



Original Article

Marian Devotion and Psychological Resilience Among Mother Devotees: A Phenomenological Study of the Turumba Devotion in Quezon, Philippines

Gared Yunyz M. Meralpis, Cindy C. Alvarez, Mary Christzeil M. Barte, John Clifford M. Alvero 

Author Information:

San Pablo Colleges, San Pablo City, Laguna, Philippines

Correspondence:
jc.alvero@sanpablocolleges.edu.ph

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Abstract. This phenomenological study addresses the limited qualitative research on the relationship between Marian devotion and psychological resilience by examining how Turumba, a culturally rooted Marian practice in Dolores, Quezon, shapes the coping experiences of Filipino mothers. It explores how faith-related components – safety, satisfaction, connectivity, openness, and mortality awareness – are reflected in their lived experiences. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews with $n = 16$ purposively selected mother devotees, the data were analyzed thematically. Findings indicate that key themes included perceived spiritual protection, strengthened communal belonging, and faith-oriented perseverance. Participants described interpreting personal and family difficulties through religious meaning-making processes that supported emotional regulation and adaptive coping. These results suggest that Marian devotion operates as a culturally embedded psychosocial resource that contributes to resilience and perceived well-being among participants. The study underscores the relevance of contextualized religious practices for understanding culturally situated coping systems. It highlights their potential value for psychosocial support frameworks that involve women in faith-centered communities.

Keywords: Filipino mothers; Marian devotion; Emotional resilience; Religion.

Religious faith and spirituality have long been recognized as important resources that help individuals navigate life's challenges and uncertainties. Contemporary psychological and sociological scholarship conceptualizes faith not merely as belief but as a dynamic and multidimensional process that promotes feelings of safety, emotional fulfillment, social connectedness, openness to experience, and awareness of life's finitude (Schwalm et al., 2022; Akbayram & Keten, 2024). These dimensions are closely associated with psychological resilience, commonly defined as the capacity to cope with crises, sustain well-being, and derive meaning despite adversity. Such resilience is particularly salient for women, who often manage intersecting personal, familial, and socioeconomic responsibilities that may heighten exposure to stress and role strain.

Building on this perspective, the Philippine context offers a culturally rich setting in which faith and resilience

intersect. Catholicism is deeply embedded in Filipino social life and significantly shapes how individuals interpret hardship and cultivate coping strategies. One prominent expression of this religiosity is the Turumba festival, a longstanding devotional tradition honoring Nuestra Señora de los Dolores in Dolores, Quezon. The festival draws numerous mother devotees whose participation extends beyond ritual observance. For these women, Turumba devotion functions as a source of psychological support, collective identity, and emotional grounding. As they balance caregiving obligations with economic and social demands, devotional practice may serve as an anchor, nurturing resilience. Despite its evident cultural and affective significance, there remains limited qualitative research examining how mother devotees experience and articulate resilience through this specific form of faith expression. This gap constrains scholarly understanding of how culturally embedded religious practices support women's psychological strength.

This study is grounded in Joana Swikiewicz's theoretical model of religious faith and psychological resilience, which conceptualizes faith through five interrelated dimensions: safety, satisfaction, connectivity, openness to experience, and recognition of mortality. Correspondingly, psychological resilience encompasses coping with crises, strengthening well-being, and constructing meaning in life. Guided by this framework, the present study investigates these dimensions within the context of Turumba devotion to understand how spirituality supports resilience among mother devotees. Specifically, it seeks to explore how these women experience psychological resilience through their faith practices. The findings aim to contribute to existing literature on faith-based resilience within culturally specific contexts and to inform culturally responsive pastoral care, mental health initiatives, and community programs that acknowledge indigenous devotional traditions as sources of strength and healing.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically utilizing a phenomenological approach, to explore and understand the lived experiences of mother devotees of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de Turumba in Quezon. Qualitative research is appropriate for this inquiry as it seeks to capture the depth, richness, and complexity of personal meanings that cannot be quantified, particularly those tied to religious devotion and psychological resilience. The phenomenological method, as described by Creswell and Poth (2023), is a qualitative research approach focused on understanding and exploring how individuals perceive and make sense of their lived experiences. The aim is to uncover the essence of these experiences from the perspective of those who have lived them, without preconceived notions or theoretical assumptions. This method typically involves semi-structured interviews, in which participants are encouraged to share their experiences in their own words, allowing the researcher to gain a deep understanding of how they interpret and give meaning to those experiences.

In the context of this study, the phenomenological approach enables an in-depth exploration of how participants experience and make sense of their faith through the Turumba devotion, and how these experiences contribute to their ability to cope with adversity, maintain well-being, and construct a meaningful life. Through thematic analysis of interview data, the study aims to shed light on how dimensions of religious faith—such as safety, satisfaction, connectivity, openness to experience, and recognition of mortality—intersect with key aspects of psychological resilience, including crisis coping, well-being, and life meaning, as theorized by Joana Butėnaitė-Swikiewicz.

Research Participants

The participants in this qualitative study are sixteen (16) mother devotees of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de Turumba in Quezon. These individuals had been selected through purposive sampling. With inclusion criteria of: (1) they identify as mothers, (2) ages thirty (30) to eighty (80) years old, (3) resident of Dolores, Quezon Province, and (4) Had participated in any Turumba related devotions for past 12 months (e.g., Novena, Processions, Biyernes de Dolores, Septenaryo Rites, Fiestas, and Pilgrimage). This specific demographic is chosen to provide deep, contextualized insights into the intersection of maternal identity, faith practice, and resilience within the cultural and religious framework of the Turumba devotion. Their narratives are expected to reflect a nuanced understanding of how spiritual traditions inform emotional strength and coping mechanisms in the face of personal and familial challenges.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in this qualitative study is a semi-structured interview guide, carefully crafted to explore the

lived experiences of mother devotees of Nuestra Señora de los Dolores de Turumba in Quezon. The researchers developed the interview guide based on Joana Swikiewicz's theoretical model of Religious Faith and Psychological Resilience. This model emphasizes the components of religious faith—such as safety, satisfaction, connectivity, openness to experience, and recognition of mortality—as well as the elements of psychological resilience, including the ability to cope with crises, strengthen well-being, and make life meaningful. The interview guide comprises 17 open-ended questions grouped into four thematic areas: background and devotional profile, dimensions of religious faith, aspects of psychological resilience, and reflective closing questions. These questions were designed to encourage deep, narrative responses that capture the participants' personal meanings, emotional insights, and spiritual reflections tied to their devotion to the Birhen de los Dolores.

The instrument was initially written in English and translated into Filipino to ensure cultural appropriateness and emotional accessibility for the participants. It was reviewed and validated by experts in psychology and religious studies to ensure content relevance and ethical sensitivity. Additionally, a pretest was conducted with one non-participating mother devotee to assess the clarity, flow, and cultural resonance of the questions. Feedback from the validation and pretesting process was incorporated into the final version of the instrument. This interview guide serves as a vital tool for eliciting rich, in-depth qualitative data that helps the researcher understand how the Turumba devotion shapes and sustains mothers' psychological resilience through faith and shared spiritual experience.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data-gathering process began by contacting potential respondents based on the booklet (Balaraw) provided by the National Shrine of Our Lady of Sorrows in Dolores, Quezon. This initial contact seeks assistance in identifying and recommending potential participants who meet the study's criteria. Upon reviewing the provided booklet, arrangements were made with the designated contacts to set the interview dates and locations. Interviews are scheduled in settings that are convenient and comfortable for participants, providing a private, respectful environment that encourages open, honest sharing. Before each interview, the study's purpose was explained, informed consent obtained, and confidentiality assured, including the participant's right to withdraw at any time. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and audio-recorded (with permission), supplemented by notes to capture non-verbal cues and contextual information. This procedure ensures ethical standards are upheld and fosters a trusting relationship with participants, enabling the collection of rich, meaningful data on the psychological resilience and religious faith of mother devotees engaged in the Turumba devotion.

Data Analysis

This study adhered to established ethical standards for qualitative research involving human participants, particularly within a religious and culturally sensitive context. Prior to data collection, all participants were fully informed about the purpose, scope, and voluntary nature of the study, and written informed consent was obtained. Participants were assured of their right to decline participation or withdraw at any point without consequence. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly maintained by using pseudonyms and removing identifying details from transcripts and reports. Given the sacred nature of the Turumba devotion and the deeply personal narratives shared, the researcher exercised cultural sensitivity, respect for religious beliefs, and emotional care throughout the interviews, ensuring that no questions caused distress or violated spiritual boundaries. Audio recordings and transcripts were securely stored and accessed only by the researcher. The study prioritized the dignity, well-being, and spiritual integrity of the mother devotees, recognizing them not merely as informants but as bearers of lived faith whose stories deserved respectful and responsible representation.

Ethical Considerations

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Results and Discussion

Sacred Safety and the Virgin's Protective Presence

One of the dominant themes that emerged from the interviews was the safety and security provided by the Virgin Mary. Many mothers described their experience with the Virgin Mary as a source of emotional support during times of crisis, fear, illness, and uncertainty. For many mothers, the Virgin Mary was perceived as a source of protection, particularly during Turumba processions. Mothers reported feeling a heightened sense of security during this time because of the presence of the Virgin Mary. In addition to public rituals, the Virgin Mary appeared to mothers in private circumstances; when a mother was ill or experiencing distress, the Virgin Mary would appear to her through signs, dreams, or answered prayers, leaving her feeling comforted and protected. One mother spoke specifically about her relationship with the Virgin Mary and how, through the celebration of the Turumba, her fears were eliminated, even when she faced high levels of risk.

"Oo kasi, gabi na kasi matapos, diba, wala akong takot na uuwi, kasi malayo, diba, wala akong takot na, baka may mangyari sa akin kasi, sumama ako sa turumba, hindi ko sya nalilimutan, ayun"- P9

This sense of sacred safety was also evident in how mothers drew emotional strength from the Virgin's protective presence and interpreted their own suffering through her maternal resilience. Another participant reflected on how identifying with the Virgin's experiences shaped her attitudes toward hardship and protection:

"Ano, kasi si Mahal na Birhen, marami syang pinagdaanan parang sino ba namang magulang ang gustong makita ang anak nyang nasa krus diba? Sinunod nya lang yung ano ng Panginoon, nagtiwala lang sya sa Panginoon na ito yung pinagkaloob. Kumbaga, tatanggapin mo kung ano ang sakit na ipagkaloob sa iyo at may kapalit naman iyong biyaya." - P2

This sentiment is echoed in another participant's story, where the Virgin's protection was evident in her emotional and physical endurance during difficult times.

"Ako, malakas ang loob ko pag kasama ko si Mahal na Birhen. Naramdaman ko na kahit mahirap ang buhay, hindi ako pababayaang." - P4

One participant specifically recalled how the Virgin Mary's presence gave her the confidence to return home safely despite her fears during the Turumba procession, underscoring her unwavering faith in the Virgin's protective embrace:

Another mother reflected on the power of the Virgin's presence, even in the most difficult of circumstances:

"Kapag sumasama ako sa Turumba, ramdam ko yung presence ng Mahal na Birhen, para bang kahit mahirap, kahit init ng araw, may kalakip na protection, hindi ako natatakot." - P10

These accounts reveal the profound sense of emotional safety that comes from maternal devotion, with the Virgin Mary acting as a spiritual refuge. Through her, mothers find the strength to endure hardships and reassurance that they are never alone. The Virgin Mary's role in offering emotional solace and resilience is central to mothers' coping mechanisms, illustrating the powerful bond between maternal devotion and emotional security.

"Kasi kahit sa araw-araw, ramdam ko ang presence ni Mahal na Birhen, parang yung lahat ng pinagdadaanan ko, hindi ko na kailangang harapin mag-isa." - P3

For many mothers, the Virgin's protective presence provides not only comfort but also spiritual strength, transforming their fear into hope and their struggles into moments of divine connection.

The findings show that mothers experience a sense of sacred safety through the interaction of their emotional vulnerabilities and the Turumba devotional environment, which presents the Virgin as a protective presence. Within But enaite- witkiewicz's (2020) Theoretical Model of Religious Faith and Psychological Resilience, this protective relationship functions as an antecedent spiritual condition that shapes how mothers initially appraise fear, illness, uncertainty, and threat. Instead of viewing difficult situations as overwhelming dangers, mothers

find emotional steadiness in their trust and surrender to the Birhen. Although external risks remain, this sacred relationship softens fear and provides inner stability, allowing mothers to face adversity with a sense of groundedness rather than distress. This understanding of sacred safety is supported by Yilmaz's (2024) feminist reflections, which describe Marian spaces as environments where women experience healing, empowerment, and a renewed sense of identity through devotion to Mary. Yilmaz explains that Marian sites offer emotional restoration and spiritual growth by fostering solidarity, mutual support, and imaginative engagement with Mary's maternal presence. These spaces allow women to feel accompanied by a compassionate female figure who strengthens dignity and agency. Similarly, Turumba serves as a Marian space for the mothers in this study, offering a sacred environment where they feel protected, emotionally anchored, and affirmed in their roles as mothers under the Virgin's care.

The theme also aligns with Yilmaz's (2023) phenomenological study on Catholic women pilgrims, which shows that Marian devotion provides protection, empowerment, and emotional grounding. According to Yilmaz, pilgrimage sites shape women's sense of safety and resilience through Marian symbolism and encounters with Mary as mother, mediatrix, and divine companion. Women report reduced vulnerability and renewed inner stability through these experiences. Likewise, the mothers in this study interpret Turumba rituals, devotional signs, and personal experiences as expressions of Mary's care, thereby softening fear and making vulnerability manageable within a sacred framework. Overall, these findings suggest that Marian devotional spaces, such as Turumba, function as sources of psychological safety for emotionally burdened mothers. Pastoral and community initiatives may benefit from intentionally nurturing these spaces as supportive environments rather than viewing them only as ritual practices. Future studies may further examine how this sense of sacred safety relates to fear, anxiety, and coping behaviors, or compare Turumba with other Marian devotions to better understand how different ritual contexts shape women's experiences of protection and resilience.

Communal Connection and Shared Devotional Belonging

A second theme that emerged from the interviews was the way Turumba functioned as a Communal Connection and Shared Devotional Belonging, where mothers experienced profound belonging, solidarity, and emotional connection with fellow devotees. Many participants described the procession not only as a religious ritual but as a shared spiritual journey that strengthened their ties to others and fostered a sense of being carried by a larger faith community. Mothers repeatedly emphasized that they did not feel alone in their struggles because Turumba created an atmosphere of mutual care—one marked by shared prayers, synchronized movements, and collective devotion to the Virgin. The ritual's highly embodied and communal nature helped them feel held and supported by others facing parallel life challenges. This communal energy created a "family-like" environment in which emotional burdens felt lighter, and resilience felt more possible. As one mother expressed, joining the devotion with her entire family created a powerful experience of unity:

"Oo kasi ay, yung, yung faith na, naibigay sa akin nang Mahal na Birhen ay hanggang duon na lang talaga. na, pagka akoy sumasama sa turumba ay mas lalong nadadagdagan dahil, hindi lang, parang hindi ako nakakaramdam ng pagod." - P4

Others highlighted how witnessing the multitude of devotees amplified the sense of being part of something sacred and collective:

"Oo, tulad ng mga, alam naman natin na napakarami na ng deboto ng Mahal na Birhen, galing sa ibang lugar kasi ay nararamdaman nila na may himalang nangyari sa kanila at ganon din sa atin, parang nararamdaman ko na safe, safe ako." - P2

This communal dimension also extended into personal spiritual practices. Some mothers shared that intercessory prayer for others strengthened their perception of being part of a larger caring community:

"Halimbawa ay may mga kahilingan ka para sa iyong anak. Kalimitan kasi sa akin, ang mga kahilingan ko'y sa aking mga anak. Minsan, kahit ako'y may sakit, mas inuuna kong ipanalangin ang mga anak, ang mga taong may karamdaman, mga kapwang may karamdaman. Doon, inaano na sila – ang biyayaan din, tulungan din." - P3

One mother reflected on how the collective prayers and support during Turumba provide comfort and a sense of solidarity with others who are also going through struggles:

“Parang, hindi lang ako mag-isa sa aking mga problema, dahil dito sa Turumba, ramdam ko yung pagtutulungan, yung prayers ng bawat isa, na parang sila rin ang nagdadala sa akin.” – P5

Another participant shared how the presence of so many devotees strengthens her connection with others and with the Virgin Mary, reinforcing the feeling of being part of something much larger than herself:

“Kasi yung dami ng tao, nararamdaman mo na hindi lang ikaw ang may hinaharap na pagsubok, kundi lahat tayo nagkakasama-sama para sa isang layunin.” – P6

Another participant reflected on how she finds strength in her ability to pray for others during the procession, feeling that this selfless act connects her to the larger community:

“Kahit ako'y may mga hinanakit, mas inuuna ko pa rin ang mga panalangin ko para sa ibang tao, kasi sa bawat dasal ko, parang nakikibahagi ako sa pagdadala ng pasanin ng iba.” – P9

One mother described how participating in Turumba as a family not only deepens her faith but also strengthens the bond within her family, creating a sense of shared spiritual purpose:

“Noong una, hindi kami lahat magkasama, pero ngayon, tuwing may Turumba, lahat kami sama-sama, kaya mas nagiging masaya, parang pamilya talaga kami sa bawat pagdalo.” – P7

The findings show that mothers' sense of communal connection develops from the interaction of their social needs, emotional challenges, and the Turumba devotional setting, which they experience as a shared spiritual home. Guided by Butėnaite-Šwitkiewicz's (2020) Theoretical Model of Religious Faith and Psychological Resilience, this sense of belonging functions as a connectivity condition that shapes how mothers understand stress, isolation, and hardship. Instead of facing difficulties alone, mothers interpret their struggles within a supportive devotional community, where companionship, collective prayer, and shared ritual movement help ease emotional distress. While external challenges persist, the Turumba community serves as a social anchor, transforming loneliness into a sense of belonging and enabling mothers to face adversity with shared strength. This theme is supported by the study of Kweyu, Tucholski, and Mwarari (2023), which highlights the role of social support in promoting emotional well-being within religious communities. Their findings show that positive living among perpetually professed consecrated women is strengthened by communal encouragement, relational warmth, and the presence of understanding peers and leaders, even if the statistical relationship is modest ($r = .104$, $p = .042$). The authors emphasize that daily experiences of empathy and shared understanding shape how religious women cope with stress and demands. Similarly, Turumba functions as a communal space where mothers feel emotionally supported through shared rituals and collective prayer, mirroring the communal support described in the Kenyan context.

The experience of Turumba also aligns with Macaranas' (2021) discussion of Filipino folk religiosity, which views popular Catholic devotions as deeply communal and culturally rooted practices. Macaranas explains that Filipino folk Catholicism emphasizes collective rituals that express shared identity, belonging, and connection with both the sacred and the community. From this perspective, Turumba reflects a form of everyday Marian devotion in which mothers are bound together through shared movement, sacrifice, and embodied expressions of faith. This communal experience allows mothers to sustain hope, affirm their shared identity, and situate their personal struggles within a collective, emotionally meaningful faith experience. Overall, the findings highlight the importance of nurturing communal devotional spaces that support shared prayer and strong relational networks within faith communities. Strengthening these culturally rooted practices can help mothers transform isolation into collective strength and sustain emotional resilience. The discussion also underscores the value of further research into how specific communal rituals may deepen social cohesion and enhance psychological well-being among Filipino devotees.

Emotional and Spiritual Renewal Through Embodied Devotion

One of the prominent themes that surfaced from the interviews is the mothers' experience of emotional and spiritual renewal through their embodied participation in the Turumba devotion. For many participants, Turumba is not merely a religious obligation but a deeply felt emotional process that lightens psychological burdens, restores inner balance, and invigorates their sense of purpose. The rhythmic movement, chanting, coordinated

steps, and physical immersion in communal prayer create an affective environment where tension dissipates and emotional heaviness is released. Mothers repeatedly described Turumba as a form of pagpapagaan ng loob, a ritual that cleanses the heart and energizes both body and spirit. One participant articulated this transformative sense of well-being:

"...kahit masama pakiramdam mo... gaganda ang pakiramdam mo... gagaling ka sa pagtuturumba." – P8

Participants also described physical restoration, noting that bodily discomfort, fatigue, or heaviness seemed to ease through ritual movement:

"Mhmm, lagi naman... kapag nasama ka sa Turumba... pagkakatapos non ay parang na-refresh ka." – P10

Despite physical exhaustion, mothers highlighted a paradoxical sense of lightness after the devotion:

"Kahit pagod ang katawan, magaan naman ang pakiramdam pag-uwi." – P7

Some mothers further described Turumba as a cleansing movement—one that absorbs emotional distress and restores inner clarity:

"...alam mo yung pakiramdam na parang hinihigop niya yung negative energy sa buhay mo? Tapos paglabas mo, parang bagong tao ka na ulit." – P11

Others emphasized emotional release through tears and quiet prayer during the procession:

"Doon ako umiiyak minsan habang naglalakad... pagkatapos non, gumagaan na." – P5

These narratives illustrate that the emotional uplift experienced in Turumba is deeply embedded in the ritual's embodied nature. The physical engagement—walking, dancing, swaying to music, and enduring heat and exertion—becomes a spiritual discipline that helps regulate overwhelming emotions. One mother reflected on how repetitive movement and prayer gradually calm her inner state:

"Habang paulit-ulit ang lakad at dasal, kumakalma ang loob ko." – P4

Within Buténaitė-Šwitkiewicz's (2020) model, this experience corresponds to the Satisfaction dimension, wherein religious practices foster emotional ease, fulfillment, and renewed motivation. This renewed motivation is reflected in mothers' sense of strength after participating in Turumba:

"Pagkatapos ng Turumba, parang may linaw ulit at lakas na magpatuloy." – P6

The emotional renewal derived from Turumba is further strengthened by its communal nature. Mothers emphasized the reassurance gained from moving and praying alongside fellow devotees:

"Kapag magkakasabay kayong naglalakad at sumasayaw, parang sama-sama kayong gumagaan." – P13

Others highlighted the sense of belonging that emerges from shared devotion:

"Hindi ka nag-iisa... marami kayong may parehong pinagdadaanan." – P2

Finally, one mother emphasized how Turumba becomes a safe space for releasing unspoken emotional burdens:

"Parang doon ko naibubuhos lahat ng bigat na hindi ko masabi sa iba." – P9

Over time, Turumba becomes an enduring emotional anchor rather than a one-time experience:

"Hindi lang minsan ang lakas na nakukuha mo... paulit-ulit mo itong binabalikan." – P15

These narratives illustrate that the emotional uplift experienced in Turumba is deeply embedded in the ritual's embodied nature. The physical engagement—walking, dancing, swaying to music, and enduring heat and exertion—becomes a spiritual discipline that helps regulate overwhelming emotions. Within Buténaitė-Šwitkiewicz's (2020) model, this corresponds to the Satisfaction dimension, in which spiritual practices create emotional ease, fulfillment, and renewed motivation. Recent scholarship strongly supports these restorative effects of embodied devotion. A study by Newson, Buhrmester, and Whitehouse (2021) demonstrated that collective rituals significantly increase positive affect and emotional uplift, emphasizing that synchronized group actions naturally enhance mood and social connectedness.

Similarly, Vox and Bloom (2020) showed that ritual practices reduce anxiety and offer psychological comfort by providing structure, symbolic meaning, and predictable patterns of movement conducive to emotional stability. The embodied dimension of Turumba is further evident in Rountree's (2021) work, which highlights how walking rituals and pilgrimage-like movements foster emotional grounding, clarity, and spiritual renewal by enabling individuals to process emotions through physical action. Additionally, Tulloch (2020) emphasized that embodied ritual participation creates powerful affective shifts, enabling devotees to release emotional burdens and experience heightened spiritual connection. Tulloch's work reveals how movement, rhythm, and sensory engagement within ritual contexts produce feelings of lightness, renewal, and inner transformation—precisely mirroring the mothers' descriptions of Turumba's cleansing and invigorating effects.

Taken together, these studies affirm that the emotional renewal described by Turumba mothers corresponds to well-established mechanisms in ritual psychology: embodied movement regulates emotions, reduces stress, and generates inner balance. Turumba functions as a psychospiritual refuge, where emotional heaviness is released, energy is restored, and spiritual vitality is rekindled through shared embodied practice. For many mothers, the devotion becomes a reliable source of inner strength—allowing them to move through life's burdens with renewed clarity, steadiness, and hope. The embodied rhythm of Turumba is more than tradition; it is a lived, restorative practice that sustains their well-being.

Meaning-Making Through Suffering and the Virgin's Sorrows

A significant theme that emerged from the mothers' narratives is how they make meaning from personal suffering through the lens of the Virgin's sorrows. Experiences of illness, poverty, emotional burdens, fear, and uncertainty are not interpreted as random or meaningless hardships. However, they are reframed as spiritually significant trials intertwined with the maternal suffering of the Birhen Dolorosa. Through this sacred reframing, pain becomes purposeful, bearable, and even strengthening. One mother articulated this profound meaning-making process when reflecting on her cancer diagnosis:

"Masayang masaya ang puso ko na ako ang nagka-cancer... hindi ko kayang makitang pagdadaan ng anak ko." - P1

Rather than perceiving suffering as abandonment or punishment, many mothers viewed it as a form of maternal offering, aligned with Mary's own endurance as a grieving mother. Pain was often accepted as something that could protect their children or deepen their faith. Another mother shared:

"Kung may hirap man, tinatanggap ko na lang... iniisip ko si Mama Mary." - P3

For many participants, adversity did not lead to spiritual distancing; instead, it strengthened their attachment to faith. Suffering became a reason to cling more deeply to belief rather than to withdraw from it:

"Imbis na ako'y magtampo... mas lalo akong humawak sa aking paniniwala." - P4

Some mothers described consciously recalling the Virgin's sorrow during moments of emotional distress, using Mary's suffering as a reference point for emotional regulation and endurance:

"Kapag mabigat na talaga, iniisip ko ang sakit na dinanas ni Mama Mary." - P6

Others emphasized how Mary's identity as a mother allowed them to feel deeply understood in their pain:

"Bilang ina, ramdam ko ang sakit niya... kaya mas naiintindihan niya ako." - P9

This identification with the Virgin's sorrow reframes suffering as a shared, relational experience rather than a solitary burden. One participant explained:

"Parang hindi ka nag-iisa sa paghihirap... may kasama kang umuunawa." - P12

Several mothers shared that suffering reshaped their emotional and moral outlook, fostering patience, humility, and compassion:

"Mas natuto akong magtiis at umunawa dahil sa mga pagsubok." - P7

Moments of helplessness were often met with surrender rather than despair, as mothers entrusted their fears to the Virgin:

"Kapag wala na akong magawa, ipinagkakatiwala ko na lang kay Mama Mary." - P10

This surrender was experienced not as weakness but as emotional release and acceptance:

"Mas gumagaan ang pakiramdam kapag tinanggap mo na ang lahat." -P14

Over time, repeated suffering did not diminish faith but instead deepened it, transforming pain into a source of inner strength:

"Sa bawat pagsubok, mas tumitibay ang pananalig ko." - P15

This reframing reflects a psychological process known as meaning-making, where individuals reinterpret painful events through their spiritual worldview to reduce emotional overwhelm. In But enait - witkiewicz's (2020) framework, this corresponds to Openness to Transcendent Experience, in which adversity is interpreted through sacred symbols and narratives, and to Recognition of Mortality, in which suffering is met not with fear but with acceptance and trust. Contemporary scholarship reinforces the mothers' experiences. Pargament and Raiya (2020) argue that religious coping enables individuals to transform suffering into opportunities for spiritual growth, emotional steadiness, and purpose by anchoring pain within a faith-based meaning system. Similarly, Long and Villarreal (2021) found that meaning-making and spirituality significantly enhance psychological resilience during hardship, enabling individuals to reinterpret distress as part of a meaningful journey rather than an overwhelming threat.

The mothers' re-reading of their struggles through the Virgin's life parallels the findings of Ugwueze and Muonwe (2022), who emphasize that believers often frame suffering as spiritually purposeful, drawing strength and acceptance from religious narratives that model endurance and maternal sacrifice. Moreover, Ahmadi, Zandi, and Ahmadi (2022) demonstrate that religious frameworks help individuals confront mortality, loss, and deep emotional pain by providing transcendent meaning that reduces fear and fosters inner peace. Collectively, these studies affirm that meaning-making is not purely cognitive but deeply spiritual. The mothers' identification with the Virgin's sorrows gives shape to their pain, enabling them to endure hardship with dignity, hope, and emotional resilience. Turumba devotion, therefore, becomes not only an emotional refuge but a theological lens through which suffering is transformed into a sacred path of strength. This theme also carries important pastoral implications: mothers benefit greatly from spaces where they can articulate their suffering through Marian narratives. Parish efforts such as faith-sharing groups, reflections on the Seven Sorrows of Mary, and spiritual accompaniment can further support meaning-making, helping mothers face life's challenges with greater clarity and inner grounding. Ultimately, through the Virgin's sorrows, these mothers learn that suffering can be transformed— not into despair, but into deeper faith, purpose, and resilient love.

Faith-Driven Perseverance and Psychological Recovery

The narratives reveal that faith practices and participation in the Turumba devotion serve as active tools for coping, emotional regulation, and psychological restoration among the mothers interviewed. This theme highlights how prayer, surrendering to God, and engaging in ritual traditions function not merely as religious expressions but as intentional strategies for overcoming crises such as emotional breakdowns, depression,

financial strain, single parenthood, caregiving burdens, and grief.

Participants reported that turning to faith helped them regain clarity, calm, and a sense of agency during periods of distress. The act of surrendering challenges:

"Kapag hindi ko na kaya... Siya na ang bahala" - P1

"Nang mawalan ako ng mahal sa buhay, ang dasal ang tumulong sa akin para tanggapin ang lahat." - P8

"Pagkatapos kong magdasal, gumagaan ang pakiramdam ko kasi naibigay ko na lahat sa Diyos." P10

It reflects a perceived transfer of emotional burden, which contributes to feelings of relief and renewed strength. Similarly, ritual engagement, including Turumba practices, was consistently described as instrumental in accelerating emotional recovery for many devotees. Five participants state:

"Malaking tulong sa akin ang Turumba kasi doon ako nakakaramdam ng kapayapaan." - P2

"Bilang isang single mother, ang pananampalataya ko ang nagpapalakas sa akin araw-araw." - P6

"Ang pananampalataya ko ang tumutulong sa akin na bumangon kapag sobrang bigat na ng buhay." - P12

"Kapag sumasama ako sa Turumba, nakakaramdam ako ng lakas kahit pagod na pagod ako." - P7

"Sa Turumba, nararamdaman ko na hindi ako nag-iisa sa pinagdadaanan ko." - P11

One respondent noted that even health professionals observed the unusually rapid psychological rebound –

"Ang bilis ng recovery mo – parang walang nangyari" - P13.

The theme Faith-Driven Perseverance and Psychological Recovery directly reflects the mechanisms described in Buténaitė-Šwitkiewicz's (2020) Theoretical Model of Religious Faith and Psychological Resilience, in which religious faith serves as a foundation for coping, sustaining well-being, and creating meaning in the face of adversity. In the context of the Turumba sa Birhen, the lived experiences of mother devotees illustrate how each component of the theoretical model is activated through prayer, surrender, ritual participation, and Marian devotion. Participants' reliance on prayer and surrender aligns with recent studies identifying positive religious coping, which allows individuals to reinterpret stressors through a lens of divine support and meaning-making. Such religious coping helps reduce emotional distress, providing both comfort and cognitive reframing during crises (Pargament & Exline, 2022). It also states that prayer facilitates emotional regulation by fostering calmness, perceived control, and hope, particularly through adaptive religious/spiritual engagement and its influence on emotion regulation processes (Brandão, 2025).

Engagement in Turumba – similar to communal and embodied religious rituals worldwide – provides somatic grounding, social support, and psychological containment. Participation in group rituals enhances resilience, belonging, and emotional coherence, especially among women facing socioeconomic hardship (Abd Aziz, Ridzuan, Abu Yazid, Sansudin, Abd Majid, 2024). The statements imply that faith and Turumba rituals function not merely as spiritual practices but also as psychological tools, helping to regulate emotions, regain clarity in decision-making, maintain motivation during crises, and develop long-term resilience. This shows that spiritual frameworks can provide internal psychological resources comparable to cognitive or behavioral coping strategies. The statements collectively imply that faith is not just belief – it is functional, practical, and therapeutic. For these mothers, faith-driven perseverance reshapes how they suffer, recover, act, and transform their lives.

Conclusion

This study highlights that the mother devotees of Turumba have demonstrated immense resilience as the result of spiritual safety, developing a sense of community and belonging with other mothers (their peers), their repeated act of devotion to Mother Mary (embodying their dedication), and the ability to create a meaning for themselves through the emotions expressed by the Virgin Mary during her suffering. Developing a system of multiple levels

of "support" from a cultural perspective lays the foundation for defining and emphasizing culture's role in a mother's ability to navigate life, particularly in motherhood. This understanding reinforces the value of providing mothers with opportunities to build on their Marian-centered supportive resources through the development of community-based, church-supported prayer activities, community-supportive group reflection, and devotionals that will enable mothers to manage their emotions (improved emotional regulation), create a sense of community and connection with others (build social connection), and increase their ability to cope (increase coping capacity). For mental health professionals who work in faith-centered communities, incorporating culturally familiar religious experiences (i.e., rhythmic rituals, intercessory prayers, and embodied devotion) alongside psychoeducational and counselling supports for mothers experiencing stress due to grief and caregiving obligations equitably supports mothers' well-being. Mental health providers/mental health professionals who practice in faith/community settings can assist in fostering a religious attachment to God as a spiritual anchor, encouraging them to accurately evaluate their life circumstances while developing self-efficacy and adaptive coping strategies. Furthermore, faith- and community-driven programs, including those offered through parish-based, women-based, and pastoral support groups, are essential to reducing burnout and increasing daily resilience among mothers. Through collaboration between community-based and faith-based institutions to create culturally sensitive programs that address the needs of mothers and families, a unified approach to mental health, family support, and community-based resources can be developed, ensuring that mothers receive holistic assistance while preserving the cultural and spiritual foundations that sustain their well-being.

Contributions of Authors

Authors 1, 2, and 3: conceptualization, proposal writing, data gathering, data analysis, manuscript preparation
Author 4: supervision, academic guidance, manuscript review, editing, and revisions

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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