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**COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND THE ADOPTION OF URBAN
GARDENING AMONG TRICYCLE DRIVERS**

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Acceptance Page

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“COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES AND THE ADOPTION OF URBAN GARDENING AMONG TRICYCLE DRIVERS” is hereby accepted by the Faculty of Information and Communication Studies, U.P. Open University, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Master of Development Communication.

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Biographical Sketch

The author was born and raised in the Philippines, where she developed a deep passion for learning, storytelling, and community engagement. She earned her undergraduate degree in Film and Audio-Visual Communication from the University of the Philippines Diliman in 2007, a formative experience that nurtured her creativity and strengthened her ability to amplify real-life narratives through research and visual storytelling.

Currently, she works in the technology industry and is part of Accenture, where she promotes innovation, agility, and a culture of inclusion and sustainability. Beyond her professional role, she is actively involved in various advocacy communities supporting persons with disabilities, working parents, and corporate citizenship efforts. Her work-life balance and dedication to personal growth have enabled her to pursue postgraduate studies while continuing to lead and inspire at work.

Her Master's thesis explores the intersection of sustainability and livelihood among marginalized groups during the COVID-19 pandemic, focusing on the stories of tricycle drivers practicing urban gardening in Manggahan, Pasig City. The study not only highlights environmental resilience but also the power of community-based action.

She is a devoted mother to a son diagnosed with mild ADHD, mild autism, and a mild learning disability—an experience that has profoundly shaped her worldview. Her academic journey is deeply inspired by her son and her desire to build a more compassionate, inclusive future. This milestone reflects her persistence, purpose, and the unwavering love that surrounds her.

Acknowledgement

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This thesis is more than just an academic requirement—it is a reflection of the love, faith, and kindness of everyone who believed in me. To all of you, from the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Dedication

To my son, **Charles Zachary Arriola**—

This thesis is lovingly and wholeheartedly dedicated to you. Throughout this journey, you have been my guiding light—my constant reminder of why I began and why I needed to finish. Your strength, your spirit, and your story have shaped the very heart of this work.

You are wonderfully unique, with your own set of challenges—living with mild ADHD, mild autism, and a mild learning disability. I've watched you navigate the world in your own way, overcoming each obstacle with quiet bravery, resilience, and a heart full of love. There were days when it was difficult—for you, and for me. But in those very moments, I saw the truest meaning of perseverance. And it was through your journey that I found the strength to continue mine.

Completing this thesis is not just a milestone in my academic life. It is a symbol of everything we have overcome together. Every long night, every tough decision, every time I had to divide my time between being a mother and a student—it was all for you. Because you deserve to see that no matter how hard life gets, we can rise above it. That our challenges do not define us—they shape us, but they never limit us.

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Abstract

This study, titled “Communication Strategies and the Adoption of Urban Gardening Among Tricycle Drivers,” explores how communication influences the awareness, adoption, and continued practice of urban farming among tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig City during the COVID-19 pandemic. Conducted as a qualitative case study, the research gathered insights through in-depth interviews with tricycle drivers who sustained urban gardening practices amid mobility restrictions and economic challenges brought by the health crisis.

Using the Social Cultural Tradition theory as a guiding lens, the study examines how everyday communication—rooted in family interactions, peer networks, social media and community exchanges—shaped the respondents’ understanding, motivation, and persistence in urban farming. While the theory is not tested, it offers a framework to understand how meanings and behaviors are shaped within social and cultural contexts.

Findings reveal that communication played a critical role not only in the initial adoption of urban gardening but also in its continuity during the pandemic, as respondents relied on conversations with family, spouses, and social networks for encouragement, knowledge sharing, and emotional support. The practice of urban gardening became both a coping mechanism and a sustainable response to food insecurity. The study suggests that community-centered communication strategies grounded in shared traditions and everyday relationships can support long-term engagement in grassroots environmental initiatives, particularly in times of crisis. **Keywords:** Tricycle drivers; Urban gardening; Communication Strategies; Social Cultural Tradition; Manggahan, Pasig City

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Urban gardening has gained prominence in recent years as a sustainable solution to address food insecurity, reduce food waste, and provide supplemental income for low-income urban populations. In the Philippines, the COVID-19 pandemic magnified existing socio-economic vulnerabilities, particularly for informal workers such as tricycle drivers who rely on daily earnings for survival (Asian Development Bank, 2020). With limited access to steady income and food supplies during lockdowns, many sought alternative strategies to support their families—and urban gardening became one such response.

Tricycle drivers, embedded within closely-knit communities, are significantly influenced by the everyday interactions and shared experiences within their social networks. This study draws on the Social Cultural Tradition Theory, which emphasizes that communication is not merely a channel for transmitting information but a process through which social realities are constructed and maintained. Through casual conversations, storytelling, and observation, knowledge about urban gardening spreads gradually within the community, shaping attitudes, practices, and collective identities.

The adoption of urban gardening, therefore, is not solely an economic response but also a culturally embedded practice. Within their communities, tricycle drivers exchange ideas, success stories, and gardening tips, reinforcing shared norms and values that influence behavior. Communication plays a crucial role in framing

gardening not just as a survival strategy, but as a meaningful and sustainable lifestyle choice—rooted in tradition, mutual support, and resilience.

However, despite the potential of urban gardening to alleviate food insecurity and enhance self-reliance, barriers such as limited access to resources, lack of technical knowledge, and socio-economic constraints still exist (Lee-Smith, 2010; FAO, 2020). In rapidly urbanizing areas of the Philippines, where poverty and food access remain pressing concerns (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2021), understanding how communication shapes these practices is critical. Grounding this study in the Social Cultural Tradition allows for a richer exploration of how collective meaning-making, cultural norms, and social interactions influence the adoption and sustainability of urban gardening among tricycle drivers.

Statement of the Problem

Despite its potential, the adoption of urban gardening among tricycle drivers remains uneven and underexplored. Understanding the role of communication—how information is shared, interpreted, and acted upon within social and cultural contexts—can offer valuable insights into how these grassroots initiatives are sustained. Communication not only transmits practical knowledge but also reinforces community values, traditions, and motivations that influence individual and collective behavior.

This study seeks to explore how communication strategies influence the adoption and continuation of urban gardening among tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig City. Guided by the Social Cultural Tradition theory, this research investigates how interpersonal interactions, community dialogue, and shared cultural meanings

shape the respondents' engagement in urban gardening, especially during the pandemic.

Specifically, the study aims to answer the following questions:

1. What communication channels and strategies influence the tricycle drivers' awareness and adoption of urban gardening?
2. How do family, peer groups, and community networks contribute to their continued practice of urban gardening during the COVID-19 pandemic?
3. In what ways does communication reflect and reinforce cultural meanings and social relationships that support urban gardening?

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are the following:

1. To identify the level of awareness and knowledge of tricycle drivers regarding urban gardening
2. To analyze the factors influencing the adoption or rejection of urban gardening among tricycle drivers
3. To examine how communication channels affect the diffusion of urban gardening among tricycle drivers
4. To evaluate the role of social networks in promoting urban gardening practices among tricycle drivers

Significance of the Study

The study directly benefits tricycle drivers by exploring how urban gardening can serve as an alternative source of food and supplementary income. Understanding the barriers they face and the factors that motivate them to engage in urban gardening can lead to better-targeted programs and interventions that improve their quality of life.

By providing insights into how communication influences the behavior of tricycle drivers toward urban gardening, this study can guide local government units (LGUs) in designing policies and campaigns that promote sustainable urban gardening. It can help in formulating community-based programs that support urban gardening, improve food accessibility, and strengthen local economies.

The findings of this study can also assist non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community organizations in developing effective outreach and education programs that encourage urban gardening. By understanding the role of communication and social networks, they can design strategies that foster collaboration among community members and increase the adoption rate of urban gardening practices.

The study contributes to the body of knowledge on the social cultural tradition theory, particularly in the context of urban gardening in low-income urban communities. It provides a framework for future research on the adoption of sustainable practices in urban settings and opens avenues for further exploration of how communication strategies influence behavior change.

Encouraging urban gardening among tricycle drivers has broader societal benefits such as enhancing food security, promoting environmental sustainability, and fostering community resilience. The study's recommendations can help build stronger,

more self-reliant urban communities by empowering residents to contribute to local food production and sustainability efforts.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study focuses on understanding how communication affects the behavior of urban tricycle drivers in adopting urban gardening. Specifically, it investigates the level of awareness, knowledge, and attitudes of tricycle drivers in Barangay Manggahan, Pasig City toward urban gardening, the communication channels that influence their decision-making, and the factors that facilitate or hinder their engagement in the practice. The study will be conducted to selected tricycle drivers who already have experience in urban gardening.

Guided by the Social Cultural Tradition theory, this study explores how communication practices—embedded in everyday interactions, shared meanings, and cultural traditions—shape the way tricycle drivers understand, adopt, and sustain urban gardening. Rather than testing the theory, it is used as a lens to interpret how communication is influenced by social relationships, community values, and cultural norms.

Data will be collected through in-depth short interviews with tricycle drivers at their TODA terminal. The study is qualitative in nature and focused on a specific locale, which may limit the general findings to other communities. The tools and materials used include mobile phones with internet access and applications for recording responses and taking photos during data collection.

In the future, the study may be further developed and applied to the rest of the other *barangays* in Pasig City and to the different *barangays* within the National Capital Region (NCR).

Operational Definition of Terms

1. **Tricycle drivers** – individuals who operate or drive tricycles as their primary or secondary occupation in urban areas, specifically in Manggahan, Pasig City
2. **TODA** (Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association) – a local organization representing the collective interests of tricycle drivers in a specific area or barangay
3. **Tricycle** - a three-wheeled public utility vehicle consisting of a motorcycle and an attached passenger's sidecar, used for short-distance urban transportation
4. **Urban gardening** – the practice of growing, cultivating, and harvesting food (such as vegetables, fruits and herbs) in urban environments such as rooftops, small vacant lots, or residential backyards. It focuses on sustainable, local food production within city spaces
5. **Communication Channels** – the medium through which information about urban gardening is transmitted to tricycle drivers. These channels include traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers), social media platforms (Facebook, YouTube), community meetings, word of mouth, and formal training or seminars
6. **Social Networks** – the networks of relationships among tricycle drivers, their families, peers, community members, and local organizations. This can include both formal and informal networks, such as colleagues, neighbors, and local government

or community groups. These social networks facilitate the exchange of information, support, and encouragement, which may influence the adoption of urban gardening practices

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Social Tradition Theory, which emphasizes the enduring influence of customs, inherited practices, and long-standing social norms in shaping individual and collective behavior. Social tradition theory highlights how people's actions are guided not merely by rational decision-making but by deeply embedded cultural patterns and communal values passed down across generations (Oakeshott, 1962). For this research, the urban gardening activities of tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig City are seen as more than just practical responses to food insecurity or income loss. They are also expressions of traditional values related to self-sufficiency, care for the family, *bayanihan* (community cooperation), and connection to the land. These values, while not always formalized, are preserved through everyday practices and community rituals—and are activated especially during times of crisis.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the breakdown of institutional systems, loss of income, and social restrictions forced many communities to rely on traditional and localized practices for survival. In this case, urban gardening emerged as a revival of traditional food production behaviors, shared informally among peers, neighbors, and family members. Communication about planting techniques, use of recycled materials, and collective sharing of harvests took place through word-of-mouth exchanges and

social media posts, demonstrating how tradition is carried out and adapted through everyday communication.

By using Social Tradition Theory, this study frames urban gardening not as a newly introduced innovation, but as a re-emergence of tradition—an inherited social behavior reinforced through communal interaction and crisis-driven necessity. It recognizes that traditions are not static; they evolve through time, shaped by current conditions and communicated from one person to another.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Urbanization has hugely and quite rapidly affected the Philippines. According to Gino Antonio Trinidad, a Doctor of Public Administration student at the UP National College of Public Administration and Governance (UP NCPAG), estimates have shown that close to half of the Philippine population is now living in urban areas and is expected to breach the 50 percent mark by year 2050. Such rapid urbanization is brought about not only by demographic means (i.e., the 'natural' increase in population of towns and/or cities), but also by conversion of land (Trinidad, 2019). World Bank country Director Mara K. Warwick also mentioned that "as one of the fastest urbanizing countries in the region, urbanization presents a great opportunity for economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction for the Philippines. Yet, the speed and scale of urbanization brings challenges. Demands for housing, basic services, functional transport systems, and jobs continue to surge. And as cities fail to keep pace with the rapid urbanization, informal settlements grow, and inequality widens. In the Philippines, the richest 20 percent of the population outspend the poorest 20 percent by about nine times" (De Vera, 2017).

More than 200,000 Filipinos in Metro Manila have made it past the poverty threshold in 2018, according to the data derived from poverty incidence estimates by the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA). Poverty incidence is high among marginalized sectors in the Philippines (Irene, 2015). In a CNN report during the last quarter of 2019, 54% of Filipino families considered themselves poor which is considered as the highest self-rated poverty recorded by the Social Weather Stations (SWS) in five years. Based on the results of their latest survey conducted between

December 13 to 16 of 2019, around 13.1 million Filipino families experienced poverty from October to December of 2018. Thirty-five percent of the respondents described themselves as poor based on the food they eat (CNN Philippines Staff, 2020).

Poverty rate, according to the World Bank, was seen declining at 19.8% in 2020 and 18.7% in 2021 (Filipino Times Staff, 2019). Although the poverty incidence rate is seen to decline in the coming years, there are still a lot of families that remained poor and were not able to earn enough to buy for their basic needs (Pilar, 2020).

The Covid-19 Pandemic

The year 2020 brought a lot of natural disasters, crises and challenges, one of which is the COVID-19 pandemic. The coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, according to UNDP (2020), was the defining global health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we have faced since World War 2. Since its emergence in Asia in 2019, the virus had spread to every continent except Antarctica. The world had its full attention. Cases were still on the rise worldwide while countries are sprinting to slow the spread of the virus through quarantine, travel restrictions, contact tracing, testing and treating patients, and limiting people movement by not allowing large gatherings, enabling work from home to majority and virtual learning for the students. The government's immediate focus had been on strategies to manage the pandemic both from a public health perspective and the economic and financial fallout (Woldring & Roth, 2020).

In the Philippines, Php 2.1 billion out of the Php 2.7 initial relief package rolled out by the government was allocated to provide unemployment benefits to displaced workers. Only a fraction for the needs of the poor families were being appropriated. The *Bayanihan* Heal as One Act or Republic Act 11469 (RA 11469) was signed by President Rodrigo Duterte that gave him additional powers and authority to reallocate

and reprogram a budget of Php 275 billion in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Act provided relief packages for eighteen million families who lived below the poverty line in the form of a cash fund between Php 5,000 to Php 8,000 every month for two months or the social amelioration program (De Silva, 2020). It was spearheaded by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) with the help of the Local Government Units (LGUs) for verification and distribution. However, the process was long and tedious and was not able to cover people's needs (Gutierrez, 2020).

While the government was seeking different ways to slow down the transmission of the virus, many of our countrymen were left without enough food, water and jobs. Many jobs have no paid sick leaves. Irregular workers, including those who were paid on a per output, *takay*, or *pakyaw* basis, were particularly vulnerable. Working from home was not an option for all workers, as in the case of jeepney and tricycle drivers, and service workers (Adlemore, 2020). According to a survey conducted in the Philippines, about 78.1 percent of households with a member earning below Php 9,500, lost a job from the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) implemented in the country last March 16, 2020 (Sanchez, 2020).

The Case of Our Tricycle Drivers

In every city or province, tricycles were always present to transport people, goods and services from one point to another. There were 4.5 million registered tricycles in the country last 2018 (Hilotin, 2019) and according to the National Confederation of Tricycles and Transport Operators and Drivers Associations of the Philippines, in Metro Manila alone, there were about 300,000 registered tricycle units (Tupas et. al, 2020). However, tricycle drivers were considered the poorest and

most marginalized among transport groups (Alunan, 2018) that made the government target them as one of the beneficiaries from its programs.

In Pasig City, there were a total of 12,000 tricycle drivers trying to make a living each day. They had been the center of attention during the start of lockdown in Metro Manila when Mayor Vico Sotto appealed on behalf of them. He asked the national government to allow the tricycles within Pasig to carry passengers for emergencies and front liners going to work. However, Interior and Local Government Secretary Eduardo Año as well as Cabinet Secretary Karlo Nograles made the same point that allowing tricycles to operate will defeat the purpose of the quarantine which would protect residents from COVID-19 by forcing them to stay home. Police were instructed to arrest those tricycle drivers who would be found operating in the city (Servillos, 2020). In the end, Mayor Sotto agreed to comply with the transport service restrictions for the duration of the enhanced community quarantine (Marquez, 2020). The Local Government Unit (LGU) promised financial assistance of P55M for city transport drivers (Luna, 2020) and the tricycle drivers were left with no choice but to stay home and look for other means to provide food on their family's tables during the lockdown.

Urban Gardening and its Different Methods

A lot of Filipinos felt the need to grow their own food within their houses while the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect our country's agriculture. Director Glenn Gregorio of Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture (SEARCA) added that the global health crisis changed the perspective of consumers, and they had become interested in producing their own food from their backyards (Miraflor, 2020). The Department of Agriculture's 'Plant, Plant, Plant Program' aimed to ensure food sufficiency during emergency situations amid the

COVID-19 health crisis. The program also encouraged private and seedling companies to join the project and help promote urban gardening in Metro Manila by giving away seeds and seedlings to those interested to start vegetable gardening at home (Pelayo, 2020). Rice Watch Action Network Inc. also urged the government to add fresh produce and urban gardening starter kits in the relief food packs distributed to Filipino families nationwide. In a statement, Executive Director Hazel Tanchuling said this would help ensure food security caused by the enhanced community quarantine. He said it was time for Filipinos to produce their own food as part of promoting self-reliance (Gomez, 2020).

Urban gardening refers to the growing of plants and raising of animals within and around the cities (FAO, 2021). The Department of Agriculture wants to integrate farming in the daily activities of the urban residents so people in the city will not only be consumers but also producers (Jalandoni, 2015). In an interview statement of Rey Anacleto, Co-founder of Peace Crops Inc, Urban gardening is a style of growing plants of all varieties in an urban setting by utilizing recyclable materials such as plastic bottles, unused tires, paint cans and the like. This makes your home environment-friendly by contributing to cleaning the air and can also be a learning opportunity on how to grow your own food. (Federigan, 2020). It aims to address food shortage in the community, maintain our greener environment, ensure there is enough food supply within the community, and stabilize and strengthen food prices in the market (Tolentino, 2018).

There are different types of Urban gardening that can be applied in homes, in the backyard and in spacious areas like Vertical Farming, Edible Landscaping, Hydroponics and Aquaponics. Vertical farming is a method of cultivating plants stacked upwards that takes less space. It becomes a feasible solution for smart cities

because this method takes up fewer resources such as water and land. For example, Singapore is leading the vertical farming trend in Southeast Asia, with over 30 vertical farms by several companies in the past year (Miraflor, 2020). An innovative way of combining various principles of landscape design with existing technologies for small-scale crop production is Edible Landscaping. According to a study conducted by Tayobong et. al, instead of growing the ornamental plants, this method uses vegetables, herbs, and fruit crops and takes into consideration the aesthetics and functionality of space in relation to the production of safe and readily available crop products for the family” (Tayobong et. al, 2013). Hydroponics is the growing plants without the use of soil. In a study conducted by Dr. Primitivo Jose Santos and Eureka Teresa Ocampo of the Institute of Plant Breeding (IPB), at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), using a simple hydroponics system called SNAP hydroponics can grow vegetables like lettuce, sweet pepper, celery, and cucumber. It provides the long-term solution for vegetable production even under urban settings since there will be no issue of “in and off-season” farming because hydroponics system can be used uninterrupted (Baroña, 2004). Aquaponics is another method that combines the aquaculture (growing of fish and other aquatic animals) and hydroponics (the growing plants without soil). In this symbiotic combination, plants are fed the aquatic animals’ discharge or waste and in return, the vegetables clean the water that goes back to the fish. The bacteria from the fish waste gather in the spaces between the roots of the plant and converts into substances the plants can use to grow (North, 2016).

Policy Framework in Urban gardening

Lawmakers here in the Philippines have also noticed the impact of Urban gardening and passed legislations to encourage the people to start practicing it from their homes. During the 15th Congress in 2011, Association of Laborers and Employees (ALE) Party-list Rep. Catalina Bagasina filed House Bill (HB) 4750 or the “Urban Agriculture Act of 2011”. The House Bill seeks to promote urban gardening in cities to address food security concerns and regenerate ecosystems functions. Rep. Bagasina stressed that agricultural activities should not be limited to rural areas since it can be developed even in Metro Manila and other key cities in the country. She also stressed that disruptions caused by natural and man-made disasters will have an immediate impact on food supply, affecting populations in the cities, particularly the urban poor (Rosario, 2011). Senator Kiko Pangilinan filed Senate Bill 257 (SB 257) or the “Urban Agriculture and Vertical Farming Act of 2019,” that urged the public to grow food in idle or abandoned government-owned lots and buildings. The Bill aims to address urban environment management and mandates national and local governments to use abandoned government lots and buildings, including land in state universities and colleges for urban agriculture and vertical farming. The Bill also states that the Department of Education and the Commission on Higher Education should include urban agriculture and vertical farming in the curriculum of secondary and tertiary education in private and public schools (Tamayo, 2019). Senate Bill No. 13442 or the Instructional Gardens and Urban Agriculture Act of 2020 was filed on February 12, 2020 by Senators Cynthia Villar, Nancy Binay, Francisco, Lito Lapid, Grace Poe, and Bong Revilla Jr. According to Senator Villar, the rising food prices have made life more difficult for the urban poor. They encouraged households in urban communities

to set up a garden using small pots and empty plastic containers for their family's supply of nutritious greens (Golez, 2018).

Although there are several bills proposed for legislation, these are all still pending in the committee - SB 1342 and SB 257 are consolidated/ substituted in the Committee Report Status as of February 17, 2020 and HB 4750 until now is pending with the Committee on Food Security since June 1, 2011. Recently, the Department of Agriculture entered a Memorandum of Agreement with the Quezon City government for the Urban Agriculture Program aimed at ensuring food security in the city and the whole of Metro Manila. The program was launched to help city residents sustain their basic needs by growing their own food, and consequently, creating enough food supply in highly urbanized areas through the Agricultural Training Institute and the Bureau of Plant Industry (Antonio, 2020). In an article by Robie De Guzman, the Department of Agriculture signed an agreement with the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA) to offer more training sessions in farming and urban agriculture to address the pressing demand to boost food production (De Guzman, 2020).

Urban Gardening in Different Areas

In 2017, the Pasig City government signed a memorandum with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) to promote sustainable Urban gardening in the city. Under the agreement, DENR will assist the city government in its continuing environmental projects like the city's sustainable organic garden, urban gardening and urban gardening which promote environmental stability, biodiversity conservation and food security. It supports the National Greening Program under Executive Order No. 26 signed by then President Benigno S. Aquino III that aims a

massive forest rehabilitation program which seeks to grow 1.5 billion trees in 1.5 million hectares nationwide (Philippine Information Agency, 2017). Las Piñas and Pasig City also had a harvest festival wherein two batches of students of *Kabalikat at Kabuhayan* completed their Urban gardening courses. Both batches had 100 participants and this Urban gardening and Gardening Training aimed to promote food security and livelihood program for urban communities. Participants are taught how to create a small farm amidst the small spaces in urban areas by using recyclable materials such as pots, and plastic containers (Lopes, 2017).

Last 2018, a total of 6,600 Quezon City residents underwent Urban gardening training to reduce costs of food in the household and provide source of income amid increasing prices of commodities due to inflation. The training included backyard gardening, eco-waste management and climate change. Participants were also given planting and harvesting demonstrations at the project's demo farm at the Quezon Memorial Circle and a free starter kit containing seeds, soil, and other needs for farming (San Juan, 2018).

In Taguig City, a 2,500 square meter dump site was converted into a farm known as the Taguig Integrated Urban Farm. It uses various setups that are ideal in urban setting like vertical farming, wooden rack and pole gardening. A bamboo classroom was set up in the farm that is used in teaching urban agriculture plus a coffee shop, an orchidarium and various fruit-bearing trees and vegetables, like tomatoes, eggplants, okra, lettuce, cabbage and mustard, among others. According to City Agriculture Office officer-in-charge Emelita Solis, the urban farm's produce is being used in the feeding programs of the city government (Guzman, 2018).

Future of Urban Gardening in the Philippines

The country had succeeded in defeating the COVID-19 pandemic and urban gardening gained significant attention. Urban gardening draws on knowledge and expertise from a variety of disciplines (agriculture, environmental studies, health and nutrition, social sciences, management and policy planning, etc.) and those who now work on Urban Agriculture received training in these specialized areas. There is a need to develop their capacities toward a more holistic and integrated approach to Urban Agriculture research, development, and extension (Campilan et. Al, 2000). As for those who would like to engage in Urban gardening, getting training and support from the experts will help them develop the skills needed for farming.

One of the most important things to consider is the mindset of the people. According to project head of “Joy of Urban gardening” Cristina Perez, Urban gardening is not impossible to do. It can be done in very limited spaces and you just have to be creative in utilizing the small spaces or areas within our own homes” (Yap, 2016). Founder of Urban Roots Martin Escalona added, “the future of urban gardening in the Philippines is extremely promising. We have a lot of unused land lying around and a lot of people are interested in home farming just to supply their own needs” (Zagami, 2020). With the right guidance and support from experts, the right tools and proper mindset, anyone can start their urban gardening projects at home.

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Respondents/ Participants of the Study

Six tricycle drivers in Barangay Manggahan, Pasig, who were identified as individuals engaged in urban gardening, provided additional data to offer a deeper understanding of the role of communication in urban gardening practices. These respondents were selected based on their active participation in urban gardening and their ability to share insights into the challenges and strategies involved.

Their experiences varied, with some having extensive involvement in farming initiatives, while others had more recent engagement. Through in-depth interviews and discussions, the study aimed to explore how communication, both formal and informal, influenced their farming practices, decision-making processes, and collaboration with other urban gardeners. The information gathered from these respondents helped to shed light on the critical role communication plays in the sustainability and growth of urban gardening.

Their informed consent was obtained that explained the purpose of the study and the associated risks and benefits. The respondents were informed that they can withdraw at any time if they choose not to continue.

Locale of the Study

The interviews were conducted face-to-face at the tricycle terminal of Barangay Manggahan, Pasig City while the respondents were waiting for their passengers. Barangay Manggahan, one of the 30 Barangays in the second district of Pasig City,

spanned 327.03 hectares, making it the third largest Barangay in the city, following *barangays* Rosario and Ugong.

Research Design

This study adopts a **qualitative case study research design** to explore the role of communication in the adoption of urban gardening among tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig City. Anchored on the Social Cultural Tradition Theory, this research investigates how meaning, values, and practices related to urban gardening are shaped, transmitted, and sustained through everyday interactions within a specific community.

The Social Cultural Tradition in communication theory emphasizes the role of communication in the creation, reinforcement, and transformation of shared meanings, cultural values, and social norms within a community (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Rather than viewing communication merely as information exchange, this tradition sees it as a symbolic process embedded in social interaction and cultural context (Craig, 1999). It highlights how people co-construct their realities and sustain cultural practices through language and communication.

In this study, the Social Cultural Tradition serves as a lens to examine how tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig City adopt and sustain urban gardening practices through interpersonal communication, familial ties, and community networks. This lens reveals how urban gardening becomes more than a means of livelihood—it is integrated into their everyday life as a shared cultural practice, fostered and sustained through ongoing social communication.

By situating the study within the social and cultural dynamics of the community, this research highlights how communication not only conveys information but also

reinforces shared beliefs and collective action that make urban gardening meaningful and sustainable for the respondents at the time of the pandemic.

Chapter IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the narratives of selected tricycle drivers from Manggahan, Pasig, whose experiences with urban gardening offer rich insights into the intersections of livelihood, culture, and communication—especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through in-depth interviews and personal storytelling, this section explores how their gardening practices were shaped not by formal institutions or structured training, but by deeply rooted familial knowledge, peer interactions, and digital media. The stories reveal that communication—whether through inherited practices, conversations with loved ones, or videos accessed via mobile phones—played a vital role in their awareness, motivation, and continuity in urban gardening. Each narrative sheds light on how these individuals, often overlooked in mainstream discussions on sustainable food practices, turned to informal channels of learning and community support to grow food, foster resilience, and cultivate a sense of purpose amidst crisis.

Seeds of Experience: Tatay Zandy and His Urban Gardening





For Tatay Zandy Billera, a 53-year-old tricycle driver from Kaalinsabay in Manggahan, Pasig, urban gardening began not from formal training or community programs—but from a lifetime of lived experience and quiet communication within his family and community. Originally from Abra and raised in a farming environment, Tatay Zandy’s connection to gardening began early: *“Maliit pa lang ako, nag-aaro na,”* he shared with pride. His parents instilled in him the basics of planting and soil care, laying the groundwork for his lifelong attachment to gardening.

His journey continued informally when he moved to Pasig in 1985. Settling with his wife, he found that the vacant lot behind their home offered just enough space for

him to plant a variety of crops. *“Yung likod ng bahay ko bakanteng lote. Doon ako laging nagtatanim,”* he said. *“Kung anu-ano tinatanim ko e. Yung mga ano, yung gumagapang ba. Kasi malaki yung kuwan e, yung likod ko e. Para makalibre ba,”* he chuckled, valuing gardening to feed his family without the rising costs of market produce.

Communication, though not formal or structured, played a key role in supporting his gardening practices. Tatay Zandy’s main sources of information were YouTube videos, which he watched on his cellphone. *“Minsan yung sa YouTube, nanonood ako sa mga nagtatanim... lalo yung mga nag-aani ng palay,”* he said, expressing admiration for farming processes beyond his current setup. When asked for any specific YouTube videos or vloggers he is watching, Tatay Zandy replied, *“Mayroon yung ano.... Yung, nakalimutan ko. Yung parang sa Ilocos e. Yung mga sili, talong tinatanim, yung mga ano, sitaw, yung mga sili, ampalaya na may mga nakalagay na sili. Nakalimutan ko na.”*

Like many of his peers, he acknowledged that modern digital platforms have overtaken traditional sources like newspapers and radio. *“May cellphone na, nauna na yung mga YouTube,”* he explained.

He shared that he was once a desk officer at the *barangay* and although there was some gardening projects linked to the *barangay*—such as the community garden near the Botanical Garden under the bridge—he hadn’t personally received any free seeds or training sessions. *“Wala pa,”* he stated plainly. His wife, who also enjoys gardening, would often buy seeds themselves, showing how access to resources remains a challenge for informal farmers despite local efforts.

Despite this, Tatay Zandy remains hopeful and eager to participate in organized initiatives. When asked about a possible free seminar on urban farming, he responded

enthusiastically: “*Oo naman. Kapag magandang layunin, siyempre sasama. Para matututo...*” His motivation is not only personal—he dreams of returning to Abra someday and sharing what he’s learned with his siblings.

His views reflect a belief that gardening does more than fill plates; it feeds the soul and strengthens the body. “*Maganda po, kasi bukod sa makalibre ka ng pagkain, exercise, maganda sa katawan. Kasi yung mga nakatambay ka lang dyan, wala kang pagkain hindi ka pa pinapawisan*”, he said. During the pandemic lockdowns, his garden became a lifeline. “*Dyan nga ako nakinabang ng husto... kapag may kintsay ako, talong, sasamahan ko ng sardinas, ulam na,*” he recalled, illustrating how his small backyard garden helped his family endure a national crisis.

Tatay Zandy’s story illustrates how interpersonal knowledge-sharing, digital platforms, and personal resourcefulness work together to sustain urban farming—even in the absence of robust institutional communication. His experience highlights the need for more inclusive and accessible information dissemination so that urban gardeners like him can thrive, not just survive. It also emphasizes that communication in urban gardening is not only about formal training or online tutorials, but also about stories, family traditions, and shared meals—the very roots from which meaningful practices grow.

Planting Roots Through Conversations: Tatay Emman's Story of Urban Gardening and Farming





For Tatay Emman Geco, urban gardening is more than a practical solution, but a deeply rooted passion nurtured through generations and sustained by continuous learning through communication. Although his current residence in Pasig city limits his space for cultivation, Emman has found a way to remain connected to farming by combining his experiences, family heritage, and digital learning.

“Sa akin sa ngayon, mga tinatanim ko mga punong kahoy at prutas,” he shared, referencing the fruit-bearing trees he grows on land he tends to in his home province

of Bansud, Oriental Mindoro, *“Wala, nasa probinsiya. Nandoon yung mga ano pinapa, ano ko yung mga halaman. Ginagawa ko nalang, umaano ako ng magandang variety dito sa... basta kung saan ako makabili, tapos kung kalkula ko maganda siya, ipupunla ko na siya doon sa rooftop doon sa amin tapos papalakihin ko siya, tapos tiyaka ko siya iuuwi...Ano kasi, sobrang mahal na ng mga prutas ngayon kapag bumili ka sa mga tindahan. E gusto naming bumili mag-asawa ng prutas e, sayang. May konti naman kaming lupa, yun. Inaano na lang naming para mapakinabangan naman ng pamilya, tinaniman namin.”* It’s a labor of love he shares with his family, drawing from a childhood surrounded by farming. *“Lolo, ganoon,”* he said when asked who first taught him how to plant, highlighting how early interpersonal communication within the family shaped his agricultural knowledge.

Formal education also played a small but notable role. He recalled, *“Mayroon konti,”* about his high school agriculture lessons. Yet it is digital communication, particularly YouTube and Facebook, that has become his main sources of new techniques and updated farming strategies. *“May makabagong pagtatanim ngayon e... Mayroong, ano nalang siguro karagdagan na kinukuha ko, yung mga bagong ano ngayon. Yung paano, may makabagong pagtatanim ngayon e. Kung paano yung hydroponics, tyaka yung pagdugtong dugtong, yung mga ano..”*, Tatay Emman noted, showing enthusiasm for evolving methods like grafting, hydroponics, and variety selection. He watches videos to look out for better plant varieties and adapts these ideas in real time, initially nurturing seedlings on his rooftop before transferring them to the province: *“Kung kalkula ko maganda siya, ipupunla ko na siya doon sa rooftop... tapos iuuwi ko na lang.”*

Unlike traditional farming guided solely by instinct or inheritance, Tatay Emman’s approach is dynamic, combining learned wisdom with trial-and-error based

on what he consumes online. *“YouTube talagang ano ngayon e, kung ano yung diskarteng maganda sa YouTube”* he emphasized, noting that while the radio and print media have become less relevant, digital platforms allow him to discover reliable techniques and even market insights.

Despite his deep interest, Tatay Emman is largely unaware of city- or barangay-led initiatives that support urban gardening. *“Wala pa akong naririnig... Dito? Wala pa e”*. He observed that local support is concentrated near the *barangay* center and doesn’t reach individuals like him. *“Yung malalapit sa barangay, yun lang nakikinabang,”* he added, showing how limited local communication excludes many residents from available resources. In contrast, he recalled that in Mindoro, *“Sa amin sa probinsiya pinamimigay talaga galing Gobyerno, marami.”* underscoring the effectiveness of well-communicated agricultural support in rural areas.

When asked about attending a free seminar, his response was immediate and enthusiastic: *“Yan ang maganda... siyempre makakakuha ako ng idea na mas maganda e, mapapakinabangan ko.”* His openness to formal learning reflects a key insight that urban gardeners like him are eager to learn but often lack access points or timely information.

More than a food source, gardening offers Tatay Emman emotional fulfillment. *“Masaya ako kapag nakita ko yung mga halaman ko is yung ano na siya, malusog na...”* he said, describing the joy that blooms with every healthy plant. Though his wife and child are less involved, the act of planting remains personal and therapeutic, an outlet he treasures even without formal recognition or support.

Communication has influenced Tatay Emman’s agricultural journey through family mentorship, classroom instruction and digital content. His experience highlights the importance of knowledge dissemination in urban gardening, which relies on

various channels such as videos, neighborly conversations, and ideally, inclusive local programs that are accessible to all.

Tatay Rufino's World of Urban Gardening Journey



In a small home in Malvar, Manggahan, Pasig City, 52-year-old tricycle driver Rufino Dela Cruz found himself increasingly drawn into the world of urban gardening—not by formal training or government programs, but through the quiet yet powerful influence of communication within his own household and through digital media.

It was his wife who initially sparked his interest. *“Yung asawa ko yung nagtatanim. Tumutulong lang ako sa kanya. Umaalalay,”* he shared with a modest laugh. Their home garden became a joint project, though it was his wife who led the way. Rufino was a willing partner, helping with the watering and basic care, even if, by his own admission, he wasn’t always familiar with the names of the plants they cultivated. *“Di ko nga lang kabisado yung mga halaman na tinatanim niya. Basta tinutulungan ko lang siya,”* he added.

Much of what they learned about gardening didn’t come from books or workshops but from YouTube videos that they watched together or separately on their shared cellphone. These online resources acted as their virtual classroom. *“Tapos yung mga napapanood sa YouTube yung mga, parang mga puno na bonsai na nilalagyan ng alambre, para magkorte korte siya. Tapos yung iba naman yung pinuputol tapos tatabasin yung isa, kung puno na... tipong ano, pinagdudugtong, binabalot sa plastic. Pagkailang buwan lang, buhay na siya maganda na yung tubo niya.”* Rufino said, recounting how digital platforms provided step-by-step instructions. His wife’s interest even extended to bonsai techniques and herbal plants, which they picked up by watching various creators online. *“Yung mga pinapanood ng Misis ko, yung mga tungkol sa mga halaman na naggagamot... mga herbal medicine. Marami siyang napapanood na ganoon e. Nakikinoood na rin ako hanggang sa naano ko. Kaya lang di ko lang gaano matandaan yung mga pangalan ng herbal na pinapanood niya.”* he noted, emphasizing the breadth of topics they accessed.

Interestingly, while Rufino doesn't listen to gardening programs on the radio or television—largely due to their lack of access, he made a conscious effort to search for videos related to his interests online through social media platforms like YouTube. *“Wala kaming TV e. Sa cellphone lang ako nanonood e. Pag nakikita ko, pag nanonood ako ng, ano ng, sa YouTube, minsan kapag nakikita ko. Tinatype ko yung mga gusto kong panoorin. Tapos yung mga halaman, ayun.”* he explained, illustrating a level of self-directed learning facilitated by technology.

Communication wasn't just digital—it was also deeply personal and domestic. His wife became both his gardening and information partner. Together, they engaged in micro-entrepreneurship, occasionally selling excess plants through live selling, basing their prices on what they learned from YouTube. *“Manonood siya sa YouTube kung magkano yung mga presyong ganoon, binebenta din niya ng ganoong presyo din. Minsan singkwenta, isang daan, one fifty. Ganoon ang halaga, kumporme sa halaman din ang presyo.”* Rufino said, showing how digital content influenced their practical decisions.

Still, communication barriers persisted. Despite his interest, Rufino was unaware of any local urban gardening initiatives in their *barangay*. *“Hindi ko ano e, kasi busy ako sa pagta-tricycle e,”* he admitted, highlighting how livelihood responsibilities can hinder engagement with local programs. Moreover, the lack of a personal cellphone also limited his direct access to gardening networks and updates, with Rufino simply saying, *“Wala kasi akong cellphone e,”* and laughing off the inconvenience.

Urban gardening, for Rufino, is more than just a hobby, it's a response to economic pressures. *“Parang ang kagandahan niya lalo na sa panahon natin ngayon, kailangan talagang mag-ano ng ano, mga gulay, para maka-ano sa mga ulam,*

pandagdag din panggisa dahil sa mahal ng bilihin. Kaya malaking bagay din yung nagtatanim ka rin e. Para pangsarili mo sa bahay e.” he stressed. The garden supplements their meals, particularly with produce like *sili*, a favorite of his children.

Ultimately, Rufino’s experience with communication though informal and digital, plays a vital role in transferring knowledge, shaping attitudes, and enabling practical action. Whether through conversations with his wife, shared video viewings, or cellphone browsing, urban gardening for Rufino and his family thrives because of communication’s quiet but consistent presence.

Tatay Jonell’s Green Habit in Manggahan





At 57, Tatay Jonell had spent decades behind the handlebars of a tricycle, weaving through the familiar streets of Greenpark Village in Manggahan since 1992. But in between rides and idle hours, Tatay Jonell found himself drawn to a different kind of journey, one rooted in soil and sprouting in unexpected places.

“Trip ko lang,” he chuckled when asked about why he started planting. *“Walang ginagawa e. Nabobore ako e.”* His words met with laughter from his fellow drivers, many of whom had witnessed Tatay Jonell plucking mango leaves off the sidewalk or watering the chili plants growing near the terminal. What seemed random to some was, to him, a quiet rebellion against boredom and perhaps, a gentle reclaiming of space. *“Yung mga ano lang, kunwari kumain kami mangga, syempre yung pinagtabasan noon binhi na. O, tanim dyan.”*

Tatay Jonell’s approach to urban gardening was deeply intuitive. No formal training, no seminars, not even consistent guidance from TV or radio. *“Wala,”* he said simply when asked if he knew of any local programs promoting planting. *“Sa aking pagiisip lang. Sayang yung lupa,”* he explained, pointing at the ground. *“Kung*

magtatanim ka, yung nakukuhanan mo. Katulad niyan, bunga ng bunga.” He admitted that sometimes, he watches YouTube videos to look for simple methods for planting vegetables, *“sa YouTube kapag nag-aano... tungkol sa pagtatanim, ganyan. Dito dito lang.”* At home, urban gardening was more of a quiet family tradition than a coordinated effort. *“Di na ako nagtanim, yung mga kapatid ko na yung nagtanim noon”,* he shared.

Communication, for Tatay Jonell, wasn’t institutional or structured—it was informal, passed through observation, casual conversations, or the occasional video clip online. He admitted he’d be open to joining a training, but only *“depende sa oras. Oo, depende sa oras kasi minsan syempre, lalo na ngayon matumal ang byahe, wala pang face-to-face. Kumbaga sa ano e, kayod marino kami ngayon. Di ba?”* For now, the shared knowledge between fellow drivers—some of whom also helped prune and water plants at the terminal—was enough. *“Kung may mamunga, bahala na silang sumungkit,”* he added, suggesting that whatever grew belonged to everyone in the terminal.

Despite his humble tone and the offhanded *“trip-trip lang”* remarks, Tatay Jonell’s initiative reflects a quiet form of community building and environmental stewardship. He doesn’t sell the fruits, nor does he expect rewards. Instead, he treats gardening as a communal act, something that brings color to the concrete surroundings of the terminal and cultivates conversations between friends.

When he heard there might be a seminar with free fertilizer and kits, he smiled and said, *“E yan, kasi sayang yung lupa e.”* The interviewer offered him a future text message invite, and he agreed—tentatively, but with interest. *“Pwede. Sakto kung libre.”*

Tatay Jonell may not call himself a farmer or a gardener. But in the corners of Manggahan, between passengers and long waiting hours, he plants more than just mangoes and sili. He plants curiosity, shares stories, and sows a quiet reminder: sometimes, growing something green begins with nothing more than boredom, a YouTube video, and a little patch of land no one else bothered to care for.

Cultivating Calm: Tatay Reynaldo's Journey with Plants and Partnership





At 70 years old, Tatay Reynaldo Sayco has spent the last two decades driving a tricycle through the streets of Manggahan, Pasig. But beyond his role as a seasoned tricycle driver, he has quietly nurtured another kind of journey—one rooted in home, health, and quiet conversations with the earth.

Their home garden, modest and limited to pots and containers, may be small in size, but for Tatay Rey and his wife, it has been a space of connection, wellness, and communication. *“Kami lang dalawa sa bahay. Walang space doon, puro halaman lang ang tanim namin.”* he shared, a simple truth that hints at the quiet companionship between him and his wife. While his role in the garden mostly involves watering the plants—*“Dilig, walang problema sa pagdidilig,”* he laughed—his wife is the true green thumb of the household. *“Mahilig ‘yan talaga magtanim ng halaman. Dalaga pa lang ‘yan, bumibili na ng halaman.. Tare, tare, serpentina, yung nginangata ba.,”* he said proudly.

Their gardening practice isn’t driven by profit or market trends. In fact, his wife spends more money buying plants than selling them, though some neighbors ask to buy what she’s grown. *“Bumibili siya pero may bumibili sa kanya, e di binebenta,”* he added with a chuckle.

Communication plays a quiet but critical role in their gardening life. While Tatay Rey avoids mobile phones – “*Wala nga akong cellphone,*” he said—his wife makes up for it, turning to YouTube videos to explore new gardening techniques. “*Nag-YouTube po si Misis, araw-araw tumatawag sa akin,*” he said, acknowledging how she frequently shares her learnings or checks on the plants even while away.

Their conversations about plants aren’t just about what grows in pots but about what helps them grow as a couple navigating the challenges of aging. With his diabetes and her high blood pressure, tending to plants became more than a hobby—it became therapy. “*Nawawala stress ng Misis ko. Yung Misis ko... kasi high blood e... Ako naman diabetic,*” Tatay Rey explained, suggesting that gardening helped lighten both their moods.

His connection to the land also stretches to Bulacan, where they own a more spacious property. “*Maluwag lupa ko sa Bulacan,*” he noted, hopeful that even if he moves to Canada someday to be with his children, someone in the family will continue tending the soil and his plants. They were stuck here because of the pandemic but are already making plans of migration. “*Malaki na (the vegetables and plants in Bulacan). Ginugulay din namin. Yung mga anak ko sa una, ang mag-aalaga doon, nagtatanim ng palay*”, he said.

When asked if he’s open to attending urban farming seminars or community events in Pasig, Tatay Rey nodded with enthusiasm. “*Oo, okay lang naman,*” he replied, his tone suggesting a willingness to engage more deeply—if only he had the time away from his daily routes. Tuesdays are his only day off due to vehicle coding restrictions.

Though technology and social media aren't part of Tatay Rey's communication channels, his connection to his wife, and the plants they care for form a rich, analog web of learning, support, and shared purpose.

In the simplest of gardens, grown from containers and watered by routine and care, Tatay Rey and his wife have sown something profound: a partnership rooted in patience, laughter, and the life-giving habit of talking things through—one plant at a time.

Seeds of Resilience: Tatay Felomino's Story of Gardening in the City





On the rooftop of a humble home in Napico, Manggahan, a kind of farming takes place. For Tatay Felomino, a 61-year-old tricycle driver and father of three, this rooftop garden is more than just a hobby. It is a story of inheritance, quiet communication, and love for life.

“Kung anong natutunan mo sa magulang mo, yun ang susundin mo,” Felomino says, his voice carrying the conviction of a farmer’s son. He grew up in Marinduque, where his parents were farmers, and he became a farmer himself. Everything he knows about planting came from them, *“Doon tayo lumaki sa probinsiya e,”* he explains, sharing how farming was not just a way to eat—but a way to live.

There were no textbooks, no gardening manuals. His education in agriculture and gardening came through everyday conversations with his parents, through observation, and through doing. That early, informal communication built a lifelong connection to the land, which resurfaced years later when Felomino moved to Manila and began driving a tricycle in Pasig City.

Urban life was fast-paced, and his work demanding - ten to eleven hours on the road daily. But the pull of planting never left him. With his wife's support, he began to turn their rooftop into a green refuge. At first, it was small—just a few pots, a few seeds. But when the COVID-19 pandemic hit, that garden grew. *“Di ba nagumpisa itong pandemic? Ayun, di ba maraming tao ang natutong magtanim ng karamihan gulay. Ayun ang tinatanim ko – mustasa... sa bahay. Lalong dumami yung tanim ko noong nagkaroon ng pandemic. Maraming tao ang nagtanim ng mga gulay gulay sa taas nila, nilalagay sa mga paso,”* he says. In a time when fear and food insecurity grew, so did his garden. *“Syempre medyo makakatipid ka dyan lalo na yung namumunga na, di ba? Mga gulay. Makakatipid ka dahil hindi mo na bibilhin yun.”*

His wife stood by him, not just as a homemaker, but as a silent partner in their green venture. They would often go up together to check the plants, water them, and talk about what to plant next for their personal consumption, *“Hindi naman, panggamit lang. Pang personal ano lang. Kapag paguwi mo punta ako sa taas, didiligan ko yung mga halaman ko doon.”*

Though their children weren't as involved, his garden remained a family project in spirit, shaped by the values he shared with his wife and inherited from his parents. Communication played a crucial role in how Tatay Felomino navigated his urban farming journey—but it wasn't the kind that most people think of. He did not have access to the internet. *“Sa internet, di ako masyado diyan,”* he admits. Nor did he

actively seek out formal training or *barangay* gardening programs. In fact, although he knew about seed giveaways and barangay efforts, he never participated. “*Hindi*,” he said plainly. “*Hindi ako galing diyan e. Kasi galing din ako sa barangay, hindi naman ako sa. Kasi yung barangay may project sila yung mga empleyado nagtatanim tanim. E hindi ako galing diyan e. Sa ibang department ako napunta. Pero alam kong nagbibigay sila ng mga libreng buto.*”

Instead, Tatay Felomino relied on traditional and informal forms of communication. He occasionally caught gardening tips from TV shows—“*Minsan napapanood ko. Kaya kung minsan ginagawa ko*,” he shared. But more often, his knowledge came from memory, from long-ago conversations with his parents, and from personal experimentation.

The absence of structured, formal channels of communication—like *barangay* seminars, community-based learning sessions, or even online tutorials—meant that urban gardening remained a personal pursuit rather than a communal movement. Even within his TODA (tricycle driver association), the topic rarely came up. “*Wala, wala*,” he said when asked if he talked about planting with his fellow drivers.

And yet, when asked if he would be open to attending or even speaking at a seminar, Tatay Felomino was surprisingly receptive. “*Pwede siguro... kung magte-training muna ako*,” he said with a laugh. While he humbly believes he still has more to learn, he recognizes the value of sharing what he knows.

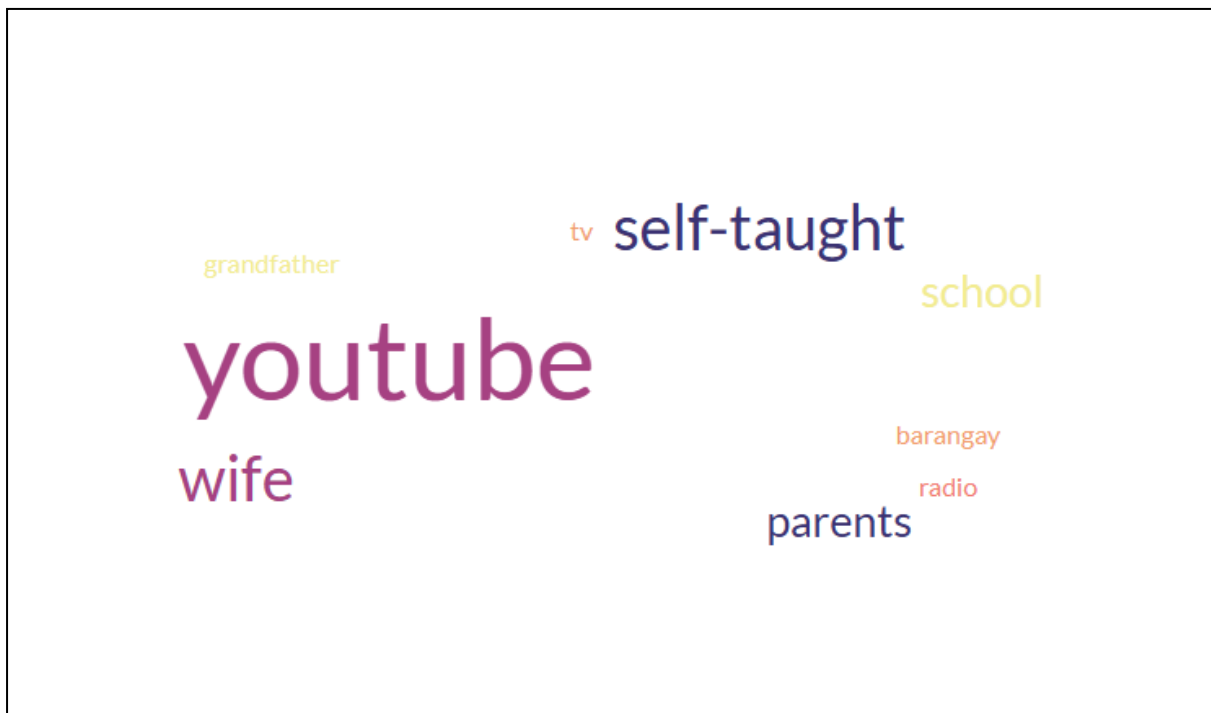
For now, his rooftop garden remains a quiet form of resistance and resilience—sustained by lived experience, the encouragement of his wife, and a lifetime of listening and learning from others. Communication, for Tatay Felomino, was never about technology or flashy campaigns. It was, and still is, about connection—across generations, through family, and through every seed that breaks through soil.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

This study investigated how communication influenced the awareness, adoption, and sustained practice of urban gardening among tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through qualitative narratives, the research surfaced themes related to communication channels, interpersonal relationships, and the socio-cultural meanings embedded in gardening practices.



Findings show that informal communication channels played a more dominant role than formal ones. Most respondents did not have access to, nor were they aware of, government-led or barangay-sponsored training programs. Instead, digital media platforms, especially YouTube, became their primary source of gardening knowledge.

Respondents like Tatay Emman, Tatay Rufino, and Tatay Zandy actively consumed gardening content online, learning new methods such as hydroponics, grafting, and seed preservation. These platforms served as accessible, self-directed learning tools that helped bridge the gap created by limited institutional support.

Family communication emerged as a central influence in sustaining gardening activities. Spouses often took the lead in initiating and managing home gardens, as seen in the stories of Tatay Reynaldo and Tatay Rufino. In many cases, gardening became a shared activity that helped couples cope with the stresses of the pandemic. Peer interactions, such as conversations among fellow tricycle drivers or neighborhood exchanges, also played an important role in sharing seeds, tips, and encouragement. While these were not organized formally, they created a strong sense of support and mutual learning within the community.

Moreover, the study found that communication reflected and reinforced deeply rooted cultural meanings. Urban gardening was not just a practical response to food insecurity but a continuation of familial and cultural traditions. Respondents like Tatay Felomino and Tatay Jonell viewed gardening as a legacy inherited from parents or provincial life. Gardening practices reflected Filipino values such as *bayanihan* (community cooperation), *diskarte* (resourcefulness), and *pagtutulungan* (mutual support). These values were often expressed through everyday conversations, shared meals from harvested crops, and communal efforts to green even the smallest urban spaces.

Conclusion

The stories of tricycle drivers in this study reveal that communication—across generations, families, peer groups, and digital platforms—was central to their urban gardening journey. Even in the absence of formal training, respondents were able to acquire and apply agricultural knowledge through accessible and relational channels of communication. Informal discussions, online tutorials, and family dialogues became powerful tools for learning and sustaining this practice.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when physical movement and economic activities were restricted, communication became even more significant. It enabled tricycle drivers to adapt, connect with others, and find emotional relief through gardening. Their continued engagement was not only a response to economic need but also an expression of cultural identity and resilience.

Finally, this study underscores that communication is not merely a tool for delivering information. It is a social process that cultivates shared meaning, strengthens relationships, and sustains life-affirming practices like urban gardening. For marginalized sectors like tricycle drivers, empowering these communication networks and enhancing their access to both digital and community-based resources can contribute to more inclusive, sustainable urban food systems and post-pandemic recovery.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to support and enhance the urban gardening practices of tricycle drivers and other similar grassroots communities:

1. Develop Community-Based Communication Campaigns - Implement campaigns such as #PlantTODA or #TODAMax to motivate tricycle drivers and their families to explore urban gardening as a sustainable and practical lifestyle.
2. Use TODA Meetings as Platforms for Learning - Integrate urban gardening modules or quick talks during TODA gatherings, which can serve as credible peer-to-peer learning hubs
3. Partner with Local Government Units (LGUs) and NGOs - Encourage collaboration between barangay officials and local agricultural offices to supply seedlings, tools, and training specifically targeted to TODA communities.
4. Design Mobile-First Learning Materials - Create short-form video content optimized for mobile phones, focusing on simple, step-by-step planting instructions relevant to small spaces.
5. Establish Urban gardening Zones Near TODA Terminals - Encourage TODA groups to participate in beautification and sustainability projects by maintaining vertical gardens or edible plant zones near tricycle terminals
6. Foster Family Involvement in Communication Design - Involve wives and children in storytelling, content creation, and visual promotion of TODA-led gardening initiatives to strengthen household commitment.

7. Promote Recognition and Incentives - Establish awards or feature TODA members who successfully adopt urban gardening, thus creating local role models and incentivizing participation.

Based on the findings of this study on the role of communication in the urban farming practices of tricycle drivers in Manggahan, Pasig, the following recommendations are proposed

Local government units and community-based organizations should develop targeted communication programs that further support urban gardening initiatives. These programs must consider the unique communication patterns and preferred channels of urban poor sectors such as tricycle drivers. The inclusion of peer-led training, family involvement, and community storytelling can increase engagement and knowledge retention.

The findings highlight the power of informal communication such as *kuwentuhan*, *tsismisan*, and word-of-mouth among tricycle drivers and their peers. Future urban gardening projects may benefit from tapping into these existing social relationships, as they help sustain motivation and spread practical techniques.

Future programs could explore how digital platforms (such as Facebook groups and messenger chats) can reinforce existing community ties and expand awareness of sustainable practices. There is an opportunity to train community leaders and members in utilizing low-cost, user-friendly digital tools for urban farming advocacy.

Schools and local youth organizations should be encouraged to integrate urban gardening into educational programs, emphasizing intergenerational communication. Doing so can bridge traditional practices and modern sustainability goals while fostering inclusive community development.

Future studies are also encouraged to explore the broader communication phenomenon during the COVID-19 pandemic. The global crisis served as a turning point in how communities shared information, adapted to restrictions, and relied on both digital and face-to-face channels. By examining how crisis communication influenced grassroots initiatives like urban gardening, researchers can uncover strategies that build resilience in similar contexts. Such studies may compare pre-pandemic and post-pandemic practices to highlight shifts in cultural norms and communication behaviors.

While this study focused on male tricycle drivers, future research may include other urban marginalized groups such as female micro-entrepreneurs, elderly residents, persons with disabilities, or youth to understand diverse perspectives on community-based urban farming and communication practices.

By addressing these recommendations, both researchers and practitioners can continue to build on the insights of this study to promote sustainable, inclusive, and communication-driven community development.

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Annexes

ANNEX A

Guide Questions for Interview with Tricycle Drivers

1. Pangalan
2. Edad
3. May Asawa? Anak?
4. Gaano na katagal nagta-tricycle?
5. Ano ang natapos? Elementary, Highschool, College?
6. Nagrerenta o sariling bahay?
7. Magkano ang kinikita sa pagta-tricycle?
8. Gaano na kayo katagal nagtatanim?
9. Bakit niyo naisipang magtanim ng halaman/ gulay/ prutas?
10. Ano-ano ang mga tinatanim ninyo?
11. Paano niyo natutunan ang pagtatanim?
 - a. Sa mga magulang? Sa kapamilya
 - b. Sa kapitbahay? Sa kaibigan?
 - c. May formal training?
 - d. Tinuro sa paaralan?
 - e. Napanood sa YouTube/ Facebook?
 - f. Nabasa sa newspaper? Napanood sa TV? Narinig sa radyo?
 - g. Programa ng barangay? Lungsod?
12. May mga impormasyon ba kayong napanood sa TV tungkol sa pagtatanim?
13. May mga impormasyon ba kayong napapakinggan sa radyo tungkol sa pagtatanim

14. May mga impormasyon ba kayong nababasa sa pahayagan/ newspaper tungkol sa pagtatanim?
15. May mga impormasyon ba kayong napapanood sa social media (Youtube/ Facebook) tungkol sa pagtatanim?
16. Mayroon bang programa ang barangay tungkol sa pagtatanim?
 - a. Anong programa, kung mayroon man?
 - b. Nagbigay ba sila ng mga leaflets tungkol dito?
 - c. May seminar ba na naganap tungkol dito?
17. Mayroon bang programa ang lungsod tungkol sa pagtatanim?
 - a. Anong programa, kung mayroon man?
 - b. Nagbigay ba sila ng mga leaflets tungkol dito?
 - c. May seminar ba na naganap tungkol dito?
18. Nakibahagi na ba kayo sa mga programa ng barangay/ lungsod tungkol sa pagtatanim?
19. Nagkaroon ba kayo ng formal training/ seminar tungkol sa pagtatanim?
20. Nais ninyo bang makibahagi sa training/ seminar sa pagtatanim?
21. Kayo ba ay kumikita dahil sa pagtatanim? May balak ba kayong ibenta yung mga pananim niyo sa hinaharap?
22. Sa tingin niyo ba, mahalaga ang pagtatanim ng gulay o prutas sa ating mga tahanan/ bakuran? Bakit o bakit hindi?
23. Contact number para kapag natuloy yung seminar tungkol sa Urban gardening, masabihan natin si Kuya

ANNEX B

Demographic and Socioeconomic Profile of Respondents

<u>Respondent</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Residence</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Years as Tricycle Driver</u>	<u>Province of Origin</u>	<u>House Ownership</u>
1	61	Napico	No formal agriculture education	Since 1995	Marinduque	Owens a house
2	70	Napico	Not specified	20+ years	Bulacan	Owens a house
3	57	Greenpark	2nd year college	Since 1992	Not specified	Owens a house
4	30s	Kaginhawaan	High school graduate	15+ years	Mindoro	Owens a house
5	53	Kaginhawaan	High school graduate	Not specified	Abra	Owens a house
6	52	Malvar	High school graduate	Not specified	Not specified	Owens a house