

PEMBARYA: The Learned Helplessness Experiences of Beggars in Pasig City

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ABSTRACT

This research delves into the learned helplessness experiences of beggars in Pasig City. This study addresses how learned helplessness manifests in the lives of beggars, the internal and external factors that have contributed to the development of this condition, and the response strategies of those who experience learned helplessness. Previous research on this psychological phenomenon has been limited, with most of it occurring in Western or other Asian countries. The Philippine research community has not yet thoroughly examined learned helplessness in the Filipino context. Using a qualitative study approach that included comprehensive interviews and theme analysis, the researchers discovered patterns in how learned helplessness emerges in people's daily lives, such as hopelessness and a lack of self-efficacy, motivation, and life accountability. Internal and external factors, such as the perception of control over one's life and the level of accessibility to external resources, were frequently identified in participants' responses. Participants frequently opt for spiritual and cognitive avoidance approaches to respond to their learned helplessness experiences.

Keywords: *beggars, learned helplessness, hopelessness, self-efficacy, spiritual approach, cognitive avoidance*

1. Introduction

The beggars are one of the most wretched groups of individuals on the planet. Typically, they sit at the same place or move from one street to another, asking for donations. Begging requires minimal physical or mental exertion but still manages to provide for their necessities. Beggars undoubtedly survive on the sympathy of the people. The issue of begging is now an all-pervasive manifestation and is not a bizarre situation for any nation anymore.

The past administration in the Philippines has created its premier anti-poverty programs. One of these is the Sagip Kalinga Program to undertake a sustained campaign of bringing down and preventing the growing number of vagrants, street children, and mendicants. The Anti-Mendicancy Law was designed to control and eradicate the condition of street begging in the country. The fact that all these anti-poverty programs and laws, including the Sagip Kalinga and the Anti-Mendicancy Law, only address the immediate short-term problems of poverty but not the structural underlying roots that cause this poverty (NAPC, 2017, p. 28-29). They may be welcome plaster on the wound, but they will never get to cure the disease that causes that wound. This idea that people turn to begging because they cannot do anything else brings a particularly interesting aspect, namely, the notion that people rely on begging because they have low self-esteem or self-concept. Moreover, over time, it tends to become increasingly difficult for someone engaged in street begging—regardless

of their initial self-esteem—to view themselves as capable of doing anything different from their current activities or to imagine alternative ways of being and earning a living.

Although there are a ton of social science and economic studies and frequent news headlines about street begging, there is little to no qualitative research on beggars. So, the study aimed to look at learned helplessness in the context of financial poverty and begging in the Philippines. The study also sought to obtain the subjective interpretations of the beggars regarding learned helplessness. The researchers also pursued the study to spread awareness to the government, private entities, and the public about beggars' current living conditions and encourage them to yield effective services to the disadvantaged sector in Philippine society.

This study is qualitative since the research question sought to answer necessitates the analysis and interpretation of data to comprehend concepts, viewpoints, and experiences by acquiring and assessing non-numerical data (Bhandari, 2020). Specifically, the study is phenomenological as it aims to discover the learned helplessness experiences of beggars in Pasig City. The study used pre-screening tools and interviews as the research instrument to obtain data on the variables being studied.

The introduction leads the reader from a general subject area to a particular topic of inquiry. It establishes the scope, context, and significance of the research being conducted by summarizing current understanding and background information about the topic, stating the purpose of the work in the form of the research problem supported by a hypothesis or a set of questions, explaining briefly the methodological approach used to examine the research problem, highlighting the potential outcomes your study can reveal, and outlining the remaining structure and organization of the paper.]

1. Methods

2.1 Respondents and Sampling

A purposive sampling technique was used to select the participants who possess the characteristics in this study, only those who are adult beggars ranging from 18 years old and above and who were found to experience learned helplessness using the pre-screening tool. This purposive sampling allowed the researchers to select limited participants who gave rich information about the phenomenon of interest.

The participants of this study were chosen purposely because the researchers believe that purposive sampling yielded the most accurate data for achieving the study's objectives. The participants in this study are beggars with the age range of 18 years old and above who are experiencing learned helplessness and do not have any mental illness since they might provide inaccurate responses to the questions and may compromise the safety of the researchers. To guarantee that the participants did not have any signs of mental disorders, the researchers did an observation checklist, which helped them to ensure that the participants did not have any signs of mental disorders and were not intoxicated by any drugs. Furthermore, street vendor beggars are not included as participants in this research.

Participant's name	Age	LH Score	Years of Begging	Brief Description
Eduardo	73	60	13 years and above	Found inside the Pasig Public Market, Had a physical illness and was intelligent.
Wily	70	63	10 years	Stays near the post office, a follower of God, a loving father and grandfather to his children and grandchildren
Tiamson	68	61	10 years	Stays beside the Mang Inasal in Pasig palengke, suffering from physical illness and old age affects his daily life.
Eric	50	62	8 years	Reside at Pasig Public Market, A devotee of God.
Reynaldo	47	60	34 years	He stayed at Pasig Public Market. He was an orphan.
Michael	42	61	4 years	Stays at Pasig Public Market and begs for sustenance.

Table 1. Participant's Profile

2.2 Research Instruments

Two (2) pre-screening tools were utilized to determine the participants who possess the criteria set by the researchers. A researcher-made tool similar to MSE helped the researchers select the participants who did not have any apparent signs of mental disorders. A Filipino-translated Learned Helplessness Scale was used to determine those who have learned helplessness. The primary research instrument used in this study was the semi-structured interview questions, consisting of a few general-central and open-ended questions. Some questions were already constructed in advance, while others emerged during the interview. Through open-ended questions, participants can articulate and express their viewpoints that the researchers may not have thought about while creating the research. It also generated insightful, profound, and unpredictable answers, which improved the research. The questions were all in English, but they were also translated into Filipino to be more comprehensible for the participants. Professionals validated all the questions in this interview. All the interviews were conducted in face-to-face format to gain first-hand information, and the researchers also used an audio recorder to review the participants' answers for future use. Permission or consent was asked for or obtained before recording the participant's answers. The researcher did a pilot test before starting the full-scale data collection. It assisted the researchers in evaluating the interview guide's content regarding its intended participants' ease of understanding and simplicity. Conducting a pilot study is necessary to determine whether the items and choices are clear to participants, as this study also used the Learned Helplessness Scale's Filipino translation as a pre-screening tool. Additionally, at this point, the factors were considered and avoided throughout the administration of the (2) pre-screening tools and the actual interview was assessed. These tools were not diagnostic tools. The researchers chose to proceed with the formal data collection after the pilot study's single subject was able to satisfactorily respond to the questions and statements on the instruments used to collect the data.

Aside from pilot testing the researcher also did norming which serves as the baseline to compare the data collected to the scores that the researcher got through norming. In this research, the researchers used the Filipino-translated Learned Helplessness Questionnaire by Dr. Ward to screen the level of the learned helplessness of the beggars in Pasig City. Since the researchers used a standardized test, the researchers conducted norming of the Filipino-translated Learned Helplessness Questionnaire among Filipinos. The final sample consisted of 111 participants. The administration of the norming in this research is online; the respondents are aged 18 and above ($M=30$). The statistical result of the mean on the level of the Filipinos in Learned Helplessness is 44 with a standard deviation of 6, and the cut-off score is 56 with a z-score of 2. The researchers used the norm-referenced since they compared the score of the beggar to the scores of the Filipino adults. Before the participant proceeded to interview appropriately, the participant must score 56 and above on the Filipino-translated Learned Helplessness Questionnaire.

2.3 *Data Gathering*

The researchers went to the participants' targeted location, the Pasig City Public Market and its vicinity. The researchers first conducted observations to determine the possible participants who possessed the criteria of adult beggars, and Those who were observed to manifest abnormal behaviors were excluded. When the researchers had already gathered the observational information of the possible participants, they approached them and engaged in small talk to build rapport. The researchers provided informed consent to explain the purpose of the research, its confidentiality, the risks and benefits that can be acquired, and the rights to withdraw if necessary. The researchers have the responsibility to assist the participants while answering the questions in which they further elaborated the content of the informed consent verbally and utilized the Filipino language while explaining. Furthermore, the researchers addressed the participants' questions. Since the study only aimed to include participants who have experienced helplessness, (2) pre-screenings were conducted to exclude those who did not experience helplessness. These tools were not diagnostic tools. The tool also included statements and questions to evaluate if the participants showed any signs of mental health conditions that were not filtered out by the observation. Experts validated the pre-screening tools before they were used to acquire the initial data. While administering the screening tool, the researchers assisted the participants. Considering the nature of the research participants, multiple interview sessions were impossible as some participants said they did not have the exact location while begging. They are roaming around the city and even in neighboring cities.

The researchers conducted a semi-structured interview to collect data from 6 participants. In a semi-structured interview, the researchers prepared questions that the relevant professionals validated before they were given to the participants. The interview consisted of open-ended questions, which allowed the participants to express their views and expand their responses regarding their learned helplessness experiences. When further clarifications are needed, the researchers were responsible for this provision. The researchers additionally asked related questions based on the participants' statements to further collect data that were not obtained if the researchers solely depended on the prepared outline of the interview questions. Data provided by other data sources, such as recording devices and paper, was also utilized for supporting details. The presence and utilization of these tools were explained to the participants beforehand, as well as their purposes in the research process. The researchers also note specific behaviors manifested by the participants during the interview.

2.4 Thematic Analysis

The researchers used Collaizzi's data analysis method to analyze the interview data. It is a method that involves reading qualitative data sets and identifying patterns in meaning across the important data to obtain themes. It has seven steps: the first one is reading and re-reading the transcriptions, then identifying the significant themes, next is formulating meanings from the statements, clustering the themes, creating an exhaustive description, producing the fundamental structure, and the last step is seeking verification of the fundamental structure (Moyo, 2022).

The primary role of researchers in this type of data analysis is to extract meaning from the collected data that answers the research objectives, allowing analysts to develop new insights and additional perceptions related to the participant's answers on what are the experiences, coping mechanisms, triggers, and factors related to learned helplessness from the open-ended questionnaire and interview results (Ho & Limpaecher, 2020).

This technique is appropriate for this study because thematic analysis extracts themes relevant to the research questions. Using this technique can enhance and improve the knowledge related to the research variables and participants of the study by interacting within the process of creating patterns and themes that will describe the experiences of the beggars and exploring the factors that resulted in developing learned helplessness, the beggars' coping mechanisms, their experience of helplessness, and the manifestations of learned helplessness in their daily lives.

2. Results

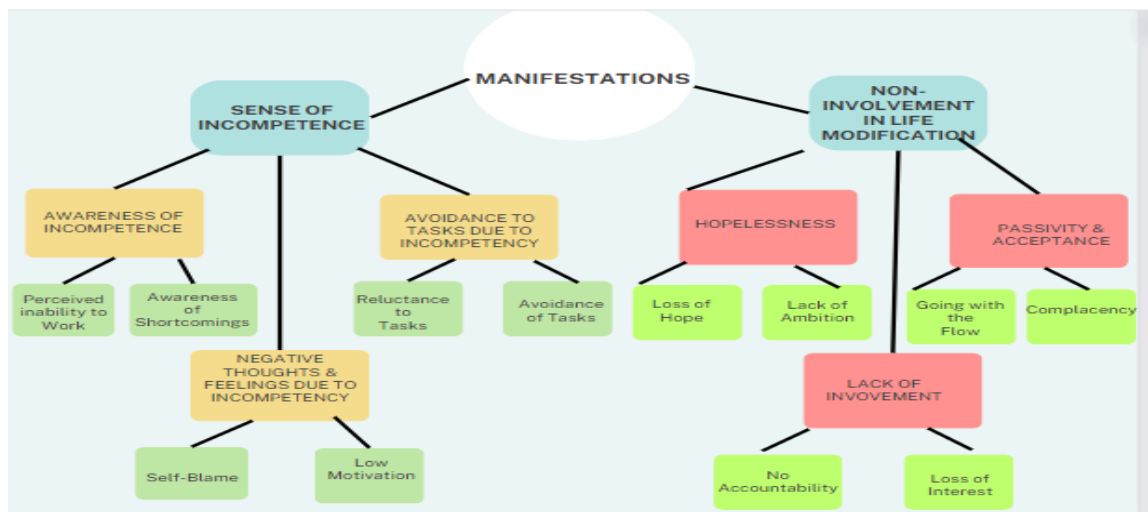


Figure 2: Thematic Map of the Manifestations of Learned Helplessness.

Learned helplessness is a form of conditioning where human behavior is learned through environmental associations and responses. Reinforcement or punishment increases the likelihood of repeating or avoiding the same behavior. Unlearning this association and deconditioning the response takes practice. Psychologists believe that changing the attributional or explanatory style can change learned helplessness behaviors, allowing individuals to grow positively and be motivated to take risks and try new things. This approach can be achieved by changing how people view the causes of life's events.

Learned helplessness typically manifests as a lack of self-esteem, low motivation, persistence, the conviction of being inept, and ultimately failure. Learned helplessness can weaken a person's ability to deal with stressful and handfull scenarios; symptoms attributed to this are feeling of powerlessness to influence how events would turn out, failure to seek assistance, a poor sense of self, low level of motivation, less effort to activities, lack of commitment, irritation, passivity, and quickly giving up (Wade & Leonard, 2022).

A. SENSE OF INCOMPETENCY

Awareness of Self-Incompetency

The awareness of a sense of incompetence refers to recognizing and acknowledging one's perceived lack of ability or proficiency in a particular skill, task, or area of life. It involves individuals accepting that they may not feel confident or capable in certain aspects of their lives. In FM 1, the participant perceived that he was incapable of working with the actual response of *"Kasi wala na akong kakayahan para magtrabaho."* In FM 2, the participant is aware of his shortcomings and feels that he cannot do anything about them with the actual response of *"Anong magagawa ko kung hindi ko alam gawin yun, sa katayuan kong ito, marami akong hindi kayang gawin."*

Avoidance of Tasks due to Perceived Incompetence

People who feel they lack the abilities, knowledge, or confidence to adequately finish a task often avoid it out of perceived incompetence. Numerous variables can influence this avoidance tendency, such as worry, low self-esteem, fear of failing, or a fixed worldview that believes abilities are intrinsic and unchanging. In FM 3: The participant believed that one should not pursue tasks that are beyond one's capability with the actual response of *"Totoo talaga, kahit subukan mong gawin yun, kung hindi mo kaya, wag mo na ipilit."* In FM 4: The participant showed reluctance to do tasks that he believed he was incompetent to do with the actual response of *"Paano mo magagawa ng maganda ang trabaho kung mali mali ang gawa mo at hindi ka mahusay doon."*

Negative Thoughts and Feelings Associated with Being Incompetent

Feeling incompetent can lead to negative thoughts and emotions that may impact various aspects of an individual's well-being. In FM 5, the participant believed that one should take the blame for pursuing things despite his inability to accomplish them with the actual response of *"Bakit ko tatanggapin ang trabaho kung hindi ko kaya, baka masisi ka lang ng may ari noon."* In FM 6, the participant has a low level of motivation with the actual response of *"Mababa na pero kaya pang buhayin ang sarili, nabubuhay naman."*

B. NON-INVOLVEMENT IN LIFE MODIFICATION

Lack of Involvement in Life Improvement

The participants exhibited disconnectedness and loss of eagerness to be involved in acquiring life improvement. In FM 7, the participant perceived that he had no accountability over his life course with the actual response of *"Wala akong pananagutan. Pinapasa diyos ko nalang."* In FM 8, the participant does not have any interest in improving his life with the actual response of *"Wala na akong pangarap sa buhay, basta mabuhay, makakain, at wag gumawa ng masama."*

Feelings of Hopelessness

Hopelessness and learned helplessness are interconnected concepts often observed in psychology. Hopelessness is a subjective emotional state characterized by a lack of optimism about the future. The association lies in situations where an individual experiences repeated failures or challenges, contributing to a belief that they are unable to influence or change their circumstances. This can foster feelings of hopelessness as they perceive a lack of control, aligning with the principles of learned helplessness. In FM 9, the participant illustrated a loss of hope in life, no ambition left, and just waiting for death with the actual response, *"Wala na eh matanda na nga ako eh, ano pa nga ba ang gagawin ko. Inaantay ko nga lang kung kelan ako kukunin ni lord, wala na akong ambisyon sa buhay."* In FM 10, the participant showed feelings of hopelessness with the actual response *"Tama, kasi hindi ko na kaya gawin ang mga gusto kong mangyari. Kahit anong gawin ko."* In FM 11: The participant perceived a loss of hope to improve his situation with the actual statement of *"Ayan po hindi ko masagot pero kahit papaano nasasalba ko naman yung mga ganyang pagkakataon, kagaya na lang pag wala kaming pera tapos nagugutom mga anak ko, may mga nalalapitan naman ako kahit papaano para lang mabigyan ng pagkain mga anak ko, kahit mga anak ko lang makakain minsan may mga kaibigan namang malapit kapag walang kaibigan na malapit dito po ako namamalimos, minsan inaabot kami dito ng*

gabing gabi lalo na kapag walang wala kami, minsan ala- diyos (10:00pm) minsan alas-onse (11:00pm) para magkapera lang kami kinabukasan."

Passivity, Complacency, and Acceptance

Passivity refers to a lack of active response or resistance, complacency is a feeling of satisfaction with the current situation, and acceptance is acknowledging and embracing a circumstance. Learned helplessness is often linked to a pattern of passivity, complacency, and acceptance, where individuals believe they have no control over their circumstances, leading to a reluctance to take action or make changes. In FM 12, the participant exhibits complacency with his current financial situation. *"Di wala ho! Pantawid gutom na lang po. Wala na po siguro. Kasi kahit gaano pa po ako magsumikap parang hindi naman po nangyayari yung gusto kong mangayari."* In FM 13, the participant perceived that he feels like he is in a loop, the only thing that he does every day is begging with the actual statement, *"Wala lang parang sabay lang sa agos, normal lang yung paulit ulit na gawain ko manlimos."*

As the researchers go through the participants' stories of diminished hope, absent ambition, and the burden of waiting, they get a sense of the complexity of the human condition. Instead of being a depressing experience, this investigation offers a chance for comprehension and empathy. The researchers may start a conversation that could lead to healing, rebirth, and the potential to find hope again, even in the most difficult times of life, by recognizing the complex interactions between internal and environmental factors that lead to this situation.

RO2. Explore the factors that contributed to the development of their learned helplessness.

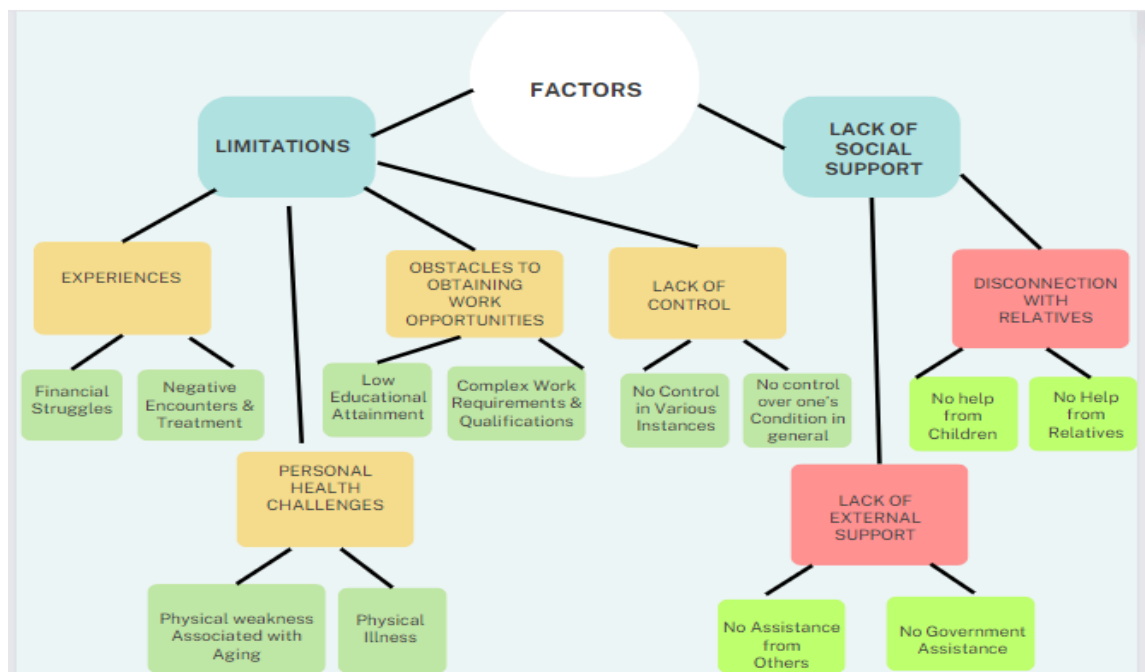


Figure 3: Thematic Map of the Factors of Learned Helplessness.

A. LIMITATIONS

Experiences and Struggles while Begging

Individuals who resort to begging often face numerous difficulties and struggles. The researchers were able to gather information regarding the difficulties experienced by beggars which is found in FM 14: The participant depicts how his life is hard for being a

beggar with the actual response of *"Hindi sapat e. Sa parehas namin na ganito na maliit lang ang kinikita e."* In FM 15, the participant is sharing his disappointing encounters with people with the sample response of *"Siguro yung mga tingin sa akin ng mga tao na kesho namamalimos lang ako at madumi na walang trabaho na kelalaking tao di maghanap ng trabaho. Ayon nakakalungkot yung kalagayan ko kase ganyan tingin nila sa akin. Hindi ko naman ito ginusto. Yung bibigyan ka ng tagbibintsengko, yung ang tagal magkakalkal sa bag tapos piso or benchingko lang pala ang ibibigay sa akin."* Alongside with financial struggles, people who beg often face social stigma and rejection. Negative stereotypes and misconceptions about begging can lead to isolation, discrimination, and a sense of shame. In FM 16, the participant expressed his struggle while begging with the actual response of *"Minsan walang nagbibigay minsan madaming kakumpetensya, hinuhuli ka pa, minsan walang kita o nagkakasakit kapa, tsaka pag natutulog sa bangketa mababasa ng ulan."*

Obstacles to Obtaining Work Opportunities

Limited access to education, job opportunities, and support services can hinder efforts to escape poverty. Despite the public notion that beggars are begging probably because of laziness, in FM 17, the participant shared their hindrances to work applications with the statement, *"Mahirap kasing mag apply pag walang requirements e. Maraming kailangan. Kailangan ng pera."* In FM 18, the participant showed interest in trying other ways to earn but is aware of having limited resources to do so with the *"Gusto ko nga bumalik ngayon, pero wala akong pera pampuhunan."* In FM 19, the participant is experiencing struggles brought on by having a low-level educational background with the actual response of, *"Meron naman, kaso sa problema ang edad ko e tsaka natapos ko."*

Physical Health Challenges

Physical health challenges can contribute to the development of learned helplessness. Physical health challenges can lead to functional limitations, affecting an individual's ability to perform everyday activities. Learning helplessness may impact their overall well-being if they perceive these limitations as insurmountable. The challenges and limitations brought on by physical illnesses in FM 20, in which the participant stated that his physical illness is a hindrance to the things that he wants to do with the actual response of *"Kung gusto ko gawin ang isang bagay, tapos hindi kaya gawin ng katawan ko, ay wala talaga akong magagawa,"* and FM 21, with the participant perceived that due to age, he is incapable of doing certain tasks having the actual response of, *"Simula nung ako ay humina dahil sa katandaan, kahit pag-iigib ng tubig ay hindi ko magawa."* In FM 22, the participant sharing information about his physical illness with the actual line *"Sinisikap ko na makapunta dito sa pwesto ko sa pasig para manlimos at may pangkain ako. Lalo na nag maintenance ako kaya kailangan ko rin bumili ng gamot."* In FM 23, the participant is experiencing some physical pain with the line, *"Masakit ang katawan ko. Ang likod ko, kamay ko. Ansakit lumakad nang maayos."*

Perceived Lack of Control

Perceived lack of control and learned helplessness are psychological concepts that describe a person's belief that they have little or no influence over their circumstances, leading to a sense of helplessness and a reduced motivation to take action. In FM 24, the participant illustrates that sometimes he does not have any control over his life, *"Kung minsan hindi na e, kung minsan nagagalit ako di ko makontrol e."* In FM 25, the participant showed a lack of control over his life because of his condition with the actual response of *"Tama, kasi hindi ko na kaya gawin ang mga gusto kong mangyari. Kahit anong gawin ko."*

B. PERCEIVED LACK OF SUPPORT

Lack of Support from Closely Related Individuals

Begging can strain relationships with family and friends. Some individuals may experience estrangement from loved ones due to the challenges associated with their circumstances. In FM 26, the participant perceived that he did not get any help from his relatives with the actual response of *"Wala kase, pero binibigyan naman nila ako ng pangkain, yung anak ko sa Marikina kaya lang matagal na akong walang ano sakanila kase matagal narin eh 23 yrs na wala akong ugnayan sakanila."* In FM 27, the participant perceived that he did not want to get any help from his children with the actual response of

"Sympre hindi ako umaasa sa mga anak ko eh kelangan sarili ko lang asahan ko hindi nga nila alam na ganito ang trabaho ko eh."

Lack of Support from External Entities

Aside from the lack of support from closely related individuals, limited to no assistance received from external entities such as the government, non-government organizations, and the public was found in FM 28 in which the participant perceived that he did not get any help from the government with the sample response of *"Oo eh sa San Juan kase ako eh, eh ngayon di ko na naano yung sa pension ko kase di ko na nafollow up kase wala na rin tumatawag sa akin eh. Dati may pension ako eh senior citizen ako eh. Di na ako nakakatanggap eh kase kapag bigayan wala ako hindi na nila binibigay."* In FM 29, the participant perceived that he did not get any help from anyone with the actual response of *"Hindi Hindi. Walang tumutulong sa akin."*

In the studies of Rahman (2019) and Malarvizhi and Geetha (2016), apart from aging, other main causes of people choosing to rely on begging as a source of income are inadequate education, lack of skills, poverty, family dissolution, and physical impairments. Moreover, most elderly beggars use various coping techniques to deal with their difficulties. Another way to deal with health issues is self-medication. To address the issue of medical expenses, they purchase medications without a diagnosis (Dagnaw, 2019). It has shown that the elements that lead to the development of learned helplessness, whether they are based on socioeconomic inequalities, problems with mental and physical health, restricted access to opportunities, or a lack of control, require careful investigation. This discovery serves as a compass, pointing the way toward developing all-encompassing solutions that address the underlying causes of learned helplessness and its contributing factors. It creates an environment where people can overcome these challenges and journey toward bettering their lives.

RO3. To know how they respond to their helplessness experiences.

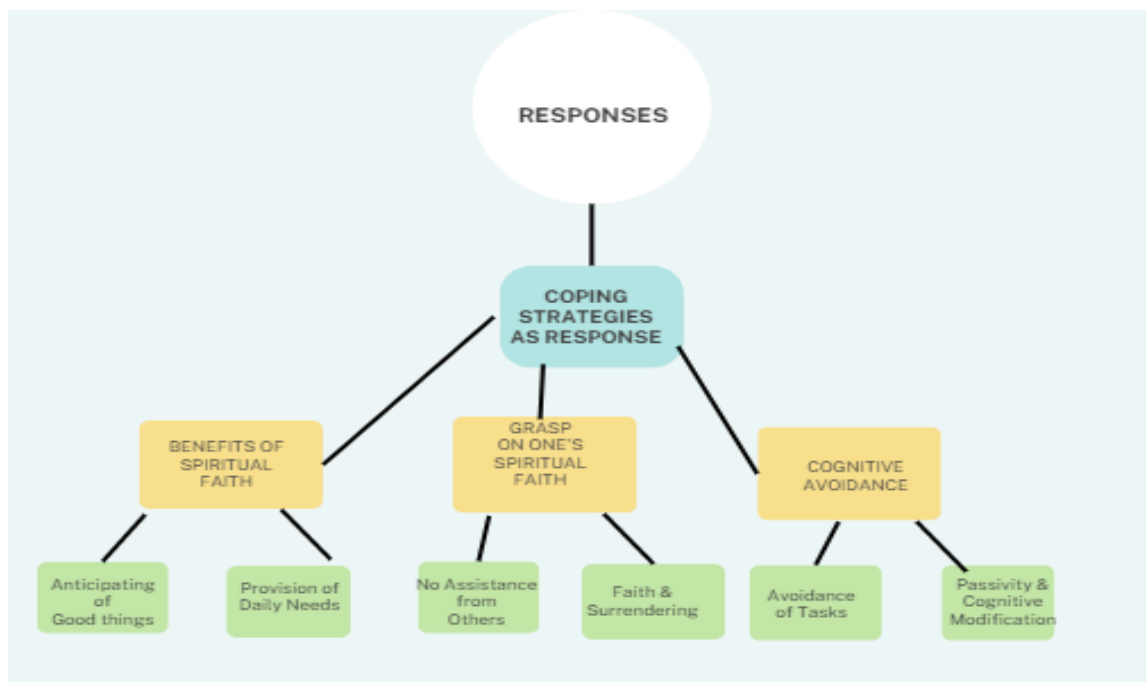


Figure 4: Thematic Map of the Responses Used by the Participants

A. COPING STRATEGIES AS RESPONSES

The access to coping resources of people exposed to adverse socioeconomic conditions has more often been undermined by past exposure to uncontrollable stressors, which increases the likelihood of appraising subsequent stressors as uncontrollable. In particular, if a stressor is considered uncontrollable, it makes less sense to employ a

problem-approaching coping strategy than if the stressor is assessed as controllable—because it will probably persist regardless of the coping strategy. Accordingly, problem avoidance can be the least harmful strategy if a stressor is assessed as uncontrollable. Despite "active, thoughtful, and creative strategies to cope with the difficult problems" despite limited access to socioeconomic resources, problem-approaching coping strategies often do not meet their objective due to the circumstances. We explained that if a problem-approaching is evoked when a stressor is insolvable, this can undermine access to coping resources over time, which Belle and Doucet describe as "repeated coping failures may then lead to the belief that stress factors cannot be overcome" (Crielaard et al., 2021).

Spiritual coping mechanisms are resilient strands in the human experience intertwined with personal development and well-being. People discover a source of strength that transcends the difficulties of the material world through meaningful rituals, prayer, community fellowship, contact with a higher power, and/or study of sacred books. People who adopt spiritual coping mechanisms find a deep sense of meaning and purpose in the complex dance of life, in addition to learning how to overcome hardship.

Perceived Benefits of Spiritual Faith

Many individuals turn to their faith as a source of strength and resilience when facing adversity. Spiritual beliefs can help individuals to experience things in a more endurable manner and anticipate that provisions will come along the way. In FM 30, the participant believed that his needs would be provided because of faith with the actual response "*Ako lang naman ang pinoproblema ko sa buhay, wala nang umaasa sakin. Nagdadasal na lang ako sa panginoon na kapag ako ay tumanda bigyan niya lang ako ng lakas para makagawa ako ng paraan.*" Additionally, FM 31 stated that the participant believed that good things would happen because of faith with the actual response, "*Opo! Pinagpapa sa Diyos ko na lang po ang lahat. Opo meron naman po, pero po madalas pinapa sa taas ko na lang po.*"

The Presence of Spiritual Faith in One's Life

For some individuals, spiritual faith serves as a source of comfort and support during challenging times. Believing in a higher power or purpose can provide solace, hope, and a sense that challenges are part of a larger plan despite the current life challenges both on a personal and social level. FM 32 states that the participant completely surrendered to God for the next course of his life. This is found in the actual response of one of the participants, "*Sa ngayon, hindi kasi nga eto na ako, lumalapit na lang ako sa panginoon.*" Additionally, the participant FM 33 states that the participant prioritizes God's aid over people's actions and treatments "*Kung ayaw nila ako bigyan, okay lang. Diyos na ang bahala sa kanila.*"

When faced with difficult situations, beggars may take on this attitude, accepting life's uncertainties and putting their trust in a greater force. This relationship highlights how cultural perspectives on faith and destiny may affect people—including those going through difficult times—and mold their reactions to adversity into a feeling of resignation to uncontrollable events. "Bahala na" is a Filipino idiom that means "Leave it to God" or "God will provide." It expresses accepting whatever comes next after an occurrence instead of depending on fatalistic or presumptuous signals. As per the Filipino author Paraluman S. Aspillera, the phrase "Bathala na!" could have originated from "If God wills it," a reference to the ancient Tagalog deity Bathala. It has changed throughout time, and Filipinos may utilize it if they have tried every other option to escape a sticky situation. The more comprehensive "Bahala na ang Diyos!" and the hilariously inspiring "Bahala na si Batman!" are two examples of modern renditions (Menguito & Teng-Calleja, 2010).

Resigned Acceptance as a Form of Cognitive Avoidance

Resignation acceptance as a form of cognitive avoidance means that if the individual withdraws from an unpleasant situation or fact, that individual accepts it without complaining because she/he realizes that it will not change. It is found in FM 34. The participant is just going with the flow in his life; he is not trying hard to improve his life with the actual response of "*Hinahayaan ko nalang. Hinahayaan ko matapos ang araw, pero pag may solusyon gagawan ko ng paraan, pero pag wala hinahayaan ko na lang matapos ang araw.*"

Balzac famously remarked, "Resignation is a daily suicide." He was not mistaken either. Sometimes, people believe that giving up is the only option when life throws obstacles. People feel their only option is to grit their teeth and accept unfortunate circumstances. Moreover, resignation involves giving up on changing circumstances and accepting what happens, even if it is painful. It signifies surrender to obstacles not because they are insurmountable but due to pessimism or mental fatigue. Resignation reflects a passive stance towards events, risking the adoption of a perpetual victim mentality. This mindset prevents proactive responses to reality, trapping individuals in a cycle of self-pity and believing that change is impossible (Delgado, 2023).

3. Discussion

Learned helplessness comes in different manifestations in the lives of the participants. Some participants perceived their life situation as permanent and cannot be changed for the better. They exhibited passivity and the 'come what may' notion. However, some were still open to life improvement but emphasized that they could not do it independently. The participants exhibited a lack of motivation in doing their daily tasks as they felt like they were just going around in circles and could not see the improvement brought by their efforts. Additionally, they exhibited a lack of self-efficacy in doing tasks as they felt incapable of doing them. Despite a low economic status, a sense of complacency was also found in the participants who considered their current living conditions satisfactory. They are content with who and where they are right now as long as they have something to eat every day. Some participants said they still hope for a better life if external assistance is given. However, some of the participants also shared that they are not looking forward to anything else in their lives and have a solidified idea that their current difficult condition is permanent.

Several factors are connected to the learned helplessness experiences of beggars. First is the limited access to external resources and assistance from their families, friends, and government. Challenges and negative encounters while begging were also featured. Some of them had tight budgets due to the scarcity of alms received. Some were treated rudely, slept in the streets, and limited aid when it came to their physical health concerns. Additionally, the participants admitted that most of the time, the control for their daily circumstances is beyond their capabilities. The participants also admitted that they do not see their sense of accountability over their living conditions, thus relying heavily on divine and social assistance. How participants deal with the challenging manifestations of learned helplessness that affect their daily living made two coping strategies arise: relying heavily on divine intervention and passive acceptance of their current living conditions.

Whenever they feel hopeless, some learn to accept that their situation will be inevitable and inescapable. On the other hand, some rely heavily on their faith, anticipating that provisions and solutions will come. When asked about their ways of dealing with their helplessness experiences, they rely heavily on the Divine's assistance. For them, having faith would guide and provide during crises. Additionally, some of them exhibited resigned acceptance, a form of cognitive avoidance as another coping strategy to deal with their adverse life situations. Central to a state of resignation is feeling defeated and incapable of creating change. It means giving up on some level, as people might feel the odds are stacked against them.

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