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Prospect of marriage among adolescents with mental illness in the lens of parents

No less than the highest law of the land, the Philippine Constitution, acknowledges the inviolability of marriage as a social institution and mandates the state to employ measures to protect it and ensure active promotion of its total development. Marriage, in Philippine laws, is “a special contract of permanent union between a man and a woman entered in accordance with law for the establishment of conjugal and family life”. Most cultures, much like that of the Philippines, expect individuals to get married and have families. But marriage and family life can be stressful, requiring considerable efforts in adjustment. Added stresses of marriage and family life may overwhelm an individual with an existing mental illness. This grounded theory study is aimed at exploring the parents’ views on the marriage prospect of their mentally ill adolescent children. 10 parents, with mentally ill adolescent children confined in a tertiary hospital in Manila, Philippines were interviewed after securing consent. Five themes and 14 subthemes were identified. Themes identified were: Marriage as a solution, desiring but anxious, seeing a “bright” home, more than a roller coaster ride and in my heart within my view. Attainment of an optimal family life after marriage of a mentally ill is a multifaceted phenomenon. Parents of mentally ill adolescents should be assisted to help them cope with the stresses of everyday adjustment on their children’s existing challenges.

Biography

Gilmore G Solidum is a Professor at Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila (University of the city of Manila) and was former Dean of the College of Nursing and University Registrar of the same institution. Dr. Solidum is a registered nurse and a licensed professional teacher. Aside from his basic nursing education, he is a holder of a master’s degree in psychology and nursing and has a doctorate in management. Dr. Solidum is an awarded educator and researcher. His involvement goes beyond the academe as he is also active in professional development activities and community development initiatives.

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