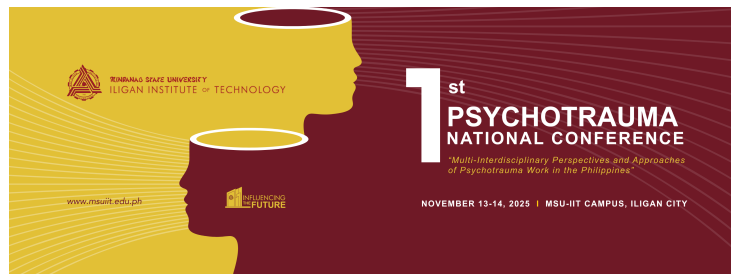


## National Psychotrauma Conference 2025



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# Determinants of Mental Health among Disaster-Prone Communities in Caraga, Philippines: A Structural Equation Modeling Analysis

Thursday, November 13, 2025 3:30 PM (15 minutes)

### ABSTRACT

As an integral part of health and well-being, individuals adopt various strategies to protect their mental health. However, certain uncontrollable factors, such as natural disasters and calamities, can still negatively impact their well-being. Residents in disaster-prone areas may encounter unique circumstances that can significantly impact their mental health. This study explored the determinants of mental health among disaster-prone communities in the Caraga Region, Philippines, among a sample of 560 participants from five different localities in the region. This study utilized a cross-sectional quantitative research design utilizing adapted instruments measuring attitudes towards mental health problems (ATMHP), depression (PHQ9), anxiety (GAD-7), and distress (K10). The study's results indicated that for this sample, participants are generally likely to be well, albeit with mild anxieties and depression, which may be brought about by concerns surrounding their day-to-day activities. The findings also suggest that while participants believe their families do not hold negative attitudes toward mental health issues, they still express concerns about how their families might be perceived if they themselves faced such problems. Regression analysis also revealed that community attitudes toward mental health problems and anxiety are significant predictors of depression. Furthermore, shame and distress appeared to mediate the relationship between attitudes toward mental health problems, anxiety, and depression. Although results may not be generalizable to all populations, it underscores the impact of how an individual's perception of how their community views mental health problems play a role in the well-being of people who continuously experience environmental threats.

Keywords: mental health, depression, distress, anxiety, disaster-prone communities

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