

DELVING INTO THE MENTAL HEALTH OF STUDENTS OF EUGENIO CABEZAS NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This descriptive research was conducted to determine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic to the mental health of students and it was also conducted to understand the level of the students' mental health in terms of depression, anxiety and stress. The research instrument that was used was adopted. The Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS-21) is a set of three-self report scales designed to measure the emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. It consists of 21 items. The respondents of the research were 50 students from the Eugenio Cabezas National High School. The mean method was used to determine the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and also the level of mental health of the students in terms of depression, anxiety and stress. The following results showed that anxiety got the highest rating and level with an interpretation level of Extremely Severe followed by depression and stress with an interpretation level of Moderate.

Keywords: anxiety, COVID 19, depression, mental health status of students, stress.

INTRODUCTION

In March 11 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak a global pandemic (Dominico 2020). The Philippines is one of the 228 countries affected by the disease. In order to reduce the risk of the virus transmission, President Rodrigo Duterte imposed enhanced community quarantine in Luzon, the country's most populous place on March 16, 2020. This lockdown manifested as curfews, checkpoints, travel restrictions and suspension of businesses and school activities. (Gazette, 2020) However, as the virus is yet to be curbed varying quarantine restrictions are implemented across the country. Furthermore, schools have shifted to online learning despite financial and psychological concerns (Baticulon RE, 2021).

In the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic global prevalence of anxiety and depression increased by a massive 25%, according to a scientific brief releases by the World Health Organization (WHO) one major explanation for the increase is the unprecedented stress caused by the social isolation resulting from the pandemic. Loneliness, fear of infection suffering and death for oneself and for loved one grief after bereavement and financial worries have also been cited as stressors leading to anxiety and depression. (WHO 2022)

The scientific brief which is informed by a comprehensive review of existing evidence about the impact of Covid-19 on mental health and mental health services and includes estimated from the latest Global Burden of Disease study shows that the pandemic has affected the mental health of young people. (WHO 2022) For adolescence is a crucial period for social development school closures and social distancing during the Covid-19 pandemic can worsen existing mental

health problems in adolescents and increases the risk of future mental health issues. (Clemens V., Deschamps P Fergent J.M. 2020) A loss of routine for many adolescent particularly high school students' social isolations and feelings of loneliness increase the risk of mental illness. An increase in domestic violence and abuse during the pandemic further opposes adolescents to risks of developing mental health consequences of online learning among students can include anxiety and absenteeism. These can stem from the increased demand for new technological skills productivity and information overload (Poalses and Bezuldenhout 2018). The Covid-19 Pandemic worsened these consequences when educational institutions shifted from face-to-face activities to mostly online learning modalities to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 (Malolos et al 2021) while all students may be affected students from lower socioeconomic localities have higher mental distress due to their limited financial capacity to obtain the necessary gadgets and internet connectivity. Given these a digital divide stemming from socioeconomic inequalities can result in mental health disparities among students during the pandemic (cleofas J.V Rocha I.C.N 2021). In a recent article, Hou et al (2020) noted that young Chinese students from resource-scarce localities may be at risk for mental disorders during the Covid-19 pandemic due to social and cultural factors. Similar observations were noted in the Philippines. Children had a higher risk for poor mental health compared to adults in the Philippines partly due to their shift to online learning modalities during the pandemic (Malolos et al 2021).

The most common mental health issues are depression, anxiety and stress. Depression negatively affects how you feel, the way you think and how you act (Felix, 2020). Anxiety is your body's natural response to stress. Also Anxiety feels different depending on the person experiencing it (Timothy, Kimberly, 2020). Stress can be defined as any type of change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain. Stress is also your body's response to anything that requires your attention or action (Elizabeth, David, 2022).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study aimed to delve into the mental health of Eugenio Cabezas National High School students during Covid-19 pandemic

Specifically, it intended to answer the following questions:

1. What effects did the COVID-19 pandemic do to the mental health of the students in terms of:
 - a. Depression
 - b. Anxiety
 - c. Stress
2. What is the depression level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic?
3. What is the anxiety level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic?
4. What is the stress level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic?

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The Descriptive research design was used in this research. It allows you to systematically describe phenomenon, situation, or population. The research was conducted in Trece Martires City, in the province of Cavite. The Data was gathered in Eugenio Cabezas National High

School. The researcher used purposive and convenient sampling method in selecting the respondents for this research. There are 50 students-respondents from Eugenio Cabelas National High School.

The research instrument that was used is an adopted survey questionnaire. The Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 items (DASS-21) is a set of three self-report scales designed to measure the emotional states of depression, anxiety and stress. Each of the three DASS-21 scales contains items divided into subscales with similar content. Scores on the DASS-21 will need to be multiplied by 2 to calculate the final score

Meaning	Depression	Anxiety	Stress
Normal	0-9	0-7	0-14
Mild	10-13	8-9	15-18
Moderate	14-20	10-14	19-25
Severe	21-27	15-19	26-33
Extremely Severe	28+	20+	34+

RESULTS

The following table presents the mental health of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic:

Table 1: COVID-19 pandemic effects to students' mental health in terms of depression

Indicators	Mean
I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	1.34
I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	1.24
I felt I had nothing to look forward to	1.24
I felt down-hearted and blue	1.24
I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	1.28
I felt that I was rather touchy	1.16
I felt that life was meaningless	1.46

Table 1 shows that the students only feel TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME all the indicators of depression in the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 2: COVID-19 pandemic effects to students' mental health in terms of anxiety

Indicators	Mean
I was aware of dryness of my mouth	1.32
I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)	1.18
I experienced trembling (e.g., in the hands)	1.5
I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	1.54
I felt I was close to panic	1.4
I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g., sense of heart increase heart missing of a beat.	1.34
I felt scared without any good reason	1.64

Table 2 shows that the students only feel TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME all the indicators of anxiety in the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 3: COVID-19 pandemic effects to students' mental health in terms of stress

Indicators	Mean
I found it hard to wind down	1.18
I tended to over-react to situations	1.38
I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	1.5
I found myself getting agitated	1.18
I found it difficult to relax	1.44
I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	1.28
I felt that I wasn't much as a person	1.4

Table 3 shows that the students only feel TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME all the indicators of stress in the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

Table 4: Depression level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Domain	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Depression	17.92	MODERATE

Table 4 shows that the students' depression level in the time of COVID-19 pandemic is MODERATE with the mean of 17.92.

Table 5: Anxiety level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Domain	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Anxiety	19.84	EXTREMELY SEVERE

Table 5 shows that the students' anxiety level in the time of COVID-19 pandemic is EXTREMELY SEVERE with the mean of 19.84.

Table 6: Stress level of students in the time of COVID-19 pandemic

Domain	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Stress	18.72	MODERATE

Table 6 shows that the students stress level in the time of COVID-19 pandemic is MODERATE with the mean of 18.72.

DISCUSSIONS

The primary purpose of this research was to delve into the mental health of the students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Specifically it aims to know the effects of the Covid-19 did to the mental

health of students and also the level of the mental health of students in terms of depression, anxiety and stress during the pandemic.

The results from the survey that was conducted to Eugenio Cabezas National High School showed the effects of the Covid-19 to the mental health of the students. There are 7 indicators in each DASS (Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale). In terms of Depression, indicator 3, I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all has a mean rating of **1.34**. Indicator 5, I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things has a mean rating of **1.24**. Indicator 10, I felt I had nothing to look forward to has a mean rating of **1.24**. Indicator 13, I felt down-hearted and blue has a mean rating of **1.24**. Indicator 16, I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything has a mean rating of **1.28**. Indicator 18, I felt that I was rather touchy has a mean rating of **1.16**. Indicator 21, I felt that life was meaningless has a mean rating of **1.46**. The highest mean rating in terms of depression was the Indicator 21, which is, I felt that life was meaningless with a mean rating of **1.46** this means that this indicator was the one the students experienced the most in terms of depression. Also, the students experienced the indicators to depression only **TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME** during the pandemic.

In terms of Anxiety, indicator 2, I was aware of dryness of my mouth has a mean rating of **1.32**. indicator 4, I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g. excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion) has a mean rating of **1.18**. Indicator 7, I experience trembling (e.g. in the hands) has a mean rating of **1.5**. Indicator 9, I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself has a mean rating of **1.54**. Indicator 15, I felt I was close to panic has a mean rating of **1.4**. Indicator 19, I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g. sense of heart increase heart missing of a beat) has a mean rating of **1.34**. Indicator 20, I felt scared without any good reason has a mean rating of **1.64**. The highest mean rating in terms of anxiety was Indicator 20, which is, I felt scared without any good reason with a mean rating of **1.64** this means that this indicator was the one the students experienced the most in terms of anxiety. Also, the students experienced the indicators to anxiety only **TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME** during the pandemic.

In terms of Stress, indicator 1, I found it hard to wind down has a mean rating of **1.18**. Indicator 6, I tended to over-react to situations has a mean rating of **1.38**. Indicator 8, I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy with a mean rating of **1.5**. Indicator 11, I found myself getting agitated. with a mean rating of **1.18**. Indicator 12, I found it difficult to relax has a mean rating of **1.44**. Indicator 14, I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing has a mean rating of **1.24**. Indicator 17, I felt that I wasn't much of a person has a mean rating of **1.4**. The highest mean rating in terms of stress was Indicator 12, which is, I found it difficult to relax with a mean rating of **1.44** this means that this indicator was the one the students experienced the most in terms of stress. Also, the students experienced the indicators to stress only **TO SOME DEGREE OR SOME TIME** during the pandemic.

The results also revealed the Depression, Anxiety and Stress level of the students during the Covid-19 pandemic. In terms of Depression, the results showed that students experienced depression to a **MODERATE** level with a mean rating of **17.92**. In terms of Anxiety, the results showed that students experienced anxiety to a **EXTREMELY SEVERE** level with a mean rating of **19.84**. And lastly in terms of Stress, results showed that students experienced stress to a **MODERATE** level with a mean rating of **18.72**. The following results showed that anxiety

was the highest. It has a mean rating of **19.84** and at the level of **EXTREMELY SEVERE**. This means that most students from Eugenio Cabezas National High School experienced anxiety the most during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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Appendix B

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, STRESS SCALE
DASS21

Name(Optional) _____ Year and section: _____

Please read each and **circle** number 0, 1, 2, or 3 which indicated how much the statement applied to you during the **Covid-19 Pandemic**. There are no right or wrong answers,

The rating scale is as follows:

- 0- Did not apply to me at all
 1- Applied to me to some degree or some time
 2- Applied to me to a considerable degree or a good part of time
 3- Applied to me very much or most of the time

1. (s) I found it hard to wind down	0	1	2	3
2. (a) I was aware of dryness of my mouth	0	1	2	3
3. (d) I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	0	1	2	3
4. (a) I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g. excessively rapid breathing, breathlessness in the absence of physical exertion)	0	1	2	3
5. (d) I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	0	1	2	3
6. (s) I tended to over-react to situations	0	1	2	3
7. (a) I experienced trembling(e.g. in the hands)	0	1	2	3
8. (s) I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	0	1	2	3
9. (a) I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	0	1	2	3
10. (d) I felt I had nothing to look forward to	0	1	2	3
11. (s) I found myself getting agitated	0	1	2	3
12. (s) I found it difficult to relax	0	1	2	3
13. (d) I felt down-hearted and blue	0	1	2	3
14. (s) I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	0	1	2	3
15. (a)I felt I was close to panic	0	1	2	3
16. (d) I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	0	1	2	3
17. (s) I felt that I wasn't much as a person	0	1	2	3
18. (d) I felt that I was rather touchy	0	1	2	3
19. (a)I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion (e.g. sense of heart increase heart missing of a beat.	0	1	2	3
20. (a)I felt scared without any good reason	0	1	2	3
21. (d)I felt that life was meaningless	0	1	2	3