

Depression Concerning the Stigma of Mental Health

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated personal attributes, the level of awareness about mental health and depression, and the self-perception regarding self-stigma and public stigma in Barangay Alawihao, Daet, Camarines Sur. It also uncovers the respondent's level of awareness about mental health and depression topics and self-perception of self-stigma and public stigma. In addition, it also proposed and recommended activities to disseminate awareness of depression. The study utilized a descriptive qualitative research design with 100 respondents. Data collected were collated and analyzed through descriptive statistics using frequency count, percentage technique, and weighted mean. The findings revealed that the respondents are young adults, with the majority of female college undergraduates displaying a commendable awareness level regarding mental health and depression. Suggested seminars and leaflets are effective tools for disseminating relevant information on mental health, depression, and stigma. With this, it is recommended to conduct further studies using different variables, continuing to raise awareness about mental health causes, organizing seminar series, and distributing leaflets to combat self-stigma and public stigma on depression. Additionally, the study suggests crafting a proposal for conducting seminars and creating and distributing leaflets.

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Introduction

Mental health is a crucial aspect of overall well-being, yet it often remains shrouded in stigma and misunderstanding. This issue is of paramount importance because mental health affects every facet of an individual's life, including their physical health, relationships, productivity, and overall quality of life. When mental health issues are not addressed due to stigma or lack of awareness, the consequences can be severe, leading to worsening symptoms, diminished functioning, and even life-threatening situations such as suicide [1]-[3].

Stigma and misunderstanding surrounding mental health create barriers to seeking help and support. Many individuals may feel ashamed or embarrassed about their mental health struggles, fearing judgment or discrimination from others. This can prevent them from accessing necessary treatments and resources, exacerbating their conditions. Furthermore, public stigma reinforces harmful stereotypes and misinformation about mental illnesses, perpetuating a cycle of ignorance and prejudice [4]-[8].

Addressing mental health stigma and enhancing awareness are essential steps toward creating a more compassionate and supportive society. By educating the public and promoting open discussions about mental health, we can reduce misconceptions and encourage more people to seek help without fear of stigma. Increased awareness also fosters a better understanding of the challenges faced by those with mental health conditions, promoting empathy and support within communities [9]-[13].

Additionally, improving mental health awareness and reducing stigma can lead to better resource allocation and policy-making. When society acknowledges the importance of mental health, there is a greater push for funding, research, and services dedicated to mental health care. This can lead to more effective treatments, improved access to care, and overall better mental health outcomes for individuals [5][14][15].

Tackling the stigma and misunderstanding surrounding mental health is vital for ensuring that individuals receive the support and care they need. By fostering an environment of awareness and acceptance, we can improve the overall well-being of communities and help individuals lead healthier, more fulfilling lives. The researcher aimed to identify the awareness of the respondents of the said locale towards depression about the stigma on mental health. It was aimed to create a useful leaflet that contains information about information to serve as a necessary output that will help the respondents and other constituents of barangay Alawihao from perceiving a person with depression. This study answered the following questions:

1. What are the personal attributes of the respondents in terms of age sex, and educational attainment?

2. What is the respondent's level of awareness about the topic of mental health and depression?
3. What is the self-perception of the respondents as to self-stigma and public stigma?
4. What proposed activity can be recommended to disseminate awareness of depression?

Material and Methods

The study involved 100 participants from Barangay Alawihao, Daet, and Camarines Norte, all of whom served as respondents. To gather relevant data, the researcher designed a comprehensive questionnaire that served as the primary instrument for the study. This questionnaire was meticulously crafted to elicit detailed information regarding the respondents' attributes, levels of awareness about mental health and depression, and their self-perceptions regarding self-stigma and public stigma.

The data collected through these questionnaires were subsequently evaluated and analyzed using descriptive statistical methods. Specifically, the analysis employed frequency counts, percentage techniques, and weighted means to provide a clear and concise overview of the findings. These statistical tools helped in quantifying the level of awareness and the extent of stigma among the respondents, offering a solid foundation for interpreting the results.

The use of descriptive statistics allowed the researcher to present the data in an organized and understandable manner, highlighting key trends and patterns within the community [16]. This method of analysis was crucial in identifying the areas where awareness was commendable and where there was still significant room for improvement. By breaking down the data into frequencies, percentages, and means, the researcher was able to draw meaningful conclusions about the community's overall understanding of mental health issues and the prevalence of stigma.

This rigorous approach ensured that the findings were not only reliable but also actionable, providing a clear direction for future initiatives aimed at raising mental health awareness and reducing stigma in Barangay Alawihao. Through this study, valuable insights were gained, forming the basis for recommended interventions such as educational seminars and the distribution of informational leaflets. These recommendations aim to enhance mental health literacy and create a more supportive environment for individuals struggling with mental health issues.

Results

This data table summarizes the frequency and percentage distributions of the respondents based on age (Table 1), sex (Table 2), and educational attainment (Table 3), along with a detailed breakdown of age and sex distributions (Table 4).

Table 1. Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
16-25 years	76	76%
26-35 years	11	11%
36-45 years	11	11%
46 years and above	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Table 2. Sex Distribution of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	69	69%
Male	31	31%
Total	100	100%

Table 3. Educational Attainment of Respondents

Educational Attainment	Frequency	Percentage
College Undergraduate	34	34%
High School Undergraduate	26	26%
High School Graduate	18	18%
College Graduate	13	13%
Elementary Graduate	7	7%
Elementary Undergraduate	2	2%
Total	100	100%

Table 4. Age and Sex Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Female Frequency	Female Percentage	Male Frequency	Male Percentage
16-25 years	52	52%	24	24%
26-35 years	7	7%	4	4%
36-45 years	9	9%	2	2%
46 years and above	1	1%	1	1%
Total	69	69%	31	31%

The overall summary reflected that the highest indicator which received a total weighted mean of 4.23 was the indicator “Awareness on Mental Health” which is interpreted as fully aware. This shows that most of the respondents are confident in terms of their knowledge of mental health discussions. It is followed by the Indicator “Awareness of depression” which received a weighted mean of 4.19 and was interpreted as aware. Furthermore, the indicator “Self-perception on Public Stigma” gathered a weighted mean of 4.13 with a verbal description of agree. The indicator that received the lowest total weighted mean was the “Self-perception on Self-Stigma” which obtained a weighted mean of 3.94 and was interpreted as agree.

Table 4. Overall Summary of Awareness

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Interpretation
Awareness on Mental Health	4.23	Fully Aware
Awareness on Depression	4.19	Aware
Self-Perception on Self-Stigma	3.94	Agree
Self-Perception on Public Stigma	4.13	Agree

Discussion

A. Problem 1: Personal Attributes of the Respondents in terms of Age, Sex, Educational Attainment

Data shows that most of the respondents are between the age of 16 to 25 which gathered a total of 76 in terms of frequency and terms of percentage a total of 76 percent. There is also a total frequency of 11 which gathered a total of 11 percentages for both 26 to 35 years old and 36 to 45 years old. The indicator on the age that got the lowest frequency of 2 and a percentage of 2 was 46 years old and above. As for the indicator of sex, it was reflected that with a frequency of 69 and a total of 69 percent, most respondents are female while the male gathered a total number of 31 in terms of frequency and equivalent of 31 in percentage.

It was concluded that by tabulating the information provided by the respondents, it was computed and presented that the College Undergraduate got a total of 34 in terms of frequency with an equivalent of 34 percent. It was followed by High school undergraduates with a frequency of 26 and 26 percent. Followed by high school graduates with a total number of frequencies of 18 and a percentage of 18. Afterwards College graduate with a total result of 13 in frequency and 13 percent. Second to last was the elementary graduate with a total of 7 in frequency and percentage. Lastly, the elementary undergraduate with a total frequency of 2 with equivalent to 2%.

Furthermore, the frequency of both female and male respondents corresponds to the respective age group. It reflected that frequency of 52 which corresponds to the percentage of 52 female respondents in line with the age group of 16 to 25 years old, for male there is a total frequency of 24 in the same age group which means that this study had more respondents that range their age from 16 to 25. It was then followed by a frequency of 9 female respondents under the age group of 36 to 45. Frequency of 7 females lined with 26 to 35 years old and a frequency of 1 female reflected to be aging from 46 to older. In terms of males, the frequency of 4 males is 26 to 35 years old, the frequency of 2 is 36 to 45 years old, and the frequency of 1 for 46 and older.

The findings on the indicator for age revealed that the study participants were predominantly young adults, highlighting a significant demographic trend within Barangay

Alawihao. This age group, typically encompassing individuals in their late teens to early thirties, represents a critical segment of the population in terms of both mental health vulnerability and the potential for impactful mental health education [17].

In terms of sex distribution, the majority of respondents were female. This gender imbalance suggests that women might be more willing to participate in mental health studies or perhaps more affected by or attuned to mental health issues in this community. Furthermore, most of these female respondents were college undergraduates. This educational background indicates a relatively high level of education among the participants, which could influence their awareness and perceptions of mental health and depression [18].

Given these demographic findings, further studies are recommended to explore additional variables beyond those examined in this study. For instance, incorporating variables such as socioeconomic status, employment status, marital status, and previous exposure to mental health education could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing mental health awareness and stigma. These additional variables could help identify specific subgroups within the community that may require more targeted mental health interventions [17]-[19].

Expanding the scope of research to include these diverse variables will help in determining more precise parameters for measuring the level of mental health awareness among future respondents. Such studies could also uncover underlying patterns or correlations that were not evident in the current research. By doing so, future research can offer more tailored recommendations and interventions, ultimately contributing to more effective mental health promotion and stigma reduction efforts within Barangay Alawihao.

In conclusion, while this study provides valuable insights into the mental health awareness and stigma perceptions among young adult, female, college undergraduates in Barangay Alawihao, it also underscores the need for continued research. By exploring a broader range of variables, future studies can enhance our understanding of mental health dynamics in this community and help develop more nuanced and effective strategies for mental health education and stigma reduction.

B. Problem 2: What is the respondent's level of awareness about the topic of mental health and depression

On Mental Health, the overall weighted mean score was 4.22 and is verbally interpreted as Fully Aware. Five indicators were interpreted as fully aware, four indicators as aware, and lastly one neutral was interpreted. This reflected result suggests that the respondent's level of awareness about mental health is at the level of satisfactory. This result was condemned by the researcher. The indicator that received the interpretation of neutral reflected that respondents

need further enlightenment on the issue of how mental health status affects the way a person acts, feels, and thinks [20].

On Depression, the overall weighted mean score was 4.19 and is verbally interpreted as Aware. Four indicators were interpreted as fully aware, and six indicators were interpreted as aware. This result suggests that the respondent's level of awareness about depression is commendable. With the current generation where open discussion on depression opened an opportunity for more scope of people to further explore health issues other than physical health issues. With more discussion, depression will be understood further and be given the attention it needs for a solution to be formulated especially in terms of prevention [20],[21].

The evaluated results concluded that most respondents demonstrated a commendable level of awareness, reflected by the classification "aware," in discussions concerning mental health and depression. This high level of awareness is crucial in combating ignorance and addressing the stigma associated with mental health issues. The study underscored that depression is a prevalent problem within Barangay Alawihao, and the respondents displayed a significant understanding of this issue [13],[20].

This widespread awareness among the respondents is commendable and should be sustained and extended to other members of the barangay. Raising awareness about the causes and implications of mental health issues, such as depression, plays a vital role in reducing stigma and promoting a more supportive community environment. Continuing to educate and inform all constituents of Barangay Alawihao can help ensure that this level of awareness is maintained and potentially increased [7],[18]. By fostering an environment where mental health awareness is prioritized, the community can better support those affected by depression and other mental health conditions. The study's findings highlight the importance of ongoing educational initiatives and the need to disseminate information widely. This can be achieved through community-based programs, seminars, and the distribution of informational materials, which can help sustain and build upon the current level of awareness [7],[13],[18].

In conclusion, the respondents' commendable awareness of mental health and depression in Barangay Alawihao is a positive finding that should be leveraged to further educate and inform the broader community. Maintaining and enhancing this awareness is essential for combating stigma and ensuring that all community members are well-informed about mental health issues.

C. Problem 3: What is the self-perception of the respondents as to self-stigma and public stigma

1. Self-stigma

The overall weighted mean score was 3.94 and is interpreted as Agree. There is one indicator interpreted as strongly agree, 8 indicators interpreted as agree, and one

interpreted as neutral. This result suggests that the respondent's perception of self-stigma is high as it garnered a high number of weight on each indicator. This reflects that respondents are aware of what is self-stigma and that it exists and is difficult to combat.

2. Public Stigma, the overall weighted mean score was 4.13 and is interpreted as Agree. Three indicators were interpreted as strongly agree, and seven indicators were interpreted as agree. The result reflected that most of the respondents agree that public stigma exists, and it is difficult to combat, even culture proved to be a contributory factor as to how stigma exists in a certain geographical area. The indicator that received the lowest weighted mean reflected that social withdrawal is the result of public stigma, despite receiving the lowest it is still interpreted that most respondents agree that public stigma leads to withdrawal from society.

The respondents' self-perceptions regarding different types of stigma showed significant variation. Despite these differences, the overall weighted mean indicated a consensus, with the majority agreeing on the issues related to self-stigma and public stigma associated with depression. This agreement underscores a shared recognition of the stigma problem within the community, although individual experiences and perceptions may differ [1],[8].

To address the issue of stigma more effectively, the researcher recommends implementing comprehensive information dissemination initiatives. Specifically, organizing a series of seminars and distributing informational leaflets within Barangay Alawihao, Daet, Camarines Norte, could serve as powerful tools for enhancing information literacy. These efforts aim to provide accurate information about depression, thereby helping to combat misinformation and reduce stigma [2],[10],[12].

Seminars offer an interactive platform for educating the community, allowing for real-time discussions, questions, and clarifications. They can be tailored to address specific aspects of mental health and stigma, thereby fostering a more in-depth understanding among participants. The inclusion of leaflets ensures that the information shared during seminars can be revisited and referenced later, reinforcing the learning and helping to sustain awareness.

By pursuing these educational initiatives, the goal is to create a more informed and supportive community. Providing accurate information about depression and addressing both self-stigma and public stigma can help individuals feel more comfortable seeking help and discussing mental health issues openly. This, in turn, can lead to better mental health outcomes and a reduction in the negative impacts of stigma.

D. Problem 4: What proposed activity can be recommended to disseminate awareness of depression

A seminar and leaflets are the interventions to be proposed. This will be used to disseminate relevant information that addresses the issues of mental health, depression, self-stigma, and public stigma. It is recommended to make an output of a proposal to conduct the seminar and formulate and create the leaflets to be disseminated to the respondents.

A seminar and the distribution of leaflets are proposed interventions aimed at disseminating relevant information to address issues related to mental health, depression, self-stigma, and public stigma. These interventions are designed to enhance the community's understanding and awareness of these critical topics.

The seminars will provide a structured environment where participants can engage with experts, ask questions, and gain a deeper understanding of mental health issues and the stigmas associated with them. This interactive format is effective in clarifying misconceptions, offering support, and encouraging open discussions about mental health and depression. In conjunction with the seminars, leaflets will be created and distributed to reinforce the information shared during the sessions. These leaflets will serve as a tangible resource that individuals can refer to at their convenience, ensuring that the knowledge imparted during the seminars is accessible and retained. They will cover key points about mental health, the nature of depression, and strategies to combat self-stigma and public stigma.

To implement these interventions effectively, it is recommended to develop a detailed proposal outlining the objectives, content, and logistics of the seminars. This proposal should include plans for the formulation and creation of the leaflets, ensuring that they are informative, engaging, and easy to understand. By executing this proposal, Barangay Alawihao can take significant steps towards improving mental health literacy and reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues. These efforts will foster a more informed and supportive community, encouraging individuals to seek help and support when needed without fear of stigma. The proposed seminars and leaflets represent a strategic approach to addressing mental health and stigma issues within the community. Developing and implementing this proposal will ensure that accurate information is disseminated effectively, promoting greater awareness and understanding of mental health, depression, and stigma among the residents of Barangay Alawihao.

Conclusion

The study conducted in Barangay Alawihao, Daet, Camarines Norte, revealed a commendable level of awareness regarding mental health and depression among the predominantly young adult, female, college undergraduate respondents. This high level of

awareness is a positive indicator of the community's potential to address mental health issues effectively. However, variations in self-perception concerning self-stigma and public stigma highlight the need for targeted interventions to further educate and inform the community. To sustain and enhance this awareness, the study proposes the implementation of seminars and the distribution of informational leaflets. These initiatives aim to disseminate accurate and relevant information about mental health, depression, and associated stigmas. By providing a platform for open discussion and ongoing education, these interventions will help combat ignorance and reduce stigma, fostering a more supportive and understanding community environment. The findings emphasize the importance of continuous efforts to raise mental health awareness and combat stigma. The proposed seminars and leaflets represent a strategic approach to achieving these goals, ensuring that accurate information reaches a broader audience within the barangay. By executing these recommendations, Barangay Alawihao can build on its current awareness levels and work towards a community that fully understands and supports mental health issues.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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