

# **Grit as a virtue of the Waray-waray in reinforcing their faith and participation in the mission of the church**

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## **Abstract**

This research explored the grit of the Waray-waray/Samaron following the concept of Angela Duckworth's grit lived through its physical, social, moral, spiritual, and psychological aspects. It inquired on the role of grit in their daily experiences, the values that entail it, and how it strengthens their faith and participation in the mission of the Church. The researcher used the narrative descriptive method and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis in analyzing the data that were gathered through face-to-face and online interviews of the members of the local community of Borongan, Eastern Samar. The results show the role of grit as expressed and lived out as a positive self-image, as a cultural identity, as a moral compass, as an expression of faith, and as a source of strength. The values that entail grit which was categorized under the several aspects of their lived experiences of grit include determination, love for truth, resiliency, self-expression, steadfastness, trust in God, etc. The faith character of grit was identified as faith and grit in challenging times, faith and grit in the service of others, faith and grit in worship, and faith and grit in righteousness, while its missionary character includes a three-dimensional track patterned in the doctrine, moral, and worship dimension of catechesis are prophetic-dimension, witnessing-dimension, and celebration-dimension. The faith and missionary characters may be incorporated in conducting catechesis in various religious activities and classroom instruction on values and religion or Christian living subjects.

**Keywords:** grit, values, faith, and mission, Waray-waray, cultural identity

## **Background of the Study**

The Waray-waray (native of Samar) people are known for their grit or “tapang”, and in the dialect, “maisog” or “isog.” This has been their label ever since and when other people learn about their identity, they would go, “Ah, Waray ka? Diba, matatapang kayo?” (“You’re a Waray, so you’re gritty?) For a time, and until this time, their identity connotes a negative impression. However, as history and write-ups say, the grit of the Waray-waray goes beyond just being quarrelsome, always ready to fight or never backs out from a fight, as stated in the lyrics of the song, ‘Waray-Waray’ popularized by Sylvia La Torre.

Other people’s understanding of grit developed into a more positive tone as it is associated with their culture and unique characteristics as Samareños. This grit can be understood as strength and courage in the face of many circumstances in life. One factor they say has something to do with the location of the province, where the route of typhoon usually starts from. Our people in Samar can withstand inconvenient situations such as the wrath of typhoons and even earthquakes. And each time, people face destruction, waste, hunger, grief, trauma, and misery, yet their faith in God sustains them to move on and start life anew without fear. And so, this is the point for delving into a better understanding of this grit as it may further lead to finding opportunities for such a unique cultural characteristic. Does this grit really give meaning to the vicissitudes of life in the people of Samar? How can this grit which usually has a negative impression develop into a more notable legacy for all Samareños or Waray-waray?

This study which was aimed at knowing how this grit is meaningfully manifested in the daily life of the Waray-waray, justifies that their grit is more than the superficial and negative impression that connotes fighting, but that of a much more purposeful association. It validated that their grit brings about material and non-material outputs, be it physical, social, psychological, cultural, and spiritual, which can be beneficial to the entire province’s welfare. Now, it hopes to lessen the collective understanding of that characteristics of the Waray-waray which make others cringe and back out. It is indeed about time to strengthen that identity and give back to help make the province shine more in all aspects of their lives. They can confidently make use of their grit as a response to the call of the times when our inspiration of faith and service in the Church is needed. Also, their grit translated into concrete acts of service may rouse other nearby provinces and even the global community to do the same especially

in these trying times, when virtues of faith, hope and love are being downplayed. Furthermore, the ramifications of grittiness will help contribute to revitalizing the life of the Catholic Church whose existence for already 500 years in the archipelago has been beset with various attacks, through their witnessing of faith and active participation in the mission of the Church.

### **Statement of Research Problem**

The research intended to answer the relevant question, *“How does grit as a virtue of the Waray-waray reinforces their faith and participation in the mission of the Church?”*

### **Statement of Specific Objectives**

This research has the following specific objectives:

1. Explore how the Waray-warays’ grit reinforce their faith and participation in the mission of the Church;
2. Examine these reasons through the participant’s sharing of their lived experiences of grit following Angela Duckworth’s grit model, with the use of interpretative phenomenological analysis; and
3. Develop a model which can be of help to all Samareños in making a meaningful response to the call of faith and participation in the mission of the Church.

### **Significance of the Study**

Discovering grit as a virtue of the Waray-waray in reinforcing their faith and participation in the mission of the Church may lead to the following results:

1. To make use of their grit as a response to the call of the times where our inspiration of faith and service in the Church are needed;
2. To translate their grit into concrete acts of service of love, forgiveness, and compassion, which may rouse other nearby provinces and even the global community to do the same especially in these trying times, when virtues of faith, hope and love are being downplayed;

3. To help contribute to revitalizing the life of the Catholic Church through their witnessing of faith and active participation in the mission of the Church;
4. Develop a model which can be of help to all Samareños in making a meaningful response to the call of faith and participation in the mission of the Church through catechesis and teaching values and religion whether in the classrooms, community or the Church.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Grit is defined in the Merriam-Webster dictionary as “firmness of mind and spirit: unyielding in the face of hardship or danger.” While Angela Duckworth, et.al. define it as perseverance and passion for long-term goals. They further stress that “grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over the years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress” (Ducworth, et.al., p. 1087).

Grit, therefore, connotes a positive attitude that can usher an individual to move forward during difficulties and even failures. Many Waray-waray individuals have attested to this description through their behavior in particular circumstances. Such is the case of Waray women from the thesis of Chaya Ocampo-Go on Kababayen-an han Karak-an (Women of Storm Surges), which affirms the fearlessness of the Samareñas in the many challenges they face in life. She says that her study offers a Waray a theory of survivance defined by an ancient ferocity in the Eastern Visayas, which claims a full humanity persisting through disaster deathscapes and the colonial present.” (p2)

She further states that “by naming their living world and experiences, I argue that Waray women survivors reclaim an indigenous worldview and epistemology wherein they are able to enact their ancient ferocity to survive every day and extraordinary circumstances.”

The Waray-waray’s grit is popularly described as, when provoked, every Waray-waray individual especially women, would not back off. In other words, the Warays can be nice and kind if one is the same to them. But be careful not to push them to anger or else, you will see his/her wrath. Such is the case in the historic Balangiga massacre when the townspeople were angered by the abuse of the American troops headed by “Captain Thomas W. Conwell, commanding officer of the American unit in

Balangiga.” Although, Conwell’s action then was also a result of provocation by the threat of General Vicente Lukban’s guerillas.

*“He had the town’s male residents rounded up and detained for the purpose of hastening his clean-up operations in preparation for a visit by the US Army’s inspector-general. Around 80 men were kept in two Sibley tents unfed overnight. In addition, Connell had the men’s bolos and the stored rice for their tables confiscated. These events would have sufficiently insulted and angered the townspeople; and without the sympathy of Lukban’s guerillas, the civilians were left to their own devices to plan their course of actions against the Americans.”*

Joycie Alegre in her paper, “The Waray Culture in the Philippines, accounted in detail the characteristics of the Waray-waray in all facets of life. In her conclusion, she stated,

*“The Waray people have tenaciously stayed on in their homeland. They survived the brutal cruelty of the colonial masters and the perils of natural disasters. They shared their land with neighboring islanders – the Cebuanos and Boholanos who now comprise a large bulk of the population of Leyte. Despite the ravages of colonization, the Waray culture remains whole and hale. The people retained age-old traditions but accommodated new trends in technology, beliefs and practices.”*

History tells that in both wars and disasters, the Waray people are survivors. That in both joys and pains, they remain. According to the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration or PAGASA twenty tropical cyclones enter the Philippine area of responsibility each year. Ten among them will become typhoons with five of them having the potential to become destructive ones. (pagasa.dost.gov.ph) Eastern Samar in the Eastern Visayas region suffers heavily from strong typhoons. Geography shows the vulnerability of the province to this natural catastrophe. This geographical condition makes an impact on the grit character of the Samareños that despite the difficult challenges the typhoons bring, they remain resilient, strong, and maintain a hopeful disposition after every typhoon.

In Alegre’s study, Reynaldo Imperial says that this characteristic of “katatagan ng loob” (strong will) of the Waray is manifested as they face natural and manmade disasters. “The strong will of the of the Visayan also instill traits “ilub, unong, and amok.” These traits, according to Imperial, are not merely psychological traits but a sacred sensibility embedded and deeply entrenched in their being as a conscious responsibility which is expected in the society where they belong” (P81-82)

This grit or courage also comes from their capability to hope and pray for a good harvest. In the study of Alan Cabas, the ancestor's spirit taught the people about how to till their land and produce a bountiful harvest. He says that "this gives hope to the people to save them from scarcity, from the destruction of their plants caused by calamities, and diseases. The people draw courage from these characteristics of the 'umurukoy' or spirit." (A Theology of Creation Informed by Mayaw Belief)

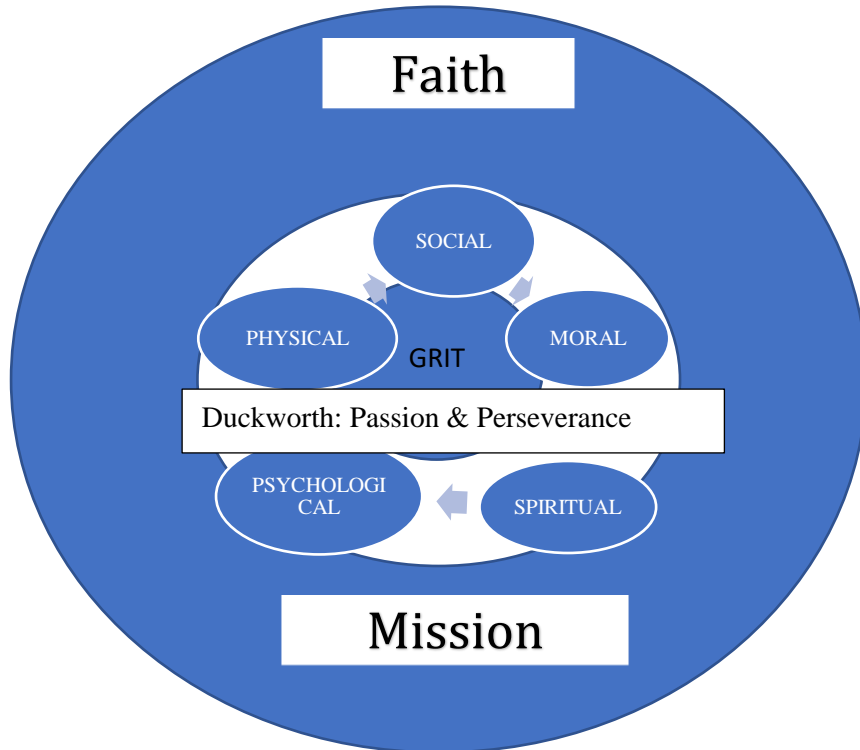
We can see here the influence of ancient beliefs and religion in the way the Waray people conduct their lives as far as perseverance, courage, faith, hope, and grit are concerned. They take courage from the spirits that provide their daily sustenance, both material and non-material.

Indeed, "The stories of the Waray people's courage, sacrifice, heroism, and wisdom must be told, written and retold. Their weaknesses as well as their strengths, too, must come to the fore of knowledge so that lessons would be learned, and better choices would be made for the future." (Alegre, p.2) This statement is an appropriate description related to Angela Duckworth's definition of grit as "perseverance and passion for long-term goals." A bright future awaits Samareños whose grit is expressed positively to achieve their goals and eventually, for a more beneficial cause for the entire people of Samar and the bigger society.

Lessons from these could be put into a more defined structure as each member of the community works together towards development. Eastern Samar has a vast area of natural resources that despite the regular disasters and calamities, people stay. There are much more reasons to remain rather than to migrate, as Duckworth, et.al. say, "the gritty individual stays the course."

## Theoretical Framework / Philosophical Underpinning:

### *Conceptual Framework:*



Angela Duckworth, et.al. define grit as perseverance and passion for long-term goals. In the review of Emilie Hoffman on Duckworth's *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance*, she stated that grit, not talent is the most influential trait in an individual achieving his or her potential. She says that "not only is grit critical to success but it is also a trait that can be grown and developed in any person." They further state that it entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress. (Duckworth, et.al., p1087)

Grit here as illustrated plays the center of all other aspects. The discussion of their experiences of grit may be encompassing and across spiritual, moral, physical, psychological, and social aspects. And if grit is truly persevering for long-term goals, this grit experiences which are properly appropriated in everyday life, can bring about positive consequences for better community building and societal progress.

And in the case of faith and mission, a more strengthened faith and active participation in the mission of the Church could be the fruits of grit. Grit plays a role in the expression of faith, such as the courage to hold on to faith amid trials and uncertainties, the strength to believe even in sufferings, and the boldness to witness to the truth despite being alone are manifestations of faith borne through grit. A gritty individual finds “consolation and strength amid suffering.” As St. Paul talks about his sufferings and tribulations which he links to his preaching of the Gospel, ‘I believed and so I spoke.’ It is by understanding the mystery at work in the lives of holy men and women that faith becomes that lamp that guides us (Lumen Fidei, 2012 para.56-57).

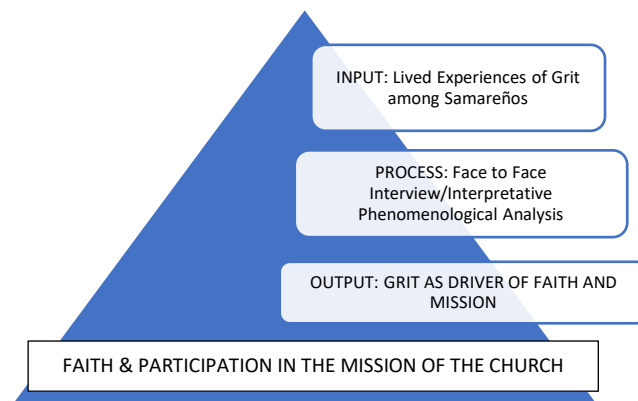
This grit of the Samareños can usher in an active participation in the mission of the Church to witness to and spread the gospel. This has been the call of the Church, not only to religious but to the laity as well. Pope Francis in his Synodal Church: Communion, Participation, and Mission addressed to the entire people of God, calls for the ‘Church’s cooperation in all areas of her mission.’ It clearly states that the ‘Church exists to evangelize.’ (For a Synodal Church, 2021 para 1.4) The Samareños witnessing, evangelizing, and worshipping God are the response to this synodal process.

If the Waray-waray’s grit is truly geared towards achieving something positive and beneficial, then it follows the Duckworth, et.al. principle, as it says, “the gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon; his or her advantage is stamina.” (p.1088) If the grit of the Waray-waray is properly motivated, then it will produce positive expression that will yield bigger future achievements.



## ***Operational Framework***

The entire research endeavor will be guided by the operational framework presented below:



The operational framework is guided by the I-P-O Framework where, the Input being the lived experiences of Grit among the 20 respondents-Samareños from the local community of Borongan, E. Samar. The process is conducted through an individual personal recorded interview, transcribed into lucid written form, and analyzed using the IPA- Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. The output is ‘Grit as the driver of faith and mission.’

## **Methodology**

### ***Research Design***

The research used a qualitative descriptive design with the help of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis method. Process of analysis is based on the oral narratives of the sharing of the local people of Borongan, Eastern Samar on their lived experiences of grit. Data are collected through personal and online individual recorded interview. Data gathered were transcribed/translated into lucid written form and were subjected to a two-stage interpretation process.

### ***Research Approaches***

A one-on-one and face to face as well as through online interviews were conducted among the respondents. They were given ample time to answer the questions. Since the IATF (Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious diseases) guidelines have been loosened, the people are now allowed to transact business at full 100% capacity. Pertinent information was gathered through a question-and-answer process.

### ***Research Participants / Respondents***

The research respondents/participants were individuals who shared their lived experiences on grit. Respondents were allowed to freely share their thoughts, and "tell their own stories in their own words. For the most parts, the participants talk, and the interviewer listens." (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009) IPA calls it, 'a conversation with a purpose'. A consent form for respondents was given prior to the interview. All answers by the participants were carefully considered and deemed confidential.

### ***Sampling Design***

The size of respondents for the interview was twenty (20) individuals. These twenty (20) individuals, who hail from Borongan, Eastern Samar, all from different nearby Barangays. Their age ranged from 20-72, male and female, and different social classes in terms of profession, status, organization, etc. The intention is to gather different experiences from different age range and diverse identity such as the students, the young and adult professionals and even the retired individuals. The proposed size of respondents is already significant as IPA's "primary concern is with a detailed account of individual experience. The issue is quality, not quantity, and given the complexity of most human phenomena, IPA studies usually benefit from a concentrated focus on a small number of cases." (Smith, et.al, 2009 p. 51)

**Table 1.***Respondent's Profile*

<b>Respondents In Code</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Profession</b>
1. RAA	32	Single	Brgy. Campesao	Private Employee
2. RAG	54	Married	Brgy. Bato	Public School Teacher
3. RNA	72	Widow	Brgy. Songco	Retired Gov't Employee
4. REA	48	Single	Brgy. Songco	Retired Private Employee
5. RGA	51	Married	Brgy. Sabang South	Retired Gov't Employee
6. RGG	62	Widower	Brgy. H	Retired Private Employee
7. RAO	28	Single	Brgy. G	Law Student
8. RJA	48	Married	Brgy. Songco	Public School Teacher
9. RAC	46	Single	Brgy. Taboc	Psychotherapist
10. RJS	49	Married	Brgy. B	Gov't Employee
11. RLP	55	Single	Brgy. B	Self-employed
12. RRJ	21	Single	Brgy. Campesao	Student
13. RJT	21	Single	Brgy. Balud	Student
14. RMA1	49	Married	Brgy. Bato	Housewife
15. RPD	21	Single	Brgy. G	Student
16. RRE	28	Single	Brgy. Bugas	Accountant
17. RNQ	23	Single	Brgy. Balud 2	Student
18. RJA	20	Single	Brgy. Balud	Student
19. RMA	21	Single	Brgy. Bato	Student
20. RDC	55	Married	Brgy. Taboc	Gov't Employee

***Measurement and Instrumentation***

For the interview, the respondents were asked these questions:

1. How does grit help you?
2. What specific virtues or values does grit entail?
3. How can this grit strengthen your faith and participation in the Church?

***Research Procedures of Data Collection***

The identified respondents for this research were subjected to individual personal recorded survey interview. Answers were thoroughly transcribed and if some data were unclear, the researcher personally asked for clarification and through phone call. The recorded data were translated into lucid written form which were used for analysis.

### ***Data Analysis / Analytical tools***

The research is qualitative-descriptive using interpretative phenomenological analysis approach. As the researcher conducts her interview, she took into consideration that “The aim of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is to explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world, and the main currency for an IPA study is the meanings particular experiences, events, states hold for participants” (Smith&Osborn, 2007).

To Smith and Osborn, it involves detailed examination of the participant’s lifeworld; it attempts to explore personal experience and is concerned with an individual’s personal perception or account of an object or event, as opposed to an attempt to produce an objective statement of the object or event itself.”

To achieve the intended results in this kind of research, the lucid written form of the transcribed and validated shared lived experiences of the respondents were subjected to a two-stage interpretation process or double hermeneutic. Double hermeneutic means that as the participant is trying to make sense of his/her experiences, the researcher then “needs to interpret that account from the participant in order to understand their experience.” (Smith, et.al. 2009, p.3) The researcher is like assuming a dual role here because he/she is also trying to make sense of their experiences.

The Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis of data includes: 1: Reading and Re-reading, 2: Initial Noting, 3: Developing emergent themes, 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes, 5: Moving to the next case, and 6: Looking for patterns across cases (pp. 82-101).

### **Results and Discussion**

The categories below flow from the meaningful descriptions based on the narratives conducted from the face-to-face and online individual interview collection of data. These results are analyzed using narrative descriptive method and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. These meaningful descriptions are carefully reflected upon to align them with the research problem and objectives of this study.

**Table 2.***The ways by which the Waraynon is guided by his/her grit*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b><i>Emergent Themes from Narrative</i></b>	<b>Duckworth's Concept of Grit</b>	
RAA RQA RGA	<i>It scares people to do bad against us. It leads others to respect us and not harm us.</i>	Grit as a Physical/Self-Image	
RDC RLP RJT	<i>It helps in self-expression and ease the burden of the heart.</i>		
RRJ RPD RSR RNQ	<i>It helps me to be brave in many ways, not to be afraid of many things.</i>		
	<i>It helps me in accomplishing my plans, and to survive.</i>		
	<i>It helps me to be respected as a woman.</i>		
	<i>It helps me to look for solution to problems.</i>		
	<i>It gives me assurance and security in times of threat.</i>		
RNA RAG RJT	<i>It guides to speak up for oneself and defend other people.</i>		Grit as a Social/Cultural Identity
RRJ RJA RQA	<i>It helps us not to be belittled despite knowing that we do not have any position in the society.</i>		
	<i>It helps not to be fooled or bullied by others.</i>		
	<i>Grit helps in understanding our strengths as women.</i>		
	<i>It helps them fight for their rights.</i>		
RNA RGG RJS RLP RMA RPD RRE RJA	<i>It scares away people who have bad intentions.</i>	Grit as a Moral Compass	
	<i>It guides one not to quarrel with others but to be calm and at peace.</i>		
	<i>It helps to discipline children, to correct but not to punish.</i>		
	<i>It helps one become a better person.</i>		
	<i>It helps us understand that reprimand from parents means their expression of love.</i>		
	<i>It leads to choosing to do good for others.</i>		
	<i>It helps in expressing over frustrations, irritation, abusive acts and unfair treatment.</i>		
	<i>It helps in correcting mistakes.</i>		
RGG RJA	<i>It helps to strive to do what is right, to fight against what one is violated of.</i>	Spiritual-Grit as an Expression of Faith	
	<i>It helps one not to quit or lose faith in God.</i>		
	<i>It guides to be faithful to God and face the responsibilities in life.</i>		
	<i>With grit, in God there is peace and happiness.</i>		

**Table 2.***Continued.*

Respondents	<i>Emergent Themes from Narrative</i>	Duckworth's Concept of Grit
ROA	<i>Grit saves in coping with hardships in studies. It helps one to shake things off and to redeem oneself after a failed recitation or bad day.</i>	Psychological- Grit as a Source of Strength
RMC	<i>It gives strength in facing difficulty in life without fear or worries. It is an armor to overcome struggles, and challenges in daily life.</i>	
RLP	<i>It helps not to be rattled or be confused in life situations.</i>	
RPD	<i>It gives strength in times of hard work and decision-makings.</i>	
RSR	<i>It helps in the examination of conscience to eradicate guilt feelings, and in expressing one's burdens to lessen the heaviness of the heart. Grit helps process oneself or analyze after expressing anger.</i>	
RMA	<i>It enhances my perseverance to deal with my mental breakdowns. It makes one take a leap despite of uncertainty.</i>	

Table 2 shows the specific ways by which the Waraynon is guided by his/her grit. It answers the question, "How does grit help you?" These responses are categorized using the conceptual framework of Angela Duckworth, *Physical, Social, Moral, Spiritual and Psychological*. These are further categorized into themes: *Grit as a cultural identity, Grit as a positive self-image, Grit as a moral compass, Grit as an expression of faith, and Grit as a source of strength.*

### ***Grit as a Positive Self-Image***

The image of Samareños as gritty or 'matapang' has many advantages despite its negative connotation. For one, it gives them a feeling of safety and security from other people who may have bad intentions on them. "*It gives me the feeling of assurance and security in times when I am in another place and they know that I am from Samar,*" said one reply. Somehow, he is assured that they will not harm him. This identity gives them that unique individuality of confidence and self-worth. Their grit also helps them to express themselves freely, which can ease the burden of their heart because they can be frank enough to say things for clarity and

understanding. Grit helps them to be brave in many aspects, from the individual tasks and decision-making to bigger challenges such as disaster or calamities, which encourages them to go on with life without fear or worries despite the hardships. It also helps them to stand up for their identity especially the women, who would show a strong character and can stand alone in many endeavors.

### ***Grit as a Cultural identity***

The Samareños are popularly known to be gritty or '*matapang*' in Tagalog word. The character of not backing off from enemies has been their label ever since which created a negative connotation among them. Yet, the Samareños would see it as strength because they gain respect from others, like a shield or armor protecting them from harm and bullying others, especially those coming from other cities who look at them as a minority. One remark says, "*We are not easily belittled by other people even if we do not have that big position in society.*" For them, their identity sends a message of regard and safety. Through time, their experiences have made them appreciate their identity of grit more than be wary of its negative implications.

### ***Grit as a Moral Compass***

This '*tapang*' is not just about anger or fighting with others but rather, a way of correcting mistakes, disciplining, and choosing to do good to become better persons. They would express anger against irregularities, abusive acts, and unfair treatment and of frustrations and irritation. Reprimand from parents, for example, is tough love meant to correct children of their wrongdoings. Grit means to strive to do better and to be conscious of the acts of violations in any aspect of their life. Grit for them would also mean choosing to be calm and at peace rather than bursting in anger if they can do otherwise. "*This grit helps me not to hold grudge against others, especially those who have hurt me.*" The courage to correct their own mistakes as well as others' is also part of this grit, for if they are open enough to express, then they would not let go of a small mistake uncorrected.

### ***Grit as an Expression of Faith***

Grit is a very important aspect of the spiritual life of the Waray-waray people. With grit, they do not quit and lose hope in God despite

problems and trials. It guides them to be faithful to God and face their responsibilities. The more challenges in life, the more they cling to God because they believe that only in God there is peace and happiness. *“No matter how big my hurdles in life are, grit helps me, and I will not easily give up my faith in God because as a Christian, I believe and trust that only in God I am assured of a life of peace and happiness,”* one respondent said.

### ***Grit as a Source of Strength***

***In Studies***, grit saves students from coping with hardships in their studies. Many students nowadays suffer from mental breakdowns as they struggle to maintain a favorable status in their subjects. *“As a student, I’ve been experiencing challenges and mental breakdowns due to deadlines, loaded activities, etc., but somehow grit enhances my perseverance to deal with these challenges, such as academic performance and the like.”*

***In Problems and Difficulties***, the Waraynons can overcome them without fear or worries. They continue to be strong in the many challenges that beset them such as the usual natural calamities, earthquake, and typhoon. Every year, they must brace themselves for every strong typhoon in the area that would leave destruction to houses, plantations and animals and even people. The aftermath of typhoons means to start over again which would mean expenses for repairs and sustenance. *“This grit is armor to overcome struggles and challenges in our daily life,”* a respondent said.

***In Decision-Makings***, from small to big, grit sets them right. Grit helps them not to be rattled in many situations, especially when deciding. With grit, they can arrive at a better and more sound judgment. It does away with confusion and being rattled, and despite uncertainties they ‘take a leap’ without fear.

***In Self-Introspection***, the Waraynon can process himself/herself after expressing anger. It also helps them examine their conscience so as to eradicate guilt feelings. When they do self-introspection and express the burden of their hearts, it lessens the feeling of heaviness within.



**Table 3.***The virtues or values that entail grit*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Emergent Themes</b>	<b>Duckworth's Concept of Grit/Virtues/Values</b>
RAA, RJA, RGA, RMA REA, RPD ROA, RSR RJT, RNQ RAC, RRE RLP, RDC RQA	<i>Bravery, competence, courage, determination, defending oneself and others, discipline, firmness, hard work, knowledge of oneself, pride of identity, self-esteem, self-expression, self-identity, self-worth, strength, and the like.</i>	Physical/Positive-Self Image Values
RNA, RRJ RGA, RJS RAG, RQA RGG	<i>Good camaraderie with others, helpfulness, Love and protection for loved ones, Openness, Respect, Safety, Understanding, and the like.</i>	Social/Cultural-Oriented Values
RGA, RJS RNA, RLP RAG, RRJ RGG, RPD RJA, RSR RAC, RNQ RJA, RDC RMA	<i>Honesty, honor, humility, integrity, kindness, love for truth, not holding a grudge, obedience, industry, endurance, patience, perseverance, persistence, temperance, optimism, and the like.</i>	Moral-Oriented Values
RGA, RSR RGG, RDC RJA, RLP RMA, RQA	<i>Belief in God, forgiveness, hope, righteousness, steadfastness, trust in God, wisdom, love for God and friends, and the like.</i>	Spiritual-Oriented Values
ROA, RDC RJA, RLP RAC, RRE	<i>Confidence, motivation, optimism, resiliency, and the like.</i>	Psychological-Oriented Values

Table 3 shows the virtues and values stemming from their lived experiences of grit. It answers the question, "What specific virtues or values does grit entail?" These are categorized into Physical/Positive-Self-Image, Social/Cultural-Oriented Values, Moral-Oriented Values, Spiritual-Oriented Values, and Psychological-Oriented Values. These results correlate with the categories in the study, "The Value of Values Education in the Virtual Classroom," which include 'personal character development,' 'social and world development,' and 'spiritual development.' The study validates that such values as perseverance, responsibility, discipline, and the like can be learned and applied amidst the challenges in the virtual classroom (Gabatbat&Santander, 2021). While the experience of grit in

various life situations can bring about the same values in many aspects of the individual's life, especially to the Waray-waray people.

### ***Physical/Positive-Self-Image Values***

These are the values that affirm their positive self-image. These values out of their lived experiences of grit enable them to express grit in a positive way to build confidence and share goodness to others. These include assurance, bravery, competence, courage, determination, defending oneself and others, discipline, firmness, hard work, knowledge of oneself, pride of identity, self-esteem, self-expression, self-identity, self-worth, strength, and others.

### ***Social/Cultural-Oriented Values***

These values out of grit are expression of their relationship with others in the community. These give them a unique identity to build a strong and united community life. These are good camaraderie with others, helpfulness, Love and protection for loved ones, Openness, Respect, Safety, Understanding, and the like.

### ***Moral-Oriented Values***

These values are an expression of true grit, that result in a loving service towards others. These are honesty, honor, humility, integrity, kindness, love for truth, not holding a grudge, obedience, patience, perseverance, persistence, temperance, et.al.

### ***Spiritual-Oriented Values***

These are values and virtues that are centered on God because their grit led them to cling to God rather than stray from Him especially in difficult situations. These include belief in God, forgiveness, hope, righteousness, steadfastness, trust in God, wisdom, love for God and friends, etc.

### ***Psychological-Oriented Values***

These values enhance their psychological disposition and mental health. They can integrate their grit into a more meaningful approach to situations in daily life. These are confidence, motivation, optimism, resiliency, and the like.

**Table 4.**

*The Faith Character of grit: The role of grit in strengthening the faith of the Samareños.*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Emergent Themes</b>	<b>The Faith Character of Grit</b>
RAA RGA RNA REA RGA ROA RMAC RJT RRE	<i>It enables one to rise from a disaster. Being able to face the crosses in life through grit strengthens the faith. Grit helps in keeping the faith despite natural calamities. Through grit, one is able to face every hurdle in life and to always trust in God's help. With grit, you have no fear in life because your trust and your whole life are in God alone. Through Grit, our love for God is innate, it will always be a part of us, our life, despite of. Grit affirms firmness of faith so as not to be easily tempted by those who do evil, not easily swayed by what others instigate.</i>	Faith and Grit in Challenging Times
RAA RGA RRJ RRE RQA	<i>Grit enables one to show hospitality and generosity during fiestas by serving food to the people. Initiative to help others means bravery and camaraderie. To maintain brotherhood among members of the Church, to develop love for them.</i>	Faith and Grit in the Service of Others
RAA, RRJ RGA, RMA RNA, RPD REA, RRE RAG, RJA RGG, RNQ ROA, RAC	<i>Grit helps to express belief in God, to have an unwavering faith and by celebrating the Holy Eucharist every Sunday. Grit helps in having fear of the Lord in his words and serving him. To study more about God to know more about him to grow in faith.</i>	Faith and Grit in Worship
RAA RGA REA RJS RLP RRJ RSR RNQ	<i>If grit is expressed according to the will of the spirit, it leads him/her to act, speak and think according to the will of God. Grit enables you to avoid temptations and fight sins. Grit, which is acknowledge as coming the spirit can be translated into determination, motivation, perseverance and patience. It helps us to become better persons-a result of our faith and participation in the mission of the Church. The perseverance to be firm and put their religious beliefs into action.</i>	Faith and Grit in Righteousness

Table 4 shows the Faith Character of Grit. It answers the question, “How can this grit strengthen your faith and participation in the Church?” Their faith experiences through grit yielded to various aspects in their lives such as Faith and Grit amid challenging times, Faith and Grit shown in the service of others, and Faith and Grit in worship and righteousness. In the vicissitudes of life such as in suffering and even in death, they can be illumined and can be experienced as the ultimate call to faith. (Lumen Fidei, 2013) To respond to such call would take grit as to accept things through pain, to go through life amid uncertainties and even to embrace death in process.

### ***The Faith Character of Grit***

#### ***Faith and Grit in Challenging Times***

The Waraynons hold on to God every time there is a calamity. This typhoon-stricken province always challenges the faith of the people but every time, each community member still rises with hope and continues with their daily routines: *“We face plenty of typhoons every year. We have no time to mourn longer because we must plant right away so we will have food to eat.”* The natural disasters are one of the crosses they face every year. They greatly affect agriculture and the economy. Yet, they remain and stay amidst the hazards of calamities in the province. When asked with options to stay or to migrate, they choose to stay. As Duckworth puts it, *“The gritty individual stays the course.”* Their grit leads them to faith, which teaches them to make meaning of their difficult life experiences. Grit enhances their faith, perseverance, and patience so that it becomes natural amidst the many disasters they face in life. Their innate love for God sustains their grit to face every hurdle in life and to always trust in God’s help.

#### ***Faith and Grit in the Service of Others***

Celebrating the town’s feast day is a tradition. People from other towns would flock to the capital town to go house to house to partake in the meals, whether relatives of the host or strangers. Every household would spend on foods that are to be served during the feast day. A respondent said, *“Friends and relatives come to our house during fiesta. We express our faith in God through service. We prepare food for them, we share our resources, and that is hospitality.”* This act of service takes grit to prepare for the meals to all who will come to their house, especially if money is tight

and they will have to find a way to provide, no matter what. Every household will not let it pass without participating in the tradition, even if it would mean being broke afterwards. Their hospitality in times like this can never be unmatched. This grit is both perseverance and firmness to put their religious beliefs into action.

### ***Faith and Grit in Worship***

Despite every trial of the Waraynon, their grit to express unwavering faith in God is manifested in their worship life on Sundays in Parish Churches and chapels. Grit helps them to keep their presence at Mass despite problems and trials. A stroke patient says, *“I am focused on the celebration of the Eucharist even if I cannot go to Church. I always stay tuned to the religious activities of our local TV station and I turn off the other stations to stay focused.”* With grit, they have no fear in life because they put their trust and their whole life in God alone. Their grit and protectiveness of their loved ones go hand in hand in celebrating Christ in the Eucharist.

### ***Faith and Grit in Righteousness***

It takes grit to avoid temptations and fight sins. When grit as coming from the Holy Spirit is applied, it can be translated into determination, motivation, perseverance, and patience. This is manifested in one respondent's reply, *“It is like I am standing strong on my faith because whatever temptation that comes my way, I will not be shaken and I will fight sins. This for me is manifesting the grit of the Waray-waray.”* When faith and grit go together, the Waraynon can stand strong against being made fun of and those who gossip about them. Grit affirms firmness of faith so as not to be easily tempted by those who do evil, and to not be easily swayed by what others instigate. Grit ushers one towards righteousness, to be afraid in the words of the Lord and to serve Him. Because of this, he/she can maintain brotherhood among the members of the Church and develop love for them.

**Table 5.**

*The Role of Grit in Strengthening the Participation in the Mission of the Church among the Samareños*

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Emergent themes</b>	<b>The Missionary Character of Grit</b>
RAA, RGA RNA, REA ROA, RJA1 RAC, RLP RJT, RMA RPD RJA RQA RDC	<p><i>It makes one commit in the sharing the mission of the church to spread the good news because of God's goodness. Others will witness it and be encouraged to do the same.</i></p> <p><i>It helps in living out the true grit of a Christian, empowered by the Holy Spirit, it gives diligence, commitment and persistence in propagating the faith.</i></p> <p><i>Grit helps us to enrich our faith so we can help in the mission of the church to spread the faith.</i></p> <p><i>Grit expressed through Righteous anger to correct others for the better, as Jesus is like being a Jesus to others, as Jesus Christ's anger, for us to reflect on what can save our souls.</i></p>	Prophetic-Dimension of Grit
RAA, RJA RGA, RQA RNA, RMA REA, ROA RJA1, RAC RJS, RRJ RPD, RSR RNQ, RRE	<p><i>Having no fear of being making fun of or gossiped about.</i></p> <p><i>It motivates one to spread the word of God to the people through house to house catechesis or through social media.</i></p> <p><i>If through grit your faith becomes active, others are also enlightened that Jesus is with them and are encouraged to get closer to God by your example, it inspires them to be active in the Church and to have fear in God.</i></p> <p><i>It can help him/her to be bold enough to witness God's goodness despite of our straying away from him at times.</i></p>	Witnessing-Dimension of Grit
RAA, RMA RGA, RPD RNA, RRE REA, RJA1 RAG, ROA RAC, RGG	<p><i>Grit helps in keeping your presence at Mass and other activities of the Church despite problems and trials.</i></p> <p><i>Grit and protectiveness go hand in hand with the celebration of Christ.</i></p>	Celebration-Dimension of Grit

Table 5. The Missionary Character of Grit. It shows the responses on how grit can strengthen their participation in the mission of the Church. The themes are categorized based on the three dimensions of faith:

Doctrine, Moral and Worship. The doctrine part includes knowing God, and by knowing Him, you can translate it to a direct or indirect prophetic action by sharing the Word of God. The Moral dimension is to translate that knowledge into actions, thus, the witnessing dimension. And the celebration dimension ushers one to a commitment to the celebration of the Eucharist and through prayer. It takes grit to respond boldly to the call of mission, whether to act upon the faith or proclaim through missionary activities of service to all. In the Synodality call of Pope Francis, it says that “the mission of the Church requires the entire people of God to be on a journey together, with each member playing his or her crucial role, united with each other.” (For a Synodal Church, 2021) And it is through the active participation of each member to realize this mission. A Waraynon finds this experience through his/her grit experience.

### *The Missionary Character of Grit*

#### *Prophetic-Dimension of Grit*

Jesus Christ shares his prophetic ministry to us to help in spreading the faith. The true grit of Waraynon is empowered by the Holy Spirit. It gives diligence, commitment, and persistence in propagating the faith. The Waraynon's grit is shown in their active participation in Church activities. “*Through our grit, our faith in God is strong and we become confident in spreading the faith and teachings of the Church,*” said one respondent. Many community members are part of Church organizations and are performing their roles in sharing faith. Some are involved in sharing the faith through the local radio and tv stations, in pre-cana seminars and catechesis for adults and children. Others are involved in the worship celebrations as part of the choir and the lector's and commentator's group. There are other religious organizations that go on house-to-house catechesis. The big number of participations of the community members in organizations are attributed to the witnessing and encouragement of others.

#### *Witnessing-Dimension of Grit*

Witnessing to the words of Jesus through good deeds inspires others to do the same. In this way, one is already sharing his/her role in the missionary works of the Church. If this grit is genuinely expressed for the good of everyone, it leads one to act, speak and think according to the will of God. This is already witnessing. The witnessing-dimension of grit is also the result of our faith and participation in the mission of the Church. It can

help the Waraynon to be bold enough to speak about God's goodness "even if we stray away from him at times." The witnessing character of the Waraynon is seen in his/her deeds, like a Jesus to others in his righteous anger to perform brotherly correction. As one respondent said, "*Jesus Christ's anger is for us to reflect on what can save our souls.*"

### ***Celebration-Dimension of Grit***

The active participation of the people in the town of Borongan alone can be seen in the big number of Churchgoers every Sunday and even on weekdays. The rainy season will not even prevent the local community from fulfilling their Church obligations regularly. The Waray people are prayerful and love to attend Mass. The liturgical cycle in their local parishes is very vibrant because there is empowerment of the laity in facilitating the major seasons and solemnities and feast days of saints. The parish priests and leaders help to enhance their sense of volunteerism by allowing them to sponsor preparations for the feast of saints. The problems of natural calamities and poverty would not deter them to be active in their religiosity. A respondent states, "*Through praying, it builds your faith with God, especially during your difficult times. Lending a prayer will keep you going.*"

### **Conclusion**

This research has explored the nuances of grit of the Waray-waray people, particularly in relation to life experiences on how grit helps them, the values lived out in daily life, in relation to expression of faith and of participation in the mission of the Church:

1. Their grit or 'tapang', has a lot of meaningful advantages to their personal, communal, or societal interactions as well as to their physical, social, moral, spiritual, and psychological well-being.
2. The negative connotation of grit is considered more a strength or an advantage that they manage to accept as their unique identity.
3. Grit can help them in various ways. They are categorized as: Grit as a positive self-image, as a cultural identity, as a moral compass, as an expression of faith, and as a source of strength.
4. Grit is associated with virtues and values. These identified values are categorized according into physical/positive-self-image-oriented values, social/cultural-oriented values, moral-oriented values, spiritual-oriented values, and psychological-oriented values.



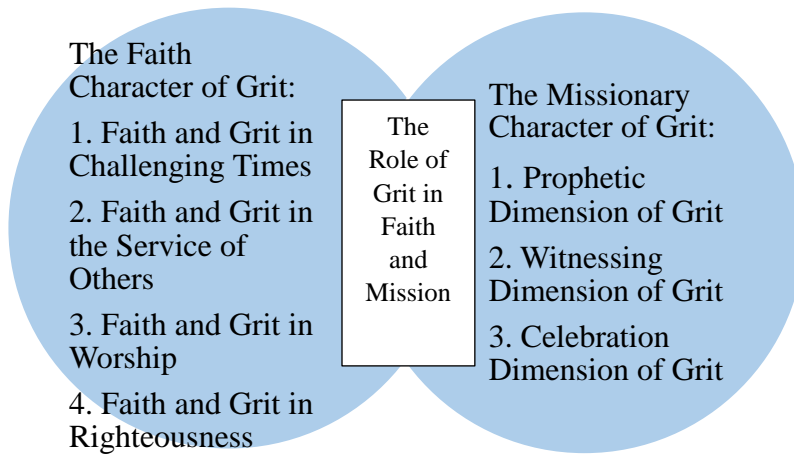
5. Grit is a driver to strengthening faith and participation in the mission of the Church. They are categorized into two characters, faith, and mission. Under the faith character are faith and grit in challenging times, faith, and grit in the service of others, faith and grit in worship, and faith and grit in righteousness.
  - 5.1 Faith and grit can go together in understanding our life situations whether good or bad, happy, or sad, and what have you.
  - 5.2 The missionary character of grit is categorized following the holistic approach of catechesis, the doctrine, moral and worship dimensions since the respondents' answers were able to meet those dimensions. They are the prophetic dimension of grit, that which ushers them to know and spread the faith. The witnessing-dimension of grit, which impels them to witness God's goodness and inspire others to do the same and celebration-dimension, because they acknowledge everything as coming from God that they lift it all up in their worship activities.

Indeed, grit has positive associations which they can confidently live out to share more of themselves in the bigger society. It also validates that they can contribute to the betterment of the local community so that they may inspire the rest and outsiders may be able to put their trust and confidence in them and finally eradicate the negative impression about their grit.

The courage of the Waray-waray people to profess their faith despite poverty and the challenging effects of natural calamities will greatly influence the image of grit in which they are popularly known. Through this research, almost all aspect of grit experiences in the life of the Waray-waray were explored and so came up with meaningful themes and interpretations.

### **Recommendation**

1. The diagram below may be used in catechesis using grit as its foundation so that a more stable faith and commitment to participate in the mission of the Church be established. It may also be incorporated in the instruction of values and Religion or Christian Living in both public and private schools, and also, in catechesis in parish churches. In this way, all Samarnon or Waray-waray may be able to appropriate the real meaning of grit which they can establish as their own unique identity.



This model may be followed by incorporating it in the integration part of a catechesis of religious instruction, following this format: I. Life Situation about Grit, II. Sacred Scriptures about faith and mission, III. Integration, IV. Celebration.

2. This study focuses only on the lived experiences of the Samareños or Waraynon. It would also be good to explore the grit of the Ilocanos, Caviteños, Batangueños, and other localities known for their grit.

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