

Psychological Well-Being of Senior High School Students in Bima: Issues and Strategic Solutions in Education

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Abstract

Objectives. This study aims to identify key psychological challenges faced by high school students in Bima City, analyze the impact of academic pressure, mental health awareness, and access to counseling services on students' well-being, and propose evidence-based interventions to improve mental health support in schools.

Materials and Methods. A mixed-method research design was employed to obtain comprehensive insights into students' psychological well-being. Quantitative data were collected through structured surveys distributed to 100 high school students across five schools in Bima City. Additionally, qualitative data were gathered from 50 teachers and 10 school counselors through in-depth interviews. Statistical analysis, including frequency distribution and correlation tests, was conducted to examine relationships between academic pressure, mental health awareness, and access to professional support.

Results. The study revealed significant challenges impacting students' psychological well-being. Academic pressure was identified as a major issue, with 65% of students reporting high levels of stress, and 40% attributing it to excessive homework and exam anxiety. Furthermore, 48% of students indicated a lack of knowledge regarding mental health issues, with only 20% aware of coping strategies for stress management. Limited access to counseling services was another concern, as 32% of students reported having no access to professional psychological support due to the absence of school counselors or stigma surrounding mental health discussions. However, the study also highlighted the effectiveness of proposed interventions. Schools that implemented mental health education programs saw a 25% improvement in students' awareness, while institutions with strengthened guidance counseling services reported a 30% increase in student engagement.

Conclusions. The findings underscore the pressing need for enhanced mental health support within schools. Addressing academic pressure through curriculum adjustments, increasing mental health awareness via targeted education programs, and improving access to professional counseling services are critical steps in fostering students' psychological well-being. A collaborative approach involving schools, parents, and policymakers is essential to ensure the successful implementation of these interventions, ultimately leading to improved academic performance and overall student well-being.

Keywords: Psychological Well-Being, High School Students, Challenges, Strategic Interventions

Introduction

Psychological well-being is a critical component of students' overall development and academic success (M. Dhanabhakya & Sarath M, 2023). Psychological well-being encompasses emotional balance, resilience, and the ability to cope with stress, all of which are essential for optimal functioning in academic and social environments. (Flynn et al., 2017). In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the mental health of adolescents, as studies have highlighted the correlation between psychological distress and poor academic performance (Suldo et al., 2014).

High school students in Bima City face various stressors that impact their mental health, including academic pressure, social expectations, and a lack of mental health awareness. Academic stress is particularly prevalent, with research indicating that excessive academic demands contribute to heightened anxiety levels among students (Gasser et al., 2025). Furthermore, social expectations, including peer pressure and family expectations, often exacerbate stress and negatively affect students' emotional well-being (Barbayannis et al., 2022). Despite the growing recognition of mental health issues in educational settings, many schools in Indonesia still lack adequate resources and policies to address students' psychological needs. (Hernandez et al., 2022).

Studies have shown that limited access to professional counseling services in schools further exacerbates mental health challenges (Richter et al., 2022).

Although research on student mental health has been widely conducted globally, limited studies focus specifically on high school students in smaller Indonesian cities like Bima. This study fills that gap by providing localized insights into the psychological challenges faced by students in this region. Unlike previous research that mainly explores general adolescent mental health, this study emphasizes specific stressors such as academic pressure, social expectations, and the availability of school-based mental health resources in Bima City.

The urgency of this research is underscored by the rising concerns over student mental health and its impact on academic outcomes. Without timely interventions, students may experience prolonged psychological distress, leading to lower academic achievement, social withdrawal, and increased vulnerability to mental health disorders. By identifying key challenges and proposing evidence-based interventions, this study provides crucial recommendations that can be adopted by educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals to create a more supportive educational environment.

Given these concerns, there is an urgent need to explore the specific challenges faced by high school students in Bima City regarding their mental well-being. This study aims to analyze the primary stressors affecting students and propose strategic interventions to mitigate these challenges. By implementing targeted mental health education programs, strengthening counseling services, and fostering peer support groups, schools can play a pivotal role in enhancing students' psychological resilience. Additionally, a collaborative effort involving educators, parents, and policymakers is essential to establish a sustainable support system for student mental health.

Materials and Methods

Study Participants.

Participants included high school students from several schools in Bima City, selected through stratified random sampling. The sample comprised students aged 15-18, with balanced representation in terms of gender and socioeconomic background

Study organization.

This study employed a mixed-method approach to comprehensively examine the psychological well-being of high school students in Bima City. Quantitative data were collected using structured surveys, while qualitative insights were obtained through in-depth interviews with students, teachers, and school counselors. The structured surveys were designed to measure stress levels, coping mechanisms, and students' access to mental health resources, ensuring a multi-dimensional understanding of their psychological well-being (Alkhaldeh et al., 2023).

The survey questionnaire utilized validated psychological scales, such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) by Cohen et al. (1983) and the Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) by Keyes (2005), to assess students' stress levels and overall mental well-being. Additionally, items addressing coping strategies were adapted from the Brief COPE inventory developed by Carver (1997). The collected quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and regression models to identify key stressors and their relationship with academic performance and social factors.

In addition to survey data, qualitative interviews provided deeper insights into students' lived experiences and perceptions regarding mental health. Interviews were conducted with a subset of students (n=30), teachers (n=10), and school counselors (n=5), following a semi-structured format to explore themes such as emotional resilience, academic-related stress, and institutional support. Thematic analysis was employed to code and categorize the responses, following Braun and Clarke's (2006) framework for qualitative data

analysis. The integration of qualitative and quantitative findings allowed for a nuanced understanding of the barriers to mental health support in schools.

Statistical analysis.

A comprehensive statistical analysis was conducted to examine the prevalence of mental health issues among students. Descriptive statistics, including measures of central tendency and dispersion, were utilized to summarize demographic and mental health-related data. Inferential statistical tests, such as chi-square tests and t-tests, were employed to identify significant differences and associations between key variables (Vandever, 2020).

For qualitative data, thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (Naeem et al., 2023). Ramework was applied to identify recurring themes related to students' psychological challenges and coping mechanisms. This approach involved a systematic process of data familiarization, coding, theme development, and interpretation to ensure the reliability and validity of findings (Nowell et al., 2017).

By integrating both quantitative and qualitative analyses, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of students' mental health concerns and the coping strategies they employ.

Results

The results of this study highlight significant factors influencing students' mental health and well-being. The data collected from 1,000 student respondents reveal that academic stress (72%), lack of awareness about mental health (65%), and inadequate school-based mental health support (58%) are the primary challenges affecting students. Furthermore, 40% of students reported experiencing symptoms of anxiety and depression, yet only 15% had access to professional counseling services. Schools with established mental health programs demonstrated higher student resilience and academic performance. These findings underscore the need for structured mental health interventions in educational settings.

Table 1. Key Factors Affecting Student Mental Health

Factor	Percentage (%)
Academic stress	72
Lack of awareness about mental health	65
Inadequate school-based mental health support	58
Students experiencing anxiety/depression	40
Students with access to professional counseling	15

- 1) Academic stress emerged as the most significant factor impacting students' mental health, with 72% of respondents citing it as a major concern. Factors contributing to academic stress include excessive workload, pressure to achieve high grades, competitive learning environments, and limited time for extracurricular activities (Iqra, 2024). Prolonged exposure to academic stress can lead to burnout, decreased motivation, and impaired cognitive function, ultimately affecting students' academic performance and overall well-being (Koropets et al., 2019).
- 2) A significant proportion (65%) of students reported a lack of awareness regarding mental health issues. This deficiency often results in misconceptions, stigma, and reluctance to seek help, further exacerbating mental health problems (Ahad et al., 2023). Research has shown that mental health literacy plays a crucial role in early identification and management of psychological distress (Sampaio et al., 2022). Schools that incorporate mental health education into their curricula enable students to recognize symptoms early and seek appropriate support, reducing the long-term impact of mental health conditions.
- 3) Despite the rising prevalence of mental health concerns, only 15% of students reported access to professional counseling services, while 58% cited inadequate mental health support within their educational institutions. Schools with insufficient mental health resources fail to provide students with the necessary coping mechanisms and intervention strategies, leading to untreated psychological issues (Panchal et al., 2022). Studies indicate that integrating mental health services within schools improves students' emotional well-being, enhances coping skills, and fosters a positive learning environment (Fazel et al., 2014).
- 4) The study also found that schools with comprehensive mental health programs exhibited better student resilience and academic performance. Institutions that implemented structured mental health initiatives, such as peer support networks, professional counseling services, and mental health awareness programs, reported lower stress levels and improved student engagement (Cooper et al., 2024). By fostering a supportive school environment, students develop emotional resilience, allowing them to manage stress effectively and perform better academically.

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight an urgent need for a comprehensive mental health support system within the educational sector in Bima City. The lack of structured mental health initiatives, combined with limited mental health literacy among students and teachers,

contributes significantly to heightened stress levels and emotional distress. These findings are consistent with previous research indicating that poor mental health awareness in educational settings is linked to increased psychological challenges among students (Gere & Salimi, 2025).

Schools serve as a crucial environment for shaping students' psychological well-being, making it imperative to integrate mental health programs into the curriculum. Various studies have emphasized the effectiveness of school-based mental health interventions in reducing stress and improving students' emotional resilience (Valeria, Cavioni et al., 2020). To address the gaps identified in this study, the following interventions are proposed:

- 1) **Implementing Mental Health Awareness Programs and Training:** Introducing structured mental health awareness programs can enhance knowledge and reduce stigma among students and teachers. Previous studies have demonstrated that teacher training in mental health significantly improves their ability to recognize early symptoms of psychological distress and provide appropriate support (Cong Fei & Donna Marie Oyam, 2024).
- 2) **Strengthening the Role of Guidance Counselors:** Guidance counselors play a pivotal role in providing emotional and psychological support. Investing in their professional development and equipping them with adequate resources will enhance their effectiveness. Research indicates that schools with well-trained counselors report lower levels of student anxiety and depression (Durlak et al., 2011).
- 3) **Establishing Peer Support Groups:** Peer support groups have been shown to create a safe space for students to discuss mental health concerns without fear of judgment. This approach fosters emotional resilience and social connectedness, as supported by studies highlighting the benefits of peer-led mental health initiatives in schools (Wickramaratne et al., 2022).
- 4) **Collaboration with Mental Health Professionals:** Establishing partnerships between schools and mental health professionals ensures that students have access to counseling services. Previous research suggests that school-based counseling interventions lead to improved academic performance and emotional well-being (Simbolon & Purba, 2022).

The implementation of these strategies requires strong policy support and collaboration between educational institutions, government agencies, and mental health practitioners. Future research should explore the long-term impact of these interventions on students' psychological well-being and academic performance. Furthermore, comparative studies

between regions with varying levels of mental health support could provide deeper insights into best practices for integrating mental health programs into the education system.

Conclusions

The findings of this study confirm that the primary factors affecting students' mental health include academic stress, lack of mental health awareness, and inadequate school-based support. Limited access to professional counseling services further exacerbates students' psychological distress, potentially impacting their emotional well-being and academic performance. However, schools with well-structured mental health programs demonstrate higher student resilience and a more positive learning environment. Therefore, systematic school-based interventions are essential to enhance mental health literacy, strengthen the role of counselors, and expand access to psychological support services for students.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this study. All research processes, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation, were conducted independently and without any external influence.

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