

"PSYkalinga: the Relationship of Parental Self-Efficacy and Mental Well-Being of Bukluran Parents"

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ABSTRACT. *This study explored the relationship between mental health and parental self-efficacy among 55 parents from the Bukluran Headstart Community in Quezon City, Philippines. Using a quantitative correlational design, mental health was measured through emotional, social, and psychological well-being, while parental self-efficacy assessed parents' confidence in their parenting roles. Results indicated that respondents had moderate mental health across all dimensions of emotional well-being ($M=4.39$, $SD=0.58$), social well-being ($M=3.07$, $SD=1.12$), and psychological well-being ($M=3.97$, $SD=0.83$). Regarding parental self-efficacy, respondents obtained high scores ($M=21$, $SD=2.32$). In terms of the correlation between the two variables, a significant positive relationship was found between parental self-efficacy and emotional well-being ($r = 0.276$, $p = 0.041$), while no significant relationships were observed with social ($r = 0.032$, $p = 0.817$) and psychological well-being ($r = 0.140$, $p = 0.30$). The findings suggest that parental self-efficacy contributes to emotional functioning but may not fully explain broader mental health outcomes such as social connectedness and psychological growth. These results highlight the importance of developing interventions that not only strengthen parenting confidence but also enhance social support systems and overall psychological well-being. Culturally responsive, community-based programs are recommended to promote holistic mental health and effective parenting among Filipino families.*

KEYWORDS. *Community, Correlational Research, Mental Health, Parental Self-Efficacy, Philippines, Well-being*

I. INTRODUCTION

Parenting is a complex and demanding role that significantly influences children's personal development and mental health. As caregivers navigate the intricacies of raising children, the relationship between their mental well-being and effective parenting becomes increasingly apparent. Mental health encompasses emotional, social, and psychological well-being—critical components of successful parental functioning. Emotional well-being denotes a parent's capacity to manage emotions, maintain resilience in challenging situations, and experience positive feelings such as joy and fulfillment. Parents with robust emotional well-being are more adept at confronting the inevitable challenges of parenting, thereby fostering a nurturing and supportive environment for their children (Morelli et al., 2020). Social well-being further contributes to effective parenting by promoting the establishment of meaningful relationships, strong support systems, and a sense of belonging within the community. Parents who nurture solid social connections benefit from emotional support and shared experiences, enhancing their confidence and ability to manage stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Moreover, psychological well-being encompasses cognitive and behavioral adaptability, self-efficacy, and a sense of purpose. Parents exhibiting

high psychological well-being frequently demonstrate effective problem-solving skills, emotional regulation, and resilience, which positively influence their parenting styles and, accordingly, their children's growth and development (Morgan et al., 2022).

Understanding the interrelated aspects of mental health offers valuable insights into the challenges and successes of parenting, ultimately shaping the parent-child relationship and children's developmental outcomes. A key psychological construct that affects parenting is self-efficacy, which Bandura (1977) defines as an individual's belief in their capacity to perform the behaviors necessary to achieve specific goals. In the context of parenting, parental self-efficacy reflects a parent's confidence in their ability to navigate child-rearing challenges, shaping both their parenting practices and the mental health outcomes for themselves and their children. Additionally, Glatz et al. (2024) elaborated in their systematic review that parental self-efficacy pertains to parents' beliefs in their ability to manage and support their children effectively. Various factors, including social support networks, parenting competence, and overall mental well-being, influence this self-efficacy. Research indicates that parents who experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression are more likely to feel competent in their parenting roles (Kendall & Bloomfield, 2005; Albanese et al., 2019).

Parental mental health plays a central role in shaping family dynamics and child outcomes. Parents experiencing mental health challenges often struggle with feelings of inadequacy, heightened stress, and difficulty regulating emotions, which can negatively impact their ability to provide a stable and nurturing environment for their children. Studies indicate that parents with mental health struggles face twice the risk of having children with social-emotional developmental issues, with harsh parenting mediating the relationship between maternal depression and externalizing behaviors (Honda et al., 2023; Morgan et al., 2022).

Research indicates that various stressors, including financial strain, social isolation, and the demands of caregiving, significantly impact parental mental health. Parents consistently report higher levels of stress compared to other adults, with nearly half reporting that their stress is overwhelming on most days. These stressors can lead to anxiety, depression, and burnout, which in turn can affect both parenting behaviors and family dynamics. Furthermore, the coping strategies employed by parents are essential in alleviating the adverse effects of mental health challenges. Studies suggest that parents who adopt positive coping strategies, such as seeking social support and practicing emotional regulation, are better equipped to manage stress and uphold effective parenting practices (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Parental self-efficacy is a significant predictor of parenting behaviors and child outcomes (Glatz et al., 2024). High levels of parental self-efficacy are associated with proactive involvement in a child's mental health and greater confidence in seeking appropriate support. Parents with strong self-efficacy are more likely to actively engage in their children's education and employ positive parenting strategies that foster a supportive, nurturing learning environment (Guillena et al., 2023). These strategies include responsiveness, warmth, and consistent discipline (Glatz, 2024). A study on how parents adapted to changes in Philippine education found that those with higher self-efficacy were better prepared to navigate these shifts, demonstrating resilience and perseverance amid adversity (Bartolome et al., 2022). Conversely, low parental self-efficacy can adversely affect how parents respond to their children's mental health needs. Parents with diminished self-efficacy may delay seeking help, underestimate the seriousness of their child's mental health condition, or feel overwhelmed when faced with these challenges (Smith et al., 2020).

Research indicates that higher parental self-efficacy is associated with more positive mental health outcomes. Parents experiencing psychological distress often report lower confidence in their parenting abilities. This condition can impact parent-child interactions, attachment, and child development outcomes (Jones & Prinz, 2005). There is also evidence of a bidirectional relationship between mental health and self-efficacy, and low self-efficacy can, in turn, worsen mental health symptoms due to increased feelings of inadequacy and stress (Leerkes & Burney, 2007). High levels of parental self-efficacy can buffer the negative effects of stress and are associated with more positive parenting behaviors, even in challenging contexts (Albanese et al., 2019).

In the Philippines, a nation characterized by its collectivist culture and strong family ties, understanding this dynamic is particularly vital. Recent studies have begun to shed light on how parental self-efficacy is associated with mental health within Filipino families. Low parental self-efficacy can contribute to adverse mental health outcomes. A study by Garcia and Alampay (2012) demonstrated that Filipino fathers experiencing stressful life events and low parental efficacy were more prone to exhibit hostility and aggression towards their children.

This result highlights how diminished confidence in parenting abilities, especially under stress, can lead to harmful interactions that negatively affect family well-being.

These studies collectively suggest that enhancing parental self-efficacy is vital for improving mental health outcomes for both parents and children in the Philippines. However, further research is needed to deepen our understanding of these relationships and to develop culturally sensitive interventions that effectively support Filipino families. Recognizing and enhancing parental self-efficacy could serve as a pivotal strategy for promoting healthier family dynamics and improving mental health outcomes among Filipinos.

Research Questions

This study aimed to explore the relationship between mental health and parental self-efficacy among selected parents from the Bukluran Headstart Community Center in Quezon City, Philippines. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the level of mental health of the respondents in terms of:
 - 1.1. Emotional Well-being
 - 1.2. Social Well-being
 - 1.3. Psychological Well-being
2. What is the level of the Parental Self-efficacy of the respondents?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the Mental Health and Parental Self-efficacy of the respondents?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Mental Health and Parental Self-efficacy of the respondents.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Respondents and Procedure

The Bukluran Headstart Community Center is a community-based organization located in Quezon City, Philippines. It aims to provide a range of programs to its partner communities, including daycare centers, livelihood programs, and skill enhancement programs. The respondents of this study consist of 3 fathers and 52 mothers, for a total of 55 parents.

This study used a quantitative correlational design to explore the relationship between the respondents' mental health and parental self-efficacy. To fulfill this endeavor, the following procedures were followed: First, the researchers asked permission from the center manager to conduct this study. After setting agreements with the center, the researchers went to the community to facilitate the study. Data were collected through face-to-face, pen-and-paper surveys after a facilitated seminar and orientation were conducted for participants from the Bukluran Headstart Community.

Research Instruments

The researchers used the Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF) in this study to assess respondents' mental health. The instrument measures three mental health subscales: emotional well-being (items 1-3), social well-being (items 4-8), and psychological well-being (items 9-14), each rated on a six-point Likert scale. The instrument's score was computed as the sum of items per subscale, with ranges corresponding to flourishing, moderately mentally healthy, and languishing (Ballesteros et al., 2022).

Table 1. Descriptive Interpretation of scores of MHC-SF

Descriptive Equivalent	Ranges
Flourishing	4.40 - 6.00
Moderately Mentally Healthy	2.70 - 4.39
Languishing	1.00 - 2.69

On the other hand, the Brief Parental Self-Efficacy Scale is a 5-item instrument intended to measure parents' belief in their ability to perform their parenting role. It is a free-to-use instrument covered by the NHS Digital Copyright Licensing Service. During the administration of the scale, respondents were asked to rate five statements on a 5-point Likert scale. Subsequently, for scoring and Interpretation, the sum of the five items is calculated to determine the total score, which ranges from 5 to 25. Higher scores indicate higher parental self-efficacy.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the study's quantitative findings and their implications for the research questions.

Table 2. Level of Mental Health of the Respondents

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Emotional Well-being	4.39	0.58	Moderately Mentally Healthy
Social Well-being	3.07	1.12	Moderately Mentally Healthy
Psychological Well-being	3.97	0.83	Moderately Mentally Healthy

Table 2 presents the mean and standard deviation of respondents' Mental Health levels across Emotional Well-being, Social Well-being, and Psychological Well-being. Results showed that the respondents exhibit moderate mental health across all three dimensions, suggesting that the respondents are not struggling, but they are also not thriving at an optimal level.

The findings revealed that the respondents demonstrated moderate levels of mental health across emotional, social, and psychological well-being. These findings suggest that while parents are not in severe distress, they are not flourishing at an optimal level either. From a psychological standpoint, this middle ground reflects a state of functional stability, but it also carries potential vulnerabilities that may hinder resilience in the face of stressors.

Emotional well-being scored the highest ($M = 4.39$, $SD = 0.58$), indicating that parents generally manage their emotions effectively and maintain stability. According to Morelli et al. (2020), emotional regulation is a cornerstone of parental functioning, enabling parents to foster nurturing environments for their children. However, the moderate score suggests that, while parents can regulate emotions, they may not consistently experience deeper

positive affect, such as joy or fulfillment. This result aligns with Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) stress and coping theory, which emphasizes that emotional resilience is not only about managing negative emotions but also about cultivating positive ones to buffer against stress.

Social well-being, on the other hand, scored the lowest ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.12$), with high variability among respondents. This data suggests disparities in social integration and connectedness. Cohen and Wills (1985) highlighted that social support mitigates the impact of stress on mental health. The weaker social well-being scores may indicate that some parents lack strong support networks, leaving them more vulnerable to isolation and stress. From a psychological perspective, this deficiency in social connectedness can undermine coping strategies, as social relationships often serve as external regulators of emotional distress.

Psychological well-being ($M = 3.97$, $SD = 0.83$) reflects a moderate sense of purpose, autonomy, and self-worth. Morgan et al. (2022) emphasized that psychological well-being is closely tied to adaptability and resilience, both of which are critical for effective parenting. The moderate scores suggest that while parents feel capable and purposeful, some may struggle with deeper personal growth or autonomy. This resonates with Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy, where confidence in one's abilities directly influences psychological resilience. Parents with moderate psychological well-being may feel competent but still experience self-doubt when confronted with complex parenting challenges.

Taken together, these findings highlight that parents in the Bukluran community are functioning adequately but remain at risk of stagnation in their mental health trajectory. The psychological perspective underscores that flourishing requires more than stability; it demands active cultivation of emotional resilience, social connectedness, and personal growth. Without interventions, moderate mental health may predispose parents to burnout or emotional exhaustion when faced with persistent stressors such as financial strain or caregiving pressures (Honda et al., 2023).

Thus, the results point to the need for community-based psychological interventions that strengthen emotional regulation skills, foster peer support networks, and promote personal development. By addressing these dimensions holistically, parents can move beyond moderate functioning toward flourishing mental health, thereby enhancing their parenting efficacy and family well-being.

Table 3. Level of Parental Self-efficacy of the Respondents

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Parental Self-efficacy	21	2.32	High

Table 3 presents the mean and standard deviation of respondents' Parental Self-efficacy. Results showed that the respondents exhibited high parental self-efficacy, as reflected in ($M = 21$, $SD = 2.32$). This data suggests that respondents generally feel confident in their ability to manage and fulfill their parenting responsibilities. The relatively low standard deviation suggests that most respondents share similar levels of self-efficacy, indicating consistently strong confidence in parenting skills across the sample.

Higher levels of parental self-efficacy are often associated with positive parenting behaviors, greater responsiveness to children's needs, and greater overall emotional stability in family interactions. Parents who believe in their ability to guide and support their children are more likely to engage in nurturing, structured, and proactive caregiving. However, while the standard deviation suggests consistency, there may still be minor variations in individual experiences, highlighting the importance of providing resources and support systems to maintain and further enhance parental confidence. Encouraging peer support networks, parental training programs, and accessible parenting resources could further strengthen parents' ability to navigate challenges and promote healthy family dynamics.

The results suggest that the parents in the Bukluran community have adequate social support networks and appropriate parenting knowledge, which strengthen their parenting competencies (Jones & Prinz, 2005). This result is a good indicator that the parents in this study engage proactively in their children's mental health and are confident in seeking appropriate support. Moreover, they are likely to be involved in their children's education and implement positive parenting approaches that nurture an encouraging learning environment (Guillena et al., 2023), a pattern supported by Bandura's (1977) definition of parental self-efficacy.

Table 4. Test of the Significance of the Relationship Between Mental Health and Parental Self-Efficacy

Parental Self-efficacy	r	p-value	Decision	Remarks
Emotional Well-being	0.276	0.041	Reject Ho	Significant
Social Well-being	0.032	0.817	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant
Psychological Well-being	0.14	0.3	Failed to Reject Ho	Not Significant

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Table 4 presents the significance of the relationship between the respondents' mental health and parental self-efficacy. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between parental self-efficacy and emotional well-being ($r = 0.276$, $p = 0.041$). These results indicate that parents who perceive themselves as more capable and confident in carrying out their parenting roles also tend to report better emotional well-being. This finding is consistent with Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy, which emphasizes that individuals who believe in their ability to manage challenges are more likely to cope effectively with stressful situations. In parenting, such confidence may help parents feel more emotionally secure and better able to handle the demands of child-rearing.

The result is also consistent with previous studies suggesting that better parental mental health is associated with greater confidence in parenting abilities. Kendall and Bloomfield (2005) and Albanese et al. (2019) noted that parents who experience lower levels of stress, anxiety, and depression tend to feel more competent in their parenting roles. Similarly, Leerkes and Burney (2007) suggested that mental health and self-efficacy may have a bidirectional relationship, such that poor mental health may weaken parental confidence, while stronger self-efficacy may be associated with more positive emotional functioning. In this study, the significant relationship between parental self-efficacy and emotional well-being may reflect how confidence in parenting serves as an internal resource that helps parents regulate emotions, maintain resilience, and respond more positively to parenting challenges.

This interpretation is further supported by Morelli et al. (2020), who emphasized that emotional well-being enables parents to regulate emotions, remain resilient in stressful situations, and foster a nurturing environment for their children. It may also be understood through the stress and coping framework of Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which highlights the importance of appraisal and coping resources in managing life stressors. Parents who believe they are capable of handling parenting responsibilities may be more likely to appraise challenges as manageable rather than overwhelming, which may contribute to more positive emotional experiences and healthier coping strategies.

On the other hand, the relationship between parental self-efficacy and social well-being was found to be weak and not statistically significant ($r = 0.032$, $p = 0.817$). This suggests that although parents may feel confident in their parenting roles, this confidence does not necessarily translate into stronger social relationships, greater

community belonging, or more satisfying interactions with others. This finding may be understood in relation to Cohen and Wills (1985), who emphasized that the availability and quality of social support strongly influence social well-being. In this case, parental self-efficacy alone may not be enough to explain social well-being, since social connectedness may depend more on external factors such as family support, peer relationships, community involvement, and opportunities for meaningful social interaction.

Likewise, the relationship between parental self-efficacy and psychological well-being was weak and not statistically significant ($r = 0.140$, $p = 0.300$). This suggests that confidence in parenting may not necessarily be associated with broader aspects of psychological well-being, such as personal growth, autonomy, purpose in life, and life satisfaction. Although psychological well-being has been linked to resilience, adaptive functioning, and emotional regulation (Morgan et al., 2022), the present findings suggest that parental self-efficacy may represent only one part of a broader set of influences on this dimension of mental health. Factors such as financial stress, caregiving burden, individual life experiences, and access to mental health resources play a more substantial role in shaping psychological well-being than confidence in parenting alone.

The findings suggest that parental self-efficacy may be more closely related to the emotional dimension of mental health than to its social and psychological dimensions. This is consistent with Jones and Prinz (2005), who noted that parental psychological distress is associated with lower parenting confidence, highlighting the close connection between parents' emotional state and their sense of competence. At the same time, the absence of significant associations with social and psychological well-being suggests that broader contextual and personal factors beyond parenting confidence may influence these domains. In other words, while parents may feel effective in managing child-rearing tasks, they may still experience limited social support or struggle with deeper concerns about fulfillment, autonomy, or overall life satisfaction.

These results may also be interpreted within the Philippine context, where strong family ties, collectivist values, and multiple caregiving demands often shape parenting. Bartolome, Mamat, and Masnan (2022) found that Filipino parents with higher self-efficacy were better able to adapt to the challenges of the new normal in education, demonstrating resilience and perseverance. These findings support the present finding that self-efficacy may be particularly important in helping parents manage emotionally demanding situations. In addition, Guillena et al. (2023) noted that parents with high self-efficacy are more likely to proactively support their children's needs, which may further strengthen their emotional confidence in their parenting role. Conversely, Smith et al. (2020) observed that parents with low parental self-efficacy may feel overwhelmed and delay responding to their children's mental health needs, which may increase emotional strain.

The importance of parental self-efficacy is also evident in studies showing its implications for family functioning and child outcomes. Garcia and Alampay (2012) found that Filipino fathers who experienced stressful life events and low parental efficacy were more likely to display hostility and aggression toward their children. Likewise, Honda et al. (2023) and Morgan et al. (2022) emphasized that parental mental health difficulties may place children at greater risk for social-emotional and behavioral problems. These studies reinforce the idea that supporting parents' emotional well-being and confidence in parenting is beneficial not only for parents themselves but also for the family's overall well-being.

Overall, this study's findings suggest that parental self-efficacy plays a meaningful role in emotional well-being. However, its relationship with social well-being and psychological well-being is less evident. This implies that improving parents' confidence in their ability to manage parenting demands may help promote emotional resilience and positive coping, but may not, on its own, be sufficient to strengthen broader social and psychological functioning. Therefore, programs and interventions for parents should not only focus on enhancing parenting competence but should also provide social support, opportunities for community connection, and access to mental health and personal development resources. In the Philippine setting, culturally sensitive interventions that recognize the importance of family relationships, community support, and contextual stressors may be especially helpful in promoting both parental self-efficacy and overall mental health.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that parents from the Bukluran Headstart Community Center generally exhibit moderate levels of mental health across emotional, social, and psychological domains, as well as high levels of parental self-efficacy. This indicates that while parents feel confident in their ability to perform their parenting roles, their overall mental well-being remains at a functional but not optimal level. Among the dimensions of mental health,

only emotional well-being was found to have a significant positive relationship with parental self-efficacy, suggesting that confidence in parenting is closely tied to better emotional regulation, resilience, and coping. However, the absence of significant relationships with social and psychological well-being implies that parental self-efficacy alone does not fully account for broader aspects of mental health, which may be influenced by external factors such as social support systems, life stressors, and access to resources.

Overall, the findings highlight that parental self-efficacy serves as an important internal resource that enhances emotional functioning. However, it is not sufficient on its own to ensure holistic mental well-being. This underscores the multidimensional nature of mental health and the need to consider both personal and contextual influences in understanding the experience of parents in community settings.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that community-based programs such as those in Bukluran integrate holistic parent support interventions that go beyond enhancing parental self-efficacy. While parenting seminars and skills training should be continued to sustain high levels of parental confidence, equal emphasis must be placed on strengthening social support networks, such as peer support groups, community engagement activities, and family-centered programs, to improve social well-being. Additionally, mental health initiatives such as stress management workshops, emotional regulation training, and access to counseling services may help parents move from moderate functioning toward flourishing mental health.

Furthermore, future researchers are encouraged to explore other variables that may influence parental mental health, such as socioeconomic status, coping mechanisms, and cultural factors, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the topic. Expanding the sample size and including more diverse participants, particularly fathers, may also improve the generalizability of findings.

Overall, interventions should adopt a culturally sensitive and multidimensional approach, recognizing that improving parental well-being requires not only building confidence in parenting but also addressing the broader psychosocial environment in which parents operate.

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