

Original Article

Stalking in the Philippines: A Literature Review

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Abstract. Women are disproportionately affected by stalking, a form of gender-based violence that often results in severe psychological, emotional, and social consequences, yet limited evidence exists regarding its nature and impact in the Philippines. This study systematically reviewed the existing literature to synthesize evidence on the forms of stalking, the lived experiences of women survivors, and the impacts of stalking within the Philippine context. To collect the latest data on stalking behaviors, victim experiences, effects, and intervention measures in the Philippines, this study, entitled *Female Stalking in the Philippines: A Systematic Literature Review Using the PRISMA 2020 Framework*, conducted a systematic review of global studies on female victimization. The search process initially identified forty-four (44) records from multiple academic databases and other relevant sources. Eleven pertinent studies written between 2015 and 2025 were analyzed using thematic-descriptive analysis based on the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. These eleven (11) studies met all the eligibility requirements and quality standards and were included in the final thematic synthesis. Three core themes that have been found include types of stalking, including intimate partner stalking and gender-based violence; the impact of stalking, including the psychological, emotional, social, and structural ramifications; and consequences of stalking, including technologically mediated stalking and stalking in public spaces. By considering the concepts of attachment theory and resilience theory, this literature review focuses on the lasting trauma that female victims experience because of stalking and their adaptive strategies in coping with the negative effects. The findings underscore the importance of strengthening anti-stalking policies, expanding victim support services, and promoting public awareness. Future research should investigate diverse populations and assess the effectiveness of intervention and prevention strategies.

Keywords: *Cyberstalking; Female victimization; Systematic Literature Review; Philippines.*

Stalking is a serious and complex form of interpersonal victimization characterized by repeated and unwanted behaviors directed toward an individual that create fear, distress, or concern for personal safety. According to Quinn-Evans et al. (2021), stalking encompasses a wide range of behaviors and interactions between perpetrators and victims. Similarly, Matos et al. (2019) described stalking as a crime associated with severe psychological, physical, and practical consequences resulting from persistent unwanted contact. Although stalking has often been perceived as harmless or romanticized in popular culture, research increasingly demonstrates that it constitutes a significant public safety and public health concern.

Existing literature highlights the profound effects of stalking on victims. Smith et al. (2022) found that stalking

frequently occurs within the context of intimate partner violence and is often linked to sexual victimization, particularly among women. Survivors commonly experience anxiety, depression, fear, and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), with many continuing to suffer long after the stalking behavior has ceased.

The rapid expansion of digital technologies and social networking platforms has further transformed the nature of stalking. Stevens et al. (2021) noted that increasing internet use has contributed to the emergence of cyberstalking and online harassment, creating new avenues through which perpetrators can monitor, threaten, and manipulate victims. Despite the growing prevalence of online stalking, limited research has examined its effects on victims' mental health and overall quality of life. Recent data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicated that approximately 22.5% of women and 9.7% of men in the United States have experienced stalking during their lifetime (Chen et al., 2023). These findings underscore the continuing relevance of stalking as a social issue requiring further scholarly attention.

In the Philippine context, the increasing use of online platforms and virtual communication has created additional opportunities for stalking-related behaviors. Lucero et al. (2025) reported that dating applications have become increasingly popular among Filipinos, facilitating the formation of online relationships. While these platforms provide opportunities for social interaction, they may also expose users to risks associated with stalking, harassment, and exploitation. This concern was highlighted by the National Bureau of Investigation's operation against a large-scale "love scam" syndicate in Makati City, where perpetrators allegedly used fabricated online identities to establish relationships with victims before manipulating them for financial gain (Pasia, 2025). Such incidents illustrate how stalking-related behaviors can evolve within digital environments and create significant emotional, psychological, and financial consequences for victims.

Despite its harmful effects, stalking remains substantially underreported. Victims frequently encounter barriers to reporting due to fear, victim-blaming attitudes, social stigma, and limited awareness regarding the seriousness of stalking behaviors (Boehnlein et al., 2020).

While many studies abroad have investigated stalking, its characteristics, and effects, it becomes apparent through a review of the literature that there is very limited knowledge regarding stalking research in the Philippine setting. Literature available on the topic has primarily concerned itself with the larger issues of online victimization, cybercrime, gender-based violence, and digital relationships, rather than concentrating on stalking specifically. Moreover, no review of the existing evidence has been undertaken yet to examine how stalking has manifested in the local context and how the problem is dealt with. This lack of research creates an unfortunate situation where relevant parties cannot develop effective countermeasures to address this issue.

The proposed project is based on the principles of Resilience Theory, as it highlights individuals' ability to overcome adversity. Moreover, the study will be anchored in Attachment Theory, as it may offer valuable insights into the nature of victimization and perpetration. Therefore, this study aims to conduct a systematic literature review entitled "Stalking in the Philippines: A Literature Review" using the PRISMA 2020 framework. Specifically, it seeks to identify the different forms of stalking reported in the Philippine context, examine the lived experiences of victims, and analyze the impacts of stalking as documented in existing literature. Through a systematic process of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion, the study intends to provide a comprehensive synthesis of available evidence while identifying gaps that require further investigation.

Objectives of the Study

1. To systematically examine existing local literature on stalking in the Philippine context
2. To identify different forms of stalking
3. To identify the lived experiences of stalking
4. To identify and examine the impact of stalking.

The significance of this study extends to multiple sectors. The findings may provide valuable information for policymakers, law enforcement agencies, legal practitioners, and victim-support organizations in developing more responsive policies and intervention programs addressing stalking behaviors. The study may also contribute to public awareness initiatives by enhancing understanding of the nature, prevalence, and consequences of stalking. From an academic perspective, the review addresses an important gap in Philippine literature and serves as a foundation for future research. Furthermore, the study supports the objectives of the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions), by promoting evidence-based approaches to preventing violence, protecting victims, and strengthening access to justice.

Methodology

Research Design

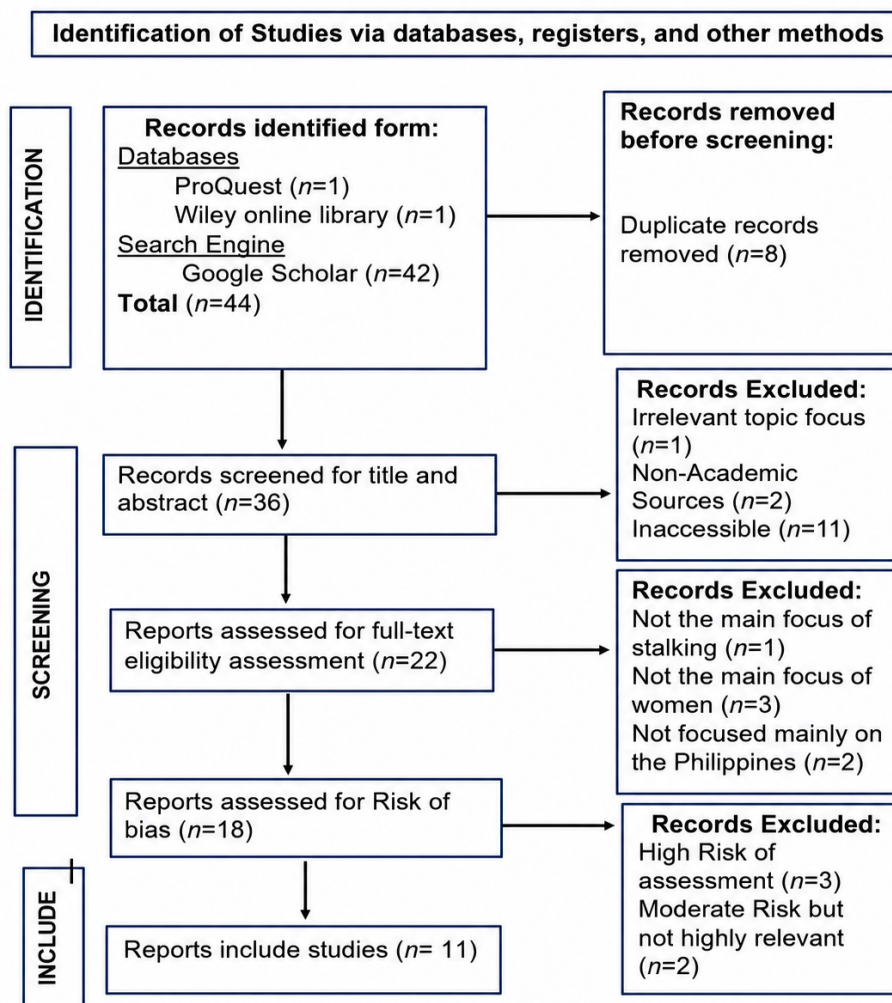


Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Study Selection Process

This study employed a systematic literature review design guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 framework. A systematic review is a rigorous research method used to identify, evaluate, and synthesize available evidence on a specific topic through a transparent and replicable process. The PRISMA framework was selected because it provides standardized procedures for identifying, screening, assessing eligibility, and including relevant studies, thereby enhancing the transparency, credibility, and reproducibility of the review. The systematic review design was considered appropriate for this study because it enabled a comprehensive examination of existing literature on stalking in the Philippines. Through this approach, the researchers synthesized available evidence regarding the forms of stalking, victim experiences, psychosocial impacts, legal responses, and intervention strategies while identifying gaps that may guide future research and policy development.

Study Selection Process

The study employed a systematic selection process guided by the PRISMA 2020 framework to identify relevant literature on stalking in the Philippine context. As illustrated in Figure 1, the selection process involved four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. This structured procedure ensured that only studies that met the established criteria for relevance, credibility, and methodological quality were included in the review.

In the identification stage, a total of forty-four (44) records were retrieved from selected databases and search engines. Specifically, one (1) record was obtained from ProQuest, one (1) from Wiley Online Library, and forty-two (42) from Google Scholar. This initial search strategy ensured broad coverage of available literature on stalking and related phenomena in the Philippines. During the screening phase, eight (8) duplicate records were removed, resulting in 36 remaining studies for title and abstract screening. At this stage, fourteen (14) studies were excluded due to lack of relevance, non-academic nature, and inaccessibility of full texts. Specifically, one (1) study was excluded for lack of relevance, two (2) were non-academic sources, and eleven (11) were inaccessible.

Following this, twenty-two (22) full-text studies were assessed for eligibility. Six (6) studies were excluded because they did not meet the research objectives: one (1) did not focus primarily on stalking, three (3) did not focus on female subjects, and two (2) were outside the Philippine context. This step ensured that only studies directly aligned with the research focus were retained. A total of sixteen (16) studies underwent risk-of-bias assessment to evaluate methodological quality and reliability. Five (5) studies were excluded due to quality concerns, specifically three (3) with high risk of bias and two (2) with moderate risk but low relevance to the research topic. Ultimately, eleven (11) studies were included in the final synthesis. This systematic process demonstrates adherence to rigorous selection standards, ensuring transparency, reliability, and consistency in identifying literature on stalking in the Philippines. The PRISMA flow diagram in Figure 1 illustrates the transparent and structured approach used in selecting studies. This strengthens the credibility of the review by showing how irrelevant and low-quality studies were systematically eliminated.

Research Subject and Eligibility Criteria

The research subjects of this study consisted of published and unpublished scholarly works, official reports, legal documents, and empirical studies that examined stalking and related behaviors within the Philippine context. Since the study utilized secondary data, no direct human participants were involved. The units of analysis included peer-reviewed journal articles, theses, dissertations, government publications, policy reports, and institutional documents that discussed stalking, cyberstalking, harassment, victimization, legal responses, offender characteristics, and psychosocial consequences.

The search process revealed a significant scarcity of empirical studies specifically examining stalking against women in the Philippine context. Despite conducting comprehensive searches across multiple scholarly databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, JSTOR, EBSCOhost, SpringerLink, Taylor & Francis, no standalone peer-reviewed studies focusing exclusively on female stalking victimization in the Philippines met the established eligibility criteria.

The inclusion criteria required that studies: (1) be published between 2015 and 2025; (2) be written in English; (3) be available in full-text format; (4) focus on stalking, cyberstalking, harassment, victimization, gender-based violence, or related behaviors within the Philippine context; and (5) be academic or institutional publications such as journal articles, theses, dissertations, government reports, and organizational publications. Studies examining legal responses, policy measures, victim experiences, risk factors, causes, forms, and impacts of stalking-related offenses were also included.

The exclusion criteria eliminated studies that: (1) were published before 2015; (2) were not written in English; (3) lacked relevance to stalking and related victimization issues; (4) focused on contexts outside the Philippines without Philippine-specific findings; and (5) consisted of non-academic materials such as blogs, social media posts, opinion articles, YouTube content, and other sources that did not meet scholarly standards.

Flowers et al. (2020) conducted a structured review showing that intimate partner stalking is a major subtype of stalking and shares many behavioral characteristics with IPV. Intimate partner stalking represents one of the most prevalent forms of stalking documented in the literature; studies on IPV provide important insights into stalking-related behaviors, coercive control, harassment, and victimization. With the DHS Program, recent Philippine

research continues to focus primarily on intimate partner violence among Filipino women rather than stalking specifically.

Research Instrument

The primary research instrument used in this study was a researcher-developed document analysis matrix. This matrix served as a structured tool for extracting, organizing, and synthesizing relevant information from selected studies. The matrix included categories such as author and year of publication, study objectives, methodology, participants, key findings, forms of stalking identified, victim experiences, impacts, legal responses, and recommendations.

In addition, the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram was utilized as a methodological tool to document the stages of study selection, including identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion of studies. These instruments ensured a systematic, transparent, and replicable review process.

Table 1. *Risk of Bias Assessment Tool*

Criteria	Guiding Question	Scoring Scale
1. Alignment	Does the study clearly examine women's stalking behaviors, patterns, experiences, or related forms of harassment, victimization, violence within the Philippine context?	1= not related 2= partly related 3= directly related
2. Source Authority and Reliability	Does the study demonstrate credibility by being peer-reviewed or issued by a recognized academic, governmental, or authoritative organization?	1= not related 2= partly related 3= directly related
3. Transparency of Methods	Does the study provide sufficient methodological detail to allow understanding and appraisal of its objectives, methods, and analysis?	1= not related 2= partly related 3= directly related
4. Objectivity	Does the study demonstrate objectivity by supporting conclusions with evidence and acknowledging potential biases or limitations?	1= not related 2= partly related 3= directly related
5. Data Analysis	Does the study apply transparent data analysis procedures, and are the findings and conclusions derived from the analyzed data?	1= not related 2= partly related 3= directly related

Table 2. *Summary of Risk of Bias of Assessment*

Study No.	Author & Year	Overall Risk
1	Alibudbud (2024)	High Risk
2	Bernarte, Acedegbega, Fadera & Yopyop (2018)	Low Risk
3	Caban (2022)	Low Risk
4	Calixtro & Brioso	Low Risk
5	Calub (2015)	High Risk
6	Clamor (2018)	Low Risk
7	Claus, Eborra, Espelata, Mercado & Mojares (2017)	Low Risk
8	Cleofas (2023)	Moderate Risk, but not highly relevant
9	Deguma, Peteros, Case, & Igot (2018)	Low Risk
10	Kibtiah (2024)	Low Risk
11	Manalo, Mercado, Perez, Revera & Salangsang (2016)	Low Risk
12	Pagurayan et al. (2023)	Low Risk
13	Santos & De Guzman (2025)	Low Risk
14	Valdez et al. (2022)	High Risk
15	Vyas (2023)	Low Risk
16	Febro-Naga & Tinam-Isan (2022)	Moderate Risk and highly relevant

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering process began with the formulation of research questions and the identification of relevant keywords and search terms related to stalking, cyberstalking, victimization, harassment, violence against women, legal responses, and the Philippines. Electronic searches were conducted using academic databases, digital repositories, online libraries, and official government and institutional websites. Retrieved records were compiled and screened based on their titles and abstracts to determine their relevance to the study objectives. Duplicate records and clearly unrelated materials were removed. The remaining articles underwent full-text review to assess their eligibility according to the established inclusion and exclusion criteria. Studies that met the eligibility

requirements were included in the final review. Information from each selected study was systematically extracted using the document analysis matrix to ensure consistency and accuracy. Throughout the review process, the PRISMA 2020 flow diagram was used to document the number of records identified, screened, excluded, assessed for eligibility, and ultimately included in the analysis.

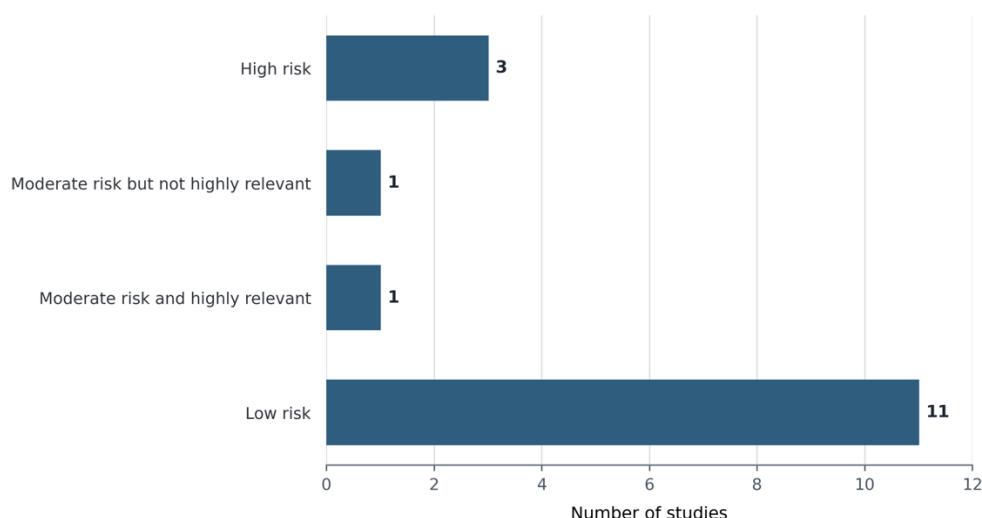


Figure 1. *Distribution of studies according to risk-of-bias classification and relevance*

Data Analysis Procedure

The collected data were analyzed using thematic-descriptive analysis. Information extracted from the selected studies was carefully reviewed, coded, categorized, and synthesized to identify recurring themes and patterns. The analysis focused on determining the common forms of stalking, characteristics of victims and offenders, psychosocial effects, legal frameworks, risk factors, and intervention strategies reported in the literature. A descriptive synthesis was employed to summarize and integrate findings across studies. Similar concepts and findings were grouped into thematic categories to facilitate interpretation and comparison. The use of predefined eligibility criteria, systematic data extraction procedures, and the PRISMA framework enhanced the rigor, consistency, and trustworthiness of the review findings. The methodological quality of the included studies was assessed using a Researcher-Developed Risk of Bias Assessment Tool (RBAT). The tool evaluated each study based on five criteria: (1) alignment, (2) source authority and reliability, (3) transparency and methods, (4) objectivity, and (5) data analysis. Studies were subsequently classified as having low, moderate, or high risk of bias. Only studies that met the predetermined quality threshold were included in the final thematic synthesis.

Ethical Considerations

This study did not involve direct participation of human subjects because it relied exclusively on publicly available secondary sources. Nevertheless, ethical principles in research were strictly observed throughout the conduct of the study. Proper citation and acknowledgment of all referenced materials were ensured to uphold academic integrity and avoid plagiarism. The study was initially reviewed and approved by the University of Mindanao Ethics Review Committee (UMERC) under Certification No. UMERC-2026-065, which determined that the research posed minimal ethical risk. Transparency, accuracy, objectivity, and responsible reporting of findings were maintained throughout the review process. All sources were evaluated critically, and the findings were presented honestly and without misrepresentation to ensure the credibility and integrity of the study.

Results and Discussion

This review was anchored on Republic Act No. 9262, which recognizes stalking as a form of violence against women within intimate or dating relationships. The Act highlights stalking as a behavior that contributes to psychological violence, thereby emphasizing the importance of examining stalking experiences among women in the Philippine context. Republic Act No. 11313 broadens the legal recognition of stalking by addressing repeated

unwanted physical and online behaviors that threaten women's safety and psychological well-being. This legislation reinforces the relevance of reviewing stalking literature, particularly in the context of public spaces and technology-facilitated harassment.

Forms of Stalking in the Philippine Context

This section presents the first major theme of the study, focusing on the forms of stalking identified in the reviewed literature. Among the eleven (11) included studies, six (6) addressed stalking-related behaviors. Two primary forms emerged: intimate partner stalking and gender-based abuse.

Table 3. Distribution of Studies by Forms of Stalking		
Forms of Stalking	Author/Year	Key Findings
Intimate Partner Stalking	Maglinte et al. (2016)	Intimate partner violence (IPV) causes serious psychological harm to women and children.
Gender-Based Abuse	Calub (2018)	Violence against women occurs at individual, community, and societal levels in forms such as rape, domestic abuse, sexual harassment, stalking, trafficking, state violence, and female genital mutilation.
Intimate Partner Stalking	Alibudbud (2024)	Many low-income Filipino women remain in abusive marriages due to financial and legal constraints, exposing them to harmful health effects of IPV.
Gender-Based Abuse	Labrague et al. (2022)	Considering the 2017 Philippine Statistics Authority survey, one in four Filipino women aged 15–49 has experienced domestic violence, showing that VAW remains prevalent.
Intimate Partner Stalking	Puno et al. (2023)	The intergenerational cycle of IPV among women is still not fully understood in terms of victimization, perpetration, and types of violence.
Intimate Partner Stalking	Agustin (2024)	Government agencies such as the DSWD can support survivors through empowerment programs and early intervention initiatives against IPV.

Intimate Partner Stalking

Stalking by someone you are in a relationship with is the most common type of stalking behavior found in the research. This shows that stalking often happens in relationships, even after they have ended, because the person doing the stalking wants to keep control over the other person. It is not just about stalking - it is often part of a bigger pattern of abuse and control in a relationship. Research has found that stalking can be a way for someone to keep scaring and controlling their partner, even after they have broken up. A study by Maglinte et., al (2016) found that women and children who experience abuse in a relationship can be really affected by it, and that stalking can be a way for the abuser to keep hurting them.

Another study by Alibudbud (2024) highlighted that women in the Philippines who are in abusive relationships often can't leave because they rely on their partner for money or are afraid of what might happen if they try to leave. This makes them more vulnerable to being stalked and harassed. These findings show how bigger issues like inequality and unfair power dynamics in relationships can contribute to stalking behaviors.

Research has shown that intimate partner violence can be passed down from one generation to the next. Puno et al. (2023) found that people who see violence in their families when they are growing up may think that controlling and stalking behaviors are normal. This suggests that stalking is not just something one person does, but can also be something people learn from their surroundings. Another study by Agustin (2024) found that to really prevent stalking, there is a need to do more than just make new laws; there is a need to help people, especially women, feel more empowered and address the underlying reasons why they are victimized. Together, these findings show that intimate partner stalking is a complex issue that involves personal relationships, the social systems we live in, and the cultural norms that often give men more power than women.

Gender-Based Abuse

Stalking is often linked to other forms of abuse that are based on gender. Stalking, as a part of the bigger picture of violence against women, makes it clear that it is often rooted in unfair gender roles and societal norms that do

not take abuse against women seriously enough. Stalking is not something that happens on its own - it is actually one part of a larger system that oppresses people based on their gender. This means that to really understand stalking, there is a need to look at the broader societal issues that allow it to happen. By doing so, every individual can start to address the underlying problems that lead to stalking and other forms of gender-based abuse.

Stalking is a big problem that affects women in many ways. It is not just about one person following another; it is about control and intimidation. Women are often the ones who are targeted and victimized. This happens at all levels of society, and it is linked to other forms of violence like rape, harassment, and domestic violence. A study by Calub (2018) showed that stalking is just one part of a bigger issue of gender inequality. Women are more likely to be controlled, intimidated, and hurt by others. Another study by Labrague et al. (2022) found that many Filipino women experience domestic violence, and stalking is often part of that. This means that women may be dealing with multiple forms of abuse at the same time. It is a complex issue that needs to be understood and addressed in a broader context. By looking at stalking as part of a larger problem of gender inequality, every individual can better understand how to help women who are affected by it.

The convergence of these findings demonstrates that stalking is sustained not only by individual perpetrators but also by social and cultural conditions that perpetuate unequal power relations. Consequently, addressing stalking requires interventions that challenge gender stereotypes, strengthen protection mechanisms for women, and promote greater public awareness regarding gender-based violence.

Lived Experiences of Stalking Victims

This section presents the second major theme of the study. Among the eleven (11) studies reviewed, three (3) focused on victims' lived experiences. Two subthemes emerged: psychological and emotional consequences and social and structural consequences.

Table 4. *Distribution of Studies on Lived Experiences of Stalking*

Forms of Stalking	Author/Year	Key Findings
Psychological and Emotional Consequences	Lu (2017)	Violent behaviors involve an attacker psychologically, sexually, or physically abusing a partner to control them through pain and terror.
Social and Structural Consequences	Claus et al. (2017)	Victims of violence, especially women, often face job instability or unemployment due to health issues, harassment, or reliance on welfare.
Psychological and Emotional Consequences	Chronister et al. (2022)	Abuse of stalking remains a major human rights and public health issue, affecting victims' mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Psychological and Emotional Consequences

The findings consistently demonstrate that psychological and emotional harm constitutes one of the most significant consequences experienced by stalking victims. Unlike physical violence, the effects of stalking often manifest through persistent fear, anxiety, emotional distress, and psychological trauma that may continue long after the stalking incidents have ended. Lu (2017) explained that abusive behaviors frequently involve psychological manipulation and fear-based control mechanisms designed to dominate victims. This suggests that stalking serves as a means of maintaining power over individuals by creating a constant perception of threat and vulnerability. Chronister et al. (2022) reinforced this perspective by describing stalking as a major public health concern due to its detrimental effects on mental, emotional, and physical well-being.

Social and Structural Consequences

Beyond psychological effects, the findings reveal that stalking also produces substantial social and structural consequences. Victims often experience disruptions in employment, social relationships, and economic stability due to the ongoing fear and stress associated with stalking behaviors. Stalking can have serious effects on a person's life, going beyond just the personal trauma. A study by Claus et al. (2017) explained that people who are being stalked may have trouble keeping a job, find themselves unemployed, or not be able to work as well as they used to. This can happen because of the harassment they are facing and the health problems that come with it. What is more, the fear of running into their stalker can be so overwhelming that they start to change their daily

routines, move to a different home, avoid going out in public, or even stop socializing with others. All of this can add up to some big socioeconomic problems that can affect the victim's well-being for a long time. It is not just the person being stalked who suffers, but also their overall quality of life and prospects. Stalking is more than just a crime committed by one person - it is a social problem that affects many people and has serious consequences. When someone is being stalked, it can make them feel isolated and vulnerable, which can have a big impact on their life. That's why we need to work together to stop stalking, including employers, communities, social services, and the police. We all need to do our part to help people who are being stalked and to prevent it from happening in the first place. By working together, we can make a difference and keep people safe.

Impact of Stalking

This section presents the third major theme of the study. Among the eleven (11) studies reviewed, two (2) focused on the impact of stalking. Two subthemes emerged: technology-facilitated harassment and public space harassment.

Table 5. Distribution of Studies on Impact of Stalking		
Impact of Stalking	Author/Year	Key Findings
Technology Facilitated Harassment	Bansal et al. (2024)	Online violence often targets women, girls, and sexual and gender minorities, especially those with intersecting marginalized identities.
Public Space Harassment	Manalo et al. (2016)	Street harassment lowers women's self-esteem and confidence, making them feel self-conscious and dehumanized.

Technology-Facilitated Harassment

The findings indicate that technological advancements have transformed the nature and scope of stalking behaviors. Digital communication platforms, social networking sites, and mobile technologies have created new opportunities for perpetrators to monitor, contact, and harass victims continuously. Bansal et al. (2024) have found that online harassment mostly affects women and groups that are already marginalized. This is a big problem because technology makes it easy for people who want to harm others to invade their privacy, no matter how far away they are. Unlike traditional stalking, cyberstalking lets people watch their victims all the time through messages, social media, tracking their location, and other digital ways. This means that people can be stalked constantly, which can be very scary and feel like they are being watched all the time. The fact that technology allows this to happen from anywhere in the world makes it even more of a concern.

As technology keeps getting more advanced, it is becoming clearer that we need to update our laws to deal with new kinds of stalking that happen online. This is not just about changing the laws, but also about making sure people know how to protect themselves from these kinds of threats. People must understand how to use technology safely and securely, so they can avoid becoming victims. As technology changes, we need to make sure our responses to these problems change too, so we can keep people safe. We have to stay one step ahead and make sure our laws and protections are strong enough to handle whatever new challenges come up.

Public Space Harassment

The findings further reveal that stalking-related behaviors frequently occur in public spaces, contributing to feelings of fear, insecurity, and diminished personal freedom among victims. Public harassment represents an important dimension of stalking because it restricts victims' ability to participate confidently in everyday activities. Manalo et al. (2016) found that street harassment negatively affects women's self-esteem and confidence while creating feelings of self-consciousness and dehumanization. This suggests that stalking-related behaviors in public environments function as mechanisms of social control that limit women's freedom of movement and participation in public life. There is a need to make public spaces safer for everyone. When people think that harassment is no big deal, victims might not report what happened to them. This is why every individual needs to do more to stop harassment and stalking. Moreover, there should be stricter rules, and people should know what is not okay. There is also a need to teach people that harassment is never acceptable. By doing this, every individual can create a society where everyone feels safe and respected.

Synthesis of Findings

The findings of the study show that stalking in the country is evident through intimate partner relationships, gender-based violence, and technology-facilitated harassment. The victims have to go through social, psychological, and economic challenges, and at the same time, many loopholes need to be addressed. From the

findings, there is a need for more rigorous policies, better support for the victims, and greater awareness about the issue of stalking.

Stalking in the Philippine context is a complex phenomenon characterized by intimate and gender-related abuse, as well as technological harassment. From all the reviewed studies, it becomes evident that the occurrence of stalking is inseparably connected to a broader picture of coercive and violent acts that target mainly women in their attempts to gain control over them. As can be seen from research focused on stalking behaviors, they always arise because of some kind of imbalance in relations between a couple. It should be noted that there are many negative consequences that stalking leads to. First, victims must endure serious psychological effects, such as anxiety, fear, psychological trauma, lack of confidence, and other psychological disorders. In this regard, it may be argued that stalking is not only a problem for criminal justice but also an issue of public health. Secondly, as has been revealed through the literature review, there are serious social and economic consequences for victims as well, including difficulties related to work and socializing.

Another significant pattern that can be derived from this literature review concerns the involvement of technological advances in the facilitation of stalking acts. As the use of social networking sites, online communication technologies, and various applications becomes more common, new possibilities open for stalking, harassment, and intrusive contacts. This finding indicates the changes occurring in the behavior of stalkers and the necessity to consider both physical and cyber forms of stalking when addressing this issue in law and institutions. Theories used to support the findings include Attachment Theory, Social Learning Theory, and Resilience Theory. Attachment Theory can provide explanations for how negative relationships may lead to stalking behaviors. On the other hand, the theories of social and psychological violence indicate that stalking behaviors can be shaped by social and cultural environment factors, which supports Social Learning Theory. Finally, Resilience Theory can offer information on how victims manage to survive under adverse conditions.

Nonetheless, the review uncovered critical deficiencies in terms of Philippine stalking research. The existing research literature does not tackle stalking directly since most studies refer to other issues in connection to stalking, including intimate partner violence, gender-related violence, cybercrime, and harassment. Only a handful of studies address stalking itself. As a result, there is very limited data on the prevalence, perpetrator, and victim characteristics, as well as the success of various interventions. In general, the findings indicate that stalking is an important yet insufficiently studied topic in the Philippines. Convergence of evidence across studies suggests the importance of further legal, social, academic, and other measures to address this problem.

Conclusion

This systematic literature review synthesized the available evidence on stalking-related behaviors affecting women in the Philippine context using the PRISMA 2020 framework. The reviewed studies indicate that stalking is most frequently discussed within the broader contexts of intimate partner violence (IPV), violence against women (VAW), gender-based violence, harassment, and technology-facilitated abuse rather than as a distinct research topic. The evidence consistently demonstrates that stalking-related behaviors are associated with adverse psychological, emotional, social, and economic consequences for women, including fear, anxiety, emotional distress, disruption of employment, and reduced participation in public life.

The results show that stalking behaviors are happening increasingly in both the physical world and online. However, since only a few studies have examined how technology is used in stalking, we cannot draw general conclusions about how common cyberstalking is in the Philippines. What we do know is that more research is needed on both traditional stalking and technology-based stalking in the Philippines. This will help us understand the problem better and figure out what to do about it. We need to look more closely at how stalking is happening in the Philippines, both online and offline, so we can find ways to stop it.

Stalking is a big problem that affects women's safety and well-being. Even though it is a serious issue, individuals do not know enough about it. This can be done by simply doing basic research to understand how many Filipino women victims of stalking are, what puts them at risk, how they report it, who the perpetrators are, and if our current laws and responses are working. Having this information will help them make better laws, policies, and support services for victims, and help prevent crimes like stalking from happening in the first place. By doing this,

individuals can create a safer environment for women and make sure they get the help they need. It is time to act and make a change.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this review, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a) Future researchers should conduct baseline epidemiological and qualitative studies that specifically examine stalking victimization among Filipino women to address the substantial research gap identified in this review.
- b) The government needs to do more to track and understand stalking cases. Agencies like the Philippine Commission on Women, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Philippine National Police, and Department of Justice should work together to gather accurate information on stalking and how it affects victims. This will help them make informed decisions and create effective plans to stop stalking. By improving their research and monitoring systems, they can better identify patterns and trends, and provide support to those who need it. It is time for the government to take stalking seriously and take concrete steps to address this issue.
- c) Local Government Units (LGUs) should integrate stalking awareness into existing Violence Against Women (VAW) prevention programs and strengthen referral mechanisms for women experiencing stalking-related behaviors.
- d) To better support women in local communities, village councils should make sure their anti-violence programs include information about stalking and how to stay safe. This means teaching people what stalking looks like, helping victims make plans to protect themselves, and connecting them with the right agencies for further help. This is especially important for women who are being harassed, watched, or threatened, either in person or through technology. By doing this, villages can help prevent abuse and keep their communities safer for everyone.
- e) Capacity-building programs should be conducted for barangay officials, law enforcement officers, social workers, and community responders to improve recognition, documentation, and appropriate response to stalking-related incidents within existing legal frameworks, including Republic Act No. 9262 and Republic Act No. 11313.
- f) Academic institutions should encourage interdisciplinary research on stalking involving criminology, psychology, law, public health, and social work to strengthen the Philippine evidence base and inform evidence-based interventions.

Contributions of Authors

Author 1: proposal writing, conceptualization, data gathering (existing literature based on inclusion criteria).

Author 2: data analysis, conceptualization (Adviser).

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