

Symposium | Local minority : [Symposium 98] Strengthening mental health support for young people in the Philippines

📅 Sun. Sep 28, 2025 1:10 PM - 2:40 PM JST | Sun. Sep 28, 2025 4:10 AM - 5:40 AM UTC 🏢 Session Room 7 (Conference Room C)

[Symposium 98] Strengthening mental health support for young people in the Philippines

Moderator: Maria Lourdes Rosanna E. De Guzman (University of the Philippines)

[SY-98-03] Catharsis, Healing, and Recovery: Approaches to Helping Sexually Abused Children

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This presentation explores evidence-based and indigenized psychosocial support interventions for 23 sexually abused female survivors, aging 18 to 25, referred by the social workers from different local government units to the Reception Study and Diagnostic Center (RSDC), situated in Davao Oriental, Southeastern Mindanao. It is a government-operated residential care center dedicated to supporting disadvantaged children, women, elderly people and families who have experienced abuse. Its mission is to ease their suffering and offer services that help rebuild and improve their lives. Using documentary analysis, participant observation, focus group discussion and key informant interviews, this research study investigates the impact of various therapeutic strategies on survivors' healing and recovery during their stay in the facility for three months. Findings highlight that cathartic approaches-such as dancing, storytelling, and dramatization are particularly effective in facilitating emotional release and healing. Such therapeutic technique is centered on Filipino Psychology constructs such as "*kapwa*" and "*pakiramdam*" which are translated as shared inner perceptions, emphasizing interconnectedness and collective identity. It balances scientific, humanistic and community-oriented practices and values collective over purely individual experiences. Additionally, music and art therapies contribute significantly to maintaining mental wellness. These interventions are framed within the Filipino cultural context, emphasizing indigenous concepts of healing and resilience. Specifically, it highlights Mindanao culture, language and social practices. Recovery is further supported by integrated services, including family and peer support, education, livelihood training, spiritual guidance, and healthcare, which collectively foster resilience and renewed sense of hope among survivors. This presentation underscores the importance of a strong support system and culturally relevant interventions, aligning with broader evidence that psychosocial support, community involvement, and tailored therapeutic approaches are critical for the recovery and reintegration of female sexual abuse survivors in Mindanao, Philippines.