



**THE MEME THERAPY: COLLEGE STUDENTS' USE OF HUMOR TO
COPE WITH COVID-19 ANXIETY**

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ABSTRACT

The Philippines is traditionally considered one of the happiest countries in the world despite the challenges they face; however, this may have changed due to the pandemic that hit the Philippines in 2020. The constant reminders of lockdowns, quarantines, and the use of personal protective equipment and vaccines have taken a mental toll on everyone who hears them and may even be traumatic to some as the media portrays it as an impending doom for the vulnerable. As an attempt to avert their attention, people find ways to cope, and one emerging as the most popular yet unconventional way is through the use of memes. Thus, this study explored the use of memes as a coping mechanism for COVID-19-related anxiety among ten (10) Filipino college students. Through a phenomenological approach with the use of semi-structured interviews. The results of the study examined the lived experiences and opinions of Filipino college students by utilizing interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), identifying shared themes, uncovering both positive and negative aspects of meme usage, its relevance to Filipino culture, and the college students' associated experiences. The findings will serve as a framework for related studies and their implications for potential use in therapy.

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