

ASIA-PACIFIC NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE IMPACT OF RITUALS, EXPERIENCES, AND ACTIONS OF THE  
ENVIRONMENT IN KACHIN ORPHANAGE CENTER UPON THE  
FAITH DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTED ORPHANED  
CHILDREN IN MYANMAR

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in Religious Education

Holistic Child Development

By

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May 15, 2021

WE HEREBY APPROVE THE THESIS

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AS PARTIAL FULFILLMENT TO THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
MASTER OF ARTS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION  
(HOLISTIC CHILD DEVELOPMENT)

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis aimed to explore whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center (KOC). The study was guided by the theoretical framework of John Westerhoff III on the core sectors for developing faith. Westerhoff articulates that there are three sectors for developing faith; namely: rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment. This current study explores the impact of those three sectors in the faith development of the selected orphaned children in KOC.

The methodology used in the study is qualitative and it is descriptive in design. To get the needed information, the researcher employed two data collection methods: interview and personal journals. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted through Facebook Messenger video call. For the personal journal, the researcher requested the respondents to write at least one journal entry each week for a month. Ten children participated in the study. They were chosen using purposive sampling method. The researcher used two approaches to do qualitative analysis; namely: coding and condensation. All the interviews and personal journal were transcribed and imported in the MAXQDA software for analysis.

Based on the findings of this research, it appears that the rituals such as Christmas, Bible Sunday services, New Year services and other services conducted in the KOC have a huge impact on the faith development of selected orphaned children. These rituals facilitated the opportunities for children to seek God more, feel God's love, and become better Christians. The experiences that the center provided helped the children feel God's presence, His love, and provision in times of need. Furthermore, the actions of

the environment allowed the children to emulate what the staff and teachers are doing.

The people in KOC have proved to be good models before the children on how to live as a member of the faith community. Based on the responses of the 10 children, the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impacted their faith development in various ways.

Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were offered to the Kachin Orphanage Center and the local church on how to enrich the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment in nurturing the faith of the children in their care.

Additionally, the following are recommendations for further studies: (a) project thesis on creating a curriculum based on Westerhoff's model for the faith development for the orphaned children, (b) comparative study between orphans and children living with their parents on the effects of rituals, experiences and the actions of the environment, and (c) content analysis of Richard's five processes for faith nurturing among orphaned children.

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No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

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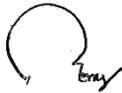
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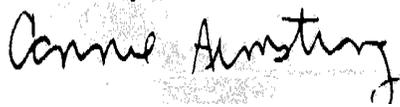
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## **DEDICATION**

To the Kachin Orphanage Center and children's' ministries of churches in Myanmar.

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## ACRONYMS

EVS	English Standard Version
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IRB	Institutional Review Board
KOC	Kachin Orphanage Center
MAXQDA	Max Qualitative Data Analysis Software
NIV	New International Version
NLT	New Living Translation
YLT	Young's Literal Translation

## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS BACKGROUND

#### Background of the Problem

In the Christian community, faith is extremely important. John Westerhoff III (1933-), a renowned author on faith development of children stated that “Faith is deeply personal, dynamic, and ultimate” (Westerhoff 2000, 18). For Christians, faith is the link to a living relationship with God. Faith is at the core of a Christian’s existence. For many if not all Christian parents, faith is something that should be passed on to children. Psalm 127:3 says, “Children are a gift from the Lord, they are a reward from him” (NLT). And the prophet Isaiah acknowledged that children are of the Lord and the Lord is the one who gave them (Isaiah 8: 18, NIV). Children are a gift from God, and they are precious not just for the parents but also for the whole community. The Bible says, “You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up” (Deut. 6:7, NIV). This is one of the major responsibilities of parents. Parents need to nurture their children every day in everything, including faith.

The researcher is a member of the Laiza Baptist Church in Myanmar. She is a witness to how parents from the church are eager to do ministry with their own ways to communicate the Christian faith to their children. In fact, the researcher’s mother said, “I have been doing ministry to my children since they were in my womb. I read the Bible to them and I pray with them every single day.” When the researcher was growing up, her

parents allowed her go to Sunday school, encouraged her to attend church, as well participate in home devotions. They brought her to church every Sunday and, as a family, they participated in church events and ceremonies with her. She grew up in a Christian community and she knew about God since she was in her mother's womb. By the grace of God, she was born into a Christian family and she has a Christian community who helps her in faith development.

During her childhood, she did not encounter many difficult situations or problems. Her life was going well. One summer holiday she attended a junior camp in the church. Part of the camp program was the young people had to share their testimonies in life. Most of her friends shared their experiences on how God comforted and helped them from the difficulties they have faced. At the time, she realized she did not have any testimony to tell them. That made her confused. She thought she loved God. She perceived she had a very good relationship with God. But suddenly, all of her perceptions changed. She started thinking, "Why is it that I do not have a testimony to tell? Why don't I have special experiences like other people? Is there really a God? Is my God real?" A lot of questions came up in her mind. All throughout that summer camp, she thought about those questions. After the camp, she did not tell her parents about her spiritual struggles. She became convinced that God did not really love her and that she was simply okay, even when God was not around her. She did not disclose these thoughts to anybody. After that, she prayed very rarely and barely read the Bible. She went to church every week, but she did not feel anything in her mind about her own spirituality. Eventually, she changed and lived like a non-Christian.

According to John Westerhoff, there are four stages of faith, namely; experienced faith, affiliated faith, searching faith and owned faith (2000, 88). Looking back, the researcher thinks that during her teenage years, she was experiencing “searching faith.” However, in her time of struggle, there was no one who helped her sort through her feelings, and she did not find the right answers. But thankfully, by the grace of God, she found her way back. God helped her renew her relationship with the Lord. Now she wonders, “I lived within a Christian family. I had a supportive faith community. I did not have to worry about my food, clothes, and other needs. But why did I go through that almost ‘faithless’ experience?” Then she thought about the orphaned children in the Kachin Orphanage Center, they do not have parents to call their own. They might not have nice clothes. Do they struggle about their faith? What are their perceptions about God? Do they still have a Christian faith despite the difficulties they have gone through?

As the researcher is thinking about these things, she wondered about the faith development of these children. Do the experiences they have in the orphanage nurture their faith? Does the orphanage engage them in rituals that could help them think about their Christian faith? Do the actions of the staff, the pastors, teachers, and the volunteers provide a model to help in their growth as a Christian? These are some of the questions that the researcher wants to explore in this study.

According to John Westerhoff, Christian faith is like the human body, it can grow and develop. But faith could be lost if it is not carefully nurtured, just like the experience of the researcher. This is why the researcher wants to study the orphaned children’s Christian faith and their relationship with God. After this study, the researcher intends to share the findings of this research with the teachers, staff, and leaders of the Kachin

Orphanage Center, as well as the pastors of the local church. This will enable them to understand how the children perceive their Christian faith and how the rituals, experiences, and the actions of the people in the environment help or do not help that faith to grow. In addition, the researcher also desires that Kachin Orphanage Center and the church will know the felt needs of children, and how they can fulfil their role in nurturing the children so they will continue to grow more in their relationship with God.

### **The Context of Kachin Orphanage Center**

In Kachin culture, people are to care for each other and look after one another by showing love. If the father in the family passes away, his brothers will take care of his children. Therefore, in the past there were no orphanage centers as they were not needed in the society. But today there is a steep growth of orphanage centers in the community. In the context of Kachin, besides many centers for orphans, the church is also taking responsibility to look after orphans by opening centers for them. The church has been showing love for these people. The church has been a shelter for them.

Among the many, Laiza Baptist Church is also running an orphanage ministry by opening a school for the orphans, and it has been a fruitful one (See Appendix A for the map of Myanmar). According to Rev. Gun Seng, “The Kachin Orphanage Center was established in June 2012” (Seng 2020). He says that the reason behind the establishment of this orphanage center is due to the civil war being resumed between the Burma Army and Kachin Army in Kachin Land after a 17 year cease-fire. Because of the war which started June 6, 2011, children became fatherless, parentless, and helpless. Some children have parents, but their parents were not able to support them financially. Some orphans had relatives, but since they were placed in the Internally Displaced People (IDP) refugee

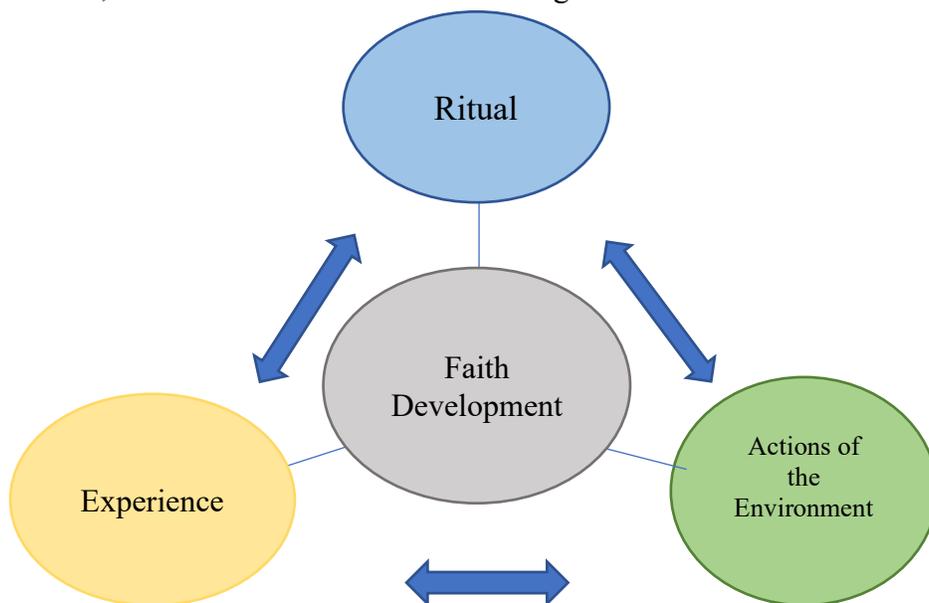
camps, they could not help them. Some orphans became hopeless, having no opportunity to go to school and no means of providing for their basic needs.

Leaders of the Laiza Baptist Church had a heart for these orphans. They got together and discussed how to go about taking care of these children. The leaders said, “If we do not take care of these orphans, in ten years our churches and our country will be devastated by orphans” (Seng 2020). Thus, the leaders led the initiative to open the orphanage center for the children. Here they would train and teach the children about what they should know in every aspect of their lives.

Another reason for establishing this orphanage center was to help the children grow strong in their spiritual lives, exhibit good behavior and morality; and to be educated (Seng 2020). One of the main reasons for running this orphanage center is to let the orphans experience the love of God and His care. The Kachin Church understands that God is the loving Father who cares for all His children. By doing this the orphans will also experience the love of God and, when they grow up and are part of society, they will also live out their lives with love. Another reason is the church wants them to have the nationalistic mindset as Kachin people; that they will come to know and value their people and love their people. All the children are from different family backgrounds, with different attitudes, characters, and morals. Some are weak spiritually as they grew up without parents and lacked being nurtured in the Christian faith. All of these children face problems and challenges in their lives. In this study the researcher wants to discover their understanding of the Christian faith and also their relationship with God using Westerhoff’s framework as model for inquiry

## Theoretical Framework

This study adapts the framework of John Westerhoff III on the core sectors for developing faith. Westerhoff articulates that faith is developed through ritual, experiences, and actions of the environment. Figure 1 illustrates this.



**Figure 1: Core Sectors for Developing Faith** (Westerhoff 2000, 53-65)

Westerhoff asserts that, “A person’s being, not his or her becoming, is at the heart of the Christian faith” (1980, 18). Faith is “a way of behaving which involves knowing, being and willing” (Westerhoff 2000, 87). For Westerhoff, the people in the same environment of the child have a responsibility of making sure that faith is reinforced through various means. First, Westerhoff mentions that for faith to develop there should be rituals and those rituals help us to sustain and transmit our understandings and ways, and also make meaning of the crises or transitions in our lives (2000, 54-58). Westerhoff explains that Sunday liturgy is ritual for the Christian community when people gather together to celebrate their faith. If the people stop worshipping as a faith community,

their faith will eventually be lost. If people want to transmit their faith to the next generation, the one thing they must do is let the young people participate at the community's every ritual. Westerhoff affirms that ritual can reveal the understanding of the Christian faith (2000, 54-58). Lawrence Richards, in his book, *A Theology for Children's Ministry*, mentions how important rituals are in the Old Testament (1983, 20). In the Old Testament times, they had plans for rituals that covered the entire year. That repeated cycle of rituals and celebrations gave a sense of God's presence and the children could feel God was with them. Furthermore, the rituals could help shape a child's mindset. The children could feel they were a chosen people and know their identity as children of God. Rituals could give opportunities for children to believe that God is their Creator and Redeemer; thus, making their faith firm (Richards 1983, 20).

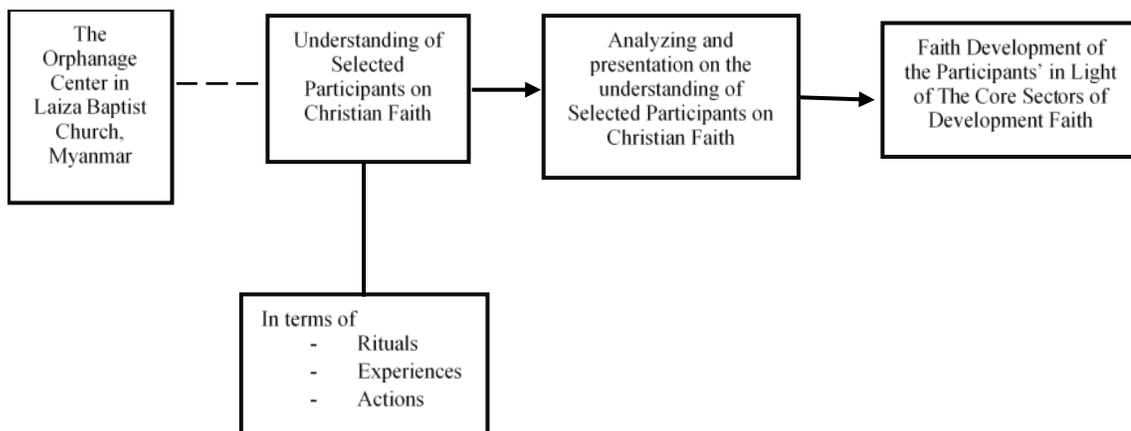
Second, Westerhoff articulates that in order for faith to develop, there has to be opportunities to learn from experiences. In the same vein, Stonehouse and May write that "experiencing God in worship and within the faith community is crucial for children" (2010, 71). When adults are worshipping God together with the children, it creates an environment of openness and freedom. Westerhoff describes that "for faith, it is therefore especially important to acknowledge that the most significant and fundamental form of learning is experience" (2000, 59-62). In his book, *Will Our Children Have Faith,* Westerhoff writes that people learn from their experiences, "by imaging (stories) and through the use of signs (conceptual language)" (2000, 61). This is illustrated when Westerhoff discusses that to experience life in a community which seeks the good of others, "we learn the story of the Good Samaritan, and then through reflection on our experience, we symbolically conceptualize the community of God in terms of love,

justice, and charity” (2000, 61). Children need to experience the stories in the Bible in real life. The life they experience in the church must be a distinctive expression of the church faith story (Westerhoff 2000, 62). The children can get good experiences by participating in the rituals. When children participate in ritual ceremonies, they also get to experience God’s presence and will feel God as comforter, guide, and provider. Childhood experiences can grip the rest of their life (May and others 2005, 36).

Finally, Westerhoff perceives that for faith to develop in children, the actions in their environment is crucial. God is at work in the world on behalf of peace, justice, and love. Our individual and corporate actions in society are the true test of our faith (Westerhoff 2012, 63-66). Humans are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26, NIV), and people then must follow God commands. The children are observing and they will usually follow what they see. The church and parents need to build a Christian faith community for the children, as Christians need to engage in personal, interpersonal, and social actions. For example, most people agree that if there are people in the community who are poor, in need of food, shelter, or care, we as Christians should respond (Westerhoff 2009, 63). Let the children know what kind of actions should be given toward weaker people; how to love and how to forgive. Richards believes that the modeling of the faith community impacts greatly on children (Richards 1983, 79). He clarifies that it is essential for children to have persons from which to model and develop their faith (Richards 1983, 79). In children’s ministry, a focus on building relationships with children and adults is essential. The action of the significant people in the child's environment could greatly affect their faith development.

## Conceptual Framework

Figure 2 demonstrates the conceptual flow of this study. The researcher will integrate the theory of John Westerhoff into the process of the research.



**Figure 2: Conceptual Framework**

The first square represents the Kachin Orphanage Center of Laiza Baptist Church, Myanmar, where the participants are from and that is the context of the orphanage center. The dashed lines represent the connection between the orphanage and the children. The second square represents the participants and their understanding on Christian faith and how does the Kachin Orphanage Center help them grow in their faith in light of Westerhoff's core sectors for developing faith, namely: rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment. The third square illustrates based on the responses of the participants, the researcher presented, analyzed, and interpreted the data following the research questions that relate to rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment. The last square represents the faith development of the participants as evidenced by their responses of Westerhoff's core sectors of developing faith which are rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment.

### Statement of the Problem

The main question of the study is: how do the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment in Kachin Orphanage Center impact or not impact the faith development of the selected orphaned children? The following are the sub problems of the study:

1. What are the demographic characteristics of the selected children from Kachin Orphanage Center, in terms of the following:
  - a. Age
  - b. Sex
  - c. Education
  - d. Number of years of being a Christian
  - e. Number of years of staying in Kachin Orphanage Center
2. According to the understanding of the selected orphaned children from Kachin Orphanage Center, how do the “rituals” affect or not affect their faith development in terms of the following areas:
  - a. What are the rituals that the center encourages the children to participate in?
  - b. In what ways do these rituals affect or not affect their relationship with God?
  - c. In what ways do these rituals mold or not mold their mind to be a better Christian?
  - d. In what ways do the rituals work or not work on their lives so their faith becomes firm?

3. According to the understanding of the selected orphaned children from Kachin Orphanage Center, how do their “experiences” in the center influence or not influence their faith development in terms of the following areas:
  - a. In what ways does the center provide or not provide experiences so the children can feel God’s presence?
  - b. How do their experiences in the center provide or not provide them the love they need when they feel abandoned?
  - c. In what ways do their experiences in the center show or not show them that God provides for them in their times of need?
  - d. In what ways does the center provide or not provide experiences for children to deal with difficult situations?
  
4. According to the understanding of the selected orphaned children from Kachin Orphanage Center, how does “the action of the environment” help or not help their faith development in terms of the following areas:
  - a. In what ways do the actions of the people in the center exemplify or not exemplify obedience to God?
  - b. How do the actions of the people in the center become or not become a model of the children’s faith development process?
  - c. In what ways do the people in the center show or not show good example of living as a faith community before the children?

### **Basic Assumption**

The study was based on the following assumption: the respondents can already understand the things that are happening in their environment. According to Piaget and

Inhelder, children who are 11 and above can think logically and their cognitive development is already appropriate to articulate their perception (Piaget and Inhelder 1969, 98). Wilhoit and Dettoni observe that children at this age can already express their Christian faith and their relationship with God more fully (1973, 54). This assumption has been validated and was found to be true after the conduct of the study.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant for Laiza Baptist Church, because the Kachin Orphanage Center is part of the ministry of church. Specifically, Laiza Baptist Church will know how the children understand their faith in light of the rituals, experiences, and actions of the people at the Orphanage. The study is also important because it can help the church identify improvements in the area of nurturing the faith of children.

This study could also provide a framework for the local churches in Myanmar on how a child's faith can be nurtured. Furthermore, the findings of the study could add to the lack of literature and empirical studies that are conducted on the faith formation of children who live inside an orphanage.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Christian Faith** is “a way of knowing that God exists, that Jesus is Lord as well as my personal redeemer, and that the Holy Spirit is the direct presence of God which infuses my life, empowers the church, and calls all humankind to a redemptive relationship” (Powers 1982, 54).

**Faith Development** is the process of growing in one's relationship with God which includes thinking, feeling, and willing and it is transmitted, sustained, and

expanded through our interactions with others (adapted from Westerhoff 2000, 88). In this study, faith development also refers to the process of growing, knowing, valuing, interpreting, and seeing what one believes in (Fowler 1981, 98-99; Little 1983, 17).

**Impact** refers to the influence or effect of the rituals, experiences, and the actions of the people in the orphanage to the children's faith development.

**Kachin Orphanage Center** is a home for orphaned children run by the Laiza Baptist Church. This is located in the northernmost state of Myanmar, and it is bordered by China. It is in Laiza City, Kachin state.

**Orphaned children** refer to individuals 18 below whose parents have died or whose parents have totally abandoned them to the care of the Kachin Orphanage Center.

**Ritual** refers to the programs and celebrations which are held in the KOC throughout out the year.

**Experience** in this study experience is something that the respondents do or encounter which has outcome either good or bad.

**People in the Center** refer to the staff, pastor, teachers, and volunteers in Kachin Orphanage Center. The phrase "actions of the environment" also refer to the "actions of the people in the center."

### **Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

There are some limitations in this study. First this study is limited to Kachin Orphanage Center only. This orphanage is run by the Laiza Baptist Church. Other orphanage centers operated by other local churches in the area are studied, so the findings may not be applicable to these settings.

The second limitation deals with the participants of the research. Only orphaned children who are 11 to 15 years of age and are registered in Kachin Orphanage Center are interviewed. These children do not personally know the researcher so there are no problems with bias or familiarity. The researcher asked permission from the principal of the center to review their profile, and the researcher selected the participants who have lived in the Kachin Orphanage Center for at least two years before the conduct of the study. The qualifications allowed the researcher to explore how the center has influenced their faith development and their understanding of the Christian faith as they have already some sense of the Christian life.

Third, this study focused only on Westerhoff's core sectors for developing faith. Westerhoff has also presented in his books the stages of faith, but the researcher did not delve into that. The researcher wanted to investigate whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center. The rituals covered the programs which celebrate in the KOC throughout the year. For experiences, the researcher only asked about the respondents' experiences while staying in KOC and not include experiences that the respondents had *before* coming to KOC. Concerning the actions of the environment, only the actions of the people inside KOC were taken into account.

This chapter explained the context of the research locale, the theoretical framework, the research questions, and other elements related to the problem and its setting. Chapter II will discuss the literature and studies that are relevant to the current research.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE AND STUDIES

This chapter contains literature and studies related to the current study. Among the topics discussed are the following: (1) Biblical view of children, (2) processes influencing the growth of faith; and (3) Westerhoff's core sectors of developing faith which involve ritual, experience, and actions of the environment processes.

#### **The Biblical View of Children**

This section is composed of two sections: (1) children through the lens of the Old and New Testament; and (2) orphaned children in the Bible.

##### Children Through the Lens of the Old and New Testament

In the Old Testament "children are the focus of God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for the promise of many descendants obviously depends upon the birth of children" (Bunge, Fretheim, and Gaventa 2008, 6). In the Bible the children can be seen as blessings from the Lord, as in the conversation of Esau and Jacob as well. "Then Esau looked up and saw the women and children. "Who are these with you?" he asked. Jacob answered, "They are the children God has graciously given your servant" (Genesis 33:5, NIV). The children are an important part of the story and highly valued by God.

Children are part of the Kingdom of God. In the book, *Child, Church and Mission*, Brewster writes, "The focus of God's promise of salvation is not a warrior king, a wise rabbi, or a high priest but a child" (2005, 30). Children are used as an example for

entering into the kingdom. The kingdom of God belongs to the children (Laseto 2013, 55). In Mathew 18:1-5, the disciples were wondering and asking who will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Then, Jesus took a child and told them, “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:4-5, NIV). These passages affirm that children are a vital part in entering the Kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 19:13-14 says, “The children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them, but the disciples rebuked those who brought them” (NIV). In verse 14, Jesus straightaway gives two commands to His disciples, “Let the little children come to me; and do not forbid them.” In this story, one can see the dignity that Jesus placed on children. Brewster comments, “The Lord gave His own life and shed His blood for the dignity and salvation of every child” (2005, 26). Jesus showed His respect for the children by sharing His time and giving attention to the children even when His disciples had no time for them (Brewster 2005, 26). This reaction of Jesus showed how He valued children.

There are a lot of stories in the Bible where God used children to fulfil His purposes, “as His messengers and instruments” (Brewster 2005, 29). It seems like when God has a special mission to do but He could not entrust to an adult, He used children in His special tasks (Brewster 2005, 29). For example, Moses’s sister Miriam was used by God in an important part of the Israel’s history. When God needed to get a stern message across to Eli, he confidently entrusted that message to Samuel, a young boy at the time (I Samuel 3). A young captive servant girl told her master Naaman about Elisha, the man of

God (2 Kings 5:1-3). These children were used by God for such important tasks. Brewster discusses that “Whatever God may be doing at the moment if one of the children’s angels sees a child in trouble, that angel will let God know immediately” (2005, 28). God has deep concern for children. He does not want them to stay away from Him.

The Lord through Moses commanded adults to teach their children to love and obey the law in a participatory way. The adults should “talk about them (scriptures) when you sit at home and when you walk along the road” (Deut. 6:7, NLT). The children should grow up in the faith community. A child’s faith should develop day by day, and children should come close with God every day through the encouragement and teaching of adults. The New Testament records, “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4, NIV). This verse commands fathers to teach and nurture their children in things about God.

In A.D. 110, Clement prompted the nurture of children. He says, “Let our children partake of the training that is in Christ. Let them learn how humility avails with God, what pure love can do with Him, how the fear of Him is good and great and saves those who live therein in holiness and a pure mind” (Clement, *To The Corinthians* 21:7-8 circa A.D. 110; cited in Richards 1983, 37). The adults have a responsibility to nurture the faith of children. Children are God’s gifts not only to parents, but also the community (Bunge 2004, 45). For people who are involved in the lives of children, they should value, show love, and nurture them because they are gifts from God and that is God’s desire.

## Orphaned Children in the Bible

An orphan is “a child that has lost one or both parents” (The Faith to Action Initiative 2020, 3). Lamentations 5:3 reveals: “We have become orphans and fatherless, our mothers like widows” (ESV). This verse implies that orphans have no one to protect or take care of them. They may feel that God has forsaken them so they feel helpless. This is their reproach and lament to God for the struggles which they bear (Henry 1996).

Orphans are vulnerable. In the ancient Near East, the father was the main means of economic support for the family unit. Elwell observes that the absence of the husband “left his wife and children in a particularly vulnerable condition” (Elwell 1996). God, however, never turns His face away from them. God always concerns Himself with the vulnerable children. To protect them from unrighteous persons, He strongly declares in Exodus 22: 22-24, “Any widow or orphan ye do not afflict; if thou dost really afflict him, surely if he at all cry unto Me, I certainly hear His cry; and Mine anger hath burned, and I have slain you by the sword, and your wives have been widows, and your sons orphans” (YLT). One can see how God cares, protects and loves orphaned children. God always stands by their side. God’s defense for orphans can be seen in Psalm 68:5: “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in His holy dwelling” (NIV). In the Bible, one can see His consistent concern for vulnerable people. Shelton states, “Likewise, the prophets admonished God’s people to demonstrate their righteousness through the care of widows and orphans, and warned them of God’s impending judgment if they did not do so (Isa. 10:1–3; Jer. 7:5–7, 22:2–5; Zech. 7:9–11; Mal. 3:5)” (2020, 6). To care for the widow and orphan is the will of God and every Christian has the responsibility to follow His word. When it comes to caring for orphans and widows, people first think of taking

care of the physical needs and fulfilling the needs that can be seen. However, one should take care not only for their physical needs but also for their spiritual needs. Supporting physical needs can help the orphaned child to grow well and caring for their spiritual needs can encourage them to feel how valuable they are before God and people.

In the Bible, there are a number of orphaned children who were blessed by God. The Bible shows the importance of spiritual teaching on these children. Esther is one of the orphans recorded in the Bible (*Esther* 1:1-2:18). When Esther's father and mother died, her uncle Mordecai brought her with him as his own daughter (*Esther* 2:7). During her childhood, her uncle Mordecai supported her, not only focusing on her physical needs but also her spiritual needs (Revelaed 2019, 6). Even when she faced threats in her life, she just kept her eyes on God (*Esther* 4:15-16). Finally, she saved herself and her people from execution (*Esther* 7).

#### Studies Conducted on Orphaned Children

There are studies conducted on orphaned children that focus on helping their basic needs. The researcher cited at least three of these studies: First, Alfred Mateyo Kalembo did a research in 2009 on "Caring for Orphans in the Pilgrim Wesley and Church of Zambia." Kalembo focused on how the church helped the orphaned children's basic needs such as housing, food, clothing and health (2009, 112-113). Kalembo discovered that among other things, the Pilgrim Wesley Church has been helping improve the health of orphaned children who were affected by HIV/AIDS. Second, Aramide Kazeem and Leif Jensen, in their research entitled, "Orphan Status, School Attendance, and Relationship to Household Head in Nigeria" highlighted on "whether orphans experience an educational advantage if they reside in households headed by blood relatives rather

than non-relatives, paying attention to age and household income differences” (Kazeem and Jensen 2017, 659). In this research, the researchers focused on orphaned children’s education. Third, Boris Ptak, Jozef Fecenko, Bibiana Barabasova and Nikola Benecova, in their research, “Vision of Children in an Orphanage about Family and Family Life,” emphasis on “how are the orphanage children’s vision on their future family and family life” (Ptak and others 2017, 784). And fourth, Randall Damon Burns did a research in 2015 on, “Creating and Nurturing a Culture of Adoption and Orphan Care in the Local Church: A Multiple Case Study,” highlighted on, “the key strategies model churches use to create and nurture a culture of orphan care” (Burns 2015, 8). Finally, Aisling L. Zweigle in her master’s thesis entitled, “An Exploration of Relationships and Potential for the Growth of Love: A Grounded Theory Study in Orphanage Q,” explored whether the orphaned children receive good enough care concentration in love from Orphanage Q (Zweigle 2017, 16). One of the major findings of Zweigle was: Essential for those working within orphanages or residential settings as caregivers, social workers, executive directors, and those working as foster parents, counselors, case-workers, teachers, or pastors is a commitment to build and maintain consistent relationship with the children (2017, 203). The study implied that love can grow even in orphanage settings.

The current study’s unique thing is this: the researcher explored on the faith development of orphaned children. The researcher investigated what are the elements that help children grow in their faith and survive an environment without the presence of their own parents. The loss of parents is perhaps one of the most harmful and stressful situations for a child to experience. As part of the side effect of the pain of losing one’s parents, the orphaned children could get risks such as “antisocial behaviors, aggression

and dangerous behaviors” (Rouholamini, Kalantarkousheh and Sharifi 2017, 1986). According to the Fowler (1981, 92), faith can shape or transform human life. If the orphaned children do not have faith in God, it could be difficult for them to thrive.

The orphaned children who have experienced hardships often find strength in their faith (Neimetz, 2007, 124). This is one of the reasons why faith in God is important for the orphaned children. One of the challenges of the teachers and caregivers in the orphanage is how to help children grow in their faith. Catherine Neimetz, in her research on “Culture of Caregiving in a Faith-Based Orphanage in Northeastern China,” mentioned that inspiring them to participate in “faith-based activities” could boost their faith development (2007, 113). In this particular research, Neimetz inquired from the center’s director and co-director about children’s spiritual routine. Neimetz found out that the center’s priority is taking care of children’s spiritual need. The co-director remarked that “consistent teaching of the Bible” helps children in their faith (Neimetz 2007, 113). He said, “When we moved into this building there was this room, it had many posters of idols in this room. The kids, they saw it and tore it down. I said not to touch these, but they would not stop. They knew those idols are bad. I was so happy that they do this. This came from the spirit of God in their heart” (Neimetz 2007, 113). The co-director’s words indicated that, faith can be developed by participation in the worship or faith-based activity. Faith is as the spirituality’s expression (Nastis 2017, 297). The director of orphanage center further said that, he saw that the orphaned children can comfort themselves through taking time with God when they meet hardships in life (Neimetz 2007, 156). This is one of advantages when children experience God through the help of people who care about their faith development.

## Myanmar Kachin Spirituality

The Kachin people have been practicing Christianity for over a century within the Buddhism majority in Myanmar. Typically, the Kachin people are inevitably considered as Christians when they meet with the other tribes. Most of the Kachin people are born Christians and they know about God since they were young. Nevertheless, a close observation of the lives of Kachin Christians shows that they are not rooted in their faith because they do not display the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (Aung 2013, 82-94). The Kachin Christian people love to listen about only salvation. They forget or they are reckless about taking on their responsibility as being a true Christian. Unlike the Biblical teachings and requirements, God's grace is still being interpreted and embraced as a "cheap grace" that there is no true repentance nor transformation of one's life. Rather, Christian faith is more or less like a kind of "add-on" to their normal way of life. As a result, they only bear the name Christian yet still "live in the flesh." Even though, Kachin Christian people go to the church, it is difficult to say that they are truly Christians because their core beliefs are not replicated and one could not see in the outcome of their actions. In this regard, to be able to build their lives on a strong faith, Kachin spirituality still has to be more strengthened by the Word of God (Aung 2013, 82-94).

### **Processes Influencing the Growth of Faith**

Yust, a Christian educator, claims that "Faith is significant for childhood because it is the place where spiritual journeys begin" (2004, 2). Sometimes, one is busy teaching the children about only Christian religion, "what the Bible says, what happened in the

history of the church, what we believe, what is right and wrong” (Westerhoff 2012, 452) and not focusing on how children can connect with God in a personal way.

Yust explains that faith is God’s gift; it informs and transforms human lives, and our best human response to faith is “faithfulness” (Yust 2004, 13-19). Yust identifies six concepts of importance in children’s lives, namely; belonging, thanksgiving, giftedness, hostility, understanding, and hope. Yust elucidates:

Belonging is letting the children feel being embraced by God and a community of faith as beloved and accepted. Thanksgiving is allowing the children to live with a sense of gratitude for the gift of faith and God’s provision of one’s daily needs. Giftedness is letting the children know that everyone is made amazingly and uniquely with their own gifts by God to serve the community. Hospitality is letting the children know how to share their gifts and welcome the gift from others so that God’s vision of a just and peaceful world can be realized. Understanding is reflecting on one’s spiritual experiences in order to become aware of how they shape one’s life and commitments. Finally, hope is letting the children expect that there is something more to human existence than what we presently see or know (Yust 2004, 13-19).

These six themes are related to children’s faith in one way or another.

Westerhoff’s concept is related with Yust’s principles. According to John Westerhoff, faith could grow “like the ring of a tree, like each ring adding to and changing the tree somewhat” (2000, 88). A tree should have a proper environment to grow well. A good environment and good soil are central for a tree to grow properly, and the same applies here that in order for a child’s faith to grow they need a good faith community (Westerhoff 2000, 88). In light of Yust’s principles, the faith community can provide those six themes for a child to grow. Along this vein, Miles and Wright state, “We first of all need to remember that a child does not exist in isolation. A child exists in context and, in order to understand that child, we must also understand his or her context” (2006, 3).

For the children, environment is important because it is one of the important factors where they develop their faith. If one wants to nurture faith in the children it “must be to shape a vital faith community” because the environment or setting involved is crucial (Richards 1983, 371).

In his book, *A Theology of Children’s Ministry*, Richards mentioned about five processes influencing the nurture of faith, namely, (1) belonging; (2) participation; (3) modeling; (4) biblical instruction; and (5) exercise of personal choice (1983, 372). First, Richards states that for faith to grow, there has to be the communication of belonging to a vital faith community. If the children do not have a sense of belonging or connection to a faith community, their spiritual growth and mental growth can be hindered (Liana 2016, 50). This was explained by a research conducted by Ro Thuam Liana in 2016 on “The Perceived Influence of The Church Upon Spirituality Among Selected Children Ages 8-14 in the Selected Church of The Nazarene Congregations in Kalaymyo Area, Myanmar.” According to his research findings, a sense of belonging in the faith community is a “strong positive influence” toward the growth of the children’s faith. He encourages the church to help children to have a “belonging mind set.” He recommended that, “children’s relationship with adults and teenagers” is also vital for having a sense of belonging (Liana 2016, iii-iv). In support to this, Scottie May and others believe that, “children are nurtured most effectively in communities where they feel a sense of belonging” (2005, 139). Faith has opportunity to grow when the faith community shows love to the children by allowing them to be involved together in the fellowship, church activities and worship service.

The second process that can influence a child's faith to grow is for them to participate in the life of a vital faith community (Richards 1983, 372). In the Old Testament, the children were included in their public worship assembly (2 Chron. 20:13, Josh. 8:35, Joel 2:15-16). Letting the children participate in the community affirms their faith relationship with God. This is one of the ways to transmit faith to the next generation. Cully says in her book, *Children in the Church*, children's participation in the church (e.g., helping in the decoration for the chapel service, cleaning in the church with peer group, distributing the church bulletin) could provide the true feeling of church life and a sense of belonging (Cully 1952, 53-54). A child's participation and sense of belonging in the faith community play an important role in the growth of children's faith (1983, 372). It is important that the church provides opportunities for children to participate in the church.

The third process that can influence children's faith to grow is "modeling" (Richards 1983, 76). Modeling portrays one of fundamental parts of nurturing a child's faith. Modeling is basic and extremely powerful and impactful on the children's lives for faith development (Richards 1983, 78-79). Richards summarizes the elements that boost the impact of modeling:

1. There needs to be frequent, long-term contact with the model(s).
2. There needs to be a warm, loving relationship with the model(s).
3. There needs to be exposure to the inner states of the model(s).
4. The model(s) need to be observed in a variety of life settings and situations.
5. The model(s) need to exhibit consistency and clarity in behaviours values, etc.
6. There needs to be a correspondence between the behaviour of the model(s) and the beliefs (ideal standards) of the community.
7. There needs to be explanation of the lifestyle of the model(s) conceptually, with instruction accompanying shared experiences (Richards 1983, 78; Richards 1975, 84-85).

In more ways than one, as a child lives with his or her parents, the child imitates what the parents are doing. If the father is a drunkard, the child will be exposed to this practice and might follow in the example set by the father. The child reflects the life of the parents and becomes like them (Richards 1975, 34). Albert Bandura mentions in his book, *Social Learning Theory*, children are careful observers and they remember what they observed from the adults, and later on they try out what they have seen (1977, 22-25). Ivy Beckwith states, “if the child’s parents and caregivers show that listening to and following God’s story is a priority for them, then the child will model those attitudes” (2004, 53). In the same way, Marjorie J. Thompson says that children learn more from what adults do rather than what adults say (1996, 22). These experts encourage the people around the child to set good examples for children to follow.

Children learn things by listening, seeing, and experiencing. However, in terms of faith, children learn and grow their faith through seeing it modeled before them. Intentionally and unintentionally, children’s behavior and characters are shaped through their environments. The apostle Paul urges his readers to “imitate him as he imitates Christ” (I Cor. 11:1 NIV). He took the imitation of others, or modeling of others, as important for spiritual growth. Their behavior and actions are meant as examples for others. It is the parents and the adults in the world around the children that may shape the child to either have a healthy, happy and fully living personality or spoil the child to negativity and fatalism (Westerhoff 2000, 65). Children are passionate learners and observers. Their behavior and mindset can be shaped by their surroundings. This implies that it is important that children are nurtured in the environment where Christlike models

are there. Westerhoff wisely observes, “Our children will have faith, only if we do” (2000, 65).

The fourth process that can influence children’s faith to grow is providing “biblical instruction as interpretation of life” (Richards 1983, 76). Richards mentions that God has revealed His thoughts and plans and decisions to men through the Holy Spirit, and that faith growth always begins with knowledge of His Word” (Richards 1970, 92). This could imply that if one conducts a Bible study with children, one should choose simple words and relate God’s Word with the children’s experiences so that they will understand and accept what is being taught to them. Furthermore, when providing biblical instruction to the children, it should be related with their daily life so that application to their situation will not be hard. It is important, Richards mentions, that we can provide biblical instruction to the children through a storytelling method (Richards 1970, 198). Bartholomew and Goheen assert that (1) God intends for the biblical story to shape children, (2) God intends that children meet God in His story, and (3) God intends that His story become their story (2004, 12). One of the ways where children experience God is to enter the stories of scripture and see God in action and hear how God speaks to them in the story (Stonehouse and May 2008, 370). Bartholomew and Goheen encourage their readers to find their place in the story and to live into it as “the true story of the world” (2004, 12). Children can be taught how to connect, or get in a firm relationship with God in their own life story, in order to develop their faith in God. The best stories are spiritual, helping to connect children with deeper truths and ultimate meaning in life (Ratcliff and McQuitty 2004, 12). To that end, providing biblical instruction as

interpretations of life through telling story is one of the best ways for children to have and to grow their faith.

Finally, the fifth process that can influence children's faith to grow is encouraging a growing exercise of personal choice. Making decisions is one of the most important aspects of human life, whether to have victory in life or not is totally dependent on it. Kamii mentioned that children learn to make choices by making their own decisions (1991, 382). For many people in the secular world, to succeed in life depends on personal choice. In the Christian life, one is given the opportunity to make choices (Enns 1989, 223). In John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (NIV). This verse says how God loves people and saved them through his only Son, Jesus. This passage shows that God gives people a chance whether or not to choose life with Him. He offers them eternal life, but people have to accept it for themselves with their own choices. He will not force them to choose. In children's ministry, sometimes adults exercise control over children's choices: what to do, when to do it, and how to do it most of the time and the children do not have that opportunity to make a decision (May and others 2005, 278). Guiding the children towards following the good way is good, but the children should be taught how to make good choices on their own. If the children are not provided with opportunities to make right choices, they might grow up unable to decide for themselves. Richards assert that, exercising personal choice is important for faith growth, so that the children should have opportunities to exercise making decisions and as a consequence, the children will learn how to handle personal choices on their own (1983, 76–80).

### **Core Sectors for Developing Faith**

The theoretical framework of this current study uses Westerhoff's model on how faith among children can be developed. He articulates that rituals, experiences, and action of the environment help in this process.

#### **Nurturing Children's Faith by Establishing Rituals**

Westerhoff says, "there is no community without ritual" (2000, 54). Ritual means "repeated and voluntary bodily acts which are symbolic; in the case of religious rituals they symbolise divine objects" (Argyle 2002, 1). Richards expounds:

In the Old Testament, one of their nurturing children's faith method was let the children participate in rituals: Passover, Pentecost, Rosh-Hashana, Day of Atonement and Tabernacles. The Israelites have a calendar for every year for those festival. In March and April they had Passover festival (Exod. 12, 13, 34; Lev. 23). From this festival the children get a sense of "Redemption." In May and June, they had Pentecost festival (Exod. 23, 34; Lev. 23; Num. 28; Deut.16) which helped children get a sense of "Sustenance." The Day of Atonement (Lev.23, Num. 29) gave the sense of "Forgiveness" and Tabernacles (Lev.23; Num. 29; Deut. 16) gave the sense of "Exodus"– on how God brought them out from the Egypt. The Israelites believed that those endless, repeated cycles of week and year shaped the faith of the Mosaic community. This is reminding and shaping the children's faith to know they are a chosen people and God as creator and redeemer as they participate in those community festival or rituals (Richards 1983, 20-21).

Bunge and Wall mention that "reading the scripture, praying, singing hymns, worshiping and serving poor" are common practices of ritual (2009, 87). The rituals are able to help children to get close with God. Along this vein, Reimer and Furrow found in their research that children have a sense or are able to feel God's divine closeness (2001, 16). In their study, a girl disclosed to them that when she had bad dreams, God was sleeping next to her and helping her from night terror (Reimer and Furrow 2001, 16). In

the research of Ovwigho and Cole, a boy named Francis found that reading the Bible provides him a sense of faith in God (2010, 103). According to these stories, rituals like praying, listening to sermon, singing and reading the Bible are able to help the children to close with God.

The researcher remembers that during her childhood years, her teachers taught her Bible verses, Bible stories, prayers, and songs in Sunday School. Through these processes, her teachers taught her about how God loves the children and what God expects from them. When the children hear these statements often, these truths will usually stay in their memory.

The rituals are not only giving the children a sense of closeness with God, they are also molding them to become a better Christian and helping the child's faith become firm. There are a lot of rituals in the Christian community; baptism and communion are the most popular (Argyle 2002, 1). May and others agree that, "these rituals were also means of teaching children and keeping the memory of God's mighty acts alive for all the people" (May and others 2005, 35). Argyle asserts that ritual could "enhance faith" (2002, 1).

In Myanmar, Christians keep the practice of rituals such as Palm Sunday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Palm Sunday, and the Lord's Supper, all of which Christians practice in different places. On those days, parents and adults bring their children to the church and all of the family members participate together on those special days. These experiences provided children with the opportunity to participate in church's ritual, enhancing their faith in God. By participating in these rituals, the church shapes the mindset of the children to God. These gatherings helped children develop a deep sense of

identity. According to May and other authors, “children can learn and those rituals make sense to the children; who they are, what their religion is, what their relationship with God is and how God loves them. Through these repeated rituals, they grasped what they were ready to learn as they grew and developed” (May and others 2005, 36).

Additionally, participation in the church’s rituals will help the children will feel closer with God. The child’s minds are molded toward becoming a better Christian and helping them cling to their religion and have their faith strengthened. Westerhoff believes that “to transmit faith to the next generation is to include them as participants in all the community’s rituals” (2000, 55). For children to have faith, letting them participate in rituals is essential.

#### Nurturing Children’s Faith by Providing Experiences for Spiritual Growth

People are learning inactively through the experiences which could transform and shape their lives. Westerhoff affirms, “For faith, it is therefore especially important to acknowledge that the most significant and fundamental form of learning is experience” (2000, 61). One cannot only teach about faith; one of the ways to have faith is learning from experiences. Webb explains, “This reflection on the experience step is the climax in this process of learning of experiences. Reflection is kind of thinking, including what I have learned, how I might perform in the real life with this new skills or new product and in which specific situation I might use this new skill” (Webb 2018). In this reflection step the children will arrange their learning outcome, and plan to be able to use it in a similar situation. If the children do not have time to reflect, the end product of this learning process will be anticlimactic as they will not learn anything from their experience.

Those processes are how the children learn from experiences. In the steps of searching the good of others, sometimes children directly seek the goodness of God. Stonehouse and May emphasize that the children found “God who is great and good” and they knew that God is always with them at every situation, every place and every time (2010, 37-38). Children feel God’s presence in their experiences. In 1962, a North Carolina girl saw God’s presence in her isolated time. She said, “I was all alone, and those people (segregationists) were screaming, and suddenly I saw God smiling, and I smiled” (Haight 1998, 215). The researcher can relate with that girl, how she felt lonely and sad because she did not have friends and felt all had abandoned her. However, she was able to experience God’s presence and certainly could feel safe, loved and have peace in her mind.

Stonehouse and May, in their research asked Amber (age seven) to describe God’s presence. Amber recalled that when she had nightmare; she said “all of a sudden I felt like God was going right behind me” and she felt like God gave her a hug (Stonehouse and May 2010, 42). Furthermore, children know “whether the surrounding circumstances are good or bad, whether our focus is on God or other things, God is with us” (Stonehouse and May 2010, 42). Children seek God when they feel happy, sad, worrisome, lonely, scary, and stressed and they find love, peace, safe, and comfort from God through their experiences. Likewise, when the child get answers from God for what they pray for, it will also make their faith firm in God (Engebreston 2006, 342). Those experiences will lead them to a faith firm in God. From these examples, one can surmise that when children feel that God is around them, they think everything in their world is fine.

In addition, Moskaliuk et al. said that, “people can get an idea from another person (learn from others), test it in their own situation, and evaluate how well the idea fits their practice” (2016). For that reason, Westerhoff challenges that we need “to bring our experiences and offer them to others in our church under the judgment and inspiration of the Gospel” (2000, 59). In this concept the children will be able to learn and have some idea from an adult’s experience, without having to face difficult situations themselves. This kind of help and support to the children will help provide benefits for their life.

#### Nurturing Children’s Faith by the Actions of the Environment

Brewster says that faith is “nurtured through affirmation, a caring environment and the example and modelling of trust on the part of adults” (2011, 115). In this study, the researcher focused on how the actions of the environment are important for the children’s faith formation. When it comes to how environment is defined, it includes all of those who are surrounding the children.

The story of the prophet Samuel is an example on how environment affects the faith of a child. Samuel’s parents went year after year to worship the Lord God at Shiloh. Samuel is blessed with good parents who were devoted people to the Lord, especially his mother, Hannah, who was faithful to her promise with God. Samuel was trained and grew up as his mother promised to God. He was trained by the priest, Eli. In this way, Samuel grew up and developed in the path of God’s will and later became a useful servant of God. This relates to what Yust said: “Children have two important strengths operating for them as they learn about the world and their role in it: keen observational powers and imagination” (2004, 23). Indeed, having a good environment is beneficial. “Children

relate to characters and images they see frequently and therefore recognize as familiar” (Yust 2004, 23-27). Most of the characteristics and behaviors are molded in their childhood through observations from their environment. Dorothy Law Nolte reminds us in this poem entitled, “Children Learn What They Live:”

If a child lives with criticism, he learns to condemn.  
 If a child lives with hostility, he learns to fight  
 If a child lives with ridicule, he learns to be shy.  
 If a child lives with tolerance, he learns to be patient.  
 If a child lives with encouragement, he learns to confidence.  
 If a child lives with praise, he learns to appreciate.  
 If a child lives with fairness, he learns to justice.  
 If a child lives with security, he learns to faith.  
 If a child lives with approval, he learns to himself.  
 If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he learns to find love in the world (Dorothy Nolte; cited in Brewster 2005, 20).

These statements illustrate the important role of environment in the area of the childhood years. By the same token, Bronfenbrenner believes that, “Different kinds of settings give rise to distinctive patterns of role, activity and relation for persons who become participants in these settings” (1979, 109). “In their mysterious and wonderful minds, children observe, absorb and apply a tremendous amount of information from their earliest moments” (Stafford and Merrill 2005, 25). Children are observing and learning from people around them. Baring, in his research on children’s concept of God, found that, “in their life of faith, their parents are positively identified as having a special impact upon them in terms of knowing God” (Baring 2012, 285). The action of environment is essential for the children’s developing faith processes. Yust says “the experiences young children have, the images they see, and the stories they hear become long-lasting frameworks on which they construct their perceptions of reality” (2004, 28).

The actions of the people around the child's environment will play an important role on the growth of their faith.

### **Summary**

Children are gifts from the Lord. Both the Old and the New Testaments attest to the fact that children are important in God's sight. In particular, orphaned children matter to God. He has commanded the congregation of Israel and even Christians today, to take care of orphans. In relation to the growth of faith, there are processes that can be done so children can develop. Having faith is essential for the Christian life. Spirituality is "an expression of faith" (Natsis 2017, 297). For this reason, having faith is crucial for the child's spiritual life. To have faith, the children have "to live with a sense of dependent openness; to explore, look, hear, taste and smell" (Westerhoff 1980, 19). Churches, homes, and in this research, the Kachin Orphanage Center, can make a difference in the growth of faith in children.

This chapter presented the related literature and studies on children and the various processes and settings that help them grow in their faith. The next chapter will discuss the methodology and procedures of the study.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES**

This study explores whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center. This chapter is going to discuss the method of the study, sources of research data, research-gathering procedures, instruments used in data gathering, and treatment of data.

#### **Method of the Study**

This thesis is qualitative in nature and descriptive in design. Qualitative research involves a rich collection of data from various sources to gain a deeper understanding of individual participants, including their opinions, perspectives, and attitudes (Nassaji 2015, 130). In addition, qualitative research allows the researcher to get rich descriptions from the respondents (Merriam and Tisdell 2016, 17). Qualitative interviewing, which is the method for this research, begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful and knowable and can be made explicit” (Patton 2015, 426). The goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. Furthermore, descriptive design is “more concerned with *what* rather than *how* or *why* something has happened” (Nassaji 2015, 130). In view of these, this research design is appropriate for this current study since its purpose is to whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center. In this study, the respondents shared their experiences through writing their personal journal (see Appendix B for the Prompts and Questions in Writing the

Personal Journal) as well as by conversing with the researcher (see Appendix C for the Interview Protocol and Guide Questions).

For the strategies in promoting validity and reliability of data, the researcher employed two methods, namely; triangulation and member checks (Merriam 2009, 229). According to Merriam and Tisdell, the triangulation method is the process of “comparing and cross-checking data collected from people with different perspectives or from follow-up interviews with the same people” (2016, 245). Through semi-structured interviews with the respondents as well as analysis from their journals, the researcher was able to find emerging themes for in-depth understanding of the respondents’ lived experiences. In addition, the researcher also employed member checks by taking data and tentative interpretations back to the respondents from whom they were derived (Merriam 2009, 229). The researcher included in the letter that she will do follow-up interviews if there are parts of the interview that need more explanation (see Appendix E for the Letter to the Pastor).

### **Sources of Data**

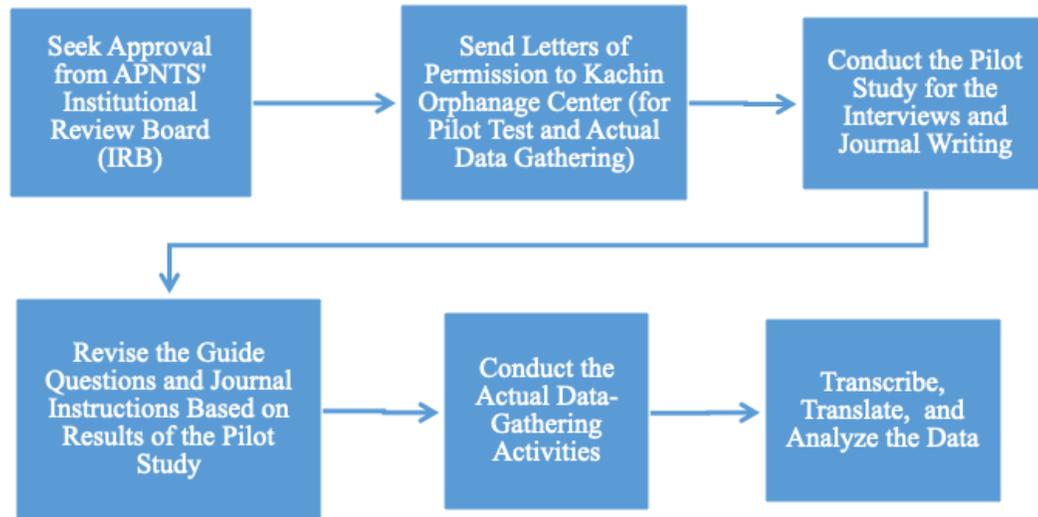
The data came from two sources, namely, (1) responses of the 10 children from the semi-structured interviews, and (2) journal of these same children. The researcher interviewed 10 selected children through a purposive sampling technique. The purposive sampling “enables the researcher to select respondents to suit the purposes of the study” (Johnson and Christensen 2000, 175). The researcher selected the respondents according to the following criteria. The first criterion is: the child should be registered in the Kachin Orphanage Center (KOC) in Laiza, Myanmar, for at least two years before the conduct of the study. The second criterion is the child should be between 11 and 15 years old. Piaget

and Inhelder mentioned that at this stage, “children are less egocentric than earlier and able to understand other points of view in their communication. At the age of twelve, they think in abstract and more logical terms. Their ability of thinking is more systematic, developing hypotheses about why something is happening that way” (1969, 98). Furthermore, Wilhoit and Dettoni assert that children who are 11 and above can think logically and their cognitive development is already appropriate to articulate their perception on Christian faith and their relationship with God more fully (1995, 54). The last criterion is: the child should have undergone the “Naming Ceremony.” This ceremony is the time when the church accepts the child as a Christian and dedicates the child’s life to God.

The second source of the data came from the respondents’ personal journal. In the personal journal, the respondents contemplated on their experiences with God as well as with the people and activities at the Orphanage in light of the prompts and guide questions that the researcher provided. These prompts served as suggestions to the respondents. They had the freedom to write about other reflections they have, but the guidelines are there in response to the research questions in the current study. These written data are used in supporting the interview responses to fulfil the objectives of the study.

### **Research-Gathering Procedures**

The following steps are the data gathering procedures for this study. The researcher followed these processes to accomplish the objectives of the research.



**Figure 3: The Process of Data Gathering**

The first step of the study was the application of approval of the research methodology from the Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS) Institutional Review Board (See Approval in Appendix D). This is important for the protection of the rights and privacy of the respondents.

The second step of the study dealt with sending the letters of permission to the Pastor and the Principal of the KOC (Appendix E and Appendix F respectively). These letters included the information for the conduct of the pilot test as well as the actual data gathering. In the letter to the Principal, the researcher asked him for assistance on the conduct of both interviews and journal writing. The Principal agreed, and the researcher scheduled a time for a short orientation on how these activities will be done.

The third step of the study is the conduct of the pilot test. Polit and Beck state that, “the pilot study can be used as a small-scale version or trial run in preparation for the major study” (2001, 467). Respondents for the pilot test will come from the same Orphanage Center. The following are the criteria in selecting the respondents for the pilot

test: (1) the child should be registered in the KOC in Laiza, Myanmar, for at least two years before the conduct of the study; (2) the child should be between 11 and 15 years old; and (3) the child should have undergone the “Naming Ceremony.” The responses of the participants of the pilot test are not included in the actual research data, instead they were used to strengthen the guide questions and the guidelines for writing the journal. The pilot test’s goal is if the participants are confused and find the guide questions and prompts difficult to understand, the researcher will revise and improve the tools (step four of the study). For the pilot test, the researcher interviewed the participants for about 30 to 45 minutes. The participants of the pilot test were a 12-year-old girl and 14-year-old boy. Both participants understood all the questions and were able to answer accordingly. The researcher also gave them time to write their at least one journal entry for one week.

The fifth step of the study is the conduct of the research activities. The researcher interviewed each child for about 30-45 minutes through Facebook video call with the help of the Principal of the orphanage. The Principal of the KOC signed a “Commitment to Maintain Confidentiality” (Appendix G) and 10 of the respondents signed “Assent Form for Participants Below 18 Years Old” (Appendix I) . In this Facebook video call conversation, the researcher exercised friendliness to the children. The researcher did not want the children to feel uncomfortable. The researcher made sure there was a secure and comfortable place for the respondents to freely share their experiences, sentiments, and feelings. The researcher was able to secure permission from the participants to record the video call. After conducting the interview, the researcher gave instructions to the child on how to write the personal journal. The researcher shared with them the sample (see

Appendix H for the Sample of Personal Journal) and the researcher also told them that they can ask the Principal of the KOC if they have questions.

Finally, after all the data gathering processes were completed, all the interview recordings and personal journals were transcribed. The interviews were done in Kachin language and the researcher translated everything to English. The researcher then did the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the data using Max Qualitative Data Analysis software (MAXQDA).

### **Data-Gathering Instruments**

The semi-structured interviews and personal journals were used as the main instruments in this study. For the semi-structured interviews, the questions were divided into four segments (Appendix C). The first segment is about the respondent's profile which includes their age, sex, education, number of years of being a Christian, and number of years at KOC. These demographic characteristics simply served as background information and the researcher did not use these variables as a means of contrasting or comparing data among various respondents. The second segment is about how the rituals and how these influence or do not influence the process of the respondents' developing faith. The third segment is about the experiences of the respondents at the center and how these experiences help or not help them in their faith development. Lastly, the fourth segment is about whether or not the actions of the people in the children's environment impact their faith development.

For the journal, the researcher asked the respondents to write at least one journal entry each week for one month. Bashan and Holsblat state that using a journal as a method of research is helping to get details about the respondent's feelings and

perceptions (2017, 4). The researcher agrees with Bashan and Holsblat because of the researcher's personal experiences. When the researcher was not able to express her feelings to other people, writing in her journal has helped her sort through her feelings. April Anne Fallaria wrote a thesis entitled, "The Use of Mobile Apps by Selected Millennial of Victory Christian Fellowship Ortigas to Facilitate Religious Practices" (2019). She used the "digital diary" as a method of data collection. In the digital diary, the respondents did voice recordings on how they use their apps according to the guide questions every day for a week (Fallaria 2019, 33). Fallaria was able to gather qualitative data from the research participants through this medium. In this study, the respondents were asked to write and share their experiences that they faced within those weeks. They were asked to follow some guidelines on what to write in this personal journal. The guidelines of the journal writing revolved around the questions posed in the current study.

### **Treatment of Data**

The researcher conducted all interviews using Kachin language. The respondents also wrote in their journals using this language. All of the data were transcribed and translated into English. After transcribing interviews and personal journals, the researcher read the transcriptions and took memos and notes about the participants' responses in order to organize the data gathered based on the research questions. For the qualitative analysis, the researcher used two approaches; coding and condensation. First, the researcher "coded" the respondents' words, phrases, and sentences both from the interview transcripts as well as from the respondents' journals using MAXQDA. Second, the researcher did "condensation," or "look" for natural meaning units and explicating the main themes of the interview and journal transcripts (Steinar and Svend 2009, 203).

Finally, themes from the data gathered were analyzed following the research questions (profile, rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment) with the use of the diagrams that were generated from MAXQDA (version 2020).

This chapter presented the methodology of the research. Chapter IV presents, analyzes, and interprets the data gathered from the responses of the selected children from Kachin Orphanage Center.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

The goal of this study is to explore whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in the Kachin Orphanage Center. This chapter is going to present, analyze, and interpret the data gathered through semi-structured interviews and personal journals. The presentation of data analysis, interpretation and presentation follows the order of the sub-questions. All the respondents were given pseudonyms for their privacy and protection of their identity.

#### **Demographic Characteristics of the Participants**

This section discusses the background information of the respondents: age, sex, education, number of years of being a Christian, and number of years of staying in the Kachin Orphanage Center (KOC). There were 10 respondents in this study; five males and five females who are between 11 to 15 years of age. In this study, the number of years of being a Christian was counted depending on the time when the respondent had undergone the “Naming Ceremony,” until the time the study was conducted (December 2020 - January 2021). This Ceremony is time when the church accepts the child as a Christian and dedicates the child’s life to God.

**Table 1: Summary of the Respondents Demographic Characteristics**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Education</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Number of Years of Being Christian</b>	<b>Number of Years of Staying In KOC</b>
Lu Lu	11	Grade 6	Female	11	4
Gam Gam	12	Grade 7	Male	12	4
Tu Tu	13	Grade 7	Male	13	7
Tang Tang	13	Grade 7	Male	10	7
Htu Htu	14	Grade 7	Female	14	7
Kai Kai	14	Grade 6	Female	14	3
La La	14	Grade 7	Male	14	5
Kaw Kaw	15	Grade 10	Female	15	6
Roi Roi	15	Grade 9	Female	15	7
Naw Naw	15	Grade 8	Male	15	3

As shown in Table 1, the respondent's ages are between 11 and 15. Among the 10 respondents, there is one 11-year-old (Lu Lu); one 12-year-old (Gam Gam); two 13-year-olds (Tu Tu and Tang Tang); three 14-year-olds (Htu Htu, Kai Kai, and La La); and three 15-year-olds (Kaw Kaw, Roi Roi, and Naw Naw). There are older children (8 out of 10) between ages 13 and 15 in this study, and the younger ones (2 out of 10) who are 12 years below. In the analysis of data, the researcher did not do any comparison of the age groups because the respondent's age gap is not so huge, i.e., 11 to 15 for contrast or any significant differences in their aspect of development.

As shown in Table 1, the selected respondent's represent grades six to ten. There are two respondents (Lu Lu and Kai Kai) who are grade 6 students; five respondents (Htu Htu, Gam Gam, La La, Tu Tu and Tang Tang) in grade 7; one (Naw Naw) in grade 8; one (Roi Roi) in grade 9; and one (Kaw Kaw) in grade 10. The highest number of respondents (5 out of 10) is in grade 7, and the rest are from the other grade levels.

The respondent's number of years of being a Christian corresponds to the time when they had their Naming Ceremony. The church holds this Naming Ceremony

between two to five months after the child's birth. For this reason, the respondents' number of years of being Christians are almost the same with their ages except for Tang Tang. He is currently 13 years old; his number of years of being Christian is 10 years because his parents as well as his paternal grandparents were animists before coming to KOC. But by the grace of God, when he was three years old, his parents accepted Jesus as their savior. And his Naming Ceremony was conducted in that year. Therefore, Tang Tang's number of years of being a Christian is 10 years.

As the researcher described in Chapter III, the criteria for the respondent's length of time staying in the Kachin Orphanage Center should be at least two years. In this study, the respondent's number of years of being at KOC is between three to seven years. Two respondents, namely Kai Kai and Naw Naw, have been staying in KOC for three years; two research participants, namely Lu Lu and Gam Gam have been staying in KOC for four years; one respondent, La La, has been staying in KOC for five years; another one, Kaw Kaw, has been staying in KOC for six years; and four respondents, namely Roi Roi, Htu Htu, Tu Tu and Tang Tang, have been staying in KOC for seven years. There are more respondents (4 out of 10 in frequency count) who spent the biggest number of years (six years) in KOC.

To summarize the demographic profile of the respondent's when it comes to age, there are more older kids (13 and above); in reference to grade level, half of the number of the respondents are in grade 7; as to gender, there is a balance between girls and boys (five girls and five boys); in reference to the number of years of being a Christian, the average number is 13.2 years; and as to the number of years of staying at KOC, the average is 4.6 years with four older children staying at the center for at least seven years each.

### **The Selected Orphaned Children's Perspective on the Rituals and its Effect on Their Faith Development**

The researcher investigated the kinds of rituals that are celebrated at KOC throughout the year, and whether or not those rituals help the children cultivate a better relationship with God, mold their minds to become a better Christian, or help their faith be more established. The information in this section was gathered through semi-structured interviews and the respondent's personal journals.

#### Kinds of the Rituals Celebrated in the Kachin Orphanage Center

The respondents mentioned various kinds of rituals that they participated in at KOC. Table 2 presents the rituals that were conducted throughout the year that the selected children mentioned which are: Communion, remembrance prayer service, confession prayer service, Bible Sunday service, Sunday School service, fasting, New Year service, Easter, spiritual renewal, Sunday service, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and morning and night devotionals (M & N).

**Table 2: Kinds of Rituals Celebrated in KOC According to the Respondents**

Rituals	Kaw	Lu	Roi	Htu	Kai	Gam	Naw	La	Tu	Thang	Total
Christmas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	10
Thanksgiving	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9
Bible Sunday Service			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		6
M & N Devotional	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	6
Fasting Prayer Service			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		5
New year Service			✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	5
Sunday Service		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓			5
Confession P. Service							✓	✓	✓		3
Remembrance Service							✓		✓		2
Easter			✓						✓		2
Spiritual Ren. Service		✓							✓		2
Communion								✓			1
Sunday School Service					✓						1

Table 2 shows that Christmas (mentioned 10 times) and Thanksgiving (mentioned nine times) seemed to make an impact on the respondents. It appears that all the respondents mentioned it and they indicated that Christmas gave them a sense of joy. Kaw Kaw and Lu Lu said that Christmas is their favorite program. Kaw Kaw shared, “Christmas is my favorite program because Christmas drama was different from others. It made me joyful, and I felt like Jesus was really born in my mind” (Interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020). For Lu Lu, when the researcher asked her why she loves Christmas, she responded, “I could see everyone’s happiness. We all wore smiles on our faces and got joyful in our mind on that night” (Interview with Lu Dec 22, 2020).” For many Christians in Myanmar, both Christmas and Thanksgiving are huge celebrations. These activities usually involve a lot of preparation like cooking, church decoration, and special participation from many people in the church community. This might probably one of the reasons why these two rituals ranked the highest in the perception of the respondents.

The third highest-ranked rituals are Bible Sunday service, and morning and night devotion services (mentioned by six respondents). Bible Sunday service was mentioned as a favourite program by Htu Htu. She said, “My favourite is the program that is held on Bible Sunday night, that is a competition program which includes reciting Bible verses and acting out dramas from the Bible stories as well as dramas we created on our own (Htu Dec 26, 2020). It appears that children seemed to enjoy and prefer programs (rituals) that allow them to use their talents. These rituals involved multiple activities like studying the Bible as well as worshipping God, among others. This is related to what Bunge and Wall stated in their book, *Children and Childhood in World Religion*, “Reading the

scripture, praying, singing hymns, and worshipping” are common practices of ritual (2009, 87) and the activities mentioned by the respondents involved these elements.

Interestingly, the children mentioned at least three rituals that specifically involved prayer, namely: (1) fasting prayer service (five out of 10); (2) confession prayer (three out of 10); and (3), the remembrance prayer service which two out of 10 children mentioned. Naw Naw and La La mentioned that confession prayer service is their favorite because that service could give them the chance of confessing their mistakes and they got the feeling of relief. Prayer is one of the opportunities where children are able to talk to God and this could be considered as a “faith-based activity.” Neimitz in her research in North-eastern China remarked that inspiring children to participate in “faith-based activities” could boost their faith development (2007, 113). It appears that the staff of KOC are allowing the children to experience this.

Easter Sunday was mentioned by two respondents. And both of them said that Easter Sunday was their favorite program because of the preaching touched their heart. Tu Tu said that, “Easter Sunday service is my favorite because the preaching on Easter Sundays is so relevant and touches my heart” (Interview with Tu Dec 26, 2020). And Roi Roi also shared that, “Easter Sunday is my favorite program; it reminds me of the death and resurrection of Jesus. I receive the love of Jesus, and I believe in Jesus, and I thank Him what he has done for me” (Interview with Roi Dec 23, 2020). Based on their responses, the preacher prepared the message well.

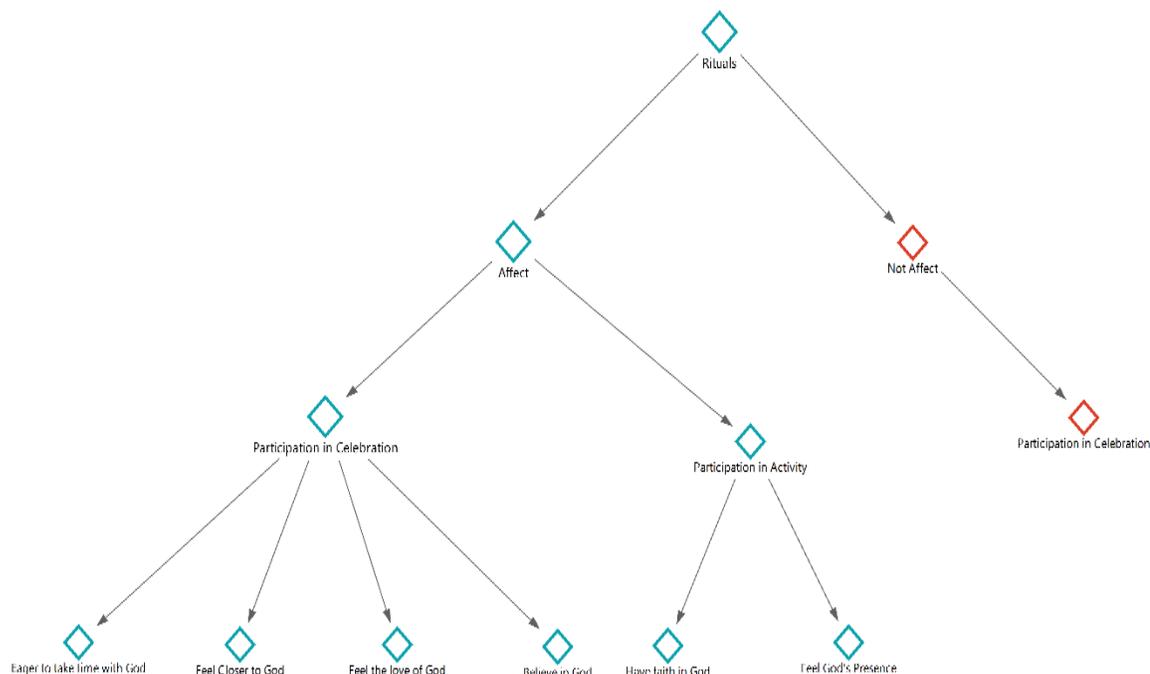
Both Communion and Sunday school services are mentioned by only one respondent, respectively. Concerning Communion, the Kachin Baptist Church only administers Communion to baptized believers. To be baptized, one should be at least 15

years old. The respondents of this current study are between 11 to 15, therefore, most of them cannot take Communion since they are not yet baptized. This probably contributed to the fact that most of the respondents did not mention Communion during the interviews. Concerning Sunday school, only one respondent mentioned it. In the interview, Kai Kai indicated that Sunday school “draws her closer to Christ.” She might be the respondent who mentioned Sunday school in Table 2. This implies that the staff of KOC would do well to make Sunday school more creative, meaningful, and interesting so children would perceive that this particular activity is impactful to their lives.

When the researcher looked into the journals of the respondents, one of the emerging themes on rituals was this: the programs conducted especially in December (holiday month) made an impact not just on the children’s faith development but also on their socio-emotional development. They wrote, that they had music, dancing training and some the talent competition program. All 10 of them wrote about how they thanked God for giving them the opportunity to learn, and how much they enjoyed learning music and dancing that could erase their stress. They have eager minds to learn music and dancing, and they want to become experts on these activities. When they mastered the dancing steps or the songs, the children wanted to share or teach these as a way to serve people. Here the researcher found the important thoughts of the respondents from their journals. They all have grateful minds to God, willingness to serve people, and according to Yust, those minds are a sign of having faith (Yust 2004, 13-19).

## Ways in Which Rituals Affect the Selected Children's Relationship with God

The MAXQDA map (hereafter referred to as Maxmap) below shows the ways in which rituals affect their relationship with God.



**Figure 4: The Respondents' Perceptions on the Ways Rituals Affect Their Relationship with God**

Figure 4 is a portrayal based on the interviews with the respondents on how rituals affected their relationship with God. There is only one square in “not affected” section (red color). The blue squares which represent the “affect” section included participation in the services/celebrations and participation in competitions (e.g. memorizing reciting Bible verses and others). Those programs are held mostly on the nights of Bible Sunday.

The respondents indicated that by participating in the rituals at KOC, they became eager to take time with God (what Kai Kai, Naw Naw, and La La mentioned), felt closer to God (mentioned by Kaw Kaw and Lala), felt the love of God (according to Htu Htu and Kai Kai), believe in God (mentioned by Kaw Kaw and La La), and felt the presence

of God and have faith in God (identified by Kaw Kaw). These are identified in the coding scheme by MAXQDA.

First, the respondents indicated that the rituals helped them become eager to take time with God. Kai Kai said that participating in the ceremonies encourages her walk with God and gives her passion to take time with God through prayer, reading the Bible and praising God. Naw Naw stated that he began to rely on God and read the scriptures more, pray more, and place God first in every situation that he faced. He said that is because he participates in the programs, services and celebrations that held at KOC. La La also shared his experience of participating in the morning devotional service and it how it changed him. He said, “My teacher encouraged us in the morning devotional service, and I can still remember those words she told us, that “we should come to God with all our body, mind, spirit so that God will accept, forgive, and bless us” (Interview with La Dec 23, 2020). Since that time, he wants to embrace God and wants to worship Him more. He spends more time in prayer and reading the word of God. However, Tang Tang has a different perception with others. He said, “to have a strong or firm faith, I think just hearing, seeing is not enough but our own experience is also important. But by participating in services and activities, I am encouraged and blessed by hearing testimonies, and sermons but it does not made my faith firm” (interview with Tang, Dec. 28, 2020). For this perceptive child, there is a need for more experiences with God and the people around him to develop his faith.

Second, the participants indicated that the rituals helped them feel closer to God. Kaw Kaw, in her interview shared her experience of participating in the services. It drew her to God and gave her a better relationship with God. She said, “I commit my day

during the morning devotions every day. By doing this, I have peace inside and confidence in my daily life because whatever I do, everything is positive, and I praise God for this. Sometimes I do not feel like committing my day and everything during the day is not positive. Therefore, I want to be close to God, walk with God more and commit my days to God” (interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020). La La indicated that by participating in the celebrations, they help him to get closer to God through sermons and the motivation of his teachers. In the research of Ovwigho and Cole, they found that rituals like praying, listening to sermons, singing and reading the Bible are able to help the children to get close with God (2010, 103). Getting close with God is vital to develop the children’s faith.

Third, the respondents shared that rituals helped them feel the love of God. Htu Htu shared about how she understood the love of God and this made her faith in God to be strong. Her relationship with God is stronger than before. She shared about that with an experience when “one night, I was sleepwalking and was about to fall from a ladder but, coincidentally, one of my sisters found me and saved me. Afterwards, I understood the sermons of the love God has for us, and I realized He is watching over me” (interview with Htu Dec 26, 2020). From that time, she resolved to pursue a better relationship with God. She continually said that if she did not participate in the services and had not heard about love of God, she would not be able to relate to and apply the word of God in her life. She felt that the worst thing that could ever happen to her would be if she never got to be in a good relationship with God. Kai Kai also shared a similar point with Htu Htu. She said that by participating in the celebrations at KOC, she knows more about God and she feels the love of God more deeply. These responses point to and agree with May et al.

when they said that the “rituals could give a sense of how God shows love to the children, and in that sense it can help to further develop their faith in God” (May et al, 2005, 36).

Fourth, the respondents perceived that the rituals helped them believe in God. In the interview, Kaw Kaw and La La had the same experiences and shared many of the same things. They said that sermons and the motivation of teachers helped them to believe more in God. They also felt that they can overcome times of trouble if God is with them. They realized that God can do anything. All they need is to come to God with a repentant heart and hold onto God.

Finally, rituals helped in feeling God’s presence and have faith in God. Kaw Kaw felt a sense of God’s presence when participating in the rituals and activities. She stated that she felt the presence of God when she participated in the competition in KOC. She shared:

Umm...at a Bible verse competition on a Bible Sunday night, I was nervous that I might forget what I had memorized and I prayed to be calm and for the presence of God to be with me. When I was on the stage I was totally calm and I was able to participate very well in the competition. It was because of my prayer and the presence of God was with me. From that time, I could feel that my level of belief in God is obviously increasing, and I had more faith in God than before (Interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020).

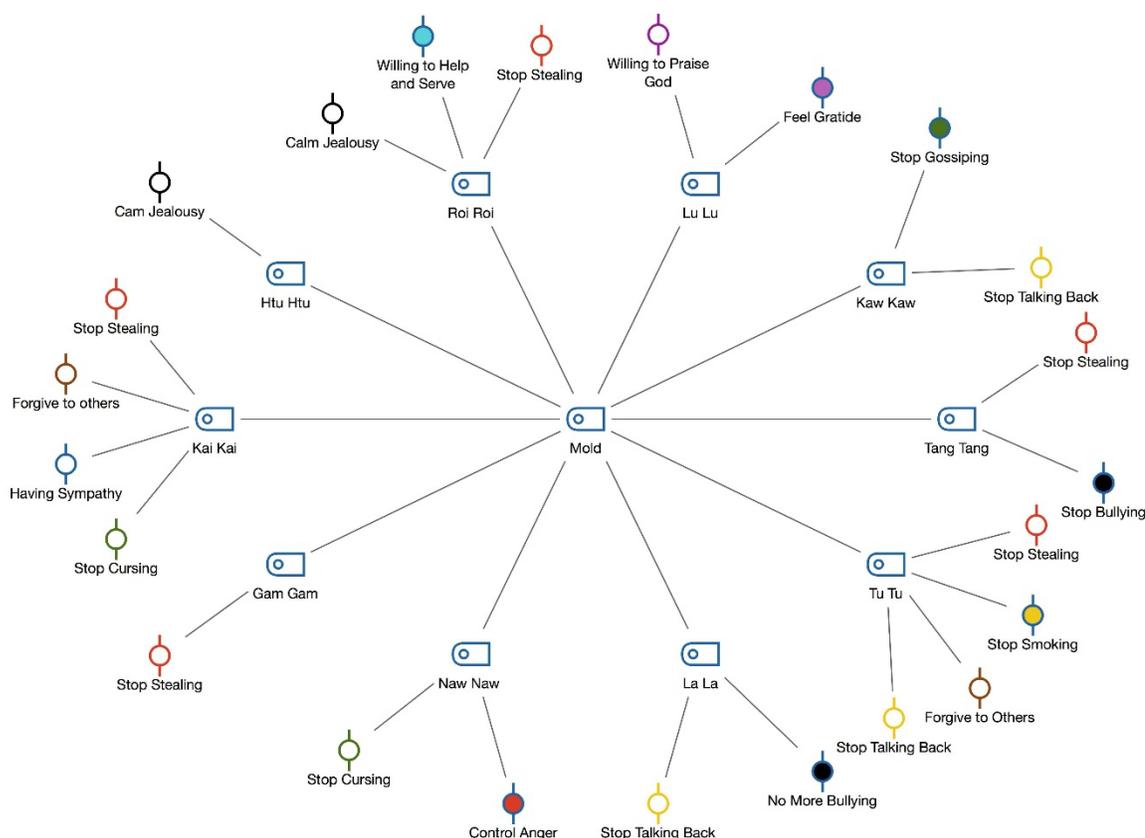
It is how she sensed the presence of God and developed her belief in God when she was participating in the rituals in KOC. In relation to this, Haight observed that children could feel God’s presence and it could boost their faith (Haight 1998, 215). This is evident in the experience of Kaw Kaw.

To sum up this section, all respondents had good responses to participating in the ritual celebrations except Tang Tang, in this study. Even though Tang Tang does not agree with the others, it can still be seen in the Figure 4 that the rituals “affect” (square is

bigger) than “not affect” square, which means the rituals did affect the children’s relationship with God which is reinforced by Argyle assertion that rituals could provide them with a firm relationship with God and “enhance faith” (2002, 1).

### Ways in which Rituals Mold the Selected Orphanage Children’s Minds to be Better Christians

In this section, the researcher asked, “Are there ritual ceremonies that mold your mind to be a better Christian? If Yes, in what way? If no, please explain.” The respondents indicated how they became better Christians by the rituals through participation in the programs, services, and celebrations in KOC.



**Figure 5: The Respondents’ Perceptions on the Ways Rituals Mold Their Minds to be Better Christians**

Figure 5 is a representation of the participants responses on how rituals molded their minds to become better Christians. It appears that children know the change in their behavior. They were able to identify these as “stop stealing,” “stop talking back,” “take away jealousy,” “a willingness to help and serve,” “forgiving others,” “stop cursing,” “stop bullying,” “stop gossiping,” “feeling gratitude,” “willing to praise God,” “having sympathy,” “controlling anger,” and “stop smoking.”

Interestingly, the following are specific rituals that facilitated these changes: (1) prayer and worship activities (Naw Naw, who said that he used to curse and was short-tempered); and (2) daily devotions (Kaw Kaw, who indicated that she used to steal and say bad words; Tu Tu, who used to smoke and steal; Tang Tang, who used to steal, bully, and fight with his friends; and Kai Kai—now learned how to forgive; Gam Gam, who stole a bicycle; and Lala who used to bully others). These respondents were able to think about their past bad habits and how participation in the center’s rituals helped them become better Christians. Changing bad habits of the past could take time (Holst 2021, n.p.). Christians still have the fallen nature, and that habits need to be trained through hearing, listening, and practicing. This implies that the prayer and worship activities, the teaching, guidance of the teacher and staff in the daily devotions helped the development of spiritual growth among the respondents.

One of the most noticeable things in the interviews was the experience of most respondents in “stealing.” It has to be noted that children who come to the orphanage came from different backgrounds. Most of these children are talking about “stealing” because Laiza is located near the border of China where drugs and drinks are practiced by many people (Chin 2007, n.p.). Thus, this phenomenon might have affected the families

of children who eventually came to KOC. These children became orphans with no relatives to rebuke them before they came to KOC; however, based on the responses of the children, the rituals held at KOC are effectively influencing them, guiding them to get on the right path that God wants them to travel.

#### Ways in which the Rituals Work on the Selected Orphaned Children's Lives so Their Faith Becomes Firm

The respondents shared how the rituals worked in their lives so their faith became firm and rooted in God. Roi Roi, Kai Kai, Naw Naw, and La La indicated how their faith became rooted because of their active participation in the rituals at KOC. The following are their statements:

- Roi Roi: “By participating in the services in KOC, I found the answers to the questions I had. My doubts about God are gone and my faith got stronger.”
- Kai Kai: “I came to accept Christ in my deepest mind, and I have more confidence in my faith in Him. My relationship with God is getting stronger than before.”
- Naw Naw: “I am touch with God and I feel that my relationship with God is healthy.”
- La La: “Yes I am a Christian. I, however, did not know and love God before, but by participating in the ceremonies, I came to know and love God. It has made my faith firm.”

Their responses resonated what Westerhoff and Richards wrote about. Westerhoff said that rituals can reveal the understanding of the Christian faith (2000, 54-58) and Richards observed that rituals could give opportunities for children to make their faith firm (1983, 20). However, Tang Tang has the opposite idea all of them. He shared his opinion that he did not have a good relationship with God, and that his faith did not increase by participating in the celebrations at KOC. He said, “By participating in the

services and activities I am encouraged and blessed by hearing testimonies and sermons, but it does not change my faith. I did not have a special relationship with God because I only heard when they were preaching and after that, I forgot it all” (interview with Tang Dec 26, 2020). This implies that individual attention to children’s needs is imperative (Grubb 2013, n.p.). The teachers might be having great results with some students but there are those few children who would need more attention.

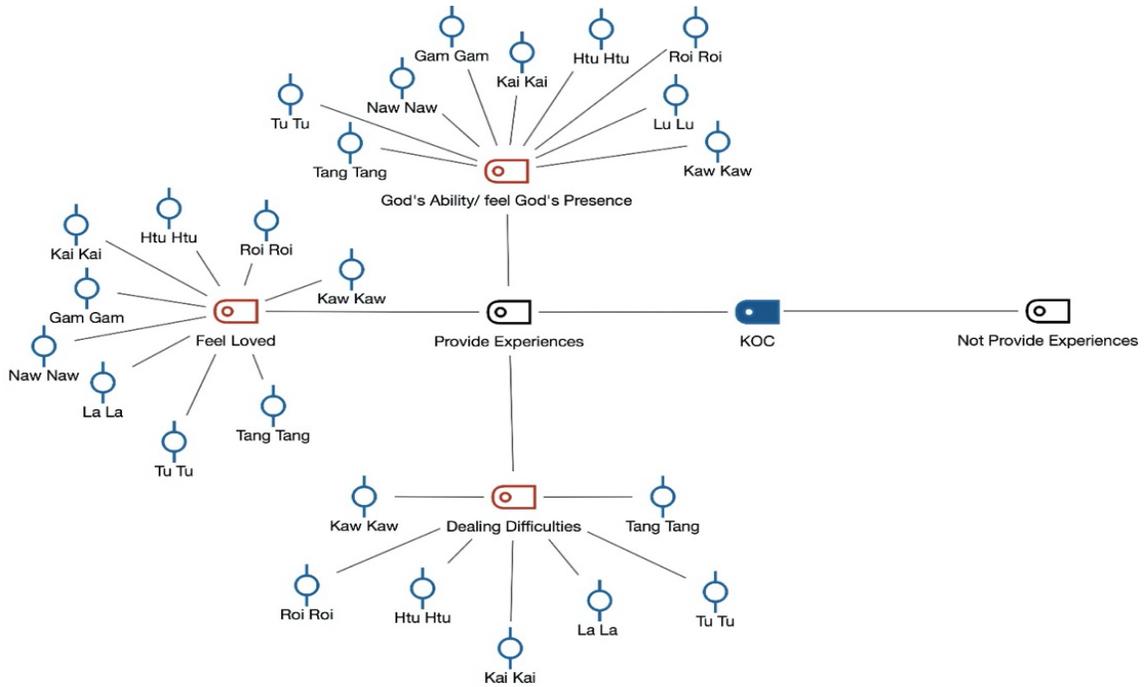
Based on most of the respondent’s answers, the rituals worked well in their lives by making their faith more firm. In addition, the rituals are not only helping the child’s faith become stronger, but is also giving them a closer relationship with God as they are being molded to become a better person (May and others 2005, 35).

### **The Understanding of the Selected Orphaned Children on How Their Experiences Influence Their Faith Development**

This section deals with whether or not the experiences of the children in KOC influenced their faith development. The researcher explored four parts to get this result. In the first part, the researcher explored whether or not the center provided experiences which led the children to feel God’s presence. The second part is whether or not the children’s experiences at the center provided them with love when they needed it. The third part is whether or not the children’s experiences in the center show them that God provides for them in their times of need. The fourth and last part is whether or not the center provided experiences for the children to learn how to deal with difficult situations.

Based on what the respondents shared, the researcher was able to document via Maxmap their experiences. As seen in Figure 3 below, the full blue color represents KOC. The left side refers to “provides experiences” while the right side refers to “not

provide experiences.” After gathering data from the respondents, the researcher found that their responses to Sub-problems E and D which say respectively, “In what ways do their experiences in the center show or not show them that God provides for them in their times of need” and “In what ways does the center provide or not provide experiences for the children to deal with difficult situations,” are related, which is why the researcher combined them. The reason for that is seen in Figure 3 below; there are only three subdivisions (orange color) in the “provides experiences” side; namely: “God’s ability/feel God’s presence,” “feel loved and dealing the difficulties,” these are what the researcher explored to get the result for the research question two. The circle shape with blue color represents the names of the respondents.



**Figure 6: Ways that KOC Provides Experiences to Feel God’s Presence**

### Ways in which KOC Provides Experiences so the Children feel God's Presence

The respondents mostly talked about how they feel God's presence and understand God's abilities, because they believe God listens to their prayers and provides what they needed in the KOC. Kaw Kaw shared about how she got the sense of God's presence through her experiences. When she got sick and missed her family so much she did not actually pray, but mumbled to God that she misses them so much. The next morning, her grandmother and sibling unexpectedly called her on the phone and it cured her both her homesickness and loneliness. She stated, "I am really thankful to God because I feel that He listens and granted me my desire, and I really feel His presence" (Interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020). Roi Roi also shared the same thoughts as Kaw Kaw. She said, "When I miss my grandma so much, I prayed to God that He will let me speak with my grandma. Amazingly, my grandma contacted me through the center's phone." She stated that was God's response to her prayer. It made her feel more assured that God is watching over her. Kai Kai also mentioned about how she feels God's existence. When COVID-19 was spreading, all schools were suspended. At the center, teachers and students prayed every day in their devotional services. Kai Kai and her friend discussed it and agreed to pray together in their personal devotions. They prayed, "God, if you really exist, allow us to go to school" (interview with Kai Dec 28, 2020). Before too long, the school was re-opened, and they could study again. That was how she believed that God is real and listened to their prayer. Naw Naw too shared some same experiences with Kai Kai. He also prayed for the school to re-open soon, and he got the answer from God. Those experiences (receiving answers to their prayers) can help the children's faith develop (Engebreston 2006, 342).

Tu Tu, Tang Tang and Htu Htu also revealed that they experienced God's abilities by being healed when they got injured while at the KOC. Tu Tu shared that he grew up in a Christian family but he did not think much about Christianity or God, especially after his parents passed away. When he arrived in the center, he injured one of his feet and it kept getting worse. It was much worse than he expected, but he did not tell anyone because he thought he could endure it. But the injury got infected and became even worse and he eventually had to tell his teacher. He had heard that some people had to have their leg amputated because of the infection, and he was afraid this would happen to him. His teachers prayed for him and encouraged him to pray with faith. He began to pray with faith, and in time his leg was healed. From that time on, he feels and understands more about God and God's abilities. Htu Htu also shared her experience of how God healed her when she sustained a serious head injury and lost lots of blood after being attacked by a wild bull. The entire center was praying for her and she herself prayed for God to heal her. By the grace of God, the surgery was successful, and her life was saved even though she still suffered pain. She kept on praying and the teachers and her friends also prayed for her. After a month she was feeling better and she praised God for His healing. Tang Tang also shared about his experiences when he felt God's help. He shared that just before examination day he was trying to do revisions on his lessons. He could not concentrate on his studies and was very angry because he could not concentrate, therefore he cried. While he was crying, his teacher invited him to the prayer room and told him to calm himself and shared with him that God can do all things. The teacher asked him if he believed that God can do anything. He replied yes. The teacher and he prayed together, and he went back to his study room. After that he could concentrate on his studies and he

was happy. He gives thanks to God because God helped him when he needed it the most. Those are such good experiences that make their relationships with God much more special than before. These are the answers they received when the respondents prayed and those experiences lifted their faith. For this, Engebreston stated that when the children get answers from God for what they pray for, it will also make their faith firm in God (Engebreston 2006, 342).

Lu Lu and Gam Gam shared that they felt God's presence and believed in God's abilities from others' testimonies in KOC. At the KOC, they must take turns in leading devotions. Lu Lu said, "A friend of mine was sold to China, but she prayed to God and God freed her from the bad people. By hearing her testimony, I only want to embrace God because He is the only God I can depend on." Gam Gam also shared:

When my teacher went to study in India, he was having a hard time speaking English and everything related to her studies was very hard. He put his trust in God and kept studying. Later, he was able to communicate to everyone in English fluently, and finished his studies in India. As my teacher was sharing and encouraging us, I realized that God can do everything. He can give us wisdom. I believe that God will give me wisdom too (Interview with Gam Dec 21, 2020).

This is what they learned from others' experiences. Moskaliuk and other authors said that "people can get an idea from another person (learn from others), test it in their own situation, and evaluate how well the idea fits their practice" (2016). Likewise, Westerhoff also argued that, "to bring our experiences and offer them to others in our church under the judgment and inspiration of the Gospel" (2000, 59). In seeing this, children learn and get ideas not only from their own experiences but also from others' experiences. Actual experience is important; however, reflection is crucial because, in this reflection step the children will arrange their learning outcome, and plan to be able to

use it in a similar situation. Many children will not learn in actual experiences without having reflection.

### How the Experiences in KOC Provide Love when They Feel Abandoned

The selected orphaned children tell about how they feel loved at KOC. There are two ways; some said they felt loved from the teachers some said they felt loved by friends in KOC. Nine out of 10 of the respondents mentioned about they are loved by the teachers because their teachers encourage them when they feel lonely and are discouraged. Roi Roi shared that when she failed an exam and she was depressed, her teachers encouraged her instead of scolding her. Her depression disappeared and it motivated her to study again. Not only that, but she also shared in her personal journal about how much love she received from God. She wrote that only because of the grace of God she was well and alive. She said, “I am governed by God in every day of my life” (Roi’s personal journal, January 10, 2021). She knows the reason why everything is well in her life is because of the love of God. Tang Tang also had a similar experience as Roi Roi. He shared that he received love from his teachers. He said that when he failed a test, the teachers encouraged him to study more and not to be discouraged. It was not yet the final exam and they told him if he studied hard, he could still pass the final. This inspired him and he wanted to study hard. Finally, he passed his final examination and feels that is how he receives love from his teachers.

Htu Htu shared that her teachers not only encouraged them, but also taught them to be patient when they did not understand their lessons. She felt that she was not a smart student and said, “teachers explain and teach me lessons with patience when I cannot understand. I think it is their love for me.”

Kaw Kaw, Tu Tu, Naw Naw and La La also shared their experiences that they are loved by the teachers because they were encouraged when they felt lonely, discouraged, and homesick. Kaw Kaw said that she was lonely and she did not feel she had family at KOC when she first arrived at the center. Her teachers encouraged her and comforted her that everything was going to be ok. Because of that encouragement and comfort, she was feeling like she also had a family with KOC. The researcher discovered Kaw Kaw had the feeling of belonging in KOC. According to Richards, to give a sense of belonging in society is the center of nurturing faith development (1983, 372). In the research of Ro Thuam Liana, he mentioned that if the children do not have a sense of belonging in the community, the growth of their faith can be hindered (Liana 2016, 50). Tu Tu also disclosed that because of his teachers' cordial welcome to him, he felt relieved. He said when he arrived at the center he was wondering why he had to stay in this orphanage center, and he was grieving his lonely life. He asked himself why he must feel this sorrowful about his life. His teachers gave comfort to him and encouraged him with the words of God. Because of their love and concern, he overcame his sorrows. Naw Naw also had experience of being loved by the teachers. He said, "I feel love from teachers. When I was sick and feeling down, teachers took care of me, prayed for me and encouraged me like their own child. I think this is because of their love for me and for us" (Interview with Naw Dec 22, 2020). In addition to that, he shared from his personal journal that they are loved by the church members. He received gifts and donations from the church members. When they do not have rice or firewood, the church members provide for them. By this, he can see the love the church members have for them. For La La, he also has the same experience. He said that he feels the love of his teachers.

Sometimes, his teachers spend their own money to buy them snacks. He said, “I think this comes from their love” (Interview with La 23, 2020). Lu Lu, in her interview stated that she feels love from her teachers. She shared that she is loved because her teachers forgave her mistakes. Gam Gam also shared same idea here, he said, “I receive the love from teachers. Even though I did not listen and I was always behaving bad against teachers, they never hate me nor forsake me. Instead, they continued to teach patiently and showed their love” (interview with Gam Dec 21, 2020). These are the feelings of the respondents that they are loved by their teachers.

Three out of 10 respondents shared they are also loved by their friends. Kaw Kaw shared that she feels the love of her friends. When she sees her friends with fancy clothes, she wished she could wear them. She asked them if she can try them on; they allowed her to and told her she looks good in them. Kai Kai also shared she feels loved by her friends. When she was sick and not able to wash her own clothes, she had friends show their concern by washing her clothes for her. She wrote in her journal how she feels God’s love as well, and described that God looks after her everyday of her life. She does not have to worry about what to eat or what to wear. She does not need to worry for her health and her study such in music training. She knows these good things happen to her because of the love of God. Tu Tu said that he, too feels the love of his friends. When he did wrong and hit his friends, they still accepted him and forgave him. He feels assured that this is real love and true friends. In this section, the respondents shared they are loved by friends and teachers. The researcher focuses on their emotions of feeling loved, because people learn from the good of others and then want to model it in their own lives (Webb 2018). When the children are loved, comforted, helped, feel safe and have

peace in their mind because of what others have done for them, someday they will become the one who offers love, comfort, help, safety and peace to others.

#### Ways in which the Center Provides Experiences to Help Children Know that God Provides in their Times of Need

Based on the respondents, the following are concrete examples that KOC provided experiences for them to know that God is the One who Provides for them in times of need and difficult situations. Roi Roi and Htu Htu shared how the KOC gave them the knowledge to be able to deal with difficulties. When they were in need of financial help at the beginning of the semester, the whole dorm fasted for 12 hours and prayed together to God. They received an answer as God provided them with financial support just in time. According to this case, Roi Roi and Htu Htu had the experiences to deal with their difficulties through fasting and praying, and they saw God provide for them in their times of need. La La also mentioned a time when the center was out of “curry” to feed them. The students were called to pray together along with their teacher, and they began to receive unexpected blessings from people. Having donors in times of need, La La feels that this is the love of God and His care for them. Through this, the KOC is training them and showing how to deal the problem and difficulties. At the same time, La La had a sense of God’s good timing. Tang Tang shared that whenever there are new items or donations received in the center, they always give a prayer of thanksgiving to God. Here the center trains the children how to deal the difficulties and let the children experience how God always provides in their times of need. This is related to what Yust said, “having sense of thanksgiving is a sign of having faith in God” (Yust 2004, 13-14).

Kai Kai also shared an interesting experience through their prayers that overwhelmed them. She explained how one time their teacher lost her mobile phone which she had placed in her bag. The teacher asked them who took the phone, and no one admitted to stealing it. The teachers told them that even though no one confessed that God knows everything and taking without permission is stealing. It is a sin and God does not like it, but God is willing to forgive those who repent and come back to Him. After that the teachers and students prayed together for the person's heart that took the phone to change. The very next morning, the mobile phone was returned in the same bag. They all were surprised and Kai Kai believes that this is the work of God and God hears their prayer.

Tu Tu also shared something that surprised the researcher. It was related to Kai Kai's sharing of the story. Tu Tu reminisced:

Once I stole a mobile phone from one of our teacher's bags. That afternoon the teachers assembled all the students and asked who took the phone, but we were all silent. The teachers told us that it's not a good character and stealing is a sin. The teachers told us that repenting and returning to God is the will of God and God enjoys it when someone repents and returns to Him. God will always welcome and forgive. After that everyone prayed together. When they were praying, I felt sad in my mind. That night my mind was not peaceful, and I was confused about what should I do. At first I planned to sell that mobile phone. However, I wanted to do God's will and regretted what I had done. I decided the early the next morning to return that phone and I confessed my sin to God (interview with Tu Dec 26, 2020).

When the phone was placed in the bag not only Kai Kai felt shocked, but everyone did. Kai Kai, in her interview, said that she believed it was God's work and God heard their prayers. That sounds like Kai Kai's belief steps went to the next level. Tu Tu, because of teachers' teaching and the prayers of all, changed the evil in his mind to the good. The researcher is sure; Tu Tu will also feel the power of prayer and how God

works in his life. This is how the KOC gave experience to the children on how to deal with the problems, and that God is always looking and ready to provide for their needs.

Kaw Kaw also shared experiences that she overcame through prayer. The teachers always taught them that God can do everything so the students learned through their experiences how to deal with or solve problems through prayer. So Kaw Kaw also knows what she should do when she faces problems or difficulties. She said she tried to control herself, but her weakness was thinking too much about her problems and she is very sensitive. She does not want to share when she has a problem. Therefore, she only prayed to God to take away her problems because they give her pain. She asked God to comfort her when she feels sad and is in pain. After praying, the problems were gone. Kaw Kaw found strength in God and was able to overcome. According to Neimez, achieving a victory through fighting all the problem by getting the strength in God is also a figure of having faith (Neimez 2007, 124).

In this section, the respondents shared the experiences and ways of dealing with difficulties in KOC. They shared different experiences or issues, but the ways of their dealing methods were the same. They all spoke out with the same voices about prayer and solving the problems. They got the sense of God providing for them in times of their need. The respondent's shared how the center teaches and the children have learned knowledge about how to handle the difficulties; not only common difficulties but also their personal difficulties. It is confirming that the center nurtured the children well in strengthening their faith.

### The Understanding of the Selected Orphaned Children on How the Actions of the Environment Help Their Faith Development

In this section, the researcher discovered how the actions of their environment helped the children's faith development in KOC. When the researcher said the action of the environment, it means the actions of the people in KOC including pastors, teachers, and friends. For the children, environment is important because it is one of the important factors where they develop their faith (Richards 1983, 371).

#### Ways in which the Actions of the People in the Center Exemplify Obedience to God

Table 3 depicts the actions of the people in KOC that exemplify obedience to God as indicated by the selected children.

**Table 3: Actions of the People in Kachin Orphanage Center that Exemplify Obedience to God**

		<b>Actions of the Environment</b>		
<b>Are the actions of the people in KOC exemplifying obedience to God?</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Actions Related to Attitude about God</b>	<b>Actions Related to Social Harmony</b>	<b>Actions Related to Morality</b>
<b>Yes</b>	Kaw Kaw	- Being Faithful to God - Adore God		- Show respect - Speak gently - Humble before elders
	Lu Lu	-Being good servant of God	- Helping - Decorating the Church	
	Roi Roi	- Showing Love	- Comfort - Encourage	
	Kai Kai	-Teach how to pray		
	Naw Naw	- Attend Church Regularly - Devotional services	- Clean the campus	
	Tang Tang	-Righteousness and faithfulness - Pray	- Helping - Rebuking	

Table 3 summarizes the responses of the six respondents who indicated that “yes” the actions of the environment have helped us see how the staff of KOC exemplified obedience to God. The respondents who said “Yes” pointed to actions related to attitudes about God through the observations of the respondents on the people in KOC which include being “faithful to God,” “adoring God,” “being a good servant of God,” “showing love,” “teaching how to pray,” “attending church regularly,” “devotional services,” “righteousness,” and “faithfulness in prayer.” Looking at the responses of the participants, one can observe the impact that the staff of KOC and even the people in the church had on the children. Kaw Kaw observed not only that people attend church services regularly and other devotional services but also that teachers pray for the students with sympathy and with love. Naw Naw also had same view with Kaw Kaw, he said about attending church regularly and trying to get closer with God is, because he sees that it as the people in KOC exemplified obedience to God. Lu Lu sees that teachers are good servants of God because the teachers take the role of parent and treat the children like their own sons and daughters. Likewise, Roi Roi also talked about showing love because she sees love of God in the teachers even though not related by blood, teachers treat the children as their own. Tang Tang also shared that he felt God’s righteousness and faithful in KOC, because the teachers treat all of them equally. For Lu Lu said that the teachers pray for the children to love God more, to believe in God more, and to become educated persons, it means to her that these exemplified the obedience of God. Kai Kai included on ‘teach how to pray.’ For Kai, some of her friends’ actions exemplified the obedience of God in the lives of the people because those children were

teaching how to pray to some younger children, and they pray for them to walk in the right path.

Lu Lu, Roi Roi, Naw Naw and Tang Tang highlighted on the actions related to social harmony such as, helping to friends when they need helps, comforting to the weak and depressed persons, encouraging to the sick friends, rebuking with love to walk in the right path, decorating the church and cleaning the campus even though no one told them to do. And Kaw Kaw, focused on the actions related to morality; show respect for others, speak gently, and are humble before elders and teachers, those actions make them accept and confirm the good Christian life which exemplified obedience of God in their surroundings.

Table 4 displays the actions of the environment identified by the respondents that do *not* exemplify obedience to God.

**Table 4: Actions of the People in KOC that Do Not Exemplify Obedience to God**

Are the actions of the people in KOC exemplifying obedience to God?	Respondents	Actions of the Environment		
		Actions Related to Attitude about God	Actions Related to Social Harmony	Actions Related to Morality
No	Htu Htu			- Talking Back to the teacher - Lying to their friends - Stealing - Bullying
	Gam Gam			- Bad Christian
	La La			- Drinking and smoking
	Tu Tu			- Bullying
	Kai Kai	- Not respect God		

Table 4 shows that Htu Htu, Gam Gam, La La, Tu Tu and Kai Kai shared the opposite things with the presentation above. For them, the people in KOC did not

exemplify the obedience to God. For the respondents, “people” here refers to their friends who stay together with them in KOC. Regarding actions related to attitude about God, only one response was found. Kai Kai indicated, “not respect God.” The reason is: according to her, some of her friends did not pray earnestly which let her think that this kind of prayer did not exemplify obedience to God. For the rest of this “No” group, Htu Htu, Gam Gam, La La, and Tu Tu, mainly emphasized about the actions related to morality. According to their sharing, they are not seeing that the actions of their environment (like friends in the camp) exemplify obedience to God. According to Htu Htu, and Tu Tu, they specifically said about bullying. Htu Hut explained that, her friends talk back to the teachers, lie to their friends, and steal things. Drinking and smoking are also not a good actions according to the observation of La La.

The difference between the respondents who indicated “Yes” (Table 3), and those that said “No” (Table 4) was: the “Yes” group emphasized on the actions related to attitudes about God and this “No” group emphasized on the actions of the people related to morality. For the respondents who indicated “Yes,” it appears that they were referring to the “teachers” when they used the word “people.” For the respondents who said, “No,” they were referring to their “friends” at KOC. In a way, these children were able to observe the attitudes of the people in their surroundings. It supports Piaget and Inhelder’s concept that children who are 11 and above can think logically and their cognitive development is already appropriate to articulate their perception (Piaget and Inhelder 1969, 98).

Ways in which the People in the Center Become A Model of the Children's  
Faith Development Process and Show Good Example of Living  
as a Faith Community

After gathering the data from the children, the researcher found out that their responses to Subproblems B and C which say, respectively: "In what ways do the actions of the people in the center become a model or not model of the children's faith development process" and "In what ways do the people in the center show or not show good example of living as a faith community before the children" were related. When the researcher asked the respondents whether or not the people in the center show a good example of living as a faith community before them, all respondents spoke out same voices, they said, "Yes, they showed" (explaining will be in below).

Table 5 demonstrates Kaw Kaw's journal and interview reflections on the action of the people in her environment.

**Table 5: KawKaw's Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Kaw Kaw	<p>"I learn one thing from Teacher Dan (not real name) and that is treating equally to every student and knowing how to communicate his words to his students" (Interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020)</p> <p>"From teachers, there are things I learn through their life. They are educated people. They live out a good and caring life to others. Not only people love them for their service in their ministry but also, they are successful in their ministry. I am encouraged by their life and I want to be like them" (Jan 3, 2021, Kaw's Personal Journal)</p>	<p>"Likewise, I want to become a person who is just and can guide, support to those surrounding me to live a better life and walk a better way and love God more" (Interview with Kaw Dec 21, 2020)</p>

Table 5 shows the thoughts of Kaw Kaw concerning the ways in which the people in the center show good example of living as a faith community before her.

According to this child Kaw Kaw, it proves that children are observant. According to interview with Kaw Kaw, a lot of things regarding the life and the actions of his teacher Dan (not actual name) are evolving in his presence. In the interview with Kaw, she said her teacher knows “how to communicate his words to his students.” How can a child observe like that? The reason is because they have feelings and they long for care and support in every way of their live. That proves that the way of this teacher Dan meets the needs of the child Kaw. That is why, the teacher becomes a good teacher or a good model of being a Christian for this child. In his personal journal, Kaw also says that “I am encouraged by their life and I want to be like them.” “They” refers to her teachers. This shows that the teachers in KOC did a great job as teachers for his students. The life and thier actions influenced a great deal in the life of the child because, thier life and actions are meaningful, this gives encouragement to the life of this child. Kaw says not only in her journal, “I want to be like them,” but also in his interview that “I want to become a person who is just and can guide, and support to those surrounding me to live a better life and walk a better way and love God more.” This indicates that teachers in KOC displays a model of the faithful life as a Christian that influences and effects in the child life. In other words, the life and actions of society or surrounding has the effects on a child’s life.

**Table 6: Lulu’s Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Lu Lu	<p>“I learn some lessons from teacher Ling (not actual name); he encourages, he forgives our mistakes. When we walk in the wrong path, he helps us to walk in the right path” (Interview with Lu Dec 22, 2020.</p> <p>“There are things I learn from my teachers. They are good Christians because they depend on God. God is their priority in life” (Jan 3, 2021, Lu’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I want to become a person who brings people who are surrounding me to the right path” (Interview with Lu Dec 22, 2020)</p>

According to Lulu, she learns an important lesson of being a good Christian who put God first in life and depends on God alone through the life of her teacher Ling. Interview with Lulu, she says “she encourages, she forgives our mistakes.” This shows that the need of care and support in life as a Christian is important for the ones who commit mistakes. When she is forgiven and is encouraged by her teacher from committing mistakes, she seems to feel happy because she knows the feeling of having guilt and the needs of understanding and support. Her teacher Ling was able to meet her desire while she was in the wrong way. But she feels supported and she feels accepted by her the teacher. According to interview with Lulu, the teacher is able to show “the right path” which indicates that Lulu is one of the students who walked in the wrong path, who commit mistakes but was corrected by her teacher. She continued to say, “I want to become a person who brings people who are surrounding me to the right path.” It was a good habit of being a Christian. It shows that the teacher was able to show that acceptance and encouragement to become a better person is important in life as a Christian. Not only that, she also says in her journey that she learns that the teachers are

good Christians because “they depend on God. God is their priority in life.” As teachers, it was a great achievement to hear from a student that they receive on how to depend on God in life. According to interview with Lulu and her journal, one can see that teachers who live as a good Christian has become a model for Lulu, pushing her to become a good Christian who puts God first and depends on Him.

**Table 7: Roi Roi Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Roi Roi	<p>“I learn lessons from my friend Seng (not actual name): she listens to everything we say, helping and guiding the younger ones” (Interview with Roi Dec 23, 2020)</p> <p>“They also play as role models through their life. They do not have pride in their position of being teachers. They do not let us do the works alone, they also do the kitchen works with us” (Jan 3, 2021, Roi’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I want to be like her being an excellent example of a good person or a good sister in KOC” (Interview with Roi Dec 23, 2020)</p>

The influence of the characters of the surrounding has effects on the life of Roi Roi to become a better Christian. According to interview with Roi Roi, she learns from her surrounding friends, especially from her friend Seng (not real name) that is “obedience” to teachers and “guiding the younger ones” like a big sister in Christ. This friend of Roi Roi helps the younger girls and treat them as her sisters. To Roi Roi, this friend, Seng, shows that being a good big sister is also a good character to emulate in life. For girls, having a mature big sister is a privilege because you are rebuked when you do wrong and love you with pure heart. As a result, Roi Roi said during the interview that she wants to become like her friend Seng who is like a big sister to her. This is how the people in the center is being a model of the children. She also mentions in her journal that

the character of the teachers are like this: “they do not have pride in their position as teachers. They do not just ask the students to do cleaning, they also join the cleaning.” It is a good example of being a humble leader that encourages students to be humble Christian as servants to all no matter the position they may have.

**Table 8: Htu Htu Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Htu Htu	<p>“I see some lessons from teacher Bawk (nor real name) such as helping others in need, explaining patiently to students, encouraging us especially when we feel down” (Interview with Htu Dec 26, 2020)</p> <p>“I admire my teachers because they teach us on how to live not only for spiritual life but also for this physical lifestyle such as how to cook rice, how to live and how to wear clothes properly” (Jan 3, 2021, Htu’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I also want to become a good comforter and helper for my friends when they are in need” (Interview with Htu Dec 26, 2020)</p>

Regarding the interview and journal of Htu Htu, her life is affected by her surrounding especially from her teacher Bawk. According to interview with Htu Htu, teacher Bawk is a very good teacher who reflects a good Christian life. she helps others who are in need and she also encourages the students who are feeling depressed including Htu Htu herself. To Htu Htu, teacher Bawk is a very good teacher who is kind-hearted, a good listener, and comforter. She also says in her journal that she admires her teachers because they teach the students on how to live not only for spiritual life but also for physical lifestyle such as how to cook, how to wear. These are the people of the center are showing the good example of living as a faith community before children. Htu Htu included in her interview that she wants to become a good comforter and helper to who

are in need just like her teacher. The life and character of the teachers along with teacher Bawk have been a big influence and is being her role model for her spiritual life of becoming a better person. This shows that the actions of the surrounding of a child do affect the way a child thinks and live both their spiritual and physical life.

**Table 9: Kai Kai Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Kai Kai	<p>“I learn from my teachers that it is important and good to give something to someone when that something is very important to them” (Interview with Kai Dec 28, 2020)</p> <p>“The reasons why I admire my teachers is because they help and support us to have a strong faith in God and they encourage us to get closer to God” (Jan 3, 2021, Kai’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I want to fulfill and provide happiness to the people if I have in my possession the thing that they need” (Interview with Kai Dec 28, 2020)</p>

Regarding the interview with Kai Kai, it shows that the life of the teacher make a big influence in her life. In the interview, she says, “It is important to give something to someone when that that something is very important to them.” Kai learns that it is important to help others in need through the life of her teachers which shows that the teachers actions influence the way she thinks, and they let them see how it is important to help others. As a result, she says, “I want to fulfill and provide happiness to the people if I have in my possession the thing that they need.” She knows that there is happiness to be both the helper and the one who receives help. In Christianity, helping is a good behavior to have and the teachers influenced her to behave like them. She also mentions in her journal that she admires the teachers because they help, support, and guide them to have a stronger faith in God. Helping the needs of others is a good lesson and to have a good

behavior is a good thing to practice as a Christian. Therefore, it shows that the life of Kai is influenced by the actions of her surroundings, especially her teachers.

**Table 10: Gam Gam Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Gam Gam	<p>“I learned from our teachers, I think they have technique and ability to teach us to walk the right way. They could change even we are very bad students” (Interview with Gam Dec 21, 2020)</p> <p>“There are things I learn from my teachers. They do not have pride in their position. Despite being a teacher, they lend us their hands when we need, and they share us their good attitudes” (Jan 3, 2021, Gam’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I want to be a good guidance to walk God’s will to those who surrounding me when I grow up” (Interview with Gam Dec 21, 2020)</p>

Regarding the life and experience of Gam Gam, we can see that the society is very influential in his lifestyle and thinking, especially his teachers. According to interview with Gam, he says that he and his friends are bad students. In the interview, Gam says that teachers might have “technique and ability to teach” the students to walk in the right way. He says this because he was a bad student once but the teachers were able to guide him to become a good student. He is happy now that he is walking the right way and he wants to become a good guide to his surroundings like what his teachers did to him. Not only that, he also includes in his journal that he learned something from the teachers that helping others, sharing good attitudes are admirable. He also says that “teachers do not put their pride at the first place, but they serve the students in spite of their position.” According to the life of Gam Gam, it is clear that the actions and lifestyles of the surrounding is very important to change a person’s life.

**Table 11: Naw Naw Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Naw Naw	<p>“I learn lessons from teacher Washa (not real name). He has a gift of leadership and knows how to manage things and know how to control and make peace when we are in trouble” (Interview with Naw Dec 22, 2020)</p> <p>“They play as role models in our life. They serve us with humbleness; they cook for us; they do the cleaning and so on” (Jan 3, 2021, Naw’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I want to have the skills of a leadership like teacher Washa when I grow up” (Interview with Naw Dec 22, 2020)</p>

As for Naw Naw, he learns a good life lesson from his teacher Washa (not actual name). To Naw Naw, Teacher Washa has a gift of leadership and he knows how to manage things and know how to control many situations according to the interview. When there are arguments or fighting among the students, Teacher Washa becomes a peace maker. In Naw Naw’s case, he notices and learns valuable lessons in life through the life of Teacher Washa. Making peace is very important and admirable in Christian life. Naw Naw mentions in his journal that the teacher “serves us with humbleness.” Because the teachers cook for them and also join with them in cleaning and other things. Naw Naw is a clever boy who is able to learn very important life lessons. But cleverness is not all that matter because the teacher Washa’s life and actions also play as a very big influence for Naw Naw. The teacher is showing good example before child, the child is able to see and put his teacher as his role model of his faith development. In other words, Naw Naw is influenced by the life and actions of Teacher Washa’s daily life.

**Table 12: La la Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
La La	<p>“I learn from my friend Du, he showed me his love through reminding and forbidding me to go the wrong way or when I do bad things” (Interview with La Dec 23, 2020)</p> <p>“There is one thing I admire about my teachers. They know how to deal with stubborn students and how to change them to have a tender mind. And that is one reason why I want to be like them” (Jan 3, 2021, La’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“The love for others and lending a helping hand and guiding people to the right path” (Interview with Tu Dec 23, 2020)</p>

The journal and interview of La La says that life can be affected by the influence of good people. In La La case, his friend Du is a big influence according to the interview. Du is a good friend who rebukes La La when he did bad things. For Du, he sees that his friend loves him because he forbids him or stops him to do bad things and urges him to do good and to walk in the right path. La La is a blessed young boy to have such a good environment such as his friend Du. The love of Du has influenced Lala’s life to walk the right path, to do good. Not only that, La La says in his journal that teachers are admirable because they know how to treat stubborn people and change them to have a tender mind. This is one reason why he wants to become like the teachers as it is written in his journal. According to the interview, he also wants to be like his friend Du who shows him to do good. According to the life experience of La La, the researcher would like to tell that the change of his life (from bad student to good student, and stubborn to tender minded) is because of the influence of his surroundings such as his teachers and his friend. Therefore, the actions and participations in everyday life is significant to one's surroundings.

**Table 13: Tu Tu Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Tu Tu	<p>“There are lessons I learn from teachers. They are just, shows no favoritism, love everyone the same just like their children, their loves make us feel comfortable and safe” (Interview with Tu Dec 26, 2020)</p> <p>“I admire my teachers for one thing. They are peace makers when students fight against one another. I also want to become a peace maker like them” (Jan 3, 2021, Tu’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>“I also want to become a teacher or caregiver in the orphanage center and want to give love to the children who do not have their parents’ love” (Interview with Tu Dec 26, 2020)</p>

Tu Tu says in his interview that he learns something from his teachers. The teachers have no bias among the students. The students are treated equally and it makes Tu Tu comfortable and safe. Tu Tu says that he wants to become like their teachers who give care in the orphanage and love them like their own children equally. This shows that the efforts of the teachers for the children are very supportive and effective and being a model for the children especially for Tu Tu. In his journal, Tu Tu mentions that he wants to become a peacemaker like his teachers. Therefore, the life and the words of Tu Tu is saying that one’s life and actions can influence the surroundings.

**Table 14: Tang Tang Journal and Interview Reflections on the Actions of the Environment**

Name	Things Learned from the People in the Center	Things They Want to Apply in Their Lives
Tang Tang	<p>“I learn lessons from my friend Awng (not real name). He has sympathy for people, he always stands with the weak and protects them and he is very helpful to people” (Interview with Tang Dec 28, 2020)</p>	<p>“Like him, I want to be a just person and want to stand with the weak people”</p>

	<p>“They are my role models in life. They demonstrate to us with their action as they tell us what to do, how to live. I am able to stop my bad habits because of them” (Jan 3, 2021, Naw’s Personal Journal)</p>	<p>(Interview with Tang Dec 28, 2020)</p>
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Like the other respondents, Tang Tang also learns lessons from his friend like Awng who has a soft heart to others. The life of his friend is a big influence in Tang Tang’s life: always standing with the weak ones and protecting them. In other words, he has the heart of compassion. By looking and observing the life of his friend, Tang Tang is encouraged to be like his friend; to have sympathy, to care for the young ones and stand with them. In the interview, he says that he wants to be like his friend. In his journal, Tang Tang includes that the teachers are his role models because they demonstrate with their actions what they tell them to do. The teachers teach how to live and how to act and they practice this in their actual lives. Because of that, Tang Tang is able to stop his bad habits. Understand that the life and actions of a person is being observed is a good way to lead one’s life.

By looking at the interviews and journals of the children, the people in the center are showing good examples on how to live as a member of the faith community. One can see that the influences of the environment are affecting the respondents’ lives and their faith. The influencers are either their friends or the teachers in KOC. The actions of the people in the environment is crucial in a child’s transformation, both spiritual and physical life. Table 15 is an integration of all the responses of the research participants concerning the actions of the environment in KOC.

**Table 15: The Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center**

Actions of the Environment	Kaw	Lu	Roi	Htu	Kai	Gam	Naw	La	Tu	Thang	Total
Help to walk in the right path		✓				✓		✓		✓	4
Help and support to have faith					✓		✓		✓		3
Treating everyone equally	✓				✓				✓		3
Encourage		✓		✓							2
Helping to others			✓	✓							2
Not arrogant			✓			✓					2
Fulfilling spir & physical needs				✓			✓				2
Caring life of others	✓				✓						2
Forgive		✓									1
Put priority to God		✓									1
Obedience			✓								1
Explaining patiently				✓							1
Generous					✓						1
Peacemaker									✓		1
Sympathy for people										✓	1

Based on what respondents shared, the people in the center are showing a good example of living as a faith community before the children. “Help to walk in the right path” was mentioned by four out of 10 respondents. “Help and support to have faith and treating everyone equally,” was mentioned by three out of 10 respondents. “Encourage, helping to others, not arrogant, fulfilling both in spiritual, physical needs and caring life of others” were mentioned by two out of 10 respondents respectively. And “forgive others,” “put priority to God,” “obedience,” “explaining patiently,” “generous,” “peace maker and sympathy for people” were mentioned at least once by one respondent. These are the actions of the people environment that the children observed. According to the Table 15, the children have already mentioned 15 actions respectively in actions of the environments. In the respondents’ interview and personal journals, they mentioned that they learned a lot (indicated in Table 15 above) from their teachers and friends, they put them as their role models. The respondents learned from the actions of the environment and they have mind to use in their real life as their new skills. The actions of the

environment could transform and shape the children's life. According to Darin H. Land, professor of New Testament at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, "Faith development tends to be more about knowledge" (Facebook Messenger Interview with Land, 2020). In this concept, willing to be transformed as good Christian by learning at the actions of the environment is one of the signs of how the faith of these children is growing.

### **Summary**

In this study, the researcher investigates three research questions through semi-structured interviews with the respondents as well as analysis from their journals. For research question 1, the researcher explored whether or not the "rituals" affect the faith development of the selected orphaned children in KOC. The researcher found that the rituals *affected* the faith development of the respondents. Sub-question 2 asks whether or not the "experiences" that the children have at the center influence their faith development. Based on the findings, the experiences at the center *influenced* the faith development of the children. Sub-question 3 asks whether or not "the action of the environment" help the selected orphaned children's faith development in KOC. Based on the responses of the children, the actions of the environment are *helpful* in developing their faith. To answer the main statement of the problem, according to the selected children, "the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment made an impact in their faith development."

## **CHAPTER V**

### **SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The study aimed to investigate whether or not the rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment impact the faith development of the children living in Kachin Orphanage Center. This chapter focused on the summary, findings, conclusion, and the recommendations the researcher derived from the data gathered.

#### **Summary**

This study was conducted among the selected orphaned children of Kachin Orphanage Center. Ten children were selected as respondents for this study. The following three sections are what the researcher explored to obtain the goal of this study. Section One: Do the “rituals” affect or not affect the selected orphaned children’s faith development in KOC? Section Two: Do the selected orphaned children’s “experiences” in the center influence or not influence their faith development in KOC? Section Three: Do “the actions of the environment” help or not help the selected orphaned children’s faith development?

This study was guided by the theoretical framework of John Westerhoff III on the core sectors for developing faith. The literature and studies were able to give light to the findings of this current research. To obtain the needed data and the answers of the respondents, the researcher used two data collection methods: interview and personal journal. For interviews, the researcher used a semi-structured interview with the questions being divided into four segments. The first segment is about demographic

characteristics and is simply indicated as background information. The second segment is about the “rituals” affect or not affect the respondents’ faith development. The third segment is about the experiences of the respondents in the center influence or not influence their faith development. Lastly, the fourth segment is about the actions of the people help or not help the children’s faith development. Just as what the researcher explained about these above. The researcher conducted interviews with all the respondents through Messenger Video Call and lasted around 30-45 minutes. For the journal portion, the researcher requested that the respondents write at least one journal entry each week for a month. In the journal, the respondents wrote about their experiences with God, as well as with the people and activities at the Orphanage, in light of the prompts and guide questions that the researcher provided. When the researcher needed some further clarification or data, the researcher contacted their principle through Messenger and text messages. All the interviews and personal journals were transcribed and imported in the MaxQDA software for analysis.

The researcher used two approaches to do qualitative analysis; namely: coding and condensation. First, the researcher “coded” the respondent’s words, phrases, and sentences both from the interview transcripts, as well as from the respondent’s journals using MAXQDA. Second, the researcher “condensed” the focus on the natural meaning and expounding of the main themes of the interview and journal transcripts. Finally, themes from the data were gathered, analyzed, and interpreted following the research questions (profile, rituals, experiences, and actions of the environment).

## Findings

The findings of the study are the following. These are based on the responses of the selected children who are staying in Kachin Orphanage Center.

The respondents of this study were ten selected orphaned children in the KOC, ages between 11-15 years old. Five of the respondents were female, and five were males. When it comes to their grade level, they were between grades 6-10. In terms of the number of years of being a Christian, nine respondents have been Christians since they were born and one respondent became a believer when he was three year old. As to the number of years of staying at the KOC, the years ranged from 3 years to 7 years.

The second research question focused on the rituals; investigating whether or not they affected the selected orphaned children's faith development. There were four sub-questions that dealt with this particular research question. The first sub-question asked about the kinds of rituals that are celebrated in the KOC. With the reference on the kinds of rituals, the respondents answered they included Christmas, Thanksgiving, Bible Sunday services, morning and night devotions (M & N), fasting, New Years' service, Sunday service, confession prayer service, remembrance prayer service, Easter, spiritual renewal, communion, and Sunday School service. Besides that, in their personal journals they also mentioned music sight reading, instruments training, and dance training. The second sub-question explored whether or not the rituals affected the selected orphaned children's relationship with God. The researcher found that the rituals did *affect* the respondents' relationship with God. The respondent's shared that they became eager to spend time with God, feel closer to God, feel the love of God, believe in God, feel God's presence, and have faith in God by participating in the rituals that are celebrated in KOC.

However, a respondent Tang Tang did not agree with the others. He said, “by participating in services and activities, I am encouraged and blessed by hearing testimonies, and sermons, but it does not strengthen my faith and I did not have a special relationship with God because I only hear when they are preaching and after that I forget it all” (interview with Tang Dec 26, 2020). In sub-question three, the study explored about whether or not the rituals molded the selected orphaned children’s minds to be better Christians. The respondents indicated that their minds were *molded*. They became better Christians by participating in the rituals as they stopped stealing, stopped talking back to teachers, were no longer jealous, willing to help and serve, forgiving of others, stopped cursing, stopped bullying, stopped gossiping, felt gratitude, stopped bad habits, controlled anger, stopped smoking, became willing to praise God, and had sympathy and were obedient. Sub-question four investigated whether or not the rituals work on the selected orphaned children live so their faith become more firm. The finding for this question is: the rituals did *work* on the children’s lives. The respondent’s shared that by participating in the rituals, they found the answers to questions which had been confusing them for a long time. Their doubts about God were gone, their faith was getting stronger, and their relationship with God was healthier. Before the respondents were Christians, however, they did not know about or love God. But now, their lives were changed by participating in the ceremonies. They know and love God. The rituals facilitated the growth of their faith. In short, the rituals *affected* the selected orphaned children’s faith development.

The third research question focused on the experiences and exploring whether or not the selected orphaned children’s experiences influenced their faith development in

KOC. There were four sub-questions. The first sub-question was about ways in which the KOC provided or did not provide experiences where the children felt God's presence. For this question, the respondents indicated that KOC did *provide* the experiences for them to sense God's presence. The respondents shared that they felt God's presence and God's abilities because God listens to their prayers and provides what they needed. They also felt God's presence by being healed when they got injured. The respondents shared that when they had some difficulties and injuries in the KOC, they prayed together and God answered their prayers. Those experiences made them feel God's presence. Besides that, they felt God's presence from hearing the testimonies of others in KOC. They did not have the experiences themselves but listening to other's experiences they too could sense God's presence. The second sub-question was about how the experiences in the KOC provided or did not provide love when they felt abandoned. The respondents indicated that experienced love in the KOC from teachers and their friends. The respondents felt loved by their teacher as they had experienced encouragement from their teachers when they felt lonely, were discouraged, and homesick. They also felt they were loved by their friends as their friends shared good things with them and forgave them when they had done bad things. The third and fourth sub-questions were combined and presented in Chapter IV. The questions were about whether or not the experiences in the center showed them that God provides for them in their times of need, and did the center provide or not provide experiences for the children to deal with difficult situations. The researcher discovered those two sub-questions were related; the respondents shared that KOC provided experiences that helped them deal with their difficult situations and, at the same time, the children had experiences that God provided for them in times of need.

The last research question was about actions of the environment, and whether or not these helped to develop children's faith. In this section there were three sub-questions. The first sub-question investigated whether or not the actions of the people in the center exemplified obedience to God. For this sub-question, five out of ten respondents (Kaw, Lu, Roi, Naw, Tang) agreed that the people in the center do exemplify obedience to God. Four out of ten respondents' (Htu, Gam, La, Tu) did not agree that the all people in the center exemplified obedience to God. This finding shows that, the children are good observers, and they are able to distinguish which is good and evil things. Respondent Kai gave two answers. She said, "Some walk the way God wants, but some do not" (interview with Kai Dec 28, 2020). The second and third sub-questions were combined and interpreted in Chapter 4. The questions were about if the actions of the people in the center become a good model or not in the children's faith development process, and whether or not the people in the center show a good example of living as a faith community before the children. The respondents indicated that the people in the center did *show* good examples of living as a faith community before them. This was demonstrated in ways such as helping them to walk on the right path, helping and supporting them to have faith, treating everyone equally, encouraging, helping others, not being arrogant, fulfilling both spiritual and physical needs, caring for the life of others, forgiving, putting God as top priority, showing obedience, explaining patiently, being generous, being a peacemaker, and showing sympathy for people. At the same time the respondents mentioned that the people in the center are being good models for them. The respondents admired and wanted to become like them. The researcher found from the

data that the people in the center have been good models and were supporting the respondents, not only in faith development but also the children's physical life.

### **Conclusions**

As the findings showed, the rituals have been big influences in the children's lives. Rituals such as Christmas, Thanksgivings, Bible Sunday services, Morning and Night Devotion, New Year services, and other services have big impact on the faith development of the children. According to the respondents they prefer to participate in programs that "touch their heart" or "catch their attention and give joy or excitement." Therefore, it is important to capture the interest of the children, hence, it is wise to have creative rituals to foster children's growth of faith.

As indicated by some of the children, they are willing to seek God more and want to spend more time with God since they received encouragements through sermons and testimonies of the teachers, and they felt the love of God by participating in rituals. Therefore, skills in interpreting and explaining the Scriptures is essential in nurturing the children's faith. Rituals also indicate that the minds of the children are molded by participating; the children become wiser and they behave like Christians. They stop stealing, stopped smoking and so on. As for the teachers, they have done a great job in guiding these children through these rituals. This is a huge success for the KOC. These rituals become the foundation of their faith development. Above all, it is clear to the researcher that these rituals have become tools to mold, build, nurture and to develop the faith of the children in Christ.

The analysis and findings of the research showed that KOC provides experiences for the children to feel the presence of God through many situations. Experiences are

sometimes better than lecturing in life. KOC is able to guide the children in prayer and is able to encourage the children on how to pray and when to pray in their lives. In times of needs, they felt provided. In times of sadness, the children felt loved through their surroundings. In times of sickness, the children felt the healing power of God through their experiences of prayers and encouragements as guided and encouraged by the KOC. It seems that the KOC is successful in nurturing the children by providing the different experiences of life. Looking into the responses of the children shows that the KOC is carefully working and proceeding into further future success. The children felt loved, felt provided for, and were growing in knowledge of the presence of God, and that is a big success for the KOC. On that account, children learn the differences of life problems and learn how to overcome by depending on the power of God through prayer, encouragement, and the love from the surrounding people.

As the results indicate, the influence of the environment does make a difference in the life of the individual, especially for the children. In the center, some children say that the actions of the environment portray a role model on obedience to God, while others say that the environment does not. This shows that the actions or activities of the environment are being observed by them. It should be important advice for the teacher. While some are obedient to God, some are not. The actions of the environment are not only observed with words, but they also are being copied in the lives of some children. Some of the respondents say they want to become more like some of their friends and are inspired to behave like them in ways such as caring for others, making peace, showing forgiveness among other things. Therefore, the actions of the environment are very

important and are influential not only in the faith journey of the children, but also in their physical life.

### **Recommendations**

The researcher finds in the analysis of the data in this study that John Westerhoff's core sectors (rituals, experiences and actions of the environment) were working toward nurturing the children's faith development in the Kachin Orphanage Center. Based on the findings of the study, the following are some recommendations for KOC and for the ministry of the local church. In addition, recommendations for further studies are also indicated in this section.

#### Recommendations to the Kachin Orphanage Center

First, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the KOC to the children in terms of rituals:

- a. Based on the findings, the respondents prefer the program which give joy or excitement. In this light, the center would do well to plan more creative rituals (not mentioned by the children in this research) to encourage the children to participate more and to get their enthusiasms so their faith will grow;
- b. Schedule and encourage the children to lead personal devotion time so the children's relationship with God will grow, since the respondents indicated that their faith is enhanced as they see the results of their prayers;
- c. Schedule additional activities (drama, choir, and game competition) that focus on the "moral" development so the children's minds are formed and they can become better Christians since some children indicated that they struggle with behavior problems;

- d. Since the children indicated that their faith is not firm, the staff of KOC could conduct training on how to help the children participate in the “preaching” ministry of the church during special activities. This might be a big leap of faith, but there are Bible expositors and experts in teaching children how to do Biblical hermeneutics.

Second, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the KOC to the children in terms of their experiences:

- a. Allow children to visit the sick, taking into consideration their developmental needs, and allowing the children to pray for the sick. This could enhance their faith and also encourage the sick people; since some respondents indicated that they felt the love of God when someone prays and takes care of them especially in the time of sickness;
- b. The researcher found that the children deeply feel gratitude to the donors, the center could conduct a special time for donor appreciation and allow selected children to give their testimonies on how the donors and/or the members of the local church have been used by God to answer their prayers; and
- c. Planning for fasting together with the children and urging them to pray in their personal prayers since the respondents mentioned that they have experienced the difficulties in life but that they also enjoyed the fruits of their prayers after doing fasting and personal prayer;

Third, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the KOC to the children in terms of the actions of the environment:

- a. The people of the center would do well to continue showing kindness, acceptance, love, justice and encouragement to the children, since the participants said that those kinds of good actions are the ones that they want to emulate from the people in KOC;
- b. In order to be good models so that the children learn and grow in faith, the “people” (other than the teachers and staff) in the center could consider acting not only with words but also by living a life that gives priority to God in every situation; and
- c. Continue to show love by caring, forgiving, rebuking and accepting in order for the children to learn how to live in a faith community since the children accepted that those are good qualities of a Christian.

#### Recommendations to the Church

First, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the church to the children in terms of rituals:

- a. Engage the children and their friends to think about other ritual ceremonies that wish to have at the church;
- b. Allow the children to create their own interpretation of Bible stories and present these in church services during special occasions since the children indicated that they love to create their own dramas;
- c. Organize a “day camp” where creative games and activities which have themes to teach life lessons could be done since the children indicated that they learned a lot from the games and activities; and

- d. In order to reach their hearts and build their faith, it is a good idea to hold services for children led by mature teachers so that it will be easier to reach, teach, and strengthen them in the Christian faith, since the respondents indicated that there are lessons that they “only hear during preaching and after that forgot it all.”

Second, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the church to the children in terms of experiences:

- a. The church could plan a short trip or excursion for the children. While they can enjoy the fun of traveling together, the church can provide games, activities, and share the amazing works of God that indicate the presence of God in each one in this life.
- b. The church can request that the church school teachers treat the children well and take time to talk with them, especially in times of arguments with friends. It is also important that the children feel loved and receive encouragement from the church as some might not have a good relationship with parents.
- c. Engage the children to “give back to the church;” an activity where the children will be allowed to show their appreciation to the ministry of the church in their lives, since the children indicated that their gratefulness to the church who did so much for their faith development;

Third, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations could further enhance the ministry of the church to the children in terms of the actions of the environment:

- a. To exemplify obedience to God, both the church members and the pastors continue to show kindness, acceptance, love, justice and encouragement to the children.
- b. In order for being good models for the children to learn and grow in faith, the church members and the pastors could have a “fun day” where the children can observe how these leaders in the church fellowship with them, since the finding shows the children are active observers;
- c. The church members and the pastors should show love by caring, forgiving, comforting, helping, counselling and accepting in order for the children to learn how to live in faith community.

#### Recommendations for Further Studies

After conducting this research, the researcher realized that further studies need to be considered. The following are some recommendations for more scrutiny:

- a. The finding shows that, Westerhoff’s model for faith development works well in the KOC. However, Sunday School and some other programs were not part of the “top activities” that the respondents mentioned. Therefore, engaging on a project thesis on enriching the Sunday school curriculum based on Westerhoff’s model for the faith development for the orphaned children would be helpful;
- b. This study has been done with the orphaned children, however, under Laiza Baptist Church there are also children living with parents, therefore, further study should consider a comparative study between orphans and children living with their parents on the effects of rituals, experiences and

the actions of the environment, so the church knows the differences between them and could help in the planning for children's faith nurturing ministry.

- c. The researcher did study on orphaned children with the theory of Westerhoff and at least among Baptist Churches in Myanmar, there has been no study about Richard's "five processes for faith nurturing" among orphaned children yet, therefore, further study could be done pertaining to a these processes for faith nurturing among orphaned children among Baptist Churches in Myanmar so that the church will be able to explore more options on the elements that can nurture children's faith development.

## APPENDIX A

## MAP OF MYANMAR



Source:

[https://www.google.com/search?q=laiza+myanmar+map&rlz=1C1GCEA\\_enPH931PH931&sxsrf=ALeKk03usABMHm0XetyE6n4ekjsIWxOjBQ:1619022697900&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiKm6rG4Y\\_wAhUCfnAKHQS-DroQ\\_AUoAnoECAEQBA&biw=1280&bih=578#imgrc=tHiPppiHcy7ReM&imgdii=HpskIVBjY6gIcM](https://www.google.com/search?q=laiza+myanmar+map&rlz=1C1GCEA_enPH931PH931&sxsrf=ALeKk03usABMHm0XetyE6n4ekjsIWxOjBQ:1619022697900&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwiKm6rG4Y_wAhUCfnAKHQS-DroQ_AUoAnoECAEQBA&biw=1280&bih=578#imgrc=tHiPppiHcy7ReM&imgdii=HpskIVBjY6gIcM)

## APPENDIX B

### PROMPTS AND GUIDE QUESTIONS IN WRITING THE PERSONAL JOURNAL

#### Introduction:

Dear friend, thank you for saying yes to write your experiences. Hopefully this writing experience will help you express your feelings concerning your Christian faith. I would ask you to write at least one journal entry per week for the whole month of November. If you want to write more, that is also fine. The following are some things you can write about:

1. Are there ceremonies or rituals that you did at the orphanage? What is the activity about? Did you enjoy it? Why? Were you sad? Why? Who was there with you? Did the activity or program help you get close to God? In what ways? Did it help you grow in your faith? If it did not help you, please explain.
2. Are there experiences in the orphanage that allowed you to feel God's presence? What are the experiences that teach you about God? Can you name these? How did these experiences make you feel? Did they help you feel loved? In what ways? Are there ways that the orphanage helps you in providing for your needs? Did you feel that it is God who is giving this to you? If you did not experience these things, please explain.
3. Are there some actions of the people around you that help you obey God? Who are these people? Are they good models for your faith? Why? Why not? Do they teach you how to live the life of a Christian? In what ways?

KACHIN TRANSLATION OF PROMPTS AND GUIDE QUESTIONS  
IN WRITING THE PERSONAL JOURNAL

Ga Hpaw:

Tsawra hku hkau ai manang jan/ wa na a mahkrum madup ni hpe ka na matu myit hkrum ya ai majaw chyeju dum ai. N dai laika hkrang gaw na a hkristan makam masham hte seng ai na a hkam sha ai lam ni hpe hkrang shapraw ai lam hta garum madi shadaw ya ai lam ni tai na re ngu myit mada ai. November shata tup hta bat mi laman nlaw htum Journal langai ka na matu n-gun jaw shadut mayu ai re. Langai hta jan n aka tim mai ai. N pu na lam yan ni gaw nang ka na ga ngau ga si ni hpe madi shadaw ya lu ai lam nkau mi rai nga ai.

1. Jahkrai Ginra hta galaw ai hpawng lamang ni (sh) shamu shamawt lam ni nga ai kun.
  - Kaning re ai lam ni rai. Dai hpawng lamang ni hpe nang ra sharawng ai kun. Hpa majaw ra sharawng ai rai.
  - Dai lamang ni hta nang hte gadai ni rau shang lawm a ta.
  - Dai hpawng lamang ni gaw nang hte Karai Kasang grau ni kahtep wa hkra garum ya lu ai kun.
  - Gara hku garum ya ai rai?
  - Dai hpawng lamang ni gaw na a makam masham kaba wa na matu garum ya ai i? Garum ya lu ai rai yang chyeju the sang lang dan rit.
2. Ginra kata hta Karai Kasang na a n tsa mada mara ya ai lam/ bau sin makawp maga ya ai lam hpe hkam la lu ai mahkrum madup ni nang hta nga ai kun.

- Na a makau grup yin na masha ni nang hpe Karai Kasang a mai kaja ai lam mahkrum madup ni hpe tsun dan ai kun. Tsun dan ai rai yang dai lam ni nang hpe gara hku hkam sha shangun ai rai.
  - Nang tsawra ai hpe hkam la ai ngu hkam sha ai i. Kaning zawn re ai ni rai ta tsun dan rit.
  - Ginra kaw nna na a ra kadawn ai lam ni hpe jahpring shatsup ya ai lam ni nga ai kun. Dai lam ni gaw Karai Kasang lajang ai lam ni re ngu nang hkam la ai kun. La ma na, dai hku nhkam la ai rai yang hpa majaw nhkam la ai rai, tsun dan rit.
3. Karai Kasang hpe madat mara chye na matu garum ya lu ai ngasat ngasa ni na a makau grup yin na masha ni hta mu lu ai kun.
- Kadai ni rai. Dai masha ni gaw na a makam masham a matu kasi kaja tai ai i.
  - Hkristan asak hkrung lam gara hku gaw gap ra na hpe shanhte gaw nang hpe sharin ya a ni. Gara ladat ni hte sharin ya a ta, tsun dan rit.

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW PROTOCOL AND GUIDE QUESTIONS

#### **Before the Interview**

- The interview will be done through Facebook video call or Zoom call. Fortunately, Kachin Orphanage Center (KOC) has Wi-Fi, so I do not need to worry about internet connectivity. I will also take care for one month of internet Wi-Fi fee for the Center.
- I will tell the Principal of the KOC to prepare snacks for the children who I will interview on an agreed-upon time.

#### **During the Interview**

- Welcome the respondent, introduce myself and explain about the purpose of this study.
- Clarify that there are no right or wrong answers; I just want to know what they think.
- I will let the respondent know that their actual names will not be written in this study. I will use a pseudonym in place of their real names to protect their identity.
- I will ask permission from the respondent to record video and give assurance that I will not play the entire recording to anyone else except when the thesis panel will ask for it, but everything will be held confidential and for research purposes only.
- Check if the recording is working or not with the following questions:
  1. Now we are going to talk about some things that you think are important.
  2. Who is the most important person of your life?
  3. What was the happiest moment of your life? What did you do? Where did you go?
- After that, the researcher will proceed to my research questions.

#### **Semi-Structured Interview Guide Questions**

<p><b>Segment One: PROFILE</b></p> <p>“Now we are going to talk about you”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Age</li> <li>➤ Sex</li> <li>➤ Education</li> <li>➤ Number of years of being a Christian?</li> <li>➤ Number of years you have been staying in Kachin Orphanage Center?</li> </ul>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How old are you?</li> <li>➤ In which grade are you studying now?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me the time you started the acceptance of God as your Savior?</li> <li>➤ When did you arrive in this Center?</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Segment Two: RITUALS</b>  “Now we are going to talk about the rituals or ceremonies conducted in the orphanage”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How many programs do you remember that were celebrated in your orphanage?</li> <li>➤ Which one is your favorite program among all?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me any memory about the program that you participated in?</li> <li>➤ How do those programs help you come closer with God?</li> <li>➤ Are there ritual ceremonies that mold your mind to be a better Christian? If yes, in what way? If no, please explain.</li> <li>➤ As you participated in the programs, did these help you to become a better Christian? If yes, in what way? If no, please explain.</li> <li>➤ By participation in the ceremonies, was your relationship with God strengthened? If yes, in what way? If no, please explain.</li> <li>➤ Are there ritual ceremonies that helped your faith become firm? If yes, in what way? If no, please explain.</li> </ul>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Can you tell me what those programs are?</li> <li>➤ Do you have any special memory with those programs?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me why that is more special to you?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me a story that God is with you?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me some ways how those programs help you to become a better Christian?</li> <li>➤ What are some of the ways they strengthen your relationship with God?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Segment Three: EXPERIENCES</b>  “Now we are going to talk about your experience in the orphanage”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How did your experience in the orphanage help you know God?</li> <li>➤ In what ways does the orphanage help you feel the presence of God?</li> <li>➤ What are some of the ways that the people at the orphanage help you grow in your relationship with God?</li> <li>➤ Tell me the certain time that you had encountered God?</li> <li>➤ How do your experiences in the center provide the love that you need when you feel abandoned?</li> <li>➤ In what ways did your experiences in the center show or not show them that God provides for you in times of need?</li> </ul>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Can you feel, see, or hear God? In what ways?</li> <li>➤ Can you tell me some of the ways you experience love in this orphanage?</li> <li>➤ During the difficult times, are you able to see God?</li> <li>➤ Can you share with me one difficult incident that you experience and you realized that God helped to you?</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Do you experience love when you are staying here in this orphanage? In what ways?</li> <li>➤ What are the ways that the orphanage teach you to deal with difficult situations?</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Segment Four: ACTIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>“Now we are going to talk about action of the people in the orphanage”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In what ways do the actions of the people in the center (for example, the pastor, the principal, teachers, and volunteers) show that they obey God? Are they good models?</li> <li>➤ Do the people at the center share their faith with you? How? If not, please explain more.</li> <li>➤ Do the people at the center show you how to live as a good Christian? If not, please explain more.</li> <li>➤ Why do you think of your pastor, president, teachers and church members, do they always show they care and pray for you?</li> <li>➤ Do you see any qualities of God through the people around you? Or what do you see about God from the people around you?</li> <li>➤ Are there some things that you learn from the pastor, principal, teachers, and volunteers of the center? What are these? If you did not learn anything from them, can you explain why?</li> </ul>	<p>Prompts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Can you tell me an example of how these happened?</li> </ul>

#### After the Interview

- Thank the research participants.
- Tell the child that if there are things that I need to clarify, I will ask them again through the Principal of the KOC.

KACHIN TRANSLATION OF INTERVIEW PROTOCOL  
AND GUIDE QUESTIONS

GA SAN GA HTAI A MATU GA SAN NI

Ga san ga htai n galaw shi yang

- N dai ga san ga htai lamang gaw facebook video call (sh) zoom call hku nna galaw na re. Kachin Orphanage Center hta e WI-Fi nga ai majaw ngai hku nna internet line a matu myit n tsang ra ai. Tim, Wi-Fi shata mi a matu hpe ngai hku nna lit la sa mat wa na re.
- Bai nna, ga san ga htai galaw nga yang ma ni a matu sha hpa muk hte katsi dwi n tsin ni hpe lajang da ya na matu sr, srm ni hpe tau tsun da mat wa na re.

Ga san ga htai galaw ai shaloi

- Tinang hkum shachyen na bai nna ndai lamang a lam ma ni hpe jahprai dan na.
- N dai ga san ni hta jaw ai mahtai, shut ai mahtai nnga ai lam ma ni myit hta nga ai hpe mai htai ai lam tsun jahpra dan na.
- Ma ni a mying a jet hpe n dai laika hte nka na re lam, kaga mying hpe shalat nna ka na re lam, ma ni sari hpe n hkra machyi hkra ngai hku nna makawp sa mat wa na re lam tsun jahpra dan na.
- Ma ni hpe n sen record galaw na lam a hkan hpyi nna , dai nsen record hpe gadai hpe mung njaw madat ai shangun na lam hpe tsun na.
- Recording kaja n kaja jep na matu n pu na ga san ni hpe san mat na:
  1. N dai ten hta san na ga san gaw, na a prat hta a hkyak ai ngu ai lam ni hpe san mat na re.
  2. Na a prat hta kadai gaw a hkyak dik rai?
  3. Na a prat hta pyaw dik ai lam gaw hpa rai? Nang hpa galaw taw ai? Nang gara kaw du taw ai dai ten hta?
- Ngut ai hpan, ga san ga htai lamang de matut sa mat wa na.

**Ga San Ga Htai A Matu Ga San Ni**

<p><b>Daw- I</b></p> <p><b>“Na a lam hpe san mat wa na re”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ A sak</li> <li>➤ Num/ La</li> <li>➤ Hpaji Madang</li> <li>➤ N dai ginra kaw nga ai gade ning rai sai rai</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Na a sak gade ning rai?</li> <li>➤ Ya nang tsang gade hta sharin hkamla hkaja nga ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Galoi shaning hta ndai ginra de du wa ai rai?</li> </ul>
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<p><b>Daw- II</b></p> <p>“Ya gaw ndai ginra hta galaw chye ai lamang ni the seng nna san mat wa na re”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ndai ginra hta woi galaw ai Programs gade hpe nang matsing ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Gara lamang gaw na a ra dik ai lamang rai na rai?</li> <li>➤ Nang lawm ai lamang ni hta na, na a matu matsing hpa (sh) dai ni du hkra matsing ai lam ni hpe tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Dai lamang ni gaw nang hte karai kasang hpe gara hku grau ni htep shangun ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Dai lamang ni gaw na a myit hpe galai shai wa hkra garum ya ai kun. Gara hku garum ya a ta?</li> <li>➤ Dai lamang ni gaw nang a kam sham lam hpe grau ngang kang hkra garum ya ai kun? Tsun dan rit?</li> <li>➤ Dai lamang ni gaw nang hpe grau mai kaja ai christan masha langai byin wa hkra karum ya nga ai kun tsun dan rit?</li> <li>➤ Dai lamang ni gaw nang hte karai kasiang a lapran grau shangang shaking ya lu ai kun?</li> </ul>	<p>Ga san madi ni:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dai program ni gaw hpa ni rai ta tsun dan rit?</li> <li>➤ Na a matu hpa lak lai ai lam nga i?</li> <li>➤ Hpa majaw na a matu grai lak lai ai lam byin ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Karai kasang nang the rau nga ai ngu hkam sha shangun ai lam langai mi tsun dan rit?</li> <li>➤ Nang hpe christan kaja byin tai hkra madi shadaw garum ya ai lam ni hpe tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Hpa lam ni gaw nang hte karai kasang a makit sumri hpe grau shangang ya a ta?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Daw- III</b></p> <p>“Ya ga na a mahkrum madup hte seng ai lam ni hpe san mat wa na re”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ N dai ginra kata hta nang hkrum ai ganing re ai mahkrum madup gaw karai kasang hpe myit dum shangun ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Karai Kasang nga ai ngu lam hpe ginra kaw nna gara hku sharin a chyin ya ai rai?</li> <li>➤ Ginra kaw na sr, srm ni (sh) manaw manang ni hku nna karai kasang hte grau ni kahtep hkra garum ya ai lam ni hpe tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Karai Kasang hte hkrum ai lam hte aten hpe tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Nang myit kaji hkrum ai ten hta sr,srm ni (sh) manaw manang ni hku nna gara hku tsawra myit madun ai kun tsun dan rit.</li> </ul>	<p>Ma san madi ni:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Karai Kasang hpe mu ai i/ shi a shaga nsen hpe na ai i.</li> <li>➤ Na a tsawra myit hkam la ai mahkrum madup ni hpe tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Nang yak hkak hkrum ai ten, Karai kasang hpe mu lu ai i.</li> <li>➤ Karai kasang karum la ai hpe nang bai lu myit ai lam hpe tsun dan rit.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Karai kasang nang hpe ra kadawn ai shaloi garum la ai mahkrum madup langai mi tsun dan rit.</li> <li>➤ Ndai ginra hta nga ai shaloi tsawra myit hpe i hkam la lu ai rai.</li> <li>➤ Na a mayak ni hpe gara hku tawt lai ai rai.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Segment Four: ACTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>“ya gaw na a makau grup yin na masha ni a arawn alai hte seng ai lam ni hpe san mat wa na re”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Na a makau grup yin na masha ni arawn alai ni gaw karai kasang ra ai hku hkawm sa ma ai i.</li> <li>➤ Na a makau grup yin na masha ni shanhte a makam hpe tsun jahta dan ai lam ni nga ai i.</li> <li>➤ Christan masha kaja a arawn alai ni hpe na a makau grup yin na masha ni madun dan ai i.</li> <li>➤ Na a hpung up, hpung sr, sr, srm ni the hpung masha ni nang hpe a kyu hpyi ya nga ai ngu shadu ai i. hpa majaw dai hku shadu ai rai.</li> <li>➤ Na a makau grup yin na masha ni hta karai kasang ra ai arawn alai ni hpe mu lu ai i.hpa ni rai ta.</li> <li>➤ Na a makau grup yin na masha ni kaw nna nang sharin la lu ai lam ni hpe tsun dan rit.</li> </ul>	<p>Ga san madi ni:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Ga shadawn hte tsun dan ya rit.</li> </ul>

**APPENDIX D****APPROVAL NOTIFICATION FROM THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD**

Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary  
Ortigas Avenue Extension, Kaytikling  
Taytay 1920, Rizal, Philippines

**NOTIFICATION OF REVIEW APPROVAL**

November 10, 2020

Merry Seng Hkam  
merryseng.hkam@apnts.edu.ph

**Protocol Title: THE IMPACT OF RITUALS, EXPERIENCES, AND ACTIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN KACHIN ORPHANAGE CENTER UPON THE FAITH DEVELOPMENT OF SELECTED ORPHANED CHILDREN**

**Protocol #: AR-0006**

**IRB Review Date: November 10, 2020**

**Effective Date: November 11, 2020**

**Expiration Date: November 11, 2021**

**Review Type: Expedited Review**

**Review Action: Approved**

The IRB made the following determinations:

- Waivers: Waiver of informed consent documentation
- Other Documentations: All necessary attachments submitted.
- Risk Determination: No greater than minimal risk

Please contact me at [nehemiah.bathula@apnts.edu.ph](mailto:nehemiah.bathula@apnts.edu.ph) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Nehemiah Bathula  
Administrative Assistant to the Academic Dean  
Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary

## APPENDIX E

### LETTER TO THE PASTOR IN LAIZA BAPTIST CHURCH

KACHIN STATE, MYANMAR

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Pastor \_\_\_\_\_,

Christian greetings!

I am Merry Seng Hkam and currently studying at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Holistic Child Development. To complete my course of study, I am conducting a research with the title, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.”

The aim of this study is to explore the perspectives of the children on how their faith is being developed in light of their experiences at the orphanage.

May I request your kind permission to conduct a research on Kachin Orphanage Center, at Laiza Baptist Church? For this study, I will need 10 children who are between 11 to 15 years of age for actual interviews and two children (one boy and one girl) for a pilot study. I will be conducting these interviews through Facebook video call or Zoom call, depending on what would work better. I will be recording the interviews with the permission from you as well as from the participants. I assure you and the children that I will protect the privacy of children’s information as confidential. All data will be used only for the research. I am attaching the interview guide questions and the instructions for writing in the journals. I would also ask your permission for me to conduct follow-up interviews in cases when I would need more explanation from the participants.

I would appreciate your consideration to allow me to conduct this study in the Kachin Orphanage Center. I pray that God will richly bless your ministries.

Respectfully yours,  
Merry Seng Hkam

KACHIN TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE PASTOR IN LAIZA  
BAPTIST CHURCH, KACHIN STATE, MYANMAR

N htoi: \_\_\_\_\_

De, Hpung Up \_\_\_\_\_ ,

Shayi sha gaw Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary hta, Ma Kaji hkum dingnum bawng ring lam hpe madung dat nna Master of Arts in Religious hpe sharin hkam la, hka ja taw nga ai Lamung Merry Seng Hkam rai nga nngai. Sharin hka ja ai lam hpe bungakup shangut la lu na matu, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.” Ngu, tam sawk sagawn na matu ga baw jaw da nngai. Sawk sagawn hka ja ai lam a yaw shada ai lam gaw, jahkrai ma ginra hta, ma ni a mahkrum madu hte shan hte a makam masham rawt jat galu kaba wa ai lam hpe, ma kaji ni a ning mu hte maren chye na hkawn hkrang, hka ja lu na matu re.

Dai majaw, Laiza Buga Hkalup hpung a Kachin Jahkrai ginra hta sawk sagawn hka ja ai lam hpe, ahkang jaw ya lu na matu hpyi shawn mayu ga ai. Ndai hka ja ai lam a matu, jahkrai ma 10 hte asak 10-15 lapran na la kasha (1), num kasha (1) hpe lak san shaga san ai lam ra nga ga ai. Ndai hka ja ai lam a matu, lawu na masat da ai shadawn shadang hte maren, mying ni hpe masat shagrin ya na matu hpyi shawn dat ga ai.

- (1) Laiza Jahkrai ma ginra hta naw htum (2) ning nga ga ai ma ni.
- (2) Asak 11-15 lapran na ma ni.
- (3) Dai daw let mat lu ai ma ni.

Ma ni hte san htai ai lam hpe Facebook video call (sh) Zoom call hte, yawm dik min 45 san htai ai lam galaw na ga ai. San htai ai lam hpe san htai ai ma ni a ahkang jaw ai/ njaw ai la hta hkan nna record matsing ai lam hpe galaw na ga ai. Ma ni a lak san byin ai lam ni hpe nchyam nbra na matu mung sadi jaw nngai. Lu la ai sawk sagawng shiga ni hpe mung, dai tam sawk hka ja ai lam hta sha lang na matu pahkam hkam ga ai. San htai na, ga san ni hpe mung kalang ta tang madun mat na rai ga ai. Ga san ga htai galaw na ma ni, grau chye na hkawn hkrang na matu ra ai rai yang, masat da ai ahkaw ahkang hte mare sha, galaw sawa na ga ai.

N dai Kachin Jahkrai Ginra hta sawk sagawn hkaja na lam hpe a hkang jaw ya na kam let tau hkrau chyeju dum dat nngai law.

Merry Seng Hkam.

## APPENDIX F

### LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL OF KACHIN ORPHANAGE CENTER

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Christian greetings!

I am Merry Seng Hkam and currently studying at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Holistic Child Development. To complete my course of study, I am conducting a research with the title, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.” The aim of this study is to explore the perspectives of the children on how their faith is being developed in light of their experiences at the orphanage.

Regarding this, may I request your kind permission to conduct a research on Kachin Orphanage Center, at Laiza Baptist Church? For this study, I would need 10 children for actual interviews and two children (one boy and one girl) for pilot study who are between 10 to 15 years of age. For this study, I would like to ask your permission to please identify the names of the children who have the following qualifications: 1) the child should be registered in the Kachin Orphanage Center in Laiza, Myanmar for at least two years before the conduct of the study; (2) the child should be between 11-15 year old; and (3) the child should have undergone the “Naming Ceremony.”

I will be conducting all these through Facebook video call or Zoom call (depending on what would work better) for at least 45 minutes for each child. I will be recording the interviews with the permission from you as well as from the participants. I will assure you and the children that I will protect the privacy of the children’s information as confidential. All data will be used only for the research. I am attaching the interview guide questions, the instructions for the writing of the journal, and the Agreement to Maintain Confidentiality. I would also ask your permission to conduct follow-up interviews in cases when I would need more explanation from the participants.

In addition to this, I would like to ask assistance from you. I will need your help to help with the interview and writing journal. You do not need to be present throughout the whole interview process but only when the children need help. I also ask permission granting me to use the Center’s Wi-Fi for the interviews. I will pay for the Wi-Fi cost for one month.

I would appreciate your consideration and support of my request for this study in the Kachin Orphanage Center. I pray that God would richly bless your ministries.

Respectfully yours,  
Merry Seng Hkam

KACHIN TRANSLATION OF LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL  
OF KACHIN ORPHANAGE CENTER

N htoi: \_\_\_\_\_  
De, Sr \_\_\_\_\_,

Shayi sha gaw Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary hta, Ma Kaji hkum dingnum bawng ring lam hpe madung dat nna Master of Arts in Religious hpe sharin hkam la, hka ja taw nga ai Lamung Merry Seng Hkam rai nga nngai. Sharin hka ja ai lam hpe bunghkup shangut la lu na matu, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.” Ngu, tam sawk sagawn na matu ga baw jaw da nngai. Sawk sagawn hka ja ai lam a yaw shada ai lam gaw, jahkrai ma ginra hta, ma ni a mahkrum madu hte shan hte a makam masham rawt jat galu kaba wa ai lam hpe, ma kaji ni a ning mu hte maren chye na hkawn hkrang, hka ja lu na matu re.

Dai majaw, Laiza Buga Hkalup hpung a Jinghpaw Wunpawng Jahkrai ma lakawn ginra hta sawk sagawn hka ja ai lam hpe, ahkang jaw ya lu na matu hpyi shawn mayu ga ai. Ndai hka ja ai lam a matu, jahkrai ma 10 hte asak 10-15 lapran na la kasha (1), num kasha (1) hpe lak san shaga san ai lam ra nga ga ai. Ndai hka ja ai lam a matu, lawu na masat da ai shadawn shadang hte maren, mying ni hpe masat shagrin ya na matu hpyi shawn dat ga ai.

- (1) Laiza Jahkrai ma ginra hta naw htum (2) ning nga ga ai ma ni.
- (2) Asak 11-15 lapran na ma ni.
- (3) Dai daw let mat lu ai ma ni.

Ma ni hte san hta ai lam hpe Facebook video call (sh) Zoom call hte, yawm dik min 45 san hta ai lam galaw na ga ai. San hta ai lam hpe san hta ai ma ni a ahkang jaw ai/ njaw ai la hta hkan nna record matsing ai lam hpe galaw na ga ai. Ma ni a lak san byin ai lam ni hpe nchyam nbra na matu mung sadi jaw nngai. Lu la ai sawk sagawng shiga ni hpe mung, dai tam sawk hka ja ai lam hta sha lang na matu pahkam hkam ga ai. San hta na, ga san ni hpe mung kalang ta tang madun mat na rai ga ai. Ga san ga hta galaw na ma ni, grau chye na hkawn hkrang na matu ra ai rai yang, masat da ai ahkaw ahkang hte mare sha, galaw sawa na ga ai.

Matut nna, sr/srm kaw nna madi shada la na hpe hpyi shawn mayu ga ai. Ndai sawk sagawn laika ka ai lam hta, sr/srm a garum shing tau la ai lam hpe ra ladawn nga ga ai. Ga san ga hta galaw ai lamang aten hpring nlu shang lawm ai rai tim, ma ni a ra ai aten a shang lawm ya na matu matut nna hpyi lajin mayu ga ai. Matut nna, jahkrai ma ginra a matut mahkai arung arai ( Wi-fi) ni hpe mung jai lang mayu ai majaw ahkang hpyi ga ai. Wi-Fi hpe jai lang ai hta na shata mi (one month) manu hpe mung shayi sha kaw nna jaw bang ya na nngai.

Merry Seng Hkam.

**APPENDIX G****AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY**

(For the Principal of Kachin Orphanage Center)

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to maintain the confidentiality of all information regarding the research participants as I am requested to assist for the interviews of children via Zoom or Facebook video call by the researcher Merry Seng Hkam, of Asia Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary (APNTS, Rizal Philippines). I understand that I cannot discuss anything about the interviews with anyone except the researcher Merry Seng Hkam, and that I cannot make reference to the names, identity or circumstances of any of the individuals who I come in contact with through this research. I will keep about all of the information as confidential, as to protect the rights of vulnerable children.

I understand the above conditions on this research, and I agree to these conditions without hesitation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## KACHIN TRASALATION OF AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY

(Kachin Orphanage Center a Jawng Up a Matu)

Ngai \_\_\_\_\_ hku nna ndai sawk sagawn laika a matu the seng nna Merry Seng Hkam the ma ni Via Zoom (sh) Facebook video call hku nna gasan ga htai galaw ai lam ni hpe ngai hku nna yip da na hpe myit hkrum nngai. Ndai lam the seng nna Merry Seng Hkam hta lai nna kadai wa the mung bawng ban jahta, mying tsun shapraw, hkum gawng machyi hkra tsun ai lam nnga hkra garum shing tau hkan sa na nngai. Ngai hku nna ma ni hkra machyi lam nnga na matu ndai lam ni hpe n shabrawng na nngai.

Lahta na ginlam ni yawng hpe ngai hku nna chye na let myit hkrum nngai law.

Sen: \_\_\_\_\_

Nhtoi: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX H**

## SAMPLE OF PERSONAL JOURNAL

Instruction:

*Dear children,*

*This is a sample of a journal that I wrote: you can write a similar entry like this:*

Date: June 6, 2020

While I was studying in the evening, I received a message from my mom which says, "Your grandpa has passed away." At first, I could not feel any sadness in losing him. But later, I felt a deep sense of losing him which made me so sad and it made me cry. I feel I still want my grandpa to live a little longer.

That day, we planned mass cleaning in our dorm. But, because of that, I could not pretend that nothing happened. I asked them to excuse me from helping in the cleaning activity. I went to a place where people would not find me. I began to mourn and cry out to God and prayed.

When my dorm mates heard about the news, they comforted me, and my friends sent personal condolences and kind words. Some friends came to see me and sat with me and I felt so relieved. From that experience, I realized that God has given me great friends though I do not deserve them. I could feel God's love even in the sorrowful situation.

God is always good to me. Even though I was very sad, I felt comforted.

## KACHIN TRANSLATION OF SAMPLE OF PERSONAL JOURNAL

Tsawra ai Ma ni,

Ndai gaw dinghkrai journal a matu ngai ga shadawn hku nna ka dan da ai re. Nang mung ndai zawn mai ka ai.

Nhtoi; June 6, 2020.

Lani mi na a ten hta ngai laika galaw nga yang nye Nu kaw na shiga lama mi du wa ai. Dai gaw nye a dwi la nnga mat sai nga shiga re. shawng nnan na ai shaloi gaw ngai hpa mung lak lak lai lai grai hkam sha ai lam nnga ai. Raitim jahkring mi na ai shaloi gaw, ngai dwi la hpe grau nna dum wa ai shi nnga mat ai lam myit dum let grau grau yawn wa nna, myi pwi si ni shi hkrai shi hkrat wa ai. Nye a myit hta dwi la hpe a sak loi mi naw galu shangun mayu ai, myit n gut ai lam ni byin wa ai.

Dai shani gaw , anhte a nga ginra hta jasan jaseng yawng jawm galaw na matu yawng jawm bawng ban myit hkrum da ai nhtoi re. Raitim ngai myit grai yawn nga ai majaw, dai ni gaw ngai nlu shang lawm na sai ngu manang ni hpe a hkang hpyi let masha kadai nnga ai shara de sa nna a kyu hpyi let ngai hkrai ngai myit yawn jazim nga ai.

Jawng kaw na manang ni mung dai shiga hpe na let ngai the rau yawn lawm let, n gun jaw ga ni sa tsun ya ma ai. Dai majaw nye a myit ni yawn hkyen nga ai rai tim n gun a wai la lu ai. Ndai mabyin hta na ngai myit dum lu ai lam gaw ngai hpe Karai Kasang gaw grai kaja ai manaw manang ni law law jaw da ai hpe myit dum lu ai. Bai nna ngai myit yawn hkyen, myit kaji Karen hkrum ai ten hta Karai Kasang gaw galoi mung ngai hpe lakawn la nga ai hpe dum let nye a ntsa Karai Kasang galoi mung mai kaja nga ai lam hkam sha lu ai.

## APPENDIX I

### ASSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS BELOW 18 YEARS OLD

I am Merry Seng Hkam and currently studying at Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary, taking Master of Arts in Religious Education, concentrating in Holistic Child Development. To complete my course of study, I am conducting a research with the title, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.” The aim of this study is to explore the perspectives of the children on how their faith is being developed in light of their experiences at the orphanage.

The purpose of my study is to understand your perspectives on how your faith is being developed in light of your experiences at the orphanage. I will be interviewing you for at least 45 minutes using Facebook video call or Zoom. I request that you write at least one journal entry (or diary) per week for one month. If you feel the questions make you uncomfortable, you can feel free to skip that question or ask me for further explanation.

I would like you to consider whether you are willing to participate in this study. I believe your participation will be useful for you to reflect on your experiences. You should know that, even you agree to participate, at any time you can withdraw from participation.

If you do agree to participate, I ask your permission allowing me to record the interview. I assure you that I will not play/show the full recording to anyone and will not state your name in this study. If you would like additional information concerning this study before or after it is complete, please feel free to contact me through the Principal of the Kachin Orphanage Center. He will be the one to communicate with me. A little token of gratitude will be given for your participation.

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I have read this Consent and Authorization Form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my child's rights as a research participant, I may send message to Lamung Merry Seng Hkam through the Principal of the Orphanage.

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

KACHIN TRANSLATION OF ASSENT FORM FOR  
PARTICIPANTS BELOW 18 YEARS OLD

Shayi sha gaw Asia-Pacific Nazarene Theological Seminary hta, Ma Kaji hkum dingnum bawng ring lam hpe madung dat nna Master of Arts in Religious hpe sharin hkam la, hka ja taw nga ai Lamung Merry Seng Hkam rai nga nngai. Sharin hka ja ai lam hpe bunghkup shangut la lu na matu, “The Impact of Rituals, Experiences, and Actions of the Environment in Kachin Orphanage Center upon the Faith Development of Selected Orphaned Children.” Ngu, tam sawk sagawn na matu ga baw jaw da nngai.

Sawk sagawn hka ja ai lam a yaw shada ai lam gaw, jahkrai ma ginra hta, ma ni a mahkrum madu kaw nna makam masham gara hku gaw gap kalu kaba wa ai ngu ai ma ni a ning mu hpe chyena na matu re. Ndai sawk sagawn laika a matu ma ni hpe facebook video call (sh) zoom call hku nna minit 45 daram ga san ga hta galaw sa wa na re. Shata mi tup bat mi hta dinghkrai journal laika pa laingai ka na matu hpyi shawn nngai. Lama gasan ni hpe hta na matu n manu ai rai yang shalai kau mai ai (sh) ngai hpe mung sang lang shangun mai ai.

Ndai hkaja ai lam hta shang lawm na matu myit lawm let shang lawm lu na hpe a tsawm myit yu shangun mayu ai. Ndai shang lawm ai lam hta na a matu ma a kyu rawng na re ngu hpe kam ai. Shang lawm ai shaloi tinang kam ai aten hta bai mai pru ai.

Tinang myit hkum let shang lawm wa ai shaloi, gasan gahtai ai ten hta “record” galaw wan a matu a hkang hpyi na re. ndai record hpe kadai hpe mung n madun na the na a mying hpe mung n ka madun na hpe ngai lit la nngai. Ndai lamang ngut ai hpang ja hkum ja tsup ra yang ginra a sr, srm ni kaw mai san ai. Bai nna shang lawm ai hpe chyeju dum masat masa ni jaw shalai wa na re.

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Ntsa na lam ni hpe myit hkum ai the a hkaw ahkang laika hpe hti ngut sai. Ngai hta e ga san san na the ga san a mahtai hpe lu la na matu a hkaw a hkang nga ai. Lama na ahkaw ahkang the seng nna ga san nga yang Merry Seng Hkam hpe jahkrai ma ginra sr, srm ni kaw nna matut mahkai mai ai hpe chye na nngai.

Mying: \_\_\_\_\_

N htoi: \_\_\_\_\_

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