

LEVEL OF STRESS AMONG FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF BESTLINK COLLEGE OF THE PHILIPPINES: BASIS FOR AN INTERVENTION PROGRAM

ABSTRACT

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This study explores the level of stress experienced by first-year students at Bestlink College of the Philippines, with particular attention to the social, academic, and personal challenges encountered during the transition to college life. The transition period is often a critical and demanding phase for students, potentially affecting their mental health and academic performance. This study aims to assess the overall stress levels among first-year college students and examine the influence of demographic factors such as age, gender, and academic department on their stress experiences. The study utilizes a quasi-experimental design to collect data from a representative sample of first-year students across five departments. Standardized instruments, including the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) developed by Cohen et al. (1983) and the Student Stress Inventory (SSI) developed by Zubair, Khan, and Saeed (2013), are employed to measure the frequency and percentage of reported stressors. These tools provide a comprehensive evaluation of the participants' stress levels. Findings revealed that most first-year students reported moderate to high levels of stress. Gender emerged as a significant variable, with female students consistently reporting higher stress levels than male students. This difference may be attributed to variations in stress perception, emotional regulation, or coping strategies. Age did not significantly influence stress levels, likely due to the narrow age range of respondents. However, departmental differences were observed. Students enrolled in more academically intensive programs, such as tourism, management, and education, reported higher stress levels than those in programs such as criminology and the CASE department. Key stressors identified included classroom presentation anxiety, financial difficulties, and sleep-related problems. This study underscores the considerable stress faced by first-year students and highlights the impact of demographic factors on stress experiences. Addressing the specific stressors identified can contribute to improved mental health and academic performance. The findings also provide valuable insights for the development of targeted intervention programs and support services. Overall, this research contributes to the growing body of literature on student mental health and serves as a foundation for future studies aimed at enhancing the well-being of first-year college students.

RECOMMENDED CITATION

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