

CORRELATION LEVEL OF MENTAL HEALTH ADJUSTMENT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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Abstract

Mental health is a crucial factor in students' overall development, influencing their well-being and academic success. Senior high school students face various challenges, including academic pressures, societal expectations, and personal transitions, which can negatively impact their mental health. This study examines the correlation between mental health adjustment and academic performance among senior high school students. Using a quantitative, descriptive-correlational design, data was collected from 600 students across the ABM, HUMSS, and STEM strands. The Depression Anxiety Stress Scale (DASS-21) was used to assess mental health. Findings showed that stress has a significant inverse relationship with academic performance, while depression and anxiety do not. This indicates a need for targeted stress management programs to support students' academic outcomes and emotional well-being.

Keywords: *Mental Health, Academic Performance, Senior High School, Depression, Anxiety, Stress, DASS-21*

INTRODUCTION

Many students today face academic challenges as they cope with mental health issues. These struggles can gradually impact their performance, productivity, and focus in school. Over time, they may also experience emotional and psychological strain. Adjusting to this mental health challenges can be especially difficult when students are dealing with external pressures such as environmental, financial, personal, or family-related problems. Having unstable mental health as a student may affect their energy level, concentration, dependability, and

optimism, leading to anxiety and depression. The outcome may lead to the lowest level of self-efficacy, which can impact them, and the results would be thoughts of being hopeless in every situation. According to a research study, being a student is stressful. It may induce mental anguish in some students and hamper their academic performance (Grotan et al., 2019). It is essential to comprehend each strand of mental health adjustment of the Senior High School students of Labas Senior High School upon their perceived academic performance.

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Online learning has become the teaching mode during this pandemic since it decreases the chances of students acquiring the virus. Several factors have been identified as having a significant impact on learning during the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been identified as having a substantial impact on learning during the pandemic. The following are the most important factors that influence participation in online learning: a sense of community, educator's involvement, life characteristics and previous experience, communication, styles of knowledge, and encouragement, among others (Gainor, 2018). In addition, five dimensions were also considered: the learner's mood and affect, their difficulty concerning their corresponding course, attitude, perceived learning outcome, and motivation (Kikuchi, 2020).

According to Joksimovi, Kovanovi, and Riecke (2015), with the steady development of online education and online learning environments, as well as the encouragement of social interactions between students, it is more likely that students will achieve significantly higher levels of academic achievement than is expected of them in the traditional classroom setting.

Kikuchi (2006) explained that when online learning is introduced early in the process, motivational factors tend to increase during the teaching process. As it allows learners at the initiation phase to pique their interest in online teaching, it is likely to result in an overall increase in engagement in individual learning, which is expected to result in an overall increase in active participation in special education. According to Maheshwari (2021), perceived enjoyment was another factor that influenced the learners' experience during online learning. He went on to say that perceived enjoyment positively impacts the intention to learn online.

According to Angelkoska (2018), there is a good correlation between anxiety and academic stress. Students tend to have extremely high emotional intelligence and academic performance due to the substantial positive link between time anxiety and academic focus. Additionally, Baddeley (2001) noted that worry preoccupies working memory capacity, reducing the accessibility of attentional resources used for storing and processing relevant information in the central executive, which may affect performance during concurrent tasks requiring efficient attention regulation.

The pandemic has resulted in the accumulation of positive and negative

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perceptions of online learning, which have accumulated during online learning—the system's flexibility results in various constraints, such as an unstable signal. Due to the limited human interaction, some students have demonstrated a lack of motivation and have found it difficult to practice conversation skills with their peers. However, despite the available flexibility, many students still prefer face-to-face learning over online learning because it increases motivation. At the same time, the material is being delivered during class (Laili & Nashir, 2021). This study is significant to determine the Mental Health Adjustment and Perceived Academic Performance of SHS Students of Labas SHS in the Division of Santa Rosa. Findings of this study will be helpful to identify the needs of students who are experiencing extremely severe psychological states of depression, anxiety, and stress regarding mental adjustments.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.

1. To determine the profile of senior high school students in terms of age, sex, and strand.
2. To assess the level of mental health adjustment in terms of depression, anxiety, and stress.
3. To find if there is a significant relationship between mental health adjustment and their profile variables.

4. To determine the relationship between mental health adjustment and academic performance.
5. To propose a mental health program based on the findings.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a descriptive-correlational research design. A total of 600 senior high school students from Labas Senior High School were selected through convenience sampling. The respondents represented the ABM, HUMSS, and STEM academic strands. Data were collected using the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Scale (DASS-21). Descriptive statistics, Pearson r correlation, and significance testing at a 0.05 level were used for data analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. **Profile of senior high school students in terms of age, sex, and strand.**

Table 1
The Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
16 - 17	560	93.3 %
18 - 19	31	5.2 %
20 -21	9	<u>1.5 %</u>
Total	600	100 %

Most respondents are at the age of 16 - 17 years old with the totality of 560 or 93.3 percent of the sample. The respondents with

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31 or 5.2 percent of the sample are at the age of 18 -19 years old. The respondents with 9 or 1.5 percent of the sample are at the age of 20 -21 years old

Table 2
The Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Sex

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	329	54.8 %
Male	271	45.2 %
Total	600	100 %

As displayed in table 2, most of the respondents are female with a totality of 329 or 54.8 percent of the sample. While the respondents with 271 or 45.2 percent of the sample are male

Table 3
The Demographic Profile of the Respondents in terms of Strand

Strand	Frequency	Percentage
ABM	200	33.3 %
HUMSS	200	33.3 %
STEM	200	33.4 %
Total	600	100 %

As displayed in table 3, ABM, HUMSS AND STEM respondents are equal with a totality of 200 each or 33.3 percent of the sample. It sums up to 600 respondents which accounts to 100 percent of the sample size participated in the study.

2. The Respondents Level of Mental Health Adjustment in terms of Depression, Anxiety and Stress

Table 4
State of Mental Adjustment of Senior High School student

Table 4 illustrates the mental health of a senior high school students at Labas Senior High School. Those were simplified results from the data gathered in the survey forms distributed. According to respondents, the findings from all senior high school students indicate an extremely concerning condition of mental health adjustment, with a mean score of 33.67 depression, 32.18 for anxiety, and 35.18 for stress. Overall, that showed that senior high school students in grades 11 and 12 were experiencing extremely severe psychological states of depression, anxiety, and stress regarding mental adjustments.

As shown in Table 4, the study's findings imply that stress has the most rampant psychological effects and has the most extensive area for mental health adjustment. While depression comes second and anxiety comes third

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MENTAL HEALTH ADJUSTMENT									
DEPRESSION	f	%	ANXIETY	f	%	STRESS	f	%	
Normal	0	0	Normal	0	0	Normal	0	0	
Mild	0	0	Mild	0	0	Mild	14	2.3	
Moderate	16	2.7	Moderate	0	0	Moderate	44	7.3	
Severe	76	12.7	Severe	15	2.5	Severe	157	26.2	
Extremely Severe	508	84.6	Extremely Severe	585	97.5	Extremely Severe	385	64.2	
TOTAL	600	100	TOTAL	600	100	TOTAL	600	100	
MEAN SCORES	33.67		MEAN SCORES	32.18		MEAN SCORES	35.18		
SD	6.33		SD	6.91		SD	7.33		
Extremely Severe	Extremely Severe			Extremely Severe			Extremely Severe		

Table 5
Depression

Table 5 shows the results of the surveys that portray the common thoughts and emotions associated with depression that students often experience at Labas Senior High School. The results indicate significant emotional and psychological distress among the respondents, with a total weighted mean of 2.41, categorized as "Very High." This suggests a pervasive struggle with negative emotions and well-being. The highest-rated statement, "I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things" (2.70), reflects pronounced lethargy and lack of motivation, a hallmark of severe emotional strain. Similarly, "I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all" (2.63) highlights an inability to

feel joy or positivity, indicative of emotional exhaustion. Other statements, such as "I felt downhearted and blue" (2.14) and "I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything" (2.24), underscore a significant sense of sadness and apathy.

Concerningly, respondents also expressed troubling perceptions of self-worth and purpose, with "I felt I wasn't worth much as a person" (2.30) and "I felt that life was meaningless" (2.29) scoring "High." These results suggest existential concerns and feelings of inadequacy. Furthermore, the "Very High" score of 2.52 for "I felt that I had nothing to look forward to" reveals a profound sense of hopelessness, which can severely impact mental health and quality of life.

According to the findings of a study carried out by Radwan et al. (2021), most students suffered from moderate to severe levels of depression due to the pandemic. This was particularly evident in the students' academic performance. Furthermore, Lopes & Nihei (2021) went into further detail about the detrimental effects that depressive symptoms may have on an individual, which include but are not limited to the following: decreased life satisfaction, decreased psychological well-being, and decreased physical well-being. Disengagement, denial, self-blame, self-distraction, and drug abuse

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are all examples of maladaptive coping strategies.

A. Depression	MEAN	Descriptive Equivalent
I couldn't seem to experience any positive feeling at all	2.63	Very High
I felt that I had nothing to look forward to	2.52	Very High
I found it difficult to work up the initiative to do things	2.70	Very High
I felt down-hearted and blue	2.14	High
I was unable to become enthusiastic about anything	2.24	High
I felt I wasn't worth much as a person	2.30	High
I felt that life was meaningless	2.29	High
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.41	Very High

Table 6
Anxiety

Table 6 results of the survey portray the common thoughts and emotions associated with the anxiety of the students often experience at Labas Senior High School. The data reflects notable levels of anxiety-related symptoms among respondents, as indicated by a total weighted mean of 2.30, categorized as "High." The highest-rated statement, "I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself" (2.65), categorized as "Very High," underscores significant anticipatory anxiety and fear of judgment or embarrassment. This suggests heightened social or performance-related

concerns. Similarly, "I experienced trembling" (2.53) also falls under the "Very High" category, indicating a physical manifestation of anxiety that is likely distressing to those experiencing it.

Other statements, such as "I was aware of the dryness of my mouth" (2.27), "I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion" (2.23), and "I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing)" (2.16), reflect physiological symptoms commonly associated with heightened anxiety or stress responses. These symptoms suggest that respondents are experiencing physical discomfort linked to their emotional state. Additionally, "I felt I was close to panic" (2.15) and "I felt scared without any good reason" (2.12) highlight feelings of fear and panic that may occur without a clear trigger, further underscoring the pervasive nature of anxiety in this group.

This finding was supported by the research carried out by Zeng et al. (2021), which aimed to determine how the pandemic affected the academic performance of students as well as their mental health. In addition, Savitsky et al. (2020) also further explained that students with stronger resilience often use mental disengagement, which is associated with higher anxiety levels and significantly affects students' academic performance.

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B. Anxiety	MEAN	Descriptive Equivalent
I was aware of the dryness of my mouth	2.27	High
I experienced breathing difficulty (e.g., excessively rapid breathing)	2.16	High
I experienced trembling	2.53	Very High
I was worried about situations in which I might panic and make a fool of myself	2.65	Very High
I felt I was close to panic	2.15	High
I was aware of the action of my heart in the absence of physical exertion	2.23	High
I felt scared without any good reason	2.12	High
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.30	High

Legend: 1.00-1.65 (Low); 1.66-2.30 (High); 2.31-3.00 (Very High)

Table 7
Stress

Table 7 shows the survey results, which depict the common thoughts and emotions associated with stress that students frequently experience. The data indicates a significant level of stress and emotional reactivity among respondents, as evidenced by the total weighted mean of 2.51, categorized as "Very High." The highest-rated statement, "I tended to over-react to situations" (2.92), reflects a pronounced tendency toward heightened emotional responses, suggesting difficulties in managing stress or maintaining emotional balance. Similarly, "I found myself

getting agitated" (2.69) and "I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy" (2.68), both categorized as "Very High," highlight a state of heightened physiological and emotional arousal that may be exhausting for individuals experiencing it.

Statements such as "I found it hard to wind down" (2.62) and "I found it difficult to relax" (2.49) further emphasize an inability to achieve a state of calm or restfulness, indicating that respondents may struggle with persistent tension or worry. Additionally, while rated slightly lower, "I felt that I was rather touchy" (2.12) and "I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing" (2.09) reveal irritability and impatience, which are often associated with chronic stress and a strained mental state.

The results were then supported by Radwan et al. (2021), who stated that the rapid outbreak of COVID-19 has consequences on mental health. The study mentioned above examined the perceived stress level in school students participating in distance learning during the COVID-19 period. The findings indicated that the students experience moderate to high levels of stress during the period in which schools are closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The shift from traditional learning methods to online learning has been linked to a

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significantly increased prevalence of psychological distress.

very high, gaining a total weighted mean score of 2.41.

C. Stress	MEAN	Descriptive Equivalent
I found it hard to wind down	2.62	Very High
I found it difficult to relax	2.49	Very High
I tended to over-react to situations	2.92	Very High
I felt that I was using a lot of nervous energy	2.68	Very High
I found myself getting agitated	2.69	Very High
I was intolerant of anything that kept me from getting on with what I was doing	2.09	High
I felt that I was rather touchy	2.12	High
TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.51	Very High

Legend: 1.00-1.65 (Low); 1.66-2.30 (High); 2.31-3.00 (Very High)

Table 8
Mental Health Adjustment

Table 8 shows the survey results of the total weighted mean of various mental health adjustments, including depression, anxiety, and stress. In addition, the table presents that majority of the student that often experience stress gaining a 2.51 weighted mean. Overall, the total weighted mean was interpreted as

The results were then supported by Barbayannis et. al. (2022) that focused on university students revealed a significant correlation between academic stress and mental well-being. Students reporting higher academic stress also exhibited poorer mental health outcomes, including increased symptoms of depression and anxiety. This underscores the impact of academic pressures on students' mental health.

MENTAL HEALTH ADJUSTMENT	WEIGHTED MEAN	INTERPRETATION
A. Depression	2.41	Very High
B. Anxiety	2.30	High
C. Stress	2.51	Very High
AVERAGE TOTAL WEIGHTED MEAN	2.41	Very High

3. Significant Relationship between the Level of Mental Health Adjustment when they will be group according to Age, Sex and Strand'

Table 9
Significant Relationship between the Level of Mental Health Adjustment when they will be group according to Age

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VARIABLE	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Mental Health Adjustment and Age	0.0537	0.1890	Accept Ho	Not Significant

*.05 level of significance

Table 9 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of mental health adjustment when they will group according to age. The table reveals that the r-value was 0.0537, and the p-value was 0.1890. Moreover, it was found out that the p value is 0.1890 which is more than the significant value of 0.05. This result indicates that the level of mental health adjustment when the respondents' group according to age is found to be not significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 10

Significant Relationship between the Level of Mental Health Adjustment when they will be group according to Sex

VARIABLE	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Mental Health Adjustment and Sex	0.0847	0.0397	Reject Ho	Significant

*.05 level of significance

Table 10 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of mental health adjustment when they will group according to sex. The table reveals that the r-value was

0.0847, and the p-value was 0.0397. Moreover, it was found out that the p value is 0.0397 which is less than the significant value of 0.05. This result indicates that the level of mental health adjustment when the respondents' group according to sex is found to be significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected

Table 11

VARIABLE	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Respondents' Level of Mental Health Adjustment and Strand	0.0347	0.4058	Accept Ho	Not Significant

Significant Relationship between the Level of Mental Health Adjustment when they will be group according to Strand

Table 11 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of mental health adjustment when they will group according to strand. The table reveals that the r-value was 0.0347, and the p-value was 0.4058. Moreover, it was found out that the p value is 0.4058 which is more than the significant value of 0.05. This result indicates that the level of mental health adjustment when the respondents group according to strand is found to be not significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted.

4. Is there a significant relationship between their level of mental health

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adjustment and their academic performance as revealed by their first semester grade?

Table 12

Significant Relationship between the Level of Mental Health Adjustment and Academic Performance as revealed by First Semester Grade

Level of Mental Health Adjustment	Academic Performance	r-value	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Depression	Academic Performance	0.01685	0.6803	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Anxiety	Academic Performance	0.04215	0.3026	Accept Ho	Not Significant
Stress	Academic Performance	-0.0868	0.03352	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 12 shows the relationship between the respondents' level of mental health adjustment and academic performance as revealed by first semester grade. The table reveals that the r-value of level of mental health adjustment in terms of depression and anxiety to the academic performance of the respondents was 0.01685 and 0.04215, and the p-value was 0.6803 and 0.3026. Moreover, it was found out that both p value is more than the significant value of 0.05. This result indicates that the level of mental health adjustment in terms of depression and anxiety to the academic performance is found to be not significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is accepted. In addition, the table also reveals the r-value between the level of mental health

adjustment in terms of stress and academic performance of the respondents was -0.0868, and the p-value was 0.03352. Moreover, it was found out that p value is less than the significant value of 0.05. This result indicates that between the level of mental health adjustment in terms of depression and academic performance is found to be significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

- 1.Though equally distributed among strands, most of the research participants (dominated by females) age 16 to 17 since they are the average ages for Senior High School.
- 2.Senior High School students are highly experiencing depression, anxiety, and stress due to mental health adjustments.
- 3.Although age and strand do not relate to the mental adjustment levels of the students, learner's sex is related to their level of mental adjustment.
- 4.Depression and anxiety as components of mental adjustments are not significantly related to the students' academic performance. However, stress affects their academic performance.
5. A mental health program focused on stress management should be prioritized

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Recommendations:

Based on the summary mentioned above of findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are being offered:

1. Schools should prioritize the development and implementation of a comprehensive mental health program that focuses on stress management techniques. This could include workshops, counseling services, mindfulness activities, and time management training to help students cope with academic and personal stress effectively.
2. Since the study found that a learner's sex is related to their level of mental adjustment, it is recommended to design mental health initiatives that address gender-specific needs. For example, targeted counseling sessions and peer support groups can be created to ensure inclusivity and relevance.
3. Schools should consider conducting regular mental health assessments to identify students who may be struggling with depression, anxiety, or stress. Early detection will enable timely interventions to support these students before their mental health issues escalate.
4. Include modules on emotional resilience, stress management, and coping strategies in the Senior High School curriculum. Educating students about mental health will equip them with skills to navigate challenges and foster a supportive school environment.
5. Engage parents and guardians in mental health initiatives by providing workshops or seminars on understanding and supporting their children's mental health. Building a strong support system at home can complement school efforts and improve students' overall well-being.
6. The educational system must consider the quantity of work and assignments assigned to each student. The supervisor must verify that the workload is appropriate for the student's developmental age and mental health status. Additionally, the educational system must provide a secure area for students to vent and express their diverse opinions, even obtrusive ones.
7. Lastly, it is suggested that educational institutions should always consider various factors affecting a student's academic performance and should not limit themselves to psychological factors. Educators must also find various interventions and ways to increase students' morale and reduce their

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anxiety, stress, and probability of acquiring depression by providing various counseling services and facilities for all the students

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