

Mental Health in Academe Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic: What Can We Learn from the Philippines and Latvia?

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Abstract

Using primarily comparative evidence of mental health situation during the COVID-19 pandemic between a Southeast Asian and a European Country, this study was conducted among public and private schools in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic utilizing a standardized Depression, Anxiety, and Stress (DAS) questionnaire. Findings revealed that Latvian teachers experienced higher cases of depression, anxiety, and stress than Filipino teachers. In contrast, Latvian students exhibit lower cases of depression and anxiety than Filipino students. Thus, mental health conditions of both teachers and students of both countries must be prioritized by conducting various programs and activities which further demands that mental health must be considered in academic institutions because when human resource knows how to deal with depression, anxiety, and stress, they also make better choices in life which will make them corollarily become even more productive at work.

Keywords: depression, anxiety, stress, teachers, students, COVID-19, cross-sectional data analysis, Philippines, Latvia Europe

1.0 Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic caused widespread disruptions in people's lives worldwide. Many countries have already closed schools for years as part of a series of measures to stop the virus from spreading. Even though school closures are one of the most effective ways to stop the virus from spreading, several educators and researchers have expressed worry about the impact of COVID-19-related school closures on students' academic lives (Hammerstein et al., 2021; Haug et al., 2020; Wyse et al., 2020). Several studies have found that students' emotional, physical, social, and

academic well-being suffers when they are unable to attend school (Armitage et al., 2020; Berasategi et al., 2020; Burgess & Sievertsen, 2020; Idoiaga et al., 2021; Imran et al., 2020; Kleinberg et al., 2020). Furthermore, various research revealed the psychological impact of COVID-19-related school closures (Ehrler et al., 2021; Gadermann et al., 2021; O'Connor, 2021; O'Sullivan et al., 2021; Xie et al., 2020). Also, the pandemic affects students' motivation (Smith et al., 2021; Zaccoletti et al., 2020). In the same manner, after the closure of schools, teachers have suffered from stress (Besser et al., 2022), anxiety (Huang & Zhao, 2020), and

other psychological and physical symptoms (Aperribai et al., 2020; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2020). Research has indicated that teachers have accumulated these psychological symptoms due to the need to adjust to alternative teaching modes (Cruz et al., 2020; Evanoff et al., 2020). When the schools and universities reopened, other authors (Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Idoiaga Mondragon, Bueno-Notivol et al., 2021) reported a high percentage of teachers suffered from symptoms of anxiety, stress, and depression.

In Europe, for instance, anxiety and stress were shown to be significantly more prevalent in the Spanish study. After a period of distant classes, teachers have returned to the face-to-face platform. The increased prevalence of anxiety and stress can be explained in part by the uncertainties about the impact of face-to-face lectures on the risk of transmission, because of the increased requirement for commuting, as well as the chance of more contact with other school personnel and students (Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Berasategi Santxo et al., 2021). In Poland, during both the first and second waves of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country, teachers reported at least mild levels of stress, anxiety, and depression. The distinction between a professional job and family life may have blurred due to remote education, and teachers' well-being may have suffered as a result. Isolation has contributed to changes in social relations, particularly personal relationships, while also negatively affecting teachers' ability to properly deal with crisis circumstances (Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik, 2021). In Latvia, during COVID-19, a study revealed that 5.75% had clinical depression among respondents involved, while 7.82% had discomfort. Suicidal thoughts rose in 13.30% of those who had previously had clinical depression and 27.05%

of those who had previously attempted suicide. Lower general health, increased fears of contracting COVID-19 or having family members acquire it and die, history of suicidality, increased family conflicts, decreased religiosity, and caring for a vulnerable person were all linked to increases in self-reported anxiety, depressive thoughts, suicidal ideation, and being currently depressed/distressed (Vrublevska et al., 2021).

In the context of the Philippines, Filipino educators were concerned about the safety of their loved ones, and the pandemic's anxieties also altered their lifestyles. Despite having a positive attitude toward life during the COVID-19 outbreak, Filipino teachers have been vulnerable to stress since the pandemic began. On the other hand, these educators were well informed on dealing with their student's educational, social, and personal concerns (Talidong & Toquero, 2020). Private school teachers felt worried because of the decreased number of students enrolled and limited financial operations of the schools, the primary stressor for private school teachers among HEIs was the "no pay or salary cut scheme." As a result, most teachers expected financial support from the school administration and government because of the crisis (Baloran & Hernan, 2020).

Additionally, Filipino students were anxious throughout the lockdown periods (Baloran, 2020). About 54% to 56% avoided social contact, major events, and gatherings, and 62.64% were concerned about food and financial resources. Hence, the COVID-19 pandemic affected students' mental health. Further, depression, anxiety, and stress were found in 18.6%, 35.1%, and 2.85% of the students (Acob et al., 2021). In 6.1%, 23.5%, and 0.6%, the symptoms of disorders were moderate to extremely severe. Also, younger students were more likely than older students to suffer from mild

to severe depression and anxiety. Male students also showed mild to severe depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms than female students. Singles had higher depression, anxiety, and stress rates than married people. The findings also revealed a link between worry and the family's monthly income and illness history.

From 2020 to 2022, various published cross-sectional studies assessed and compared the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress (DAS) levels of the general population across countries during the COVID-19 pandemic. In Shah et al.'s (2021) study, the prevalence of psychological responses and associated correlations of depression, anxiety, and stress amidst pandemics were explored among the global population in countries like the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Pakistan, and others. Similarly, an online cross-sectional survey on DAS during the pandemic among regions of Australia, India, the UK, South Africa, the USA, Spain, and others (Sha et al., 2021). Also, a literature review involving studies conducted from China, India, Spain, and Iran to estimate mental health problems in the COVID-19 pandemic in terms of depression, anxiety, and stress (Varma et al., 2021; Lakhan et al., 2020). Further, in the school setting, other studies which focus on assessing the depression, anxiety, and stress of teachers during pandemics were conducted (Baloran & Hernan, 2020; de Oliveira Silva et al., 2021; Dosil-Santamaria et al., 2021; Jakubowski & Sitko-Dominik, 2021; Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Berasategi Santxo, et al., 2021; Kukreti et al., 2021; Pressley et al., 2021; Dosil-Santamaria et al., 2021; Sheikh et al., 2020; Silva et al., 2021; Truzoli et al., 2021) but none of these studies did a cross-cultural investigation in the context of the Philippine and Latvia, European school teachers. On the other hand, there were studies on the depression, anxiety, and stress

of students amidst pandemics across countries, especially in the context of distance learning (Debowska et al., 2020; Fawaz & Samaha, 2021; Guo et al., 2021; Lopes et al., 2021; Maia & Dias, 2020; Martin-Cano et al., 2022; Montano & Acebes, 2020). However, these studies did not compare students' depression, anxiety, and stress levels in the Philippine and Latvian school contexts. Given that the Philippines and Latvia, Europe have different cultural and economic backgrounds but share similar educational and psychosocial perspectives and a framework for advocating for mental health, it is essential to compare how students and teachers in public and private schools are affected by the pandemic in terms of depression, anxiety, and stress. Therefore, this study aimed at assessing the prevalence of depression, anxiety and stress among teachers and students in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe during COVID-19. More specifically, this study aimed to measure levels of depression, anxiety and stress among teachers and students in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe, and determine the significant difference in the levels of depression, anxiety and stress between Filipino and Latvian teachers and students during COVID-19 pandemic. The primary purpose of this paper is to provide comparative evidence of the mental health situation during the COVID-19 pandemic between a Southeast Asian and a European Country.

2.0 Methodology

Research Design and Locale

This study followed a quantitative research design utilizing a cross-sectional study among public and private schools in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. In the Philippines, the survey was conducted in Davao Region and in Latvia, the survey was conducted in major academic institutions in Daugavpils (Fig. 1).

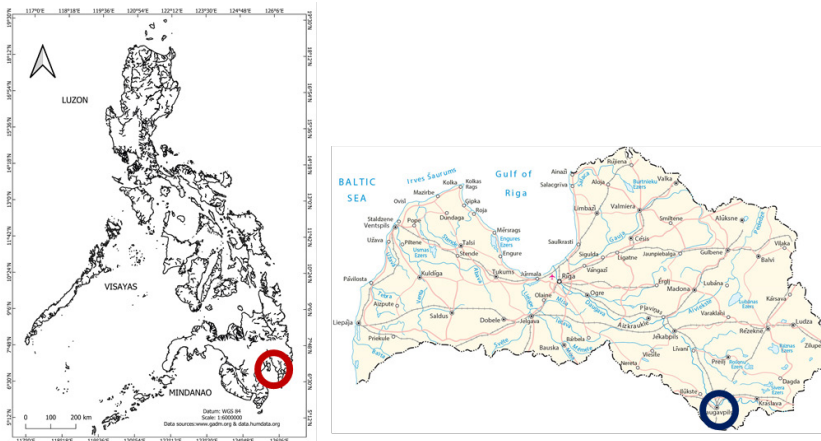


Figure 1. Research locale, showing Philippines and Davao Region in red circle (A), and Latvia showing the location of Daugavpils in blue circle (B) (GADM, n.d.)

The respondents, sampling, and ethics

There were 356 Filipino teachers from public and private schools, and 108 Latvian teachers from a public university that participated in the online survey. The study used online convenience sampling where participation in the survey is voluntary in nature. Google forms containing the DAS questionnaire were published online and were accessible to teachers and students. On the other hand, 265 Filipino students and 209 Latvian students responded to the online questionnaire disseminated through social media channels. The ethical principles of voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, potential for harm are followed.

The instrument and data collection process

The study utilized and adapted the Depression, Anxiety, and Stress (DAS) Scale originally developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995). The DAS is a 42-item self-report instrument designed to measure depression, anxiety, and tension/stress-related negative emotional states. For each item, participants can rate themselves from 0 (never) to 2 (almost always). This questionnaire has been used worldwide and tested as a valid

and reliable tool for depression, anxiety, and stress for different demographic and age groups (Akin & Cetin, 2007; Musa & Fadzil, 2007; Tran et al., 2013). The DAS questionnaire is a public domain file hence permission is not needed to use it. The score interpretation below was used.

Table 1. DAS Score Interpretation

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	0 – 9	0 – 7	0 – 14
Mild	10 – 13	8 – 9	15 – 18
Moderate	14 – 20	10 – 14	19 – 25
Severe	21 – 27	15 – 19	26 – 33
Extremely Severe	28+	20+	34+

Source: Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995; Crawford & Henry, 2003

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, particularly frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, to determine Filipino and Latvian teachers and students’ levels of depression, anxiety, and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. A Chi-square test of independence assessed

differences in the reported prevalence of depression, anxiety, and stress among Filipino and Latvian teachers and students. All statistical tests used a 0.05 level of significance.

3.0 Results and Discussion

In the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, both European and South Asian countries face economic and educational concerns. Knowing that Latvia, Europe, has higher GDP than the Philippines, much is expected in terms of its ability to cope with the technological demands of the pandemic situation in the educational sector. Both countries were forced to shut down schools in the meantime and shift to online modes of teaching and learning. Educators employed various online and technological tools to ensure schools in these two countries continued delivery of quality instruction. However, with the advent of the online learning environment, depression, anxiety, and stress among teachers and students were recorded and should be given much attention by both government and private educational sectors.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, most teacher respondents (38%) in the Philippine private schools had mild scores on the depression subscale, but 36% had scores in the moderate range, 16% had normal levels, and only 10% classified as severe. On the anxiety subscale, more than half of the teachers (52%) had scores in the moderate range, and about 20% were classified as severe. Also, 4% had scores in the extremely severe range of anxiety. The rest of 24% belonged to the normal range (12%) and mild range (12%). On the other hand, teachers in the majority (60%) had a normal level of stress, but 28% had scores in the mild range, 8% had scores in the moderate range, and only 4% experienced severe symptoms of stress. Mean scores of private school teachers were 13.6 or mild for depression, 12.1 or moderate for anxiety, and 14.4 or normal for stress (Table 2 and Figure 2).

Table 2. Distribution of Private School Teachers' Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	8 (16%)	6 (12%)	30 (60%)
Mild	19 (38%)	6 (12%)	14 (28%)
Moderate	18 (36%)	26 (52%)	4 (8%)
Severe	5 (10%)	10 (20%)	2 (4%)
Extremely Severe	0 (0%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
Mean ± SD	13.6 ± 4.7	12.1 ± 4.2	14.4 ± 4.77

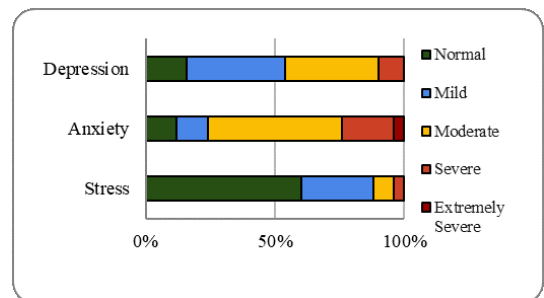


Figure 2. Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels of Philippine Private School Teachers

Among Philippine public schools, most teacher respondents (76%) during the COVID-19 pandemic had normal depression subscale scores; however, 11 % had mild depression, 9 % had moderate depression, 2% had severe symptoms, and another 2% had extremely severe depression. Similarly, most of the teachers (65%) had scores in the moderate range in terms of anxiety. This is followed by teachers, of which 17% of them had a moderate level of anxiety, 16% had a mild level, 7% had a severe level, and 5% had an extremely severe level. On the stress subscale, data similarly showed that most public-school teachers (83%) had normal scores, and only 8% were classified as having mild stress, 7% had moderate stress, and 2% had a severe level of stress. Mean scores of public school teachers were 5.5 or normal for depression, 6.6 or normal for anxiety, and 7.73 or normal for stress (Table 3 and Figure 3).

Table 3. *Distribution of Public-School Teachers' Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	234 (76%)	198 (65%)	255 (83%)
Mild	33 (11%)	19 (6%)	25 (8%)
Moderate	27 (9%)	51 (17%)	20 (7%)
Severe	7 (2%)	22 (7%)	5 (2%)
Extremely Severe	5 (2%)	16 (5%)	1 (0%)
Mean ± SD	5.5 ± 4.6	6.6 ± 4.1	7.73 ± 4.63

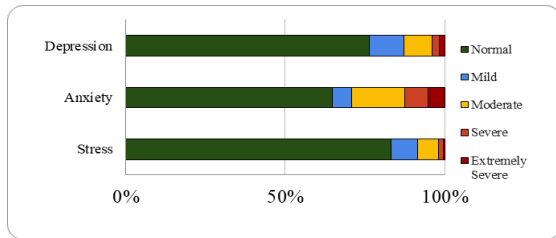


Figure 3. *Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels of Philippine Public-School Teachers*

Out of the 356 total teacher respondents (private + public schools) in the Philippines during the COVID-19 pandemic, the majority (68%) had normal scores in the depression subscale, and this is followed by teachers with 15% mild depression, 13% moderate depression, 3% severe depression and 1% extremely severe depression. More than half of the teachers (57%) had normal anxiety levels on the anxiety subscale, but 22% experienced moderate anxiety symptoms, 9% had severe symptoms, 7% had mild symptoms, and 5% had extremely severe symptoms. In terms of stress, 80% of the teachers revealed a normal level of stress, and only 11% experienced mild stress, followed by 7% of those who had moderate stress levels. Only 2% of the teachers had experienced extremely severe stress symptoms. Mean scores of teachers (private + public) were 6.6 or normal for depression, 7.4 or normal for anxiety, and 8.06 or normal for stress (Table 4 and Figure 4).

Table 4. *Distribution of Private + Public School Teachers' Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	242 (68%)	204 (57%)	285 (80%)
Mild	52 (15%)	25 (7%)	39 (11%)
Moderate	45 (13%)	77 (22%)	24 (7%)
Severe	12 (3%)	32 (9%)	7 (2%)
Extremely Severe	5 (1%)	18 (5%)	1 (0%)
Mean ± SD	6.6 ± 4.6	7.4 ± 4.1	8.06 ± 4.70

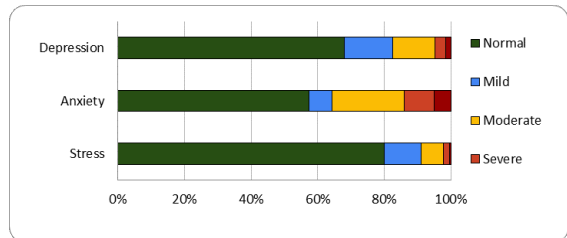


Figure 4. *Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels of Philippine Private + Public School Teachers*

Most of the teachers (64%) in Latvia, Europe, during the COVID-19 pandemic had a normal level of depression, but 14% had scores in the moderate range, 8% had scores in the severe range, 8% had scores in the extremely severe range, and 6% had scores in the mild range. Similarly, most of the Latvian teachers (75%) also experienced a normal level of anxiety. Only 11% had moderate anxiety symptoms, 8% had severe symptoms, and 6% had extremely severe symptoms. On the stress subscale, 64% of the Latvian teachers experienced a normal level of stress while 17% experienced mild stress, which is followed by 8% who had experienced severe stress, 6% who had moderate stress, and another 6% who had extremely severe stress. Mean scores of Latvian teachers were 10.1 or mild for depression, 15.9 or severe for anxiety, and 17.3 or mild for stress (Table 5 and Figure 5).

Table 5. *Distribution of Latvian Teacher's Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	23 (64%)	27 (75%)	23 (64%)
Mild	2 (6%)	0 (0%)	6 (17%)
Moderate	5 (14%)	4 (11%)	2 (6%)
Severe	3 (8%)	3 (8%)	3 (8%)
Extremely Severe	3 (8%)	2 (6%)	2 (6%)
Mean ± SD	10.1 ± 9.6	15.9 ± 10.6	17.3 ± 11.7

Table 6. *Distribution of HEI Staff Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	12 (39%)	14 (45%)	12 (39%)
Mild	2 (6%)	2 (6%)	7 (23%)
Moderate	7 (23%)	4 (13%)	3 (10%)
Severe	3 (10%)	2 (6%)	8 (26%)
Extremely Severe	7 (23%)	9 (29%)	1 (3%)
Mean ± SD	15.9 ± 10.6	12.48 ± 9.88	13.14 ± 9.87

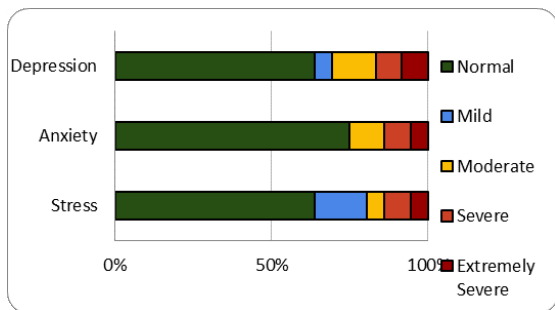


Figure 5. *Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels of Latvian Teachers*

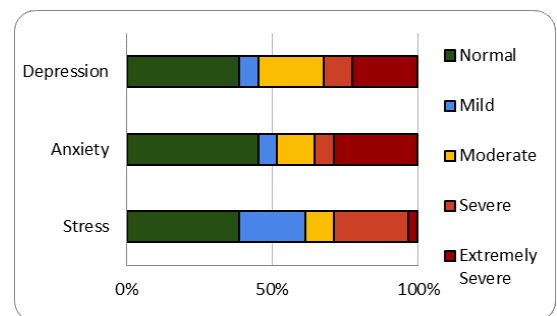


Figure 6. *Depression, Anxiety and Stress Levels of Latvian HEI Staff*

Moreover, higher education institution's staff also responded to the online survey and data revealed that 39% of them also experienced normal levels of depression, while 23% had moderate scores, and another 23% had extremely severe scores. Only 10% had severe scores and 6% with mild scores. In terms of anxiety, 45% of the HEI staff had scores in the normal range, but 29% had scores in extremely severe ranges. This is followed by 13% of them who had moderate levels of anxiety, 6% with mild levels, and another 6% with severe levels. Besides, most HEI staff also had normal levels of stress (39%), but 26% of them experienced severe symptoms, 23% had mild symptoms, 10% had moderate symptoms, and 3% had extremely severe symptoms. Mean scores of HEI staff were 15.9 or moderate for depression, 12.48 or moderate for anxiety, and 13.14 or normal for stress (Table 6 and Figure 6).

Survey results on the depression, stress, and anxiety levels among teachers in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe, during the COVID-19 period showed that teachers in private and public schools in the Philippines experienced normal depression, anxiety, and stress. Teachers have mild depression and moderate anxiety in the Philippine private schools but have normal stress levels. On the other hand, teachers in Philippine public schools had normal depression and stress symptoms but had moderate anxiety levels. In Latvian schools, teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic had a normal depression, anxiety, and stress level. Further, higher education institutions' staff involved in this study also had experienced a normal level of depression, anxiety, and stress. Generally, the prevalence of extremely severe to mild teachers' depression in the Philippines ranged from 1% to 15%, anxiety

from 5% to 22%, and stress from 2% to 11%. Also, severe to mild teachers' depression in Latvia ranged from 6% to 14%, anxiety from 6% to 23%, and stress from 11% to 22%. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant prevalence of anxiety among teachers, with the highest prevalence among teacher participants where face-to-face classes were making a comeback (Silva et al., 2021). Furthermore, teachers who worked in schools were more likely to experience stress and depression, especially in the European context (Oliveira-Carvalho et al., 2021). Also, this study aligns with the study of (Talidong & Toquero, 2020), which exposed that in the Philippines, Filipinos, particularly the teachers, experienced anxiety, and depression due to the pandemic. Private school Filipino teachers experienced psychological stress due to the reduced number of students enrolled, limited financial operations of the schools, and a salary reduction scheme (Baloran & Hernan, 2020; Corpuz, 2021).

On the other hand, Filipino students' depression and anxiety were at moderate levels; 53% of the students experienced moderate symptoms of depression, and 49% experienced moderate anxiety symptoms during the COVID-19 pandemic. Other students had mild scores (22%) in the depression subscale, 18% with normal scores, and 6% with severe scores. Also, in terms of the anxiety scale, 23% had scores in the mild range, 13% had scores in the normal range, 13% in the severe range, and only 2% in the extremely severe range. Conversely, most of the students' stress levels are in the normal range (55%), while 25% experienced mild stress levels. About 12% of Filipino students experienced moderate symptoms, and 9% had severe ones. Mean scores of Filipino students were 18.3 or moderate for depression, 15.3 or severe for anxiety, and 15.46 or mild for stress (Table 7 and Figure 7).

Table 7. *Distribution of Filipino Students' Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	49 (18%)	34 (13%)	145 (55%)
Mild	59 (22%)	62 (23%)	65 (25%)
Moderate	141 (53%)	130 (49%)	32 (12%)
Severe	16 (6%)	35 (13%)	23 (9%)
Extremely Severe	0 (0%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)
Mean ± SD	18.3 ± 4.5	15.3 ± 3.8	15.46 ± 5.79

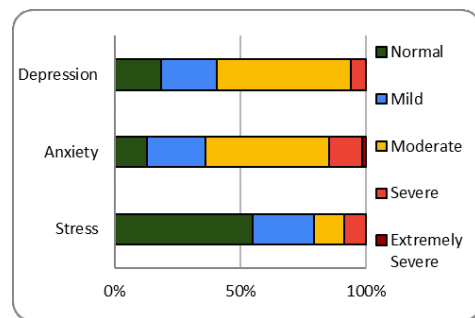


Figure 7. *Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels of Filipino Students*

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Latvian students' depression, anxiety, and stress were at normal levels. 30% had normal depression, 35% had normal anxiety, and 39% had normal stress. However, 22% of the Latvian students experienced extremely severe depression symptoms, 21% had moderate depression symptoms, 15% had severe depression symptoms, and 11% had mild depression symptoms. On the anxiety subscale, some students had extremely severe anxiety (25%) despite the majority having normal anxiety levels. Also, 18% had scores in the moderate range, 13% had scores in the severe range, and 9% had scores in the mild range. Lastly, some students also experienced moderate levels of stress (22%), 16% had experienced severe stress, 13% experienced mild stress, and 11% had extremely severe symptoms. Mean scores of Latvian students were 15.3 or moderate for depression,

13.14 or moderate for anxiety, and 18.58 or mild for stress (Table 8 and Figure 8).

Table 8. *Distribution of Latvian Students' Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels*

Categories	Depression (D)	Anxiety (A)	Stress (S)
Normal	63 (30%)	73 (35%)	81 (39%)
Mild	24 (11%)	18 (9%)	28 (13%)
Moderate	43 (21%)	37 (18%)	45 (22%)
Severe	32 (15%)	28 (13%)	33 (16%)
Extremely Severe	47 (22%)	53 (25%)	22 (11%)
Mean ± SD	15.3 ± 11.7	13.14 ± 9.87	18.58 ± 10.59

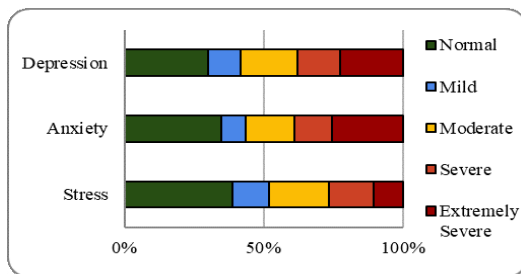


Figure 8. *Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels of Latvian Students*

The data on Philippine students' depression and anxiety were at moderate levels, and their stress levels were in the normal range during the pandemic. On the other hand, the Latvian students' depression, anxiety, and stress were at normal levels. In general, extremely severe to mild student' depression ranged from 6% to 53% in the Philippines, with anxiety ranging from 2% to 49% and stress ranging from 9% to 25%. In Latvia, severe to mild students' depression ranged from 11% to 22%, anxiety from 9% to 25%, and stress from 11% to 22%. The impact of the considerable school changes, which have affected the negative emotional symptoms experienced by students in European countries, leading to more severe

mental health issues (Oliveira-Carvalho et al., 2021). The study ascertained the prevalence of high anxiety, depression, and stress symptoms among students. In the Philippines, during the COVID-19 pandemic, students almost had significantly higher depression scores than those working or employed and had a higher amount of COVID-19 stress (Montano & Acebes, 2020). There are also 54% to 62% of Filipino students who were anxious throughout the lockdown periods (Baloran, 2020). Furthermore, suicide ideation and conduct have increased among at-risk individuals during the pandemic (Corpuz, 2021). According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, deaths from 'deliberate self-harm' increased to 25.7 % in 2020, moving it to the 27th leading cause of death from the 31st in 2019. In support, it was revealed in an Atlantic Fellows' (2022) article that young Filipinos' lack of access to mental health care, particularly in isolated places with low socio-economic status, is deadly. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a substantial increase in attempted and completed juvenile suicides and an increase in suicide-related calls to mental health clinics across the country. Combating social stigma around seeking mental health help and providing that help, such as through suicide prevention programs, is crucial.

Another important objective of this study was to compare the depression, anxiety and stress levels of teachers and students in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe. Comparative data analysis revealed that there is an association between location (Philippines and Latvia) and depression ($p=0.018$), anxiety ($p=0.004$), and stress ($p<0.001$). This is consistent with the results presented in the tables above, wherein Latvian teachers have higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress compared to Philippine teachers during the pandemic (Table 9).

Table 9. Comparison on Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels between Philippine and Latvian Teachers

	χ^2 - statistic	df	p-value
Depression	11.86	4	0.018
Anxiety	15.36	4	0.004
Stress	185	4	<0.001

Among students, our analysis also revealed that there is an association between location (Philippines and Latvia) and depression ($p < 0.001$), anxiety ($p < 0.001$), and stress ($p < 0.001$). This is consistent with the results presented in the tables above, wherein Philippine students had higher depression and anxiety levels, while Latvian students had higher stress levels during the pandemic (Table 10).

Table 10. Comparison on Depression, Anxiety, and Stress Levels between Philippine and Latvian Students

	χ^2 - statistic	df	p-value
Depression	116.2	4	<0.001
Anxiety	128.3	4	<0.001
Stress	52.95	4	<0.001

Given the comparative data, it was evident that teachers in Latvia are more stressed than teachers in the Philippines. Teachers in Latvian schools were more likely than those in Philippine schools to have moderate to severe stress symptoms. In addition, a higher percentage of Latvian teachers reported moderate to severe depression and anxiety symptoms throughout the pandemic period. The rampancy of stress was higher in the teacher participants of the European research compared to those in the studies carried out in other countries (Silva et al., 2021). In the same vein, Latvia, Europe, COVID-19-related factors were all linked to increased self-reported anxiety, depressive thoughts, and distress among people (Vrublevska et al., 2021).

In addition, survey results indicated that most Filipino students have moderate levels of depression and anxiety, while many Latvian students have normal levels of depression and anxiety. On the other hand, Latvian students had higher stress levels ranging from mild to severe symptoms. As a result, during the pandemic, Philippine students reported higher levels of depression and anxiety, whereas Latvian students had higher levels of stress. The Philippines has one of the highest depression scores compared to other countries in Asia (Wang et al., 2021). At least 38% of students in Asia had mild or moderate depression and anxiety (Jiang et al., 2021). Anxiety was the most prevalent issue among Asian students, followed by depression and stress. Due to unforeseen life changes, students are at risk for mental health issues during the coronavirus pandemic. Particularly, students in the Philippines discussed the difficulty of switching to remote learning amid the pandemic that led to some suicides, the topic of mental health and welfare became increasingly popular (Mautong et al., 2021). This follows the documented cases of three pupils who committed suicide during the quarantine period after purportedly encountering educational challenges.

What can we learn from each country?

The pandemic has exacerbated the already precarious mental health situation among Filipinos, emphasizing the need for appropriate mental health policy in both public and private education. In the Philippines, various efforts were made to address the increasing cases of depression, anxiety, and stress among its people, including teachers and students in the educational sector. The Philippine Psychological Association has created a list of free telemedicine consultations in response to the mental health consequences projected at the

start of the pandemic. The Philippine Red Cross has established a COVID-19 hotline with helpline volunteers to address mental health and other comparable concerns. In observance of National Mental Health Week, the Department of Health has also held nationwide initiatives (Malolos et al., 2021). Schools are fundamental in assisting college students with academic, safety, and social needs. The courses of activities offered by various universities and colleges may significantly impact their mental health. Due to insufficient time to adjust to the new learning environment, some students may experience depression, stress, or anxiety due to the rapid change from onsite to online learning. COVID-19 exposure on social media may also be a significant factor in college student's mental health, notably stress, depression, and anxiety (Lim et al., 2022). Mental health services must be provided in this situation to counteract mental instability. Furthermore, universities and colleges should develop an environment that encourages Filipino students to be conscious of mental health issues (Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al., 2020).

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health in Latvia, on the other hand, discovered significant risk and protective factors for self-reported increases in anxiety, depressive thoughts, suicidal thoughts, distress, and depression. To address the significant mental impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, various practical implications are underlined, making it critical to establish models for psychological crisis prevention and management to increase readiness for future pandemics. Improving and preserving mental health in a European country like Latvia is also essential in the event of a future state of emergency. Low-intensity psychosocial interventions, such as social/family support, education programs, individual guided or computerized self-help cognitive behavioral

therapy, and physical activity programs, are needed for people with milder depression symptoms, whereas high-intensity interventions, such as formal psychological treatments by trained therapists, are needed for individuals with severe depression symptoms. Risk factor prevention policy proposals must be developed (Vrublevska et al., 2021).

Strengths and Limitation of the study

This study's strength combines survey data about depression, anxiety, and stress experiences of COVID-19 from two international landscapes, the Philippines and Latvia, Europe. The study covered these two countries with different cultural and economic backgrounds but shared the same educational and psycho-social perspectives and mental health advocacy framework, especially amid distance learning in the surge of the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a cross-sectional survey, this study highlights students' and teachers' pandemic-related depression, anxiety, and stress among public and private schools in the Philippines and Latvia, Europe. Our study has several limitations. The study was conducted via an online platform where surveys reached only a sample of teachers and students, including those with an internet connection; thus, populations without internet or direct access to a mobile phone were excluded. During surveys, there may be under-reporting due to respondents' stigma about mental health. Also, a comparison was carried out between two groups from different contexts. A survey in the Philippines focused on public secondary schools, while Latvia focused on private higher education institutions. Besides, self-reported variables could be biased due to emotional factors during surveys. The findings are not fully generalizable to the whole Philippine, and Latvian school population due to clustered sampling since the research locale in Latvia includes

only one private HEI and public school in one region in the Philippines; however, they broadly represent the teacher and student population in the study countries.

4.0 Conclusion

During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was an occurrence of depression, anxiety, and stress among teachers and students in Southeast Asia and Europe amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. School closures, adoption of hybrid learning, and resumption of face-to-face sessions resulted in depression, anxiety, and stress among teachers and students, particularly in the Philippine and Latvian contexts. According to the comparative data, teachers in Latvia are more stressed than teachers in the Philippines. They had a higher likelihood of experiencing moderate to severe stress symptoms. Moreover, during the pandemic, more Latvian teachers experienced moderate to severe depression and anxiety symptoms. On the other hand, when depression, anxiety, and stress were measured in students, data revealed that students in the Philippines had higher levels of depression and anxiety. In contrast, Latvian students had higher stress levels ranging from mild to severe symptoms.

The mental health conditions of both teachers and students of both countries must be prioritized by conducting various programs and activities since it is a key component in our lives that affects how we think, feel, and act. Furthermore, mental health must be put into primary considerations in the academic institutions as this would determine how one can handle depression, anxiety, and stress and make better choices in life. Other socio-economic data of each country can also be investigated and compared with the DAS occurrence in each country. Exit plans of each country from COVID-19 are also worth investigating. Furthermore, increasing

the number of respondents and covering other countries in Asia and Europe will give more light on the bigger picture of the status of mental health in the academic community.

In light of these findings, it is appropriate to recommend that universities and other similar academic institutions may conduct stress reduction activities. Furthermore, mental health training and workshops may be organized by universities for students and teachers.

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