

Original Paper

Interweaving of Unique Stories Nested in Flesh:

A Perspective Analysis

Helmer B. Montejo^{1*} & Riza Archival²

¹ Ed.D, MAEd-Curriculum & Instruction, LPT, Talisay City College, Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines

² MAEd-AS, LPT, Talisay City College, Talisay City, Cebu, Philippines

* Helmer B. Montejo, Ed.D, E-mail: hmontejo@uspf.edu.ph and simplyhelmer@yahoo.com

Received: September 23, 2021

Accepted: October 2, 2021

Online Published: October 6, 2021

doi:10.22158/sss.v2n4p8

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/sss.v2n4p8>

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to critically analyze unique stories nested in flesh to exhaustively help readers and future researchers expand their appreciation and understanding on the expansive value of tattoos, its importance more than the symbols and images shown, and the recurring themes that can often tell you something about the person wearing the tattoo. Moreover, it seeks to understand how those without tattoos think towards those who have one. In this study, the researcher has used the qualitative method among 20 tattooed and 20 non-tattooed students in Talisay City College who were selected randomly. The results of the study show that non-tattooed respondents perceive as less acceptable than those students with tattoos. Most of the tattooed respondents' motives for having tattoos are for self-identity that tattoos can never be taken away from them as it permanently inked on the skin. Other students see it as self-expression, making them unique in shapes, sizes, and colors. The researcher recommends an orientation-seminar on acceptance and tolerance in order to remove typecasting and value the stories inscribed in flesh.

Keywords

unique stories, tattoos, symbols and images, motives, values

1. Introduction

Tattoos are more prevalent in the world than in the past and are expanding across demographics (DeMello, 1995); it becomes part of the mainstream culture in the twenty first century phenomenon. The prevalence of tattoos has nearly exploded as part of an international trend where increasing numbers of people is using tattoos as a part of their physical appearance. The nature of this phenomenon has changed dramatically and has entered the realms of normality, and has become

generally accepted but there is still an interface or division between those who regard tattoos as being beautiful and those who regard them as being ugly and degrading. Moreover, tattoos have been studied extensively by anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, nurses and doctors. Among other things, anthropologists have looked at the people who have tattoos. Psychologists have looked at the mental disorders associated with tattoos. Sociologists have looked at the deviance associated with tattoos and nurses and doctors looked at the motivations people obtaining or removing a tattoo.

In the Philippines, men and women adorned themselves with tattoos before the Spanish came in the Philippines. However, with the colonization of Spain, the art of tattooing slowly diminished. Individuals were mocked and shamed for bearing tattoos publically (Espiritu, 2015). Nowadays, the Philippines, whereas become liberated in social views, tattoos are typically looked down upon, seen as one thing that solely criminals or blue-collar individuals participate in. A Filipino who have several tattoos is also viewed by his fellow Filipinos as gang member or drug maltreater, or somebody who has been in jail (Celentano, 2016). Tattoos, notably in the chosen scene, Cebu and Talisay City are ascertained by the researchers. Individuals with tattoos are more often misjudged by people, even colleges. Those students who have marks on their skins are not allowed to enter in the campus unless they cover their tattoos with material or bandage. Though tattooing could be a terribly physical personal experience. The pain and excitement of obtaining tattooed cannot be understood without really experiencing the insertion of a needle with ink in the body. Nor can somebody perceive the social freedom or constraint resulting from having a tattoo. These experiential aspects of tattooing make it a ritual and cause affinity between those who have tattoos and exclude those that do not. However, regardless of the existing phenomenon on tattoos, researchers conduct such study to determine the communicative value of tattoos that for the following reasons: first, a tattoo is part of a person's physical appearance. People judge each other by other's physical appearance (Leary, 1995; Lennon, 1986) there is an importance in looking at the people's perception regarding tattoos. Second, the symbolisms of tattoos are means of interpreting reality and are considered to be a communicative tool. Lastly, people will be able to understand situations, social classes and comprehension brought by the symbols of tattoos. Thus, research should examine to what extent the tattooed person attempts to convey messages to others through his tattoos.

In this paper, the researchers will discuss the background of tattoos, brief history of tattoos and tackle the function of tattoos on a body. This includes discussion regarding how tattoos convey information because tattoos can be much more than just aesthetics etched on the skin. They harbor in themselves a story, a history, a love lost or a struggle overcome. They are identity, resistance or in more anthropological terms, a way to make the body space into the body place. This study assumes that people having tattoos are negatively perceived by people without tattoos. This thesis is therefore as much about identity, culture and history as it is about tattoos.

Overall, there are many ways a tattoo can be used to convey information about an individual. The motives for having a modern tattoo have been discussed in research, and may well be thought of as a

form of communication. Tattoos have been used in the past as adornment, as a mark of mystical power and as a mark of status and identification to others. Other imposed tattoos have been used specifically for communicative purposes regarding identification. As a result, those other imposed tattoos were highly visible. In the present, tattoos are becoming more common and are a part of one's physical appearance, and could be used for communicative purposes from the perspective of impression management. These tattooed persons are using their tattoos to convey information to others. Messages which can be sent through a tattoo can be one of self-expression, identity articulation, and group identity or association. These messages can be to the self or about the self to others.

1.1 Theoretical Background

This study is anchored on Brenda Dervin's Sense Making Theory. This theory is developed as a philosophically informed methodological approach for attending to and researching human sense-making and sense-unmaking. According to Dervin (1983), sense-making is central to all communicating situations may it be intrapersonal, interpersonal, etc. Since making is use to study how people construct sense of their worlds. Sense-making practice is common even in the past. The study of Dyvik and Welland (2018) on military tattoos and the experiences they capture give way to the understanding of reasons of war, its causes, and how they are etched in the body. The loss and grief, guilt and anger, and transformation and hope are all demonstrated in tattoos. This gives us the insight on how wars are operated and experienced through the narration of tattoos in the body.

Another theory that supports this study is the Communication Theory of Identity. According to Hecht (1993), identity is interactional. Identity is a communicative process and can be understood as an interaction in which messages are exchanged. Hecht (1993) also asserts that the communication theory of identity "extends beyond" individual and societal constructions to consider interaction... (p. 78). Identity is not only framed by society or the individual, but through interactions as well. Hecht discusses four frames of identity: personal, enacted, relational and communal. These are four perspectives from which we may view identity. These frames are interconnected; they interpenetrate each other and do not just stand on their own (Hecht, 1993).

The first perspective is the personal frame of identity. It is that which comes from the self. This frame is characteristics of identity stored as self-cognitions, self-feelings or as a spiritual sense of self. The second perspective is the enacted frame of identity, which comes from relationships. This frame is characteristics of identity as mutually made in social interaction. The last perspective is the communal frame of identity. It is that which comes from a group. This frame is characteristics of identity as reciprocally made in social interaction. The last perspective is the communal frame of identity. it is that which comes from a group. This frame is characteristic of identity as made in a cluster instead of made as a personal or interaction. These frames of identity are useful to know when watching different obligatory tattoos because different obligatory tattoos perform to convey a message concerning the identity of a personal. This identity is also personal, enacted, relational or communal. For instance, a tattooed person may use his or her tattoo to boost self-feelings and a personal sense of identity, which is

a personal frame of identity. This identity comes from the person, or self. In many cases, tattoos have been forced on others as a mark of identification. These forced, other imposed tattoos have functioned in different societies to mark or distinguish individuals, conveying information about the individual to the observer.

Impression management is a conscious attempt to control an image in a social interaction (Schlenker, 1980). Impression management theory helps to explain the decisions people make regarding the appearance they put forth to others. Because people evaluate each other based on how they look and act (Schneider, 1981; Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985; Leary, 1995), an individual will act and dress in certain ways to foster certain impressions or to influence other's perceptions of him or her (Schneider, 1981; Schlenker, 1980; Tedeschi & Norman, 1985; Leary, 1995). Attempts to control one's image are also known as self-presentation (Jones & Pittman, 1982), and are utilized to influence how other perceive one's personality traits, abilities, attitudes, physical characteristics, and social characteristics (Schlenker, 1980; Jones & Pittman, 1982). Impression management theory is best understood through its assumptions, key terms, the importance of physical appearance to impression management theory, and impression management theory propositions.

2. Related Literature and Studies

This study conjointly reviews connected literature and studies to form accessible materials that served to assist the researchers in examining the importance of the stories inscribed in flesh; tattoos. The stories behind these tattoos could also be emotional, practical, complex or very easy. One might even be the results of disparate motivations.

Although tattooing is growing within our society, there is still a wide-range of psychographic and demographic influence encompassing tattoos. A broad range of age groups have each negative and positive outlooks and tattooing when relating to it on a private level additionally as a professional level. There are many studies that have measured the communicative and perceptive values of numerous people that have given a variety of responses concerning tattoos.

In the early 16th century traditional tattooing is widespread in the Philippines but very little is known or written about the practice (van Dinter, 2005). In these times, tattooing was a common practice among the warrior tribes in the Cordillera region including the Kalinga's. During the arrival of the Spaniards headhunting and tattooing were being practiced more than extensively than in the time of the Americans (Krieger, 1926). During Spanish colonization the Kalinga were a people were taking was an intricate element of their culture. Killings and counter killings were quite common as were feuds between different villages and regions (Dozier, 1966). The tattoos, earned by a warrior after a successful headhunt, were a symbol of male courage and bravery and had the function of modern day military decorations (Scott, 1994, p. 20; de Raedt, 1969).

Many foreign ethnographers reinforced the idea that tattooing was done primarily and solely in connection with the practice of headhunting (Salvador-Amores, 2002). Until today much of the

tattooing and tattoo design in the Kalinga province are still best understood within the context of headhunting. Nonetheless anthropologists Ikin Salvador-Amores (2002) has shed light on the intricate practice of Kalinga tattooing. She shows the roles and functions of the Kalinga batek and how these tattoos are cultural symbols of intricate rituals. Nevertheless, Kalinga society is undergoing revolutionary change due to various processes which will be discussed in this thesis. It's within this context that we should view the changes that are taking place in the realm of Kalinga tattooing.

The German scientist Hans Meyer as cited by Salvador-Amores (2002) was perhaps the first to provide a detailed drawing of Igorot tattoos in the late 1890's. His tattoo drawings are accompanied by his description of the tattoos among Igorots of Benguet. The custom of tattooing the whole body with decorations exactly like a coat of mail with breastplate and back plates was widespread in the early 16th century and confirmed that tattooing did exist and was extensively practiced during the pre-historic period. Meyer's drawings show designs that are identical with tattoo patterns, which date back to an earlier period, as they appear on the mummy Appo Anno. The mummy is clad in body tattoos: from fingers to buttocks, chest, back and legs.

In addition, there are also mummies in some Benguet areas that bear tattoos very similar to those in Hans Meyer's drawings and the photographs of tattoos and symbols of the tattoos found on the mummies have been largely speculative. These cases in Benguet support Thiel's (1984) as cited by Salvador-Amores (2002) archaeological discovery of tattoo instruments in the Arku cave in Cagayan province, an indication of the widespread practice of tattooing. In this case, past and current archaeological evidence serve as the "explanatory bridges" in understanding people and culture (Salvador-Amores, 2002).

The first time the word tatau appeared in the English Language was in the written accounts of Captain Cook's first voyage to the island of Tahiti in 1769. The word referred to the markings found on the skin of Polynesians. When Magellan arrived on the islands of Samar and Leyte in 1521 and the Spaniards made their ways through Visayas, they encountered strangely painted, fierce looking men. They called them the "Pintados" (Scott, 1994). These men were not painted but had their full bodies tattooed.

In the Philippines the term for tattoos is batuk, which refers to the marking found on snakes and lizards (Scott, 1994). Among the different groups found in Northern Luzon the work batek (in Kalinga), fatek (in Bontoc) and fatok (in Benguet) are all derived from the sound of the tapping of a stick on the tattoo instrument, which pierces the skin (Salvador-Amores, 2002).

Tattooing and tattoos are very much connected to, or rooted in place. Tattoo styles are therefore often described as connected to place such as the ubiquitous Japanese design, a Maori tattoo or the Samoan style. This connection to place is not only a characteristic of tattooing but is found within most cultural practices (Kuwahara, p. 19).

People however, do not confine themselves to one place but rather move between places (whether forced or freely). This is also the case for a lot of Filipino's. According to James Tyner (2009; p. xiv) nearly five million migrant workers from the Philippines are employed in over 190 countries and

territories. Due to the historical ties with the United States, many Filipino's have migrated to the U.S. and form communities in for example Los Angeles.

When analyzing space and place, space only becomes place when people conceptualize it. Political and economic powers act upon space and transform it into place where the relations between tattooing, identity and social relationships are intertwined (Kuwahara, p. 20). In terms of tattooing, the body can also be viewed as another important space. Tattooing one's body is exactly the process of making one's body space into place. By tattooing it we possess, territorialize, conquer and cultivate our body.

The historical stigma attached to tattoos has simultaneously constrained and guided how tattoos are perceived. Stigma (or to prick, from Latin/Greek origins) refers to tattoos (Jones, 2000). According to Marge Demello's *Bodies of Inscription: Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community* (2000); the dichotomy between the old and new inherent in the world of tattooing can be found in several avenues. The portrayals of tattoo clients several years ago are changing, and this conflict is visible even in the research literature. DeMello (2000) finds in the discourse of tattooed people and their artists a new and particular sense of community and explores the unexpected relationship between this discourse and that of other social movements.

Humans in many different cultures have been wearing tattoos for various reasons. Uses of tattoos in past cultures include tattoos as adornment, as a mark of mystical power, and as a mark of status (Dinter, 2000; Gilber, 2000). These cultures which applied tattoos, are widespread across the globe, and tattoos can be seen in images of the Maori of New Zealand, the Dayak of Borneo, the Haida of North America (Atkinson & Young, 2001; Dinter, 2000; Gilbert, 2000) and the Igorots and Bontoc of Philippines.

Tattoos as adornment. Many cultures have used tattoos as adornment for aesthetic purposes. Tattoos were viewed as ornamental of the women of the Rukyu Islands (Dinter, 2000). Many Maori women tattooed their lips with solid or horizontal blue lines at the time of puberty as red lips were considered undesirable (Simmons, 1986) and lips tattooed blue were considered beautiful. In the Philippines, the most distinctive and great permanent decoration of the Igorot was the tattoo. For Igorot tattoos, the markers on the body when regarded on the context of the culture itself provide a clear notion of the Igorot sense of logic and beauty; however, in most of the literature, these markers are frequently interpreted as deviations associated with the themes of otherness and difference (Salvador-Amores, 2002).

Tattoos as a mark of status. Tattoos have been used in many cultures as mark of status. These marks distinguished characteristics such as lineage, power, and nobility (Dinter, 2000; Gilbert, 2000). For instance, the Maori had elaborate designs placed on their face to depict attributes such as ancestral lineage, rank within society, and women's availability for marriage (Simmons, 1986). In seventh century Japan, the lower classes, the hinin and eta, were marked with a basic cross-tattooed on their inner forearm, or a basic straight line was made either on the upper forearm or on the upper arm itself near the armpit (Richie, 1980). In Bontoc, Mountain Province, tattoo is common to elders especially to men. Tattoos constituted a record of engagement in tribal warfare. These were symbols of male valor:

which were applied only after a man had performed well in battle with fitting courage. Warriors accumulated tattoos with each act of bravery, somewhat like modern military decorations. Headhunting was the only known reasons for tattooing and to this day, no one knows exactly what tattoos signify. For many elders in the area, tattoos are the vestiges of a valuable culture and tradition (De Readt, 1989; Scott, 1969; Salvador-Amores, 2002). The “dinuras” or people without tattoos are regarded as weak beings and considered as a bad omen for the community.

Tattoos as a mark of mystical power. Many cultures have used tattoos as a mark of their mystical powers. The tattoos were used as lucky charms, as magical defense and granting the wearer the same attributes as the animal depicted in the tattoo (Dinter, 2000). Examples of tattoos used as magical defense can be seen on the hunters of Thailand who tattooed a picture of a tiger on themselves for protection (Dinter, 2000). In South East Asia, fisherman used dragons, snakes and water animal tattoos as protection (Dinter, 2000). Tattoos were also used by people to adopt the characteristics as the animal on the tattoo. In the Philippines, Filipinos ink their bodies with protective or orasyon tattoo. The word oracion is the Spanish word for prayer. The source of many, if not all, orasyones is a librito, a booklet jealously kept by its owner to preserve the potency of the orasyones contained herein. The orasyon in folk belief is considered as a type of anting-anting which can either be used as an amulet that has a preventive force against witchcraft, sickness, accidents and the like or as a talisman that brings good luck or transmit new qualities. An orasyon written on paper by a tambalan (healer) might be enclosed in a container by the recipient and worn around the neck. In order to avoid losing the orasyon some people have it buried under the skin or tattooed on the skin particularly on the arms, hands, legs, chest and back. This makes the orasyon an indelible anting-anting and explains the existence of the orasyon tattoos.

According to the book entitled “Gendered Lives: Communication, Gender and Culture” by Julia T. Wood (2008) says that nonverbal communication carries more meaning than verbal communication and it is comprised of everything that does not include words themselves. There are six subcategories of nonverbal communication that include artifacts, personal space, touch, facial and body motion, paralanguage, and physical appearance. A tattoo is an artifact because it is something that a person chooses to put on their bodies to express identity. By putting this artifact on our bodies we are communicating a message to the people around us. Tattoos are also considered as a communicative art. In a book entitled “Methods Meets Art: Arts-Based Research Practice” by Patricia Leavy (2009) she specified that the context in which art is viewed can shape meaning. A film maker named Alix Lambert stated that:

“All around the world tattoos say a lot nonverbally. Tattoos are nonverbal communication and trust between people.”

Filmmaker Lambert began her study of the nonverbal language of body art by delving into the use of tattoos to create a social hierarchy in the Russian prison system. She did this through her documentary “The Mark of Cain (2000).” She also continued this study by immersing herself in the modern culture

of the art form. And what Lambert was to learn over the years is that tattoos have an international language of their own. Through interviewing prisoners and criminologists in some of the Russia's most infamous prisons, Lambert discovered that, in the past, tattoos shaped the inner-workings of prison establishments. From the number of cupolas in a church tattoo equating to the number of an inmate's convictions, to tattoos of Stalin and Lenin demonstrating what would be the eventual method of execution for a prisoner, tattoos were a declaration of one's status in a Russian prison. As an observer of human interaction and human nature, she was learning that, throughout history, people have not just relied on words to communicate, and tattoos can loudly convey a variety of things. The past use of tattoos to establish status is not the only way tattoos in the Russian prison system have had a deep meaning, however. The current disappearing importance of tattoos in the internal Russian prison hierarchy speaks nonverbally to the changing landscape of the institution. By comparing the older generation of inmates to the current generation, Lambert learned tattoos are becoming less of a social signifier in Russian institutions. Due to overcrowding and other factors, the tattooing traditions in Russian prisons are beginning to clearly dissipate. While the symbolism of specific tattoos may be dying, getting prison tattoos in general is not. For prisoners, tattoos give them a voice in an establishment that previously stripped them of such.

Overall, tattoos are still evaluated negatively. Within the past, tattoos were related to the underprivileged. In the present, tattoos are related to medicine disorders. Research has shown that women and adolescents with tattoos are also evaluated negatively because of their tattoos. These negative evaluations are distinguished, and yet, individuals are still selecting to tattoo their bodies.

From the viewpoint of impression management theory, having a negatively evaluated tattoo is contradictory to portrayal of a positive image. The performance would be thought of a failure if the actor is trying to solicit a positive analysis, however his or her tattoo elicits a negative analysis. So as to attain the specified positive audience analysis, and have a successful performance, the actor would either ought to not get a tattoo or opt to cover the tattoo. Despite the negative analysis, if the actor still chooses to get a tattoo, the power to hide the tattoo is imperative to think about so as to make sure a successful performance.

These previous literatures and studies are somewhat associated with the researchers' current study because they are equally designed to explore the degree to that the respondents contemplate their tattoos communicative and to probe the numerous distinction between the perception of individuals with and without tattoos. Findings determine to what extent tattoos convey messages as a non-verbal kind of communication. Respondents were recruited in hand-picked tattoo retailers too however with a distinct location and variety of respondents. In the same manner the present study uses both quantitative and qualitative technique, these past related literatures and studies uses them too so as to know more the role that communication plays with respect to individuals with tattoos.

2.1 The Problem

The main purpose of this study is to determine the discourse analysis of stories inscribed in flesh and

the perspective analysis between different selected individuals with and without inks buried under their skins in Talisay City College.

Specifically this endeavors to answer the following questions:

1. What do the images and symbols of tattoos signify?
2. What are the motives for having tattoos?
3. What are the perceptions of tattooed and non-tattooed students?

2.2 Significance of The Study

This study will be a significant endeavor in establishing a deeper understanding on tattoos to the following:

Tattooed Students. This study can help those tattooed people to understand the communicative value of their tattoos.

Non-tattooed Students. This study can help non-tattooed people to diminish stereotyping is specifically to those who perceived tattoos as negative.

Sociologists. This study can help the sociologists in analyzing the social projections of tattooed people in a particular social context and the behaviors of non-tattooed towards those tattooed individuals them certain social relationships.

Researchers. The study aspires to understand how tattooed people manage impression, the tattooed person's level of awareness of their public image as perceived by others. It also examines the perceived evaluation of people with tattoos: either or negative. It can also be a form of reference for the future researchers in a conduct of study about tattoos.

3. Method

This section clears out the processes used to answer the research questions. This section includes the research methods, respondents, environment, statistical treatment, procedures and other related concepts necessary for data gathering. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, primarily qualitative knowledge was sought. to reach a sample size which will give decent knowledge to explore the research queries, a survey method will be selected.

RESEARCH LOCALE

The research study selected twenty (20) students with tattoos and twenty (20) others without tattoos, all studying in Talisay City College. The respondents with tattoos were mainly tattoo artists and clients in tattoo shops. As for the respondents without tattoos, random sampling was applied specifically to individuals without tattoos. The inception of Talisay City College was in 2004. With the current number of students reaching up to 3,900, the significance of conducting the study is very high.

RESEARCH RESPONDENTS

The informants of this study are 20 tattooed students and 20 non-tattooed students in Talisay City College.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

This analysis is a qualitative design in nature therefore it utilised the researcher-made questionnaire as the research instrument. Every of the interview of the informants lasted for half-hour to an hour. This included queries relating to the informants' tattoos. These queries assessed the communicative value of tattoos, the perception of others relating to tattoos and symbols and meanings. An audio recorder was employed in transcribing the stories inscribed in flesh. A camera was used to take photos of various tattoos for analysis with relation to its meaning and interpretation.

DATA GATHERING PROCEDURE

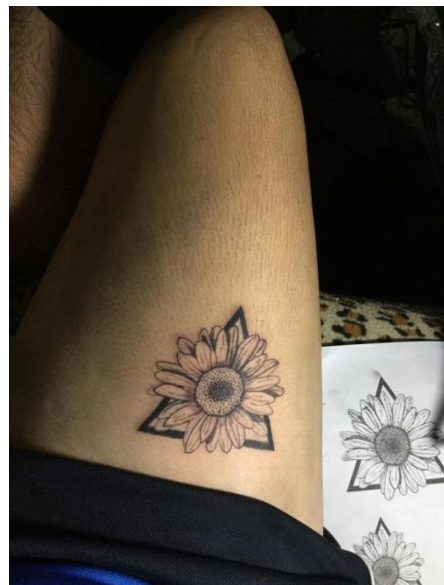
First, the researcher got hold of some books and e-books on tattoos and its history to check clearly the related studies of tattoos in terms of their meaning, communicative values and perceptions. Then qualitative information was collected using observation, listening and interviewing techniques. Students were informed concerning the aim of the study and have received a consent type to participate.

A face-to-face interview was administered one by one. Confidentiality was observed and recorded through an audio recorder lasting from half-hour to an hour then transcribed by the researcher. To investigate and measure information gathered, thematic analysis was used by the researcher.

4. Result and Discussion

SIGNIFICATION OF TATTOO IMAGES AND SYMBOLS

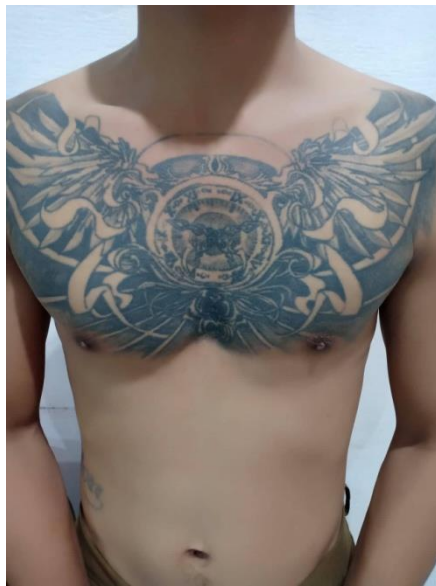
The different symbolic meaning of tattoos marked on the respondents' skin and the most common significant is love, family and devotion. It implies that most of the tattooed individuals value relationship, particularly with family, friends and to their God. These significations belong to the relational frame of identity according to the communication theory of Hecht (1993), which states that this frame is characterized as mutually constructed in social interaction.



MOTIVE FOR HAVING TATTOOS

There are several motives for having a modern tattoo. A tattooed individual may want to acquire his or her tattoos for a specific reason or reasons, some of which are communicative. Studies have found that people have obtained tattoos for reasons of identity and expression. Identity articulation is separated into cluster identity and self-identity. Expression can also be separated into style can be thought of communicative if the tattooed person needs to use his or her tattoos to convey messages concerning him or herself.

The dominant motive of the tattooed individuals of having such inks on their skin is for self-identity- a way of expressing who and what they are because according to Hecht (1993), identity is interactional and it is a communicative process by which it can be perceived and understood. Their motive belongs to the personal frame of identity which comes from the self. This frame is characteristics of identity stored as self-cognitions, self-feelings or as a spiritual sense of self.



PERCEPTIONS OF TATTOOED RESPONDENTS ON TATTOOS

Tattooed students have positive perceptions on tattoos. The dominant perceptions are appropriateness on the body and tattoos as a form of art. Common responses are as follows:

"In deciding to have tattoos, we have to think a million times because tattoos are memories you can have it until death."

"I love portrait tattoos, they are realistic and more meaningful. From the expression of the faces itself, you can already perceived that there is a certain story to tell."

"Tattoos have stories to tell. I want my own story to be tattooed on my body."

"Tattoos are form of art and self-expression."

Sense-making as discussed by Dervin (1983) is manifested through the above statements of the respondents. The stories behind each tattoo is colorfully discussed and these respondents express and narrate their experience through body tattoos.

PERCEPTIONS OF NON-TATTOOED RESPONDENTS ON TATTOOS

The researcher found out that the non-tattooed respondents firmly stand that the body is sacred because it is the holy temple of Christ. Common responses are as follows:

"Our body belongs to Christ and we are His temple. Moreover, having tattoos can cause my job in the future."

"I like the idea of having tattoo, but the result may not be that beautiful. Expectation versus reality. Also, my faith will not allow it."

"I don't like the idea of tattoos because our body is holy. Our body needs to be respected and given utmost care."

However, the negative perceptions of students without tattoos to those who have are being criminal or drug addict. The following are some of the responses:

"I count those people who have tattoos as mostly idiots and ignorant. They are violators of social norms. Liberal at its best and have no cultural and social sensitivity."

"Based on my upbringing if you have tattoos, you are considered a criminal or a drug addict."

"I found tattoos dirty and people with tattoos look like addicts and ex-convicts. Only prisoners will have one."

"They look like monsters and some of them are having evil faces on their bodies."

According to Impression Management Theory, an individual will act and dress in certain ways to foster certain impressions or to influence others perceptions of him or her. The findings show relevance to the theory in which people attempt to control their one's image as a self-presentation including personality traits, abilities, attitudes, physical characteristics and social characteristics, this is according to Schlenker (1980), Jones, and Pittman (1985).

Other responses of non-tattooed respondents on tattoos were positive towards it though they do not like the idea of having one on their bodies.

"Tattoos are a form of art and way of expressing yourself. It is not a problem."

"...they are able to express themselves through tattoos which are a form of art."

"They bravely express themselves through tattoo. It does not make you evil or drug addict."

"I am afraid of the pain it might cause me. People with tattoos are artistic and they are brave enough to have tattoos despite knowing that other people would judge them. Most of my friends having tattoos are good people."

5. Findings

The researcher found out that almost all of the symbols and pictures of tattooed students in Talisay City College signify love, family and devotion, whereas their motive for having these tattoos is often for self-identity. However, tattooed students are negatively perceived by those students without tattoos, whereby they're unremarkably thought of as addicts and ex-convicts. On the other hand, most of the tattooed students perceived tattoos as a form art.

6. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher had concluded that tattooed students do consider tattoos communicative. They mark themselves with inks, not only to be in contact with other people however additionally with oneself. Moreover, they may mean something totally different to the wearers than the students who understand them just like how non-tattooed students view them negatively.

7. Recommendation

Based on the findings and conclusions, the researcher urged that students with tattoos ought to primarily contemplate the essence and purpose of getting tattoos and the way other students perceived them. They must conjointly contemplate the meaning of the tattoos they marked on their bodies for which it will have an effect on their worth as a person. The researcher conjointly suggested for the non-tattooed people to be inspired to attend on a seminar to boost awareness regarding the communicative values of tattoos, and to minimize the stigma of the students who have tattoos.

References

- Adams, T. (2004). *Canadian Review of Sociology/Revue canadienne de sociologie*. Wiley.
https://www.researchgate.net/journal/1755-6171_Canadian_Review_of_Sociology_Revue_canadienne_de_sociologie
- Antoszewski, B. et al. (2009). Tattooing and Body Piercing - What Motivates You To Do It? *International Journal of Psychiatry*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0020764009106253>
- Atkinson, M. (2010). *Tattooing and Civilizing Processes: Body Modification as Self-control*. American Psychological Association. <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2004-15849-001>
- Brinton, D. (2015). *Religions of Primitive Peoples*. Amazon.com Services LLC.
<https://www.amazon.com/Religions-primitive-peoples-Garrison-Brinton-ebook/dp/B013Q75OD6>
- DeMello, M. (2000). Bodies of Inscription: A Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community. *American Journal of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv1168d0t>
- Dervin, B. (1983). *An Overview of Sense-Making Research: Concepts, Methods, and Results to Date*. <https://faculty.washington.edu/wpratt/MEBI598/Methods/An%20Overview%20of%20Sense-Making%20Research%201983a.htm>
- Doss, K. (2005). *The Communicative Value of Tattoos: The Role of Public Self-Consciousness on Tattoo Visibility*.
- Doss, K. et al. (2009). *The Communicative Value of Tattoos: The Role of Public Self-Consciousness on Tattoo Visibility*. Informa UK Limited. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090802637072>
- Dyvik, S. L., & Welland, J. (2018). War Ink: Sense-Making and Curating War Through Military Tattoos. *International Political Sociology*, 12(4), 346-361. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ips/oly018>
- Fink, B. (2009). Differences in Personality Attributions toward Tattooed and Nontattooed Virtual Human Characters. *Journal of Individual Differences*.

- Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art: arts-based research practice*. Guilford Publications. https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/Method_Meets_Art.html?id=e7H6SejkvUEC&redir_esc=y
- Lei, D. (2009). *The Blood-Stained Text in Translation: Tattooing, Bodily Writing, and Performance of Chinese Virtue*. Anthropological Quarterly. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236808513_The_Blood-Stained_Text_in_Translation_Tattooing_Bodily_Writing_and_Performance_of_Chinese_Virtue
- Meyer, A. (1885). *Album von Philippinen-typen*. W. Hoffmann. Retrieved from https://books.google.com.ph/books/about/Album_von_Philippinen_typen.html?id=0NNTtwAACAAJ&redir_esc=y
- Orend, A. (2009). Corporate Logo Tattoos and the Commodification of the Body. *Journal of the Contemporary Ethnography*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241608330014>
- Salvador-Amores, I. (2020). *South Asia and Southeast Asia Berg Encyclopedia of World Dress and Fashion*. Berg Publishers. Retrieved from <https://www.bloomsbury.com/uk/berg-encyclopedia-of-world-dress-and-fashion-vol-4-9781847883933/>
- Sanders, C. (2000). Bodies of Inscription: A Cultural History of the Modern Tattoo Community by Margo DeMello. *American Journal of Sociology*. <https://doi.org/10.1086/318987>
- Simmons, D. R. (2010). *Ta moko: the art of Maori tattoo*. Reed. Retrieved from <https://www.amazon.com/Ta-moko-art-Maori-tattoo/dp/0790005689>
- Tyner, J. (2009). *The Philippines: mobilities, identities, globalization*. Routledge. Retrieved from <https://www.crcpress.com/The-Philippines-Mobilities-Identities-Globalization/Tyner/p/book/9780415958073>
- Vassileva, S. et al. (2007). *Medical Applications of tattooing*. Clinics in Dermatology. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clindermatol.2007.05.014>
- Wohlrab, S. et al. (2009). *Journal of Individual Differences*. Hogrefe. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/journal/1614-0001_Journal_of_Individual_Differences
- Wood, J. (2010). *Gendered lives: communication, gender, and culture 9th Edition*. Cengage Learning. <https://www.amazon.com/Gendered-Lives-Communication-Gender-Culture/dp/0495794163>
- Wymann, C. et al. (2010). Tattoo: a multifaceted medium of communication. *Journal of media and communication research*. Retrieved from <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Tattoo%3A-a-multifaceted-medium-of-communication-Wymann/cefe04f426e5bd2a6ae443718e668655a5ae0ad7>