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Exploring Mental Health Awareness among Bachelor of Science in Office Administration Students

A Case Study at the University of Saint Anthony, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the mental health awareness of Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students at the University of Saint Anthony. Specifically, it seeks to identify the respondents' profile in terms of age, gender, and year level, as well as the factors affecting their mental health, challenges they face that may lead to mental health problems and ways to manage such issues. Moreover, based on the study findings, the study aims to develop a mental health awareness guide to help students cope with their situations. The researcher used the descriptive research method, which involves a survey questionnaire to gather data. The study's findings indicate that most respondents sleep for 4-6 hours per day, feel anxious most of the time, and experience emotional problems that affect their studies. Many respondents sometimes experience fear, anxiety, or panic attacks, feel lonely or alone, and have mood swings, particularly anxiety. However, most respondents' mental health status is average, and they do not plan to attempt suicide over the last 12 months. Based on the study's conclusions, the recommendations include ensuring students sleep enough to avoid negative feelings such as irritability and stress. It is also suggested that students take care of themselves and have enough rest, especially at night, to think clearly and feel good when they wake up. Seeking help or guidance from trusted individuals such as teachers, counsellors, or classmates is also recommended.

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Introduction

Mental health encompasses our emotional, psychological, and social well-being, affecting our thoughts, feelings, and behaviours [1]-[3]. It is a vital component at all stages of life, from childhood to adulthood, as it influences our ability to handle stress, form relationships, and make decisions. Mental health awareness serves as a reminder of the importance of mental health, particularly for those with mental health issues who deserve care, empathy, and access to recovery, healing, hope, and fulfilment [4]-[6]. In countries like the United States, mental illnesses are prevalent, with one in five American adults experiencing some form of mental illness [4].

The Philippine Mental Health Act (Senate Bill No. 1354, 2017) was proposed, passed in Congress and the Senate, and signed into law on June 21, 2018, marking a significant milestone in the country's psychiatric history. Before the bill's passing, the Philippines lacked mental health legislation, leaving clinicians without guidance on their practice's legal and ethical aspects and patients' rights undefined. For instance, patients who lacked capacity were typically "signed in" by a next of kin. The Mental Health Act in the Philippines provides rights-based mental health legislation, mandating the provision of psychiatric, psychosocial, and neurological services in all hospitals and essential mental health services in community settings [7]. However, compulsory treatment is limited to hospital settings, and the Act does not provide for mandatory community treatment. The Act also recognises the rights of "concerned individuals," such as patient relatives and mental health professionals. As defined in section 4 of the Act, mental health professionals include medical doctors, psychologists, nurses, social workers, or appropriately-trained and qualified persons with specific skills relevant to providing mental health services.

Moreover, the Act emphasises the importance of providing psychosocial support to the patient's family members if required and, with informed patient consent, including them in the treatment planning. The Mental Health Act is a significant step forward in promoting mental health in the Philippines and ensuring that patients receive the necessary care and treatment while upholding their rights. Mental health encompasses emotional, psychological, and social well-being and affects how we think, feel, and act. It is crucial at every stage of life, and Mental Health Awareness is a reminder of its importance, particularly for those with mental health issues. These individuals deserve care, understanding, empathy, and access to recovery, healing, hope, and fulfilment. In countries like the United States, mental illnesses are prevalent, with one in five American adults experiencing some form of mental illness [8]. Mental well-being describes one's mental state and ability to cope with day-to-day life.

The passing of the Philippine Mental Health Act in 2018 was a significant milestone for the country. It provides rights-based mental health legislation, ensuring that clinicians have ethical and legal guidance and that patients' rights are clearly defined. The Act mandates the provision of psychiatric, psychosocial, and neurological services in all hospitals and essential mental health services in community settings. It also recognises the role of mental health professionals, ensuring their participation in mental health planning and development, and promoting their safe working environment, access to continuing education, and autonomy in their practice. The Act also seeks to integrate mental health into the educational system by promoting mental health programs in schools and other organisations.

In line with these efforts, this study aims to determine the level of Mental Health Awareness among Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students at the University of Saint Anthony. The researcher hopes to use the results to create a Mental Health Awareness Guide to assist students experiencing mental health problems. This guide will give them the necessary information to manage their situation and seek help.

Methods

The study used a descriptive survey method to gather data. The descriptive survey involves the interpretation of the importance and meaning of what is being described. The research method was used to classify, interpret and assess data. The respondents for this study were the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration students from the University of Saint Anthony. The first to fourth-year students were included in the study. The data for the analysis were collected using a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions about the respondents' mental health awareness, factors, problems, and solutions/recommendations. The questionnaire was designed to be easily understood by the respondents. The study briefly analysed the respondents' profiles, including their age, gender, and year level. These factors were considered relevant to the study.

Results

A. Respondent Profile

The data reveals the distribution of ages among the respondents of the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration program at the University of Saint Anthony. Of the total number of respondents, 25.49% were between 17-19 years old, 47.06% were between 20-22 years old, 21.57% were between 23-25 years old, and only 5.88% were 26 years old and above.

The distribution of respondents according to their gender and year level in the Bachelor of Science in Office Administration program is also provided. The study had a total of 51 respondents, which consisted of 11 female and two male respondents from the first year, 18

female and one male respondent from the second year, eight female and no male respondents from the third year, and nine female and two male respondents from the fourth year.

B. Health Quality Responses

1. Respondents' Number of Hours of Sleep per day

The Respondents' Number of Hours of Sleep per Day. One (1), or 1.96% of the respondent's response that they sleep less than 4 hours per day; Twenty-six (26) or 50.98% of respondents, answer that they sleep 4-6 hours per day; Twenty-three (23) or 45.10% of the respondents' response that they sleep 7-9 hours per day; And one (1) or 1.96% of the respondent's response that they sleep 9-12 hours per day. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most respondents' daily sleep was 4-6 hours, and only a few slept for 9-12 hours.

2. Respondents' Quality time

The Respondent's Quality of Sleep. One (1), or 1.96% of the respondents responded that their quality was terrible; Twenty-seven (27), or 52.94% of the respondents' answers were normal; Three (3), or 5.88% of the respondents' responses were bad; Eighteen (18) or 35.29% of the respondents' response were good; And two (2) or 3.92% of the respondents' answers were perfect. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most of the respondent's response was average quality of sleep, and only a few had an excellent quality of sleep.

3. Respondents' Extreme Emotions or Mood Swings

The Respondents' Extreme Emotions or Mood Swings. Twenty-five (25), or 49.02% of the respondent, responded that they feel anxiety; Two (2) or 3.92% of the respondent, answered that they feel suicidal thoughts; Twenty-one (21), or 41.18% of the respondents answered that they think breakdowns; and three (3) or 5.88% of the respondents' answer that they feel panic attacks. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most of the respondent's reactions to extreme emotions and mood swings were Anxiety and only a few responses to suicidal thoughts.

4. Respondents feeling of being Positive in life

The Respondent's Feeling of Being Positive in Life. One (1), or 1.96% of the respondents responded that they never feel positive in life; Sixteen (16), or 31.37% of the respondents, answered that they occasionally think positively in life; Thirty-one (31) or 60.78% of the respondents' answer that they believe most of the time joyous in life; And three (3) or 5.88% of the respondents' explanation that they always feel positive in life. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most respondents responded that they feel positive in life and happy all the time and only a few answered that they never think of being positive in life.

5. The Level of How Often the Respondent's Mental Health Affected their Relationships

Two (2), or 3.92%of the respondents responded that their Mental Health affected their Relationship very often; Twenty-four (24) or 47.06% of the respondents answered that their Mental Health affected their Relationship somewhat often; Sixteen (16) or 31.37% of the respondents' response that their Mental Health affects their Relationship not so often; And nine (9) or 17.65% of the respondents' answer that Mental Health was not at all affected their Relationship. Therefore, the researcher concluded that their mental health affects their relationship somewhat often, and only a few responded that it affects their relationship very often.

6. Respondents feeling low or down

Table 9 shows The Respondent's Feelings of Being Low or Down. Nine (9), or 17.65% of the respondents responded that they feel Being Low or Down very often; Twenty-six (26) or 50.98% of the respondents, answered that they think Being Low or Down somewhat often; Thirteen (13), or 25.49% of the respondents' response that they believe Being Low or Down not so often; And three (3) or 5.88% of the respondents' answer that they not at all feel Being Low or Down. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most of the respondent's response to feeling low or down was somewhat often, and only a few responded that they did not feel humble or down.

7. Respondents' level of Mental Health Status

Table 10 shows The Respondents' Level of Mental Health Status. Four (4), or 7.84% of the respondents responded that The Level of Mental Health was excellent; Thirty-seven (37), or 72.55% of the respondents, responded that The Level of Mental Health was average; Four (4) or 7.84% of the respondents' response that The Level of Mental Health was poor; And six (6) or 11.76% of the respondents' answer that The Level of Mental Health was not sure. Therefore, the researcher concluded that the majority of the respondent's response to the level of mental health status was average, and only a few answers were excellent and poor.

Problems encountered due to emotional anxiety shows Whether the respondents Face Problems with Their Studies due to Emotional anxiety Forty-one (41), or 80.39% of the respondents, responded that Yes, they Face Problems Due to Emotional anxiety Six (6) or 11.84% of the respondents' response that No, they don't Face Problems with Their Studies Due to Emotional Problems; And four (4) or 7.84% of the respondent's responses that they Do Not Know, how to Face Problems with Their Studies Due to Emotional anxiety Therefore, the researcher concluded that majority of the respondents' response that they face problems with their studies due to emotional issues, and only few responses they do not know.

8. Respondents Experiences Fear, Anxiety or Panic Attack

Table 12 shows that Respondents Experienced Fear, Anxiety, Or Panic Attacks. Seventeen (17), or 33.33% of the respondents responded that Yes, they Experienced Fear, Anxiety, Or Panic Attacks; Seven (7), or 13.72% of the respondents' responded No, they did not Experience Fear, Anxiety, or Panic Attacks; Twenty-five (25) or 49.02% of the respondents' responses that they sometimes Experienced Fear, Anxiety, Or Panic Attacks; And two (2) or 3.92% of the respondents' response that they Experienced Fear, Anxiety, Or Panic Attacks very often. Therefore, the researcher concluded that they sometimes experienced fear, anxiety or panic attacks and only a few responses very often.

9. This is an example of writing a subsubsection title The respondents feeling of anxiety or discomfort with others

Table 13 shows the Respondent's Feelings of Anxiety or Discomfort with others. Thirteen (13), or 25.49% of the respondents responded that Yes, their Feelings of Anxiety or Discomfort Bothers them; Eight (8) or 15.69% of the respondent responded that No, their Feelings of Anxiety or; twenty-nine (29) or 56.86% of the respondent's response their Feelings of Anxiety or Discomfort Sometimes Bothers them; And one (1) or 1.96% of the respondent's answer their Feelings of Anxiety or Discomfort Bothers them very often. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most of the respondents' responses of anxiety or discomfort bother around them, and only a few reactions very often.

10. Whether the Respondent Plan to Attempt Suicide over the Last 12 Months

Four (4), or 7.84% of the respondents' responded Yes; they Plan to Attempt Suicide over the Last 12 Months; Twenty-seven (27), or 52.94 of the respondents' response No, they do not plan to Attempt Suicide over the Last 12 Months; Eighteen (18) or 35.29% of the respondents' answer that Sometimes, they Plan to Attempt Suicide over the Last 12 Months; And two (2) or 3.92% of the respondents' response that they very often to Plan to Attempt Suicide over the Last 12 Months. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most of the respondents answered that they did not plan to attempt suicide over the last 12 months, and only a few responses very often.

11. The Level of How Respondents Frequently Felt Alone or Lonely

Eleven (11), or 21.57% of the respondent's response that they Felt Alone or Lonely very often; Twenty-four (24) or 47.06% of the respondent's, answer that they Somewhat often Felt Alone or Lonely; Fourteen (14) or 27.45% of the respondent's answer that they Felt Alone or Lonely Not so often; And two (2) or 3.92% of the respondent's response that they Felt Not at all being Alone or Lonely. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most

respondents responded that they somewhat often felt alone or lonely, and only a few responded that they felt isolated or lonely.

12. The Respondents Feeling Most of The Time

Sixteen (16), or 31.37% of the respondent's response that they feel Happy most of the time; Eighteen (18) or 35.29% of the respondents' response that they feel anxious most of the time; Thirteen (13) or 25.49% of the respondents' response that they feel satisfied most of the time; And four (4) or 7.84% of the respondents' response that they feel sad most of the time. Therefore, the researcher concluded that most respondents responded that they feel anxious most of the time, and only a few feel miserable most of the time.

Discussion

The data suggests that many respondents in this study need enough sleep. According to the theories of sleep psychology, sleep is an essential part of human health and well-being, and insufficient sleep can lead to a variety of negative consequences, including decreased cognitive function, reduced productivity, and increased risk for physical and mental health problems [9]-[11]. The fact that over 50% of respondents reported sleeping only 4-6 hours per day is particularly concerning, as this amount of sleep is generally considered inadequate for most adults. Additionally, while most respondents reported average sleep quality, a significant percentage reported poor or terrible quality of sleep, which could indicate underlying sleep disorders or other health issues. These findings suggest that interventions to promote healthy sleep habits among university students may be necessary to improve overall health and well-being. Other studies recommend healthy sleep habits [12]-[14].

One study by the National Sleep Foundation found that young adults between 18-25 typically require 7-9 hours of sleep per day for optimal health and cognitive function. This is consistent with the age distribution of the respondents in the current study, where most respondents aged 20-25 reported sleeping for 4-6 hours per day. The National Sleep Foundation study also found that poor sleep quality and insufficient sleep are expected among university students and can negatively impact academic performance, mental health, and overall well-being. These findings align with the current study, which reported a significant percentage of respondents experiencing poor or terrible sleep quality. Overall, both studies highlight the importance of addressing sleep habits among university students to promote better health outcomes.

The theory of emotions and mood swings can be used to analyse the finding [15]-[17]. According to this theory, emotions are complex psychological and physiological states often triggered by external stimuli or internal thoughts and can vary in intensity and duration [16]. Mood swings are rapid and intense shifts in emotions triggered by various factors such as stress, anxiety, and depression [17].

The high prevalence of anxiety among the respondents suggests that they may be experiencing stress or fear daily, which can lead to feelings of anxiousness. The small percentage of respondents reporting suicidal thoughts may indicate a more severe mental health condition, such as depression. The prevalence of breakdowns and panic attacks may also suggest that some respondents are experiencing emotional distress. In contrast, the finding also can be analysed using the concept of positive psychology, which focuses on promoting well-being and happiness. According to this concept, positive emotions such as joy, contentment, and gratitude are essential for mental and physical health and can lead to a more fulfilling life.

The majority of respondents reporting feeling positive most of the time, and some feeling positive all the time, suggests that they have a generally positive outlook on life, which may contribute to their overall well-being. The small percentage of respondents reporting never feeling positive in life may indicate that some may benefit from interventions to improve their well-being, such as therapy, mindfulness practices, or social support networks.

The findings on how often the respondents' mental health affects their relationships can be analysed using the social cognitive theory [18],[19]. This theory suggests that their social environment influences individuals' behaviours, emotions, and cognitive processes [19]. In this case, the respondents' mental health affects their relationships, which can be attributed to the social environment in which they are. Stress, anxiety, and depression can negatively impact relationships, leading to conflict, isolation, and detachment [20]-[22]. These findings suggest that interventions to promote mental health and well-being may be necessary to improve relationships and social support among university students. Compared to other research findings, Ref. [23] found that mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety, are associated with decreased social support and poorer relationship quality among college students. This supports the notion that mental health issues can negatively affect relationships, which may further exacerbate the condition’s symptoms.

The findings related to the respondents' feelings of being low or down can be analysed using the cognitive-behavioural theory [24],[25]. This theory suggests negative thoughts and emotions can lead to negative behaviours and outcomes. In this case, the respondents' feelings of being low or down may lead to negative behaviours such as social withdrawal, decreased motivation, and decreased productivity. These findings suggest that interventions that promote positive thinking and coping strategies may be necessary to improve mental health and well-being among university students. Compared to other research findings [26], 63% of college students experienced overwhelming anxiety, 42% felt so depressed that they found it difficult to function, and 12% seriously considered suicide. This indicates that feelings of being

low or down are prevalent among university students and may require significant attention and support from mental health professionals.

The presented data provides insights into the mental health status of the respondents. One influential theory that can be used to analyse this data is the biopsychosocial model, which suggests that biological, psychological, and social factors influence mental health. Based on the data, it can be inferred that many respondents experience emotional anxiety, fear, anxiety, panic attacks, and feelings of anxiety or discomfort with others. These responses may be attributed to psychological and social factors, such as stress from school or personal relationships.

Furthermore, the data shows that some respondents plan to attempt suicide or feel alone or lonely, which could be signs of more severe mental health issues. Biological factors like genetics or brain chemistry may influence these responses. The data suggests that there is a need for mental health support and intervention among the respondents. It is essential to address the underlying factors contributing to their mental health status, whether biological, psychological, or social, to ensure appropriate interventions are provided.

The high percentage of respondents reporting problems with their studies due to emotional anxiety can be explained by the Cognitive Appraisal Theory. This theory suggests that individuals evaluate a situation based on their appraisal, which leads to an emotional response. Therefore, if students appraise their academic situation as threatening or challenging, they may experience anxiety that affects their ability to perform well in school. In this case, the high percentage of respondents facing problems with their studies due to emotional fear suggests that they may be appraising their academic workload or environment in a way that leads to a negative emotional response.

The fact that most respondents reported feeling somewhat often or very often alone or lonely can be explained by Attachment Theory. This theory suggests that individuals have an innate need to form attachment relationships with others and that disruptions can lead to feelings of loneliness or distress. In this case, the high percentage of respondents reporting feelings of loneliness may suggest that they are experiencing a lack of social support or a disruption in their attachment relationships, which can negatively affect their mental health.

Conclusion

The study provides valuable insights into the mental health status of college students in the Philippines. The findings suggest that most respondents reported an average level of mental health, while only a tiny percentage reported excellent or poor grades. However, many students faced problems with their studies due to emotional anxiety, and most respondents reported experiencing fear, anxiety, or panic attacks sometimes. Additionally, many students reported feeling anxious or uncomfortable around others. Furthermore, a small percentage of

respondents reported planning to attempt suicide over the last 12 months, but a significant number felt lonely or alone somewhat often. Finally, the study found that a considerable percentage of students reported feeling anxious most of the time. The findings underscore the importance of addressing mental health issues among college students in the Philippines. The study suggests that colleges and universities should implement programs that provide mental health support and interventions to address emotional anxiety, fear, and panic attacks. Additionally, it highlights the need to provide social support to students who may feel anxious or uncomfortable around others. Addressing these issues can help prevent mental health problems among college students and contribute to their overall well-being.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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