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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY INTO FILIPINO CULTURAL EXPECTATIONS AND THE SENSE OF BELONGINGNESS AMONG ELDERLY PARENTS CARED FOR BY THEIR CHILDREN

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ABSTRACT

Research on elderly caregiving in Filipino families remains limited, although cultural values strongly shaped caregiving practices. This study, completed in June 2026 explored the lived experiences of elderly parents about how cultural expectations shaped their sense of Belongingness while being cared for by their children in the Philippines. It explored the experiences of *paggalang* (respect), *pagkakaisa* (family unity), and *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) in caregiving practices. Purposive sampling was implemented to recruit twelve participants aged 65 and above from the City of San Fernando, Pampanga. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The study discovered that paggalang was the most meaningful cultural expectation influencing belongingness, strengthened by pagkakaisa and utang na loob. Although these values increased the inclusion and emotional security, participants also reported experiencing loneliness and disappointment when such expectations were unfulfilled. The study found that Filipino cultural values still strongly influence how families care for their elderly members and maintain a sense of belonging.

Keywords: *Filipino Culture, Paggalang, Pagkakaisa, Utang na Loob, Elderly Parents, Caregiving, Belongingness, Values*

INTRODUCTION

Aging was a natural stage in life that brought both opportunities and challenges for individuals and families (World Health Organization, 2024). As populations around the

world grew older, the number of elderly individuals requiring care continued to rise (National Research Council Panel on a Research Agenda and New Data for an Aging World, 2019). This increase made it essential to examine how different cultures provided support to older adults and the ways family involvement affected their well-being. This brought an emphasis on the difference in the support of Filipinos in providing elderly support from the rest of the world.

In the Philippines, the family had always been the foundation of each Filipino individual, as evidenced by the strong family ties that they were known for (Uy, 2023). This was seen in the way they cared for their children until they could stand for themselves, and the way they cared for their elderly until the last breath they took. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority in 2020, there were 5.86 million Filipino senior citizens who were dependent on their families for different aspects of support. Feeling included and valued by family members significantly affected the emotional well-being of elderly Filipinos, shaping their experience of aging and their sense of identity within the household (Patterson & Margolis, 2023).

Most Filipino families continue to provide care for their elderly family members despite multiple constraints, such as financial, emotional, and physical challenges. According to Felipe-Dimog et al. (2024), Filipino children traditionally assumed the caregiving role for their aging parents to provide support that was both a practical choice and a reflection of cultural values. In addition, several studies confirmed that Filipino family members remained the primary caregivers of sick and elderly Filipinos, especially when doing activities of daily living (ADLs) such as bathing and mobilizing (Abalos et al., 2018). These caregiving practices were deeply rooted in Filipino culture, particularly in values such as *paggalang* (respect), *pagkakaisa* (family unity), and *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude). Subsequently, for many Filipino parents, having their children as their caregivers could be seen as a way to repay the effort and sacrifices they gave to raise their family and as an act of love and gratitude (Gutierrez & Mabulay, 2023). The national significance of elderly care was also reflected in Republic Act No. 9994, or the Expanded Senior Citizens Act of 2010, which provides rights and benefits to Filipino senior citizens, including protection and support.

However, some Filipino elderly did not obtain the proper amount of honor and support they needed despite cultural standards and expectations among caregivers. Filipinos experience abuse and mistreatment from their caregivers even when these caregivers were their own family members, including various types of neglect and physical, financial, emotional, and verbal abuse (Felipe-Dimog et al., 2024). These negative experiences showed a gap between the expectations based on Filipino culture and the actual experiences of elderly parents. This may lead to feelings of isolation and a weakened sense of belonging among Filipino elderly. Although Filipino cultural expectations remained strong, modern influences such as changing household structures, work, migration, and financial difficulties affected how elderly parents perceived care and their inclusion within the family (Garcia et al., 2025; Felipe-Dimog et al., 2024).

Existing literature further showed that family engagement, social support, and inclusion were important to the well-being of older adults. Plesko et al. (2021) observed that social interconnection from family engagement was associated with mental health outcomes, particularly when older people felt a sense of worth and were incorporated within the home environment. Similarly, Ramos et al. (2023) found that older parents experienced stronger feelings of connection and belonging when children provided care in accordance with cultural norms. In Pampanga, Carandang et al. (2024) found that although older residents were mostly satisfied with their surroundings, migration, smaller social networks, and the loss of close family members weakened their relationships and reduced their sense of belonging. Tubio et al. (2024) also found that older adults in Geographically Isolated and Disadvantaged Areas were more likely to experience loneliness with age and that social isolation was associated with worse physical health. These findings emphasized the importance of family support, social interaction, and inclusion in promoting the emotional well-being of older adults.

Although many Filipino families continue to view caring for elderly parents as a family responsibility, perspectives on elderly care are gradually changing. Work, migration, financial problems, and changing family structures may make it difficult for some families to provide full-time care at home (Garcia et al., 2025). Younger generations may also have different views about caregiving because of modern responsibilities and changing ways of living (Norris, 2023). While these changes may lead families to seek outside support, the cultural expectations surrounding respect, family responsibility, and intergenerational relationships remain important in understanding how elderly parents experience care and belonging within their families.

Despite the growing literature on Filipino cultural values, family caregiving, and elderly well-being, a research gap remains. Much of the existing research highlighted the experiences of caregivers, health workers, or family members, while the voices of older Filipinos themselves remained limited. Although traditions such as utang na loob, paggalang, and pagkakaisa played a strong role in shaping family relationships, there was still limited literature examining how elderly parents personally understood these expectations and how they experienced the care they received from their children. Studies also tended to generalize findings across broader populations, overlooking the unique experiences of specific communities such as those in Pampanga. As a result, there remained a gap in understanding the personal experiences of Filipino elderly parents, particularly how they viewed belonging, support, respect, and emotional connection within their families.

Understanding these experiences was crucial for promoting the well-being of elderly parents and ensuring that they felt valued, respected, and included in family life. Furthermore, examining cultural values in relation to family-focused care could contribute to culturally sensitive caregiving practices that address not only the physical needs of older adults but also their emotional and social well-being. By centering the voices of elderly parents themselves, this study aimed to provide a platform for understanding how Filipino cultural expectations shaped their sense of belonging when they were cared for by their children.

Therefore, this study, "A Phenomenological Study into Filipino Cultural Expectations and the Sense of Belongingness Among Elderly Parents Cared for by Their Children," explored the lived experiences of elderly parents in San Fernando, Pampanga, particularly how Filipino cultural expectations influenced their sense of belongingness within their families. By focusing on the perspectives of elderly parents themselves, the study sought to provide context-specific insights that could contribute to culturally sensitive family caregiving practices and promote holistic care that respected both the needs and dignity of older adults.

Research Questions

This research study aimed to understand and gain insight into the lived experiences of elderly parents on how their sense of belongingness was formed with their children caring for them in the Philippines, and how their Filipino cultural expectations influenced this. It aimed to gain insights into the lived experiences of traditional Filipino cultural values and caregiving practices by the elderly parents in relation to their sense of belongingness and attachment within the family.

Specific Objectives:

1. How did cultural expectations surrounding caregiving shape the sense of belonging of elderly parents within the family setting?
    - 1.1 paggalang (respect),
    - 1.2 pagkakaisa (family unity)
    - 1.3 utang na loob (debt of gratitude)
2. Which cultural expectation did elderly parents perceive as most meaningful in shaping their sense of belongingness within the family?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study applied a qualitative research design using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to obtain deeper insight into how Filipino cultural expectations shaped the sense of belonging of Filipino elderly parents who were cared for by their children. A phenomenological research design was suitable for this study because it enabled the researchers to explore and describe the lived experiences of elderly parents, which was the objective of the study (Adeniran & Tayo-Ladega, 2024). Through this design, the researchers were able to identify patterns and themes from the deeper perspectives, emotions, and views of the participants that might not arise using other research designs (Oluka, 2025). The use of open-ended questions also allowed participants to freely express how Filipino cultural values shaped their sense of belongingness in a detailed and meaningful manner.

Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga, Philippines, among elderly Filipino parents who were being cared for by their own children. The location enabled the researchers to access participants fitting the inclusion criteria.

Respondents and Sampling Method

Purposive sampling was used to select the participants based on the criteria relevant to the research objectives. Community centers, barangay offices, and local health facilities in San Fernando, Pampanga, were approached to assist in identifying potential participants who met the established criteria.

The inclusion criteria required participants to: (1) be 65 years of age or older; (2) reside in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga; (3) be under the care of their own children, whether financially or physically; (4) have no severe cognitive impairment, such as advanced dementia, that would hinder meaningful participation; and (5) be medically stable to ensure safe participation in the study.

The participants consisted of nine (9) females and three (3) males, with ages ranging from 66 to 82 years. The participants had between two and eight children. Their demographic characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile

Participants	Profile		
	Sex	Age	Number of Children
P1	F	67	2
P2	F	67	4
P3	F	82	6
P4	F	81	5
P5	F	82	4
P6	M	67	6
P7	F	79	5
P8	M	74	5
P9	M	70	8
P10	M	70	5
P11	F	75	4
P12	F	66	8

Research Instrument

The primary data-gathering instrument was a researcher-prepared semi-structured, one-on-one interview guide. The interview guide consisted of open-ended

questions focusing on key areas relevant to the study, including respect and dignity, family cohesion and support, intergenerational responsibility, caregiving experiences, and sense of belongingness. The semi-structured format allowed the researchers to maintain consistency across interviews while providing participants with sufficient freedom to elaborate on their personal experiences.

The interviews were conducted in Filipino or Kapampangan, depending on the language preferred by each participant. With the participants' permission, the interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Field notes were also taken to document relevant observations during the interviews.

The interview guide was reviewed and approved by experts in the related field. Revisions were made after the initial validation and were resubmitted and revised twice before approval. The interview guide was tested with 3 participants in the same age group in a similar locale and setting. Few revisions regarding the conduction of the interview were made after the pilot testing.

Data-Gathering Procedure

Prior to data collection, the researchers secured ethical clearance from the College of Nursing and Pharmacy, University of the Assumption and obtained the necessary permission from the concerned barangay officials in selected communities in San Fernando, Pampanga.

The researchers coordinated with Barangay Health Workers (BHWs) and, when necessary, family members or primary caregivers during the initial screening of potential participants. This screening was intended to identify individuals who might have cognitive difficulties that could interfere with their ability to provide informed consent or participate meaningfully in the interview. No medical records were collected as part of this preliminary screening.

Eligible participants were approached individually and were provided with an explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality measures, and their rights as participants. Written informed consent was obtained before the interviews. Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time without consequences.

Individual in-depth interviews were conducted at a private and comfortable location, such as the participant's home, based on the participant's preference and convenience. Each interview lasted approximately 45 to 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted in Filipino or Kapampangan according to the participant's preferred language to promote clear communication and comfortable expression of personal experiences.

With permission, the interviews were audio-recorded. The researchers also took field notes regarding relevant observations, including body language and the interview environment. The recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and translated into

English when necessary. The researchers reviewed the transcripts against the recordings to ensure accuracy and preserve the meaning of the participants' responses.

After each interview, the researchers conducted a debriefing to determine whether participants were comfortable following the discussion and to provide an opportunity for them to raise questions, concerns, or feelings that arose during the interview.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). The researchers first reviewed the interview transcripts repeatedly to become familiar with the participants' accounts. Significant statements and meaningful portions of the transcripts were identified and examined in relation to the participants' lived experiences.

The researchers then developed initial codes and identified emerging patterns across the participants' accounts. Related codes were grouped into broader themes that represented the participants' experiences of Filipino cultural expectations and their sense of belongingness. The researchers compared the emerging themes across individual participants while maintaining attention to the unique experiences and perspectives of each participant.

The analysis focused on interpreting how participants understood and gave meaning to their experiences of caregiving, family relationships, cultural expectations, inclusion, respect, and belongingness. The final themes were reviewed in relation to the research objectives and the participants' original accounts to ensure that the interpretations remained grounded in their experiences.

Scope and Limitations

The study focused on the lived experiences of 12 Filipino elderly parents aged 65 years and above residing in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga, who were cared for by their own children. The study specifically examined how Filipino cultural expectations influenced their sense of belongingness within their families.

As a qualitative phenomenological study using purposive sampling, the findings were based on the personal experiences and interpretations of the selected participants and were not intended to be statistically generalized to all Filipino elderly parents. The study was also limited to one geographic setting and a relatively small number of participants. Differences in family structure, socioeconomic circumstances, health status, and individual experiences may have influenced participants' perceptions. In addition, the sensitive nature of discussions concerning family relationships and caregiving may have affected the extent to which some participants disclosed their experiences. Despite these limitations, the phenomenological approach provided in-depth, context-specific insights into the experiences of elderly parents and the role of Filipino cultural expectations in their sense of belongingness.

RESULTS

Cultural Expectations Shaping Sense of Belonging

This section presents the themes formulated regarding the experiences of elderly parents in the family setting in connection with how their belonging is shaped by the cultural values.

Paggalang (Respect)

Participants expressed their understanding of respect as something they teach and remind their children and grandchildren to do. They mentioned behaviors like *pagmamano*, saying "*po*" and "*opo*," listening to elders, and following what parents say. Respect was described through family directions and daily reminders in the household. For the elderly parents, respect was not just a cultural practice but a sign that their role and dignity as parents were still recognized in the household. Participants described disrespect as something that affects their feelings. They mentioned feeling hurt, upset, or angry when children do not listen or when respect is not shown. Table 2 presents the experiences and expectations of the participants about *paggalang* (respect).

Table 2: Paggalang (Respect)

Themes	Subthemes	Number of Responses
Elders Teaching Respect	Passing Down Respect	5
	Being Obedient	5
Feelings About Disrespect	Emotional Pain about Disrespect	4
	Anger about Disrespect	3

Pagkakaisa (Family Unity)

Pagkakaisa as Family Support theme describes how elderly parents experience family unity through shared presence, mutual help, and division of responsibilities. Participants shared that unity is seen during meals, celebrations, outings, and family gatherings where members spend time together. It also appears when family members assist one another during problems, illness, or financial need. Being included in those family activities gave the participants a strong feeling that they still belonged to the family despite aging and dependency. Through these responses, family unity is shown as part of daily family support and togetherness. Feelings About Conflict theme describes the emotional responses of elderly parents when family unity is affected by conflict or distance. Participants shared that disagreements among children, lack of support, or separation from family members can cause pain, anger, or sadness. The responses show

that conflict within the family is experienced emotionally by elderly parents, especially when it affects togetherness and harmony. Table 3 presents the experiences and expectations of the participants about *pagkakaisa* (family unity).

Table 3: Pagkakaisa (Family Unity)

Themes	Subthemes	Number of Responses
Pagkakaisa as Family Support	Being Together	11
	Helping one another	6
	Sharing Responsibilities	3
Feelings About Conflict	Emotional Pain about Conflict	4
	Anger about Conflict	2

***Utang na Loob* (Debt of Gratitude)**

Utang na Loob as Giving Back theme describes how elderly parents experience *utang na loob* through the care and support they receive from their children. Participants shared that giving back is shown when they are being remembered, being asked about their condition, receiving food or money, and being assisted during illness. Through these actions, utang na loob is described as care given back to parents. Feelings About Neglect theme describes the emotional response of an elderly parent when utang na loob is not demonstrated. One participant shared that it is painful when children appear to lack gratitude after being raised by their parents. The response shows that neglect is experienced as hurtful because it is connected to the care and effort given by parents in raising their children. Table 4 presents the experiences and expectations of the participants about *Utang na Loob* (Debt of Gratitude).

Table 4: Utang na Loob (Debt of Gratitude)

Themes	Subthemes	Number of Responses
Utang na Loob as Giving Back	Being Present	3
	Remembering	4
	Giving Financial Support	7
	Giving Physical Support	4

Feelings About Neglect	Feeling Hurt by Neglect	1

Most Meaningful Cultural Expectation

Respect as the Main Source of Belonging theme describes elderly parents' view of respect as the most meaningful cultural expectation in shaping their sense of belonging within the family. Participants identified paggalang as important, necessary, and central in family relationships. For them, being respected by children is an important part of how elderly parents experience their place within the household. This theme also highlighted the importance of other values, such as family unity and debt of gratitude, in their experiences. Table 5 presents the most meaningful cultural expectations of the elderly shaping their belonging in the family.

Table 5: Integrative Theme

Themes	Subthemes	Number of Responses
Respect as Main Source of Belonging	Choosing Respect First	6
	Valuing Family Unity	3
	Valuing Debt of Gratitude	3

DISCUSSION

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of Filipino elderly parents under the care of their children. Twelve (12) elderly participants were purposively selected based on the inclusion criteria. Their narratives showed how Filipino cultural expectations influenced their experiences of care, family relationships, and belongingness. The participants identified paggalang, pagkakaisa, and utang na loob as significant values in family relationships and caregiving. Similarly, Soriano-Fagel & Cayabyab (2026) explained that Filipino family relationships are often guided by values that continue to influence how parents and children treat one another, even during old age. These values shaped how elderly parents perceived their position in the household and whether they felt included, remembered, and cared for.

1.1. Paggalang (Respect)

In terms of *paggalang*, participants described respect as a value learned within the family and passed from one generation to another. They recalled teaching children and grandchildren practices such as *pagmamano*, using "*po*" and "*opo*," and listening to

elders. This is consistent with Shamsikhani et al. (2022), who found that respect for older people is demonstrated when family members listen to, support, and consider their feelings. Participants emphasized that respect was expressed not only through words but also through obedience and listening. Children who followed instructions and did not answer back were viewed as signs that respect remained within the family. However, participants also expressed sadness when their children ignored their advice or showed disrespect. Ahmed & Mohamed (2022) similarly explained that elderly parents feel more valued when their opinions are heard and respected. Thus, being listened to and acknowledged as an elder contributed strongly to their sense of belonging.

1.2. Pagkakaisa (Family Unity)

Another important finding was *pagkakaisa* or family unity. Participants associated unity with shared meals, celebrations, family activities, and inclusion in gatherings. Kang et al. (2023) reported that social interaction with family members positively affects older adults' life satisfaction by strengthening harmonious relationships and emotional support. Similarly, Gierke et al. (2026) found that emotional support and family cohesion are associated with greater psychological well-being and reduced loneliness among older adults. For the participants, simple moments of togetherness reminded them that they remained part of the family.

Family unity was also expressed through shared responsibilities, such as providing food, medicine, financial assistance, and caregiving. Some participants described their children working together during illness or financial difficulties. Bražinová et al. (2024) stated that cooperation among family members can help elderly parents feel more secure and less burdened during old age. However, family conflict also affected participants emotionally. They reported feeling hurt when their children argued or failed to support one another. Kang et al. (2023) emphasized that harmonious family relationships contribute to older adults' emotional well-being and fulfillment. Therefore, when unity is weakened by conflict, elderly parents may feel less included and emotionally secure.

1.3. Utang na Loob (Debt of Gratitude)

The study also revealed that *utang na loob* was experienced through the care and support provided by children. Participants felt valued when their children visited, checked on them, or remembered them during difficult times. Some emphasized that they did not expect expensive gifts and valued their children's presence more. Casilan & Baclagan (2024) similarly stated that utang na loob is not limited to monetary gifts but may be expressed through presence and care. Financial and physical support were also important, including providing medicine, food, allowance, and assistance during illness. Some children even took leave from work to care for their parents. Bermas et al. (2024) found that financial and physical support may be viewed as ways of giving back to parents for their sacrifices in raising and educating their children.

However, one participant expressed emotional pain when children failed to demonstrate utang na loob. Lasanas et al. (2024) noted that neglect among elderly

parents may occur when they feel that their sacrifices have not been recognized by their children. This suggests that the absence of gratitude may weaken the emotional connection between parental sacrifices and family appreciation.

2. Most Meaningful Cultural Expectation

Among the three cultural expectations, paggalang was most consistently identified as meaningful to the participants' sense of belonging. They explained that even when families were united, relationships could lose value when respect was absent. Elderly parents associated respect with acknowledgment, recognition, dignity, and proper treatment. Dsouza et al. (2023) emphasized that recognition and attentiveness toward elderly parents are important in understanding their feelings and experiences. This also supported the Intergenerational Solidarity Theory. *Paggalang* reflected normative solidarity through expected duties toward elderly parents; *pagkakaisa* reflected associational and affectual solidarity through shared activities, gatherings, support, and togetherness; while *utang na loob* reflected functional solidarity through financial assistance, physical care, remembrance, and presence during times of need. Together, these forms of solidarity demonstrated how Filipino cultural expectations contribute to elderly parents' sense of belonging, care, and continued relevance within the family.

Overall, the findings showed that *paggalang, pagkakaisa,* and *utang na loob* remain influential in the experiences of Filipino elderly parents. These values helped participants feel appreciated, included, and emotionally secure, while conflict, neglect, and disrespect weakened their sense of belonging. Unlike studies that primarily focus on caregivers, this study highlighted the voices of elderly parents themselves, providing a deeper understanding of how Filipino cultural expectations shape their everyday experiences of belongingness within their families in San Fernando, Pampanga.

Conclusions

This phenomenological study explored the lived experiences of twelve elderly parents living in the City of San Fernando, Pampanga, emphasizing the impact of Filipino cultural values such as *paggalang* (respect), *pagkakaisa* (family unity), and *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) on their sense of belonging in the family. The research adopted a more detailed understanding of the impact of these cultural expectations regarding the emotional security, inclusion, and well-being of elderly parents by using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. This study focused primarily on a lack of understanding of aging parents' perceptions of belongingness in light of changing family dynamics.

For elderly parents, the feeling of belonging through respect is not only in terms of the observable cultural practices like "*po*" and "*opo*" and *pagmamano*, but also in terms of recognizing their dignity and emotional worth in the family. They also feel a sense of belonging through *pagkakaisa*, which is shown in shared activities, emotional connection, mutual support, and inclusion in daily activities and important family events. They experience emotional challenges like feeling hurt, sad, and excluded when respect is not

accorded or when unity in the family is broken. For example, elderly parents experience care in the form of utang na loob through the acts of their children, such as financial support, provision of basic needs, and assistance during illness. Some do not see these as obligations but as signs of love and responsibilities to family, which strengthen their sense of belonging. From these experiences, elderly parents learn the importance of respect, inclusion, and true care in the family. Their sense of belonging is formed by cultural values in relationships with *paggalang* as the most meaningful, and *pagkakaisa* and *utang na loob* as supporting values. These experiences show the continuing relevance of elderly parents in the family and the importance of emotional presence, inclusion, and respect in enhancing their well-being.

Recommendations

Given the study's findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

Elderly parents are encouraged to openly communicate about their needs and desires on an emotional, physical, and social level, which would lead to good communication among families. Also, elderly parents should be assisted in decision-making and participation in family activities that will help them feel important and included. Community programs for senior citizens may also help reduce loneliness and improve emotional well-being.

Families are highly encouraged to foster Filipino cultural values such as *paggalang* (respect), *pagkakaisa* (family unity), and *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) in taking care of their elderly parents. Children are expected to give not only financial and physical support but also emotional presence, patience, and understanding. Spending quality time with elderly parents, listening to them, and involving them in family matters may boost intergenerational relationships and a stronger sense of belongingness

Nurses in the community are recommended to provide family-centered health teaching related to the emotional, psychological, and physical needs of elderly parents. The nurses may also organize seminars, counseling, or community outreach programs to guide families on proper elder care, respectful communication, and culturally sensitive caregiving

Healthcare Professionals are encouraged to utilize a multidisciplinary and family-centered approach in the care of elderly parents. They need an understanding of how family support networks and cultural norms can affect the overall well-being of older people. It recommended regular checks on the emotional health, family ties, and caregiving environment of the elderly.

Local governments and community leaders should strengthen programs that help seniors and family caregivers. This includes accessible health care services, programs that support caregivers, recreational opportunities for elderly people, and campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of respecting and including older adults in society.

Future researchers are recommended to explore the experiences of elderly parents in other provinces or cultural settings in the Philippines. Researchers may also examine the perspectives of child caregivers or compare rural and urban family caregiving experiences to gain a broader understanding of elderly belongingness and family dynamics.

Based on the findings of the study, the researchers developed Balik-Tanaw: Stories from the Past, Values for Tomorrow, an evidence-based storytelling and values-education intervention designed to promote respect, family unity, gratitude, and intergenerational connection among young children. The intervention translates the cultural values identified in the study, particularly *paggalang* (respect), *pagkakaisa* (family unity), and *pasasalamat* (gratitude), into age-appropriate stories, interactive activities, and family-based learning experiences.

The program is recommended for implementation in daycare centers and other appropriate community or educational settings, particularly among young children who may benefit from early exposure to Filipino family values and positive attitudes toward older adults. The intervention may include illustrated storybooks, interactive storytelling, role-playing, values-based activities, coloring and sharing activities, and simple take-home activities that encourage children to interact with and appreciate their elderly family members. A pre- and post-activity assessment may also be used to determine changes in children's understanding of the values presented.

The intervention may be implemented in coordination with daycare teachers, parents or guardians, community health workers, and other appropriate community stakeholders to ensure that the activities are developmentally appropriate, culturally relevant, and applicable to the children's family environment. The storybooks and activity materials may also be retained by participating daycare centers for continued use in storytelling and values-education activities. Future implementation may consider adapting the intervention to other communities and evaluating its effectiveness with a larger number of participants and longer follow-up periods.

Compliance with Ethical Standards

The researchers made sure to follow the rules and got approval from the University of the Assumption Research Ethics Board. This was done to protect the rights and well-being of the participants who took part in the study. The researchers wanted to make sure that the elderly participants were safe and comfortable throughout the study.

Before the interviews started, the elderly participants were told that they could join the study if they wanted to. They were also told that they could stop or leave the study at any time without any problems. The researchers told them how long the study would last, which was not more than one year. The interviews were done face-to-face in a place for the participants and lasted around 45 to 60 minutes.

The researchers thought about the possibility of emotional or psychological discomfort. Some elderly participants remembered sensitive experiences and felt anxious or vulnerable when sharing their stories. To make this better, the researchers came up with a plan to let and inform the participants to take breaks or stop the interview if they needed to. The elderly participants were also told that they could choose to be interviewed with a family member. If they needed help, the researchers would give them recommendations or referrals for counseling or support services. The researchers made sure to respect the Filipino culture and values. All of this information was explained to the participants in a consent form.

The researchers protected the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. Each participant was given a code name so that their real names and personal details were not used in any research material. Participants were also informed that all data gathered in this research will be utilized solely for academic purposes. The researchers stored the interview notes, transcripts, and consent forms in a secure place. Digital files were kept on a laptop and Google Drive, and only the researchers could access them. The voice recordings were transferred to Google Drive. Deleted from the recording devices. The researchers would keep the data for three years after the study was finished. Then they would delete the digital files and shred the physical documents. The researchers made sure that only they could access the Google Drive folder to protect the data. The researchers met in private to discuss the progress of the data analysis to prevent any information from getting out.

The researchers made sure that their own thoughts and feelings did not influence the interpretation of the participants' narratives. They did this by writing down their reflections after each interview, which helped them stay focused on the participants' voices and experiences.

The researchers ensured that all data gathered, processed, written, and recommended came from the actual research, and was not copied from others' intellectual property. All references used were properly cited in-text and in the reference section using the APA 7th edition format.

The researchers knew that the interviews might cause mental stress. The participants might have felt pressured to answer questions, but they were reminded that they could choose not to answer anything they were not comfortable with. There were no conflicts of interest in this study because it was not funded by any group or organization that could influence the results. The participants were told that the study was done for academic purposes. So the researchers said that there was no known conflict of interest.

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