

Intergenerational Mental Health Coping Mechanisms in the Philippines: A Systematic Literature Review

Dariebel T. Sab-it

Benguet State University, La Trinidad, Benguet, Philippines
d.sab-it@bsu.edu.ph

Received: May 14, 2024 | Accepted: December 19, 2024 | Published: May 28, 2025

Abstract

While there has been considerable literature on mental health coping mechanisms of Filipinos, especially among different age groups, a functional analysis of these findings remains lacking. Consequently, this paper attempts to analyze mental health coping mechanisms used by Filipinos across different generations, identifying the common practices and different factors. Employing a systematic literature review methodology, twenty-nine (29) studies were analyzed through content analysis technique. The results of the study revealed seven (7) areas of common coping mechanisms categorized into mobilizing body and mind, illuminating support, nurturing self, dialogues with professionals, finding strength in faith, utilizing traditional practices, and learning and growth mechanisms, while the factors were grouped into five (5) areas - culture, attitudes, gender, economic and spiritual. The findings imply that illuminating support, finding strength in faith, and utilizing traditional practices are the most common coping mechanisms employed by the older generation and that mobilizing body and mind, illuminating support, nurturing self, dialogues with professionals, finding strength in faith and learning and growth mechanisms are commonly used by the younger generation. The inclination of Filipinos towards certain coping strategies is influenced by various identified factors which can have both positive and negative influences. These influences can lead to a reluctance to consider alternative coping methods while reinforcing a firm conviction in the efficacy of their chosen strategies.

Keywords: *mental health, intergenerational coping mechanisms, preferences*

How to Cite:

Sab-it, D.T. (2025). Intergenerational Mental Health Coping Mechanisms in the Philippines: A Systematic Literature Review. *Journal of Health Research and Society*, 4(1), 5-14. <https://doi.org/10.34002/jhrs.v4i1.98>

Introduction

Mental health profoundly affects individuals' daily lives, shaping thoughts, emotions, and actions, and thereby determining overall well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2022) underscores mental health as essential for handling life's challenges and contributing to society. In the Philippines, however, it remains a complex and often stigmatized issue. While the Mental Health Act of 2018 marked progress, access to care is still limited by resource constraints, cultural misconceptions, and socioeconomic disparities. Addressing these challenges requires further efforts to improve mental health resources, educate the public, and normalize conversations

about mental well-being.

In the Philippines, cultural heritage has significantly influenced perceptions of mental health, with concepts often linked to supernatural entities and community harmony (Cervantes, 2023; Tuliao, 2014). These cultural beliefs have perpetuated misconceptions and stigmas, impacting Filipinos' attitudes toward mental health and help-seeking behaviors (Bacay, 2018; Rubio, 2023). Moreover, the shortage of mental health professionals, economic factors, and limited access to services further contribute to the absence of an in-depth understanding of mental health in the Philippines (Tuliao, 2014; Ji & Liu, 2022). Despite these challenges, the prevalence of mental health conditions, including anxiety and depression, has

increased (WHO, 2022; Hechanova, 2019; Cervantes, 2023).

While mental health awareness is growing, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic, barriers to seeking professional help persist (Toquero, 2020; Tuliao, 2014). Filipino coping mechanisms often emphasize collectivism and community support, with families and traditional healers playing vital roles in mental health care (Hilario & Su, 2023; Bacay et al., 2018). Additionally, faith and religion, including prayer, have been highlighted as essential tools for coping (Del Castillo et al., 2023; Estrañero, 2022). A holistic approach to mental health in the Philippines requires integrating professional care with culturally rooted coping mechanisms, such as family support, traditional healing, and faith-based practices.

Understanding intergenerational coping mechanisms is crucial for comprehending how Filipino families address mental health challenges across generations (Rubio, 2023; Tuliao, 2014). These coping strategies blend contemporary techniques with traditional cultural norms, underscoring the adaptability and resilience of Filipino families. Despite extensive research on mental health in the Philippines (Amri & Bemak, 2013; Ai et al., 2016; Au, 2022; Bacay et al., 2018; Cervantes, 2023; Cordero, 2022), there remains a gap in understanding intergenerational coping strategies, highlighting the need for further investigation in this area.

To date, no systematic review of studies on intergenerational mental health coping mechanisms of Filipinos has been conducted. Tuliao (2014) carried out a comprehensive analysis of the literature about Filipino mental health help-seeking in the United States, offering a detailed examination of the cultural backdrop influencing Filipino help-seeking tendencies. Ramos (2015) conducted historical research on mental health care during the prehistoric Philippines, which provided an organized system of mental health and maladaptive behavior rituals that prehistoric Filipinos practiced. Alongside recent studies on Filipinos, these works provide context to the concept of mental health and various coping mechanisms of Filipinos across generations.

This systematic review aims to critically provide an in-depth understanding of the Philippines' intergenerational mental health coping mechanisms, considering both traditional cultural norms and contemporary influences. It will shed light on the adaptability and resilience of Filipino families and offer insights to improve mental health awareness, support, and services in the country. Specifically, this review will focus on identifying the commonly practiced mental health

coping mechanisms of Filipino individuals and describing the factors contributing to the preference of Filipinos on mental health coping mechanisms.

Statement of the Problem

This systematic review attempts to analyze mental health coping mechanisms used by Filipinos across different generations, identifying the common practices and a variety of influencing factors. Specifically, it is geared towards answering the following questions:

1. What are the commonly practiced mental health coping mechanisms of Filipino individuals?
2. What factors contribute to the preference of Filipinos for mental health coping mechanisms?

Materials and Methods

Research Design

The present study utilized the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. A systematic literature review, also known as a systematic review, is a method for locating, evaluating, and synthesizing all relevant papers on a specific research question, topic, or phenomenon (Kitchenham, 2004). While systematic reviews are classified as secondary studies, individual research contributing to a systematic review is referred to as primary studies.

Okoli and Schabram (2014) support this approach by distinguishing between two types of literature reviews: those used to provide theoretical foundations for primary research and graduate student theses, and those conducted as stand-alone assessments of the literature (i.e., systematic literature reviews). Ideally, a stand-alone systematic literature review serves as a widely recognized resource that provides a focused and concise overview of the literature when beginning an inquiry. These independent assessments aim to provide an overview of the existing body of knowledge, identify gaps in current research, and serve as a foundation for new studies.

Sampling Technique

The criteria for accepting and rejecting research provides a explicit explanation of the standards and rules applied in selecting which papers to include in the review, as well as an analytical framework for addressing the issue (Abrami et al., 1988). Initially, the inclusion criteria were applied systematically to ensure that all pertinent studies the review considered; consequently, no study was excluded without thorough verification. In instances where a study met multiple exclusion criteria, it was excluded at the outset.

Table 1

Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion

Parameters	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Journal and Publication Type	Primary research articles or scientific papers (full articles) published in peer-reviewed journals in any of the following databases: Google Scholar, ERIC, and other online databases that are available to the researcher	Book reviews, opinion pieces, literary reviews, policy documents, conference proceedings, and research articles online are not available to the researcher
Focus (Descriptors)	Intergenerational healing practices or coping mechanisms for Mental health	Research articles that did not dwell on the diverse healing practices or coping mechanisms for Mental health
Language	English as a medium of writing	Did not make use of English as a medium of writing
Year of Publication	Research published from 2015 to 2024	Research articles or scientific papers published before 2015
Demographic Location	Philippines	Outside the Philippines

Utilizing available databases by using the following keywords: mental health to Filipinos/ mental health coping mechanisms in the Philippines/traditional healing practices of Filipinos, 241 studies met the following criteria for inclusion and exclusion. These criteria are outlined in Table 1.

The main factors considered when selecting articles for inclusion were whether they were published in reputable journals or had undergone peer review. Publications play a crucial role in facilitating discussions among scientists regarding the methodology and significance of research efforts (Kalichman, 2001).

The final publications for inclusion in the review were selected through an additional evaluation of study quality after confirming that the research articles met the inclusion criteria. At this stage, the standards for assessing scientific work the review considered. The articles were required to adhere to the widely accepted structure for scientific publications, which includes sections on methodology, results, conclusions, and discussion (Sharp, 2002).

Since the study focuses on the various mental health coping mechanisms employed by Filipinos across different age groups and the respondents' perceptions of mental health, the selected studies were carefully deliberated and evaluated to ensure that these areas were central to the results and discussions of the chosen works.

Data Collection

The initial stage of the study involved exploring multiple databases to locate studies on Filipinos' coping mechanisms for mental health

issues. To identify intergenerational mental health coping mechanisms, the search process was guided by inclusion and exclusion criteria established prior to the identification, collection, and acquisition of relevant literature. Part of the criteria also focused on studies examining Filipino perspectives on mental health. While the qualifying criteria were essential for gathering all relevant and reasonable data, they remained flexible and subject to adjustment as the systematic review progressed, as noted by Meline (2006).

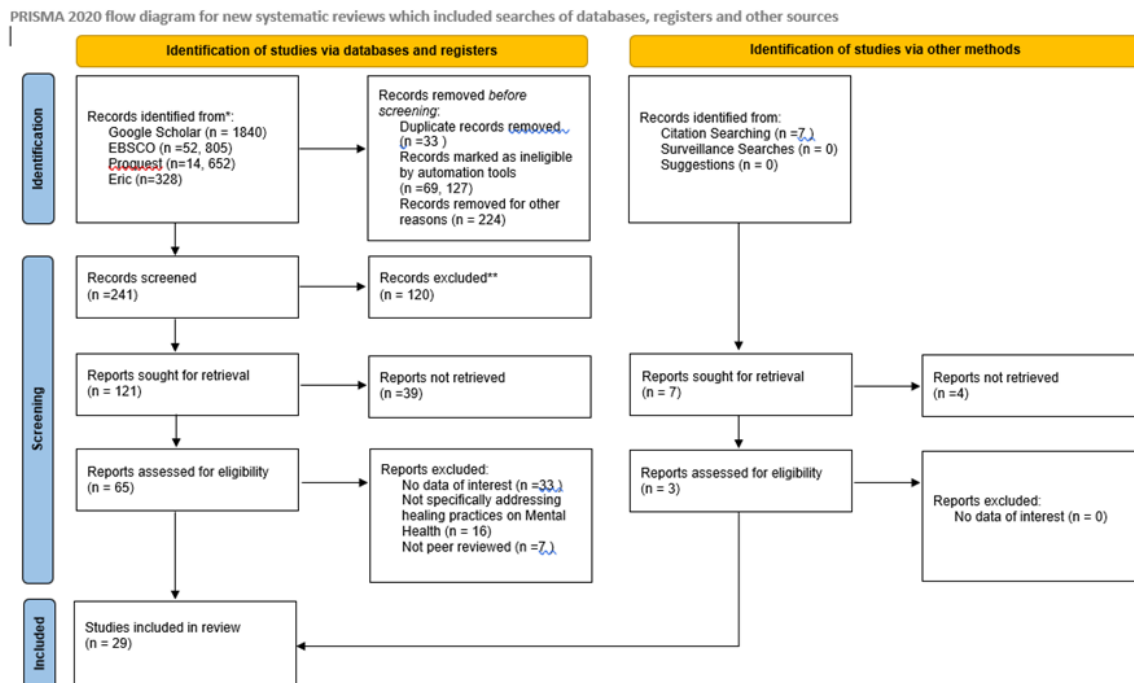
In addition to the study selection method, both forward and backward citation searches were employed to ensure consistency in research findings across investigations. Backward citation searching involved examining the references cited in the original studies, while forward citation searching used a citation index to identify studies that cited a particular source; this process is commonly referred to as "checking reference lists" (Higgins et al., 2019; Briscoe et al., 2020, as cited in the Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, 2008). According to Cooper et al. (2017), citation searching is particularly useful for identifying studies that may be missed in text-based searches of titles, abstracts, or the limited vocabulary sections of bibliographical records. See Figure 1 for the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA)-based data collection process, showing also the sampling technique used in this study.

Data Analysis

A literature survey provides significant benefits, enabling researchers to examine findings from similar studies, uncover major hypotheses,

Figure 1

PRISMA Flow.



*Consider, if feasible to do so, reporting the number of records identified from each database or register searched (rather than the total number across all databases/registers).

**If automation tools were used, indicate how many records were excluded by a human and how many were excluded by automation tools.

From: Page MJ, McKenzie JE, Bossuyt PM, Boutron I, Hoffmann TC, Mulrow CD, et al. The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ* 2021;372:n71. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n71. For more information, visit: <http://www.prisma-statement.org/>

and gain insights into diverse perspectives on a given topic. Additionally, literature reviews assist academics in identifying areas requiring further research (Fraenkel et al., 2012).

In this study, content analysis has been proposed as a method to enhance understanding by identifying recurring categories of coping mechanisms and the factors influencing the preference for these approaches. Content analysis, which involves systematically categorizing and interpreting textual or qualitative data, allows researchers to detect patterns and themes, offering insights into the underlying motivations and choices associated with coping strategies.

Results and Discussion

This section presents the analysis of the data gathered through the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Furthermore, the presentation and analysis were conducted in connection with the two research questions.

Of the 241 studies, only 29 made the cut for inclusion as these studies focused on the mental health coping mechanisms used by Filipinos in different generations. The same studies also tackled

perceptions of Filipinos on mental health.

As for the year of publication, it is observed that the studies were published in a ten-year period between 2014 and the present year of 2024. The years 2024 and 2014 both recorded one study published in each year. As Glasziou et al. (2001), in the study of Tam et al. (2017) posited, systematic reviews must be up to date due to the dynamic nature of obtaining and presenting research evidence for multiple stakeholders, such as researchers need to be able to find thorough and up-to-date systematic reviews (Evans, 2001). Also, it is important to note that the studies passed the inclusion criteria made up of ten qualitative studies and one quantitative study.

Research Question One: On the Commonly Practiced Mental Health Coping Mechanisms of Filipino Individuals

The evidence from the 29 types of research that addressed question one (1), can be divided into 7 categories: Mobilizing body and mind, Interpersonal Support, Nurturing self, Dialogue, Faith, Utilizing Traditional Practices and Learning and Growth or simply coined as MINDFUL framework. They are discussed as follows.

Table 2*Characteristics of studies used in the SRL*

Research Number	Research and Author	Year Publication	Type of Research
1.	Ai, A. L., Appel, H. B., & Nicdao, E. G. Differential associations of religious involvement with the mental health of Asian-American subgroups: A cultural perspective.	2016	Quantitative study
2.	Amri, S., & Bemak, . Mental Health Help-Seeking Behaviors of Muslim Immigrants in the United States: Overcoming Social Stigma and Cultural Mistrust.	2013	Qualitative Research
3.	Au, E. W. Expressive arts in psychotherapy with children who have experienced trauma in the Philippines: A qualitative study.	2022	Qualitative study
4.	Bacay, J. M., Estepa, F. A., & Lao, A. M. Mental Health in the Philippines: Schizophrenia.	2018	Qualitative Analysis
5.	Cariñez Dela Cruz Fajarito, RPsy, Rpm, & Rosalito G. De Guzman, RPsy, CSCIP, PhD. Understanding Combat-Related PTSD Symptom Expression Through Index Trauma and Military Culture: Case Studies of Filipino Soldiers.	2017	Case study (Qualitative study)
6.	Cervantes, C. L. G. Kaluluwa, Kapwa, Kalikasan: Mental health implications of Filipino folk beliefs.	2023	Qualitative Study
7.	Cordero Jr, D. A. Down but Never Out! Narratives on Mental Health Challenges of Selected College Students During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines: God, Self, Anxiety, and Depression.	2022	Qualitative Study
8.	Cordero Jr, D. A. Sákit Pighati and Pag asa: A Pastoral Reflection on Suffering During the COVID 19 Pandemic in the Philippines.	2021	Descriptive Qualitative Study
9.	Del Castillo, F. A., Del Castillo, C. D. B., & Koenig, H. G. Associations between prayer and mental health among Christian youth in the Philippines.	2023	Qualitative Study
10.	Estrañero, J. G. Kulang sa Dasal: A Descriptive Study Concerning the Use of Faith to Combat Depression in the Philippines.	2022	Descriptive Research
11.	Hechanova, M. R. M., Jocson, R. M., Alianan, A. S., Delos Santos, J. J. I., Manaois, J. O., Gomez, G. A., & Lamzon, G. R. Developing resilience online: Evaluation of synchronous and asynchronous resilience interventions for Filipino college students.	2023	Comparative Study (Qualitative)
12.	Hechanova, R., & Waelde, L. (2017). The influence of culture on disaster mental health and psychosocial support interventions in Southeast Asia.	2017	Qualitative Research
13.	Hechanova, M. R. M. (2019). Development of community-based mental health interventions in the Philippines: An ecological perspective.	2019	Comparative case study (Qualitative)
14.	Hilario, R. C., & Sy Su, C. C. The Efficacy and Limits of Pilgrimage as Therapy for Depression.	2023	Archival Research
15.	Ji, L., & Liu, Z. Analysis of the effects of arts and crafts in public mental health education based on artificial intelligence technology.	2022	Qualitative Research
16.	Jimenez, A. L., Della, C. D., Arcenas, A. M. A., Chua, C. L. Y., & Legaspi, R. H. E. Examining the competency of Filipino mental health professionals in psychodynamic psychotherapy.	2020	Mixed method
17.	Jimenez, E. C. Impact of mental health and stress level of teachers to learning resource development.	2021	Descriptive-correlational research
18.	Marenus, M.W.; Cahuas, A.; Hammoud, D.; Murray, A.; Friedman, K.; Ottensoser, H.; Sanowski, J.; Kumavarel, V.; Chen, W. Web-Based Physical Activity Interventions to Promote Resilience and Mindfulness Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Pilot Study.	2023	Experimental/ Pilot Study
19.	Mukherjee, M., & Awasthi, P. Involuntary Cultural Change and Mental Health Status Among Indigenous Groups: A Synthesis of Existing Literature.	2022	Narrative study
20.	Ramos, C. V. Body rituals on mental health and maladaptive behavior during the prehistoric Philippines.	2015	Historical Research
21.	Real, D. V. C., Aniñon, E. C., Aller, F. S., Resoor, N. Q., & Englis, A. L. Health Care Beliefs and Practices among Atas in Canggehob, Mabinay, Philippines.	2023	Qualitative-phenomenological
22.	Roxas, G. K. T. "Self-care is being attentive to yourself": Using assemblages to examine discursive-material practices of self-care among Filipino university students.	2023	Qualitative Research
23.	Rubio, R. R. M. A. The Filipino concept of mental illness and nurses' attitudes: A scoping review	2023	Scoping Review
24.	Samaco-Zamora, M. C. F., & Fernande, K. T. G. A Grounded Theory of Filipino Wellness (Kaginhawaan).	2016	Grounded theory
25.	Serrano, J. O., & Reyes, M. E. S. Bending not breaking: coping among Filipino university students experiencing psychological distress during the global health crisis	2023	Grounded theory
26.	Talidong, K. J. B., & Toquero, C. M. D. Philippine Teachers' Practices to Deal with Anxiety amid COVID-19.	2020	Mixed method
27.	Tuliao, Antover P., "Mental health help seeking among Filipinos: a review of the literature"	2014	Descriptive Research
28.	Villanueva, J. M. Indigenous healing practices, policies and perceptions of young and elderly Ga'dang people in Nueva Vizcaya, Philippines.	2021	Descriptive-Qualitative method
29.	Voith, L. A., & Blakey, J. M.. Restoring and empowering traumatized girls in a Philippines-based independent living program: An exploratory study.	2018	Exploratory Research

Note. Table 2 presents the characteristics of the studies included after applying the rigorous inclusion and exclusion criteria. As shown in the table, the characteristics of the studies are categorized into three main components based on the inclusion criteria: the title and author of the study, the year of publication, and the type of research.

Mobilizing Body and Mind

Engaging in physical activities, such as exercise, yoga, or dance, serves as a prominent coping mechanism, particularly among younger Filipinos who benefit from greater access to organized fitness programs (Marenus et al., 2023). For older generations, physical activity often manifests in simpler forms, such as walking or gardening. These activities play a vital role in reducing mental stress and are strongly associated with concepts of nurturing oneself and fostering personal growth. By promoting mindfulness, self-reflection, and emotional resilience, physical exercise becomes an integral part of maintaining mental well-being across age groups (Cordero, 2021; Ji & Liu, 2022).

Illuminating Support

Emotional and social support from family, friends, and community is an essential coping strategy for Filipinos across all ages. For older generations, this support is often deeply rooted in close-knit familial ties and community relationships. Younger Filipinos, however, are expanding their support systems to include digital communities and online platforms, reflecting the changing nature of social interactions (Hechanova, 2019; Cordero, 2021). **Illuminating Support** is closely related to **Finding Strength in Faith** and **Dialogues with Professionals**, particularly for younger individuals, who balance both traditional and contemporary support systems.

Nurturing Self

Younger Filipinos are more likely to engage in self-care activities, such as pursuing hobbies, practicing arts and crafts, or traveling, as a means of coping with mental health challenges (Hilario & Su, 2023; Roxas, 2023). For the older generation, nurturing self may manifest in more reflective practices such as prayer or community engagement. This mechanism often overlaps with **Learning and Growth**, as both focus on personal development and the promotion of emotional well-being.

Dialogues with Professionals

Seeking professional help, such as counseling or therapy, is a coping mechanism that has gained traction among younger Filipinos due to increased awareness of mental health and better access to services (Cordero, 2021; Tuliao, 2014). In contrast, older generations may be less inclined to seek professional mental health support due to cultural stigma or economic barriers, relying instead on Utilizing Traditional Practices or spiritual guidance (Ramos, 2015). This generational difference reflects changing attitudes

toward mental health care and highlights the growing importance of integrating professional support into modern coping strategies.

Finding Strength in Faith

Spirituality and religion are central to coping mechanisms for many Filipinos, particularly among older generations who often turn to prayer, religious services, or pastoral counseling in times of distress (Cordero, 2021; Del Castillo et al., 2023). While younger Filipinos continue to engage in spiritual practices, they often supplement them with modern interventions such as therapy or self-care, blending traditional and contemporary approaches (Hechanova & Waelde, 2017).

Utilizing Traditional Practices

Traditional healing practices, such as consulting indigenous healers (Babaylan) or using herbal remedies, are still prevalent among older Filipinos (Ramos, 2015). These practices are often intertwined with spiritual beliefs, offering a culturally resonant way to address mental health challenges. Younger Filipinos, while less reliant on traditional practices, may incorporate elements of these methods alongside professional mental health services, demonstrating a nuanced approach to coping (Cervantes, 2023; Real et al., 2023).

Learning and Growth

This coping mechanism emphasizes personal reflection, resilience, and self-improvement, and is more commonly observed among younger Filipinos. They view mental health struggles as opportunities for growth and actively seek ways to enhance emotional intelligence and adaptability (Hilario & Su, 2023; Cordero, 2022). For older generations, learning and growth tend to be framed within the context of fulfilling familial or communal roles, reflecting a more collective rather than individualistic approach to mental health management (Jimenez, 2021).

This study explored commonly practiced mental health coping mechanisms among Filipinos, analyzed through 29 studies and grouped into a “MINDFUL” framework: **Mobilizing Body and Mind**, **Illuminating Support**, **Nurturing Self**, **Dialogues with Professionals**, **Finding Strength in Faith**, **Utilizing Traditional Practices**, and **Learning and Growth**. These mechanisms highlight generational differences, with younger Filipinos tending towards physical activities, self-care, and professional support, while older Filipinos emphasize family-based support, spirituality, and traditional healing practices. This framework reflects a blend of traditional and modern methods adapted to mental health management.

The MINDFUL framework provides a comprehensive view of Filipino mental health coping strategies, illustrating how cultural, generational, and social factors shape preferences. Integrating these mechanisms, especially traditional and professional supports, could lead to a more holistic approach to mental health care, fostering resilience across generations and promoting accessible, culturally sensitive mental health resources.

Factors Contributing to the Preference of Filipinos' Mental Health Coping Mechanisms.

As with problem 2, there is considerable evidence that shows the factors contributing to the preferred mental health coping mechanisms of Filipinos. These factors were further categorized into five (5) separate themes: Culture, Attitudes, Gender, Economics, Spirituality, or simply the C.A.G.E.S. They are discussed as follows.

Culture

Cultural beliefs play a crucial role in determining how Filipinos approach mental health. For older generations, traditional practices are often the first line of defense, grounded in long-standing cultural norms that prioritize community harmony and spiritual well-being (Rubio, 2023; Ramos, 2015). In contrast, younger generations, influenced by globalization and Western mental health ideologies, are more open to combining cultural practices with modern therapies (Tuliao, 2014). This cultural shift is leading to a hybrid approach to mental health care that blends the old with the new.

Attitudes

The willingness to seek help or acknowledge mental health issues varies across generations. Older Filipinos may be more hesitant to seek professional help due to the stigma attached to mental illness, preferring traditional or spiritual methods (Tuliao, 2014). Younger generations, however, show greater openness to discussing mental health challenges and engaging with professional services, influenced by rising mental health awareness and advocacy (Hechanova, 2019). This attitudinal shift is reshaping the landscape of mental health care in the Philippines, making professional dialogues more accessible to younger Filipinos.

Gender

Gender plays a significant role in the preference for certain coping mechanisms. Filipino men, especially in older generations, are more likely to avoid professional help due to societal expectations surrounding masculinity. Instead, they often turn to physical activities (Mobilizing Body

and Mind) or spiritual practices (Finding Strength in Faith) to manage mental health (Hechanova, 2019). Women, on the other hand, are generally more open to seeking **Illuminating Support** from social networks and professionals, highlighting the gendered dynamics of coping in the Filipino context (Tuliao, 2014).

Economic Factors

Economic status influences access to mental health resources. Lower-income individuals, particularly in older generations, are more likely to rely on cost-effective traditional healing methods, while younger and more affluent Filipinos can afford professional mental health services such as counseling and psychotherapy (Ramos, 2015; Hechanova, 2019). Economic constraints thus play a critical role in shaping the types of coping mechanisms available to different groups, limiting the use of more contemporary methods for those with fewer financial resources.

Spirituality

Spirituality remains a cornerstone of coping for many Filipinos, especially among older generations who view prayer, religious gatherings, and faith-based support as primary sources of mental and emotional strength (Cordero, 2021; Del Castillo et al., 2023). Younger Filipinos continue to value spirituality but are more likely to combine religious practices with modern mental health interventions, such as therapy, reflecting a more integrated approach to coping (Hechanova & Waelde, 2017).

This study examined the factors influencing Filipino preferences for mental health coping mechanisms, categorized into five key themes: **Culture, Attitudes, Gender, Economic Factors, and Spirituality** (C.A.G.E.S.). These factors reveal generational, socioeconomic, and gender-based differences in coping preferences. For instance, older Filipinos often rely on traditional practices and spirituality due to cultural beliefs and economic constraints, while younger Filipinos, influenced by greater mental health awareness and access, lean towards modern therapeutic options. Gender also shapes coping, with Filipino women more likely to seek social and professional support, while men tend toward physical or spiritual coping.

The C.A.G.E.S. framework provides a nuanced understanding of how various cultural, economic, and social factors influence mental health coping mechanisms in the Philippines. By addressing these factors, mental health support systems can become more inclusive and responsive, ensuring culturally relevant and economically accessible mental health resources across different demographics.

The **M.I.N.D.F.U.L.** mechanisms and **C.A.G.E.S.** factors are deeply interconnected, with each influencing the other across generations. For example, **Culture** and **Spirituality** play crucial roles in shaping older Filipinos' preference for **Utilizing Traditional Practices** and **Finding Strength in Faith**, while younger individuals, shaped by shifting **Attitudes** and improved **Economic** access, are more inclined to use **Dialogues with Professionals** and **Nurturing Self**. Gender also influences the preference for certain mechanisms, with men more likely to focus on physical and spiritual outlets, while women more readily seek emotional and professional support.

Conclusion

This systematic review aims to examine mental health coping mechanisms used by Filipinos across different generations, identifying the factors that influence their preferences, to provide an in-depth understanding of how cultural, economic and social contexts shape coping strategies and contribute to mental health resilience. Following carefully planned research using specific criteria for both inclusion and exclusion, 29 papers were selected for data extraction and coding. After conducting a comprehensive data synthesis and analysis, this systematic literature review concludes by summarizing the main findings, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

This systematic review revealed that Filipino mental health coping mechanisms fall under the “M.I.N.D.F.U.L.” framework, encompassing Mobilizing Body and Mind (physical activities), Illuminating Support (social support), Nurturing Self (self-care), Dialogues with Professionals (professional help), Finding Strength in Faith (spirituality), Utilizing Traditional Practices (indigenous methods), and Learning and Growth (personal reflection). Notably, older generations favor traditional practices, spirituality, and community support, while younger Filipinos lean toward self-care, professional help, and personal development, highlighting a shift toward modern approaches. The study also identified five factors—Culture, Attitudes, Gender, Economics, and Spirituality (C.A.G.E.S.)—that shape these preferences: cultural beliefs anchor older Filipinos to traditional methods; attitudes toward mental health impact willingness to seek professional help; gender roles influence coping choices, with men tending toward physical and spiritual practices, while women seek social support; economic status affects access to resources, with lower-income individuals relying more on traditional practices; and spirituality remains essential, especially for older generations. These findings underscore the

complex interplay between generational differences and societal factors, showing how C.A.G.E.S. factors shape coping strategies, fostering resilience or potentially limiting the exploration of alternative supports.

This study faces several limitations that could impact its findings' generalizability. First, its focus on Filipino coping mechanisms restricts applicability to other cultural contexts. Additionally, limiting the review to English-language studies may overlook relevant research in other languages. The study's timeframe, from 2015 to 2024, excludes earlier studies that might offer insights into changes in coping mechanisms over time. Furthermore, the heavy reliance on qualitative data may reduce generalizability, as fewer quantitative studies were included. Lastly, the focus on peer-reviewed articles may introduce publication bias, potentially excluding relevant non-published or non-indexed studies. Future research could address these limitations by including diverse cultural contexts, expanding the language and timeframe scope, incorporating more quantitative data, and considering grey literature for a broader perspective.

Future research could expand by exploring coping mechanisms across different cultures and regions, allowing for comparative insights with Filipino practices. Including studies in non-English languages could offer a more global perspective on coping mechanisms, while longitudinal studies would help track how these strategies evolve alongside societal and economic shifts. Emphasizing quantitative approaches could yield data generalizable to larger populations, and exploring the role of technology in mental health care would clarify how digital resources are reshaping coping strategies. Lastly, examining the impact of recent mental health policies in the Philippines could offer valuable insights into how policy changes affect coping behaviors and mental health outcomes.

This study highlights the diverse mental health coping mechanisms Filipinos use, organized under the M.I.N.D.F.U.L. framework: Mobilizing Body and Mind, Illuminating Support, Nurturing Self, Dialogues with Professionals, Finding Strength in Faith, Utilizing Traditional Practices, and Learning and Growth. These mechanisms are influenced by factors in the C.A.G.E.S. model—Culture, Attitudes, Gender, Economics, and Spirituality—which shape coping preferences both positively and negatively. By identifying these mechanisms and contributing factors, this study provides valuable insights for researchers, mental health professionals, and Filipino individuals, emphasizing that various coping strategies are available to promote resilience and healing.

Ultimately, this research serves as a reminder of the hope and support accessible through a range of culturally relevant and adaptable coping methods.

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