & C in the Appendix for the complete list of items). We also subjected the scales to reliability analysis. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the scale of utilitarian-egocentrism is .84, while for self-expressive individualism is .76. Both value is above .70 which reflects good internal consistency (DeVellis 1991). In the table below (Table 5), we present the attitudes toward individualism from an empirical perspective.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
1. Utilitarian-egocentric individualism (Theoretical I & II) (items: v70, v71, v64, v66, v65, v68)	3,937	3.45	.82	.84
2. Self-expressive individualism (Theoretical III, A, B) (items: v62, v61, v63, v60, v67, v69)	3,944	3.98	.63	.76

In the frequency analysis (Table 5), one can observe that our respondents *agree* to both utilitarian-egocentric individualism ($\bar{x} = 3.45$) and self-expressive individualism ($\bar{x} = 3.98$), though the latter scored slightly higher.

We also examined in the theoretical part the preferred characteristics of future partners. We come up with four theoretical models, namely: traditionalism, and three dimensions of individualism, i.e. exploration, negotiation, and distinction. After subjecting our data to factor analysis, we come up with only two factors, namely: *traditionalism* and *individualistic*

*liberalism*¹⁴. In the frequency analysis, it is apparent that our respondents strongly agree on a traditionalistic type of future partner, but are ambivalent with regards a future partner that is individualistic liberal.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
1. Traditionalism (Theoretical I) (items: v74, v76, v79, v81)	3,968	4.59	.59	.78
2. Individualistic Liberalism (Theoretical II, III) (items: v73, v80, v84)	3,968	3.34	.91	.56

In the theoretical part, we discussed four concepts related to the value system, namely: traditional achievement values, the traditional family values, social criticism, and hedonistic values. Based on our earlier discussion, we presume that both the traditional achievement values and traditional family values are more collective or community oriented while social criticism and hedonistic values tend to be more individualism oriented. The result of the factor analysis demonstrate that the four factors in the theoretical part have been reflected in the responses of our young respondents (see Table 7 below). The result of the frequency analysis reveals that our respondents *totally agree* on both traditional achievement values and hedonistic values, but are *ambivalent* to both the traditional family and social criticism values.

	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha	Spearman's Rho
1. Traditional achievement values (Theoretical I) (items: v95, v99)	3,981	4.32	.76	.67	.48** (N=4006; .000)
2. Traditional family values (Theoretical II) (items: v87, v91)	3,983	3.31	1.18	.84	.72** (N=4006; .000)
3. Social Criticism (Theoretical III) (items: v90, v92)	3,967	3.30	.96	.64	.47** (N=4006; .000)
4. Hedonistic values (Theoretical IV) (items: v86, v94)	3,989	4.36	.80	.73	.58** (N=4006; .000)

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Missing pairwise

To sum up, we can say that our respondents agree to **individualistic related** scales like utilitarian-egocentrism, self-expressive individualism, and hedonistic values, but are ambivalent with regards preference for individualistic-liberal future partner and social criticism. For **traditionalistic related** scales, they respond positively to both traditionalistic future partner and traditionalistic achievement values but are ambivalent in accepting traditional family values.

b. Salvation

We consider three dimensions on the images of the salvation in the theoretical part, namely: the dimension of transcendence, the temporal dimension, and the scope of salvation. The dimension of transcendence has three models, (1) absolute transcendence, (2) immanent –

¹⁴ We use the term ‘liberalism’ to signify the concept that ‘each person should be free to do anything without constraint or social obligation, provided he or she does not impinge other’s liberties (See: Fiske 2002: 82-83).

transcendence, and (3) absolute immanence. The factor analysis confirms these three factors. Our respondents *strongly agree* to all these salvation attitudes in the dimension of transcendence. The temporal dimension which is composed of three models in the theoretical part (past, present, and future) has formed only two factors in the empirical part, namely: *Present-of-the-Past salvation* (combined items from the past-oriented and present-oriented salvation in the theoretical part), and the *future-oriented* salvation. Here you can see that the students have no purely past-oriented nor solely present-oriented idea of salvation, but a permutation of the *present-of-the-past oriented* type of salvation. However, a purely *future-oriented* type of salvation exist in the mindset of our respondents. While they strongly agree on the *present-of-the-past oriented* type of salvation, they scored slightly lower on the future-oriented salvation but agree nevertheless. For the scope of salvation, we have three models in the theoretical part, namely: exclusivistic, inclusivistic, and pluralistic salvation. As a result of the factor analysis, we come up with only two factors: *inclusive-pluralistic* salvation (combined items of *inclusivism* and pluralism), and *exclusivistic* salvation. The students totally agree on inclusive-pluralism but are ambivalent about exclusivistic salvation.

Table 8: Salvation - An Empirical Perspective				
	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Cronbach's Alpha
Dimension of Transcendence:				
1. Absolute Transcendence (Theoretical I .A) (items: v134, v136, v139)	3,772	4.53	.65	.95
2. Immanent Transcendence (Theoretical I. B) (items: v140, v141, v142)	3,767	4.45	.66	.94
3. Absolute Immanence (Theoretical I.C) (items: v135, v137, v138)	3,773	4.40	.65	.94
Temporal Dimension:				
4. Present-of-the-Past (Theoretical II. A & B) (items: v144, v145, v146, 147, v149, v151)	3,724	4.22	.68	.95
5. Future-Oriented (Theoretical II, C) (items: v143, v148, v150)	3,723	4.00	.79	.85
Scope of Salvation:				
6. Inclusive-pluralism (Theoretical III, B & C) (items: v153, v155, v156, v158, v160)	3,762	4.26	.69	.92
7. Exclusivistic Salvation (Theoretical III, A) (items: v154, v157, v159)	3,765	3.14	1.10	.92

2. ANOVA & T-Test

In order to compare the mean scores of our respondents and to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between them, we conducted a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and t-test. Here below, we present some striking results of the analyses (see also Table 9).

For **utilitarian egocentrism**, there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the *male* ($\bar{X} = 3.54$) and *female* respondents ($\bar{X} = 3.45$). There is a significant difference in the scores of 12-16 yrs. old ($\bar{X} = 3.49$) and the age group 17-18 yrs. Old ($\bar{X} = 3.40$). Scores of

students from private schools ($\bar{X} = 3.54$) are statistically different from public schools ($\bar{X} = 3.37$). Public school students score ambivalently on utilitarian egocentrism while private school students unequivocally agree. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the marginal church ($\bar{X} = 3.57$) members and the core members ($\bar{X} = 3.44$) is small. In terms of social status, there is on the one hand a significant difference in the scores of those in the lower class ($\bar{X} = 3.54$), and on the other hand, those from the middle class ($\bar{X} = 3.42$), and higher class ($\bar{X} = 3.45$).

The impact of some population characteristics on **self-expression** was likewise explored. Only characteristics like the type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.03$; public = $\bar{X} = 3.39$), educational level (high school: $\bar{X} = 3.90$; college: $\bar{X} = 3.398$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 3.85$; modal: $\bar{X} = 3.95$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.03$), and social status of our respondents (low: $\bar{X} = 3.92$; middle: $\bar{X} = 3.96$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.03$) have an impact. Gender and age have no impact on self-expression.

With regards to the preference for **traditionalistic future partner**, only the following social locations have significant variances: gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.43$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.67$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.64$; public: $\bar{X} = 4.54$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 4.28$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.56$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.68$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 4.46$; middle: $\bar{X} = 4.56$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.69$). Age and educational level have no impact.

For the preference for **individualistic-liberal future partner**, the following population characteristics have significant variances. With regards to gender, male students agree (male: $\bar{X} = 3.52$) to an individualistic-liberal future partner than their female counterpart (female: $\bar{X} = 3.25$) who scored ambivalently. Students of private school ($\bar{X} = 3.50$) agree, while those of the public schools are ambivalent ($\bar{X} = 3.21$). High school students ($\bar{X} = 2.78$) are negatively ambivalent about this type of future partner, while college students are positively ambivalent ($\bar{X} = 3.39$). In terms of social status, students of the lower ($\bar{X} = 3.15$) and the middle class ($\bar{X} = 3.32$) are ambivalent, while those of the higher class ($\bar{X} = 3.46$) plainly agree. Age and church membership have no significant differences among its groups.

With regards to the attitudes toward **traditional achievement values**, we observe the difference in scores on the following characteristics: gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.19$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.39$), age cluster (12-16 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 4.30$; 17-18 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 4.36$; and, 19 yrs above: $\bar{X} = 4.30$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.40$; public: $\bar{X} = 4.25$), educational level (high school: $\bar{X} = 4.04$; college: $\bar{X} = 4.34$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 3.95$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.27$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.45$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 4.11$; middle: $\bar{X} = 4.29$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.44$).

In terms of the attitudes toward **traditional family values**, some notable differences in scores on the following characteristics can be presented. The male scores higher ($\bar{X} = 3.49$) than the female students ($\bar{X} = 3.21$). The older age group scores higher than the lower age cluster (12-16 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 3.24$; 17-18 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 3.29$; and, 19 yrs above: $\bar{X} = 3.49$). Students of private schools ($\bar{X} = 3.40$) agree more to traditional family values than the public students ($\bar{X} = 3.23$). Both the marginal church members ($\bar{X} = 3.18$) and the modal ($\bar{X} = 3.23$) are ambivalent with regards traditional family values, while core members unambiguously agree ($\bar{X} = 3.45$). There is no statistical differences among groups on the educational level and social status.

With regards to their attitudes toward **social criticism value**, the following population characteristics play a significant role. For gender, the male ($\bar{X} = 3.39$) scored higher than the female ($\bar{X} = 3.26$). Private school students ($\bar{X} = 3.37$) score slightly higher than the students of the public schools ($\bar{X} = 3.25$). High school students ($\bar{X} = 3.13$) score lesser than the college students ($\bar{X} = 3.32$). One can also observe that the core church members ($\bar{X} = 3.43$) score higher

on *social criticism* than both the modal ($\bar{X} = 3.21$) and marginal (marginal: $\bar{X} = 3.15$). In terms of social status, students belonging higher class ($\bar{X} = 3.42$) scores higher than the lower ($\bar{X} = 3.14$) and the middle class ($\bar{X} = 3.26$). No two age groups are significantly different at the 0.05 level.

In terms of their attitudes toward *hedonistic values*, the following population characteristics have significant variances: age cluster (12-16 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 4.44$; 17-18 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 4.34$; and, 19 yrs above: $\bar{X} = 4.22$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.48$; public: $\bar{X} = 4.26$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 4.17$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.30$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.47$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 4.04$; middle: $\bar{X} = 4.29$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.58$). It is quite striking to note that while there is a statistical difference among these groupings, our analysis reveal that all of them agree on hedonistic values. Gender and education has no significant statistical difference.

Is there any significant differences in terms of our respondents' attitudes toward salvation? In what follows, we present the results of our findings.

For **absolute transcendence**, gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.43$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.59$), age cluster (12-16 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 4.55$; 19 yrs above: $\bar{X} = 4.30$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.58$; public: $\bar{X} = 4.48$), educational level (high school: $\bar{X} = 4.68$; college: $\bar{X} = 4.52$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 4.35$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.47$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.63$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 4.55$; middle: $\bar{X} = 4.58$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.46$).

With **immanent-transcendence**, except for age, the following social location plays a significant role: gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.37$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.50$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 4.48$; public: $\bar{X} = 4.43$), educational level (high school: $\bar{X} = 4.54$; college: $\bar{X} = 4.45$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 4.23$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.40$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.56$), and social status (middle: $\bar{X} = 4.49$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.41$).

For **absolute immanence**, only gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.33$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.44$) and church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 4.21$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.33$; core = $\bar{X} = 4.51$) have significant difference among its groups.

In terms of their attitudes toward **present-of-the-past salvation**, only gender and church membership play a role. The male students ($\bar{X} = 4.12$) score slightly lower than the female students ($\bar{X} = 4.28$). Core church members score higher ($\bar{X} = 4.51$) than the modal ($\bar{X} = 4.14$) and the marginal ($\bar{X} = 3.99$).

For **future-oriented salvation**, only *church membership* shows significant difference among groups at the 0.05 level. There is a significant difference in the scores between marginal ($\bar{X} = 3.85$) and core members ($\bar{X} = 4.06$), and between modal ($\bar{X} = 3.97$) and core members.

With regards to the attitudes toward **exclusivistic salvation**, we observe the following striking differences: gender (male: $\bar{X} = 3.03$; female: $\bar{X} = 3.34$), age cluster (12-16 yrs. old: $\bar{X} = 3.21$; 17-18 yrs: $\bar{X} = 3.05$), type of school (private: $\bar{X} = 3.20$; public: $\bar{X} = 3.09$), educational level (high school: $\bar{X} = 3.38$; college: $\bar{X} = 3.11$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 3.30$; modal: $\bar{X} = 3.12$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 3.25$; high: $\bar{X} = 3.08$).

Lastly, in relation to the attitudes toward **inclusivist-pluralistic salvation**, gender (male: $\bar{X} = 4.14$; female: $\bar{X} = 4.32$), church membership (marginal: $\bar{X} = 3.99$; modal: $\bar{X} = 4.20$, and core: $\bar{X} = 4.37$), and social status (low: $\bar{X} = 4.20$; high: $\bar{X} = 4.30$). Core members score higher on this salvation attitude than the modal and marginal members, although modal members score higher than the marginal. Students of the higher social status score higher than the lower social status on their attitudes toward inclusivistic-pluralistic salvation.

3. Correlation

The relationship between *individualism* and *salvation* was investigated using Spearman's *rho* correlation coefficient. In this report, we consider only correlation values that has positive or negative $\rho \geq .20$. Here are a number of findings based on the analysis:

Table 10 : Correlation analysis of Individualism and salvation (Spearman's rho)							
	Absolute transcendence	Immanent Transcendence	Absolute Immanence	Present-of-Past	Future-Oriented	Exclusivistic	Inclusivistic Pluralism
Utilitarian egocentrism	---	---	---	---	---	r = .28	---
Self-expression	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Traditional achievement values	r =.21	r =.24	r =.25	r =.21	---	---	r =.21
Traditional Family Values	---	---	---	---	---	r =.21	---
Social critical values	---	r =.21	r =.21	---	---	r =.20	---
Hedonistic values	---	r =.20	r =.20	---	---	---	---
Traditionalistic future partner	r =.22	r =.23	r =.24	r =.22	---	---	r =.23
Individualistic liberal future partner	---	---	---	---	---	r =.22	---

**. correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

. non-Parametric correlation; missing pairwise

Utilitarian egocentrism is positively correlated to exclusivistic salvation [r=.28]. No significant correlation exists between self-expression and salvation attitudes. The **traditional achievement value** is positively correlated to absolute transcendent salvation [r=.21], immanent transcendent salvation [r=.24], absolute immanent salvation [r=.25], present-of-past [r=.21], and inclusivist-pluralism [r=.21]. **Traditional family values** is correlated only to exclusivism [r=.21]. **Social criticism** is correlated to immanent transcendent salvation [r=.21], absolute immanent salvation [r=.21], and exclusivism [r=.20]. **Hedonism** is correlated to immanent transcendent salvation [r=.20] and absolute immanent salvation [r=.20]. **Preference for traditionalistic future partner** is correlated to absolute transcendent salvation [r=.22], immanent transcendent salvation [r=.23], absolute immanent salvation [r=.24], present-of-past [r=.22], and inclusivist-pluralistic salvation [r=.23]. **Preference for individualistic liberal partner** is correlated only to exclusivism [r= .22].

In terms of the correlation between population characteristics and individualism, we gather only one positive correlation, i.e. between **social status** and **hedonism** [$r=.22$]. There is, however, no significant correlation between population characteristics and salvation.

Table 11 : Correlation : Salvation & Population Characteristics (Spearman's rho) ¹⁵							
	Absolute transcendence	Immanent Transcendence	Absolute immanence	Present-of-the-Past	Future oriented	Exclusivistic	Inclusivistic pluralism
Gender	---	---	---	---	---	$r = -.135^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n =3765	---
Public-private	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
High school College	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Age cluster	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Social Status	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Church membership	---	$r = .149^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n =3767	$r = .159^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n =3773	$r = .177^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n =3724	---	---	$r = .177^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n =3762

Table 12 : Correlation Analysis: Individualism & Population Characteristics (Spearman's rho)								
	Utilitarian Egocentrism	Self-Expression	Traditional Achievement Values	Traditional Family Values	Social Critical Values	Hedonistic Values	Traditionalistic Future partner	Individualistic liberal future partner
Gender	---	---	---	---	---	---	$r = .198^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3968	---
Public-private	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	$r = .162^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3968
High school College	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	$r = .180^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3951
Age cluster	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---
Social Status	---	---	---	---	---	$r = .220^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3989	$r = .146^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3968	---
Church membership	---	---	$r = .189^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3981	---	---	$r = .131^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3989	$r = .182^{**}$ sig.(2-tailed) =.000 n = 3968	---

¹⁵ *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

D. Discussion

The central question that we ask in this paper is: *what is the relationship between the attitudes toward individualism and salvation among the Filipino youth of today?* In order to answer this question, we tried to address four sub-questions, namely: (1) what are the attitudes of the Filipino students toward *individualism?*, (2) what are the attitudes of the Filipino students toward *salvation?*, (3) what is the relationship between individualism and salvation among the Filipino students?, and (4) what are the pastoral implications of these relationships, especially on the *Lineamenta* on the families?

(1) What are the attitudes of the Filipino youth toward *individualism?*

The results of our analysis reveal that our Filipino youth of today manifest certain tendency towards individualism. They explicitly agree on utilitarian-egocentric individualism, self-expressive individualism, and hedonistic values. These empirical findings call for serious attention because they corroborate some of the points on individualism which was raised by the *Lineamenta*. As the document states: “...equal consideration needs to be given to the growing danger represented by a troubling individualism which deforms family bonds and ends up considering each component of the family as an isolated unit, leading, in some cases, to the idea that a person is formed according to his own desires, which are considered absolute”(Lineamenta, 4). In fact our study reveals that while our young respondents agree on traditionalistic achievement values like *being in a good financial situation* and *having social security*, they still have an ambivalent attitude towards traditional family values like *being married* and *having children and raising them*. This raises the question whether the young generation of today gives more priority to material security than being married and having children. Or is it maybe because students aim to reach material stability first before thinking about marriage and having children? Nevertheless, this gives us a glimpse into the mindset of this generation of Filipinos that marriage and family life is no longer their chief value or concern.

However, our study also show that while our respondents are amenable to traditionalistic future partner, they are nevertheless ambivalent about their choice for an individualistic-liberal future partner. This is quite interesting. While there is a tendency towards *individualism*, today’s youths seem to have a different perception when it comes to choosing their own partner. On the one hand, they are not sure if they would prefer an individualistic-liberal partner, but on the other hand, they exhibit clear preference for a traditionalistic future partner who exudes characteristics like being faithful, providing security and protection, giving importance to family ties, and having a sense of duty. This latter tendency in choosing their future partners confirms what *Lineamenta* (no. 1) states that: “*despite the many signs of crisis in the family institution in various areas of the “global village”, the desire to marry and form a family remains vibrant, especially among young people*”. This desire to marry and form a family is however qualified by our respondents’ preference for a partner who is faithful, dutiful, and one who treasures family life.

One can also discern from this study that our respondents, who represent the contemporary Filipino youth, especially the modal and the marginal church members, are not so sure about their attitudes on *social criticism*. While they score high on hedonistic values and traditional achievement values, they seem to put little worth on being critical to issues pertaining to society. Having a critical attitude towards social evils are part of the Christian tradition. The church document *Justice in the World* (no. 6) declares that “Action on behalf of justice is a constitutive dimension of preaching the Gospel”. It is therefore a challenge for the church and society to

educate their youth to be conscious of their prophetic calling and to be socially critical to issues so as to bring about authentic and integral transformation of our society. It is our task “to inculcate a truly and entirely human way of life in justice, love and simplicity” (*Justice in the World*, 51).

Another striking result is the implication of the explicit stanch agreement of the Filipino youth to *traditional achievement values* and *hedonism*. A generation that emphasizes material stability and having fun in life might have difficulties in accepting the ‘cross’ that is entailed in family life. This is what the *Lineamenta* (no. 13) is implying when it states that ‘the indissolubility of marriage (“what therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder” Matthew 19:6), is to be understood not as a ‘yoke’ imposed on persons but as a “gift” to a husband and wife united in marriage. The paradigmatic example of Jesus’ humbling act of coming to earth shows God’s abiding accompaniment, transforming hardened heart with his grace and orientating it towards its principle, by way of the cross.” Family life entails embracing not just the pleasant and bright side of life, but also the unpleasant and seamy side of it.

(2) What are the attitudes of the Filipino youth toward salvation?

Our contemporary Filipino students *strongly agree* to all images of salvation belonging to the dimension of transcendence, i.e. absolute transcendence, immanent transcendence, and absolute immanence. They also agree on inclusive-pluralistic salvation but are ambivalent about exclusivistic salvation. They strongly agree on the *present-of-the-past oriented* type of salvation and agree on future-oriented salvation.

It is quite interesting to reflect on the attitude of our young students regarding *inclusivistic-pluralism* type of salvation (a combination of items from inclusivism and pluralism). While they believe that ‘*various religions find their deepest truth in Christ*’, they also find it acceptable that the ‘*hope for salvation is equally embodied in all religions*’ – and that this can be combined as one possible soteriological conviction. This calls to mind Jacques Dupuis’ notion of *inclusive pluralism* which according to D. Lane (2011:160) was an attempt to bring together inclusivism and pluralism in “a way that avoids the relativism of radical pluralism and the absolutism of exclusivism.” Using Dupuis’ explanation, the concept of *inclusive pluralism* “safeguards the uniqueness of the Christ event for the salvation of the world while at the same time recognising the possibility of salvation in other religions for their followers” (ibid.). Dupuis’ concept of inclusive pluralism is influenced by Rahner’s proposition that Jesus Christ is the savior not only of Christians but of all peoples (Rahner 1978:312). *Redemptor Hominis* (1979) likewise insists that “every human person without exception has been redeemed by Christ.” This view “opens up the possibility of the experience of God for all, the universality of God’s grace in the world, the existence of a transcendental revelation for all, and the universal presence of the Spirit in the World” (Lane 2011:159). One may ask what could be the implication of this soteriological attitude to the contemporary Filipino Christian believer amidst the increasing pluralism in the Philippines and their increasing exposure, especially the migrants to other cultures and religions? Does this religious attitude engender a more respectful estimation of other religions and cultures, while not relegating their Christ-centered faith? Does this prompt a Christian to see the *logos spermatikos* scattered in other cultures and religions and enables them to see pluralism as part of God’s plan of salvation? One may conjecture that this type of soteriological attitude may prepare young believers to live their faith authentically in the midst of increasing pluralism, without resorting to fundamentalism and irresponsible relativism.

Another striking result of this study is the attitude on *present-of-the-past* salvation instead of the discrete and linear past-oriented and present oriented types of salvation. This concept of salvation in the temporal dimension calls to mind the integrity or unity of the three dimensions of time in Christian soteriology. This coherent notion of time is affirmed by the biblical concepts of God's **covenant** and **steadfastness**. "Israel only came to understand its own history as a divine promise when it reflected, from the standpoint of the present, on its history, recognising in it God's steadfastness. For the human being standing in history, and thus looking to the future, this divine steadfastness is basically an expectation of a future filled with salvation"(Capucac 2010:110). In his book *Time and Narrative*, Ricoeur shows the unity and plurality of the temporal structure of the past, present and the future by referring to Book XI of Augustine's Confessions. According to him, the *aporia* of the unity and plurality of time can be understood in terms of the present. Hence, the past is interpreted as the **past of the present** (memory), the future is the **future of the present** (expectation), and the present as the **present of the present** (attention or focused awareness). This integral interpretation constitutes the so-called *thesis of the threefold-present*. The *present-of-the-past* salvation can be interpreted within this threefold-present. Volf (2006:21) picks up this insight saying that "when we remember the past, it is not only past; it breaks into the present and gains a new lease on life". Atkins (2004:xi) translate this insight in his reflection of the Eucharist as a meal of 'remembering' in two ways. One is in the causative sense, that is, when an object or idea causes you to remember someone, something, or an event that transpired in the past. And second meaning of 'remembering' is similar to the threefold unity of past, present, and future. In this second sense, 'remembrance' implies calling to mind the presence of Christ for this moment of time while also recognizing that Jesus is part of history and that his presence now foreshadows the coming again of Christ in future glory". This present-of-the-past concept of salvation carries also an element of 'replication'. It allows one to relive past events in the present and give opportunity for a 'second enjoyment'. The *praeterita* (things that have gone by) has a 'plural adjective' – *praesentia*; it admits internal multiplicity (Atkins: 2004; Capucac 2010:112). However, while it allows memory to replicate pleasure, it may also relive a painful past. Thus, aside from its multiplying power, it also gives the capacity to transform or reshape the past. By retelling the past from the perspective of the present, one is enabled to heal a painful past (Atkins 2004).

(3) What is the relationship between *individualism* and *salvation* among the Filipino students?

Both *utilitarian egocentrism* and the preference for *individualistic-liberal* future partner are positively correlated with *exclusivism*. How can we explain this association? One way of explicating this correlation is through the *self-referential* and *self-seeking* tendencies common to these attitudes. 'Self-referential' or 'self-seeking' inclinations can be found both in utilitarian egocentrism and the preference for *individualistic-liberal* future partner which are translated and even legitimated through religious convictions using exclusivistic soteriological terms. Examples of this relationship abound in many religiously or non-religiously motivated conflicts (e.g. crusades, anti-semitism, Nazism, apartheid, European colonialism, etc.).

Hedonistic values are correlated to both the immanent-transcendent salvation and absolute immanent salvation. Of course, the correlation between hedonism and absolute immanent salvation is rather expected. But how can we explain the association of hedonistic values to immanent-transcendence? The correlation between hedonism and immanent-transcendence can be explained through the experience of overwhelming joy in life brought by immanent or

material satisfaction which are uplifting experiences and thus be connected to an immanent-transcendent soteriological experience.

Social critical values are correlated to three salvation images, namely: immanent-transcendent, absolute immanence, and exclusivism. While it is easy to understand the association between social critical values to immanent-transcendent and absolute immanent salvation, it is quite surprising to see a positive correlation between *social critical values* with *exclusivism*. One possible explanation of this association is the tendency inherent in both of these attitudes to appraise reality according to his or her mindset, worldview, or ideology. A ‘healthy’ social activism allows room for other perspectives or opinions, while an ‘unhealthy’ activism tends to be intolerant, heartless, callous, rigid and obdurate. Similarly, an *exclusivist* tends to be absolutist, purist, intolerant, fanatical and unbending.

Traditional family value is correlated to *exclusivistic* salvation. One possible explanation for this association is the proclivity of the adherents of exclusivism to secure or affix salvation mainly through tradition. **Exclusivism** believes that the way to achieve salvation comes only in and through one’s tradition. As a consequence of this conviction, an exclusivist tend to view other religious, cultural, or moral traditions and their practices to be lacking of what an exclusivists considers as important, in this case values like *being married* and *having children and raising them*.

Both the **traditional achievement value** and the **preference for traditional future partner** are correlated to the same group of soteriological images, namely: absolute transcendence, immanent-transcendence, absolute immanence, present-of-the-past, and inclusivistic pluralism. While we can expect traditional achievement value and preference for traditional future partner to be linked with absolute transcendence, immanent transcendence, present-of-the-past, and inclusivistic-pluralism, it is surprising to see their connection to absolute immanence. One explanation is that the items of traditional achievement value like *social security*, and *having a good financial situation* can be interpreted as this-worldly or immanent concerns. Likewise, having a partner who is faithful, giving security and protection, giving importance to family ties, and being a dutiful person may be interpreted in a purely absolute immanent way, although a believer would interpret them from the perspective of faith and tradition the way the *Lineamenta* would do.

(4) What pastoral implications can we draw from this study and what can it contribute to the *Lineamenta*?

Based on this empirical-theological study, our first recommendation is to suggest not to look at ‘individualism’ as a threat or sheer menace, but to see it as a reality that has many faces – some of which have great positive and liberating impact on the person and on the family. One important element is the idea of the emancipation of the individual persons from the tyranny of fatalism, alienation caused by oppressive structures and ideologies, from historical and cultural colonialism, from the culture of silence (Capucão 2010: 151). We must encourage individuals to be the architects of their own history and destiny. One must be able to value his or her own human dignity that is rooted in the Christian notion of ‘being made in the image and likeness of God’. Many texts in the scriptures, while not denying the communal nature of faith, affirms this personal or individual nature of salvation (Ez. 18:20, Jer. 31:29, 1Sam19:11, 2Sam 22.4, Rom. 1:16, 17; 3:21-28; James 1:23, 2Cor. 5:10, etc.). Burnett (2001) argues that Paul was concerned about salvation of the individual and not just those questions pertaining to communal or collective aspects. Self-consciousness, the capacity of individuals to reflect on his or her behavior

is therefore part of the salvific message of Jesus. Several theologians express this individual salvation differently, for instance, as a movement from inauthenticity to faith (Bultmann), from estrangement to centeredness (Tillich), from guilt to freedom (Rahner), from *hamartia* to restoration of vision (R. Niebuhr), from passivity to self-affirmation (feminist theology) [see: Capucao 2010:122]. The Second Vatican Council's document, *Dignitatis Humanae* (no. 1) even states that "contemporary man is becoming increasingly conscious of the dignity of the human person; more and more, people are demanding that men should exercise fully their own judgment and responsible freedom in their actions and should not be subject to the pressure of coercion but be inspired by a sense of duty."

Many of the *brokenness* and *alienation* which are experienced by the individual are often traced from the unhealed wounds coming from their past experiences in their families. Their earlier problematic experiences in the family have enormous impact on the human person. *Broken* individuals would most likely yield broken families. And for many of them, salvation or liberation comes only when these individual issues are addressed and healed. And through the process of healing, the person is enabled to respond authentically to the call for Christian commitment towards universal salvation. The church therefore needs to address these need for personal healing and forgiveness as part of their family ministry. Taking Jesus as an example, one may emulate his unconditional love and mercy. "By looking at the sinner with love, Jesus leads the person to repentance and conversion" (*Lineamenta*, 13).

One major task of the church is to assist the youth to make the right choices. We have to be aware that making moral and religious or spiritual choices is no longer easy for many students of today. Many of them are confronted by numerous possibilities surrounding their freedom of choice. In making choices, religion plays an important role. The choices made by individuals based on religion may not be solely motivated by religious compensators as some sociological theories would advance (Stark & Bainbridge 1987), but by the intrinsic value of Christian tradition that brings about authentic freedom to the individual. Thus, the church must be able to develop a youth and family formation program towards authenticity, towards genuine freedom of spirit construed as a "communion in the sovereign freedom with which God desires to save the world" (M. De Goedt).

However, one should be keen to acknowledge that for many of our contemporary Filipino youths, while religion still plays an important role in their lives, their regard for its saliency is 'partial' and 'differential'. Van der Ven (1998: 40) explains: "It is *differential* in the sense that religion may play a role in private life, for themselves or their significant others, but play little or no role in public matters such as politics. It is *partial* because in the areas where religion plays a role, it is not the main factor, but one factor among many." In this context, freedom and autonomy of the individual is given primary value, even in the construction of their religious self. This demands the minister to be creative and flexible to respond to the opinions and wants of each individual (Van der Ven 1998:43).

Some Filipino authors like F. Landa Jocano (1992: 18-20) observe that many Filipinos today experience what he calls "inner incongruence" of values and orientation. This inner incongruence, he explains, is brought about by the existence of two dialectical value systems, a **western or colonial exogenous value system** that underscores legalism, formality, individual merit on the one hand, and an **indigenous/subconscious/traditional value system** characterized by customary, non-formal, flexible, non-confrontational, and consensus orientation, on the other. He suggests that we must promote our native values particularly in the education of our youth in order to develop our inner strength. The indigenous concept of *loob* and *pakikipagkapwa* (See De Mesa 1987; Brazal 2004) must complement each other. Jocano proposes to uphold values

inherent in our culture like *sampalataya sa maykapal* (belief in God), *damdaming maka-bansa* (love of country above self), *pagmamahal sa pamilya* (care for the family), *paggalang sa kapwa* (respect for the individual), *mithiing pakakaugnay-ugnay* (desire for consensus), and *pagnanais ng pagkakaisa* (preference for unity and harmony). Traditional virtues like *galang* (spirit of respect for the individual), *ugnayan* (the spirit of consensus), *pananagutan* (the spirit of responsibility and accountability), *balikatan* (the spirit of burden-sharing), *bayanihan* (spirit of cooperation and teamwork), and *malasakit* (the spirit of solicitous concern) must be fostered among the youth both in the familial and national life (Jocano 1992: 18-20). Furthermore, he adds: “We need to harness a faith that has an impact not only over one’s destiny, “but also in one’s self and in the goodness of one’s fellow humans. To do this is to gain inner strength and to overcome the harshness of daily routine and excesses. To have inner strength is to be in harmony with the cosmic order, to have control over the *gulong ng palad* (wheel of destiny) and ultimately, to enjoy the blessings of material wealth” (Jocano 1992a:22).

Finally, although this study examines the situation of the Filipino youth, it somehow touches an important aspect in their life, and that is the *family*. The vocation and mission of the family in the church and contemporary world must never neglect to consider the dynamic life of the youth, “to follow attentively the profound changes which are taking place among peoples”(Ad Gentes, 11; Lineamenta, 12). It continues to be a pastoral challenge to constantly examine their concrete circumstances in life so as to deliver to them a “word of truth and hope, which is based [on the belief] that man comes from God, and that, consequently, a reflection capable of reframing the great questions about the meaning of human existence can be responsive to humanity’s most profound expectations” (Lineamenta, 10). May our youth of today which is the future of our Christian family, the domestic church, be part of that “dynamic process [which] develops, one which advances gradually with the progressive integration of the gifts of God”(Familiaris Consortio, 9), in an on-going conversion to a love that saves us from sin and gives us FULLNESS OF LIFE.” (Lineamenta, 12).

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