

Resiliency, Optimism, and Personal Well-Being of Mothers of School Children During COVID-19 Pandemic: Basis for a Proposed Family Counseling Program

Nurhanifa S. Abolais

Integrated Laboratory School, Mindanao State University, Marawi City, Philippines

Author Email: abolais.nurhanifa@msumain.edu.ph

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Abstract. The study's primary objective is to investigate the levels of resiliency, optimism, and personal well-being among mothers of schoolchildren during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing the basis for a proposed family counseling program. Two hundred (200) mothers participated in the study whose children were officially enrolled during the School Year 2022-2023 in selected schools in the Marawi Division, Marawi City, Lanao del Sur. The study employed a modified structured questionnaire, which underwent proper validation, including content and construct validation through Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis, with a CMIN/DF of 2.373, CFI of 0.724, SRMR of 0.072, and RMSEA of 0.065, yielding an overall interrater reliability of 95% using the Kappa statistic. The data were analyzed using statistical tools, including percentage, mode, and Pearson's chi-square test at a 0.05 level of significance. Based on the findings, the study revealed that the respondents exhibited a high level of resilience across various components, such as adaptability, purposeful direction, emotion regulation, challenge orientation, ingenuity, and support seeking. First, the respondents displayed a high level of optimism within themselves and in all situations, showing a better state of mental and social well-being amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, the age of the respondents was significantly related to their resiliency regarding adaptability and purposeful direction, with a correlation coefficient of 26.939 and a p -value of 0.008. Third, their age and the number of children they had showed significant relationships with their resiliency concerning emotion regulation and challenge orientation, with correlation coefficients of 0.2212 and 0.19708 and p -values of 0.036 and 0.020, respectively. Fourth, their civil status and resiliency, in terms of ingenuity and support seeking, were also significantly related to each other, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.17533 and a p -value of 0.007. Fifth, the respondents' age was significantly associated with their self-optimism, with a correlation coefficient of 24.926 and a p -value of .015. Lastly, their educational attainment had a significant relationship with their optimism regarding situations, with a correlation coefficient of 0.44714 and a p -value of 0.000. However, their demographic profile was revealed to have no significant relationship with their personal well-being in terms of mental and social aspects.

Keywords: Resiliency; Optimism; Personal well-being; COVID-19 pandemic; Mothers of schoolchildren; Family counseling program

1.0 Introduction

In Filipino families, traditional roles have long defined fathers as providers and mothers as the primary caregivers. However, these roles have shifted in recent years, with many women also taking on breadwinning responsibilities. This dual burden has made motherhood more complex and demanding, even for highly educated and successful

women (Luthar & Ciciolla, 2015). The COVID-19 pandemic intensified these challenges by creating financial and emotional stressors that disproportionately affected mothers (Taylor & Conger, 2014). During this period, mothers not only carried responsibilities within their homes but also bore an increased role in society.

In the Philippines, the pandemic caused strict lockdowns that disrupted livelihoods and heightened economic and social stress, particularly among vulnerable communities (Bueza, 2021; Fonbuena, 2020). Women, especially mothers, experienced heavier burdens due to job losses and greater caregiving demands (World Economic Forum, 2021). Filipino mothers faced multiple challenges, including managing childcare, supporting education, maintaining households, and preserving family well-being, all under conditions of fear and uncertainty (Packman, 2020; Garey, 2021). These pressures had a significant impact on their mental, physical, and emotional health, particularly in impoverished settings (San Valentin, 2020). Mental health issues, including burnout, became widespread (Manulife's Third Asia Care Survey, 2022). To address these growing concerns, organizations and experts have emphasized the need for mental health programs and strategies tailored to pandemic conditions (Buenaventura et al., 2020). Although groups such as UNHCR provided aid during lockdowns (UNHCR, 2020; Fonbuena, 2020), limited resources left many families struggling to cope with the situation. Recognizing these strains, experts have underscored the need for supportive measures to strengthen the resilience of mothers (Tagupa, 2021; Lee, 2021).

Studies have shown that resilience can be fostered through psychological strengths, such as optimism and mindfulness (Pillay, 2020). Research has also identified coping strategies that help women manage stress in work and family settings (Yi Lian & Lian Tam, 2014). In the Philippine context, despite the pandemic's challenges, Filipinos are often described as resilient and optimistic (Garay et al., 2020). These traits, celebrated in cultural narratives and international reports (Cabico, 2018; Canoy, 2019), highlight the adaptability and perseverance of individuals even in the face of adversity. However, while these strengths are acknowledged, there remains a need for systematic research that examines how mothers specifically sustained resilience, optimism, and well-being during the pandemic, and how such insights can inform programs to support them.

This study aimed to address the gap by investigating the resiliency, optimism, and personal well-being of mothers of schoolchildren during the COVID-19 pandemic. The findings will serve as the basis for proposing a family counseling program designed to strengthen coping strategies and enhance the overall well-being of mothers and their families during times of crisis. By focusing on this specific group, the study seeks to provide targeted insights that can guide interventions tailored to the unique needs of Filipino mothers.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This study employed a Quantitative descriptive research method, a non-experimental type of research, whereby variables were measured using numerical terms. However, the variables under investigation were not manipulated by the researcher. It was used to gather quantifiable data for statistical analysis of a population sample. This research method was employed in this study to assess the level of resiliency, optimism, and personal well-being among the respondents.

2.2 Research Locale

The study was conducted in selected elementary schools within the Marawi City Division, one of the ten divisions under the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). Using cluster sampling, nine public elementary schools were selected to represent the division. Each school was chosen from one of the nine districts, ensuring that all districts were represented. These schools are situated in various areas across the city, including communities such as Patani, Angoyao, Caloocan, Datu Saber, Banggolo, Datu Macaorao, Matampay, Sikap, and Marawi Central. These institutions were identified across different districts under the leadership of Schools Division Superintendent Prof. Anna Zenaida A. Unte-Alonto. Marawi City, officially the Islamic City of Marawi, is the capital of Lanao del Sur and home to the Maranao people. With a population of 207,010 (2020 census), it is also known as the "summer capital of the south" due to its cooler climate. However, the city endured significant challenges, including the 2017 Marawi Siege and the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced schools to adopt remote and blended learning modalities for over two years. Limited face-to-face classes finally resumed on February 14, 2022, marking a gradual recovery for the city's education sector.

2.3 Research Respondents

The respondents in this study were mothers whose children were officially enrolled as elementary pupils at selected elementary schools in Marawi City Division during the 2022-2023 academic school year, regardless of their age. The selection of the sample population from the nine (9) districts was done through quota sampling, where the nine districts were used as strata and a sample was recruited or selected from them until the quota was reached. Out of the total population, only 200 respondents were chosen from the nine (9) selected participating schools based on their enrollment numbers. The most significant proportion of respondents came from Angoyao Central Elementary School, with 52 (26.15%), followed closely by Marawi Central Elementary Pilot School, with 50 (24.95%). Smaller shares were drawn from Datu Macaorao Elementary School, with seven students (3.67%), and Banggolo Elementary School, with nine students (4.59%). The remaining schools contributed varying sample sizes ranging from 11 to 24 respondents, ensuring that all nine districts were proportionately represented in the study.

2.4 Research Instruments

This study employed a modified structured questionnaire to collect the desired data and answer the questions outlined in the statement of the problem. The modification of the questionnaire was made through rephrasing and incorporating terms to enhance clarity and better suit the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. On the one hand, Part 1 was designed to secure personal information, including age, educational attainment, family monthly income, number of children, and civil status. A revised personal data sheet was used to acquire information about the respondents. On the other hand, Part 2 consisted of items/questions about the respondents' resiliency, optimism, and personal well-being. The reliability of the research instrument was determined using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to ensure internal consistency among the items.

For the validity purposes, the researcher adapted and modified questionnaires about the level of resiliency, optimism, and personal well-being of an individual: The Resilience Questionnaire constructed by the Assessment and Development Consultants (2017) for the resiliency level; the Optimism/Pessimism Instrument (OPI) of Prof. William Dember (1989) and the Revised Life Orientation Test (LOT-R) for the optimism level; and Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (SWEMWBS) (2012) and Social Well-Being Questionnaire made by Jacqueline Radzyk (2014) for the Mental and Social Well-Being of the respondents, respectively. Moreover, the modified instrument underwent validation by the panel of experts from the College of Education and professional mothers affiliated with other institutions. Additionally, it underwent content and construct validations, including both Exploratory Factor Analysis and Confirmatory Factor Analysis.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedure

Prior to initiating data collection, the researcher obtained ethical clearance for the study from the Office of the Research Ethics Committee. Subsequently, request letters were submitted to the Office of the Schools Division Superintendent, Prof. Zenaida Unte-Alonto, and to the respective principals of the selected participating schools. Respondents were provided with an invitation letter and an informed consent form to secure their approval for participation in the study. Finally, to further validate the responses, face-to-face interviews were conducted with some of the selected respondents. Thereafter, the collected data were tabulated, scored, and analyzed using statistical tools.

2.6 Data Analysis

The participants' responses were statistically analyzed according to the study's requirements using several statistical tools, including frequency and Percentage, Mode, and Pearson's Chi-Square (X^2) tests. Frequency and Percentage were applied to determine the distribution of the respondents according to their demographic profile, which included age, highest educational attainment, occupation, family monthly income, and number of children. The Mode, also referred to as the modal value, was used to identify the most common or popular response within the data set. It highlighted the observation or value that occurred most frequently and therefore represented the dominant pattern in the respondents' answers. Meanwhile, Pearson's Chi-Square (X^2) tests were employed to determine the relationships between categorical variables and to test hypotheses. This statistical tool was particularly useful in finding out whether observed differences between variables were due to chance or indicated a significant relationship. The degrees of freedom were also considered in these tests to decide whether the null hypothesis should be rejected, based on the total number of variables and samples involved in the study.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

The participation of the respondents in this research was entirely voluntary, which largely depended on their decision whether to participate or not. Even when they had already agreed to participate, they could request that the researcher not use the information they had provided in the research study. Similarly, they were given the privilege not to answer questions with which they were not comfortable. Refusal to take part in or withdraw from this study involved no penalty and did not affect the grades of their children. Furthermore, the respondents' participation in this research was strictly confidential. The information provided was not shared with anybody. All data collected from the respondents were kept private, ensuring that the respondents' names or identities did not appear in the results and discussion of this research. For direct quotations, the researcher used code names. Rest assured that utmost care and precautions were observed to ensure the safety and anonymity of the respondents.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Descriptive Profile of Respondents

In Terms of Age

The frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents by age is presented in Table 1. It showed that many, 74 or 37.00%, of the respondents were 31-40 years old; 62 or 31.00% were 41-50 years old; 31 or 15.50% were 21 to 30 years old; 29 or 14.50% were 51 years of age and above, while only 4 or 2.00% were 20 years old and below.

Table 1. Respondents: According to Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
51 or Above	29	14.50
41-50	62	31.00
31-40	74	37.00
21-30	31	15.50
20 or Below	4	2.00
Total	200	100.00

This result implied that most respondents belonged to the 31–40-year age range, a phase commonly associated with heightened stability, career progression, and emotional readiness, factors that frequently motivate individuals to contemplate establishing a family. This age range is often characterized by a sense of maturity and readiness for long-term commitments, including the decision to start a family, which highlights the convergence of personal and professional aspirations during this life stage. According to Ungureanu (2020), the age range of 30-40 was often seen as a time when many people tend to get more confident, less anxious, and less depressed. Golombok (2000) also noted that individuals in their 30s and 40s may be more emotionally and financially prepared for parenthood, which could lead to potentially more stable family environments.

In Terms of Highest Educational Attainment

Table 2 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents according to their highest level of educational attainment. It showed that many, 83 or 41.50%, of the respondents were college graduates; 81 or 40.50% were high school graduates; 25 or 12.50% were elementary graduates, while only ten (10) or 5.00% were post-graduates or master's degree holders.

Table 2. Respondents: According to the Highest Educational Attainment

Highest Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
Elementary Graduate	25	12.50
High School Graduate	81	40.50
College Graduate	83	41.50
Master's Degree	10	5.00
Doctoral Degree	0	0.00
Others	1	0.50
Total	200	100.00

This showed that all respondents have attended school. Seligman (2011) emphasized the role of education in fostering character strengths, positive emotions, and resilience, which in turn contribute to mental well-being and overall survival. Rutter (2012) also emphasized that education could mitigate risks and promote resilience in the

face of adversity. Furthermore, the high attendance rate among schools among the respondents underscores the potential reach of educational interventions in fostering not only academic development but also character strengths and psychological resilience.

In Terms of Family Monthly Income

Based on the study's findings, income can significantly impact an individual's quality of life, as income level often dictates access to various resources, including healthcare, education, and social support systems. Moreover, Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents by their monthly income.

Table 3. *Respondents: According to Family Monthly Income*

Family Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below PHP 4,999	105	52.50
PHP 5,000 – 9,999	47	23.50
PHP 10,000 – 14,999	20	10.00
PHP 15,000 – 19,999	18	9.00
PHP 20,000 or Above	10	5.00
Total	200	100.00

The monthly incomes of the respondents were presented in the table above. As shown, the majority, 105 or 52.50%, of the respondents have a monthly income below PhP 4,999; 47 or 23.50% ranged from PhP 5,000 to PhP 9,999; 20 or 10.00% ranged from PhP 10,000 to PhP 14,999; 18 or 9.00% ranged from PhP 15,000 to PhP 19,999; and 10 or 5.00% ranged from PhP 20,000 or above. The prevalence of lower monthly incomes, particularly with 52.50% of respondents earning below PhP 4,999, implies a potential impact on the living status of the surveyed population. Individuals in this income bracket may face challenges in meeting basic living expenses such as housing, utilities, and essential needs. This result suggests a higher likelihood of living in economically strained conditions, which may lead to inadequate housing, limited access to essential services, and an increased risk of financial stress among the surveyed population.

In Terms of the Husband's Monthly Income

Table 4 displays the frequency and percentage distribution of respondents categorized by their husbands' monthly income. Among the surveyed individuals, many (76 or 38.00%) of the respondents' husbands earned "Below PhP 4,999" monthly; 61 or 30.50% earned between PhP 5,000 and PhP 9,999; 19 or 9.50% earned PhP 10,000 to PhP 14,999; four (4) or 2.00% earned PhP 15,000 to PhP 19,999; and 13 or 6.50% earned PhP 20,000 or above. Furthermore, 27 or 13.50% of the respondents who did not report their husband's income were likely widows or divorcees. This implied a lack of financial support from their husbands due to circumstances such as bereavement or divorce, indicating that these respondents might be solely responsible for their households' financial matters.

Table 4. *Respondents: According to Husband's Monthly Income*

Husband's Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
No Answer	27	13.50
Below PHP 4,999	76	38.00
PHP 5,000 – 9,999	61	30.50
PHP 10,000 – 14,999	19	9.50
PHP 15,000 – 19,999	4	2.00
PHP 20,000 or Above	13	6.50
Total	200	100.00

This suggests that a substantial proportion of the participants and their partners came from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Marmot (2004) emphasized the link between reduced income and health disparities, noting that individuals with limited financial means often encounter increased stress levels, which can negatively impact both their physical and mental health. Edin and Shaefer (2015) further illuminated the obstacles tied to lower income, revealing the intricate challenges confronting those in economically disadvantaged circumstances, particularly concerning family dynamics and stability. Recognizing these dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions and strengthening support networks to address these issues effectively. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing targeted interventions and strengthening support networks to address these issues effectively.

In Terms of the Number of Children

Table 5 displays the frequency and distribution of respondents according to the number of children they have. From the total number of respondents, many (75 or 37.50%) have 4–6 children; sixty-eight (68 or 34.00%) have 1–3 children; Forty-nine (49 or 24.50%) have 7–10 children; six (6 or 3.00%) have children of more than 10; and two (2 or 1.00%) have two children only.

Table 5. *Respondents: According to the Number of Children*

Number of Children	Frequency	Percentage
7 – 10	49	24.50
4 – 6	75	37.50
1 – 3	68	34.00
Others	8	4.00
Total	200	100.00

It could indicate that the respondents have prominent families, contributing to heightened financial pressure. The expenses associated with supporting and providing for numerous children, encompassing education, healthcare, and necessities, may significantly amplify their financial obligations and difficulties, potentially resulting in heightened financial stress and challenges in maintaining a desired standard of living. As highlighted by the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (2023), economic hardship and financial strain can have profound and adverse impacts on families, underscoring the imperative need for meticulous budgeting and resource allocation. Despite these efforts, the circumstances could elevate stress levels for these mothers as they navigate the dual responsibilities of parenting and financial management, potentially necessitating targeted support mechanisms.

In Terms of Civil Status

Table 6 presents the frequency and percentage of the respondents according to their civil status. The majority (173, or 86.50%) of the respondents were married; 14 (or 7.00%) were widowed; and 13 (or 6.50%) were divorced or legally separated. This implies that most respondents had partners or husbands who could provide financial and emotional support. However, some respondents did not receive full support from their husbands and were raising their children alone due to separation, either through death or divorce.

Table 6. *Respondents: According to the Civil Status*

Number of Children	Frequency	Percentage
Married	173	86.50
Divorced/Legally Separated	13	6.50
Widowed	14	7.00
Total	200	100.00

Rousou et al. (2013) and Meier et al. (2016) affirmed that unmarried mothers reported diminished life satisfaction and poorer health compared to their married counterparts. In contrast, Pollmann-Schult's (2018) research indicated that single mothers exhibited higher life satisfaction in nations with supportive family policies and greater gender equality. Furthermore, Gadalla's (2009) investigation highlighted a correlation between heightened social support and reduced depressive symptoms. Similarly, according to Franz et al. (2003), single mothers lacking additional personal assistance for their children, those who are younger, and those facing financial challenges experienced elevated levels of psychological distress. These diverse findings collectively underscore the pivotal roles of social support systems and financial stability in shaping the well-being, mental health, and overall satisfaction of single mothers, offering crucial insights for targeted intervention and support initiatives. Efforts aimed at bolstering social support networks and addressing economic disparities are essential components in promoting the resilience and overall mental well-being of single mothers facing various challenges.

3.2 Respondents' Level of Resiliency

In Terms of Adaptability and Purposeful Direction

Table 7 presents the respondents' level of resiliency in terms of adaptability and purposeful direction. The level of resiliency in terms of adaptability and purposeful direction was described as high across all indicators. This implies that the respondents demonstrated strong adaptability and purposeful direction by remaining determined to achieve their goals, even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic's demanding situations. They modified their behavior when their existing approaches proved ineffective, regularly set clear short- and long-term goals that

reflected a proactive and goal-oriented mindset, and consistently strove to meet their targets despite the difficulties posed by the pandemic. This further suggests a high level of dedication and persistence among the respondents in pursuing their goals.

Table 7. *Mode of the Respondents' Resiliency in Terms of Adaptability and Purposeful Direction*

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
One can modify one's behavior if the existing approach is not working.	4	22	39	117	18	H	High
Shows determination to achieve goals in demanding situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.	5	6	23	121	45	H	High
Sets clear, short-term, and long-term goals for oneself regularly.	6	3	40	113	38	H	High
Consistently strives to meet targets and objectives despite the current situation brought by the COVID-19 pandemic.	3	11	32	107	47	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

Moreover, the findings align closely with the American Psychological Association's (2014) definition of resilience as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress. Wagnild (2023) emphasized that purposeful direction provides individuals with a clear sense of meaning and motivation, guiding them through difficulties and strengthening their determination to persist. The results also support Wagnild's statement, showing that individuals who set clear goals, demonstrate determination, and adapt their behavior in response to challenges are more likely to maintain a strong sense of purpose and direction in life. This sense of purpose, in turn, offered them motivation, guidance, and the persistence needed to cope with difficulties—an essential aspect of resilience, particularly during stressors such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Terms of Emotion Regulation and Challenge Orientation

Table 8 displays the respondents' level of resiliency in terms of emotion regulation and challenge orientation.

Table 8. *Mode of Respondents' Resiliency in Terms of Emotion Regulation and Challenge Orientation*

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
Easily adapts to the new normal situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes in my environment.	14	35	21	106	24	H	High
Exhibits a calm and controlled manner in facing the difficult or stressful situations during the COVID-19 pandemic.	8	29	22	111	30	H	High
Keeps events in perspective and does not overreact in high-stress situations pressure situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.	7	50	34	98	11	H	High
Views challenges that emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic as opportunities to learn and develop.	1	13	26	121	39	H	High
Sees the new normal situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic as an opportunity to test one's ability.	5	16	25	112	42	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

The respondents' resilience, as measured by emotion regulation and challenge orientation, was described as high across all indicators. The highest-rated statement, "*Views challenges that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic as opportunities to learn and develop,*" and the lowest-rated statement, "*Keeps events in perspective and does not overreact in high-pressure situations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,*" were both rated high. These findings highlight the respondents' strong capacity for emotional regulation and a positive outlook toward challenges, indicating their ability to remain calm, adapt to stressful situations, and view adversity as an opportunity for growth. Understanding these attitudes can help guide support strategies that strengthen psychological well-being during crises.

The results further suggest that respondents proactively adapted, acquired new skills, and pursued innovative solutions to build resilience. This aligns with Dweck and Molden's (2005) assertion that beliefs about one's abilities shape responses to challenges and influence whether individuals embrace them as opportunities for learning. Respondents viewed the "new normal" brought about by the pandemic as an opportunity to test their abilities, reflecting a calm and controlled approach to facing stress. Similarly, the findings support Barrett's (2016) Constructed Emotion Theory, which argues that people actively shape emotional experiences through cognitive appraisal and regulation. Such processes highlight the importance of challenge orientation and emotion regulation as key aspects of resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Terms of Ingenuity and Support Seeking

Table 9 displays the data about the mode of respondents' resiliency in terms of ingenuity and support seeking.

Table 9. Mode of Respondents' Resiliency in Terms of Ingenuity and Support Seeking

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
Shows confidence in one's ability to find a way around problems.	0	10	17	114	59	H	High
Prefers to ask for help rather than to tackle problems alone.	2	30	25	109	34	H	High
Regularly shares concerns and feelings with coworkers and/or colleagues in the workplace.	2	24	13	119	42	H	High
Has closer contact with direct neighbors.	3	35	29	108	25	H	High
Thinks beyond the more obvious solutions when trying to solve problems faced during the COVID-19 pandemic.	1	9	28	121	41	H	High
Sees opportunities and options in problem-solving that others may not see.	1	17	33	126	23	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

Based on the data in Table 9, the respondents' level of resiliency in terms of ingenuity and support-seeking was described as high across all six indicators. The highest-rated statement was *"sees opportunities and options in problem solving that others may not see,"* while the lowest was *"has closer contact with direct neighbors."* These findings indicate that respondents demonstrated strong creative problem-solving abilities and a proactive approach to seeking support, reflecting their capacity to identify alternative solutions and think beyond obvious options. They also demonstrated increased engagement with neighbors during challenging times, indicating diverse social behaviors that promoted community connection. These results align with Sandberg and Grant's (2023) assertion that "resilience is the strength and speed of our response to adversity," as respondents displayed both the creativity to find solutions and the readiness to collaborate with others when challenges arose.

Furthermore, the results support Mestre et al.'s (2017) view that managing overwhelming emotions—or seeking assistance to cope with them—helps individuals maintain focus and resilience. Respondents who preferred asking for help and maintaining closer contact with their neighbors (Indicators 2 and 4) demonstrated a willingness to seek emotional support, indicating that support-seeking served as an effective strategy for regulating emotions and strengthening resilience. Their ability to think critically, adapt creatively, and connect socially underscores resilience as a dynamic process of overcoming adversity through both ingenuity and collaborative support.

3.3 Respondents' Level of Optimism

Optimism About Self

Table 10 shows the level of self-optimism of the respondents. The highest mode indicator, *"In this trying time, one usually expects the best,"* and the lowest mode indicator, *"Rarely counts on good things happening to oneself in this pandemic time,"* were both rated high.

Table 10. Mode of Respondents' Optimism About Self

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
In this trying time, one usually expects the best.	5	17	24	122	32	H	High
It is easy to relax in these trying times.	10	55	27	89	19	H	High
Rarely does one count on good things happening to oneself in this pandemic time.	15	44	36	85	20	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

The results indicated that the respondents anticipated or hoped for positive outcomes or favorable results in the challenging situations brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. These individuals typically have an optimistic outlook and hope for the most positive and beneficial outcomes. They would rather look on the bright side of the situation than the bad one. However, there was also a significant portion where a degree of skepticism and lower expectations were exhibited. These findings reflected the diversity of attitudes and responses to adversity during a pandemic, with some individuals remaining hopeful and others more cautious in their outlook.

The findings presented in the table are closely related to the concept of optimism bias, as described by Sharot (2011) in her book. The optimism bias refers to the tendency for individuals to have a more positive outlook and

perceive potential positive outcomes as more likely than negative ones, even in challenging or uncertain situations. The responses in the table showed that a significant portion of the respondents tended to expect the best and find it easy to relax during challenging times. This aligned with the idea that individuals, due to their cognitive bias, might emphasize the positive aspects of their situation and downplay the negative ones, leading to a more optimistic outlook. According to Scott (2022), optimists tend to view hardships as learning experiences or temporary setbacks, rather than as permanent challenges. Even the most miserable day holds the promise for them that "tomorrow will probably be better."

Optimism on Situations

Table 11 presents the respondents' level of optimism on situations.

Table 11. Mode of Respondents' Optimism on Situations

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
It seems the cards of life are stacked overhead because of the COVID-19 pandemic.	9	35	31	104	21	H	High
Sometimes feeling down is experienced, but one regains composure right back again.	6	37	18	113	26	H	High
In general, there is the belief that the COVID-19 pandemic will eventually come to an end.	4	4	10	119	63	H	High
Feels comfortable in one's home.	6	19	23	104	48	H	High
With sufficient faith, one can accomplish almost anything in this challenging time brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.	2	11	17	92	78	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

Based on the table, all indicators were rated high, reflecting strong levels of resilience among the respondents. The leading indicator, "In general, there is the belief that the COVID-19 pandemic will eventually come to its end," revealed that about 64% of respondents expressed high or very high concern about the pandemic's impact, viewing it as a significant challenge in their lives. Meanwhile, the lowest indicator, "With enough faith, one can do almost anything in this difficult time caused by the COVID-19 pandemic," showed that around 70% of respondents reported high or very high faith and confidence in overcoming the pandemic's challenges. These findings suggest that while the respondents recognized the pandemic's hardships, they maintained optimism, faith, and a positive outlook amid adversity. As Chakraborty (2020) emphasized, maintaining optimism helps individuals manage stress and envision favorable outcomes, thereby fostering resilience and adaptive coping responses in times of crisis.

The results further implied that respondents believed the pandemic's challenges could be overcome through faith, emotional regulation, and collective societal efforts such as vaccination and public health initiatives. This aligns with Hanson's (2013) view that optimism during adversity involves deliberately cultivating positive emotions to counter negativity and sustain emotional balance, as reflected in responses such as "Sometimes feel down is experienced but regain composure right back again." Moreover, the findings resonate with Seligman's (2011) conceptualization of optimism as a cognitive stance wherein individuals perceive setbacks as temporary and subject to change. The participants' belief in the eventual resolution of the pandemic, their ability to recover from difficulties, and their confidence in personal efforts collectively illustrate optimism as both a mindset and a resilience-building factor amid the COVID-19 crisis.

3.4 Respondents' Personal Well-Being

Mental Well-Being

As shown in Table 12, the respondents' mental well-being was described as high, as evident in the mode values of all indicators. The majority of the respondents have exhibited high levels of optimism about the future, clear thinking, and interest in new developments during the COVID-19 pandemic. These indicators suggested a positive outlook and adaptability among the respondents in the face of the pandemic's challenges.

Table 12. Mode of Respondents' Mental Well-Being

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
Feeling optimistic about the future during this COVID-19 pandemic.	9	21	53	72	45	H	High
Thinks clearly despite the new normal situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.	10	20	46	90	34	H	High

The results indicated that the respondents did not perceive their cognitive abilities as significantly impaired by the changes brought about by the pandemic. An optimistic outlook may positively influence an individual's mental and physical well-being by promoting a healthy lifestyle, as well as encouraging adaptive behaviors and cognitive responses (Conversano et al., 2010). The findings also suggested that the respondents were open to new opportunities and changes prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which could have positive effects on their mental well-being. Seligman (2006) stated that explanatory style stems directly from one's worldview – whether people see themselves and others as valuable and deserving or as worthless and hopeless. Moreover, Fraser Health (2023) emphasized that positive mental health can enhance happiness and help children and youth cope with life's regular ups and downs. It can also prevent the onset of other mental health issues, such as anxiety and depression.

Social Well-Being

Table 13 presents the state of social well-being among the respondents, where the values of the mode for all indicators were high. The highest mode indicator, which stated "Dealing with problems well during this COVID-19 pandemic," showed that the majority of respondents reported high (H) or very high (VH) levels of problem-solving skills and adaptability during the pandemic. This suggested that individuals have effectively coped with the challenges posed by the pandemic, which could have positively impacted their social and emotional well-being.

Table 13. Mode of Respondents' Social Well-Being

Indicators	Responses (n=20)					Mode	Interpretation
	VL	L	F	H	VH		
Enjoys spending time with friends a lot through social media in this new normal situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.	15	31	62	71	21	H	High
Feeling more relaxed during this COVID-19 pandemic.	28	35	52	69	16	H	High
Dealing with problems well during this COVID-19 pandemic.	5	22	56	88	29	H	High
Feels understood and heard by welfare organizations (social work, home health care, mental health care, and doctors).	12	20	49	81	38	H	High

Note: VH=Very High, H=High, F=Fair, L=Low, VL=Very Low

The findings indicated that the respondents have successfully adapted to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic by finding joy in digital social interactions, managing stress effectively, and feeling well-supported by welfare organizations. These positive social experiences and coping strategies contributed to their overall well-being during a time of significant disruption and change. Social connectedness refers to a person's sense of belonging, support, and connection to others, which has a significant impact on their mental, emotional, and physical health, particularly when facing adversity (Van Bel, 2009). The ability to maintain and strengthen social connections, through digital means, played a crucial role in providing support, reducing stress, enhancing problem-solving skills, and improving overall well-being. These findings aligned with the concept of social connectedness as emphasized by Van Bel. Furthermore, social ties (i.e., marital status) may shape the way that structural variables influence health (Montez et al., 2009). This idea suggests that connections, including marital status and other structural variables, provide critical sources of support, understanding, and assistance, thereby contributing to an individual's overall well-being during challenging times.

3.5 Significant Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Resiliency

Profile and Resiliency on Adaptability and Purposeful Direction

As shown in Table 14, the profile of the respondents in terms of age was found to be significantly related to their resiliency in adaptability and purposeful direction. At the same time, their highest educational attainment, family monthly income, number of children, and civil status were not significantly related. This was demonstrated by the correlation coefficient of 26.94 and a p -value of .008 for age, which was less than the significance level of 0.05. In contrast, the p -values for the highest educational attainment, monthly income (of both respondents and their husbands), number of children, and civil status were greater than 0.05, indicating significance levels.

Table 14. *Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Resiliency on Adaptability and Purposeful Direction*

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	26.94	.008*	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	7.95	.789	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	11.91	.218	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	5.38	.944	Not Significant
Number of Children	14.04	.121	Not Significant
Civil Status	2.20	.900	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

The findings demonstrated that age affects the level of resiliency in terms of adaptability and purposeful direction among mothers of school-age children. In contrast, educational attainment, family monthly income, number of children, and civil status of the respondents did not significantly impact their level of resiliency in terms of adaptability and purposeful direction. Research has shown that resilience tends to increase with age for many individuals. As people age, they often accumulate life experiences and coping strategies that could contribute to their ability to handle and recover from stress and challenges. Dipatuan (2014) stated that the resiliency of OFWs' wives was influenced by age, educational attainment, and the number of children. Individuals with a high level of resilience were, therefore, able to adapt easily to changing conditions, overcome problems more quickly, and produce solutions to problems in greater numbers and variety (Taylor et al., 2013).

Profile and Resiliency on Emotion Regulation and Challenge Orientation

Table 15 shows that factors such as age and number of children have a significant relationship with resiliency in emotion regulation and challenge orientation, with correlation coefficients of 0.22 and 0.20, respectively, and p-values of 0.036 and 0.020. This suggests a meaningful association between a person's age, the number of children they have, and their ability to regulate emotions and approach challenges. Meanwhile, factors such as educational attainment and family income (both the respondent's and the husband's) did not appear to significantly influence resiliency in emotion regulation and challenge orientation.

Table 15. *Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Resiliency on Emotion Regulation and Challenge Orientation*

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	22.11	.036*	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	7.01	.983	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	5.04	.831	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	15.97	.192	Not Significant
Number of Children	19.71	.020*	Significant
Civil Status	11.94	.063	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

These results imply that both the respondents' age and the number of their children influenced their resilience in terms of emotion regulation and challenge orientation. On the other hand, resiliency was not affected by their educational attainment, family monthly income, or civil status. Several theories suggest that emotion regulation tends to change with age. As Sanchis-Sanchis, Grau, Moliner, & Morales-Murillo (2020) found, children and pre-adolescents aged 9–12 obtained lower scores in emotional regulation strategies than those in the 13–16 age group. This finding aligns with the Socioemotional Selectivity Theory, which posits that older adults' more limited time perspective motivates emotion regulation in pursuit of well-being goals (Carstensen, 2006). Thus, older respondents may be better equipped to manage their emotions and approach challenges with a resilient mindset. Furthermore, respondents with more children may also exhibit higher levels of resiliency, possibly due to increased life responsibilities and adaptive coping experiences.

Profile and Resiliency on Ingenuity and Support Seeking

As shown, the respondents' age, educational attainment, monthly income of both the respondents and their husbands, and number of children have no significant relationship with their level of resiliency in terms of ingenuity and support seeking. This was contrary to civil status, which has a significant relationship with the latter. Additionally, this was supported by the computed p-values for age, educational attainment, monthly income, number of children, and civil status.

Table 16. *Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Resiliency on Ingenuity and Support Seeking*

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	15.79	.201	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	8.40	.754	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	4.87	.846	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	16.67	.163	Not Significant
Number of Children	16.52	.057	Not Significant
Civil Status	17.63	.007*	Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

Civil status was the only demographic factor found to be significantly related to the respondents' resilience, as its p-value was less than the significance level of 0.05. Other factors—such as age, educational attainment, the respondents' monthly income, the husbands' monthly income, and the number of children—did not show significant relationships with resilience, with p-values of 0.201, 0.754, 0.846, 0.163, and 0.057, respectively, all greater than the 0.05 significance level. These results suggest that age, educational attainment, family income, and number of children did not significantly affect the respondents' resiliency in terms of ingenuity and support-seeking. Research has consistently shown that married individuals tend to have higher levels of perceived social support (De Silva et al., 2005) compared to unmarried individuals (Fasihi et al., 2017). It is believed that perceived social support enhances a person's help-seeking and coping mechanisms by promoting positive appraisal of situations and reducing negative emotional responses (Thoits, 2011).

3.6 Significant Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Optimism

Profile and Self-Optimism

Table 17 shows that the respondents' profiles—such as educational attainment, family monthly income, number of children, and civil status—did not have significant relationships with their level of optimism, as indicated by the corresponding p-values and correlation coefficients. On the other hand, age was found to be significantly related to their self-optimism. This implies that as the respondents' age increased, their level of optimism also tended to increase, as reflected in the correlation coefficient of 24.93 with a p-value of .015. Moreover, the results suggest that any observed relationships between the other variables and optimism may have occurred by chance rather than reflecting a genuine underlying relationship.

Table 17. *Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Optimism About Self*

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	24.93	.015*	Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	14.56	.266	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	7.94	.541	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	3.27	.993	Not Significant
Number of Children	10.41	.319	Not Significant
Civil Status	3.07	.800	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

Studies investigating age-related differences in optimism have presented conflicting results: while some have indicated an increase in dispositional optimism with age, others have not supported this finding. You et al. (2009) reported that older Americans exhibited higher levels of dispositional optimism compared to younger Americans. In contrast, older Chinese individuals exhibited lower levels of dispositional optimism compared to their younger counterparts. Several potential explanations for these contrasting findings have been proposed, including the moderating or mediating influences of religion (Mattis et al., 2004), coping strategies (Myers & Derakshan, 2004; Nicholls et al., 2008), and self-regulation (Umstadtd et al., 2007).

Profile and Optimism on Situations

Table 18 reveals that the respondents' age, family income, number of children, and civil status had no significant relationship with their optimism in various situations, as indicated by the correlation coefficients and p-values presented in the table, all of which were higher than the 0.05 significance level. The analysis revealed a statistically significant relationship between the respondents' highest educational attainment and the "on-site" variable, with a correlation coefficient of 0.4471 and a p-value of < 0.001, indicating a significant relationship. This suggests that an individual's level of education significantly influences the aspect represented by "on-situation." Those with higher educational attainment may experience different "on-the-spot" responses compared to individuals with lower educational levels. Researchers have suggested that optimistic individuals approach life situations with the

belief that outcomes will be favorable and are more likely to exhibit better coping mechanisms when dealing with adversity and stress (Karademas et al., 2007). Psychology researchers, such as Oettingen et al. (2005), have referred to this as “mental contrasting,” the ability to shift our mind from focusing on the present reality to focusing on the desired future state.

Table 18. Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Optimism on Situations

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	17.35	.137	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	44.71	<.001*	Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	4.43	.881	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	6.92	.863	Not Significant
Number of Children	7.30	.606	Not Significant
Civil Status	5.51	.480	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

3.7 Significant Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Personal Well-Being

Profile and Mental Well-Being

Table 19 presents the study's findings regarding the relationship between the respondents' profiles and their mental well-being.

Table 19. Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Mental Well-Being

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	7.58	.817	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	6.34	.898	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	12.48	.187	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	17.33	.138	Not Significant
Number of Children	15.30	.083	Not Significant
Civil Status	9.47	.149	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

Table 19 suggests that none of the examined variables—such as age, educational attainment, income, number of children, and civil status—were significantly correlated with the "Mental" variable, as indicated by the correlation coefficients and *p*-values of .817, .898, .187, .138, .083, and .149, all of which were greater than the significance level of .05. This implies that these factors did not strongly influence or predict this particular aspect of an individual's mental well-being. Van Den Berg et al. (2010) suggested that the income shock associated with job loss is unlikely to represent the primary source of the effect on an individual's and their partner's mental health. This statement suggests that income shocks resulting from job loss may not be the primary factor affecting mental health; instead, other mechanisms or factors may play a more significant role in determining mental health outcomes.

Profile and Social Well-Being

Based on Table 20, the respondents' income was found to have a significant relationship with their social well-being. In contrast, their age, educational attainment, husbands' income, number of children, and civil status did not exhibit a significant relationship with their social well-being. These findings were demonstrated through the correlation coefficients and *p*-values presented in the same table.

Table 20. Relationship Between the Respondents' Profile and Their Social Well-Being

Profile	Correlation Coefficient (χ^2)	p-value	Remark
Age	5.40	.943	Not Significant
Highest Educational Attainment	13.36	.344	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Respondent	8.27	.507	Not Significant
Family Monthly Income of the Husband	9.81	.633	Not Significant
Number of Children	10.89	.283	Not Significant
Civil Status	5.80	.445	Not Significant

Note: *Significant at .05 Level of Significance

Findings aligned with the idea that mental health (mind) and its relationship with various aspects of well-being were multifaceted, hence influenced by a broader set of factors beyond the variables examined. To effectively enhance well-being, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive approach that addresses both mental and physical health, as well as other dimensions of an individual's existence. Additionally, recognizing the interdependence of

these factors is crucial for promoting a holistic understanding of well-being and implementing effective interventions. From the data provided above, it is evident that favorable living conditions, including secure housing and stable employment, play a pivotal role in shaping individuals' overall well-being. While the correlation between income and well-being, typically gauged through life satisfaction, is more pronounced among individuals with lower socioeconomic status, studies also indicate significant impacts for those at higher income levels (Biswas-Diener, 2009). This underscores the importance of recognizing the nuanced relationship between economic factors and well-being across diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, thereby highlighting the need for tailored interventions to address varying needs effectively.

4.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings, mothers aged 31–40, with 4–6 children, who were college graduates but earning below Php 4,999 monthly, demonstrated high levels of resilience, optimism, and personal well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their ability to remain positive and care for their families despite financial and social challenges reflected their remarkable strength and adaptability. This resilience was evident in their adaptability, purposeful direction, emotion regulation, challenge orientation, ingenuity, and support-seeking behaviors, which together illustrated their capacity to overcome adversity with hope and determination. The study further revealed that their optimism, directed both toward themselves and the situations they encountered, fostered a sense of hope that significantly enhanced their mental and social well-being. Their demonstrated resilience and optimism not only served as a foundation for their families' stability but also stood as an inspiring example of human strength in the face of uncertainty. However, while the overall indicators of resilience and optimism were high, certain areas, such as emotion regulation, self-oriented challenge orientation, and the social aspects of well-being, were found to be relatively less developed. These gaps highlight the need for further support, which can be addressed through a family counseling program. By integrating psychological principles, therapeutic methods, and family dynamics, the program aims to strengthen these areas and provide mothers with practical tools to navigate and thrive in the face of life's adversities.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The author undertook the conceptualization, design, and execution of the study alone. All stages of the research process, from proposal writing and data gathering to data analysis, interpretation, and documentation, were independently carried out by the author. The data analysis was conducted with the assistance and statistical guidance of Prof. Sonny Magno, the Dean of the College of Science Education at Mindanao State University. The author personally managed the coordination, fieldwork, and data acquisition, ensuring the accuracy and reliability of the results. This research is therefore a product of the author's individual effort, initiative, and commitment to scholarly work.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the conduct and publication of this study.

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