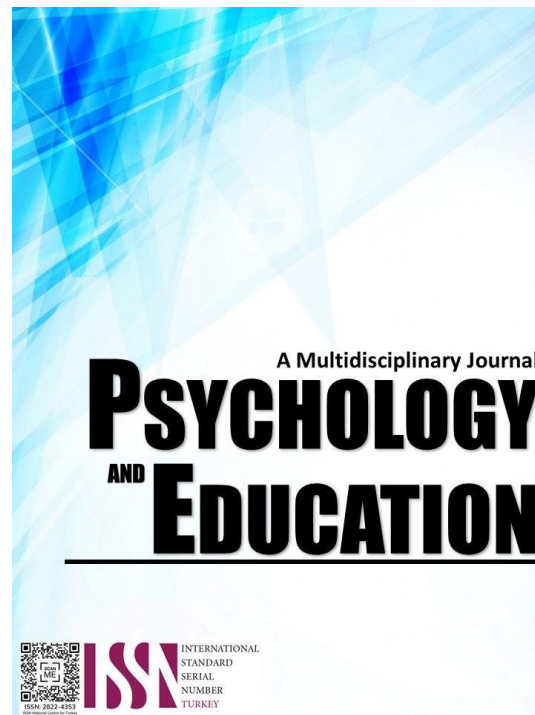


# CONCEALED ENTITLEMENT: EXPLORING THE RELUCTANCE OF INDIVIDUALS WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL DISABILITIES IN ENGAGING WITH PUBLIC AND PRIORITY LANES



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## Concealed Entitlement: Exploring the Reluctance of Individuals with Psychosocial Disabilities in Engaging with Public and Priority Lanes

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### Abstract

One of the recent central themes in the field of psychology is psychosocial disabilities related subjects, with some studies showing that people with the said disabilities often encounter challenges when interacting in public and social life (WHO, 2018). This study aims explore the reluctance of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in engaging with public and priority lanes. With the use of purposive sampling and Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis research design, the purpose of this study is to understand the experiences and challenges that prevent these individuals from utilizing services intended to assist them. Fifteen Individuals with Psychosocial Disabilities who are residing within the District 6 of Bulacan (Angat, Norzagaray, and Sta. Maria) are involved in this study. The participants also accomplished a semi-structured interview guide which encompasses the individuals' experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms. The result that emerged with the data analysis is that Individuals with Psychosocial Disabilities often confront unfavorable experiences and challenges when using public and priority lanes. As indicated by the participants, they are subjected to intimidating stares, negative reactions, criticisms, stigmatization, discrimination, and various misconceptions due to the lack of public awareness and understanding concerning their disabilities. Insufficient and weak support systems also contribute to the reluctance-behavior of these individuals in using public and priority lanes. These adverse experiences and challenges not only impact their daily lives but also affect their overall well-being. After analyzing the data, the researchers also found out that despite facing challenges and adverse experiences, the participants still follow a positive mechanism and motivations to cope up with mentioned experiences.

**Keywords:** *psychosocial disabilities, mental health, stigma, public and priority lanes, reluctance, misconceptions*

### Introduction

One of the recent central themes in the field of psychology is psychosocial disabilities related subjects, with some studies showing that people with the said disabilities often encounter challenges when interacting in public and social life (WHO, 2018). In countries like the United States, Canada, and Australia, individuals with psychosocial disabilities are provided with privileges such as access to public transportations, priority lanes, employment accommodations, and priority services in healthcare facilities, where general public were also well-informed about the complexities of psychosocial disabilities (Williams, 2020). Meanwhile, in the context of the Philippines, as mentioned privileges may also be the same, the treatment and understanding of individuals with psychosocial disabilities may differ. The Republic Act No. 11036 seek to protect and promote the rights of individuals with psychosocial disabilities, emphasizing the need for inclusive and accessible services (The Mental Health, 2017). However, misconceptions and lack of awareness about mental health issues still persist and may potentially affect the willingness of these individuals to engage with public and priority lanes (Davidson et al., 2020).

Additionally, Jones et al. (2017) reveals that some individuals with psychosocial disabilities avoid any situations that may expose their mental health conditions which includes using priority services, due to the negative societal attitudes and misconceptions held by the general public. As widely known, mental health conditions are often stigmatized which leads to misconceptions, social exclusion, and discrimination. Having that said, these individuals may manifest a fear of negative reactions or judgments from others, leading to discouragement of using these lanes. This was further validated by the study of Bogart and Dunn (2019) which states that psychosocial individuals are reluctant to use these lanes due to their encountered negative experiences, namely, the negative criticisms, negative reactions and comments, intimidating glares and stares, and finally, the insensitive and inappropriate questioning about their disabilities. Likewise, Durbin and Sirotkin (2019) address the challenges faced by individuals with psychosocial disabilities and mental health conditions in the workforce. It suggests that employed individuals with the said disabilities may be more reluctant to use these priority lanes to avoid any negative perceptions or potential misconceptions at their workplace. Thus, the growing research specifically aims to address and understand the limited recognition given to the people with psychosocial disabilities in engaging with these services.

As the aforementioned studies elaborates the possible significant factors on the individuals' reluctance in using priority services; specifically, the public and priority lanes, there is still a gap in addressing other controversies influencing their reluctance to engage with these lanes. According to Bult et al. (2015), one factor contributing to this is the lack of awareness and information about psychosocial disabilities. The study suggests that more campaigns and an extensive dissemination of information and awareness regarding the said disability should be employed. Consequently, the lack of awareness and education about psychosocial disabilities and mental health sensitivity among the public mass have an evident strong contributing factor to the hesitancy of individuals to engage



with these public and priority services (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2017).

To an extent, given that there are still scarcities of studies and research in this specific area in the Philippines, this study will employ a qualitative research design which aims to explore the underlying experiences and factors to the reluctance behavior of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in engaging with public and priority lanes. This study may include the examination of the impact of societal factors, misconceptions, and the perceptions towards psychosocial disabilities. Thus, all the findings gathered from this study will contribute to the literature of psychology and to the future policies that aim to develop effective strategies on enhancing their engagement and ensure an equal access to services.

Research Questions

This study aims to explore the experiences and challenges influencing the reluctance of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in engaging with public and priority lanes. Specifically, this sought to answer the following questions:

- 1.What are the experiences of individuals with psychosocial disabilities regarding the utilization of public and priority lanes?
- 2.What are the challenges that contribute to the reluctance of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in using public and priority lanes?
- 3.What are the coping mechanisms of individuals with psychosocial disabilities regarding the reluctance to utilize public and priority lanes?

Methodology

This section outlines the methods and procedures employed in this study to explore the reluctance of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in engaging public and priority lanes. The strategies of inquiry, participants of the study, instrument of the study, the data collection process, and the data analysis will be presented along with the ethical considerations.

Research Design

As this study is qualitative in nature, Heideggerian "Hermeneutics" phenomenology developed by Martin Heidegger was utilized as a research design in this study. Heidegger's phenomenology offers valuable insights into the intricate nature of lived experiences and their underlying meanings (Moran et al., 2015). Additionally, adopting a hermeneutic framework enables researchers to appreciate narratives that capture individuals' everyday encounters with the phenomenon under investigation. By deconstructing and reorganizing these narratives, researchers can effectively convey their significance to others. Furthermore, Heidegger's phenomenology specifically focuses on the present state of human experience within the context of the living world. The emphasis is on uncovering specific details and seemingly inconsequential components of experiences that are often overlooked

Participants

This study employed purposive sampling which involved fifteen (15) individuals with psychosocial disabilities who are reluctant to use public and priority lanes. The participants are residing within the District 6 of Bulacan (Angat, Norzagaray, and Sta. Maria). The ages of the participants were indicated in Table 1, which range from 21-40 years old. Furthermore, the participants were interviewed face-to-face, which included eight (8) females and seven (7) males, with three (3) college undergraduates, while twelve (12) are college graduates. Furthermore, the criteria for participants are as follows:

- Individuals with Psychosocial Disabilitites
- With PWD ID
- Residing within the District 6 of Bulacan (Angat, Norzagaray, and Sta. Maria)
- 19-20 years old

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Participant Code	Age	Gender	Educational Attainment	Employment Status
1	31	Female	Master of Business Administration	Financial Advisor
2	35	Female	BSIT Graduate	Virtual Assistant
3	39	Male	BSIT Graduate	Self-Employed/Businessman
4	28	Female	BSED Major in English Graduate	ESL Teacher
5	36	Male	BS Nursing Graduate	Self-Employed/Businessman
6	29	Female	BSED Major in Science Undergraduate	Self-Employed/Businesswoman
7	40	Male	BSBA Major in Human Resource Management Graduate	Company Team Leader
8	37	Male	BSED Major in Mathematics	Data Encoder
9	29	Female	BEED Graduate	Virtual Assistant
10	39	Male	BSBA Major in Marketing Management Graduate	Production Manager
11	28	Male	BS in Computer Science	Call Center Agent

12	26	Female	BSED Major in English Graduate	Call Center Agent
13	38	Female	BS Nursing Graduate	Real Estate Agent
14	21	Female	BSA Undergraduate	Call Center Agent and Streamer
15	37	Male	BS in Computer Engineering Graduate	Freelance Web Designer and Developer

Moreover, it is important to consider whether the participants are willing to do either a personal interview an online interview. Debriefing and initial orientation were also conducted in order to avoid any inconveniences.

Instruments

This study utilized a semi-structured interview guide, and as to ensure its reliability, it was thoroughly validated by the experts in the subject matter. The interview guide was developed by the researchers which includes the specified questions revolving and narrowing three major themes; inquiries about the experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms of the public and priority lane-reluctant psychosocial disabled individuals. Additionally, the participants were given the freedom to raise any clarifications or concerns regarding the interview questions and inquiries.

Procedure

To gain accurate findings, semi-structured interviews was employed with the public and priority lanes-reluctant individuals with psychosocial disabilities. The study preferably conducts a personal interview in gathering the data, however, considering that the participants are individuals with psychosocial disabilities whose comfortability is highly regarded, they were given the option to undergo online video conference call tools such as Messenger, Zoom, and Google Meet. Moreover, the participants received a consent form beforehand, following the legal requirements. The researchers disseminated this to the participants through Google Form and hardcopy, along with the consent form permitting the transcription and recording of the entire interview. Additionally, after all the necessary discussions, the researchers assured the participants that all of the gathered information and data will be kept confidential.

Data Analysis

In order to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the collected data, transcribing and recording of the interview was conducted. Prior to this, a comprehensive analysis was necessary to make sense of the data collected from public and priority lanes-reluctant individuals with psychosocial disabilities. The interview transcripts include participants’ exact words and undergo a strict examination. Thematic content analysis was also employed to eliminate biases (Canary, 2019). Key themes include: individuals with psychosocial disabilities’ experiences, challenges, and coping mechanisms.

Moreover, this study specifically used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). IPA is an approach that aims to provide detailed examinations and analysis of one’s personal lived experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2014). It is derived from the modified Van Kaam method popularized by Moustakas and is used to analyze and produce qualitative data results. The revised Van Kaam analysis includes seven steps: list and group, reduce and eliminate, group and thematize, validation, individual textual description, individual structural description, and textual-structural description. Thus, allowing an in-depth exploration of the individuals’ lived experiences which provides rich insights into their perspectives, meanings, and challenges attached to their experiences.

Ethical Considerations

The approval of the instrument and the data collection process by the research professor guarantees that permission has been obtained and ethical standards have been strictly adhered to. The participants who qualified the defined criteria were requested to give explicit consent through informed consent with the professor’s assistance.

The consent form was explained in accordance with the protocol for data collection. The purpose and objectives of the study were clarified, ensuring that participants understood their voluntary participation and the option to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality was also addressed, assuring participants that all data collected during the study would be used only for research and academic purposes, with their identities protected anonymously. Personal information shared by participants will also be kept confidential, as mandated by Republic Act 10173, and will not be utilized to violate the Data Privacy Act.

Moreover, the language that was used in the interview guide was modified according to the respondents’ comprehension and literacy levels. The participants’ accessibility in the execution and administration of the study was also considered.

Results and Discussion

The analysis and interpretation of the data will be presented, revealing four themes in this study, namely, (1) the unheard tales, (2) invisible consequences, (3) weak support structure, and (4) positive defense. These four themes elucidate the experiences, challenges, and the coping mechanisms of the individuals with psychosocial disability. Additionally, the following section will further elaborate



the data on each subtheme by providing the actual transcripts and verbatim of the participants.

Table 2. *The Analysis*

Horizon	Subthemes	Themes
As I mentioned noh, I experienced weird looks and parang some would want to question me if I'm pwd ba talaga kase I look healthy and young plus I dont have any visible disability to say so. Ayy, actually ayun nga noh may isang instance na someone look at me weirdly and then told me na nakikisingit lang ako sa pila and I felt a bit of embarrassment din since may mga ibang nakarinig din eh then people would look at me na parang they agree with the other person. <i>(As I mentioned earlier, you know, I've experienced strange looks, and it's like some people want to question if I'm really a person with disability because I look healthy and young, and I don't have any visible disability to indicate that. Oh, actually there was one instance where someone looked at me strangely and then told me that I was just cutting in line. I felt a bit embarrassed because others heard it too, and people started looking at me as if they agreed with the other person.)</i> (P14)	Unsolicited Peculiar Looks (Microaggressions) (100%)	The Unheard Tales (Hidden Adversities)
'yung iba will rudely ask "PWD po ba kayo?" ta's sinabi ko nang may psychosocial disability ako sasabihin pa nila "Ay naku 'yong mga wala pong kapansanan do'n po sa lane na 'yon 'wag po dito kasi para po 'to sa mga may kapansanan na kagaya namin oh, nakakahiya naman po, nahihirapan na nga kami tapos sisingit pa 'yong mga kagaya n'yo" so that is a rude. But I will just think na they really lack awareness and education about this matter lang talaga. <i>(Some will rudely ask "Are you a PWD?" And then after I answered that I have psychosocial disability they'll say, "oh, those without disabilities should use that lane over there. This lane is for people with disabilities like us, shame on you, we're already struggling, and people like you are cutting in". So that is rude. But I will just think that they really lack awareness and educations about this matter.)</i> (P1)	Exclusionary and Impolite Behavior: Due to Lack of Awareness (Social Insensitivity) (86%)	
Ano ba, ah, minsan sa ibang tao lalo na sa medyo kilala ako na may ganto, dahil nga diba hindi aware yung iba sa gantong disability tas sasabihin nilang baliw ka ganto ganyan kase nga meron ako netong ano ahh, kaya nahihirapan akong gumalaw galaw sa labas ganon, at kaya nahihiya akong pumila sa ganon. <i>(You know sometimes, with other people, especially those who are somewhat familiar with me having this, because many are not aware of this kind of disability, they will say that I'm crazy or something because I have this ahh, that's why it's difficult for me to move around in public, and that's why I feel embarrassed to stand in line like that.)</i> (P2)	The Inaccurate Labeling (Stereotypes) (60%)	
Sa totoo lang, bilang ano ahh lalake minsan pati ikaw nahihiya kapag gamit mo yun, sabi ko nga eh kanina ano ahh kesyo eh bakla raw ako, hina-hina ko, lalo na pag wala silang alam o hindi nila naiintindihan yung paggamit mo non, yung kundisyon mo kase tingin nila may deperensya sa pag iisip eh diba. Lalo na nakakahiya sa mga nakakakita saking kilala, mga katrabaho ko, tsaka kaibigan kong lalake din, naiilang ako. Kaya minsan kung gagamit ako ng mga ganyang lanes, doon sa lugar na malayo layo talaga, ahh sa manila example, kase dito sa Bulacan syempre iisang lugar lang baka may nakakakilala saakin. <i>(Honestly, as a man, sometimes it's embarrassing when you use it. Like I said earlier, they say that you might be gay, especially when they don't know or understand why you're using it, thinking there's something wrong with your mental faculties. It's really awkward especially when people who know me, like colleagues and friends, saw me using it. That's why if I use those lanes, I prefer doing it in places far away, like Manila, for example, because here in Bulacan, it's a small community, and someone might recognize me.)</i> (P3)	A Sign of Unmanliness (Toxic Masculinity) (71%)	
I tend to overthink a lot when it comes to using it kase I always feel like everyone judges me and talks about my condition so di ko nalang talaga mostly ginagamit yung lanes para maka-iwas din sa mga magtatanong kasi yung iba minsan di ba nag mamadali silang maka-punta sa pupuntahan na may urgencies, ganiyan so they tend to want na maka-advance agad sa pila, ganyan, mapabilis yung processes. <i>(I tend to overthink a lot when it comes to using it because I always feel like everyone judge me and talk about my condition so most of the time, I just avoid using the lanes to steer clear of questions because sometimes, you know, they are in a hurry to reach their destination, and they want to advance quickly in line to expedite the process.)</i> (P1)	Subtle Display of Faint Suspiciousness (Paranoia) (53%)	Invisible Consequences (Psychological Impact)



Unang una isipin ko na, sa akin nasa pansarili kung ano iisipin ng iba o iisipin ko na mapapadali yung pagpila ko or pag access ko sa mga priority lane dahil mas kaunti ang nakapila pero kase pagdating sa ibang tao, iniisip ko naman na 'yung sasabihin din nila na yung mga kasunod ko din na mga priority iisipin nila na hindi naman ako priority pero nakapila ako dun, sa line na yun. Kaya parang ayoko nalang pumila ron kase naaano akong husgahan ako, parang takot ganon. Yun iniisip ko din ganun. *(Initially, I consider what others might think about me, whether it would make queuing or accessing priority lanes easier for me because there are fewer people in line. However, when it comes to other people, I also think that they might say that those behind me in the priority line would think I'm not a priority, yet I'm queued there in that line. So I'd rather not stand in that line because fear being judged. That's what I also think about, that fear.)* (P2)

Yes, naexperienced ko yan na I do feel na need kong i-hide yung disability ko. Kasi naa-anxious ako sa mga sasabihin ng ibang tao, nahihiya rin ako iopen up kase natatakot akong baka hindi nila maintindihan and i-judge ako as a whole. I am also like afraid how people would react saakin if they knew. I am afraid of judgements, baka hindi ako maging belong and such. *(Yes, I've experienced that. I do feel the need to hide my disability. I get anxious about what other people might say, and I feel hesitant to open up because I'm afraid they might not understand and judge me as a whole. I'm also afraid of how people would react if they knew. I fear judgments and worry that I might not belong.)* (P14)

yeah, sometimes siguro, parang ano lang when I see other PWD's na parang grabe yung disability nila physically, doon parang mixed emotions ako. 'Cause I am thinking na did I really deserve to be prioritized kase I can handle myself naman, nakakaguilt din yung ibang perks ng may PWD ID. *(Yeah, sometimes, when I see other PWD's with severe physical disabilities, I experience mixed emotions. I start thinking, do I really deserve to be prioritized because I can manage on my own? I felt guilty to enjoy some perks of having a PWD ID.)* (P13)

kasi syempre minsan may ano talaga sa pamilya mga ano ba 'yung kamag-anak ganon na parang imbes ano, suportahan ako sila pa 'yung parang manghihila saakin pababa ganon, na sasabihan o chichismisan ng kung ano dahil nga sa disability ko, tapos parang nahihiya din sila pag pumipila ako sa priority lanes tas andyan sila kasama ko ganon kase parang hindi naman daw ako PWD. *(Because sometimes, even within the family, certain relatives become a source of discouragement. Instead of supporting me, they pull me down because of my disability. They talk or gossip about me because of it. And they, they feel embarrassed when I use priority lanes, when they're with me, as if I'm not really a PWD.)* (P4)

Like at work, wala naman akong ahh masyadong malapit na friends na magse-save and protekta sa akin and so I feel embarrassed when I hear something related saakin and my situation, I don't want to be judged and left out and so even if sa facilities ng mismong building namin or malapit samin na may available PWD lanes, I decided not to use it as much as possible. *(Like at work, I don't actually have close friends that will save and protect me and so I feel embarrassed when I hear something related to me and my situation. I don't want to be judged or left out. Even if there are available PWD lanes in the faculties of our building or nearby, I decided not to use them as much as possible.)* (P9)

pero pagdating sa ibang tao when I travel alone or need some kind of assistance, or 'yong hihingi ako ng help sa ibang tao, I, I don't think I'm strong like that para manghingi ng assistance kasi mapapa-isip ako sometimes, even though I wanted to ask for help, anong help naman 'yong matutulong nila sa'kin 'di ba? Maiintindihan ba nila 'yong situation ko na, tutulungan ba nila ako dahil may kailangan ako without them asking any questions pa 'di ba? Especially when it comes sa mga lanes. So, so far that's what I have. *(But when it comes to other people, when I travel alone or need some kind of assistance, or when I ask for help from others, I don't think I'm strong enough to ask for assistance. Because sometimes, even though I want to ask for help, I wonder what help they can really provide, you know? Will they understand my situation? Will they help me because I need it, without asking any questions? Especially when it comes to lanes. So, that's what I've experienced so far.)* (P1)

The Fears and Pressure  
that Occupy the Mind  
(Anxiety)  
(73%)

Social Outcast: The  
Extent of Hiding the  
Self  
(Disability  
Concealment)  
(60%)

Innocent Guilt:  
Manifesting Hesitance  
Behavior  
(Privilege Hesitance)  
(66%)

Discouragement within  
Bloodlines  
(Family Invalidation)  
(60%)

Weak Support  
Structure  
(Social Support  
Deficit)

Weak Connection at  
Work  
(Low Social Support)  
(80%)

Rather Not Ask for Help  
to Others  
(Mistrust)  
(80%)



Ahh might involve managing my mental health like doing self-affirmations before I even step out of the house into the outside world, seeking support from professionals which happens every other month depending on how my schedule would allow it, practicing self-care like watching what I eat and buying something that'll serve as my reward for braving minor or major challenges I faced, and engaging in activities that promote well-being like brunch or dinner dates with my family or working out. *(It might involve managing my mental health, like doing self-affirmations before I even step out of the house into the outside world. Seeking support from professionals, which happens every other month depending on my schedule. Practicing self-care, like watching what I eat and buying something that'll serve as my reward for braving minor or major challenges I faced. Engaging in activities that promote well-being, like brunch or dinner dates with my family or working out.) (P1)*

Ganun kasi ano eh natuto na ko mag exclude ng tao so nung bata pa kailangan iplease mo lahat di ba so pagpinplease mo lahat ganyan ka lang, you cannot please them, but, so syempre pag matanda ka na, parang pipiliin mo na dito ako may peace, dito ko wala, so dyan na lang yung mga toxic gets ko itong wala ka namang magagawa kung anong isipin yung mga and you don't have to defend yourself. *(That's because I've learned to exclude people. When you're young, you feel the need to please everyone, but you realize you can't please them all. So, when you're older, you start choosing where you have peace. You leave behind the toxic Individuals, understanding that you can't control what others think, and you don't have to defend yourself.) (P10)*

Ahm, every day I keep on fighting. Somehow, I handle my disability naman, although I cannot say that I function well all the time as I have bipolar, but kung ano yung best ko as of the moment, binibigay ko talaga. Pero hindi maiiwasan na yung disability is may impact sa mga normal routines ko, like sa house, sa work, sa ibang tao and everything in between. Pero, I make everything as normal as possible everyday even if there are still people who lack information and awareness about individuals na katulad ko, but then it is not our responsibility naman na idikdik sa mga kokote nila yon. As young as I seemed, and even with what I have, I work my hardest every day for my family and I am learning to take care of myself. *(Every day, I keep on fighting. Somehow, I manage my disability, although I cannot say that I function well all the time due to bipolar disorder. But I give my best at the moment. It's inevitable that my disability has an impact on my normal routines—whether at home, work, or with other people and everything as normal as possible every day, even if there are still people lacking information and awareness about Individuals like me. Yet it's not our responsibility to drill that into their heads. Despite appearing young and dealing with what I have. I work my hardest every day for my family and I am learning to take care of myself.) (P14)*

Minding My Self-Care Routine (Self-care) (93%)  
Positive Defense (Adaptive Coping Mechanism)

I Am No Longer a People Pleaser (Self-Assertiveness) (73%)

Fighting Despite the Struggles (Resiliency and Perseverance) (100%)

The Unheard Tales

Most people are not aware of the misconceptions, experiences and the hidden challenges that individuals with psychosocial disabilities encounter in their everyday living, and specifically, as they use the PWD public and priority lanes. In relation to this, according to United Nations (2019), despite the recognition given to these individuals to fully participate within the society which includes the access to services, accommodations, and spaces, they still encounter different experiences in the general public. Consecutively, Parr et al. (2020) have found out that most individuals with psychosocial disabilities frequently have diverse and varied experiences when accessing these lanes and services. Thus, this theme will elaborate the experiences and challenges of the participants while using public and priority lanes.

Unsolicited Peculiar Looks

According to Bogart and Dunn (2019), psychosocial individuals are reluctant to use public and priority lanes due to their encountered negative experiences, namely, the intimidating glares and stares, the negative criticisms, negative reactions and comments, and finally, the insensitive and inappropriate questioning about their disabilities. When the interviewee asked the participants what are their experiences while using public and priority lanes, most answered that they are receiving weird and intimidating stares and looks. Participant 14 shared her answers about these unsolicited peculiar looks,

*As I mentioned noh, I experienced weird looks and parang some would want to question me if I'm pwd ba talaga kase I look healthy and young plus I dont have any visible disability to say so. Ayy, actually ayun nga noh may isang instance na someone look at me weirdly and then told me na nakikisingit lang ako sa pila and I felt a bit of embarrassment din since may mga ibang nakarinig din eh*

then people would look at me na parang they agree with the other person.

Additionally, participant 1 also elaborated her answer in regards of the experiences that she received while using these lanes,

*There are times talaga na syempre aware kayo na ahm Psychosocial Disability 'yong meron ako so whenever I use them parang pagtitinginan ka talaga kasi di ka kagaya nung iba na naka wheelchair, cast, or may hearing aid, or di ba naka saklay kagaya ng iba na mga ahm PWD na may physical manifestation talaga yong disability nila, so sometimes I really get those kind of stare and they are very unpleasant din so nakaka-ilang, so sometimes even nakaka-anxious, ang gagawin ko di ko nalang sila gagamitin, para kasing nakakahiya.*

In relation to the findings, Davar (2015) enunciated that people's excluding reactions such as staring, glaring, name calling, and bullying can contribute to the negative impact affecting the service and community experiences of people with psychosocial disabilities.

### **Exclusionary and Impolite Behavior: Due to Lack of Awareness**

For some others, participants felt excluded because of the questioning and the embarrassing reactions they receive about their disability. When Participant 1 was asked about other's reactions towards her usage of PWD lanes she stated,

*'yung iba will rudely ask "PWD po ba kayo?" ta's kahit sinabi ko nang may psychosocial disability ako sasabihin pa nila "Ay naku 'yong mga wala pong kapansanan do'n po sa lane na 'yon 'wag po dito kasi para po 'to sa mga may kapansanan na kagaya namin oh, nakakahiya naman po, nahihirapan na nga kami tapos sisingit pa 'yong mga kagaya n'yo" so that is a rude. But I will just think na they really lack awareness and education about this matter lang talaga.*

It was evident that participant 1 received shaming remarks and added that she was only cutting in line to be accommodated. In support to these findings, Thornicroft et al. (2016) stated that people still often think that mental health problems are a made-up reason to accommodate services and benefits, which contributes to the negative perceptions and stereotypes towards individuals with psychosocial disabilities that leads to exclusion and lack of support.

Additionally, as most participants shared the same experiences, participant 15 further elaborates the exclusion he experienced in a discrimination context. He mentioned,

*Discrimination talaga na parang ano, narereceive ko ay yung ano, papalitapin kapa don sa normal lane nga ahh kahit kapwa PWD ka naman eh. Nakakabastos at nakakahiya sa mga nakakakita, tapos ku-kwestyunin ka parin nila. "Bakit PWD ka ba?" "Bakit ka nakikipila?" 'di ba.*

Furthermore, research has consistently shown that individuals with psychosocial disabilities are more likely to experience social exclusion than those without these conditions due to the negative perceptions and the discrimination they receive due to their condition (Franco et al., 2018). However, exclusionary, discrimination, and stigmatization was perpetuated due to lack of awareness regarding mental illnesses and psychosocial disabilities. Participant 6 has elaborated her thoughts stating,

*So, I-I, for example like sa relating to the lanes gano'n na, hindi masyadong, ah people are not yet educated when it comes to mental issues, parang pina-prioritize 'yong, kailangan may lane pala sila gano'n, like people have no idea about that. Kasi like samin na psychosocial, acknowledged na kami as a pwd but they are not that aware about sa disability namin kasi they know lang pag pwd ka pilay ka, or bulag, pipi, gano'n eh sa amin naman kasi as long na we are fine talagang tignan and complete, hindi naman agad agad makikita yung kapansanan namin eh kaya they thought that pumipila lang talaga kami dun sa priority lane.*

Consequently, the limited understanding and knowledge about psychosocial disabilities among the general public influences the reluctance and perceptions of such disabilities to use public and priority services and lanes (Collier et al., 2017). These lacking hinders the individuals with said disabilities to receive appropriate services and accommodations.

### **The Inaccurate Labeling**

When participants were asked about how other people perceived of their disability, participant 2 said that she was labeled as insane or crazy, which limits her actions in public and made her feel reluctant to use priority lanes.

*Ano ba, ah, minsan sa ibang tao lalo na sa medyo kilala ako na may ganto, dahil nga diba hindi aware yung iba sa gantong disability tas sasabihin nilang baliw ka ganto ganyan kase nga meron ako netong ano ahh, kaya nahihirapan akong gumalaw galaw sa labas ganon, at kaya nahihiya akong pumila sa ganon.*

With these inaccurate terms, the participant manifested reluctant-behaviors in using the lanes. According to the study of Link et al. (2019), such labeling as "crazy" or "insane" to individuals with mental illnesses contributes to social exclusion, increased stigma, and limited opportunities for individuals to access appropriate support and resources. Meanwhile, participant 14 further stated the way people perceived her condition and thus, contributed to her reluctance in using public and priority lanes.

*But the problem is maraming times na hindi maiiwasang mahiya ako and maging reluctant to use these lanes kase the misconceptions*



of other people about us are offending and triggering din. Especially with mental health, maraming misconceptions like mga siraulo kami, may toyo, may sapak, gawa-gawa lang namin to and such.

According to several studies, the general public typically misconceptualized and labels people with mental health problems as insane, incapable, dangerous, inadequate, and blameworthy, which was frequently backed by wrath and fear that may result in behavioral intentions of evasion, unfair treatment, and compulsion (McGinty et al., 2014). Moreover, the findings of Angermeyer and Matschinger (2015) emphasized that derogatory terms and labeling among individuals with mental illnesses, including psychosocial disabilities create further misconceptions and stereotypes about these individuals.

### **A Sign of Unmanliness**

As half of the number of participants were males, most of them shared how the notions about masculinity affect their reluctance to use public and priority lanes. Participant 3 shared that he was labeled as gay and weak for having mental health problems, specifically for having psychosocial disability, and sharing that he only uses these lanes away from his place. He stated,

*Sa totoo lang, bilang ano ahh lalake minsan pati ikaw nahihiya kapag gamit mo yun, sabi ko nga eh kanina ano ahh kesyo eh bakla raw ako, hina-hina ko, lalo na pag wala silang alam o hindi nila naiintindihan yung paggamit mo non, yung kundisyon mo kase tingin nila may deperensya sa pag iisip eh diba. Lalo na nakakahiya sa mga nakakakita saking kilala, mga katrabaho ko, tsaka kaibigan kong lalake din, naiilang ako. Kaya minsan kung gagamit ako ng mga ganyang lanes, doon sa lugar na malayo layo talaga, ahh sa manila example, kase dito sa Bulacan syempre iisang lugar lang baka may nakakakilala sakin.*

With this finding, it is evident that up to the present day, the traditional masculine gender stereotypes still exists and inevitable for those men suffering from mental health problems and psychosocial disabilities. According to Rice et al. (2019), society continues to perpetuate the view that having mental health problems together with help-seeking is a sign of weakness or “unmanliness” for men. Thus, men’s unwillingness to do public activities that might expose their conditions is related to social and cultural factors, including notions of masculinity and beliefs about the nature of mental health issues.

Participant 10 and 15 also shared the same thoughts,

*Kuwan ano, ahh kumbaga malaki yung ahh pagkakaiba kase saming mga lalake ano, kase tingin nga ng karamihan eh hindi naman ganon ahh ka 'common kumbaga yung pag kaming lalake yung may problema mentally. Halos sanay sila na hindi lalake yung meron nito. Kuwan nakakalalake yung ahh pipila ka tapos makita ka mga tao na maganda naman katawan ko, bale mahiya rin ako non.*

In support to the responses, WHO (2019) stated that many people perceive that mental health conditions are only pronounced for women and girls. Moreover, according to Oliffe and Phillips (2018), men can be deterred from accessing priority services and seeking help due to concerns about the embarrassment, stigmatization, judgement, and loss of masculine identity.

### **Invisible Consequences**

With the negative experiences and challenges that the participants have encounter while using public and priority lanes, its psychological and behavioral impacts were often overlooked and unnoticed. A review by Firth et al. (2019) discovered that psychosocial disabilities are substantially vulnerable and may unnoticedly manifest other psychological impacts due to various factors, including rejection of seeking help, refusal to access services and accommodations, and the concerns regarding other’s perception of them. Thus, this theme will furtherly elaborate the psychological and behavioral impacts that individuals with psychosocial disabilities may exhibit in line with their experiences and challenges.

### **Subtle Display of Faint Suspiciousness**

Cerretto et al. (2018) defined suspiciousness as the feeling and belief that one will and was being threatened or harm in some way, without proper evidence. When the participants were asked how they feel when faced with the decision to use public and priority lanes, participant 1 shared,

*I tend to overthink a lot when it comes to using it kase I always feel like everyone judges me and talks about my condition so di ko nalang talaga mostly ginagamit yung lanes para maka-iwas din sa mga magtatanong kasi yung iba minsan di ba nag mamadali silang maka-punta sa pupuntahan na may urgencies, ganiyan so they tend to want na maka-advance agad sa pila, ganyan, mapabilis yung processes.*

The findings showed that a faint of suspiciousness was exhibited by the participant where she claimed that other people always judge and talks about her without further evidence. This was supported by the study of Hirsch et al. (2017) which stated that lack of awareness, misconception, discriminations, and stigma can be immensely damaging for individuals with psychosocial disabilities, leading to feelings of suspicions, paranoia, mistrust, and social isolation.

Participant 9 also shared her reason to isolation while she displays her suspicions of being judged and stared at,

*Bale syempre may mga oras na parang inaatake ako ganon tas iniisip ko pa mga sasabihin ng iba ahh kaya parang ano tawag dito, ahh gusto ko nalang din mag isa. Tsaka ano, pinipili ko yung mga alam mo yun, ahh mga tao sa paligid ko nga kase nga alam kong lahat sila ji-na-judge tapos pinagtitinginan lang ako at the same time alam ko namang maraming hindi talaga nakakaintindi ng disability namin.*

With this, negative perceptions and reactions can have significant effects on the individuals with psychosocial disability's mental health and well-being, including increasing feelings of suspiciousness towards others, paranoia, and self-isolation from others (Phelan et al., 2020).

### ***The Fears and Pressures that Occupy the Mind***

In relation to the negative reactions and barriers that individuals with psychosocial disabilities encounters, such as the negative stereotypes and lack of understanding from the public, it may contribute pressures and fears when they are faced in public spaces (Haugom et al., 2018). Thus, participant 2 shared her thoughts in lined to this,

*Unang una isipin ko na, sa akin nasa pansarili kung ano iisipin ng iba o iisipin ko na mapapadali yung pagpila ko or pag access ko sa mga priority lane dahil mas kaunti ang nakapila pero kase pagdating sa ibang tao, iniisip ko naman na 'yung sasabihin din nila na yung mga kasunod ko din na mga priority iisipin nila na hindi naman ako priority pero nakapila ako dun, sa line na yun. Kaya parang ayoko nalang pumila ron kase naaano akong husgahan ako, parang takot ganon. Yun iniisip ko din ganun.*

With that being said, a review of Yanos et al. (2015) emphasized that the fear of judgement and pressure to use the given services often lead to the avoidance of public spaces and restricted engagement with priority lanes. As other participants shared the same feelings, participant 1 also added,

*I do feel pressured, at some point lalo, alam mo 'yon? gustong-gusto ko na maka-uwi, I'm having breakdowns, na-na gusto ko nalang umuwi, alangang umiyak ako in public 'di ba? na I've had a stressful day and something triggered me na gusto kong dumeretso sa bahay, tumakbo pauwi, umiyak do'n, gusto ko nang makapagpahinga 'di ba and then, in such a rush na ah maka-uwi, sometimes nakapila na ako sa ano, regular lane and then maiisip ko PWD ako and then tinitignan ko 'yong PWD lane, gusto kong pumila ro'n gusto ko na talagang maka-uwi, na 'yun 'yung parang struggle sa sarili ko, sa ah, inside of me na it's overwhelming sometimes na ah people will think na ano eh maliit lang s'yang bagay na "hala eh PWD ka you have a ano, a proof naman 'di ba, you can prove them kung sakaling magtanong sila. Bakit 'di mo magawa?" 'yun kasi 'yung ano eh problem, 'yun 'yung trouble in having ahm psychosocial disability 'di ba ah, they don't understand kung gaano kahirap sometimes, akala nila, madaling sabihin,*

In support to the participants' statements, individuals with the said disabilities often face anxiety and self-consciousness due to the fear of being judged and discriminated against using these lanes. These fears can significantly impact their confidence and willingness to access necessary services, thus leading to self-pressures (Rusch, 2014).

### ***Social Outcast: The Extent of Hiding the Self***

When the interviewee asked the participants if there is an instance, they feel the need to hide their disability, the majority of the participants responded the same thoughts. Participant 14 elaborated her answer,

*Yes, naexperienced ko yan na I do feel na need kong i-hide yung disability ko. Kasi naa-anxious ako sa mga sasabihin ng ibang tao, nahihiya rin ako iopen up kase natatakot akong baka hindi nila maintindihan and ii-judge ako as a whole. I am also like afraid how people would react saakin if they knew. I am afraid of judgements, baka hindi ako maging belong and such.*

This is evidence that due to the negative perceptions and reactions of the people towards them, it affects their confidence, leading to the need to hide their disability. Additionally, participant 2 also shared her same experience,

*Yung pag sa may mga gathering sa harap ng maraming tao makikisalamuha ako sa mga iba't ibang tao doon ko siya tinatago yung disability ko. Iniingatan ko na di nila gaanong malaman yung tungkol sa sarili ko dahil alam ko na pag ano masasaktan din ako parang inaatake ako ng anxiety ko sa palaging ganun ng ganon.*

Thus, Jones et al. (2017) reveals that some individuals with psychosocial disabilities avoid any situations that may expose their mental health conditions, due to the negative societal attitudes and misconceptions held by the general public. As widely known, mental health conditions are often stigmatized which leads to misconceptions, social exclusion, and discrimination. Having that said, these individuals may manifest avoidance of negative reactions or judgements from others when accessing and using public and priority lanes, which could discourage them from accessing these services.

### ***Innocent Guilt: Manifesting Hesitance Behavior***

As psychosocial disability has no physical manifestations of a disability, most of the participants feel guilty using the given perks, thus

contributing to their reluctance in engaging with public and priority lanes. Participant 13 stated,

*Yeah, sometimes siguro, parang ano lang when I see other PWD's na parang grabe yung disability nila physically, doon parang mixed emotions ako. 'Cause I am thinking na did I really deserve to be prioritized kase I can handle myself naman, nakakaguilt din yung ibang perks ng may PWD ID.*

Most individuals with psychosocial disabilities suffer from self-stigma which has been the result of the internalization of unfavorable society perceptions. According to Yanos et al. (2017), this self-stigma could undermine self-esteem and self-efficacy, as well as impede help-seeking behaviors. Consequently, people with psychosocial disabilities think that they were not deserving of possessing public and priority services, resources, and benefits as it was what others perceive. Thus, they show guilt, embarrassment, and decreased self-trust, which leads to becoming reluctant in using public and priority lanes and services they are entitled to use.

In addition, when the same question was asked regarding if they ever feel not entitled to use priority lanes, participant 3 elaborated,

*Madalas! Kase nga normal ang tingin ng mga tao saken, wala akong diperensya, mas naano akong ilabas yung ID ko para malaman nila na pwd ako tsaka okay lang naman sakin pag nakakita ako ng mga mas grabe talaga kondisyon nagpapaubaya nalang ako. Nakokonsensya ako pag ganon. Kase minsan din nataas yung kilay ng iba kasi nakikita nila wala naman akong depekto.*

Thus, the negative attitudes and beliefs surrounding psychosocial disabilities leads to reduced self-esteem and limited social support, intensifying the feeling of guilt when utilizing public and priority lanes (Shibre et al., 2013)

### **Weak Support Structure**

Individuals with psychosocial disabilities encounter further difficulties due to inadequate social support networks and a lack of involvement from communities and their families (Brunette et al., 2016). Thus, their ability to use public and priority lanes to access services may be hindered by a lack of a strong support network. With that said, this theme includes the various experiences of the participants in different relationships in relation with their disabilities and in using priority lanes.

### **Discouragement within Bloodlines**

Participant 4 shared the discouragement she received from her relatives as well as the embarrassment she endured from them. The participant stated,

*Kasi syempre minsan may ano talaga sa pamilya mga ano ba 'yung kamag-anak ganon na parang imbes ano, suportahan ako sila pa 'yung parang manghihila sakin pababa ganon, na sasabihan o chichismisan ng kung ano dahil nga sa disability ko, tapos parang nahiihiya din sila pag pumipila ako sa priority lanes tas andyan sila kasama ko ganon kase parang hindi naman daw ako PWD.*

Heslop and Johnson (2015) discovered individuals with mental health illnesses, including psychosocial disabilities experience discrimination and judgement from their own families and friends. Hence, it is evident in the participants' response that due to the negative comments by their own family, they felt embarrassed lining in public and priority lanes.

As the majority feel the same, participant 14 elaborated the same feelings she encounters,

*I think siguro when the times na I feel like I am not supported by my family kasi parang nada-down ako when they bring it up, especially if may misunderstandings and fights. So sometimes I think, how can other people understand and just let me be, if my own family hindi nila ako maintindihan and masupport, right? Kaya napapangunahan ko, I dont use it nalang siguro for the peace of my mind nalang din.*

The findings discovered that the participants feel like being not understood and were not supported by their loved ones (Barrowclough & Haddock, 2015). In relative to this, according to the qualitative study by Cook and Leamy (2017), individuals with such disabilities stated that they are reluctant to discuss their conditions to their loved ones as they feel like their conditions were a burden and unacceptable, and thus, some stated that their family and friends are often the ones who let them down.

### **Weak Connection at Work**

Unluckily for others, when the interviewee asked the participants how are their relationships within their workplace, participant 9 said,

*Like at work, wala naman akong ah masyadong malapit na friends na magse-save and protekta sa akin and so I feel embarrassed when I hear something related sakin and my situation, I don't want to be judged and left out and so even if sa facilities ng mismong building namin or malapit samin na may available PWD lanes, I decided not to use it as much as possible.*

Participant 9 mentioned that she has no close friends to protect her when her fellow co-workers bring up something related to her condition. Aside from this, participant 14 shared how her workmates negatively reacted towards her for receiving the favor of the company considering her schedules due to her disability.

*Nagagamit ko naman yung disability ko as my advantage kasi let's say parang ano mas maiintindihan ka as someone who have this*

*disability, so they do consideration so ayun minsan ipapa-adjust yung sched mo ganon like that. However, we have workmates that have a lot to say, na I have special treatment, na gawa-gawa ko lang yung about sa mental health ko, like even today may mga ganong pag-iisip parin, and I know it is inevitable naman talaga.*

This evidence implies that individuals with the said disabilities might receive unpleasant experiences in the workplace. Likewise, Durbin and Sirotkin (2019) address that employed individuals with psychosocial disabilities may be more reluctant to use these priority lanes to avoid any negative perceptions or potential misconceptions at their workplace.

### ***Rather Not Ask Help to Others***

A study of Corrigan et al. (2014) discovered that people with psychosocial disabilities often have trouble seeking help and support in public spaces. It was also revealed that due to several factors including, mistrust, discrimination, stigma, and the lack of understanding, individuals with mental illnesses are unlikely to request help and access public services than people with visible disabilities. Thus, when asked if the participants ever asked for help or assistance to other people, participant 1 said,

*Pero pagdating sa ibang tao when I travel alone or need some kind of assistance, or 'yong hihingi ako ng help sa ibang tao, I, I don't think I'm strong like that para manghingi ng assistance kasi mapapa-isip ako sometimes, even though I wanted to ask for help, anong help naman 'yong matutulong nila sa'kin 'di ba? Maiintindihan ba nila 'yong situation ko na, tutulungan ba nila ako dahil may kailangan ako without them asking any questions pa 'di ba? Especially when it comes sa mga lanes. So, so far that's what I have.*

With the response of participant 1, it shows a rejection to seek help in others due to some factors, such as questioning her conditions and the lack of understandings people have with her disability.

Additionally, with the similar thoughts from most of the participants when asked if they ever seek help to other people, participant 2 also stated,

*Bale ano, hindi kase ano nga nakakahiya lalo na sa iba.*

Thus, people with psychosocial and mental health problems often do not use public and priority services and refuse to seek help in order to keep others unaware of their mental condition. Based on a survey carried by Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality (2014), an 11% stated the fear of requesting for help, as seeking help could lead to other's negative perception of them, while, 8.7% disclosed refusing help as it might cause consequences on their job and reputation, meanwhile, 6.8% cited not requesting help as they do not want others know their mental health conditions.

### ***Positive Defense***

Despite of the challenges and the negative experiences that the participants have encounter, all of them follows a positive mechanism and motivations to cope up with those experiences. According to Smith (2021), individuals with psychosocial disabilities often use a variety of coping mechanisms to overcome their anxiety and negative experiences of interacting with other people and hesitance to seek public accommodations and services. Therefore, this theme elaborates the coping mechanisms and motivations that they use in order to surpass the negative feelings and situations they experience.

### ***Minding My Self-Care Routine***

As most participants shared the similar self-management and self-care coping mechanisms, participant 1 further elaborated how she positively manages her mental health and how she takes care of herself before she steps out of her comfort zone. She said,

*Ahh might involve managing my mental health like doing self-affirmations before I even step out of the house into the outside world, seeking support from professionals which happens every other month depending on how my schedule would allow it, practicing self-care like watching what I eat and buying something that'll serve as my reward for braving minor or major challenges I faced, and engaging in activities that promote well-being like brunch or dinner dates with my family or working out.*

This finding was supported by study of Anderson et al. (2016) revealed that individuals with psychosocial disabilities often develop self-reliance, self-management, and self-care. The study also highlighted that when the participants are faced with anxiety and difficulties in public spaces, they tend to independently handle the situations by using coping mechanisms such as positive-self talk and mindfulness to manage anxiety and pressure in public settings. Additionally, self-care and self-management includes, entertaining oneself and by others through technology, exercising, adequate sleep, diet-planning, breathing exercises, and self-validations (Flin et al., 2014).

### ***I Am No Longer a People Pleaser***

Meanwhile, some of the participants stated that they no longer please people as it is not their responsibility to do so. Thus, participant 10 elaborated her answer,

*Ganun kasi ano eh natuto na ko mag exclude ng tao so nung bata pa kailangan iplease mo lahat di ba so pagpinplease mo lahat ganyan ka lang, you cannot please them, but, so syempre pag matanda ka na, parang pipiliin mo na dito ako may peace, dito ko wala, so dyan na lang yung mga toxic gets ko itong wala ka namang magagawa kung anong isipin yung mga and you don't have to defend yourself.*

The response of the participant implies that peace can be achieved by not always pleasing other people. Sharing the similar mindset, participant 15 added,

*Meron kang maririnig na ibat ibang bagay issue para sayo, pero hindi ko sya pinapatulan. Hayaan nalang natin sila kung ano ano yung mga masasabi nila satin. Kase sa totoo lang, hindi naman lahat ma-p-please mo yung tao.*

Having that said, Shakespeare (2015) discovered that many individuals with psychosocial disabilities benefit from adopting a mindset of “not pleasing other people”. By assertively setting boundaries and prioritizing their own needs, they experience improved self-esteem, reduced stress, and a better ability to cope with challenges.

In relation to this, participant 12 shared her thoughts in regards to being unbothered by what other people perceive of her and her disability.

*I am trying to not care that much about what other people would say or think. Kase like it's not my fault if they lack empathy and education related sa gantong matters eh. Like iniisip kong wala akong time para iintindihin pa yung mga ganong bagay kase mas dapat kong intindihin yung sarili ko eh. If I worry too much din, maapektuhan lang ako. So, I don't have time to think about their opinions. And diba maraming mga support groups and post sa social media? If ever naman na I felt na maapektuhan ako, di kaya nako-caught ng ganon yung atensyon ko, I would scroll nalang sa mga pages or groups na may mga positive and motivating posts.*

With the statement of the participant 12, it is evident that she is not bothered and distracted by what other people think of her. Whereas, this manifest self-acceptance and self-esteem. In support to this, Kim and Lee (2019) found individuals with psychosocial disabilities often employ self-acceptance and self-love as a positive coping mechanism. Thus, they reject what others perceive of them, and focus on accepting themselves as they are, including their condition.

Furthermore, the participant 12 also mentioned that social media and support groups were also her gateways from being affected by her negative surroundings. Thus, Stuttgen et al. (2021) discovered that the use of gadgets and technology-based platforms, such as, online support groups, and telehealth services has been found to enhance the coping mechanisms of the aforementioned individuals. For instance, an individual with psychosocial disability would use technology-based platforms to heightened their self-esteem and motivations through online support groups and motivational posts.

### **Fighting Despite the Struggles**

Although the participants may have their own various coping mechanisms, they all have one main objective; it is to fight despite of all the set-backs they are experiencing. According to Wright (2023), resilience is the ability to easily overcome, adapt to, and recover from challenges, changes, and obstacles. On the other hand, perseverance is the ability to continually display motivation, determination, effort, and discipline to overcome or achieve something, despite of the challenges faced.

Along with this, participant 14 further share her thoughts,

*Ahm, every day I keep on fighting. Somehow, I handle my disability naman, although I cannot say that I function well all the time as I have bipolar, but kung ano yung best ko as of the moment, binibigay ko talaga. Pero hindi maiiwasan na yung disability is may impact sa mga normal routines ko, like sa house, sa work, sa ibang tao and everything in between. Pero, I make everything as normal as possible everyday even if there are still people who lack information and awareness about individuals na katulad ko, but then it is not our responsibility naman na idikdik sa mga kokote nila yon. As young as I seemed, and even with what I have, I work my hardest every day for my family and I am learning to take care of myself.*

Participant 14 stated that even though she is not all the time well-functional, she always urges to do her best. The participant also emphasizes that she keeps and will keep on fighting every day, which shows perseverance and resiliency to live a better life.

Thus, the study of Green and Smith (2018) found that individuals with psychosocial disabilities often employ perseverance as a positive coping mechanism. They continue to fight each day despite their struggles, demonstrating resilience and determination in overcoming challenges.

In addition, participant 6 shared his statement when asked about how he managed and cope up with the challenges he faced. He said,

*Eh walang iba kundi pakatatag lang, lalo na sa pamilya ko. Ako yung breadwinner kaya kailangang lumaban lang wag pansinin yung mga nasa paligid.*

Aside from the resiliency and perseverance that the participants have shown, they also seek motivations from their loved ones. According to Antonak and Livneh (2013), another coping mechanism that these individuals usually employ is the reframing of negative



situations and seeking motivations from others to cope with disability-related challenges. Whereas, according to Adams et al. (2014), family-related motivations and peer-support networks play a significant role in the self-esteem and encouraging the individuals with mental health conditions and psychosocial disabilities to be strong and face the challenges they encounter.

## Conclusion

The study's findings resulted in the following conclusion:

Individuals with psychosocial disabilities encounter various experiences and challenges when using public and priority lanes. They are often subjected to getting frequent strange looks and interrogation, exclusionary and impolite behavior, stigmatization, inaccurate labeling, and gender stereotypes due to lack of awareness. Thus, making them feel reluctant to use the said lanes.

These adverse experiences and challenges not only impact their daily lives but also affect their overall well-being. This includes low self-confidence, a sense of suspicion towards others, guilt and pressures to use the lanes, embarrassment, the feeling of need to hide their disabilities, and the persistent fear of being subjected to judgement in public spaces.

Insufficient and weak support systems contribute to the reluctance-behavior of the individuals with psychosocial disabilities in using public and priority lanes. The lack of understanding, discouragement, embarrassment, negative comments, and judgements within family, other people, and work environment increases their refusal to seek help from others, as well as damages their confidence in public spaces and prevents them from using these lanes.

Individuals with psychosocial disabilities were able to employ positive mechanisms and strategies to cope with the challenges and negative experiences they encounter. This includes cultivation of self-management and self-care practices. These individuals also embrace the mindset of being unbothered to other's negative perceptions and the unwillingness to please other people. Additionally, they tend to prioritize their own well-being and mental health, incorporating mindful routines into their lives.

The significant findings of this study's conclusions recommend the following;

It is recommended that more education and awareness is needed regarding psychosocial disabilities and their right to use the priority lanes and other PWD perks. It is necessary to conduct awareness campaigns through different platforms to educate the public about the said disabilities, in order to reduce stigma, stereotypes, and misconceptions.

The study recommends that counseling and support services for individuals with psychosocial disabilities are necessary to empower them and their well-being to improve their quality of life.

As support systems contribute a significant impact on the reluctance-behavior of the participants, it is recommended that community, family, workplaces, and public spaces should provide various supports and foster a friendly and safe environment for the individuals with psychosocial disabilities. Furthermore, helping the individuals to acknowledge help-seeking and developing support structures or peer support groups can significantly contribute to their daily motivations.

The study recommends that teaching long-term coping skills and positive mechanisms among individuals with psychosocial disabilities can help to improve their quality of life. An implementation of coping skills program can also be necessary to cultivate the individuals' confidence, self-efficacy, and willingness to engage in public spaces. This could include cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation techniques, and social skills training.

The study suggests that policymakers should foster collaboration between one another; the government bodies, municipal bodies, and organizations working with individuals with psychosocial disabilities to develop and implement a more comprehensive policies and programs that highly prioritize the rights and inclusion of individuals with psychosocial disabilities in engaging in public spaces. This includes providing more accessible psychotherapies, and further mental health services and consultations funds. Additionally, conduct improve accessibility in public and priority lanes by constructing more of these lanes in localities and various establishments and also by integrating universal design principles into the development and renovation of the lanes to ensure inclusivity. Furthermore, individuals with the said disabilities should be involved in the decision-making process to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are addressed.

Psychology students should conduct extensive online advocacies, campaigns, and related research projects that focus on the understanding the barriers and challenges faced by people with inapparent disabilities and mental health problems. These projects could lead to better awareness and understanding that psychosocial disabilities should not be excluded, stigmatized, and deserves to use the privileges given to them.

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