

# **Bearing the Hidden Burden: A Qualitative Study of the Challenges and Support Needs of Filipino Non-Offending Caregivers of Child Sexual Abuse Survivors**

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Child sexual abuse has a wide-ranging impact that extends beyond the child survivor to the entire family, with non-offending caregivers bearing a substantial yet often unrecognized burden. Despite their crucial involvement in children's recovery, limited research has explored the experiences of non-offending caregivers, particularly in low-resource settings such as the Philippines. This qualitative study explored the lived experiences, challenges, and support needs of seven caregivers and five child welfare professionals through two focus group discussions. Thematic analysis revealed caregiver substantial psychological distress, including parenting stress, poor mental health, intense emotions, and difficulty managing trauma-related child behaviors, as well as systemic challenges, such as limited social support, safety concerns, and barriers to legal and government services. Caregivers reported needs for emotional and psychological support, coping skills, social support, safety, and access to information and resources. Findings highlight the importance of culturally responsive strategies that explicitly address the needs of non-offending caregivers and inform the development of targeted interventions to support family and child recovery.

Keywords: Filipino Non-Offending Caregivers (NOC), Child Sexual Abuse (CSA), Challenges and Support Needs

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